

Wannsee, Oslo, Geneva

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By Robbie Friedmann

Lately, more courageous dissenting voices are being heard from Arab corners. A Saudi Arabian writer introspectively takes responsibility for being the problem rather than blaming it on others ("[Saudi Columnist: 'We Have Bred Monsters ... We Are the Problem and Not America,'](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Saudi Arabia/Reform in the Arab and Muslim World, 30 November 2003, No. 617).

An American-Arab source criticized the antisemitic speech of the Malaysian Prime Minister ("U.S. Liberal Arabic Website Rebuttal to Mahathir's Speech," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Reform Project/Arab Antisemitism Project, 2 December 2003, No. 618) arguing that it "encouraged ignorance among Muslims," maintaining that "Muslims' 'Jewish Complex' began with Islam," and claiming "the Muslims are responsible for creating a cultural separation fence."

A Canadian Muslim author called for an Islamic reformation that would purge the Muslim world of antisemitism ("Muslim Feminist Manji Wows Crowd in Toronto," Sheldon Gordon, *Forward*, 28 November 2003).

In Egypt there was a call to remove Islam as the country's official religion ("[Leading Egyptian Feminist Dr. Al-Sa'dawi: Islam Should be Removed from the Egyptian Constitution as the 'Official Religion,'](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Egypt/Reform in the Arab and Muslim World, 5 December 2003, No. 621) and an Egyptian playwright described the required change in mentality to move from a state of war to a state of peace ("[Leading Egyptian Liberal Ali Salem on the Struggle of Arab Intellectuals for Freedom,](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Egypt/Reform in the Arab and Muslim World, 5 December 2003, No. 622).

While these are promising buds of hope that certainly should be encouraged and nurtured, the Arab/Muslim narrative continues to be dominated with hate and fantasy. Therefore, some accurately point out that the liberal movement in the Arab world today is weaker than its predecessor in Japan, and much weaker than its predecessor in Germany. Yet the prospects for war and peace in the coming decades depend, critically as an observer argues on whether it can somehow achieve a better fate ("Listening to Arabs," Joshua Muravchik, *Commentary*, December 2003).

Indeed, terror international is no longer limited (and actually never was) to the U.N.-funded refugee camps in the Gaza strip. Institutionalized indoctrination of hate is now part of political establishments from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan and beyond (including the U.S.) with a danger of the resurgence of the Taliban ("[Over the Cuckoo's Nest,](#)" Arnaud de Borchgrave, *The Washington Times*, 2 December 2003): "Pakistan's *madrassas* (Koranic schools) are still churning out 750,000 jihadi-prone male teenagers a year with the same hateful views of America, Israel and India. The fossilized clerics in charge have stood their ground -- with Wahhabi clergy money still reaching them from Saudi Arabia. An estimated total of five million young men have passed through the system for the last 13 years."

The danger posed to the free world is not only from indoctrination and suicide bombers but from the ultimate weapons of mass destruction - the A-Bomb. So much so that four countries that usually do not see eye to eye have joined together to demand Iran comply with international law in connection with its nuclear program, namely the threat it poses ("[Israel: Iran is now danger No. 1 U.S., Britain, France and Germany threatened Iran on Monday with sanctions over its nuclear program](#)," Nicole Gaouette, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 28 November 2003). Yet it is very hard to believe a country that is willing to drop a bomb and duped international inspectors for two decades will suddenly behave. These threats by the four countries will prove to be absolutely ineffective and certainly inefficient unless backed by action.

This can be illustrated from another perspective. The world (and more than a few Israelis) tend to perceive a lull in terrorist activities. This despite daily attacks. However, this is not for lack of trying. In the last few weeks Israeli security services were able to intercept dozens of terrorists attempts and those attempts continue in earnest ("Mofaz: Quiet is Illusory, Arafat Still Pulling Strings," JPost.com Staff, 30 November 2003).

But terror is reflected not only in bombs but also in the hate that leads to them. Therefore, the sublimation of traditional antisemitism into anti-Israeli rhetoric only makes its evil force more sinister by relying on its traditional images: the Jewish conspiracy to rule the world, linking Jews with money and media, the hooked-nose stingy Jew, the blood libel, disparaging use of Jewish symbols or traditional Christian anti-Jewish imagery. These are themes now used to describe Israel's actions. British Labor MP Tam Dalyell decried the influence of "a Jewish cabal" on British foreign policy-making and an Italian cartoonist last year depicted the Israeli siege of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem as an attempt to kill Jesus "again" ("[Anti-Zionism is antisemitism: Behind much criticism of Israel is a thinly veiled hatred of Jews](#)," Emanuele Ottolenghi, *The Guardian*, 29 November 2003).

