

The Sadistic Glorification of Terror

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By Robbie Friedmann

This weekend Americans celebrated Thanksgiving with greater appreciation for its meaning than in many years in recent history aware of the terror dangers lurking around the corner.

The president visited and welcomed the new members of NATO and informed Lithuania that "You are joining the strong and growing family of NATO. Our alliance has made a solemn pledge of protection, and anyone who would choose Lithuania as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America" ("Bush urges new NATO nations to fight terrorism," USA Today, 11/23/2002).

While an encouraging prospect for new alliances, Lithuania is not exactly a country that is under a threat of terrorism (but it has a known history of willingly collaborating with the Nazis). Yet the one country that has been the foremost victim of international terrorism, namely Israel, has yet to be offered to join NATO ("Israel should join NATO," Editorial, The Jerusalem Post, Nov. 23, 2002). If indeed fighting terrorism is recognized as becoming NATO's mission (as it should be) then the one country that NATO needs to add to its ranks is Israel. This is not so much for the military protection that NATO could offer Israel but more so to make a statement that Israel belongs to a family of nations and does not stand alone in its fight against terrorism.

Proof of this point is offered by the arrests made in England, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and now Kenya, of those suspected of involvement in or supporting terrorism. Indeed, ITU (International Terrorism Unlimited) is celebrating daily attacks with a trio of attacks against Israelis in Israel and (two in) Kenya in one day. Israeli editorials and experts were quick to point out the obvious: that these attacks symbolize more than an assault on their immediate Israeli targets ("Two attacks on freedom," Editorial, The Jerusalem Post, Nov. 29, 2002) and that they constitute a dangerous development ("Kenya attack a new phase in international terrorism," Boaz Ganor, The Jerusalem Post, Nov. 29, 2002).

While the terror against defenseless people is glorified and celebrated in the Arab streets (and among their western left-wing sympathizers and supporters), the fact remains that it also represents cowardice. After all, a baby with a pacifier, or for that matter an able-bodied man, can do very little when shot at in a surprise attack or being bombed on a bus ("The Unique Cowardice of Palestinian Terrorism," Louis Rene Beres, Arutz Sheva, 25 November 2002). But the preaching of hate legitimizes and idolizes such cowardly conduct.

And indeed, as hateful mosque sermons so dutifully preach, they are not only after Israelis but also instruct to kill Americans. And now the Palestinians who have perfected suicide bombing are threatening to use them against the US ("PA legislator threatens US with suicide bombings," Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, November 25, 2002).

An pro-Arab leaning commentator on Fox News said that President Bush's condemnation of the

Kenya attack and the likelihood that a loose Palestinian Al-Qaida terror network may be responsible for it could be detrimental to the US because it may damage possible "Arab support" of the coalition against Iraq should the US align itself too closely with Israel. The commentator must have been oblivious not only to the facts on the ground (namely, the nature of the atrocity and who perpetrated it) but also to the actual dangers of terrorism to the US as well as to the dubious "support" that the US is getting from Arab countries. Yet others are at least starting to question whether the war against terrorism is really not one and the same for the US and Israel. Yet policy differences remain sharply divided between the US and Israel on the future "road-map" for "peace in the area" ("[Fight Against Terror: Two Conflicts or One?](#)" James Bennet, The New York Times, 11-29-2002).

Writing "for" President Bush, Thomas Friedman continues to hawk his false facts and pretentious framing in what otherwise could have been a fairly decent "Presidential" letter to "Muslim Leaders." He leaves the impression as if Israeli soldiers were killing Palestinian kids indiscriminately and offers the false equivalence between it and suicide bombing as if these kids were not actively involved in the violence ("Soldiers shooting kids is wrong. Suicide killing is wrong") and makes it appear as if Bush "admits" he has not done enough for peace implying that Israel is the one who has to make an effort to get peace ("[Defusing the Holy Bomb](#)," Thomas L. Friedman, The New York Times, November 27, 2002).

This convoluted logic is exactly what serves to undermine his otherwise eloquent argument against terrorism and ironically helps promote and legitimize the arguments made by terrorists and their apologists. By no means will it help "defuse the holy bomb."

