

More than peace in our time

By Suzanne Fields *The Washington Times* November 20, 2006

Just when you think no one can come up with a genuine modern analogy to Nazi Germany, someone does. Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the conservative Likud Party in Israel, offers a scary and wholly plausible comparison. "It's 1938 and Iran is Germany," he told the annual General Assembly of the United Jewish Communities the other day in Los Angeles. "When someone tells you he is going to exterminate you, believe him -- and stop him."

No sooner than he completed his speech the Iranian newspapers reported that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was boasting that "we will soon witness [Israel's] disappearance and destruction." Mr. Ahmadinejad and his men are preparing a Holocaust that Hitler would envy, not limited to a tiny fledgling democracy in the Middle East. The Iranian nuclear program poses a threat to the entire West.

"Israel would certainly be the first stop on Iran's tour of destruction, but at the planned production rate of 25 nuclear bombs a year ... [the arsenal] will be directed against 'the big Satan,' the U.S. and the 'moderate Satan,' Europe," Mr. Netanyahu told the assembled Jewish communities. But the ordering of events has changed. Hitler started a war first and began work on the atomic bomb; Mr. Ahmadinejad is building nuclear weapons first.

To do nothing is to appease, which is yet another allusion to the careless international diplomacy before World War II: "No one cared then and no one cares now." Hitler went on building a formidable military machine while the world pretended not to notice. Winston Churchill was the lonely prophet whose warning went unheeded. Appeasement, he said, is "a bit like feeding a crocodile hoping that it would eat you last." This time everyone notices what Iran is doing, but wants to go about business as usual: "What? Me worry?" The first missiles will have Europe in range, then America. Israel will be the canary in the coal mine, the first to disappear as a warning to everyone else.

Mr. Ahmadinejad isn't trying to sell a Holocaust analogy; he insists the original never happened. But the 5 million Jews in Israel understand that rhetoric precedes the reality. Erasing Israel from the map is real to them. "Because Auschwitz really happened, it has permeated our imagination, become a permanent part of us," says Nobel Prize-winning novelist Imre

Kertesz. "What we are able to imagine -- because it really happened -- can happen again."

While Mr. Netanyahu was speaking on the Left Coast, the man who now represents "the little Satan," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel, met President Bush in Washington. They talked for several hours and mostly about what to do about Iran. Both men have been weakened since the last time they met. Mr. Olmert suffered because he was slow to react with enough ground troops for the war in Lebanon. Mr. Bush had a really bad hair day on November 7. Thus their rhetoric rings a little hollow now, suggesting that their countries have deeper divisions than they're ready to admit. Israel worries that the American weakness in Iraq might compel the president to press Israel to make unwise concessions to the Palestinians in order to organize a coalition of Arab states to support sanctions against Iran. The United States worries that Israel's military image was tarnished in the war in Lebanon, making it appear less fearsome. This war in Lebanon was not exactly the Six Day War.

Israel has strong friends in America, particularly among evangelical Christians. Nearly everyone has known this for a long time, but some people always find out late. The New York Times discovered it only last week, and put the news of its late discovery on Page One. These Christians frequently invoke Biblical references, but they're quick to draw analogies to the Third Reich. "Hitler told everybody what he was going to do, and Ahmadinejad is saying exactly what he is going to do," says Dr. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, the faith-and-family advocacy organization. "He is talking genocide."

The Rev. John Hagee, pastor of a megachurch in San Antonio, says the Iranian leader's remarks about a second Holocaust prompted him to establish Christians United for Israel. He compared the Ahmadinejad Iranians to an Old Testament villain: "Pharaoh threatened Israel and he ended up fish food."

After Messrs. Bush and Olmert concluded their private meeting in the Oval Office, they spoke in a unified voice that they cannot accept a nuclear-armed Iran. The question of how they would stop it remains unaddressed -- in public. But both men obviously know that taking a nap is not the route to peace in our time.

Abba Olmert By Michael B. Oren The Wall Street Journal November 16, 2006

"Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go it alone." With these words, Lyndon B. Johnson greeted Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban at the White House on May 26, 1967. The Middle East was in the throes of an escalating crisis. Gamal Abdul Nasser had evicted U.N. peacekeepers from Egypt's border with Israel, blockaded the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, and called on the Arab world to "throw the Jews into the sea." Israel had no intention of waiting to see if Nasser would carry out his pledge, or of keeping its troops on the permanent state of alert that was bankrupting the country. And so the Israeli government sent its foreign minister to seek Johnson's approval for mounting a pre-emptive strike. But LBJ only disappointed Eban. Though hostile to Nasser and firmly supportive of Israel, the president was hamstrung by America's imbroglio in Vietnam and by the drop in his domestic support. The most he offered the Israelis was Washington's help in mobilizing international action against Egypt. Beyond that, there was only that repeated, cryptic phrase, "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go it alone."

