

Thou Shalt Not Kill! . . .?

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By Robbie Friedmann

A recruit for a suicide bombing mission had timely second thoughts on the way to meet his 72 virgins and apparently preferred to have his chances with them on Earth ("West Bank Teen Halts Suicide Bombing Role," Mohammed Daraghmeh, *The Washington Post*, The Associated Press, 10 May 2004). But one or even a few such cases do not stop the flow of the many who are ready to give up their lives for Yasser Arafat, a corrupt criminal who has a well-oiled terror machine ("[The Teflon Terrorists](#)," Rachel Ehrenfeld, *FrontPageMagazine.com*, 11 May 2004) and who continually inflames violence in the area ("Arafat Calls on Palestinians to 'Terrorize Your Enemy,'" Arnon Regular, *Ha'aretz*, 15 May 2004).

Arafat, playing out his status as Nobel Peace Prize winner and the great humanitarian he is ("Mofaz: Palestinians Smuggled Body Parts in UNWRA Ambulances," *Ma'ariv* service, 15 May 2004) succeeded in his 15 May speech (commemorating the Palestinian "Day of Catastrophe" they brought upon themselves) to destroy in one sentence the "[Geneva Accord](#)" that his Israeli protagonists were so proud of: Arafat insisted the Palestinian refugees have a "right" to terrorize Israel and also "the right to return to Palestine," namely, to destroy Israel. Arafat has finally emptied all air from the Geneva Accord that was based in large part on selling Israelis the idea that Palestinians have given up the "right of return."

This is an important point because the Western world still tends to view the Arab-Israeli conflict as distinct from its own war on terrorism. The U.S. benefits from Israel's experience in fighting terrorism yet it still sees Israel's efforts not as part of the "global" war on terror. The beheadings of Daniel Pearl and Nick Berg or the parading of a head of an Israeli soldier in the streets of Gaza come from the same mind-set that has the exact same goals and destiny for **all** Westerners ("The Two-Conflict Delusion," Saul Singer, *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 May 2004).

There is only one overall war against terrorism (and the forces behind it) and that war involves many battles on many fronts: "Does anyone really believe that all the head-severing crowd wants is to live in peace with Israel? To claim the conflicts are separate is to imply that brutal murderers are capable of wanting peace, and to grant the terrorists the high moral ground. Someday, the West will win and the jihadi camp will lose its stranglehold over the Palestinians and other parts of the Muslim world. At that time, the Arab-Israeli conflict will be solvable, just as the Cold War evaporated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Until then, playing into the enemy's two-conflict game is not a sign of hope but a delusion that drives away the hope it seeks to keep alive.

Following the knee-jerk reaction to the Iraqi prison fiasco there, is a danger of "over-correction" of the prison system there that could hurt intelligence gathering efforts. Yet, more level-headed commentary has been seen. Admittedly, the prison pictures are shocking and so are the abuses that took place; but from all we know this was not torture. It was humiliation and for those who cannot afford being humiliated but can afford to die while murdering others this may have been a far more humane method than torture. In that sense the apology of President George W. Bush

(and then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld) was inappropriate and only weakens the U.S. stand as a powerful nation, as after all we offended our own values not Arab ones ("Torturous Apology," Mark Steyn, *The Jerusalem Post*, 11 May 2004).

Indeed, the apology to an Arab ruler by the President of the United States is seen as a mistake and so was the relegation of Iraq's future to a U.N. representative who is the epitome of the problems of the Arab world ("The Curse of Pan-Arabia," Fouad Ajami, *The Wall Street Journal*, 12 May 2004). As the "dean" of Middle East scholars suggests, the very notion of the U.S. turning to the U.N. renders it weak in the eyes of the players in the Middle East ("Iraq, India, Palestine: Turning to the U.N. only Confirms the Arabs' Perception that the U.S. is Weak," Bernard Lewis, *Wall Street Journal*, 12 May 2004).

