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THE PUBLIC I

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Lebanese girls from the village of Shaara in front of their destroyed home (Left), and an Israeli peace demonstration (Right).



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The United States, Israel and the Middle East

by Kenneth M. Cuno

This is a slightly revised version of the remarks I prepared for an October 26 public forum sponsored by AWARE Presents on "What Should be the U.S. Policy in the Middle East? The Confrontation of Israel with its Neighbors."

I'd like to begin with some observations about the way that we in the U.S. discuss Israel and the Middle East. All too often our discussions are unproductive due to the rhetorical moves we make, and so I'm going to mention some examples before discussing our policy.

For a long time I've been bothered by the way we use the terms "pro-Israel" as opposed to "pro-Arab" or "anti-Israel." We need to stop thinking and speaking in these simplistic terms, which imply that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a zero-sum game. To label someone or some idea as pro-Israel or anti-Israel implies that the existence of the State of Israel is at stake. It isn't. Israel is by far the strongest power in the Middle East, and the majority of the Arab states are now eager to normalize relations, as soon as a satisfactory Israeli-Palestinian settlement is reached. The issue is Israel's boundaries, not Israel's existence. The real existential question is the Palestinian question—the question of whether they will achieve self-determination in a territorially viable state, which is their right. The "pro-Israel" v. "pro-Arab" or "anti-Israel" dichotomy only serves the interests of those who see some advantage in promoting the conflict. A good example of that is the ongoing campaign to smear academic Middle East Studies programs and even academia as a whole as "anti-Israel."

Another sterile exercise is the "blame game." We who are interested in a just political settlement need to stop playing that game, debating who is at fault, who is the aggressor, who "started it," and so forth. There is plenty of blame on both sides for the continuing conflict. Both sides are guilty, to paraphrase the late Abba Eban's words, of almost "never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity" for peace and normalization. However, it is an asymmetrical situation, in which the Palestinians have had much less control over events, and less influence over the public debate. Here are a couple examples of the blame game. Some of Israel's "new historians" have implied that in the early 1950s Ben-Gurion missed an opportunity by not responding to secret peace "feelers" from Egypt and Syria. Well, maybe, but we have no way of knowing what might have happened if he had. Arafat was also blamed for "rejecting peace" at Camp David in 2000. But in actuality the Israeli-American offer was unacceptable. An inability to agree is not the same thing as "rejecting peace."

"Peace" is another problematic term. Maybe we should stop kidding ourselves that the parties in this conflict are seeking peace. Between Israelis and Palestinians the conflict has always been about land. Nowadays Israelis are divided between those who would accept a state within boundaries based on the June 4, 1967 frontiers and those who want to annex part or all of the Occupied Territories, either out of security concerns or nationalist irredentism. The Palestinians are also divided between those who support a two-state solution based on the June 4, 1967 boundaries and nationalist irredentists who want to liberate "all" of historic Palestine. The nationalist irredentists on both sides are delusional and dangerous, but they are in the minority. They can be undercut if there is a clear understanding on the June 4, 1967 boundaries as the basis for a final settlement agreement. "Peace," in the sense of an end to violence, will only be achieved as the result of a just settlement.

Finally, there are a number of terms in usage that I would lump together under the heading of "political fundamentalism." Fundamentalist discourse uses catch words in place of reflection. Too often we slide into a kind of fundamentalism, applying labels such as "terrorism," "Islamofascism," "anti-



Professor Cuno teaches the history of the modern Middle East at UIUC. The framed newspaper is the first edition of *Al-Ahram* from 1876.

Semitism," "racism," "terrorist state," "apartheid state," and so on to those we oppose. These terms generate more heat than light, and are only useful if you're preaching to the choir.

Terrorism is the targeting of civilians or non-combatants for political ends. It is a strategy, albeit an ugly, reprehensible one. Terrorism is practiced by virtually everyone, because it is effective, at least some of the time. We should denounce terrorism, but we should remember that terrorism is not an ideology, and no organization or state is essentially a "terrorist" organization or state. Nor is any religion. There are Muslim terrorists (and other kinds), but there is no such thing as "Islamic terrorism."

Arab and Muslim objections to Israel are not due to an inherent anti-Semitism. Arab and Muslim anti-Semitism is a product of the Arab-Israeli conflict, not a root cause of it. Holocaust denial in the Arab and Muslim world is motivated by the misperception that Israel was created and is supported by the West in compensation for the Holocaust. On the Israeli side there is nakba denial.—Palestinians refer to their uprooting and dispersal in 1948, as the nakba or "disaster." Nakba denial is not denial of the event itself but denial of any Israeli responsibility for it. In that view, the Palestinians "ran away," they were "ordered" to run away, they weren't there to begin with, and besides they started it. Israeli nakba denial springs from the same source as Arab Holocaust denial, namely an unwillingness to accept any legitimacy to the other side's case.

Similar to the accusation that Arabs or Muslims are inherently anti-Semitic is the charge that Zionism is a form of racism or that Israel is a racist "apartheid state." Again, this is political fundamentalism. The equation of Zionism and racism was cooked up by the Arab states in the early 1970s in the hope of isolating Israel as a "pariah state" like the white regime in Rhodesia (today's Zimbabwe). The connection is

very clear if one reads the UN General Assembly resolution of 1974. The absence of any racial doctrine in the foundational Zionist texts is equally clear. On the other hand, there is a mixture of de jure and de facto discrimination against non-Jewish (mainly Palestinian) citizens in Israel that is analogous to racial discrimination in the U.S. half a century ago. The term "apartheid" is more appropriate to the situation in the West Bank, which is why Israelis on the left will use this term—not to condemn Israel as a whole but to warn against the direction they see their country going in.

As for U.S. policy toward Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict, our policy has not been consistently the same, but has evolved in zigs and zags. Approximately 40 years ago Israel became a strategic ally of the US. Before then and since, though, the U.S. made periodic attempts to reconcile the two sides—and to reconcile our Israeli alliance with our Arab alliances—by mediating the conflict and working toward a settlement. Starting in the 1960s that policy of mediation was occasionally abandoned in favor of relying on Israel as a strategic asset in our efforts to dominate the Middle East and to exclude the influence of rivals. This was the strategy during the Nixon administration's first term and during much of the Reagan administration. It was a Cold War, anti-Soviet policy. Throughout those decades, whether mediating the conflict or not, the U.S. had an overall "status quo" strategy, seeking "stability."

I maintain that the policy of the current Bush administration is exceptional in its revisionist goals and its militancy. It is "revisionist" in its stated goal of changing the political order in the Middle East. Regime change has been the avowed policy toward Iraq, Iran, Syria, and the Palestinian Authority, and traditional allies (though not Israel) have also been pressured to change their political systems. It is

Continued on page 3



Vilifying Israel

By An Anonymous Israeli From Our Community

In the recent conflicts in the Middle East, the Israeli point of view is rarely covered, especially by independent media. I think there are a lot of misconceptions and information gaps.

