

Sorry Jack, It IS Lawful, Justified and Productive

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By Robbie Friedmann

Important news items raced each other last week faster than race cars in a [NASCAR](#) event. By the end of the week the elimination of Hamas' terrorist leader Rantisi, and the European ranting about it, replaced the news from Iraq, Ariel Sharon's visit to the U.S., the U.S. backing of his disengagement plan, President George W. Bush's important press conference and the Osama "truce" offer. With 19 April marking Holocaust Memorial Day this year, it is worth connecting some dots among all these.

Osama purportedly offered peace to Europeans but pledged to continue to terrorize the U.S. Most Western media outlets correctly translated the offer as "truce" or "cease-fire" rather than "peace," and indeed the original Arabic term used implies a temporary arrangement, an arbitration. This offer sounded far more as an ultimatum than a good-will gesture. It is shocking that the Europeans flatly and quickly rejected it ("[Osama bin Laden Speech Offers Peace Treaty with Europe, Says al-Qaeda 'Will Persist in Fighting' the U.S.](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Jihad & Terrorism Studies Project, 15 April 2004, No. 695).

In his press conference last week (President Addresses the Nation in Prime Time Press Conference, Press Conference of the President, The East Room, 8:31 P.M. EDT, 13 April 2004), President Bush had all the appropriate components of defining terrorism as an international affliction and no longer distinguishing between terrorism directed against Israelis and all other terrorism connecting the dots with Iraq and standing steadfast on his policy there: "The violence we are seeing in Iraq is familiar. The terrorist who takes hostages or plants a roadside bomb near Baghdad is serving the same ideology of murder that kills innocent people on trains in Madrid, murders children on buses in Jerusalem, blows up a nightclub in Bali and cuts the throat of a young reporter for being a Jew."

Sharon's visit the following day resulted in the strongest support any Israeli Prime Minister has received from the White House. Defined as a shift in policy and no less than a "shocker" ("Bush Concedes West Bank to Israel in Policy Shocker," Barry Schweid, Associated Press, 14 April 2004). What was pleasing to many (not all) Israelis was received as doomsday by Palestinians ("Palestinians See plan as Disastrous," Margaret Coker, Craig Nelson, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 18 April 2004).

The biggest achievement was the virtual nullification of the Palestinian so-called "right of return" but on most other issues the declarations fairly clearly suggest they be solved at the negotiating table - assuming the Palestinians are ever able to drag themselves there. That clearly means the declarations the President has made should be perceived to be an opening gambit to the negotiations ("[Double-edged Bush](#)," Ze'ev Schiff, *Ha'aretz*, 15 April 2004). Another achievement was the removal of any ambiguity about Israel's territorial predicament, as Bush has made it clear the 1967 borders are not sacred, relying on the significantly missing "the" in [U.N. Resolution 242](#) in reference to "territories" ("Old Realities," George Will, TownHall.com, 18 April 2004).

Sharon was not the only visitor to the U.S. He was sandwiched between the ruler of Egypt and the King of Jordan. But the fairly positive press he received in the U.S. was not shared by his Egyptian counterpart. In fact a scathing editorial criticized him ("Our Man in Cairo," Editorial, *The Washington Post*, 12 April 2004) as "the largest obstacle to President Bush's democracy initiative in the greater Middle East." Not exactly a title fitting one who calls himself a great ally and friend of the U.S.

He is not - as of yet - defined as an enemy, and neither are some of those from within who are earnestly involved in an "uprising" against the U.S. An American academic ("[A Berkeley Prof's 'Intifada' Against America](#)," Jonathan Calt Harris, *FrontPageMagazine*, 15 April 2004) who is a native Palestinian with a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from U.C. Berkeley, and currently a lecturer in Near Eastern Studies and Ethnic Studies Departments there, has literally incited to "...support the resistance (in Iraq); we've got to say that we support attacks against the occupying forces."

Not surprisingly, a well-respected journalist has finally dared legitimize the term "fifth column" in reference to the enemy within ("[Islamist Fifth Columns](#)," Arnaud de Borchgrave, *The Washington Times*, 8 April 2004). And he is not only talking about Europe and the increasingly growing (demographically, culturally and politically) Islamist presence there. He also makes unequivocal reference to the presence of a fifth column in the U.S. in the shape of activists such as [Abdurahman Alamoudi](#), an American citizen who was the prime mover behind the American Muslim Council, and organizations such as The Council on American-Islamic Relations. Some have even gainfully acquired the title of "[Islamism's Poster Boy](#)" (Alyssa A. Lappen, *FrontPageMagazine*, 15 April 2004) although it is no longer clear whether they operate from inside the U.S. any longer.