Perhaps a similar message was imparted by George W. Bush in his meeting earlier this week with Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Much like 1967, Israel faces a Middle Eastern leader who has repeatedly sworn to wipe it off the map, and to that end is assiduously trying to acquire nuclear weapons. Like Nasser, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad can cripple Israel economically by keeping it in a state of alert, driving away foreign investment and tourism. In the absence of international commitment to thwart Iran's nuclear plans, Israel has no choice but to consider striking pre-emptively. Doing so, however, requires explicit U.S. support, or at the very least, an indication that the U.S. will not oppose such action. Like Eban 40 years earlier, Mr. Olmert came to Washington in search of a green light.

But the U.S. is hardly in the position to sanction an Israeli attack. Boggled down in Iraq and hemorrhaging political capital at home, Mr. Bush resembles Johnson in his inability to approve risky military initiatives. As inimical to Mr. Ahmadinejad as his predecessor was to Nasser, and at least as sympathetic to the Jewish state, Mr. Bush is nevertheless unable to undertake a unilateral attack against Iran or even to endorse an Israeli one.

This was bad news for Mr. Olmert. The Israeli prime minister hoped to secure a hard-and-fast timetable for interdicting Iran's nuclear program first by diplomacy and then, if that failed, by force. Instead, he heard that the U.S. would only support measures to isolate Iran economically and balked at the use of bombs. Though he and his administration have routinely stated a determination to prevent Iran

from obtaining strategic capabilities, Mr. Bush, in the aftermath of his party's electoral defeats, avoided all public mention of armed power as a means of achieving that goal.

The only option for the U.S., then, is international sanctions. These, however, have proven singularly inadequate in quashing the nuclear aspirations of North Korea -- a country far more financially fragile than Iran -- and lack the vital support of Russia, China and France. Iran has also threatened to retaliate for sanctions by cutting back oil production and increasing its support for terror.

Back in 1967, Johnson also tried to apply international pressure on Egypt. He planned to issue a multilateral declaration condemning the closure of Tiran and to create a convoy of ships from 26 nations to physically challenge the blockade. But fearing for their oil supplies, European countries refused to cooperate with Johnson's *démarche*, while Egypt threatened violence against any attempt to reopen the straits. In the end, only four countries were willing to sign the declaration and only two volunteered ships for the convoy.

Mr. Bush is unlikely to be more successful than Johnson in marshalling international strictures against a defiant Middle Eastern regime. Nor was Mr. Olmert liable to extract from Mr. Bush more concrete backing for pre-emptive action than Eban did from LBJ. At most, Mr. Bush could have signaled his sympathy for Israel's plight and for the steps it must take to ensure its survival. The light Mr. Olmert received in Washington was probably not green, but neither was it flashing red.

Eban left the White House disappointed and confused. Neither he nor the Israeli government could decipher the meaning of the message "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go it alone." Was the president opposed to an assault against Egypt, as some of the ministers believed, or was he indicating his willingness to look the other way while Israel attacked? Ultimately, Israeli leaders concluded that, while the U.S. might condemn the action, it would probably do nothing to stop it. Johnson, for his part, understood that the Israelis had lost faith in international diplomacy and would interpret his words as a go. "They're going to hit," the president sighed, "and there's nothing we can do about it."

Lyndon Johnson indeed did little to prevent Israel from launching its surprise attack against Egypt on June 5 or, after Jordan and Syria joined the war, from advancing into the West Bank and the Golan Heights. The Six-Day War was a seismic event that profoundly altered the Middle East, with reverberations that continue to convulse the region. An Israeli strike at Iran's nuclear facilities could well have a similar impact, especially as Mr. Ahmadinejad and the mullahs are certain to react violently.

Mr. Olmert and his government must consider such consequences as they decide on Israel's next moves. The ramifications of that decision are certain to affect America as well. Many Arabs to this day believe that the U.S. was complicit in the Six-Day War, and even that American pilots flew Israeli planes. Such rumors will again be rife if Israel attacks

Iran, and especially if Israeli jets pass through Iraq's American-controlled airspace. Israel may indeed act alone, but in the minds of a great many people in the Middle East, the U.S. acts with it.

Mr. Oren is a senior fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem.

How to Fight Anti-Israel Campaigns on Campus

By Manfred Gerstenfeld Jerusalem Center For Public Affairs December 1, 2006

The last four years have seen the promotion of boycott and divestment campaigns against Israel in a number of countries. There have also been verbal or even physical aggressions and discrimination against Israelis and Jews. The fact that the anti-Israeli boycott campaigners do not propose boycotts of the crime-inciting Palestinian universities indicates strongly discriminatory and even racist attitudes.

Each academic boycott campaign could provoke a counter boycott, unless the boycotted are exceptionally weak. Boycotts also provide a further argument for external intervention in the academic world, both political and otherwise. The David Project's documentary on the intimidation of pro-Israeli students at Columbia University has shown that some universities' misdeeds can be effectively exposed by a small outside actor without major financial resources.

Israeli universities must play a larger role in fighting both anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli discrimination on worldwide campuses. Collaborating with the Israeli government, Diaspora organizations, academic institutions, and private activists may yield the best results. Such task forces' main aim should not be to defend Israel but to turn the accusers into the accused.