Let's start with a few brief facts. Israel is about 1/5th to 1/6th the size of Illinois. Lebanon is even smaller. Israel was created in the late 1940's. Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iraq became independent from Britain and France at about the same time. They were previously controlled by the Ottoman Empire for about 500 years. The borders drawn by Britain and France are behind much of the current conflict in the region.

Israel has been involved in 3 major wars in which at least 8 neighboring countries directly supplied troops at one point or another (the three other Israel-Lebanon wars are not considered major wars). Two of the major wars occurred before the West Bank and Gaza strip were an issue. At no time during its existence have all of Israel's borders have been quiet from missiles or bombings. Missiles are regularly fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip (Quassams), and Lebanon (Katusias). During the 1991 Gulf War, Baghdad fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel. Iran threatens Israel with missiles and nuclear warheads. A major reason for these ongoing conflicts is the existence of permanent refugee camps.

Before 1967, the West Bank and Gaza strip were part of Jordan and Egypt respectively. Between the creation of those countries and 1967 there was no Palestinian uprising. Palestinians have been kept in refugee camps without the right to work, or to resolve their future, for about 60 years after the birth of these nations.

Israel has about 6 million people of which more than 1 million are Palestinians. Since the 1940's, more Jews fled Arab countries than Palestinians fled Israel. Far more Palestinians live in Israel now than Jews live in the whole Arab and Muslim worlds combined.

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, modern Greece and Turkey were formed. A mass population exchange occurred where Christians fled from Turkey to Greece and Muslims fled from Greece to Turkey. No permanent refugee camps were formed.

When Pakistan separated from India, a mass migration occurred where Hindus in Pakistan fled to India and Muslims fled to Pakistan. The same occurred with India and Bangladesh. No permanent refugee camps were formed.

No conflict has ever been resolved by permanent refugee camps. Palestinians should not be held in camps without jobs or recourse. Keeping them in camps is furthering colonialism by reinforcing the lines that the British decided in the 1940's when designations such as Palestinian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Syrian were determined.

At a panel in the Urbana City Council chambers on Oct 26, it was suggested that as a part of a settlement the US needed to open its borders to some of these Palestinians. As an ideal this certainly sounds good. However, I am not sure that it will work. The reason is that having a third party accept responsibility continues the cycle of avoiding the responsibility of Arab countries. In the end, Arab countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Syria are held to a lower standard than say India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Greece and Turkey. Why are these four countries (and other Arab countries) not responsible for refugees?

I think the solution (beyond a cynical proposal of banning religion) actually starts here, with the people that read this newspaper, the people that judge the situation and criticize the actors. The first priority is the application of human rights equally throughout the world. People should not be kidnaped, killed, jailed or threatened based on their opinions or even pictures they took (the Canadian-Iranian

journalist Zahra Kazemi was tortured and killed by the Iranian police for simply taking a picture of a prison). Nobody should be subjected to this: not Palestinians, Israelis, Iranians, Kurds, Iraqis, Africans etc. People who deny these basic rights, who incorporate vigilante groups in their midst, or who do not speak up against these practices should be denied legitimacy. They should not be necessarily labeled terrorist, but violators of human rights.

Ironically, Israel itself has decent human rights within its borders, especially compared with the other countries in the region (please see freedomhouse.org). Human rights should be encouraged and parties that abide by human rights should receive a positive judgment and be rewarded with more legitimacy, especially in UN (this philosophy should not just apply to this conflict). Note: being a theocracy, monarchy, democracy, dictatorship, oligarchy or whatever is irrelevant in this scheme. The essence of cultures should not be changed, but people everywhere in the world deserve to feel safe and to be allowed to express themselves.

Since its creation in the 1940's Israel has been constantly vilified, more than Greece, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon or Iraq. American Jews and Jews in general have also often been vilified. My simple question is why, and what makes Israel so different? Is it that Israel's refugees are Jewish? Is it that some of Israel's refugees also came from Europe?

Unless all parties are held to the same standards of human rights and unless the Western view of Muslim and Arab countries changes from blameless victims to part of the problem, nothing will change. Excuses to continue fighting will always be found.

LoCaL



Court Watch Report: Another Cop Gets Off

By Brian Dolinar



Community Court Watch has been following the case against former Sheriff's Deputy Ryan Garrett for several months. Garrett was facing four felony counts for, among other things, approaching Ty Kellums, boyfriend of his estranged wife, while in uniform and threatening him with the words, "I'm a cop. Watch your back."

Recently, on Friday, October 27, Garrett was given a plea bargain by State's Attorney Julia Rietz's office. Garrett entered a guilty plea to Judge Tom Difanis for a misdemeanor offense. He was sentenced to a \$500 fine and 100 hours of public service, relatively little punishment for the significant erosion of public trust in the police and the trauma he caused for his wife and Kellums.

The four felony counts against Garrett were for official misconduct, disorderly conduct, and intimidation. He pleaded guilty to the charge of illegally using police records to search the background of Kellums on May 16, 2005. But this was the least of the accusations.

Other allegations included an incident on May 22, 2005, when Garrett stalked Kellums at his apartment. While on duty in his squad car and in uniform, Garrett approached Kellums and warned him, "I'm a cop. Watch your back."

Garrett then followed through with his threats in a clear abuse of his police power. On November 25, 2005, Garrett called a fellow deputy and sent him to perform a sobri-

ety test on the couple in a parked car who had been out drinking that night. Garrett had apparently been stalking Mary Garrett and Kellums that night and figured he could play a little trick. The other deputy suspected he was being used for Garrett's ploy and contacted a Champaign police officer who tested Mary Garrett and found she was well below the legal intoxication limit.

Sheriff Dan Walsh was notified and Garrett was suspended (with pay) on December 17, 2005. Charges were brought against him a month later and State's Attorney Julia Rietz told the News-Gazette, "Both the sheriff and I are very troubled by Deputy Garrett's action. He abused his authority as a police officer and that will not be tolerated."

The recent plea bargain given to Garrett by Rietz' office suggests that such police abuse will indeed be tolerated in Champaign County, just like Urbana Officer Hjort who has never been charged for allegations that he raped a 25-year-old woman.

Turning a blind eye to such an abuse of power is not just something common to police departments, but also other law and order professions. Indeed, many police officers get their training in the U.S. military. Garrett had served in the Army National Guard and was formerly a state trooper in Louisiana. He currently lives in rural Tolono.

This was not the end of Garrett's spousal abuse. A restraining order had been placed on him on July 26, 2006, and his wife filed divorce papers on August 11, 2006. In the Order of Protection, Mary Garrett describes several incidents of physical and psycho-

logical abuse. Her husband had told her she could do nothing because he was a cop. She writes:

"I never reported any of this because he was a deputy for Champaign Co. and he told me numerous times it wouldn't do me any good. And from my recent experiences with the police involving him it hasn't."

Indeed, this plea bargain proves Mary Garrett's observation to be true—police will not be fully prosecuted in Champaign County.

