

# Terrorists Do Not Apologize

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By Robbie Friedmann

A most interesting development in the Muslim world is a statement by the grandson of Ayatollah Khomeini denouncing the current Iranian regime as the "world's worst dictatorship" along with a call to separate religion from the state ("[Ayatollah Khomeini's Grandson: 'Iran Needs Democracy and Separation of Religion and State;' 'The Iranian Regime Is the World's Worst Dictatorship'](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Iran/Reform in the Arab and Muslim World, 6 August 2003, No. 548).

He defined the current regime and those succeeding his grandfather as "exploiting his [Ayatollah Khomeini's] name, the name of Islam, and the religious regime in order to continue their tyrannical rule." One might be led to believe there was no Islamic takeover of Iran, no takeover of the U.S. embassy, no terror acts carried out under his grandfather, and that his grandfather was a pleasant and charitable leader. Nevertheless, his move does not auger well for the current Iranian regime and might enhance its downfall.

The battle over terrorism is but a single campaign (even if it has a multitude of facets and locations). It is paralleled by another equally serious campaign launched by Islamic religious militants. It began with the very Khomeini whose grandson sees him as a great leader. These militants are trying their very best to proselytize the rest of the world or control it by force and terror. As terror reigns in the Middle East even terms of reference are Muslim. We are forced to talk about the *hudna*, the Muslim version of a cease-fire which means "regrouping to hit when convenient."

Then bombs continue to go off not only in Israel but in Chechenya, Moscow, India, the Philippines and Indonesia together with a massive proselytization campaign that is defined by its leaders as "integral to triumph in fourth-generation warfare." This campaign - known as *Dawa* - is not aimed merely at conversion but it does so by denial of any right of choice. Hence the danger emanates from "spiritual efforts" which guide physical terrorism. The danger to the West lies in increasingly effective efforts of *Dawa* that filter into school textbooks and educational systems ("[The Dawning of Dawa](#)," Alyssa A. Lappen, FrontPageMagazine.com 15 July 2003).

It is primarily spearheaded by spreading antisemitic canards. The latest one is from a notorious Saudi professor who has now concocted yet another libel that Jews have grand designs on Iraq ("[King Faysal University Professor: 'Jews Consider Iraq Part of Greater Israel'](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Arab Antisemitism/Saudi Arabia 5 August 2003, No. 547). The more outrageous the lie the stronger its impact. It claims - among other atrocious charges - a *Fatwa* (a Muslim religious ruling) "issued by rabbis," and the presence of "Israeli soldiers in Iraq." It helps little to suggest that rabbis in Israel do not issue joint *fatwas* and that there are no Israeli soldiers in Iraq. The point is not truth but demonizing and hence such claims as "Suspicious Zionist Moves on Iraqi Soil," and "Awaken... Before We Discover That Dirty Hands Have Already Strangled Us."

The Muslim religious establishment does not declare any cease-fire on whining. It continuously laments the Western "double standards towards Arabs/Muslims" despite ample evidence the West has fought for Arab causes. Also that it is fairly united in its desire, intent, and action to assist the Palestinians achieve their political aims of establishing a state - not necessarily their aim of destroying Israel - far more than the Arabs themselves have ever done for their "brethren" ("Western Political Energy," Mark A. Heller, the *Jerusalem Post*, 1 August 2003).

It is now a forgone conclusion in most circles, except perhaps in the U.S. State Department, the European Union and the U.N., that the Roadmap was a non-starter ("Roadmap to Nowhere," Jeff Jacoby, *Boston Globe*, 3 August 2003; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 August 2003). The Palestinians have not kept one element of the principles it espouses. Yet the real winner of the wave of violence and terror is clearly the terrorist group Hamas, which is now considered not only a player but one which calls the shots. Pun is fully intended as it is up to Hamas to decide when it will cease the cease-fire which has actually never been implemented to begin with ("The 1002nd Arabian Nights Tale," Sarah Honig, *The Jerusalem Post*, 4 August 2003).

And while the Palestinians are "declaring" a "cease-fire" other elements are opening the terror spigot again as Hizbullah has been shelling Israel's northern border this past week causing damage and casualties ("Ceasefire? Hizbullah Steps up Shelling of Northern Israel," *World Tribune.com*, 4 August 2003). It **appears** that Israelis have learned their lessons from previously tolerating Palestinian transgressions of agreements and now insist on full compliance with the spirit and the letter of agreements ("Sharon's History Lesson," Editorial, the *Jerusalem Post*, 3 August 2003).

In fact, some are suggesting Israel's (and America's) patience has run out and the next Palestinian transgression will be met with proper response ("[Sharon Is Ready to Pound Palestinians the Way Bush Whipped Saddam](#)," Zev Chafets, *Jewishworldreview.com*, 5 August 2003). That of course, remains to be seen. It is a sure bet transgressions will take place but it is less sure of a bet to predict Israeli reaction.

Examine the good-will gesture that Israel made by releasing Palestinian terrorists housed in Israeli prisons. This was a step not required by the Roadmap and instead of Palestinians welcoming it they lambasted Israel for not releasing all prisoners (i.e., terrorists). It appears no matter what Israel will do (other than committing collective suicide) Arabs will never be pleased ("Israel's Prisoner Release Fails to Win PR Battle," Ellis Shuman, *israelinsider.com*, 7 August 2003).