What do Concordia University in Montreal, San Francisco State University, the University of California at Irvine, Columbia University, SOAS in London, the recently merged British academic teachers' unions AUT and NATFHE, and MAUP University in Kiev have in common? Over the past few years they have become major names associated with verbal and even physical aggressions and discrimination against Israelis and Jews. Many other academic institutions in several countries could be added to this list.

At the very start of the current academic year, another group emerged to promote anti-Israeli discrimination. In September 2006, sixty-one Irish academics sent a letter to the *Irish Times* calling for a moratorium on support to Israeli academic institutions at both national and European levels.¹ Soon thereafter the student government at the University of Michigan's Dearborn campus passed a resolution calling on the University's Board of Regents to vote to divest from Israel.² There was also an appeal for divestment at Wayne State

University (WSU). Thereupon, WSU president Irvin D. Reid came out with a statement saying: "Wayne State opposes divestiture and has no intention of divesting itself of stocks in companies doing business with Israel or any other legitimate state."

He added: "We encourage our students to use their right to free speech, but accusations, acrimony and demands such as divestiture are counter to the intelligent dialogue and free discourse for which this university stands."³

Boycott and Academic Freedom Since the academic campaigns against Israel began in 2002, tens of thousands of academics worldwide have signed petitions opposing the boycott of Israel. They far outnumber those who support the boycott. Only a limited number of Israel's supporters would have to publicly take discriminatory positions against boycotters and their allies to create a substantial disturbance of international academic life. In some professions where the anti-Israeli forces are strong worldwide, such as in Middle Eastern studies or linguistics, pro-Israelis might encounter difficulties. In others such as psychoanalysis or medicine, the anti-Israelis would be handicapped.

Unless the boycotted are exceptionally weak, each academic boycott could provoke a counter boycott. The Israeli academic world is quite strong with its several Nobel Prize winners and many top scholars. From a cycle of boycotts of Israeli academics and counter boycotts, the university world at large can only lose.

Boycotts would further harm the cause of academic freedom at a time when there are already several reasons to limit it. Its abuse by academic ideologues and propagandists is a major argument against the prevailing near-absolute academic freedom. At present, academics can say what they want, it is difficult to fire tenured teachers, and there is no government interference in university affairs.

Yet there are increasingly teachers in academia who promote hate, bias, or manifest lies rather than seeking to advance knowledge. Responsibility is a precondition for academic freedom, but there are now many cases where it is lacking.

Can Universities Reform Themselves?

Academic boycotts are likely to have other impacts as well. The academic world has been aiming at self-governance and trying to minimize outside

interference. The many distortions in the academic and administrative fields raise doubt as to whether universities are capable of reforming themselves. Boycott campaigns add another strong argument for external intervention in the academic world.

Many politicians condemned the 2002 British anti- Israeli boycott campaign and a few French imitations of it. In 2006, the Report of the UK All-Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism concluded that "calls to boycott contact with academics working in Israel are an assault on academic freedom and intellectual exchange.⁴

Damaging Columbia University's Image

How effective even small outside groups can be in damaging the image of major academic institutions was demonstrated at Columbia University. Although there were many complaints about the ongoing intimidation of pro-Israeli students by teachers in its MEALAC (Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures) Department, the administration did not react.

Finally a small nonacademic grassroots group, the David Project, documented some of the abuses in a film called *Columbia Unbecoming*. Its revelations generated major negative publicity for Columbia and forced its administration to undertake an internal inquiry. However much the investigators covered up, they had to admit that the grievance procedure was faulty.⁵ The Columbia affair also frightened other university administrations that somebody might "do a Columbia on them."

The David Project has shown that a university's misdeeds can be effectively exposed by a small outside actor without major financial resources. Because of this precedent, it now suffices at other universities to collect testimonies on a teacher's misdeeds with a tape recorder. These can then be publicly exposed with an investment of a few dollars.

Another conclusion to be drawn from the success of the David Project's exposure of Columbia is that if it had been undertaken by a more powerful group, the university would have been in much greater trouble. Other universities should take this into account when failing to act against misbehavior on their campus.

Had the Columbia inquiry not produced at least some minor results, the next step would probably have been outside pressure on major donors to stop supporting the school. This is yet another aspect of how the seemingly closed academic world can be dented by outsiders.

Failed Censorship in the Netherlands

Boycotts are only one type of anti-Israeli action on campus. The methods used by the boycotters are applied in many other areas. The motivations can be diverse. A university administration's attempt to

silence a prominent scholar in the Netherlands shows how matters can boomerang for those who want to suppress the truth.

In June 2006, administrators at Utrecht University in the Netherlands refused to publish Prof. Pieter van der Horst's analysis of Islamic anti-Semitism to be mentioned in his farewell lecture. In a meeting that the university's rector called with a committee of three other professors, several arguments were given. These included that if Van der Horst did not remove the references to Islamic anti-Semitism he might be threatened by violent Muslims, a claim for which the university has never provided evidence. He felt intimidated and did not include the contested remarks in his lecture.

