

BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the
Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

July
2007

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates...* —Genesis 15:18

*Wadi-el-Arish, 50 miles SW of Gaza city. Though much was and is arid, the territory was larger than the area of Germany today.

The Jewish people did not survive for two millennia in order to pioneer new weaponry, computer security, or anti-missile missiles. We were supposed to be "a light unto the nations". In this we have failed. It turns out that the 2000-year struggle for Jewish survival comes down to a state of settlements, run by an amoral clique of corrupt lawbreakers who are deaf both to their citizens and to their enemies. A state lacking justice cannot survive. More and more Israelis are coming to understand this as they ask their children where they expect to live in 25 years. Children who are honest admit, to their parents' shock, that they do not know.

—Avraham Burg, former speaker of Israel's parliament.*

*Quoted by Alice Rothchild in *Broken Promises, Broken Dreams*. 2007.

CHAPTER NEWS

This issue of the *Dispatch* features **Israel-Palestine-USA** relations and policy, as a broken key to American power and democracy. Perhaps the right question is "Who is America?" — geopoliticians? rich people with corporate shares? see-no-evil folks who want their comfort and SUVs? folks deprived of college biology? And which views are sustainable?

BCA is adjourned until Fall, when our meeting will be announced in the *Dispatch* and by email, or call 617-266-8687.

Our June meeting, billed as "Cities Networking for Power", was well-attended and lively. Read Joanna Herlihy's report **How Cities Fight Global Warming** on Page 11. Also, in BCA's continuing effort for **democratic trade systems**, read your editor's testimony to the Massachusetts legislature on Page 7.

Impeach Now

Or Face the End of Constitutional Democracy

by Paul Craig Roberts, CounterPunch, 16 July 2007

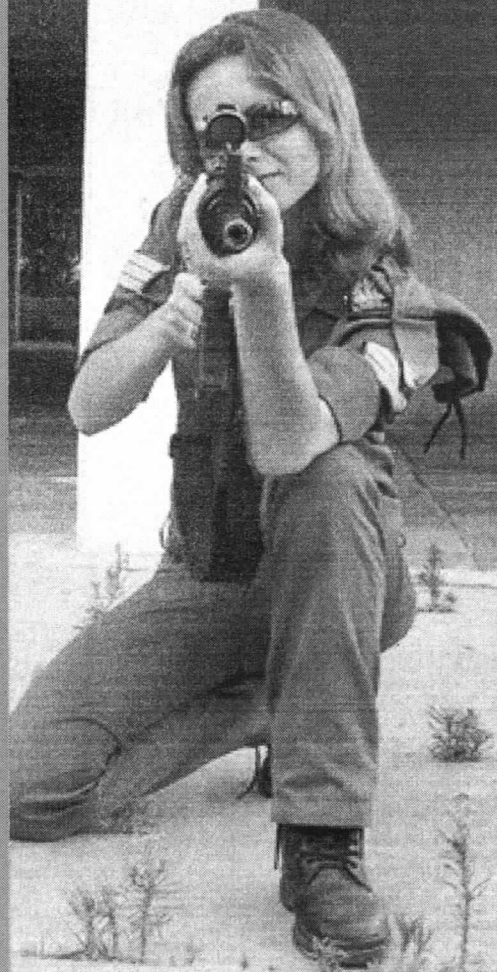
Unless Congress immediately impeaches Bush and Cheney, a year from now the US could be a dictatorial police state at war with Iran.

Bush has put in place all the necessary measures for dictatorship in the form of "executive orders" that are triggered whenever Bush declares a national emergency. Recent statements by Homeland Security Chief Michael Chertoff, former Republican senator Rick Santorum and others suggest that Americans might expect a series of staged, or false flag, "terrorist" events in the near future.

Many attentive people believe that the reason the Bush administration will not bow to expert (Continued on Page 10 >>)

U.S.-ISRAEL

PALESTINE



Israeli soldier aims automatic weapon. Posted on a right-wing American web site with the title *Nice Jewish Girls with Assault Rifles*. The blogger put these words in her mouth: "Here's lookin' at you, you insecure, woman-hating piece of Islamofascist trash."