Not surprisingly, and regrettably, some Western media have even outpaced Arab sources in already placing the blame for the Iraqi prison scandal on... Israel ("[Blaming Israel for Abu Ghraib?](#)," Honest Reporting, Communique, 10 May 2004). Yet blatant antisemitism is too much for even some French journalists who suggest that Israel is the cause of modern Arab antisemitism. They fail to grasp that such a position actually underscores if not legitimizes antisemitism ("[Antisemitism in the Arab World](#)," Dominique Vidal, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2004). At least they are capable enough in identifying its danger - if not for the Jews then for the Arabs - by stating that "antisemitic propaganda is retrogressive for the Arab world and will do it untold harm."

Some suggest the Arabs have no leg to stand on when they criticize the U.S. for mishandling prisoners ("[Iraqi Abuse?](#)" Don Feder, FrontPageMagazine.com, 4 May 2004). Such suggestions are forgetful that Arab propaganda is smart, vicious, gross, and knows what strings to pull in order to intimidate and weaken the West. Having no leg to stand on has never bothered them. But truly the important issue in the Iraqi prison is that humiliation is not torture and to wit, an experienced writer illustrates this by outlining real historical examples of torture ("U.S. Atrocities in Iraq," Walter E. Williams, Townhall.com, 12 May 2004).

Indeed, in an illustration of what torture is, the Iraqi prison fiasco was contrasted with the torture of several foreign nationals by the Saudis who forced them to "admit" they committed terrorism on Saudi soil. Apparently it was easier to deflect blame to others than admit they have a home-grown problem ("[Saudi Justice?](#)" CBS "60 Minutes," 9 May 2004). The Saudis of course denied it and their ambassador to London said they "do not torture people." Of course it is well known that they are all too busily involved in humanitarian activities that are purely intended to improve the human condition and do not have time or the inclination to torture anyone. And given Arafat's winning of the Nobel prize it is probably only a matter of time before the Saudi national executioner will join him as a winner.

It is doubtful the "60 Minutes" segment on Saudi torture was effective in putting the Iraqi prison story in perspective. But the public murder of Berg did ("[Turning Shame into Outrage](#)," Charles Paul Freund, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 May 2004): "Shameless brutality of this degree has the power to transform the shame of Zarqawi's enemies. Zarqawi has reminded his enemies that, unlike him, they are at least capable of shame. Zarqawi's righteous snuff movie is an act of lunacy, a gift to his enemies and, one hopes, an unwitting suicide note."

Berg had the misfortune of joining a long list of terror victims, such as [Daniel Pearl](#) who was murdered in a similar fashion, and [Leon Klinghoffer](#) who was shot and pushed into the sea. Or thousands of others who were stabbed, blown-up, shot or had their office building collapse on them as a result of using civilian jetliners as missiles by the same kind of terrorists..

Some reacted with understandable abhorrence ("Nick Berg's Murder," Editorial, *New York Post*, 12 May 2004). Others tried to find out what this murder means for the West, suggesting that it does not understand the true nature of the Islamist threat ("[The Beheading of an Innocent](#)," Walid Phares, *FrontPageMagazine*, 12 May 2004).

Some perceive that it actually resulted in "stiffening American resolve and inflaming American outrage," yet they also suggest we fight this war "to save Islam," seeing al-Qaeda as an aberration rather than something that emanated out of Islam or is supported by it ("[What Nick Berg's Murder Tells](#)," Andrew Sullivan, *FrontPageMagazine.com*, 12 May 2004). One only needed to watch representatives of American Muslim advocacy groups squirming in their seats unable to condemn Berg's heinous murder or suggesting it is "atypical" of Islam ("Still Waiting...", Neil Cavuto, *FOX News*, 12 May 2004).

Others used the murder to put the prison fiasco in perspective ("A Reminder of the Enemy's True Nature: A crime that puts the prison abuse into perspective," Joe Scarborough, *Jewish World Review*, 13 May 2004). Or that "We are at war with a vicious enemy, and propaganda in wartime is a weapon whose consequences can be deadly," suggesting that the prison pictures and the way Western media handled them helped provide the excuse for the murder - a rather doubtful argument ("[The Images We See -- and Those We Don't](#)," Jeff Jacoby, *The Boston Globe*, 13 May 2004).