This attempt to distort academic freedom, even though Van der Horst's contentions about Islamic anti-Semitism were valid, led to widespread public attention for a lecture that otherwise would most likely have gone unnoticed. Deleted passages were published by several Dutch papers. An editorial in the national daily, *Volkskrant*, concluded that if Van der Horst's claim about the rector justifying censorship for fear of intimidation by Muslims was true, the rector should be rebuked.⁶

Van der Horst published his view of what had happened in the *Wall Street Journal*.⁷ The case now drew international attention as well. The Israeli Academy of Sciences has invited Van der Horst to come and lecture in Israel. The text of the invitation said there would be no attempt to influence the content of his lecture, "as is usual in the academic world." A copy of the invitation was sent to the rector of Utrecht University and the other members of the committee who had tried to put pressure on Van der Horst.

This case has become a paradigm for how attempts to suppress truth in universities can backfire. Van der Horst's facts and views on Muslim anti-Semitism are now widely known in the Netherlands. It also became another case where a university could not hide its misbehavior behind closed doors.⁸

Whom to Boycott? The subject of academic boycotts should also be analyzed more scientifically. One would expect that human rights-oriented academics would focus their boycott campaigns on those universities where teachers and/or student unions call for criminal acts. A rational scientific approach would be to establish a list of institutions to boycott according to the severity of the criminal incitement on their campuses.

As the right to life is a prime human right, heading the target list of those to boycott should be universities that employ teachers or admit students who call for genocide or mass murder. Next in line

would be those where suicide bombing is encouraged. These would be followed by campuses where murder on a smaller scale is promoted. Below these on the list would be universities that teach systematic discrimination and defamation.

Universities are often ranked according to scholarship. A more complete view of the academic world would also rank them according to crime incitement. Many institutions in the Muslim and Arab Middle East would place high on such a list.

Palestinian Examples Many anti-Israeli boycotters cite Israeli attitudes toward Palestinians as the official reason for their campaigns. Analyzing crime incitement at Palestinian universities sheds light on the true motives of the boycotters.

One example of genocidal incitement by a Palestinian academic is a statement in 2004 by Dr. Ahmed Abu Halabiyah, rector of advanced studies at the Islamic University of Gaza. He said: The Jews are the Jews....They do not have any moderates or any advocates of peace. They are all liars. They must be butchered and must be killed.... The Jews are like a spring - as long as you step on it with your foot it doesn't move. But if you lift your foot from the spring, it hurts you and punishes you.... It is forbidden to have mercy in your hearts for the Jews in any place and in any land, make war on them anywhere that you find yourself. Any place that you meet them, kill them.⁹

Halabiyah made this statement on official Palestinian Authority TV as part of a Friday sermon. This genocidal call, then, issued from the governmental, academic, and religious spheres of the Palestinian Authority and its civil society.

Al-Najah and Birzeit Universities A second example comes from Nablus's Al-Najah University. An exhibition there in September 2001 included a reenactment of a Jerusalem suicide bombing. Associated Press reported: Wearing a military uniform and a black mask, a Palestinian set off a fake explosion in a replica of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem, where a suicide bomber killed himself and 15 other people.... The exhibit at Al-Najah University in Nablus was put on by students who support the militant Islamic movement Hamas, which carried out the Jerusalem attack. Support for Hamas traditionally runs high at the university, which is a hotbed for Palestinian militants and has produced a number of suicide bombers.... In another part of the exhibit, visitors looked through dark windows to see mannequins dressed as suicide bombers. Each had Islam's holy book, the Quran, in one hand, and an automatic rifle in the other. Real suicide bombers often assume this pose in videos they make before staging attacks.¹⁰

This university's student union favors suicide attacks on Israeli civilians. Terrorist organizations have also held rallies on its campus that feature demonstrations of how suicide bombers murder Israelis and blow up Israeli passenger buses.

A third example of a Palestinian university where there has been major crime incitement is Birzeit University near Ramallah. At the end of 2003, elections were held for the student government council. The campaign featured models of exploding Israeli buses. In the debate, the Hamas candidate asked the Fatah candidate: "Hamas activists in this university killed 135 Zionists. How many did Fatah activists from Bir Zeit kill?" Needless to say, the "Zionists" are largely Israeli civilians.¹¹

It should also be noted that Hebrew University, where many Arab students also study, was the target of a Palestinian terror attack on 31 July 2002 that killed nine people and wounded eighty-five. Hamas, which in 2006 became the largest political force in the Palestinian territories, claimed responsibility for the act. Those favoring a boycott of Israel did not condemn the attack.¹²

There are also some Western universities that have employed or given a platform to inciters of crime.¹³ Israeli universities, for their part, score very low as far as incitement to crime is concerned. They do not employ academics or have student unions that promote genocide or murder. The fact that the anti-Israeli boycott campaigners do not boycott the crime-inciting Palestinian universities thus manifests strongly discriminatory behavior.