Ryan Garrett remains unapologetic and defiant. He told the News-Gazette that he had been looking forward to a trial to clear his name, but took the plea bargain for the sake of his children.

Garrett's attorney Tony Novak said, "In my opinion, Ryan Garrett pleaded guilty to the only offense he arguably committed—misuse of the police records-checking system. There was no intimidation. There was no false report. There was no official misconduct. You basically have a husband and father who was trying to find out if his wife was leaving him for another man."

Novak is also representing Sgt. Myers, another one of Sheriff Walsh's deputies, who is being prosecuted for illegally using a Taser on inmates and then lying to his superiors about it. We will see if Myers also gets off lightly for these very serious charges. Myers' next court date is Monday, November 20 at 3 p.m. in Courtroom A.

Mary Schenk, writer for the News-Gazette, found little fault in Garrett's offenses and failed to mention the threatening comments allegedly made by Garrett or his record of domestic abuse. She raised no serious questions about repercussions of Garrett's plea.

Do Mary Garrett and Kellums feel safe at night knowing that Garrett has a personal vendetta against them? What message does this send to other cops who might also abuse their power? Are police above the law in Champaign County?

IWW OPEN HOUSE
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 Independent Media Center,
 202 Elm St. (the old post office),
 downtown Urbana

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What You Got To Go Through To File A Police Complaint In Champaign.

By Brian Dolinar

Following on the heels of a similar proposition in Urbana, the Champaign police department is currently considering a citizen police review board. Just the mention of such an oversight has provoked reprisals from the Mayor, the News-Gazette, and their local law-and-order constituents.

The News-Gazette has already begun editorializing against a police review board. An editorial ran on October 11, 2006 titled, "Police review board plan raises problems." As if concerned for the minority community, the editorial says a review board will be a "tough sell to people who have long viewed police either with suspicion or fear." Of course, many leaders in the African American community have supported the formation of a police review board. The suggestion is that nothing can (or should) be done to improve police relations in the black community. Filing a complaint is a relatively simple act, according to the News-Gazette. A citizen police review board would "do nothing except duplicate an existing discipline process."

This sentiment was echoed by another editorial in the News-Gazette from local citizen Michael Cook who said that Champaign police already has an "effective complaint process."

Champaign police chief R.T. Finney has expressed his interest in a police review board if it would bring more credibility to investigations. But he also said, "We don't see substantial problems with our complaint process."

Co-founder of V.E.Y.A. (Visionaries Educating Youth and Adults) Martel Miller has had a different experience. It is the story of, as Miller says, "What you got to go through to file a police complaint in Champaign."

On September 22, 2006, following a hip hop show by Ludicris, there were several after-parties. One was at the Iota house, a black fraternity on 1st Street. A young black man who will remain unidentified says he tried to get into the party but it was too crowded so he decided to leave. As he was walking out, police outside told him he could not go. He tried to explain that his car was across the street. They told him if he crossed the street he would be arrested. As soon as he stepped into the street, police arrested him for jaywalking. Usually jaywalking is a ticketable offense, but they arrested the young man, handcuffed him, and put him in back of the squad car.

Next the police pulled the young man from out of the car. While he was handcuffed, a police officer picked him up off the ground and slammed him against the trunk of the squad car. This was done as a show of force in front of a large crowd of African Americans who were by this time watching the whole incident. The young man was then taken to jail and bailed out the next day.

The day after the incident, Martel Miller got a call from the young man who explained how he was abused by Champaign police. Miller told him to go file a complaint at the Champaign police department. On September 24, the young man went down to the police station to file a complaint. He was met by Sergeant Matt Crane who got into

Champaign Police Department
82 East University Avenue
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear R.T. Finney

This is about an incident that happened on Sunday 24 September. I was at Champaign police department with [name withheld] to file a complaint. Sgt. Matt Crane would not let [name withheld] file a complaint and put him out of the building. [Name withheld] called me and I went back with him to submit his complaint to the front desk. Then I asked to speak to a superior officer. Matt Crane came out with two other officers and Mr. Crane started to put [name withheld] out and I said to Mr. Crane that [name withheld] has a right to file a complaint. And Mr. Crane then decided that he was going to throw me out of the police station. He acted unprofessionally and tried to provoke me into an argument. The other officers stood by and watched him act unprofessionally.

And at that time I decided to call the mayor at home. After I called the mayor, that's when the other sergeant decided to take some action and take control of the situation. But I believe that something should be done about Mr. Crane's actions and that is why I am filing this complaint. Every citizen should have the right to file a complaint without feeling threatened. They have no right to put them out of a building.

Sincerely,

Martel Miller

an argument with him. The Sergeant would not let him file a complaint and threw him out of the police station.

Miller received a second call that day from the young man who said he had been refused the right to file a complaint. Miller decided to go down to the station with the young man and try to file a complaint for a second time. They gave the young man's typed-written complaint to someone at the dispatch window and asked for a superior officer. Sergeant Crane came out with another Sergeant and 3 additional officers. As soon as Sergeant Crane saw the young man, he started yelling at him and tried to kick him out again. Miller interrupted and said, "This man is a citizen. He has a right to file a complaint." The Sergeant began arguing with Miller. "The next thing I know," Miller says, "the Sergeant is trying to put me out of the police station."

Miller then pulled out his cell phone and called Mayor Schweighart who had in the past told Miller to call if there was ever a problem with his police. The Mayor's answering machine was on and Miller left a message. The second Sergeant then stepped in to talk to Miller and diffuse the situation. Miller decided to leave but said he would be back to file his own complaint against Sergeant Crane.

On September 26, Miller went back down to the Champaign police department and delivered a typed-written complaint to Lieutenant Yohnka (See side bar). The Lieutenant told Miller that his complaint "wasn't detailed enough." He wanted Miller to dictate a complaint and Lieutenant Yohnka would write it out. Miller asked him if he

could have a copy of the Lieutenant's typed up complaint. Yohnka said, "No."

Miller was given a form to sign agreeing to the truthfulness of a complaint that he still had not seen. The form said if the complaint was unfounded, Miller could be held liable. Miller currently has a \$15 million law suit against Champaign for an incident in 2004 when police seized his video equipment and charged him with felony eavesdropping for videotaping police work. He is already suspicious of Champaign police and knows how they will manipulate the law to serve their own ends.

Miller asked Lieutenant Yohnka to fax the complaint to a lawyer the and he agreed. But Miller said Yohnka only faxed two blank sheets of paper. Miller called Yohnka on the phone and Yohnka flatly told him he could not have a copy of the complaint.

On October 19, Miller received a summary of his complaint, but not the entire document. He issued a Freedom of Information Act, but it was denied. According to Miller, the Champaign police are now rewriting the policy on filing a complaint. Miller says the message is:

"When you file a complaint, the Champaign police decide if they are going to take a complaint or not. They will write one down for you, but you can not see a copy of that complaint. So you don't ever know what your complaint is. They say this complaint process is fair to the citizen."