Others occupy prominent clerical positions in the United States. A Detroit cleric was brazen enough to write - and a paper gullible enough to print - an article praising Sheikh Yassin as nothing less than a saint ("Peace Still Possible Despite Sheik's Killing," Imam Mohammad Ali Elahi/Special to *The Detroit News*, 10 April 2004) and at the same time fully "understanding" and supporting terrorism. He laced his article in terms of "peace" and "justice," ignoring and twisting facts on the ground and purposefully misleading the novice reader about what he means by peace and justice.

Mainstream papers in the U.S. have become channels of propaganda for Arab writers who skillfully twist facts and spare no efforts to make the perpetrators look like victims ("Toll of Young Victims Grows: Palestinian children's deaths at Israel's hands draw little attention," Khalid Amayreh, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 15 April 2004). Another article in the Atlanta paper shows far more sympathy for Palestinians than warranted by the journalists' role of factual report and has deteriorated into opinion providing ("Palestinians See Plan as Disastrous," Margaret Coker, Craig Nelson, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 18 April 2004).

The lack of willingness to connect between various types of terrorism and to see terrorism against one (Israel) as terrorism against all is not the only reason the West has failed to understand and contain terrorism. A fairly lengthy history of appeasement has ended with President Bush ("[The Fruits of Appeasement](#)," Victor Davis Hanson, *City Journal*, Spring 2004) who, "impervious to such self-deception, has in a mere two and a half years, reversed the

perilous course of a quarter-century. Since September 11, he has removed the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, begun to challenge the Middle East through support for consensual government, isolated Yasser Arafat, pressured the Europeans on everything from antisemitism to their largesse to Hamas, removed American troops from Saudi Arabia, shut down fascistic Islamic 'charities,' scattered al-Qaeda, turned Pakistan from a de facto foe to a scrutinized neutral, rounded up terrorists in the United States, pressured Libya, Iran and Pakistan to come clean on clandestine nuclear cheating, so far avoided another September 11 and promises that he is not nearly done yet."

Indeed, the result of the appeasement is that friends and allies "cannibalize" each other while the enemy watches and benefits. This form of cannibalism also applies to internal debates during times of war ("Western Cannibalism: Eating each other while our enemies smile," Victor Davis Hanson, *National Review*, 8 April 2004): "...resolution will not come from recrimination in time of war, nor promises to let fundamentalists and their autocratic sponsors alone, but only through the military defeat and subsequent humiliation of their cause." Indeed, the irony of the political fiasco of the 9-11 Commission is aptly captured by one commentator ("[Thank You for Choosing United, Mr. bin Laden](#)," Anne Coulter, WorldNetDaily, 14 April 2004): "Bin Laden is still determined to attack inside the United States! Could they (commission members) please tell us when and where the next attack will be?"

Along these lines it is encouraging to see projections for the Middle East that are understanding of the real issues that shape developments in that region and the rest of the world by not falling into the trap of political correctness ("Possibilities for Mideast Peace," George P. Shultz, *The Washington Post*, 14 April 2004).

But this does not mean that fronts for the old mantra - that have long proven themselves as hollow - have disappeared. Prominent among them is Tom Friedman who continues to see "settlements" as a red flag ("[Kicking Over the Chessboard](#)," Thomas L. Friedman, *The New York Times*, 18 April 2004) and Israel as the "problem" ("[The Anti-Israel Saga of Tom Friedman et al](#)," Irwin N. Graulich, israelinsider, 14 April 2004)

Yet despite all proof to the opposite, Friedman deeply believes that now is a good chance for Palestinians to "prove" themselves: "Palestinians will have a chance to reposition themselves in the eyes of Israelis. They will have a chance to build a decent ministate of their own in Gaza that will prove to Israelis they can live in peace next to Israel. It will be hard and they will need help. Gaza is dirt poor. But if the Palestinians show they can build a decent state, it will do more to persuade Israelis to give up more of the West Bank, or swap land there for parts of Israel, than any Bush statements or Hamas terror. This is the best chance Palestinians have ever had to run their own house without the Israelis around. I wish them well, because if they do well, everything will be on the table." This, as if anyone has prevented them from doing so before. The problem with this approach is that it does not take into account what will happen if the Palestinians turn the Gaza strip into a terror state - a far more likely realistic scenario.

While able to inflict great damage to their enemy, it is encouraging to note that historically Arabs tend to lose the wars they wage. Probably because of the very similar reason they tend to fight them in the first place. A military analysis of their campaigns focuses on the reasons for these losses ("[Why Do Arabs Lose Wars?](#)," Norvell De Atkine, *Middle East Quarterly*, December

1999, Volume VI: Number 4).

