

Graffiti for intellectuals



Simon Says



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By Si Frumkin

THREE STOOGES GO TO IRAQ

I don't know what to call it. Stubbornness? Naivete? Brainwashing? Incredible stupidity? All of the above? All that, and bad manners as well? Probably.

There are some among us who obstinately - even proudly - refuse to acknowledge reality, to learn from experience, to accept the obvious even when they have personally experienced it. For example, it is quite obvious to me - and to the overwhelming majority of humanity - that while most birds can fly by flapping their wings, human beings cannot. Even someone who is deluded enough to believe that he can defy the laws of physics by flying and then tests this belief by jumping from a tower, will probably accept that he was wrong just before splashing on the ground below.

Furthermore, if by some quirk of fate he survives, he will probably not repeat the experiment as soon as he comes out of the hospital. He will also, probably, be grateful to those who were responsible for his survival - for example, if firefighters caught him in a safety net, he probably would be grateful and refrain from blaming them for somehow being responsible for his jump.



I don't understand those who will not acknowledge the obvious. I am referring to the trio of mentally impaired peace activists who were held hostage by murderous terrorists in Iraq and were

saved by our and British fighters. Their American colleague and friend was tortured and murdered, but the surviving trio apparently bears the murderers no ill will - they blame the United States for being the cause of it all. The blown-up school buses, the slaughter of innocents in hospitals and crowded markets, the suicide bombers dismembering innocent bystanders, the destruction of the infrastructure of their own country are not really the terrorists' fault; all is the fault of the trio's liberators who risked their own lives to free them.

And have the peaceniks learned anything from their experience? Apparently not. They are eager to have another chance at using non-violence and love to deal with the fanatically violent; to persuade, to reason, to convert, to affirm the absurd mantra that violence and war are not the answer. And there hasn't been a word of sincere thanks to the fighting men who saved them from a certain

death.

The absurdity of "War Is Not the Answer" bumper sticker infuriates me. I would be willing to accept "War Is Not ALWAYS the Answer", but the bumper sticker does not offer a compromise - War Is Not the Answer": any war, anywhere, anytime - and that's that.

I am living proof of the fallacy of this idiotic assertion. I am a Holocaust survivor and I am grateful. I would not be alive if it weren't for the war and the violence that was waged against those who were intent on exterminating me as well as replacing Western culture by an intolerant, fanatical and savage totalitarian system.

Would slavery have been abolished in the United States - or anywhere else for that matter - if it weren't for war and violence?

Would humanity be better off if peace activists waving bibles and copies of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" had manned the British warships that stopped slave traders and hanged the captains? Would the Evil Empire be prevented from gulagizing the world if it weren't for the credible threat of violence by the U. S.? Would there be a Jewish state if it hadn't used war and violence to ensure its survival? Can you name even one country that was founded, or an international conflict that was resolved, without violence or a credible threat of violence? And, on a smaller scale, can you securely live in your neighborhood - wherever it may be - without the knowledge that violence, assault, robbery and rape are



kept in check by violent armed policemen? I think not!

I would like to print a bumper sticker saying, "Surrender/Negotiation/Compromise Are Not ALWAYS the Answer" but I don't believe that there is a market for it. The reaction of our media to the Iraqi peacenik trio and their post-liberation attitudes proves it. What reaction, you may ask? Right, no reaction at all!

We are at the point where it isn't quite proper to advocate violence - even if it is directed against evil. We are uncomfortable to even acknowledge that evil exists and must be opposed - not only by words, ideas, good will, love and all the rest, but more often than not - if it is to be defeated - by force.

A Jew being herded into a gas chamber might have pleaded with the German guard that he wasn't guilty of anything, that it was a horrible mistake to murder him, that it was simply wrong to do so. He would have pleaded in vain.