Anti-Semitism and Academic Freedom Some may rate academic freedom so high as a value that they oppose boycotting even those institutions where the most hideous crimes are encouraged. From this point of view, boycotting Israeli universities or academics is also highly discriminatory. The onus is thus on the boycotters to prove that they are not racists.

The boycott and divestment campaigns prove that in many universities, academic freedom is cleverly abused to protect incitement, bias, and misbehavior. This is one more among the many reasons why campuses should be subject to greater external scrutiny.

For instance, online campus watches should be encouraged. A frequent Pavlovian response from the university world is to call such active monitoring McCarthyism. That, however, should be exposed for what it is: an attempt to stifle a normal type of criticism that exists in all other sectors of civil society. Campus watches have nothing in common with McCarthyism, which took place in a government framework that had the possibility to impose penalties.

Israeli Reactions The development of the anti-Israeli boycott and divestment campaigns also requires assessing the effectiveness of Israeli academic reactions to the threats. A closely linked question is what strategy to adopt in future for combating Israel's enemies in the academic world.

Universities are places of knowledge and wisdom. Does that also apply when they themselves are under threat? When analyzing its reactions over the past few years, one can only conclude that Israeli academia has not shown great skill in fighting the boycott. The first anti-Israeli boycott action was launched in the United Kingdom in April 2002. It consisted of collecting signatures from academics all over the world in support of a boycott. In Israel, Hebrew University reacted first, in a way that at the time was probably the most effective. Some scholars opened a website asking academics to come out against the anti-Israeli boycott. The idea was simple: for each supporter of the boycott, to enlist many more scholars who opposed it. Concurrently, efforts were made to convince well-known personalities to condemn the boycott or visit Israel to show solidarity.

Arguing Yet another approach consisted of Israeli and pro-Israeli academics publishing articles against the boycotters. Their arguments often combined apologetic, moral, utilitarian, and principled elements. Some noted that much domestic criticism of current Israeli policy comes from within the Israeli academic world. This is an apologetic argument that is irrelevant to the key issue of anti-Israeli discrimination.

Some academics also made the moral point that an academic boycott against Israel ignores ongoing terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens. Others emphasized the utilitarian claim that a boycott could damage continued academic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians. And some maintained that a one-sided perspective contravenes academic standards of truth-seeking. Although correct, this principled argument has a somewhat pathetic tone. Usually anti-Israeli ideologists on campus are not truth-seekers. They see their university positions as a platform for promoting extremist interests.

The pro-Israeli academics who initially argued against the boycotters were professionals in their scholarly fields. As advocates of their cause, they were largely amateurs. Few stressed only principles or accused the accusers in their writings.¹⁴

Professionals at Arguing Top lawyers handle these matters better. Alan Dershowitz wrote succinctly: "Any moral person who is aware of the true facts would not sign a petition singling out Israel for divestiture. Those who signed it are either

misinformed or malignant. There is no third alternative."¹⁵

When he spoke at Columbia University in February 2005, Dershowitz accused the institution: "This is the most unbalanced university that I have come across when it comes to all sides of the Middle East conflict being presented.... I have never seen a university with as much faculty silence." He added that faculty members in Columbia's MEALAC Department encourage Islamic terrorism. Dershowitz announced that if the investigatory committee published a biased report, he would help organize an independent committee that would include Nobel Prize winners.¹⁶

Occasionally an individual, in this particular case unknown, has a brainwave on how to pierce an anti-Israeli or anti-Jewish action with little effort. In July 2006, over a thousand professors signed a petition on American college campuses to condemn Israel's "aggression against Lebanon and Gaza." One person signed the petition, which was further circulated, with the name "Mr H. Nasrallah, Joseph Goebbels Chair in Communications, Duke."¹⁷

Lacking Sophistication In 2002, when a rapid reaction was needed, collecting as many signatures as possible against the boycott was a practical response. In the long run, however, it lacked sophistication. Even worse, neither the Israeli government nor academia understood that the anti-Israeli efforts were there to stay.

For several years, the heads of Israeli academia did not believe that the boycott issue would return. This author convinced then-minister Natan Sharansky to invite the presidents of the Israeli universities and the Academy of Sciences to a meeting on the subject, which finally took place in autumn 2004. But these senior representatives of the academic world said little of significance there, and no action followed. One of their concerns was not boycotts by their enemies but interference in their affairs by the Israeli government, the meeting having been called by a minister.

This reinforces the impression that something is wrong with the process of utilizing knowledge and intellect in the academic world. If university administrations cannot, over a lengthy period, identify the threats against themselves and devise an intelligent response, perhaps academics' analytical capabilities have value only as far as the past is concerned.

Israeli universities woke up again only in 2005 when the AUT's initial acceptance of a boycott resolution in the UK revived the boycott campaign. Now the threats were concrete, and Haifa and Bar-Ilan universities finally took action. When pro-Israeli British academics mobilized, the motion was

reversed. Legal threats against the AUT by Israeli universities seem to have been effective as well.¹⁸

Where to Go from Here? The anti-Israeli discrimination issue on campus has developed over the past years in many directions even though it has not had much success. There were efforts to prevent Israeli academics from obtaining grants, incite academic institutions to sever relations with Israeli ones and scholars, convince academics not to visit Israel, and thwart the publication of articles by Israeli scholars. There were also refusals to review work of Israeli academics and to give recommendations to students who wanted to study in Israel or allow them credits for their activity there.