In a Machiavellian way, Arab news sources lament Berg's murder as damaging to the Arab cause, but not because murder is bad but rather because it "erased" the impact of the prison fiasco. Yet an Arab editorial is not shy of criticizing Arab leaders and at least calling on them to take proper action as a direct lesson from the Berg murder ["[Berg's Death Augurs Ill for Arab Societies](#)," Editorial, *The Daily Star* (Beirut), 13 May 2004]: "... the region's kings, princes and presidents need to learn a valuable lesson from this abhorrent incident: that fractured societies produce real-life theaters of shame like the Berg murder in a systemic manner, and that similar fractures are infecting their own societies. If the Berg beheading does not catapult the region's leaders from the world of lethargy to the world of vigorous action to establish law and order in their own societies - and beginning with themselves - then they will be considerably weakened. They need to prove that their vision extends beyond their own vested interests to their people and societies. What more is needed to galvanize Arab leaders into action? Today, a man named Berg was put to the sword; tomorrow, it could be the Arab nation torn asunder by the same savagery. A reassessment of the concept of 'leadership' is urgently required, and the Arab summit scheduled for 22-23 May would be an excellent place to begin."

Just do not hold hopes too high for that Arab summit to produce any tangible results.

There is a story about a primitive fellow who wanders tired and thirsty in the desert. He finds a railroad track which is certainly easier to walk on than sand. He then hears a whistle, but having never seen a train before - and this one being hidden behind a small hill - by the time he realized

what was coming at him it was too late. His leg got stuck in the track and the train cut it off. Years later his wife bought a new kettle and placed it on the stove to boil water for tea. When the water boiled the kettle whistled. He then quickly got up from his chair, ran to the stove, dropped the kettle to the floor, beat it up with his cane and stomped all over it with his wooden leg. To his bewildered wife he said: "It is important to kill these monsters when they are small."

Indeed, much of the trouble today could have been avoided had the writing on the wall been heeded in the mid 1970s and an ultimatum issued to the "revolutionary" Islamists in Teheran to release the American hostages with a clear "or else" ("The Wages of Appeasement: How Jimmy Carter and academic multiculturalists helped bring us Sept. 11.," Victor Davis Hanson, *The Wall Street Journal*, 10 May 2004). The attitude of appeasement has not been totally defeated, even after 9-11, but the U.S. will "neither appease nor ignore such killers but in fact finish the terrible war that they started."

Yet there are still forces everywhere in the West who do not understand that terrorists do not need a reason to be "provoked." Our mere existence is enough for them. These forces also arrogantly believe that one is enough to tango and they rush to blame America for everything that is wrong with the world ("Blaming America First," Linda Chavez, *Jewish World Review*, 13 May 2004).

One of the leading voices of appeasement - even if a supporter of the war in Iraq - argues that the U.S. "made a mess" in Iraq. And after correctly identifying that the problem lies with the Arabs ("[Cursed by Oil](#)," Thomas L. Friedman, *The New York Times*, 9 May 2004) he then offers his tireless mantra that the U.S. is responsible for it and that the Israeli settlements are an "obstacle" to progress in the area ("[Dancing Alone](#)," Thomas L. Friedman, *The New York Times*, 13 May 2004).

He pays lip service to acknowledge that Israel is a democracy and Iraq is not, but then goes as far as equating Israeli "settlers" with extremist Shiites in Iraq ("[Tyranny of the Minorities](#)," Thomas L. Friedman, *The New York Times*, 16 May 2004). One remains bewildered as to what it is he does not understand about democracy and when the last time was that Israelis sent suicide bombers against Arab populations anywhere. Perhaps, if he gets his own news from NPR it may explain why he sees victim as perpetrator ("[The Kids Deserved to be Killed?](#)" Tamar Sternthal, *CAMERA.org*, 14 May 2004).

Constructive criticism is usually helpful, but what we see today is evidence of a political agenda that is supportive of terrorism. The world does not stand up in rage and anger against those who terrorize people in Bali, Istanbul, Jerba, Jerusalem, Madrid or New York. By criticizing the victims' (offensive and defensive) measures against terrorism these not-so-innocent groups are aiding and abetting terrorism. After all, just imagine a million people marching in Paris, London and Washington against the radical Islamists who preach hate and support terrorism. Wouldn't that be a powerful message? The moral support that terrorists receive today from inside Western sources is equivalent to if not greater than the impact collaborators with Nazis had ("Proposal for Universal Demonstrators," Yaakov Achimeir, *Ma'ariv*, 9 May 2004).