It is just as futile for us to plead, explain, negotiate with today's savages - they want us dead for whatever incomprehensible - to us - reason they have. The time has come to give up the foolishness of those who insist



Tom Cox, the murdered American peace activist

that they can fly until they splash on the ground - if we are to survive, the answer will come from violence. Ω

THE JORDAN OPTION

CAROLINE GLICK, J-POST, 4/10/06

IAF HELICOPTERS ATTACKED PALESTINIAN TERROR TRAINING CAMPS IN GAZA ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY in an attempt to thwart the Palestinians' rapidly intensifying Kassam rocket offensive on southern Israel. The targeted camps are new blots on the blighted Gazan landscape. They were established shortly after Israel expelled 8,000 of its citizens from their homes in Gush Katif and razed their communities ahead of the IDF retreat from Gaza last summer. The camps were established on the ruins of the communities of Slav and Neve Dekalim.

The Palestinian rocket offensive on southern Israel and the establishment of terror training camps on the ruins of Israeli settlements are incontrovertible proof that the Israeli strategy of "disengagement" has failed utterly and completely. During the 38 years of Israel's presence in Gaza, even when things were at their worst, the area never constituted much more than an irritant to Israel's national security.

Now, with Hamas in charge and al-Qaida, Iran, Hizbullah, PA militias, Islamic Jihad and Fatah terror-crime mobs running rampant, Gaza has become more than an irritant. Today, Gaza has become a base for global jihad and a source for constant and intensifying destabilization throughout the region. The current rocket offensive from Gaza - for which Israel has yet to come up with any effective response short of invasion - has placed some of Israel's most sensitive national infrastructures in under constant attack. The daily shelling of the communities around Gaza imperils the economic viability of southern Israel.

Whereas one of the basic rationales given for the "disengagement" was that Israeli presence in Gaza was the main source of friction between Palestinians and Israelis, what is now clear is that Israel's presence in Gaza was a source of stability.

Speaking to Newsweek over the weekend, Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert set out his plans for the future. Olmert declared his intention to push forward with his "convergence" plan in Judea and Samaria. He will forcibly expel tens of thousands of Israelis from their communities and vastly curtail Israel's military control of the areas. And he expects America to support him by financing the resettlement of some 80,000 Israeli refugees and recognizing Israel's self-declared borders. That is, he desires American support for an Israeli implementation of the Gaza expulsions and retreat on a mass scale in the strategically vital areas of Judea and Samaria.

TODAY, THERE are two paradigms for contending with the Palestinian conflict with Israel. The first one is to negotiate a peace treaty with the Palestinians in which they will get land and sovereignty in exchange for promising to live at peace with Israel. In a word, this paradigm is the paradigm of appeasement.

The second paradigm involves an Israeli retreat from Judea and Samaria and parts of Jerusalem in exchange for nothing whatsoever from the Palestinians. That is, the second paradigm is the paradigm of surrender.

The appeasement paradigm failed at the Camp David summit in July 2000 when the Palestinians refused to accept an Israeli offer of almost everything they say they demand - Gaza, Judea and Samaria and east Jerusalem including Judaism's most sacred site, the Temple Mount. Rather than accept the deal which would entail recognizing Israel's right to exist in rump borders, the Palestinians went to war.

Rather than accept the appeasement paradigm's failure, the Israeli Left together with the Arab League, the EU and the US government attempted to artificially resuscitate it. Through a series of reports - Mitchell, Tenet, Zinni and then eventually the road map - the international community and the Israeli Left have maintained the fiction that appeasement is still an option. This is why, even today, when Olmert has moved to the surrender paradigm, he still pays lip service to appeasement by stating that he is willing to negotiate with Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas even though Hamas is running the show.

Yet lip service aside, Olmert and his cohorts are fully committed to the surrender paradigm and they are gunning for the Bush administration to dump appeasement and join their bandwagon. As Olmert put it to Newsweek, "I understand that if [the retreat and expulsion plan from Judea and Samaria] will be accepted as a contribution to a Middle East with less violence and terror, we will be able to reach an understanding with the American government about some measures of support that can be essential for the success of this move."

Unfortunately for the Bush administration, as the Gaza model shows, backing Olmert's plan will mean that the US will be giving its support to a strategy that has no chance whatsoever of making a "contribution to a Middle East with less violence and terror." To the contrary, Olmert's surrender paradigm has made a contribution to violence and terror.