Regrettably, the *Atlanta Journal* carried a front page story with a very positive headline ("334 Palestinian Prisoners Freed to Joyful Return," Craig Nelson, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 7 August 2003) and a photo of a released terrorist hugging his daughter as if this was a homecoming celebration. Indeed, two days later the paper carried a very similar front page coverage of article/photo and this time it was on the return of U.S. soldiers ("Charlie Company Comes Home," Ron Martz, the *Atlanta Journal - Constitution*, 9 August 2003). One has to work very hard to avoid the inevitable comparison of the sense of patriotism shown towards returning U.S. soldiers and the reverence with which terrorists have been depicted. Reporters may have done their job well but editors should go back to study journalism at a better school.

**Palestinians are masters of the non-deal. They reach an "agreement" and then violate it. Then they deny they violate it. Then they add several impositions on the deal that were not originally part of it.** This is exactly what happened with the Palestinian self-declared "cease-fire" which is anything but. As the terror campaign continues they have added two demands: Release their terrorists from Israeli prisons (as if this is an entitlement) and stop building the Israeli security fence ("Stuck on a Barrier that's Not on the Roadmap," Charles Krauthammer, the *Washington Post*, 8 August 2003).

In addition they jump at anything else that Israel does if criticism serves their political agenda. The Israeli parliament has passed a (temporary) law (to be reviewed and ratified on an annual basis) to prevent giving automatic citizenship to Palestinians who marry Israeli Arabs. Israel has done it for two reasons: First, to curb the relatively free movement so as to prevent Palestinians from committing terror; second, to prevent Palestinians from using such marriages (fictitious or otherwise) from adding volumes to the number of Israeli Arabs. Civil rights groups in Israel, Europe and elsewhere (and of course Palestinian members of the Israeli parliament) have railed over this imposition, yet there is no example anywhere in the world where a country gives an automatic citizenship to anyone marrying its citizens ("The Right of Citizenship," Editorial, the *Jerusalem Post*, 7 August 2003).

This is the same kind of moral failure practiced by those who tried so hard to keep Saddam in Power ("A Moral Failure: Why did so many on the left march to save Saddam Hussein?" Norman Geras, the *Wall Street Journal*, 4 August 2003).

Interestingly enough, the three entities that gave the U.S. the hardest times prior to the war in Iraq, the European Union, Russia and the U.N., are also members with the U.S. in the "Quartet" that endorses the Roadmap. Of these the U.N. is the body with the most blatant anti-Israel policies and the most shameless pro-Palestinian support. Its "fact-finding" spending sprees, its declarations, its conferences and its agenda leave no room for any other conclusion ("[The U.N. is Still a Stage for Anti-Israel Incitement](#)," Shlomo Shamir, *Ha'aretz*, 7 August 2003).

In a fascinating development, the Palestinian prime minister's planned visit to Kuwait was canceled because he (i.e., Arafat) refused a Kuwaiti demand that Palestinians apologize for (and condemn) their backing of Iraq during its 1990 invasion of Kuwait which sparked the 1991 Gulf War ("Abbas Skips Trip to Kuwait," the Associated Press, the *New York Times*, 9 August 2003). While Kuwaitis are not exactly a role model when it comes to civil rights and freedom they are clearly serving as a model when it comes to dignity. Their own. No apology, no visit. And the Palestinians could not bring themselves to come up with one. Perhaps they should demand the Kuwaitis apologize for kicking them out right after the Gulf War and maybe demand a *right of return*? Surely Israel should demand an apology from the Palestinians - who cheered when Iraqi SCUD missiles rained on Israel and then boisterously killed Israelis. So should the U.S. for American citizens killed by Palestinian terror in the last three or four decades.

At least some elected officials in the U.S. are seeing that the fight Israel is fighting is one and the same the U.S. is fighting ("Israel's Fight is Our Fight" Tom DeLay, the *Jerusalem Post*, 3 August 2003): "The U.S. has fought evil before, in many forms, and, with the help of allies like Israel,

we are committed to defeating global terrorism now. Once this battle is won we will put all our resources toward winning the peace, too. But while this battle still rages, it is the position of the people of the U.S., as expressed by their representatives in Congress, that Israel's fight is our fight."

A similar sentiment was expressed by Sol Stern, a writer who recently visited Israel ("[Israel Without Apology](#)," Sol Stern, *City Journal*, 7 August 2003): "That Friday afternoon...was more important in understanding what will secure a decent future for the Middle East than any State Department" or U.N.-crafted "Roadmap." It showed the resiliency of a brave democracy that has endured lethal assault from the same people who want America and Americans to die not because of our faults but because of our democratic virtues. That is why Israel now deserves the support, without apology or equivocation, of the U.S. government and of every fellow democrat in the world."

Perhaps expecting terrorists to apologize is out of touch with reality. After all, why should there be expectations of civilized behavior from those who violate the most basic premises of society by taking the lives of others and then glorify these acts as an entitlement that leads to heaven? Rosa Luxemburg has written about the fine line between the art of the possible and opportunism; and it is important to be forewarned that political greed and opportunism of the moment may prove not all is possible. Catering to the whims of murderers and terrorists for the convenience of the moment will end up as an opportunistic measure for which the victim may be paying an even higher price in the future.

International diplomacy should heed President Bush's uncompromising statement in his June 24 speech and in many occasions after the September 11 atrocity and fight terrorism unconditionally and unwaveringly. That is the true challenge both Sharon and Bush now face. Ignoring this or responding half-heartedly or distinguishing between terror aimed at the U.S. and that aimed at Israel, the Philippines, Indonesia, India, or Russia will only backfire. Oh, yes, pun intended. And for heeding that policy there is no need to apologize.