Some - even in Europe - do understand the gravity of the challenges the West is facing ("Why the West is Fighting - and Why it Must Win," *London Daily Telegraph*, 13 May 2004). Others

add a dimension of urgency ("Stop Navel Gazing," Caroline Glick, *The Jerusalem Post*, 14 May 2004): "In behaving as though the Palestinian branch of the global jihad is engaging in a war over a few kilometers in Gaza, Judea and Samaria rather than playing a central role in the global jihad against non-Muslims, we are making it harder for our allies, first and foremost the Americans, to see the true nature of the war they too are fighting. If it is only Israeli settlers who are preventing peace by living in mobile homes in Judea and Samaria then perhaps it is only America in its 'arrogance' that is preventing the jihadis from coming to a meeting of the minds with the West. As the jihad spreads throughout the world, we must stop finally with our self-destructive self-absorption. The butchers in Zeitoun who kicked the remains of our soldiers like footballs on Tuesday, like the butchers in Baghdad, Karachi, Riyadh and beyond who kill with barbaric ecstasy and primordial hatred do so not because of anything we have done. They do so because they are barbarians. And if we do not wish to be destroyed, we must do everything to destroy them and nothing to give them hope for victory against us."

Indeed, some see it correctly as a fight for survival and therefore argue that nothing short of an absolute victory is acceptable ("[It's a Fight for Survival -- Pull Out All Stops](#)," Bruce Herschensohn, *Los Angeles Times*, 12 May 2004): "The only subject worthy of our national attention and the only pursuit that should be acceptable is total victory - no matter if others are offended or even destroyed."

Interestingly enough, even in Israel, which has shown tremendous restraint over the last three and a half years of unrelenting terror against its population, there are voices calling for far more drastic measures than have been used to date, suggesting to inflict serious damage on the enemy ("Time for a change in Tactics," Margot Dudkevitch, *The Jerusalem Post*, 11 May 2004): "Maybe it's time to act like other armies and do what we have to do - and force the other side to pay the price. Maybe that is the only way to wipe terrorism off the map." And not only journalists in Israel but also strategists there are suggesting it as they assess the threats ("Strategists Call for Israeli Strikes against Expanding WMD Threat," *World Tribune.com*, 14 May 2004).

Even a Nobel Peace Prize winner is joining the crowd (probably to the chagrin of the Prize Selection Committee) arguing that war is necessary to save people when the threat against them is more evil than war itself ("Sometimes, a War Saves People: We must be willing to bring the fight to those who would do evil," Jose Ramos-horta, *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 May 2004): "It is always easier to say no to war, even at the price of appeasement. But being politically correct means leaving the innocent to suffer the world over, from Phnom Penh to Baghdad. And that is what those who would cut and run from Iraq risk doing."

Christian clergy who dared to speak against terrorism have been attacked (so far only verbally), not only by the terrorists and their supporters from within but also by their supporters from without. A case in point is the former Archbishop of Canterbury ("Carey under Fire Again Over 'Muslim Martyrs' Speech," *London Daily Telegraph*, 13 May 2004).

In a sense, it really does not matter if this is a religious war or not ("Islam Has Lost its Way," Shmuley Boteach, *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 May 2004). The fact remains that extremists have hijacked the narrative of Muslims and it became not only dominant but unchallenged. While there are protests in the West against the war - and in Israel against government policy - one is

yet to see protests in the Arab/Muslim world (and for that matter in the free world as well) against terrorism. The problem is that being devout or not, using God's name in vain is still powerfully heard around the world and "battle" cries as well as heinous murders carried out by terrorists are preceded and followed by invoking their god's name ("Devil's Work Done in the Name of God: The chant of Allahu Akbar - God is Great - is heard in every mosque around the globe," Piers Akerman, *The Daily Telegraph*, Australia, 13 May 2004).