So what is the Bush administration to do? Its current paradigm of appeasement has no chance of succeeding and Olmert's paradigm of surrender is also a recipe for failure.

LUCKILY, appeasement and surrender are not the only options available for stabilizing the Middle East and diminishing levels of violence and terror. In the current issue of the Middle East Quarterly, Dan Diker and Pinchas Inbari outline a paradigm that has a better chance of success than either appeasement or surrender.

Their article, "Re-energizing a West Bank-Jordan Alliance" notes that Israel and Jordan today share a cardinal interest in ensuring that Judea and Samaria do not follow the Gaza model. As they demonstrate, there is reason to believe that from this convergence of interests, a strategy can emerge that will be capable of succeeding where appeasement and surrender fail.

The Jordanian regime is today subject to two sources of turbulence that have the potential to destroy it. First there is Iraq. Iraq's political and military instability wreaks havoc on Jordan which is economically dependent on its eastern neighbor. Jordanian terrorist and al-Qaida commander in Iraq with Abu Musab Zarkawi has targeted the Hashemite regime. Al-Qaida has cells throughout Jordan. Al-Qaida operatives attacked Eilat with Katyushas from Akaba on August 19 and they targeted Amman itself in the hotel bombings last November.

Al-Qaida's spread from Iraq to Jordan is now, in the wake of Israel's retreat from Gaza being followed by its spread to Gaza and Judea and Samaria. As Jordanian diplomats explained to Diker and Inbari last September, Jordan is deeply opposed to Olmert's proposed Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria. In their view, such a retreat would cause a spread of Gazan and Iraqi style chaos to Judea and Samaria. Such chaos could easily endanger the Hashemite regime.

UNTIL 1988, Arabs in Judea and Samaria were Jordanian citizens. Fearing that the Palestinian uprising which began that year would destabilize his kingdom, the late King Hussein renounced Jordan's claims to sovereignty over the areas. Yet Jordan has remained actively engaged in the areas. Some 70 percent of Jordanians define themselves as Palestinians and most Jordanians have family in Judea and Samaria. Trade between the two banks of the Jordan is intense. King Abdullah's wife Rania is a Palestinian. In naming their son

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Hussein the crown prince of Jordan, Abdullah has effectively transformed the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan into the Hashemite-Palestinian Kingdom of Jordan-Palestine.

Inbari and Diker believe that the Jordanian regime may be willing today to entertain a strategy of federating or confederating with Judea and Samaria. The advantage of such a policy for the Palestinians is that as citizens of overwhelmingly Palestinian Jordan, they would no longer be stateless. The advantage for Israel and Jordan would be that the threat that the PA's chronic instability poses to both states' security would be remedied by the presence of two sovereigns - at peace with one another, with have decades of military cooperation behind them, and a shared interest in destroying all vestiges of Islamist terror cells in the area - in charge.

Although they do not discuss the issue of Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria in their article, there is little reason to think that a confederative or federative arrangement that would place Jordan in charge of the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria would necessitate any limitation on the right of Israel to remain responsible for the Israelis who live in the areas. Clear and straightforward arrangements regarding citizenship and security responsibilities for both the Palestinians and the Israelis can be reached with little more than a handshake given the depth of both Israel and Jordan's shared interests.

ONE OF the main reasons that the notion of Palestinian statehood - upon which the appeasement and surrender paradigms are based - is acceptable to Israelis is because it is believed that if the Palestinians are given sovereignty they will begin to behave like a responsible member of the community of states. Sadly, events of the past 13 years have proven repeatedly that the conferring of the accoutrements of statehood - including sovereignty in Gaza -- exacerbates Palestinian support for jihad and instability.