Undoing Our Tangled Web

Israel & USA—The Time for Divorce

by Chris Hedges, TruthDig.com, 2 July 2007

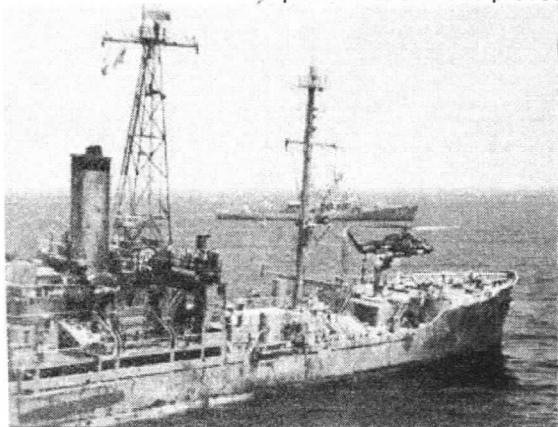
Israel, without the United States, would probably not exist. The country came perilously close to extinction during the October 1973 war when Egypt, trained and backed by the Soviet Union, crossed the Suez and the Syrians poured in over the Golan Heights. Huge American military transport planes came to the rescue. They began landing every half-hour to refit the battered Israeli army, which had lost most of its heavy armor. By the time the war was over, the United States had given Israel \$2.2 billion in emergency military aid.

The intervention, which enraged the Arab world, triggered the OPEC oil embargo that for a time wreaked havoc on Western economies. This was perhaps the most dramatic example of the sustained life-support system the United States has provided to the Jewish state.

Israel was born at midnight May 14, 1948. The U.S. recognized the new state 11 minutes later. The two countries have been locked in a deadly embrace ever since.

Washington, at the beginning of the relationship, was able to be a moderating influence. An incensed President Eisenhower demanded and got Israel's withdrawal after the Israelis occupied Gaza in 1956. During the Six-Day War in 1967, Israeli warplanes bombed the USS *Liberty*. The ship, (Continued on next page >>)

flying the U.S. flag and stationed 15 miles off the Israeli coast, was intercepting tactical and strategic communications from both sides. The Israeli strikes killed 34 U.S. sailors and wounded 171. The deliberate attack froze, for a while, Washington's enthusiasm for Israel. But ruptures like this one proved to be only



bumps, soon smoothed out by an increasingly sophisticated and well-financed Israel lobby that set out to merge Israel and American foreign policy

Israel "mistakenly" bombed spy ship USS Liberty in the Middle East.

Israel has reaped tremendous rewards from this alliance. It has been given more than \$140 billion in U.S. direct economic and military assistance. It receives about \$3 billion in direct assistance annually, roughly one-fifth of the U.S. foreign aid budget. Although most American foreign aid packages stipulate that related military purchases have to be made in the United States, Israel is allowed to use about 25 percent of the money to subsidize its own growing and profitable defense industry. It is exempt, unlike other nations, from accounting for how it spends the aid money. And funds are routinely siphoned off to build new Jewish settlements, bolster the Israeli occupation in the Palestinian territories and construct the security barrier, which costs an estimated \$1 million a mile.

The barrier weaves its way through the West Bank, creating isolated pockets of impoverished Palestinians in ringed ghettos. By the time the barrier is finished it will probably in effect seize up to 40 percent of Palestinian land. This is the largest land grab by Israel since the 1967 war. And although the United States officially opposes settlement expansion and the barrier, it also funds them.

The U.S. has provided Israel with nearly \$3 billion to develop weapons systems and given Israel access to some of the most sophisticated items in its own military arsenal, including Blackhawk attack helicopters and F-16 fighter jets. The United States also gives Israel access to intelligence it denies to its NATO allies. And when Israel refused to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, the United States stood by without a word of protest as the Israelis built the region's first nuclear weapons program.