September 26, 2006

The United States, Israel and the Middle East

Continued from page 1

militant insofar as military means are believed to be capable of producing the desired political and social results. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's description of last summer's Lebanon war as the "birth pangs" of a new Middle East was consistent with previous statements about the folly of previous administrations pursuing "stability at the expense of democracy" in the region. This neo-conservative view is congruent with the Israeli Likudist perspective—namely, that conflict in the Middle East is caused by dysfunctional Arab and Iranian politics. It is as if Israel were not there, and not contributing to regional conflict.

The failure of this militant, revisionist policy should be evident. It has produced more instability, more polarization, more terrorism, and more sympathy for terrorism. Notwithstanding President Bush's endorsement of the goal of a Palestinian state and his "Road Map" plan, his administration has de-prioritized the Israeli-Palestinian question, allowing that situation to deteriorate. Israeli colonization of the occupied West Bank continues, with hardly a protest from Washington, making a "two-state solution" to the conflict seem less and less likely. This is bad for everyone—Israel, the Palestinians, and the U.S.

It is a myth that anti-American sentiment in the Arab and Muslim world is driven by "what we are." It is driven by what we do. Currently there are three things that stoke anti-American feeling that we could do something to change. First is our support of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East—and that means all of our Arab allies. We need to temper our concern for stability with concern for human rights. The two are not incompatible, as Secretary Rice has suggested. Second is our occupation of Iraq, which has been a disaster, but which needs no elaboration here. Third is our normally uncritical support for Israel,

including during last summer's war in Lebanon and the continuing siege of Gaza.

The US should adopt a pro-active policy to promote an Israeli-Palestinian settlement consisting of the following elements:

- a territorial settlement leading to a Palestinian state based on the June 4, 1967 borders
- normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab states
- a just resolution of the Palestinian refugee's plight (one that respects Israel's sovereignty as well as the rights of the refugees)



Now, the Real Battle Begins

By Robert Naiman



CHAMPAIGN-URBANA VOTES TO WITHDRAW FROM IRAQ AND IMPEACH BUSH-CHENEY

The election defeats of Republicans on Tuesday, with Democrats taking control of the House and Senate for the first time since 1994, have been widely described as a referendum on the unpopular war in Iraq. Certainly, most Americans told pollsters before the election that they expected a Democratic victory to result in withdrawal from Iraq (see, for example, "With Iraq Driving Election, Voters Want New Approach," Adam Nagourney & Megan Thee, New York Times, November 2, 2006) and most Americans told pollsters before the election that the U.S. should set a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, 61% in a Newsweek poll (see "Most Americans Want Timetable for Iraq War," Angus Reid Global Monitor : Polls & Research, November 2, 2006.)

However, now that the election is over and the Democrats have won, while everyone concedes that the unpopularity of the war was a main driver of the Democrats' victory, the battle lines are being drawn over whether the election victory means that the U.S. should withdraw from Iraq. George McGovern, the former senator and Democratic presidential candidate, is presenting a plan for removing U.S. troops from Iraq by June. Meanwhile, Iraq's president says that he has been reassured by Democratic leaders that they have "no plans for a quick withdrawal of U.S. forces," AP reports.

So the battle is over whether the elections mean "withdrawal" or a yet to be determined "change of course."

This was predicted, and that's what makes the actual referenda that passed on Tuesday calling for withdrawal so important. There were referenda in Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and Illinois, including Champaign-Urbana and Springfield. All of the 58 local ballot initiatives on withdrawal were successful.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA: ORDERLY AND RAPID WITHDRAWAL

Champaign:

In order to halt the continuing loss of human life and resources necessary to meet human needs at home, shall the U.S. commence a humane, orderly, rapid and comprehensive withdrawal from Iraq?

Yes 9888 (58%) No 7104 (42%)

Urbana:

Shall the voters of Cunningham Township call upon the U.S. government to commence an orderly and rapid withdrawal of all U.S. Military from Iraq while providing financial support for Iraq security?

Yes 5729 (65%) No 3029 (35%)

Champaign and Urbana:

Yes 15618 (61%) No 10134 (39%)

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA: IMPEACHMENT

Champaign:

Shall our representative to the U.S. House of Representatives be asked to support the impeachment of George W. Bush and Richard Cheney for misleading our nation to war with Iraq?

Yes 7877 (46%) No 9140 (54%)

Urbana:

Shall the voters of Cunningham Township ask our representative to the U.S. House of Representatives to support articles of impeachment to remove George W. Bush and Richard Cheney from office?

Yes 5171 (59%) No 3614 (41%)

Champaign and Urbana:

Yes 13049(50.6%) No 12755 (49.4%)

URBANA: NATIONAL GUARD MOBILIZATION

Shall the Governor of Illinois, to the extent of his authority, resist any further federal mobilization of Illinois National Guard Units for service in Iraq?

Yes 4812 (60%) No 3154 (40%)

In many Republican precincts in Champaign—as judged by the vote in the Secretary of State's race—the majority voted in favor of withdrawal from Iraq. In 32 of Champaign's 38 precincts and in 22 of Urbana's 23 precincts a majority voted in favor of withdrawal.

As we were tallying the votes at the County building, Republican Rep. Tim Johnson gave a press conference on his victory in the Congressional election. He acknowledged that the US position in Iraq was a "quagmire" and that Americans would not tolerate the status quo for another two years.

In the spring the Urbana City Council passed a resolution in favor of withdrawal. At the time, peace activists claimed that the council was reflecting majority sentiment in Urbana. This completes the argument.

Illinois Cities Vote to Withdraw From Iraq:

Township/County	Yes	No	Total	%Yes	%No
City of Chicago (95%)	389,257	93,048	571,406	81	19
Suburban Cook (88%)	349,051	182,149	531,200	66	34
Aurora Township	9,601	5,225	14,826	65	35
Berwyn Township (90%)	5,816	2,371	8,187	71	29
Capital Township	23,859	15,955	39,814	60	40
Champaign Township	9,888	7,104	16,992	58	42
Cunningham (Urbana) (100%)	5,729	3,029	8,758	65	35
Downers Grove Township (98%)	24,269	19,830	44,099	55	45
Geneva township (100%)	4,928	4,209	9,137	54	46
Oak Park township (98%)	13,405	4,175	17,580	76	24
Riverside township (95%)	3,164	1,971	5,135	62	38
DeKalb township	5,060	3,617	8,677	58	42
Whiteside County	211	185	8,677	53	47
Total:	844,238	342,868	1,187,106	71	29

Ten Referenda also Passed in Wisconsin:

Town/City	Yes	No	Total	%Yes	%No
Boscobel	476	277	753	63	37
Fox Point	2,082	1,378	3,460	60	40
Lake Delton	451	235	686	66	34
Middleton	4,499	3,191	7,690	59	41
Milwaukee (98%)	111,805	44,101	155,906	72	28
Racine	11,064	7,048	18,112	61	39
S. Milwaukee	4,390	3,733	8,177	54	46
Springdale	450	446	896	50	50
Viroqua	801	740	1541	52	48
Wauwatosa	13,106	9,725	22,831	57	43
Total:	149,124	70,874	219,998	68	32

Now, we need to make these results stick, by raising them at every opportunity with Representative Johnson and Senators Durbin and Obama, and by using every opportunity to get them into local media, especially letters to the editor. Let these words be on everyone's lips: 61% of Champaign-Urbana's voters said they want an "orderly and rapid withdrawal" from Iraq.

