

Terrorists Are Being Rewarded Yet Again

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By Robbie Friedmann

A few *peace activists* were injured and at least one was accidentally killed recently when acting as *human shields* to protect terrorists. Now it turns out that the close proximity of these peace mongers to the terrorists also provided a convenient tactic actually to carry out terrorist attacks. Two British Muslims entered the Gaza strip under the guise of *peace activists* and then were sent to their deadly mission in Israel ("[Bombers posed as peace activists](#)," Jeevan Vasagar, Vikram Dodd and Conal Urquhart, *The Guardian*, Friday, 2 May 2003).

As if no new prime minister has been appointed, the Palestinians continue incessantly with their hateful incitement to violence and murder. Now their official TV has broadcast a video that calls for the killing of Jews, continuing to *legitimize* their entitlement to murder ("PA TV: Kill Jews of the Disputed Areas," Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch, Multi-Media Bulletin, 30 April 2003).

The terrorists in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria are not the only ones operating and constituting a threat to Israel and the United States. The recent visit of Secretary of State Powell to the region demonstrated the need to focus on other terrorist groups, whom the Syrians call *freedom fighters* such as the Hezbollah in Lebanon ("Operation Syria: Hezbollah should be on Powell's agenda," Rachel Ehrenfeld, *NationalReviewOnline*, 02 May 2003).

The reactions in the Arab world to the collapse of Iraq's dictatorial regime range from cautious gratitude to outright hostility. Yet an examination of the very critical position by Arab writers vis-a-vis what could be defined as the collapse not just of the regime but that of the current *Arab system* suffers from the same maladies of which they are so eagerly critical. They cannot say a bad word about the Arab situation without putting the blame on Israel. So in a sense their criticism *sounds good* to those who are seeking such Arab voices, but at the same time by continually bashing Israel they ingratiate themselves with the same hostile elements they criticize ("Arab Doubts, Inside and Out," Raghida Dergham, *The Washington Post*, 27 April 2003 and "Time for Arabs to Take The Lead on Freedom," Jamil Khoury, *The Washington Post*, 27 April 2003).

Even what seems to be an exception to this kind of writing is fraught with traps that may not be obvious. A Saudi editorial laments the Arab predicament and offers the now expected criticism and self-examination so common to the West ("It is All Israel's Fault!" *Arab News*, 26 April 2003.) Yet it is vague enough about what coexistence with Israel means and does not even mention her by name (so who would they coexist with if not Israel) and at the same time under this cover offers a resell of Crown Prince Abdullah's *Peace Plan* that apparently was a non-starter with anyone other than Tom Friedman.

Indeed, Friedman is starting to attract increasingly critical attention and perhaps one should wonder why it took this long. Perhaps he finally got under the skin of those who believe it is

important to challenge his claims ("[Good Tom, Bad Tom](#)," Jonathan Tobin, *Jewish World Review*, 2 May 2003.)

Yet this soft criticism actually ends up complimenting Friedman for *a good one* that he wrote. By the law of averages even someone who is constantly in error may end up with an accidental good piece. But even if one agrees that the piece was a good one his general writing is not and at best it is the exception that points to the rule.

To illustrate: His claim the with the war in Iraq the terrorism bubble has burst elicited a well written critique not only of Friedman but also of the Fourth Estate for being too comfortable with terrorists ("[Bursting the Fourth Estate](#)," Alyssa A. Lappen, *FrontPageMagazine.com*, 29 April 2003): "Despite relentless terrorism, however, reporters continue suck up to its perpetrators and neglect even the most elementary comparisons. They regularly slam Israel for fighting murderers. It is easy, after all. 'Israel is a democracy,' explained one TV news executive whom I questioned last year on the general failure to report Sudanese slavery and other Arab atrocities." In short, the media rewards terrorists, whose bubble Friedman now admits, "has come to threaten open societies and all they value." Yet Friedman concludes, "We are all now in a post-bubble world."

Not quite. Before we arrive, a fourth bubble must burst--the Fourth Estate Bubble. The world will be a lot safer when it does."

If there are positive signs of criticism from inside the Arab world then its warring mindset expresses itself again by constantly looking for a boogeyman. This time the Jews and Christians are not enough and apparently there are Muslims who feel that some of their brethren are "100 times more dangerous" to them than what they call the infidels ("[Al-Qa'ida Affiliated Website: The Shi'a Threat to Sunni Islamists is No Less than the 'Judeo-Christian' Threat](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Jihad and Terrorism Studies, 2 May 2003, No. 498).