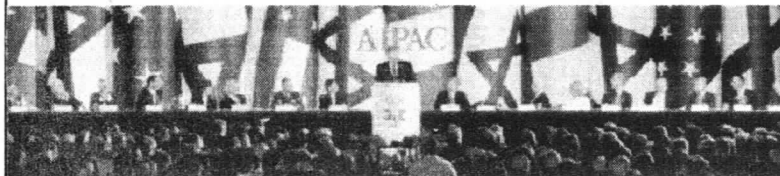
U.S. foreign policy, especially under the current Bush administration, has become little more than an extension of Israeli foreign policy. The United States since 1982 has vetoed 32 Security Council resolutions critical of Israel, more than the total number of vetoes cast by all the other Security Council members. It refuses to enforce the Security Council resolutions it claims to support. These resolutions call on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.

There is now volcanic anger and revulsion by Arabs at this blatant favoritism. Few in the Middle East see any distinction between Israeli and American policies, nor should they. And when the Islamic radicals speak of U.S. support of Israel as a prime reason for their hatred of the United States, we should listen. The consequences of this one-sided relationship are

being played out in the disastrous war in Iraq, growing tension with Iran, and the humanitarian and political crisis in Gaza. It is being played out in Lebanon, where Hezbollah is gearing up for another war with Israel, one most Middle East analysts say is inevitable. The U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East is unraveling. And it is doing so because of this special relationship. The eruption of a regional conflict would usher in a nightmare of catastrophic proportions.

There were many in the American foreign policy establishment and State Department who saw this situation coming. The decision to throw our lot in with Israel in the Middle East was not initially a popular one with an array of foreign policy experts, including President Harry Truman's secretary of state, Gen. George Marshall. They warned there would be a backlash. They knew the cost the United States would pay in the oil-rich region for this decision, which they feared would be one of the greatest strategic blunders of the postwar era. And they were right. The decision has jeopardized American and Israeli security and created the kindling for a regional conflagration.

The alliance, which makes no sense in geopolitical terms, does make sense when seen through the lens of domestic politics. The Israel lobby has become a potent force in the American political system. No major candidate, Democrat or Republican, dares to challenge it. The lobby successfully purged the State Department of Arab experts who challenged the notion that Israeli and American interests were identical. Backers of Israel have doled out hundreds of millions of dollars to support U.S. political candidates deemed favorable to Israel. They have brutally punished those who strayed, including the first President Bush, who they said was not vigorous enough in his defense of Israeli interests. This was a lesson the next Bush White House did not forget. George W. Bush did not want to be a one-term president like his father.



Israel lobby annual meeting draws many from DC political "firmament"

Israel advocated removing Saddam Hussein from power and currently advocates striking Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons. Direct Israeli involvement in American military operations in the Middle East is impossible. It would reignite a war between Arab states and Israel. The United States, which during the Cold War avoided direct military involvement in the region, now does the direct bidding of Israel while Israel watches from the sidelines. During the 1991 Gulf War, Israel was a spectator, just as it is in the war with Iraq.

President Bush, facing dwindling support for the war in Iraq, publicly holds Israel up as a model for what he would like Iraq to become. Imagine how this idea plays out on the Arab street, which views Israel as the Algerians viewed the French colonizers during the war of liberation.

"In Israel," Bush said recently, "terrorists have taken innocent human life for years in suicide attacks. The difference is that Israel is a functioning democracy and it's not prevented from carrying out its responsibilities. And that's a good indicator of success that we're looking for in Iraq."

Americans are increasingly isolated and reviled in the world. They remain blissfully ignorant of their own culpability for this isolation. U.S. "spin" paints the rest of

(Continued on Page 8 >>)

Grating Encounter with Young Bully Systemic Harassment by Israeli Soldiers

Two testimonies from Alice Rothchild's *Broken Promises, Broken Dreams: Stories of Jewish & Palestinian Trauma and Resilience*. Pluto Press, 2007.