Indeed, even if al-Qaeda has been damaged, it has spread its cancerous influence to such an extent that there is little doubt now that a worldwide *jihād* is surging in any and all corners of the world ("Global Jihad," Corine Hegland, *National Journal*, 7 May 2004). "...bin Laden has taken that 'transnational emotion that binds all Muslims' and effectively harnessed it to his political agenda. He has, at the moment, no credible competition. Moderate Islam is on the retreat, and Western democracy has little traction among the corrupt and repressive governments of Islamic countries."

Murdering civilians or desecrating the graves of the dead constitutes a pattern to an extent that even Western media are using the terms of reference of the terrorists. Thus "vandalizing" (not desecrating) graves now constitutes a (legitimate) act of protest ("Gaza Commonwealth Graves Vandalized in Protest," Nidal al-Mughrabi, Reuters, 10 May 2004).

This abomination has reached unprecedented proportions. Some of its aspects are making the practices of the Soviet regime pale in comparison. There they made "un-history." When they wanted to eliminate a leader from collective memory they expunged the relevant pages from newspapers and history books. The Arab/Muslim obsession goes much further by inventing a new history - that never was. Through that process the claims of Judaism and Christianity in thousands of years of well-documented history are denied. ("[Sec.-Gen. of the Iranian Committee for Supporting the Intifada: 'The Palestinian People Lived on This Land Before Jacob and the Children of Israel'; 'The Palestinian Problem is the Problem of All Muslims,'](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch No. 712, 13 May 2004).

And they do not limit this re-writing of history and the preaching of hate to their own countries ("Plain, Misguided, Hatred," Andrew Bolt, *Herald Sun*, 7 May 2004). They take full advantage of Western freedoms to export it to their intended targets/victims ("Kingdom Comes to North America: Top Saudi cleric to visit Canada," Steven Stalinsky, *National Review*, 13 May 2004). Yet thus far it appears to have only caught the attention of media watch groups and several bloggers, but no government action has been taken ("Hate Comes to Canada," Daimnation, 13 May 2004; and "[RoP Head to Visit Canada](#)," Little Green Footballs, 13 May 2004).

Whether this is a clash of civilizations, a culture war or a war of religions is less important than realizing that **this is a war**. It is a war where the enemy does not need any provocation or cause to attack us. In this sense it is the continuation of the Nazi ideology of annihilating those who do not fit in their system of supremacy. In the same way their murderous genocidal campaign resulted in unprecedented atrocities, the terrorists are devoutly emulating the Nazi intent and tactics as part of a larger strategy for global jihad.

The sixth commandment is sometimes wrongly translated into "thou shalt not kill." But in the Hebrew original and in the early Greek translations the term is "though shalt not murder." One

can wonder how this semantic confusion came about, yet there is one issue that remains clear throughout history. There are conditions under which killing is permitted, condoned and sometimes even encouraged as an imperative. For example, self-defense when one's life is clearly in danger. Murder is not condoned under any civil society. That is why we will win this battle against those who are more barbaric than Barbarians. ***They have no future and we cannot allow them to rob us of ours.***

The fight for our survival means the enemy's life is worth less than ours. It also means U.S. diplomacy needs to be demanding and assertive, not groveling and apologetic. A report today quotes Secretary of State Colin Powell as saying "Our heads are bowed over the outrages at Abu Ghraib prison" to a group of Arab heads of state and business leaders meeting in Jordan. "You will see in the weeks to come that we are a nation of justice . . . that America is still the best chance for peace in the world." The report goes on to state - assessing as news - that "Powell's attendance at the World Economic Forum was part of a diplomatic campaign to buoy America's tarnished reputation over U.S. soldiers' abuse of prisoners in Iraq and the administration's silence over violence in the Palestinian territories" ("Arabs Give Cool Reception to Penitent Powell," Margaret Coker, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 15 May 2004).

If the U.S. has made a choice on who is a terrorist and who is not, who is a terrorist-supporter and who is not, then that moral choice needs to hold and not dissolve at the sight of "grievances" and excuses. Blaming Israel for violence in the territories is like blaming the U.S. for being violent against Osama bin Laden, or a police officer for legally arresting - by using force - a criminal. It his high time to use all necessary measures in self-defense of our future.