The analysis focuses not only on economic, ideological and technical reasons but also on culture and societal attributes, arguing that "...until Arab politics begin to change at fundamental levels, Arab armies, whatever the courage or proficiency of individual officers and men, are unlikely to acquire the range of qualities which modern fighting forces require for success on the battlefield. For these qualities depend on inculcating respect, trust and openness among members of the armed forces at all levels, and this is the marching music of modern warfare that Arab armies, no matter how much they emulate the corresponding steps, do not want to hear." An important point for their potential adversaries to note. Comforting in its outcome but at what a heavy price.

Given how the Arabs fight wars the threat may not lie in winning conventional wars against them (Iraq is illustrative of this point). This is not said to dismiss the cost of such wars in human lives and property. This is more to point out that the danger lies in the intentions, style, methods, consistence, persistence, deceit and any lack of shame associated with it. In short, an ethos that increasingly proves to be disastrous ("The Ethos of Islam," Mordechai Nisan, *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 April 2004).

Often the people of the region get credit for being passive (when not violent) by blaming the leaders. The leaders of course blame the "street" for needing to rule with an iron fist. One observer suggests both are true ("The Mirror of Fallujah: No more passes and excuses for the Middle East," Victor Davis Hanson, 4 April 2004): "If we are to try to bring some good to the Middle East, then we must first have the intellectual courage to confess that for the most part the pathologies embedded there are not merely the work of corrupt leaders but often the very people who put them in place and allowed them to continue their ruin."

The seriousness and severity of their malice is omnipresent. Last week the Jordanians were able to prevent a major chemical terror attack by al-Qaeda against Jordanian and American interests. And the Palestinians were also prevented from using biological agents in a terror attack ("Terrorists Attempted Bio-Warfare Attack: Tanzim plan to detonate AIDS-tainted charge foiled. Hizbullah aided and funded plot. Additional Passover attacks thwarted as well," Amir Rapaport, *Ma'ariv*, 13 April 2004).

Hearing the support that an Iraqi terrorist leader has for Hamas and Hizbullah, one observer suggests ("Familiar Scene: Feeding continues, so terror continues," Rachel Ehrenfeld, *National Review*, 14 April 2004) that the world failed to contain terrorism while it still could: "The historical and persisting failure of the U.S. and the West to denounce Palestinian terrorists' atrocities, and to put an end to their activities, was clearly perceived as a weakness by the Islamists. This weakness is now being exploited by al-Qaeda and other Muslim fundamentalists, who have taken up arms against the U.S. and Coalition forces." Indeed, the support and identification of the Iraqi terrorist with his Palestinian and Lebanese counterparts emanates out of the perception that these organizations are the closest to winning their jihad in the Islamist world ("Sadr and Sharon," Saul Singer, *The Jerusalem Post*, 8 April 2004).

Indeed, frenzy feeds frenzy as the Palestinians were showing full support to Saddam Hussein by burning Israeli and U.S. flags to commemorate the first anniversary of Baghdad's fall

("Palestinians Urge Holy War against Us," Khaled Abu Toameh, *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 April 2004). Just before the Hamas terrorist leader was eliminated ("Israel Kills Hamas Leader Rantisi," *Ma'ariv* News Service, 17 April 2004) he was able still to send the following message to the "Iraqi people:" "...the Palestinian people are with you, you are fighting the American terrorism as we fight the Zionist terrorism. I'm certain that you would win your battle against the Americans and you would of course defeat American terrorism. You are there on the front line because you are fighting the enemies of God and Islam, the murderers Bush and Sharon." After statements like this, one remains befuddled as to why anyone would insist on offering the Palestinians a state of their own.

While the American administration was careful not to condemn Israel for eliminating Rantisi and clearly expressed the sentiment that Israel has the right to defend herself, the U.N. and the Europeans were quick to condemn the elimination as quick as they were to reject bin Laden's "truce" offer. The British Foreign Secretary, true to his colors, condemned the act as "unlawful, unjustified and counter-productive" ("Israel Kills Top Hamas Leader in Missile Strike," Reuters, 17 April 2004) and the EU foreign policy chief has added that "Israel has a right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks, but actions of this type are not only unlawful, they are not conducive to lowering tension." One remains wondering how terrorist atrocities contribute to lowering tensions because those are not usually condemned by the high-minded Europeans. Thus one must conclude they are tolerated as long as they are not targeting Europe and England. Good old Jack Straw is simply wrong. Rantisi's elimination is lawful, it is justified and it is productive. Letting him live this long was not.