In addition, there were unofficial or concealed boycotts such as foreign academics severing relations with Israelis with whom they had maintained contacts for years. Attacks on Jews and Israel in the world's universities take many forms. A workable strategy must be based on an early evaluation of threats. There is no standard model for the best defense. Case studies need to be done that analyze each attack and its key components. Questions to be asked include how the anti-Israeli action manifests itself, who is behind it, what anti-Semitic elements it includes, and whether anybody has already reacted against it. Once these facts are clear the next step is to design a strategy and mobilize allies.

The attacked are both Israeli universities and pro-Israelis on foreign campuses. Some of the latter have suffered severe consequences for expressing their views, including the loss of academic positions. Collaborating with the Israeli government, Diaspora organizations, academic institutions, and private activists may yield the best results. Such task forces' main aim should not be to defend Israel but to turn the accusers into the accused.

Notes * This article is based on a presentation at the Conference on Academic Freedom and the Politics of Boycotts, Bar-Ilan University, January 2006. The full presentation will be published in the conference proceedings edited by Gerald Steinberg.

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Dr. Manfred Gerstenfeld is chairman of the Board of Fellows of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He is an international business strategist who has been a consultant to governments and international agencies.

The root of Palestinian misery

By The National Post (Canada) editorial November 20, 2006

The Jabaliya Refugee Camp in Gaza was the scene of Palestinian celebrations yesterday. No, a "martyr" from the camp hadn't managed to blow up a restaurant full of Israeli families, the usual reason for joyous gatherings among Arabs in this part of the

world. Rather, the locals were celebrating the victory of their "human shields" in thwarting an air strike against the home of wanted terrorist Wail Barud.

But while the assembly of hundreds of Palestinians in anticipation of the planned Israeli

bombing did succeed in protecting Barud's home, the tactic may have backfired from a propaganda perspective: It served to demonstrate that Israel does not seek to kill Palestinian civilians wholesale, as Arab propagandists constantly claim. Indeed, it is clear the Palestinians themselves do not believe their own propaganda about Israel's alleged thirst for blood. Otherwise, they never would have been able to recruit all those human shields.

If Israel really were as sadistic as its critics claim, it wouldn't have called off yesterday's bombing run. Just the opposite: It would have jumped at the chance to kill so many Palestinians at one go. Just imagine if the shoe were on the other foot, and hundreds of Israeli "human shields" positioned themselves in an unguarded cafe in the West Bank.

Call Terrorists By Their Rightful Name

By Ed Koch Israel Insider.com November 16, 2006

Last week, The New York Times reported, "Israeli troops killed two Palestinian women and wounded some 10 others who were seeking to serve as human shields for Hamas militants holed up in a Gaza mosque...Hundreds of women, urged on by Palestinian radio, were flocking to the mosque to try to prevent an Israeli attack and to help an estimated 60 men escape... the gunmen inside the mosque escaped."

The people The Times refers to as "militants" in Gaza have been firing rockets daily from the Gaza town of Beit Hanun at nearby towns on the Israeli side of the border, seeking to injure or kill Israeli civilians. Those who intentionally aim to kill civilians should be referred to as terrorists.

In contrast, violence by Palestinians against Israeli military personnel merely perpetuates the war between the two peoples and therefore undermines chances that a Palestinian state will be created. However, Palestinian attacks on the Israeli military are acceptable under international law and are therefore not considered acts of terrorism, even if they are repugnant to those of us who support Israel.

I, like most Jews in Israel and the United States, have come to the conclusion that the Palestinian government and the Palestinian people who overwhelmingly voted for that government are part of the international Islamic terrorist effort to bring the West and its civilization to its knees. Israel -- located as it is in the heart of the Islamic world...is seen by the supporters of Islamic terror as the primary target.

The Hamas government has repeatedly stated that it would not recognize the legitimacy of the State of Israel, that it would continue to engage in violent acts against Israel and that it would not recognize any agreements that prior Palestinian governments had entered into with Israel. For Hamas, the two-state solution is not an option.

Palestinian suicide bombers would be stepping over each other in an effort to attack the target. "Human shields" work only when your enemy fights like a human.

A second irony is that it is men like Barud who are at the root of Palestinian misery -- for if they were not firing rockets at Israel from Gaza, and smuggling in weapons from Egypt, there would be no need for the Jewish state to stage counterterrorist operations in Gaza, every square inch of which it evacuated in August, 2005. If Palestinians were more rational about where their society's interests lie, they would go to Barud's house not to offer protection -- but to arrest him so that others in the area could live in peace.

Hamas believes that historic Palestine "from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea" must be a single Arab state and that all Jews not born in that "Palestine" must be expelled.