With Hamas in charge of the PA and global jihadist terror groups backed by Iran on the march in Gaza and Judea and Samaria, further empowerment of the Palestinians will endanger the survivability of Jordan and Israel. But as Inbari and Diker show, other options exist. If the Americans wish to support an Israeli policy that will, as Olmert says make "a contribution to a Middle East with less violence and terror," they should suggest that he consider switching his paradigm to one that has a chance of achieving that goal. ☪

THE PAST MEETS THE FUTURE

David Brooks, N.Y. Times, 4/13/06

Mr. Past: Your big problem is you don't understand the limits of what governments can achieve. Before this whole Iraq thing, you should have read Elie Kedourie's essay on the British occupation in the 1920's. This isn't history repeating itself, it's the same unbroken pattern.

Kedourie shows the whole history of Iraq is a story of "bloodshed, treason and rapine." He shows how Iraqi politics have always been marked by "murderous currents," "demonic hatreds," "grisly spectacles," Sunni violence and Shiite fanaticism. He shows naïve Westerners who thought they could change all this. He even quotes a memo from a British officer saying Britain should threaten to withdraw because then the Iraqis will be forced to behave responsibly. It's all the same!

The central lesson of the past three years is that societies are not that malleable. Evils do not grow out of manageable defects in the environment that can be neatly fixed. We need to change our mentality, scale back to more realistic expectations.

Mr. Future: Actually, I did read Kedourie, but last night I also reread the Exodus story. The Exodus story reminds us that human beings can transform themselves and their situations. It reminds us that people who embark on generational journeys are the realistic ones, because they are the ones who see all the possibilities the future contains.

The finest things humans have done have been achieved in an Exodus frame of mind. This country was settled and founded by people who adopted the Exodus mentality. The civil rights movement was also led by such people.

Martin Luther King learned from Exodus that it is not enough to sit back and let history slowly evolve. It's sometimes necessary to venture into the hazardous wilderness.

There are times amid the journey when the Promised Land can seem a long way off, when the words "next year in Jerusalem" seem unrealistic. But those are the times when the words mean the most. So of all the lessons to learn from the past three years, the worst would be to settle back into your cold-hearted acceptance of the status quo.

Mr. Past: You had no right to force others to sacrifice for your distant visions of

milk and honey. How long is the young woman in Najaf supposed to be oppressed while you wait for the Arab journey through chaos to end?

Your problem is that in your innocence, you have no idea how long historical processes take to work themselves out. You have no idea of the deep cultural continuities that stretch back over centuries and shape behavior. The people who suffer for democracy should see the wages of their labor sometime in their own lives.

Mr. Future: Because you are so arrogant, you assume I am an idiot. The Exodus story prepares us for all that. It is not the story of liberation, but of the long, troubled march to freedom.

The Israelites had been damaged by their own oppression. They longed for freedom but were not ready for it. There were fights and divisions.

Moses told his men to "slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor," thus ordering the murder of 3,000 Israelites.

Tocqueville gets at this when he writes that freedom "is ordinarily born in the midst of storms, it is established painfully among civil discords, and only when it is old can one know the benefits." The adolescence of freedom is painful, but what is the alternative?

Mr. Past: The alternative is to develop a mind-set in which you don't try insanely to solve great historical problems, but you understand that history is one unexpected thing after another. You seek balance. You navigate through the storms to keep some reasonable order intact for one more day. It never ends.

Mr. Future: You will be surprised by the habits of mind you fall into. You will stop trying to end tyranny and pretty soon you will stop condemning it. You will develop a hardheartedness that flatters your moral vanity because it seems mature.

Remember, fewer Iraqis have died in the second Iraq war than in the first, when Saddam crushed the Shiite uprising we fomented. The world wasn't bothered by that extermination — there were no rallies in the streets. We were all being realistic.

The nation will adopt one mind-set after the trauma of Iraq, yours or Moses'. Right now, the public mood is with you, but I can't imagine yours will long prevail. ☆



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HOW I LEARNED TO LOVE THE WALL

By Irshad Manji, a fellow at Yale and author of *"The Trouble With Islam Today—A Muslim's Call For Reform"*. N. Y. Times, to its credit, published this piece on 3/18/06 - it's worth reading! I strongly suggest you go to Manji's website—www.muslim-refusenik.com—for this is how she sees herself. A remarkable, brave, intelligent Muslim—may there be many more like her!