And these supporters and apologists are actively and viciously engaged in a contortionist dance, twisting between vocal support on one hand and absolute denial on the other (depending on the audience). This week was abuzz about support for terrorism with connections leading directly to the House of Saud through one of the king's daughters who is the wife of the Saudi Ambassador to the US. ("The Saudi Money Trail," Michael Isikoff and Evan Thomas, NEWSWEEK, Dec. 2). The Saudis expressed not merely denial but also were "outraged." They launched an aggressive assault of the "how dare you even think that the princess is involved in anything but charity" nature.

While the Saudis are trying to portray themselves as nothing but "charitable," persistent reports in the West indicate that they have a sinister side that plays a far more dominant role than the image of the clean white robe would want us to believe: "The rulers of Saudi Arabia are gorging themselves on the country's oil wealth. But... one British man has tasted the cruelty that is maintaining this precarious regime against a rising tide of extremism" ("[Greed and torture at the House of Saud](#)," John Sweeney, The Observer November 24, 2002).

And that other charitable Saudi, OBL, apparently still alive or dead, issued his new threats that a British paper described as "A chilling new message...being circulated among British Islamic extremists, calling for attacks on civilians and describing the 'Islamic nation' as 'eager for martyrdom'" ("[Osama issues new call to arms](#)," Jason Burke, The Observer, November 24, 2002). As horrifying (and insane) as it is, the full [text of the letter](#) OBL has authored his a sobering lesson that should be read as it offers more than a glimpse to the perceived, imagined, and

concocted grievances that amount to nothing short of megalomaniacal pretense. It weaves through decades and centuries of "history," declares that there is no such thing as "innocent civilians" and crowns himself as the judge, jury and executioner. He ends his letter with an arrogant warning: "If the Americans refuse to listen to our advice and the goodness, guidance and righteousness that we call them to, then be aware that you will lose this Crusade Bush began, just like the other previous Crusades in which you were humiliated by the hands of the Mujahideen, fleeing to your home in great silence and disgrace."

Despite persistent attempts by western media and political sources to make artificial distinctions between OBL's Al-Qaida and "other" extremists, it appears that the terror agenda has similar objectives across groups, similar narrative, and similar characteristics as well as similar targets. Yesterday 300 Palestinians "demonstrated" in Capetown with two children dressed as suicide bombers ("[Outrage as 'suicide bombers' hit Cape Town](#)," Elliott Sylvester, Independent online (Saturday Cape Argus), November 29 2002). The South African paper described this event as one that "has sent shockwaves around the country." Perhaps it might be shocking to the South Africans but it constitutes just another (marching) "writing on the wall" that is perhaps as ignored by the West as was the revolution that brought Humeini to power in the 70s: "During Friday's march, the message from the children - between the ages of seven and 13 - leading the march was simple, but ominous: "Death to America, death to Israel," they shouted." Apparently this demonstration received a license in the name of free speech with no one thinking that its effect is any different than someone shouting "fire" in a theater.

The problem lies with not taking seriously enough the hate that permeates official media and clergy messages throughout the Arab and Muslim world and brazenly so in the streets of London, Capetown, and Washington DC. The Egyptian TV series continues despite some perfunctory diplomatic "protests" that do not even amount to a slap-on-the-wrist or constitute a sufficient deterrent to its screening ("Anti-Semitism in the Egyptian TV Series "Knight Without a Horse," Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, November 26, 2002).

Egyptian propaganda does not stop at malicious antisemitic concoctions but actively endorses homicidal suicide bombings with its official press lending enthusiastic support for it. And this is the country that signed a peace accord with Israel ("[Editors of Egyptian Government Papers Hail the Recent Suicide Bombing in a Jerusalem Neighborhood](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Egypt/Jihad and Terrorism Studies, November 25, 2002, No. 442). One striking example of justifying suicide bombings is found in referring to the victims on the Jerusalem bus (mostly children) as "terrorists" as did the official Egyptian daily Al Akhbar in its editorial: "eleven Israeli terrorists were killed in this operation."

This hatefully vicious propaganda is by no means limited to the media, politics, and the clergy but is institutionalized in school textbooks as well. Marcus, of Palestinian Media Watch, points to examples in textbooks that depict the same antisemitic theme that the [previously mentioned] TV series is based on in official school textbooks ("Egyptian production of the "Protocols" libel parallels Arab Schoolbook lessons," November 24, 2002).