On my radio program last Friday night, a caller denounced the Israeli military for shooting Palestinian women who sought to shield the holed-up gunmen occupying the mosque. The Arab world and others hostile to Israel have already denounced the Israelis for shooting at these women. The Times reported, "Ismail Haniya, the Palestinian prime minister, angrily called for the international community to 'come here and witness the daily massacres that are being carried out against the Palestinian nation.'"

The obvious purpose of the confrontation between the women and the soldiers was to create Palestinian propaganda that could be used to discredit Israel. On my radio program I asked what the Israeli soldiers are to do -- stand there and be killed? Are the militants to be allowed to escape and engage in terrorist actions on another day, killing Israeli civilians and soldiers? Are Palestinian women to be allowed because of their gender to help the Palestinian terrorists with impunity? I think rational people will say no.

I believe rational people will agree with an Israeli spokesman quoted in The Times. "'The fighting around the mosque is not something we wanted,' said Mark Regev, a spokesman for Israel's Foreign Ministry. 'But international law is clear: when combatants take control of a religious site and begin firing, it becomes a legitimate target. They broke the sanctity of the site.'"

Similarly, as The Times reported, "One marcher, Suhad el-Masri, 28, said she and several of her relatives had been carrying abayas and scarves to give to the men. 'We took them so they could disguise themselves as women and escape,' she said.

Her sister, Hiba Rajab, 20, was shot in her legs and left arm; her wounds were considered serious." These women broke the commitment that women will not participate in acts of violence and thus not be fired upon. As recently as Nov. 7th, The Times reported that in Gaza, "Mervet Masoud, an 18-year-old Palestinian woman, blew herself up near several [Israeli] soldiers, killing herself and slightly wounding one soldier... [She] said in a video released by Islamic Jihad after her attack, 'Consider me a martyr!'"

There will undoubtedly be continuing efforts to delegitimize the very existence of the State of Israel by supporters of the Palestinians. While some decent people decry the shooting of Palestinian women, they are silent in the face of the horrendous carnage inflicted by Islamic suicide bombers in Iraq who are killing and maiming innocent Iraqi civilians every day, many women shopping at local markets. The explosions are the handiwork of Iraqi Sunni and Shia militants engaged in their escalating civil war.

I asked my radio caller what would he do in this Gaza event. He said he didn't know and had no

suggestion other than not shooting the women. I support the statement by U.S. State Department spokesman, Sean McCormack, who is quoted in The Times. "The U.N. has a point of view," McCormack said, commenting on another critical statement by Kofi Annan, adding, "Israel has the right to defend itself. The reason why all of this developed in the first place is because you have continuing attacks on Israel from Palestinian Authority areas." Would a spokesman in a John Kerry administration have said that?

I have mixed emotions on the Democrats taking both houses of Congress. I support the Democrats' domestic agenda including increasing the minimum wage, stem cell research, national medical insurance, etc. I also support the president's foreign policy, and I hope he will not be deterred in leading the nation aggressively against Islamic terrorism as a result of the election thumping he just received.

Ed Koch is a former mayor of New York City and a popular radio talk show host.

When purple prose can be deadly

By Wesley Pruden The Washington Times November 17, 2006

The most vicious dictators in the nations of the religion of peace aren't very competent military commanders. They nearly always wind up with destroyed armies and acres of widows, orphans and rubble. But they usually have imaginative writers to feed large egos and big mouths. Theirs is purple prose written in blood.

Saddam Hussein promised "the mother of all battles," and delivered something he might have sent to his favorite mother-in-law for her birthday. The rattle and bang of the mother of all battles turned out to be barely the squeal of a pig. His army, led by the Republican Guard, raced back to Baghdad with Norman Schwarzkopf in hot pursuit and only Christian mercy saved the army from massacre.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the ridiculously eccentric president of Iran, is an honor student of the Saddam Hussein School of Hyperbole. Goofy though he is, he will soon preside over a nuclear weapon if someone doesn't stop him. When he promises to "wipe Israel off the map" only fools, like many of our European cousins, treat his threat as merely the taunt of the schoolyard bully, and then it's back to stuffing their faces with cheeses and sausages.

Mr. Ahmadinejad sets himself up as a clown, dispensing hyperbole as if it were cotton candy. "Hezbollah destroyed at least half of Israel in the Lebanon war," he told the Tehran newspaper Keyhan. "Now only half the path [to its destruction] remains. It was proven that, by means of an offensive operation that need not be equal to Israel's moves, it is possible to neutralize the Zionist navy.

"Just as in one 33-day war more than 50 percent of Israel was destroyed, and the hope of its supporters for the continued life of this regime was broken, it is likely in the next battle the second half will also collapse. "On that day ... Jordan will not be able to prevent the Jordanian Islamists from operating through the long Jordan-Palestine border and the millions of Egyptian Islamists ... will not let the Sinai-Israel border remain quiet, and the Syrian Golan Heights will not remain as a [mere] observer of the battle. That day is not so far off."