A British cartoonist won the political cartoon award for depicting Sharon as a (Palestinian) child-eating monster modeled after Goya's "Saturn devouring one of his sons." Despite his strenuous objections to his cartoon being antisemitic, the fact remains that he might as well have published it in *Der Sturmer* the notorious Nazi organ for hateful articles and [malicious antisemitic cartoons](#). As an editorial argues, the test of antisemitism should not be in admitting to it but in measuring the effect of the action, and in this case the message is unequivocal ("Cartoon Jews," *The Jerusalem Post*, Editorial, 30 November 2003).

Some (non-Jewish) writers in ultra-liberal papers such as the *Guardian* have recognized the anti-Israel (namely antisemitic) trend and decided to leave it for another paper ("Good, Bad and Ugly," Julie Burchill, *The Guardian*, 29 November 2003). Others see dangers not only to Jews but to systems of democratic governance fearing that antisemitism might bring back totalitarianism ("Hatred of Jews Threatens Rule of Law, Former CIA Head Warns of 'Totalitarianism,'" Joseph Brean, *National Post*, 1 December 2003).

The threat is indeed coming from and is lead by totalitarian countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In a library in Egypt, a notoriously antisemitic propaganda book, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, is now displayed near the Torah (the five books of the Old Testament). The Egyptians claim it is a Jewish manuscript "more important" than the Torah ("[Jewish Holy Books](#)

[On Display at the Alexandria Library: The Torah & the Protocols of the Elders of Zion,](#)" MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Egypt/Arab Antisemitism Project, 3 December 2003, No. 619). That is like saying a pornographic magazine is more important than the New Testament.

The media plays an important role in rounding the rough edges of antisemitism if not legitimizing it altogether. When lists of terror incidents and terror victims are published by news agencies (on which newspapers and TV/radio rely), Israel is not on the list. Apparently Israelis are not considered victims of terror because the media sources see it as a result of a "political struggle" and not sheer terrorism. The media also engages in classical, politically correct doublespeak, adopting unfounded claims by Arabs/Muslims. They report Arab denial of the Jewish Temple *as fact* and Israeli claims to it as an *allegation* ("[Media's Israel Double-standard,](#)" Joseph Farah, WorldNetDaily, 24 November 2003).

Yet an important development has put media outlets on notice following the conviction by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda of three Rwandan media executives from the Hutu tribe of genocide, incitement to commit genocide and crimes against humanity ("[Rwandans Applaud Genocide Verdict,](#)" BBC, 4 December, 2003).

The new Chief Prosecutor said "the verdict would serve as a warning for journalists and editors in other conflicts. The tribunal has established an international precedent that those who use media to target a racial or ethnic group for destruction will face justice" and the verdict included a statement that "The power of the media to create and destroy human values comes with great responsibility...Those who control the media are accountable for its consequences" ("[Court Convicts 3 in 1994 Genocide Across Rwanda,](#)" Sharon LaFraniere, *New York Times*, 4 December 2003).

Meanwhile self-styled Arab-American advocacy groups continue to support terror while focusing their efforts on mounting frivolous complaints about violations of their "rights" thus providing sufficient grounds for some Arab Americans to question if they really represent their interests and demanding that such groups distance themselves from extremism ("[The priorities of Muslim-Americans,](#)" Joseph Farah, WorldNetDaily.com, 25 November 2003).

It appears freedom of speech is being tested but that is a misleading perception. It should but is not. In campuses in the U.S. and Canada (add Europe of course) extremists activists are busy with grand designs on the destruction of Israel more than on their studies of Medieval French literature ("Campus Rally for Terror," Lee Kaplan, FrontPageMagazine.com, 3 December 2003). In Canada you cannot enter a meeting of Palestinian activists unless you sign a statement that you support the Palestinian right to fight Israel with any means "they deem necessary," which is a euphemism for legitimizing terrorism. And in Ohio, a workshop on "Deconstructing Zionist Responses On Your Campus" focused on dismissing "concern over suicide bombings while debating the Israel/Palestine issue." But the "debate" focused on radical activists advocating the destruction of Israel "by any means necessary."