Unique and Progressive: That's Rentertainment

by Darrin Drda

That's Rentertainment owner Geoff Merritt likes to keep a low profile ("I've never been seen on being photographed," he replied when asked for a mug shot). But like his store on 6th and John in Campustown, the humble exterior belies a rich eclecticism to be discovered within. Geoff's passion for the un-ordinary (and extraordinary) is reflected in the ever-evolving (and revolving) collection of DVDs lining the shelves of Rentertainment, with sections devoted to Japanese Anime, B Movies, British Humour (note the "u"), Hitchcock, Monty Python, Stand-Up Comedy, Star Trek, Music movies and videos, plus an impressive array of International and Independent films. And let's not forget the rack of almost 100 flicks about cycling, which

Geoff considers "one of the most exciting sports ever." Geoff's penchant for the little-known is matched only by his concern for the world at large. That's Rentertainment is the only place in C-U where one can one browse through documentaries categorized into Environmental and Social Issues, American Politics, or Gay and Lesbian concerns. The store's comprehensive website (www.rentertainment.com) urges its visitors to shop locally, with a page listing the name, address, and phone number of all locally-owned businesses. Another page displays the headline "Make a difference in your community - volunteer as much as you can and support not-for-profits," citing the many organizations that Rentertainment itself supports. Among them are the University YMCA (upon whose Board of Governors Geoff

sits as Chair), The United Way (Geoff has long been an active member and administrator), The Lance Armstrong Foundation, WEFT, WILL, and of course the grassroots Indymedia newspaper that you're now reading. That's Rentertainment has been a staple in the community since 1985, having moved several times before settling comfortably into its current niche. As the last locally-owned and operated video store in town, with the area's largest and most diverse DVD collection, Rentertainment caters to folks who have "grown tired of the typical Blockbuster fare." Indeed, to visit Mr. Merritt's treasure trove is to vote for community, for independent media and art, and against corporate colonization of the mind and of the planet. Of course, maybe you're just in the mood for a bad kung-fu movie.



Religion and Politics in the Middle East

By Valerie J. Hoffman



Valerie Hoffman, a specialist in Islamic studies, is an associate professor in the Program for the Study of Religion at the University of Illinois, where she teaches courses on all aspects of Islam

In 1979, a popular revolution in Iran toppled a ruthless dictator backed by the United States and replaced him with a regime that gave supreme political authority to a traditionally-trained scholar of Islam, something unprecedented in Islamic history. Suddenly Islam was at the forefront of discussions on politics in the Middle East, and its political revival provoked both fascination and fear. The Iranian government's open desire to export its revolutionary ideology led to strategic American alliances with other players in the region, regardless of their anti-democratic ideology or record of human rights abuses, most notably Saudi Arabia, Saddam Hussein, and the Mujahideen fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan.

WHAT CAUSED THE POLITICAL REVIVAL OF ISLAM, AND JUST HOW IMPORTANT IS ISLAM IN MIDDLE EASTERN POLITICS?

Iranians of all social classes and political ideologies participated in the revolution of 1978-79 that toppled the Shah, and many of them neither desired nor expected the "Islamic" regime that took power. Under the Shah and many other authoritarian governments of the Middle East, freedom of assembly and rival political parties were banned, leaving the mosque and other religious institutions as the only venue for political gatherings and the formation of political opposition. 'Ali Shari'ati is sometimes described as "the ideologue of the Iranian revolution," though he died in 1977 and did not live to see it. He captured the imagination of young intellectuals by redefining key concepts in Shi'ite Islam, using Marxist terminology, and promoting opposition to American imperialism. Ayatollah Khomeini, who sent fiery sermons on tape cassettes from exile in Iraq and Paris, used Shari'ati's terminology and masked the rigid and highly authoritarian nature of his Islamic ideology in order to become the symbol of resistance to the Shah. Many women wore a chador in public demonstrations against the Shah, as a symbol of their solidarity with the religiously-led opposition, although in daily life they did not wear it and had no intention of doing so. Islamic history has no tradition of direct rule by religious scholars; they had always served only in a consultative capacity. Who could have anticipated the shape of the new Islamic Republic of Iran, or the brutality with which it suppressed all opposition? It is interesting to note that a sociological study conducted in the 1990s in Egypt, Jordan and Iran found that Iranians were far more liberal and secular in their attitudes than Egyptians or Jordanians, although only Iran is ruled by an "Islamic" regime.

WESTERN MODELS: ATTRACTION AND REPULSION

Except for Saudi Arabia, which was never colonized and has been dominated since the 1920s by the rigidly fundamentalist ideology of Wahhabism, Muslim-majority states that acquired independence in the twentieth century looked to Western political systems as the model of modern statehood. Turkey, recognized as a republic in 1923, declared itself secular, avoiding all references to Islam in its constitution and patterning its laws after European codes. Other Muslim-majority countries typically declared Islam to be the national religion, but nonetheless followed Western models of government and law. The domain of the Shari'a (Islamic law) had gradually diminished over the centuries, leaving only family law under the authority of religious scholars.

Europeans were very critical of the treatment of women in Muslim societies, citing polygamy, female seclusion, and the exclusively male right of extra-judicial divorce as evidence of Islam's inferiority as a religion. This prompted "Islamic modernists" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to propose new interpretations of family law that would grant women more rights and prioritize the welfare of society. Modernist interpretations influenced family laws in the new Muslim states, which often granted women

modest improvements over their status in traditional law. Modernists also argued successfully for the necessity of female education: Egypt's 1924 constitution made primary education compulsory for both girls and boys.

Most Muslim-majority states that attained independence in the twentieth century adopted parliamentary governments, but the continued subjection of these governments to Western interference, and the Western commitment to the establishment of Israel on Arab land, led to the emergence of "revolutionary" socialist regimes in the 1950s and 60s: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, South Yemen and Libya all embraced pan-Arab nationalism and socialist economic reforms—a socialism, however, that was defended by state-appointed religious spokesmen as "Islamic," to distinguish it from communism. Industries were nationalized, the power of the old aristocracy was broken through reforms distributing their lands to peasants, and the government became the main employer of all those who earned wages. Despite the description of their policy as "Islamic," these regimes imposed very strict controls on the religious establishment. Religious institutions were also nationalized, and religious scholars were instructed to teach that Islam is socialism. Islamic institutions were to serve government policy, rather than the other way around. The Suez Canal crisis of 1956 made Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt a hero not only in the Arab world, but throughout the Third World, as a symbol of resistance to imperialism.