It is important to understand the depth of the vileness of the "Protocols" as they have been used throughout modern history as an ideological pretext for vilification and genocide against the

Jewish people. Writing on antisemitism in the Third Reich, Herman Graml describes the Protocols' influence on Hitler: "Hitler, like all the Nazis, was strongly impressed and probably continued to believe in the truth of the PROTOCOLS, although they were exposed as early as 1921 as a clumsy forgery on the part of the Tsarist secret police. ("[Hitler on the Protocols](#)"). For a comprehensive introduction to the Protocols it is worth reading "[Commentary on the Protocols -- by Dr. Daniel Keren](#)."

Assuming the Arabs are not ignorant of history - and that they KNOW rather well that this is a concocted forgery - the reason they use the "Protocols" for their propaganda purposes is not much different from the reasons the Tzar and the Nazis used it. They only "refined" it. The Protocols provide them with a convenient lie that the masses can easily adopt to create a target to channel their hate and deflect it from their real internal problems. People who glorify murder have very little moral scruples to prevent them from lying. A mixture of outright lies and "fertile imagination" has always served as a backdrop for shaping up "realities" that were conveniently invented along with the appropriate myths to nurture them (see "An Industry of Lies," Chuck Chriss, JIA, 11-26-2002 and "Palestinian lies, Israeli truths," Martin Sherman, The Jerusalem Post, Nov. 29, 2002).

Regrettably the industry of lies is not limited to shrewd Arab propagandists. Various media outlets, diplomats, and the protesters-on-duty adopt the technique of the "big lie" rather effectively and this is evident in the insidious divestiture-from-Israel campaign on US campuses. It is of course sad to see that in the temples of knowledge many are spouting their "opinions" without any reference to facts but if it works on the guttural pseudo-intellectual level why rely on facts? This campaign is based on several unfounded claims that have been systematically exposed (see "The Big Lie: Divest from Israel," I. J. Mansdorf, israelinsider, November 29, 2002) and are attributed to the classical scape-goating that transformed the classical antisemitism to (the more modern) "anti-Zionism" ("Understanding Zionophobia: the Ivory Tower," Gil Troy, Forward, November 22, 2002).

In the meantime, The UN travesty in Iraq continues. The same UN that is indirectly responsible for the Six Days War when it evacuated the Gaza strip instead of standing up to (Egyptian president) Nasser, the same UN that issued a resolution equating Zionism to racism, and the same UN that allowed its Durban conference to be hijacked by cultural terrorists, is now having its "inspectors" on a wild goose chase in Iraq that is likely to end up costing many lives because the inspection operation is futile from the outset. One of these inspectors has dubious qualifications in sexual preferences but not necessarily in the subject matter of bio-chemical weaponry ("Weapons Inspectors' Experience Questioned: Va. Man Is Cited As Example; Hiring Process Criticized," James V. Grimaldi, Washington Post, November 28, 2002; Page A01).

And the incompetent Blix is already backpedaling from the UN mandate, giving room for charges that his mission is a failure from the start: "If the inspectors continue as they have begun, Saddam will never be forced to give up his mass destruction arsenal--which every Western intelligence service believes he has--because Mr. Blix will never uncover what is hidden. The world should demand that Mr. Blix confront Saddam now with the best evidence the West can muster, and insist on explanations. Unless he does so, Mr. Blix will have the distinction of missing the Iraqi bomb before the Gulf War, missing it afterward, and now missing it once

again." ("Mr. Blix Goes to Baghdad: A U.N. bureaucrat won't be willing to hand the world a war," Gary Milhollin, The Wall Street Journal, November 26, 2002). His politeness for Saddam is regrettably not serving as a facade for stern demands for compliance with his mandate. All this against a backdrop of speculations that Hussein is in a massive hiding operation to "privatize" the weapons by hiding them (or components of and archived documents of) in citizens homes.