If "ifs" and "buts" were candy and nuts, as someone's wise old granny once said, we would all have a Merry Christmas (or a Happy Hanukkah, a kickin' Kwanzaa or even a riotous Ramadan), and Mr. Ahmadinejad provokes bitter mirth with every pronouncement. But so did Saddam Hussein, with his vainglorious boast about mothers and battles, and the hundreds of thousands of corpses that littered the Iraqi (and Kuwaiti) landscape were grim enough testimony that just as the devil can quote Scripture, so can a vain despot inflict great harm to unwary innocents.

"The great war is ahead of us," the Iranian president told another Tehran newspaper, Resalat (as translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute). "It will break out perhaps tomorrow, or in another few days, or in a few months, or even a few years. ... Israel must collapse. For the first time in 60 years of its disgraceful life the Zionist regime -- the West's beloved in the Middle East -- tasted the taste of defeat, and the citizens of this regime trembled at the menace of Hezbollah's mischief. The nation of

Muslims must prepare for this great war so as to completely wipe out the Zionist regime, and remove his cancerous growth."

Once upon a time the West could treat this kind of Islamic boilerplate as the amusing rant of a dork, president or not, a dork who gets messages from Muhammad in paradise, as broadcast to a bicuspid. But Mr. Ahmadinejad is not as dumb as he sounds and is only half as dumb as he looks. Iran, though afflicted with large pockets of grinding poverty, is a first-world country with competent chemists,

physicists and even rocket scientists, all devoted to joining soon as nations with the Islamic bomb.

Once developed by Iran, nuclear weapons will spread quickly to Bangladesh, Syria, Egypt and throughout the Middle East. That's why the Europeans who are still up and awake, having returned from having their wives fitted for their first burqas, are counting on America or Israel dealing with the Iranian nuclear threat. Everybody knows the Jews can do it, and they have the manly orbs to get it done. Does anybody else?

Forget politics, do your jobs By The Jerusalem Post November 23, 2006

Our media this week have been obsessed with the souring relations between Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz. The widespread conclusion seems to be that Peretz should be and will be gently moved to another post - perhaps taking Shimon Peres's deputy prime minister spot while the latter is moved to the presidency.

All of this may be somewhat entertaining, since personalities are generally more interesting than policies. It is more difficult, but more important, to address the underlying problem of a government that, in a time of multiple crises, is incapable of providing a modicum of strategic direction.

In the diplomatic-military arena alone, five major challenges loom: stopping the daily Palestinian bombardments from Gaza; blocking the rearmament of Hizbullah and its bid to control Lebanon; shaping the international debate over regional peace-making efforts; rebuilding the IDF and our deterrent capacity in the wake of the Lebanon war; and addressing the refusal of the international community to effectively confront Iran.

Any one of these challenges would require the government to function at its best. This means not only fully utilizing the planning and analysis apparatuses of the various bureaucracies, but employing the cabinet to set goals, review plans and take decisions in a serious and systematic manner.

We understand that no government regularly operates with such a purity of policy focus, devoid of political infighting. Perhaps our current leaders are within the normal, unfortunately low, standards regarding the balance between politics and substance. Yet these are not normal times, and our current government seems particularly paralyzed by a combination of lack of direction and the dark clouds hanging over its key figures regarding their handling of the recent war.

In this context, some have latched on to the idea of exchanging Amir Peretz for Ehud Barak, who at least, as former prime minister and IDF chief of General Staff, is undeniably qualified for the post. The problem with Barak, however, is what the Defense Ministry needs now is someone who will

demand and oversee reforms within the IDF, not someone who might want to use the post as a platform for a political comeback.

Again, however, what is important is not to focus on personalities, but on what the public should be demanding from its leaders. The problem is not Peretz per se, but that Israel simply cannot afford a defense minister spending much of his energy fighting for his political life rather than one who has the experience, skills, inclination and opportunity to devote nearly all of his time to an extraordinarily tough, challenging and sensitive job that is critical for our security. The same goes for the post of prime minister. The public needs to see that the nation's primary decision maker is capable of systematically addressing the five challenges we outlined above, not to mention such burning non-diplomatic matters as the economy, educational system, the Israeli Arab minority, religious-secular tensions, electoral reform, and so on. The irony is that so long as Olmert is seen to be "managing" in an ad-hoc way, attempting to put out political fires rather than coherently tackling critical issues, the more his downward political spiral will accelerate.

Just one year ago, when Ariel Sharon founded Kadima, Israel's situation may not have objectively been more secure - just as the US enjoyed a false sense of security before 9/11. But now the government must take visible and concrete steps to increase both the reality and perception of our security. The major structural vulnerabilities exposed during the war against Hizbullah - including but by no means limited to the inadequate decision-making hierarchies and the absent forums in which to effectively digest, debate and draw operational conclusions on the basis of intelligence information - will not be remedied by the knee-jerk expedient of changing personalities at the top. Israel's well-being requires a far deeper internalizing of these flaws and their strategic correction. But if our current leaders are too busy attending to their own political survival to oversee this vital process of reform, a process that the anxious public is rightly demanding, then their political downfall is inevitable, regardless of whether it will improve matters or not.