THE IMPACT OF ISRAEL

But the presence of a Jewish state created by European fiat on Arab land and at the cost of Arab dispossession remained a symbol of Arab subjugation and humiliation. In spring 1967 Egypt, Syria and Jordan planned a joint attack on Israel, which the Israelis preempted by air strikes on all three countries. Arab defeat in the Six-Day War of June 1967 was swift and total: Jordan lost the West Bank and east Jerusalem, Syria lost the Golan Heights, and Egypt lost the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip. The defeat prompted many Arabs, especially in Egypt, to ask why God had allowed them to suffer such a defeat: the Qur'an promised Muslims that, with divine assistance, they could defeat a force ten times larger than themselves, yet a small country had defeated three larger and more populous Muslim countries. Was God punishing them for subordinating religion to secular ideologies? The religious revival had begun.

The religious revival also encompassed Egypt's ancient Coptic church, whose members constitute about ten percent of the country's population. Every year at Easter time, some Copts would make a pilgrimage to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in east Jerusalem, where Jesus is said to have been buried. But in spring 1968, all of Jerusalem was under Israeli rule, making pilgrimage impossible. In April 1968 an apparition of the Virgin Mary holding the infant Jesus was sighted on a church dome in a Cairo suburb, and returned every night for two and a half years, attracting millions of Egyptians, including Muslims, who also revere Jesus as a prophet born from a virgin. When the government asked the Coptic pope to comment on the miracle, he said that Mary had come to comfort the Egyptians in their sorrow and to assure them that Jerusalem would return to Arab rule.

ISLAM'S ROOTING IDENTITY IN MORALITY

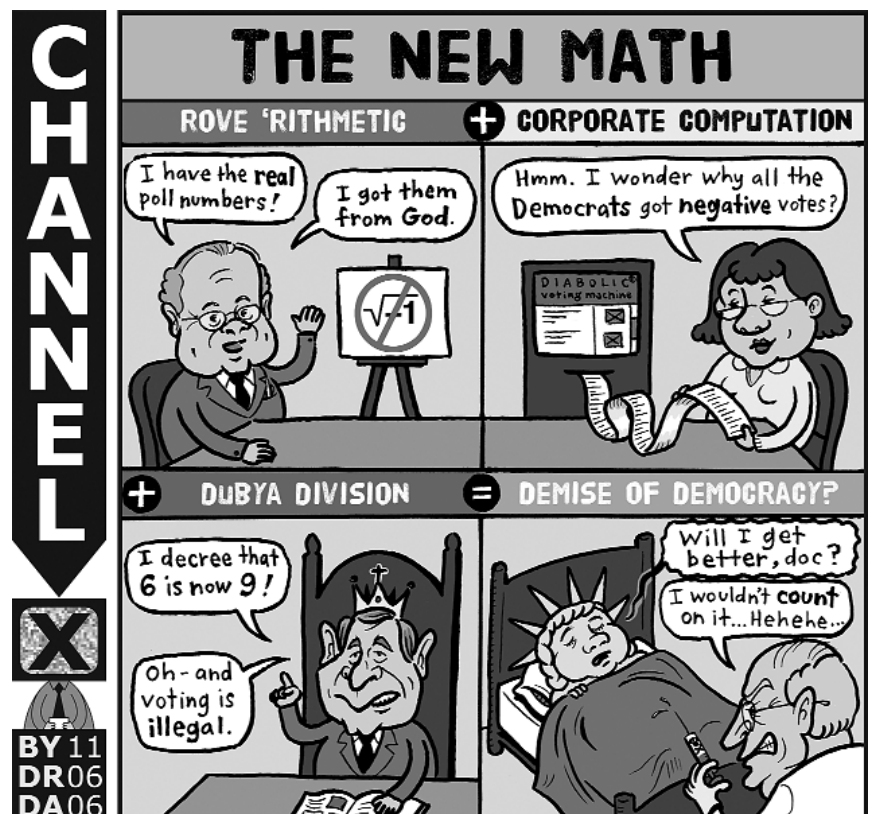
The religious revival in the Middle East may be seen as part of a worldwide phenomenon of renewed interest in religion in the 1970s and 80s. Anxiety over the apparent breakdown of the family and a rise in crime led to public discourse on morality as much here in the U.S. as in the Muslim world. In the Middle East, the religious revival, which began in the most Westernized parts of the Muslim world, was part of a search for a more authentic cultural

identity; people felt they had lost their moral moorings through blind imitation of the West, which was seen as characterized by soulless materialism and crass individualism. Many who were troubled by corruption and immorality felt that the solution lay in making the Shari'a the law of the land.

Because Muslims see Islam as promoting kindness and justice, and are often unfamiliar with the specifics of traditional Islamic law, their endorsement of the Shari'a does not necessarily mean an endorsement of stonings, beheadings, and the seclusion of women; people want religion because they want justice and morality rather than a society that runs on patronage and bribery. The movement to make Islam the organizing principle of society and politics is called Islamism. Islamists cover a broad spectrum from simple piety to radical militancy, but all agree with the slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt that "Islam is the answer." The election of Islamist politicians in Algeria, Jordan, and Palestine does not necessarily indicate approval of Islamic radicalism: just as the recent Democratic electoral victory demonstrated public disapproval of the war in Iraq, so Islamists are sometimes elected as an alternative to an existing political elite that is regarded as ineffective and corrupt. Another reason for Islamist electoral victories, as in Pakistan in 2002 and Iran in 2005, is that existing authorities disallowed the candidacy of many non-Islamist candidates.

THE ROLE OF AMERICAN CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISTS

American Christian fundamentalism also plays a role in Middle Eastern politics: although Israel is a secular state founded as a homeland for Jews rather than a truly "Jewish" state, many American Christians see Israel as the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham; indeed, American Christians are often more zealous Zionists than Israeli Jews. President Bush's religious ardor is matched by the zeal of Iran's President Ahmadinejad. Ahmadinejad feels called to prepare for the return of the twelfth Shi'ite Imam, who, after an absence of eleven centuries, will return as the Mahdi, a messiah figure who will defeat God's enemies and fill the world with justice—a belief not unlike Christian expectations of the second coming of Christ. Until the Mahdi returns, the Shi'a expect an increase in worldly turmoil and moral deterioration—just as many Christians believe regarding the return of Christ. Bush has also claimed that God told him to invade Iraq. The implications of such certainty of divine calling, and the belief that chaos is an inevitable precursor to divine rescue, raise disturbing questions regarding such leaders' willingness to place world security at risk beyond all reason.



CHANNEL

BY 11
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New York City IMC Responds to the Death of Brad Will

via email and at: <http://publish.nyc.indymedia.org/en/2006/10/77958.html>



New York City

Brad Will was killed on October 27, 2006, in Oaxaca, Mexico, while working as a journalist for the global Indymedia network. He was shot in the torso while documenting an armed, paramilitary assault on the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca, a fusion of striking local teachers and other community organizations demanding democracy in Mexico.