This perhaps could add one good reason why the U.S. should not insist on maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity ("U.S. is wrong to insist on keeping Iraq intact," Ralph Peters, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 25 April 2003).

While the enemy from without is hard at work to destroy what western civilization symbolizes the West, itself, has a little problem: those within it who speak against it and show deep sympathy for the enemy. They create an added problem to anyone who dares criticize them by suggesting their very freedom of expression is being attacked and they are subjects to character assassination and so in a sense they seize the right to be *critical* but are intolerant when criticized ("Anti-Americanism, from within," Ruth Wisse, *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 April 2003). It is far more than mere expressions of opinion. It resembles far more the evolution of the German National Socialist movement that became the infamous Nazi party, Nazi ideology, and Nazi regime ("Goebbels would have liked this," Randy S. Shapiro, *israelinsider*, 29 April 2003).

Indeed, some are carrying it beyond rhetoric as there are persistent reports a British MP has received millions of dollars from the Saddam's regime, obviously in an attempt to curry favors on the floor of the parliament and in British public opinion ("'Anti-war' in retrospect," Editorial, *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 April 2003).

Now the world is in tizzy about the new Palestinian *prime Minister*. As if regime change is sufficient by *replacing* one person at the top while the cabinet members remain the same and the new prime minister still reports to Arafat and is constrained by him and by his cronies. Frankly this *regime change* is tantamount to Herman Goring appointed to replace Hitler yet still reporting to him. Very little de-Nazification in either case. Indeed, Arafat should not be seen as being out of the game by any means ("The man who never gives up," Barry Rubin, *The Jerusalem Post*, 28 April 2003).

So on one hand, Arafat is still salient in the *background* and Abu Mazen may elicit frothing around the mouth of such political operatives as Terje Larsen or be crowned as the *champion of peace* in the minds and headlines of shallow reporters ("Peace gets new champion: Palestinian chief to shun violence," Margaret Coker, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 29 April 2003) but it does little to change the character of the man, the expectations of this position, and the nature of the political realities in the area. Perhaps Abu Mazen should be entitled to wear that crown only if he delivers - not a minute earlier. ("Abbas's burden of proof," Caroline Glick, *The Jerusalem Post*, 25 April 2003): "Unless the Palestinian Authority under Abbas is actually willing to abide by the commitments taken on by the PLO a decade ago, there is no point in cheering his rise, no reason to negotiate anything with him, and certainly no reason to sigh in relief that Arafat again has done Mubarak's bidding."

Why would anyone think that Abu Mazen is so cherubic as to usher in a new era of ending terror and making peace with Israel when he himself is part and parcel of the terror network and when symbolically he, as a documented Holocaust denier, was given as a *gift* to the people of Israel on Holocaust Day ("[Abu Mazen: A Political Profile](#)," Yael Yehoshua, MEMRI, Special Report - No. 15, 29 April 2003, and Special Report - No. 16 April 30, 2003 No.16)?

Moreover, he did not somehow appear from a muzzled *peace camp* that was vying to express the ideology and value of peace. In fact he is reported to have direct organizational links to major terrorists activities ("[Arafat's new PM behind Munich Olympics attack?](#)" Steve K. Walz, *WorldNetDaily.com*, 29 April 2003) and his new *interior minister* who is also in charge of policing and security hails from the same background ("Delusions about the Palestinian 'security ace'," Michael Freund, *The Jerusalem Post*, 30 April 2003).

Yet some are willing to identify in his relative weakness rays of hope that it might bring about desired changes ("Enter the Weak Man: Abu Mazen's strength is his lack of strength," Bret Stephens, *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 May 2003). There are too many unsound assumptions with this approach, namely that Abu Mazen is interested in success, that Arafat will allow him to succeed, that he is interested in stability, and is powerful enough to crack down on terrorists thus entering the Palestinians into nothing short of a *civil war*. Odds are stacked too high against success under these circumstances.

It should be obvious that whether under *peace* or *war*, terrorism is a strategy that pays off well for the perpetrators and thus far anything short of absolutely vanquishing it provides the incentives and fuel it needs to continue ("Don't stop fighting terror," Editorial, *The Jerusalem Post*, 30 April, 2003).

The much talked about *Roadmap* was unfolded this week ("A Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict") and interestingly enough the Palestinians accepted it without reservations. Israel on the other hand has many and highly justified concerns ("Release of the Roadmap," Chuck Chriss, *Jewish Internet Association*, 30 April 2003).