Seema Jilani is a lively and engaging medical student from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Though born in Louisiana, because of her father's work with international corporations such as Halliburton, she has lived all over the world. Her parents are originally from Pakistan and she has felt varying levels of attachment and adherence to her Islamic faith as she has evolved into adulthood. She was interested in exploring the Israeli/Palestinian conflict with a group of Jewish medical activists. While in Jerusalem, she went to pray with a medical student, S.T. (she declined to be named), at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site for Muslims. On returning, she tearfully recounted her experience (6 March 2005):

First, to get into the mosque, we had to pass a checkpoint and they [Israeli police] didn't believe that I was Muslim, and they made me show my passport and then I had to do *wudu*, the cleansing ritual that you should do before you enter the mosque or before you pray. The Israeli soldiers watched me walk in, with my headscarf. They didn't say anything, and as I walked out from the cleansing ritual, I didn't even realize I am so used to walking into my mosque so freely, they stopped us and they shouted at us and they said, "No, no, wait, stop." When they stopped me they said "Why are you here? Give me your passport."

I was made to recite verses from the Koran that they didn't know. They didn't even pronounce it right when they asked me to recite it. I was very surprised and then, in the middle of the verse, they said "Stop it. I don't want to hear it any more." Then I said no, I won't stop it. I have to continue and have to finish it because you don't just stop a prayer in the middle. He wouldn't give me my passport until I said the Koran verses and then as I said them with each intonation he would shake the passport and they were laughing, when I did it. With each verse that I said, he would shake the passport right in my face about two millimeters from my nose. When I said "Amen," he said "Here, now you can have your passport."

We were so taken aback, [S.T.] just said that they're assholes and she wasn't shocked so I assume this has happened before. I've always been the type of person that's been non-confrontational with soldiers and I don't take too many risks, but at this time I've never felt so strongly that I really would like to finish. You can't turn me on and off like I am a puppet. This was only about control. You ask me to say the prayer, now let me finish it. You can't turn me off and then wave my passport in my face as I am saying the holiest verses of my religion. I'm not even that religious, but it should mean something, you know?

I really felt like, not even hitting him; I just wanted to spit in his face. Then the amazing thing is, you walk into Aqsa and it's the most beautiful mosque I have ever set foot in. It's the most beautiful building. It's more beautiful than Mecca or Medina by far, which I found astonishing because I thought I would never feel that. I've never felt so much happiness and so much sadness in one second.

—Seema Jilani

Alice Rothchild's Words in Brief

♦ The Israeli lobby is actually politically far to the right of the majority of US Jews as well as Israelis... US Jews need to ask, do we as a subgroup within US society want to be in an alliance with mostly WASP neoconservatives, Christian fundamentalists, and right-wing Jewish ideologists?

♦ Marketing and image-making have replaced honest discussion involving the serious issues facing a vibrant but complicated Israeli society and its own security concerns.

♦ More Israelis are leaving the country to live in the Diaspora [outside Israel] than are arriving... I fear that [many] Jews in the Diaspora support that which is most extraordinary about Israeli accomplishments and at the same time act as complicit enablers for that which is most pathologic.

♦ At home, after the invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, the US government is facing growing criticism both from its citizenry and beyond its borders. In order to repair its broken relationships with the rest of the world, the US will undoubtedly have to reassess its unwavering support for Israeli policies that are seen by the world as destabilizing and instigating Arab hostility.

I worry that if we as Jews do not tolerate criticism of Israeli policy, then all Jews will be seen as culpable for whatever catastrophes lie ahead. Surely history will teach us that Israel cannot claim a moral dispensation because of past suffering and then behave immorally, that the US government will not always be there offering large amounts of economic and military aid, that misusing the term anti-Semitism to characterize criticism of Israeli behavior ultimately renders the concept meaningless.

Alice Rothchild practices medicine at Harvard Vanguard, Copley branch, Boston, has traveled extensively in Israel and Palestine, and volunteers with Jewish Voice for Peace.

Israelis and Palestinians Never Meet "I was shocked... They Are Like Us!"