The members of the New York City Independent Media Center mourn the loss of this inspiring colleague and friend. We want to thank everyone who has sent condolences to our office and posted remembrances to www.nyc.indymedia.org. We share our grief with the people of our city and beyond who lived, worked, and struggled with Brad over the course of his dynamic but short life. We can only imagine the pain of the people of Oaxaca who have lost seven of their neighbors to this fight, including Emilio Alonso Fabian, a teacher, and who now face an invasion by federal troops.

All we want in compensation for his death is the only thing Brad ever wanted to see in this world: **JUSTICE!**

- We, along with all of Brad's friends, reject the use of further state-sponsored violence in Oaxaca.

- The New York City Independent Media Center supports the demand of Reporters Without Borders for a full and complete investigation by Mexican authorities into Oaxaca State Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz's continued use of plain-clothed municipal police as a political paramilitary force. The arrest of his assailants is not enough.

- The NYC IMC also supports the call of Zapatista Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos "to compañeros and compañeras in other countries to unite and to demand justice for this dead compañero." Marcos issued this call "especially to all of the alternative media, and free media here in Mexico and in all the world." Indymedia was born from the Zapatista vision of a global network of alternative communication against neoliberalism and for humanity. To believe in Indymedia is to believe that journalism is either in the service of justice or it is a cause of injustice. We speak and listen, resist and struggle. In that spirit, Brad Will was both a journalist and a human rights activist.

He was a part of this movement of independent journalists who go where the corporate media do not or stay long after they are gone. Perhaps Brad's death would have been prevented if Mexican, international, and US media corporations had told the story of the Oaxacan people. Then those of us who live in comfort would not only be learning now about this 5 month old strike, or about this 500 year old struggle.

And then Brad might not have felt the need to face down those assassins in Oaxaca holding merely the ineffective shields of his US passport and prensa extranjera badge. Then Brad would not have joined the fast-growing list of journalists killed in action, or the much longer list of those killed in recent years by troops defending entrenched, unjust power in Latin America. Still, those of us who knew Brad know that his work would never have been completed. From the community gardens of the Lower East Side to the Movimento Sem Terra encampments of Brazil, he would have continued to travel to where the people who make this world a beautiful place are resisting those who would cause it further death and destruction. Now, in his memory, we will all travel those roads. We are the network, all of us who speak and listen, all of us who resist.

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WILL FAMILY STATEMENT

November 8th, 2006

The family of Brad Will has issued the following statement:

"We understand that two of the group of five allegedly involved in Brad's murder have been arrested in Oaxaca. We applaud this action but also note that the other three implicated directly in the crime remain at large. We urge that efforts immediately be expanded to find and arrest all of those involved in all recent killings there.

We call for the creation of an independent federal Mexican commission to ensure a fair and just investigation and trial.

And we urge an inquiry into the extent to which higher-level officials in the state government of Oaxaca have been involved in both Brad's murder and other human rights violations.

We also condemn and seek an immediate end to the illegitimate arrests and ongoing harassment of the press corps in Oaxaca.

And we wholeheartedly agree with Reporters Without Borders' call for Oaxaca state governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz to be summoned before the new prosecutor's office dealing with attacks on press freedom.

Finally, we urge that the demonstrators maintain a distinctly peaceful and non-violent approach to the expression of their demands in Oaxaca."

By The family of Brad Will willcomm@aol.com

Oaxaca Teach-in and Fundraiser

Thursday, Nov. 16, 7 pm, At the Independent Media Center

Broadway and Elm at the old post office in downtown Urbana

Hundreds of thousands have conducted a mass strike in Oaxaca, Mexico, supporting striking teachers, and calling for Governor Ruiz of the state of Oaxaca to step down. Several dozens have been killed by paramilitary and federal troops, including beloved New York Indymedia journalist Brad Will.

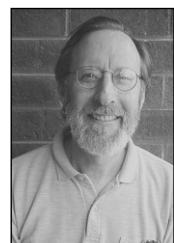
There will be video footage and discussion about what is happening in Oaxaca. We will pass the hat to send financial support to IMC Mexico to help with coverage of events.





The U.S., Israel, and Lebanon: Historical Roots and Patterns of Conflict

by David Green



The destructive and lethal forces unleashed this past summer by the United States and Israel upon Lebanon are not surprising in light of their historical roots in at least four patterns of conflict: First, the unwillingness of Israel and its American patrons to resolve the question of the Palestinian refugees and provide for a viable Palestinian state, but rather the exploitation of this conflict to intimidate other Arab states in the region, especially Lebanon. Second, Israel's territorial ambitions in southern Lebanon, especially regarding water, as well as the economic challenge posed to Israel by a peaceful and thriving Lebanon as a center of finance and tourism. Third, Israel's doctrine of massive and illegal retaliation against civilian populations in response to Arab terrorism and resistance, as a means of asserting unquestioned military superiority in the region and preventing the establishment of a deterrent force that would necessitate good faith negotiation. Fourth, Israel's military alliance with the U.S., and its willingness to serve American interests in the latter's efforts to dominate the region's energy resources, as defined more recently by both neoconservative and neoliberal doctrines that have engendered the destruction of not only Lebanon but Afghanistan, Iraq, and Gaza; and have also justified the increased concentration of wealth and economic inequality in both Israel and the U.S.

THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

Palestinian refugees have resided in Lebanon since the 1948 war. After the 1967 war, Israel continued bombing refugee camps in southern Lebanon. Ron David (Arabs and Israel for Beginners) quotes London Guardian correspondent Irene Beeson (writing in 1978) that "150 or more towns and villages in South Lebanon...have been repeatedly savaged by the Israeli armed forces since 1968." In 1970, PLO leadership was driven from Jordan to Lebanon. After the 1973 war, Yasser Arafat began to signal that he would accept a two-state solution to the Palestinian problem, building on an interpretation of UN resolution 242 that called for the formation of a Palestinian state comprising the West Bank and Gaza.

According to Noam Chomsky (Middle East Illusions): "The issue reached the UN Security Council in January 1976, with a resolution incorporating the language of UN 242 but abandoning its rejectionism, now calling for a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The resolution was supported by virtually the entire world, including the major Arab states, the PLO, Europe, the nonaligned countries, and the Soviet Union, which was in the mainstream of international diplomacy throughout.

"Israel refused to attend the UN session. Instead, it bombed Lebanon once again, killing more than 50 villagers in what it called a 'preventive' strike, presumably retaliation against U.N. diplomacy...The United States vetoed the resolution, as it did again in 1980."

Chomsky (The Fateful Triangle) documents that Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, long-planned and killing 20,000 Lebanese, mostly civilians, grew out of fears of a peaceful resolution: "The PLO was gaining respectability thanks to its preference for negotiations over terror. The Israeli government's hope, therefore, was to compel 'the stricken PLO' to 'return to its earlier terrorism,' thus 'undercutting the danger' of negotiations." As such, this was a "war for the (illegal) settlements."