Tom Friedman ("I have great sympathy for where the Left is coming from") correctly criticizes the London anarchists who blame Bush (and Blair) for all the world's ills. He is so eager to hear them blame the real culprits "just a little" that he is willing to equate Bush to bin Laden ("[The Chant Not Heard,](#)" Thomas L. Friedman, *The New York Times*, 30 November 2003): "Hey, I

would have settled for 'Bush and Blair equal bin Laden and Saddam' - something, anything, that acknowledged that the threats to global peace today were not just coming from the White House and Downing Street." This is the kind of idiotic logic of magnanimity-compromise that demands very little on one hand and loses far more on the other.

Recently a carnival of prostitution took place in Geneva funded by the government of Switzerland. Not your regular street harlots, but those who eagerly have sold their country - Israel - to the enemy and were proud of it. There were Palestinians there too ("[Unofficial Mideast Peace Initiative Unveiled: Much-criticized plan calls for concessions on both sides](#)," Matthew Chance, CNN, 1 December 2003) and the Israeli-Palestinian "negotiators" were even seen by Secretary of State Colin Powell at week's end ("Powell Effort Aims to Pressure Sharon on Peace Accord," Glenn Kessler, *Washington Post*, 3 December 2003). The Israelis in all likelihood truly believed they were doing their country a favor and were bringing peace ever closer. The Palestinians were there because they were smarter. They were the pimps. The Israeli political rejects were the harlots who justified being in the oldest profession because they love sex.

The proof was not late in coming. Palestinian officials were quick to state that the initiative was not done for peace but as a tactic to divide Israelis (as they did after Oslo admitting it was a trick). Just before the signature the armed wing of Fatah, al-Aksa Martyrs' Brigades, issued a strongly worded statement condemning the agreement ("Fatah Official: Initiative Designed to Divide Israelis," Khaled Abu Toameh and Lamia Lahoud, *The Jerusalem Post*, 30 November 2003) as were Palestinian intellectuals in the U.S. ("Origins of the Middle East Crisis: Who caused Palestinian Diaspora? Israel needs to apologize, let them back," George Bisharat, Special to *The Bee Sunday, Sacramento Bee*, 30 November 2003).

The Palestinian Authority (namely Arafat) has officially "celebrated" the agreement (no it is not a contradiction - it is a plan to confuse the enemy) but did so only verbally, not in writing and only after cliff-hanging tensions keeping everyone wondering whether they would even participate in the ceremony. However, they were even quicker to reject the only achievement that Israelis claimed they got from the Palestinians saying they will never give up "their right to return." ("PA Celebrates 'Geneva Agreement' While Rejecting Their Only Concession." Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, 2 December 2003). Arafat himself remained tactically silent ("Why is Arafat Silent?" Danny Rubinstein, *Ha'aretz*, 1 December 2003).

Indeed, shortly after the "signature," the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Nebil Shaath, emphasized that Palestinians "will never give up the right to return to their houses, and will negotiate only about the procedures of returning." And the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council stated, "The right of return is holy and no one can cancel it." Moreover, after Geneva, the same PA that "celebrated" the agreement continued with its effort to destroy Israel ("The Palestinian KEY: The Symbol of PA Rejection of 'Geneva' and Rejection of Israel's Right to Exist," Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, 3 December 2003).

The Geneva Agreement was the best show in town in the minds of the producers but the critics did not take kindly to it. Lambasting it as a foolish repeat of Oslo ("Peace Farce," Editorial, *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 December 2003; see also "Blame the Chaos on Sharon," Isi Leibler, *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 December 2003) that is equated with the appeasement of Hitler and will have the same outcome ("[Geneva is a Blueprint for War, not Peace](#)," Jeff Jacoby, *The Boston Globe*, 4

December 2003): "For the fervent acclaim the accord has drawn resembles nothing so much as the jubilation that greeted the Munich Accord of 1938, when Neville Chamberlain agreed to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in order to placate Adolf Hitler."

Others correctly identify the dangers not only to Israel but also to international diplomacy ("The Geneva Discord," Ilana Freedman, *MetroWest Daily News*, 5 December 2003): "Whatever the argument might be in favor of the Geneva initiative, the process that it represents threatens the future of international negotiations and policy-making. America's support of this maverick initiative will compromise our own foreign policy and the lasting impact of this new benchmark will be felt not only in the Middle East but throughout the world."