I went [to the house of my acquaintance, peace activist Judy Blanc, in West Jerusalem] and her guest was lovely, spoke English in a beautiful Oxford accent, and we spoke all evening about the great food and the great restaurants we had eaten in. At some point I said to her, "Rita, where are you from?" She said "Ramallah." I said, "No, no, before Ramallah." She said, "No, I am born and brought up in Ramallah." I said, "No, you couldn't be from Ramallah. You're not Palestinian, are you?" She said "Yes, I am Palestinian." She was Dr. Rita Giacaman [a prominent member of the Palestinian women's movement and now director of the Department of International Community Health at Birzeit University]. Well I was shocked. This was the first time that I had ever had a conversation with a Palestinian. I was 43 years old. I didn't know that Palestinians were like us. It sounds so stupid and so simple but Israelis and Palestinians never meet.

—Gila Svirsky, raised in a Zionist family in NJ, moved from Brandeis University to Israel at age 19.

Jews Losing Our Way?

Scrap Domination, Adopt Love

by Michael Lerner, RabbiLerner@tikun.org, 20 July 2007

Tisha B'av, which starts this Monday evening, July 24th, at 9 p.m. with the reading and discussing of the *Book of Lamentations*, is all about the way the Jewish people has lost its way and then suffered karmic consequences.

According to the rabbis, the reason the First Temple was destroyed is the reason that the Prophets had predicted. Jews had power but used it without sensitivity, ignoring the Torah commands to care for the powerless, the poor, the homeless, the stranger, the "other." Nothing is repeated more frequently in Torah than variations on this command: When you come into your land, do NOT oppress the stranger (the other), remember that you were strangers (the other) in the land of Egypt.

The Torah says over and over again, counter to the "God gave it to us so we have a RIGHT to the Land of Israel" philosophy, that our claim to the land is totally dependent on our ability to live according to God's commands, including the command to "LOVE THE STRANGER." But, according to the rabbis in the Talmud, the reason we lost the land the 2nd time—and the 2nd Temple was destroyed—is that we still couldn't take seriously the injunctions about love. Not just to love the stranger, but even to love our neighbor as ourselves. Instead, the rabbis say, the 2nd Temple was destroyed because of free-floating hatred among Jews toward each other.

Do you imagine that 2 thousand years of suffering in the Diaspora taught Jews to not make these mistakes again? Not at all. The Zionist movement rejected Torah teachings and instead in effect embraced the strategy of domination and the Right Hand of God, as if to say: "It is with power and might that we will secure the Land of Israel and it is with power and might that we will deal with our non-Jewish neighbors and the stranger who dwells within our midst (in this case, the Palestinian people)."

The terrible truth is that the Jewish people once again risk being expelled from our land by even more cataclysmic violence than the last time, just as predicted by the prophets of old, unless we can substitute a strategy of generosity for the strategy of domination. There is no reason to believe that the prophets' vision (please read *Isaiah*, chapter one) is any less true today than when first uttered. Whether you think of that as God's will, or the inevitable karmic consequences of choosing violence instead of a path of generosity and reconciliation (such as that outlined in my book *The Geneva Accord and Other Strategies for Middle East Peace* published in 2004 by North Atlantic Books), the outcome will be the same, the destruction of the Jewish state in Palestine (a fate which we fear and oppose, which is why we at *Tikkun* are doing everything we can to raise consciousness of the Jewish people about the need for a Strategy of Generosity and a path of love, kindness, reconciliation, justice for the Palestinian people and also for those Jewish refugees who fled Arab lands, and peace).

The message of Tisha B'Av, when we focus on this karmic relationship, is not just for Jews or for Israel. Wouldn't it be great if every religion and every nation had a day like this to explore the ways it had itself lost its way? For the truth is that today it is the collective folly of the human race which allows its current misleaders, and those who control the global economy and shape the media, who are leading us to destruction. The arrogance of power by the U.S., its commitment to a strategy of

domination instead of a strategy of generosity (such as that proposed by the Network of Spiritual Progressives' Global Marshall Plan—see www.spiritualprogressives.org) will lead to the destruction of America as well, and perhaps even of human life on the planet. And of course, as the *Book of Lamentations* makes clear, the disaster will fall not only the arrogant, but on the innocent as well.