The background for the recent American-Israeli destruction of Lebanon was, of course, Israel's relentless starving and bombing of Gaza (with American weapons), beginning in its current intensified form after the election of Hamas early this year, with an escalation well before Israel's kidnapping of two Palestinian civilians on June 24th, followed the next day by the capture of an Israeli soldier which "precipitated" full-scale Israeli bombardment. While Hezbollah's capture and killing of Israeli soldiers two weeks later must also be seen in the context of six years of border violations since Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon in 2000 (with a ratio of ten to one in favor of Israeli violations), it was arguably also a response in solidarity with the Palestinians in response to Israel's assault on Gaza. Both Hamas and Hezbollah have legitimacy as religious, populist, and nationalist resistance movements in a Middle East dominated by American-approved authoritarian regimes. As such, they threaten American/Israeli hegemony if they become viable democratic actors and legitimate negotiating partners.

ISRAELI AMBITIONS IN AND COMPETITION WITH LEBANON

Israel's long-term territorial ambitions are discussed in the diaries of the second Israeli Prime Minister, Moshe Sharett (1954-56), in accounts of conflicts with his predecessor David Ben-Gurion. These diaries form the basis for Livia Rokach's Israel's Sacred Terrorism.

Rokach writes: "The 1982 'operation', as well as its predecessor, the 'Litani Operation' of 1978, were part of the long-standing Zionist strategy for Lebanon and Palestine. That strategy, formulated and applied during the 1950s, had been envisaged at least four decades earlier, and attempts to implement it are still being carried out three decades later. On November 6, 1918, a committee of British mandate officials and Zionist leaders put forth a suggested northern boundary for a Jewish Palestine 'from the North Litani River up to Baniyas.' (A 1919) proposal emphasized the 'vital importance of controlling all water resources up to their sources.'"

In the 1960s, as Ron David reminds us, Beirut was the "Paris of the East," a financial center with a tourist boom. In December 1968, Israel bombed the Beirut airport, destroying 13 civilian airliners in a "retaliatory raid" in response to an attack by two terrorists belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine at the Athens airport that killed one Israeli. The UN Security Council condemned the attack, but as David suggests, "Lebanese tourism nosedived; Israel's tourism went up, and up." The Lebanese economy was devastated by civil war (1975-90) and Israeli invasions (1978, 1982).

In this context, it's worth noting the comments of two Lebanese businessmen interviewed on Democracy Now. Georges Hanna, manager of a factory for prefab housing: "They hit everything: 25,000 square meter coverage area, factories, all of them damaged. We think it's about -- they have also some factories that made the same products like us, and they made this attack to

eliminate us from the market." And Michel Waked, manager of a larger dairy factory: "You know, this is the third time our factory get destroyed. In '82, the same thing happened. It's not the first time. So how can you consider Israeli as a friend, or whatever? You always consider Israel the enemy. And the only dairy who can compete with them is us." Among other things, the destruction of Lebanon can be seen as a kind of state-sponsored neoliberal gangsterism.

MASSIVE AND DISPROPORTIONATE RETALIATION AGAINST CIVILIANS

The first notorious example of Israel's doctrine of massive retaliation against civilians was at the Jordanian village of Qibya in 1953, reviewed by Walid Khalidi in an article also based upon Sharett's diary. Ariel Sharon's Unit 101, under orders from Moshe Dayan, responded to the murder of an Israeli mother and her two children by infiltrators into Israel by blowing up 45 houses and killing 69 civilians, two-thirds of them women and children.

Israel's implementation of this policy based on a racist "language of force" (directed at Arabs who stand accused of understanding no other) does not necessarily require a clear provocation, as in 1982, when the assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London by the Abu Nidal group (sworn enemies of the PLO) provided the pretext for a long-planned invasion into Lebanon, literally a "war against peace" to drive out the PLO, which had scrupulously observed a truce for nearly one year. Nor does the initial action have to victimize Israeli civilians for Israel to "retaliate" primarily against Arab civilians, as recent events in both Gaza and Lebanon demonstrate.

In The Fateful Triangle, Chomsky quotes remarks by General Mordechai Gur regarding the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, as summarized by military analyst Ze'ev Schiff: "In South Lebanon we struck the civilian population consciously, because they deserved it . . . the Army has never distinguished civilian (from military) targets . . . but purposely attacked civilian targets even when Israeli settlements had not been struck."

U.S.-ISRAEL MILITARY ALLIANCE

The U.S.-Israel military alliance can be traced to the early 1960s, and has been global in nature, especially regarding the support for terrorism in Latin America in the 1970s and 80s. With the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979, Israel became even more important as a protector of American interests in the Middle East. This alliance has intensified during recent years with the neoconservative Project for a New American Century, 9/11, and the re-declaration of the 1980s "war on terror" by the Bush administration. The promotion of military solutions and of fear in the general population in both countries directly relates to transfers of wealth to military-industrial sectors. Both countries are thus beset by a vicious cycle of fear, war, and widespread economic desperation, for which invaded and occupied peoples have paid the highest price.

Regarding the specifics of U.S. support for Israel's invasion of Lebanon, Stephen Zunes writes: "There is increasing evidence that Israel instigated a disastrous war on Lebanon largely at the behest of the United States. The Bush administration was set on crippling Hezbollah, the radical Shiite political movement that maintains a sizable block of seats in the Lebanese parliament. Taking advantage of the country's democratic opening after the forced departure of Syrian troops last year, Hezbollah defied U.S. efforts to democratize the region on American terms. The populist party's unwillingness to disarm its militia as required by UN resolution—and the inability of the pro-Western Lebanese government to force them to do so—led the Bush administration to push Israel to take military action."

RHETORIC AND REALITY IN THE "WAR ON TERROR"

As American and Israeli efforts to control events in the Middle East become increasingly problematic, there are increased efforts to re-cast the conflict in terms of a "clash of civilizations" between "Judeo-Christians" and "Islamofascists." Such propaganda is obviously intended to invoke both Nazi Germany and the Cold War, reframing power-driven conflicts over land and resources as an essentialized global conflict of culture and religion.

But the ironies inherent in this propaganda may portend changes in violent historical patterns. The Bush and Olmert administrations have proved to be corrupt and deceitful; the relation between their rhetoric and reality evokes none other than fascist propagandists and Pravda. Hezbollah and Hamas have proved to be incorruptible popular movements, unrelated to al-Qaeda, that rightly stand in opposition to the Palestinian Authority, the government of Lebanon, and Israel. Meanwhile, the religious subplot in the secular Jewish State evokes Jacob Talmon's 1965 assertion (quoted by Chomsky in Middle East Illusions) that "the Rabbinate (in Israel) is rapidly developing into a firmly institutionalized church imposing an exacting discipline on its members. The State... has given birth to an established Church." But the religious Jew stays at home or in the illegal settlements while the secular Jew is conscripted to fight in an American/Israeli war for oil and hegemony that targets civilians and infrastructure, and now invites serious retaliation against his community. One possibility to be hoped for is that the secular Jewish-Israeli conscript and impoverished American "volunteer" will come to see no future in all of this, and realize that their respective states are also (and just as fundamentally) at war against their own citizens.