Iraq continues to mock the UN (and the US). While continually claiming it has no weapons of mass destruction (WMD), it has 500 Muslim clerics calling for Jihad against the U.S., and an Iraqi official threatening to use the WMD that Iraq "does not have" ("[Unidentified Senior Iraqi Official: We Did Not Hesitate to Use WMD in the Past and Will Not Stand Idly By This Time Either](#)," MEMRI, Special Alert - Iraq/Jihad and Terrorism Studies Project, November 26, 2002, No. 4).

And who is offering comfort to Iraq? No other than the Syrian foreign minister in an interview to an Egyptian newspaper. This is the same Syria that supported resolution 1441 and is a member of the UN Security Council ("[Syria's Foreign Minister to Egyptian Weekly: The "No-Fly Zones" are Illegitimate; Syria Voted for UN Resolution 1441 to Strengthen the Washington Peace Camp; American Policy is Tyrannical](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Iraq/Syria, November 26, 2002, No. 443).

While the world is willing to play these appeasement games, a reminder that they could be far more costly is aptly illustrated by Shlomo Avineri, a scholar/diplomat, who survived the Nazi murders of his grandparents now facing the possibility of having his grandchildren's lives and future being threatened by a possible Iraqi gas attack. Given the quality of the UN inspectors, Avineri's characterization of the current threat as an "unspeakable obscenity" is more than appropriate ("A Haunting Echo," The Los Angeles Times, November 24, 2002): "If Hitler had been stopped earlier, my three grandparents -- and numerous uncles, aunts and cousins -- would not have perished in the gas chambers. That's my personal story. But the "if only" that stems from the 1930s appeasement extends to tens of millions who lost family members, both civilians and soldiers, who might have been spared. A world without World War II would have been a better place. A world without Hussein will ultimately be a safer place, regardless of how he is brought down."

In this theater of absurd it is worth noting the ironical contradiction where Finland is reported to have refused to sell Israel gas detection kits for defensive purposes as in an Iraqi gas attack ("[Finland Refuses To Sell Gas Kits To Israel](#)," Arutz Sheva) yet Israel has agreed to sell gas masks to Kuwait....not exactly one of the countries that belongs to the Israel fan club ("Israel agrees to sell gas masks to Kuwait for civilian distribution," Amnon Barzilai, Haaretz, November 29, 2002).

It is important to recognize that this is a world where vicious sadism is performed under the Orwellian guise of "mercy," where Israeli school children are blown up and then are defined as "terrorists" by an official Egyptian government editorial, where an extremist leader declares war and issues an "ultimatum" to western civilization, where the UN is used as a delay tactic by Saddam and his European suck-ups, and where a campaign of dehumanization and genocide is the declared official propaganda in media, in mosques, in schools and by official political

representatives. And what is needed is more than recognizing this. It is imperative, as Avineri articulated, not to wait and risk such a high cost in human lives. It is therefore imperative to defeat terrorism and rule it out as a "legitimate" mechanism for conflict resolution. There are two possible options at hand: submit to terror or conquer it. Come to think about it, submission is not really an option.

Given the risks we are daily warned about, the quicker the West adopts a less tolerant attitude towards terrorism - and to the support and sympathy it receives - the better. Countries should legislate anti-sedition law; statements that support and offer even implied sympathy to terror should be outlawed and the makers prosecuted. This is as serious and, to an extent, even more dangerous than Nazism because of its world-wide implications. The longer we wait and the more tolerant we are the more vulnerable we will become. This has nothing to do with free speech. It has to do with vile criminal behavior. The same way that hate speech is outlawed in the US so should be supportive declarations of terrorism including "conditional condemnation" of terror (which amount to indirect support of it).

We are tolerating imposed security measures at airports because we believe it is done in our best interest (though not necessarily for our convenience). The wide majority of the passengers have nothing to do with being terrorist risks yet we are all subject to this costly - and not necessarily effective - inconvenience in the name of security. Yet, we are reluctant - in the name of civil liberties - to outlaw behavior that is directly linkable to the fostering of terrorism and to terrorism itself. We can no longer afford this luxury. Those who care about civil liberties should be in the forefront of the fight to vanquish terrorism.

Indeed it is time for the world to paraphrase the words of President Bush and say that "anyone who would choose Israel as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America and the rest of the free world." Is it likely? Not very. But at least the option is there to ponder. And so are the consequences.