Of course, the "realists" from the time of Isaiah and Jeremiah to the current moment will denounce the prophetic vision as "unrealistic" and tell us that everything is fine, a few minor changes are needed, perhaps the strategy of domination will eventually work if we stay the course. But it won't.

Which is why those who love the Jewish people, and those who love America, are really those who are sounding the alarm. But it's not enough to say what's wrong and what we are against. That's why Isaiah quickly puts forth his vision of non-violence: nations making war no more, beating their swords into ploughshares. And that's what's missing today from the Democrats, the anti-war movement, the progressive forces: a vision of what a world based on generosity would look like, and how to get there. That's the other part of doing the fast day of Tisha B'av—moving from focus on mourning the destruction on Monday night to visioning the rebuilding on Tuesday afternoon...

LOCAL PRO-ISRAEL RANT

"Fighting Those Opposed to Peace"*

by Tom Mountain, Newton Tab, 3 July 2007

Today the Gaza Hamas terrorists are armed with more and better weapons than they were in 1970, when the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] ran the territory. And they're a lot more fanatical. The only positive side to battling the PLO was that they actually knew when they were defeated, and tended to surrender rather than be gunned down by the IDF [Israel Defense Force—the army]. But Hamas is like the Japanese kamikaze, fanatical to the point where they'll kill themselves and any Jew, soldier or civilian that they can get their hands on.



If Israel is serious about defeating Hamas, it will have to kill Hamas. Every last one of them.

This sounds draconian, but it's the only way. Unless, of course, by some miraculous change of heart, Hamas decides to stop killing Jews. And this will never happen.

This means that the IDF will have to re-conquer Gaza, street by street, house by house, until every last Hamas terrorist is either killed or captured. They'll have to duplicate what the Americans did on Iwo Jima – hunt them down and snuff them out. No matter how long it takes or how many IDF casualties happen as a result. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Hamas terrorists must be killed. If they are not killed they will continue to kill Jews.

The Hamas war against the Jews, temporarily sidelined while they tighten their grip on Gaza, will continue after they've defeated their political rivals. And just as in 1934 when the SS eliminated the SA, thus enabling the Nazis to consolidate their power, Hamas will resume its war against the Jewish State after they've liquidated the PLO.

Hamas will continue to attack Israel until every last Jew is either killed or driven into exile. This is an integral part of their religion. Their brand of Islam dictates that it is noble to kill Jews, and ideally, to kill themselves in the process. Hamas terrorists

believe that the ultimate goal in life is to die a martyr, which means to die murdering as many Jews as possible. This brand of martyrdom is the very purpose of their existence.

Hamas will not negotiate with Israel. Hamas will never surrender to Israel. They are sworn to the destruction of Israel and the death of every Jew within Israel. They would rather die than make peace with the Jewish State. Their fight with Israel is a fight to the death. They will kill every Jew "from the river to the sea (Palestine will be free)," or die trying.

So they need to die ... at the hands of the Jewish State. For Israel, it's simply a matter of kill, or be killed.

There really is no other choice. Sometime after they've wiped out the PLO in Gaza and consolidated their power, Israel must destroy Hamas. This means that all of the Hamas terrorists need to be killed, or at least captured. When this happens, when Israel finally chooses to admit that a state of total war exists with Hamas, then and only then will the process of eliminating Hamas begin.

In World War II few Americans would have thought that Japan was redeemable, that peace between the two people would ever be possible, but the American political and military leaders at the time were determined to capture or kill the Japanese leadership and force their armies to surrender or die. This is how wars with a fanatical enemy are won.

Only after the Japanese people witnessed the destruction of their country, the disastrous leadership of their political and military elite, and the folly of their sacred kamikaze culture, did they learn to change. And only after they were nearly wiped off the map, did the Japanese start to rebuild their country.