ON MARCH 28, ISRAELIS WILL ELECT A NEW PRIME MINISTER TO REPLACE THE AILING Ariel Sharon. But I'd bet my last shekel that I'll continue to hear the phrase "Ariel Sharon's apartheid wall." It's a phrase spoken to make that spewed to on almost every university campus I visit in North America and Europe.

Among a new generation of Muslims, this is what Mr. Sharon will be known for long after he leaves office: unilaterally erecting a barrier, most of it a fence, some of it a wall, that cuts Arab villages in half, chokes the movement of ordinary Palestinians, cripples local economies and, ultimately, separates human beings.

New York Times dubbed Manji "Osama Bin Laden's worst nightmare". She takes it as a compliment.

The critics have a point - up to a point.

They're right that Palestinians are virtually wailing at "the wall." When I went to see its towering cement slabs in the West Bank town of Abu Dis last year, an Arab man approached me to unload his sadness. "It's no good," he said. "It's hard."

"Why do you think they built it?" I asked.

The man shook his head and repeated, "It's hard." After some silence, he added, "We are not two people. We are one."

"How do you explain that to suicide bombers?" I wondered aloud.

The man smiled. "No understand," he replied. "No English. Thank you. Goodbye."

Was it something I said? Maybe my impolite mention of Palestinian martyrs? Then

again, how could I not mention them?

After all, this barrier, although built by Mr. Sharon, was birthed by "shaheds," suicide bombers whom Palestinian leaders have glorified as martyrs. Qassam missiles can kill two or three people at a time. Suicide bombers lay waste to many more. Since the barrier went up, suicide attacks have plunged, which means innocent Arab lives have been spared along with Jewish ones. Does a concrete effort to save civilian lives justify the hardship posed by this structure? The humanitarian in me bristles, but ultimately answers yes.

That's not to deny or even diminish Arab pain. I had to twist myself like an amateur gymnast when I helped a Palestinian woman carry her grocery bags through a gap in the wall (such gaps, closely watched by Israeli soldiers, do exist). It made me wonder how much more difficult the obstacle course must be for people twice my age, who must travel to one of the wider official checkpoints nearby.

I appreciate that Israel's intent is not to keep Palestinians "in" so much as to keep suicide bombers "out." But in the minds of many Palestinians, Ariel Sharon never adequately acknowledged the humiliation felt by a 60-year-old Arab whose family has harvested the Holy Land for generations when she has to show her identity card to an 18-year-old Ethiopian immigrant in an Israeli Army uniform who's been in the country for

eight months. In that context, fences and walls come off as cruelly gratuitous.

For all the closings, however, Israel is open enough to tolerate lawsuits by civil society groups who despise every mile of the barrier. Mr. Sharon himself agreed to reroute sections of it when the Israel High Court ruled in favor of the complainants. Where else in the Middle East can Arabs and Jews work together so visibly to contest, and change, state policies?

I reflected on this question as I observed an Israeli Army jeep patrol the gap in Abu Dis. The vehicle was crammed with soldiers who, in turn, observed me filming the anti-Israel graffiti scrawled by Western activists to "Scotland hates the blood-sucking Zionists!" I turned my video camera on the soldiers. Nobody ordered me to shut it off or show the tape. My Arab taxi driver stood by, unprotected by a diplomatic license plate or press banner.

Like all Muslims, I look forward to the day when neither the jeep nor the wall is in Abu Dis. So will we tell the self-appointed martyrs of Islam that the people -not just Arabs, but Arabs and Jews -"are one"? That before the barrier, there was the bomber? And that the barrier can be dismantled, but the bomber's victims are gone forever?

Young Muslims, especially those privileged with a good education, cannot walk away from these questions as my interlocutor in Abu Dis did. If we follow in his footsteps, we are only conspiring against ourselves. After all, once the election is over, we won't have Ariel Sharon to kick around anymore. Ø