Of course there were prominent figures who clearly identified the many flaws of the agreement and exposed it for the fraud it constitutes. It is particularly important to note when such criticism is coming from figures such as former Prime Minister Ehud Barak who gave the Palestinians unprecedented concessions only to be "reciprocated" with terrorism. Or a Left-leaning scholar-civil servant such as Professor Avineri who enumerated key elements in this accord which render it nothing but damaged-goods ("[The Lies of Geneva](#)," Shlomo Avineri, IMRA, 4 December 2003).

One of the most pathetic yet disconcerting scenes from Geneva was a speech delivered by former President Jimmy Carter, setting the tone for the Palestinians who immediately seized the opportunity of having the world stage to attack Israel. Clearly a contradictory outcome to what promised to be a peaceful gathering. Carter is responsible for equating settlements with terrorism, for demanding excessive concessions from Israel and for complaining that President George W. Bush is biased towards Israel. All this is well beyond what a "peaceful" and even-handed speech warranted. But his worse performance was in an interview he gave following the Geneva signing in which he is quoted as saying ("[Self-Appointed Israeli and Palestinian Negotiators Offer a Plan for Middle East Peace](#)," Elaine Sciolino, *The New York Times*, 2 December 2003): "Had I been elected to a second term, with the prestige and authority and influence and reputation I had in the region, we could have moved to a final solution"

A final solution? Carter - one of the worst presidents in U.S. history - may not be historically inclined enough to know the meaning of this term. That is giving him the benefit of the doubt. However, if he chose his words carefully this is even worse. One does not have to be Jewish to be deeply offended by his lack of sensitivity. Suffice it to visit [Yad-Vashem](#) and see the 20 January 1942 Wannsee Protocol (pronounced: Vahn-zeh) that became the Nazi-documented master plan for the annihilation of the Jews using the notorious term "The Final Solution." Mort Kondracke stated on FOX that Carter is plainly anti-Israel. As I once wrote concerning him, being a fool or a knave, makes no difference in his case. If he has any decency left he ought to apologize profusely. Otherwise he should be categorized as a supporter of genocide in which case he should return the Nobel Peace Prize (clearly not the only mistake made by the Prize Committee).

From Wannsee to Oslo and from Oslo to Geneva it appears the world is not learning. One could only remain wondering how the Bush administration would have reacted to a group of democrats - say under the leadership of Al Gore - going to Iraq now and "negotiating" an "alternative" plan with Saddam Hussein and/or Osama bin Laden. In fact, this is as close as Carter has come when

he went to Cuba - luckily with far less disastrous consequences.

Perhaps the best counter argument to Carter and his ilk is that with their action and rhetoric they are weakening and destroying the very few democracies that offer a beacon of hope for a world desperately needing proofs of success and best practices of democracy. Indeed, even the Bush administration needs to step carefully in this field to make certain it does not undo with one hand what it is trying to build with the other ("Is Bush Selling Out? Washington should stand behind democracies in Israel and Taiwan," Claudia Rosett, *The Wall Street Journal*, 3 December 2003): "...in those places where democracy, in the face of terrible threats and against huge odds, has established itself--in Israel's democratic outpost in the Middle East, in Taiwan's democratic flowering in the Chinese world--it is crucial that we yield no ground. A policy of appeasing current tyrants, the better to concentrate on Iraq to the exclusion of all else, may offer some in Washington an illusion of calm. But to nudge Israel yet again in the direction of the peace-at-any-price crowd, to even hint at offering up Taiwan's security in the absurd hope of placating China's politburo, is to embrace standards so frail that the result can only be to embolden our enemies and erode the very progress we are at such pains to achieve in Iraq."

To the credit of the desperately-seeking-peace crowd it could be said that peace is indeed a lofty goal worth pursuing. It is a noble value that says much about who we are as human beings. That is actually encouraging. But the problem lies in assuming that everyone buys into the same values and that if we are interested in peace so is everyone else. However, wishful thinking is a bad substitute for careful policy. That is exactly why the jubilation over Chamberlain's "achievement" in Munich was so short-lived and so erroneous to begin with. There is nothing more appropriate to the current circumstances than the old saying: "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Good intentions are simply not good enough. It is high time to adopt a sober business-like approach where peace should not be pursued at any cost and certainly should not lead to war or serve as a deceiving mechanism that masks hostile intentions.