Thus the Palestinians have already won a little PR coup without much effort but the mere fact the Palestinians accepted the Roadmap means it is good for them and not good for Israel ("[Israelis, Palestinians get peace 'road map': Varied interpretations of proposal suggest it could be a bumpy ride](#)," Molly Moore, John Ward Anderson, *Washington Post*, 1 May 2003.)

Remember, these are the street/rooftop dancers whenever a disaster hits the U.S. or Israel and even now, they mourn the collapse of Saddam Hussein. ("The road map and realism," Isi Leibler, *The Jerusalem Post*, Apr. 30, 2003.)

One of the best articles written on the Roadmap provides a much wider historical context and comprehensive perspective of the complex circumstances that are at the root causes of the conflict itself ("Wrong Turn: The "road map" won't lead to peace if it bypasses the causes of war," Abraham D. Sofaer, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 2, 2003): "The problem is that this Roadmap, like many plans for Middle East peace, expects to bring an end to Palestinian violence against Israel without addressing the reasons why the Palestinians have deliberately and repeatedly chosen that path."

Sofaer outlines the problems that either have facilitated the conflict or have not done enough to attenuate it. Among these are: 1) The "longstanding strategy of Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organization to keep as many Palestinians as possible living under horrible conditions in refugee camps, close to Israel and the U.N. support of this reality;" 2) "The Palestinian educational system, replete with encouragements to terrorist activities and Israel hate-filled textbooks, is an abomination; it, too, is largely funded by the U.N.;" 3) "Our policies have worked to prevent Israel from defending itself against terrorism;" 4) "Terrorists have benefited from unreasonable efforts to restrict Israeli responses to their operations;" 5) "Besides criticizing Israel, our government and others also repeatedly accuse it of using excessive force and improper methods;" 6) "Our government has also consistently failed to come to grips with the extent and seriousness of Palestinian terror itself;" 7) "In addition to subsidizing refugee camps that breed terrorism as well as an educational system that justifies and extols it, and in addition to hobbling Israel's efforts to counter terrorism, we and others continue to be remiss in dealing with state support of terror."

Sofaer then discusses the issues that remain unresolved due to diplomatic expediency and shortsightedness resulting in more harm than good. These are the issues of moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem (not done); Right of return (a non-starter to any negotiations), Settlements and borders (asymmetry in dealing with Israel and the Palestinians). Sofaer then emphasizes that "There can be no peace until the Arabs of the region openly accept the existence of Israel as a permanent, sovereign state." The U.N. (where Israel is still treated as a pariah state), normalizing relations with Arab countries was not pushed enough, Israel as ally (Israel was presented to the Arabs more as an inconvenient burden or a charity case than a respected ally), the Jewish question (the Palestinians do not tolerate Jews anywhere yet they want their problems solved),

"the failure of our government at the highest levels to denounce the genocidal teachings that issue regularly from the press, the mosques and the schools of Arab and Muslim regimes, some of them our longstanding allies, is shameful."

Sofaer emphasizes, "The problem is not one of borders and territory; it is not one of schedules; it is not even one of a Palestinian state. The problem is existential... By omission as much as by commission, the U.S. and other democracies have encouraged radical Palestinians and their supporters to cling to their dream of eliminating the Jewish state."

Finally, Sofaer suggests, "A Roadmap to peace is a fine thing, but if it is based on denial and wishful thinking it will be rightly doomed. The task for diplomats and all other interested parties is to force an end to the murder of Jews and the effort to destroy the Jewish state; in pursuit of that goal, it is as necessary to delegitimize Palestinian violence finally as it is to prevent and repudiate the delegitimization of Israel. When that necessary condition is met in word and deed, all manner of desirable and mutually beneficial outcomes will become negotiable; but not before."

This is not merely criticism of the weaknesses of the suggested Roadmap but an offering of too many missing links that deserve attention if this plan is not to become yet another failed initiative. Given the existential implications this road map has for Israel, it also has policy implications for the U.S. Unless proper attention is given to the valid points raised by Sofaer the risk is not only for Israel but also for any post-war efforts of the U.S. whether in fighting terrorism or any dictatorial regimes as well as in trying to change the circumstances that are conducive to terrorism. It is high time to do the right thing for a change. The fact that terrorism is now an international network, as proven by the two British Muslims, shows how difficult the road ahead is. The current Roadmap will not take us where we need to be.