The Americans increasingly understand who the terrorists are. Little wonder. After all, his elimination was helpful to the U.S. in the same way that Israeli anti-terror tactics are increasingly found to be helpful to the U.S. in its war in Iraq ("U.S. Using Israeli Tactics to Subdue Iraq Uprising," *World Tribune.com*, 16 April 2004). One can remain wondering if the Brits will be ever able or willing to connect the dots without having to experience Islamic terrorism at their doorstep. Given Blair's humiliating visit to Libya and the shameful declarations by his Foreign Minister, it perhaps matters not to the Brits even if they will be hit again as they were in Lockerbie.

The Brits, who were quick to send Blair to shake Ghaddafi's hand and welcome him back to civilization, are back to their old tricks and now are thumbing their noses at the U.S. by meddling in the affairs of the Gaza Strip. Specifically they are training Palestinian "security" forces, except they have conveniently ignored that the top slots these forces occupy are on the U.S. terror list ("Gaza - the British are Coming: British involvement in Gaza," Shmuel Bar, AME exclusive - 11 April 2004).

Astute observers have warned that virulent antisemitism ends up historically causing great damage to their instigators not only to their intended victims. Indeed, current antisemitism in Europe is strongly based on a combined Euro-Arab anti-Israel sentiment as well as anti-Israel policy but it also has anti-Christian, anti-European and eventually anti-Western ramifications ("[Eurabia and Euro-Arab Antisemitism](#)," Bat Ye'or, *FrontPageMagazine*, 5 April 2004). Others identify fundamental demographic and cultural changes in Europe with unforeseen long-term consequences that portend danger not only to Europe but to the rest of the free world ("[The Way We Live Now: Eurabia?](#)," Niall Ferguson, *The New York Times*, 4 April 2004).

For the last few decades Islamist violence has mainly met a church that preferred to look the other way, for the simple reason of wishing to protect Christian interests of a decreasing Christian population in places holy to Christianity. However, in the last year profoundly critical voices have been heard from the Church. In October 2003 the Vatican denounced with unusual harshness the oppression of Christians in Muslim countries ("The Church and Islam: 'La Civiltà Cattolica' Breaks the Cease-fire," Sandro Magister).

And more recently the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, criticized Islam itself as "authoritarian, inflexible and under-achieving" ("[An Archbishop Tells the Truth About Islam](#)," Val MacQueen, *FrontPageMagazine*, 6 April 2004). This resulted in denunciation from the expected British Islamic quarters, although at least one self-styled Islamist leader later suggested terrorism not be tolerated and should be reported to police, to which the leading Islamist radical cleric said that doing so means "apostasy in Islam."

The Archbishop was joined later by the head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, Cardinal O'Connor ("Cardinal Criticizes Muslim Leaders," *The Western Mail*, 12 April 2004) but the Archbishop might have given up such support - had he been asked - as the Cardinal indirectly justified terrorism by suggesting it is rooted in "inequities" - a claim often used as an excuse by terrorists. Nevertheless, the mere agreement with the Archbishop is significant enough to show that Christian leaders in England have decided it is time to air their grievances in public and no longer remain silent.

Support for the charges by the Church clerics is found in no better source than an Arab liberal writer who argues that leading Muslim ideologues display positive attitudes towards the use of violence ("[Arab Liberal: Most Islamic Ideologues, Organization Leaders Advocate Violence](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Reform Project, 16 April 2004, No. 696).

This week, Israel and the Jewish people commemorate the Holocaust in an annual anniversary that now spans 59 years since the most horrendous experience in human history. An insane system that used a rationally sane scientific approach to exterminate human beings simply for who they were. And not only six million Jews. [Five million "others:"](#) Poles, Afro-Europeans, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, disabled, homosexuals and Jews who converted to Christianity. A total of 11 million people became victims to perpetrators who thought they were "superior" to them and measured their "superiority" by the "inferiority" of the "subhuman" they so expertly vilified.

The importance of [Holocaust Memorial Day](#) lies in remembering so as to never forget the atrocity that was committed by evil and learning the lesson so it will never happen again. The challenge the Islamists of the Osama bin Laden kind (including their peers in Iran, Hamas, Hizbullah, Islamic Jihad, Fatah, Tanzim, Muslim Brotherhood, to name a few, and many sister organizations as well as those who support them) are posing to us is no less sinister than the Holocaust. If we are not watchful and vigilant we will allow an even worse holocaust (if one can imagine that) upon us. Just consider the history so that it is not allowed to repeat itself. As Sharon said commemorating the Holocaust: "We won't let murderers hurt our people...Our face is toward peace, but the defending sword will not be returned to its sheath."