And only when the majority of Hamas terrorists are killed, will the rest of Gaza be able to at least begin the path to civilization. When the Hamas terrorists are dead, their children, like the Japanese children of World War II, may no longer see killing themselves and others as their main purpose in life. A generation of children committed to something other than a cult of death could rise as a result.

But this can only happen if Israel has the national will to defeat Hamas, once and for all. And that means killing Hamas, once and for all. What remains is for a strong and decisive Israeli leader, like Moshe Dayan in 1971, to order his generals, "You can start."

**Original headline in Tab.*

Ed. Comment: Newton's own Rush Limbaugh? One hopes that readers of the Newton Tab are less ignorant than this rabid myth promoter.

Three points:

(1) *Israel is not an innocent victim, merely defending itself. With Israeli occupation of the Gaza strip in 1956, President Eisenhower forced Israel to withdraw, but Israel has dominated and decimated Palestine ever since. With billions of dollars annually in US military aid, and 100 times more weaponry than Hamas, can Israel really think that a Palestinian armed force can drive them into the sea?*

(2) *Japan did not have to be threatened with genocide to surrender. The atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a message to the Soviets—also poised to invade—not the Japanese. Japan had already formally prepared to surrender, and the US authorities knew it.*

(3) *Palestinians, the majority of which live on the West Bank, had elected Hamas fair and square. This, I suppose, makes all of them "terrorists" and justifies genocide. Never mind US and world rejection of genocide. Never mind serious investigations and fair trials. Right, Mr. Mountain?*

Newton has a lot of psychoanalysts. When good synagogue-going Newton Jews see Palestinians wanting to murder them en masse, might there be a case here for ego-defensive "projection"—attributing to The Other one's own unthinkable [murderous] impulses, likely coming from irrational fears? Or is this a ruse for US taxpayers to continue subsidizing the Israeli economy and hegemony, or both?

Palestine Wrecked

Hamas, Fatah, International Indifference

by Alain Gresh, Le Monde Diplomatique, July 2007

The international community has decided in a rare display of unity that it must save President Mahmoud Abbas. It has offered to resume aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA), relieve the suffering of civilians and reopen talks to strengthen the position of moderate Palestinians. Even the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, suddenly thinks Abbas might be a partner for peace. After ignoring years of reports on the bad situation in Gaza and the West Bank from organisations as diverse as the World Bank, Amnesty International and the World Health Organisation, have the United States and the European Union finally woken up?

It has taken an overwhelming victory by Hamas in Gaza to end the torpor. The US and Israel have not stinted their provision of military assistance to Fatah, authorising the import of weapons for the presidential guard and security forces (1). But to no avail. The flight of most of Fatah's military leaders—Muhammad Dahlan, Rashid Abu Shabak and Samir Masharawi—who took refuge in the West Bank or Egypt rather than stand by their troops, is only one factor in the shattering defeat. Another is Fatah's inability to reform itself, give up its status as the party of state in a non-existent state, and become a conventional political force. Nepotism, corruption and clan loyalties still blight the organisation founded by Yasser Arafat.

But the ferocity of the fighting between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza also reflects the unravelling of Palestinian society, exacerbated by 15 months of international boycott. There were summary executions, vengeance and pillaging, and each side accused the other of being in the pay of foreign forces. On 12 January, at a meeting in Gaza with Dahlan, the crowd condemned Hamas as Shia puppets (2). Hamas responded by accusing Fatah of being Israeli or US agents or *kafirs* (infidels). The Israeli journalist Amira Hass noted: "Both camps are turning all civilians into hostages, and sentencing them to death in their street fights, sacrificing the struggle for Palestinian liberation on the altar of their rivalry" (3). Palestine is paying a high price for bringing combat, with its cult of violence and male chauvinism, back into the political arena.

In an email on 12 June the Palestinian psychiatrist Eyad Sarraj wrote: "There is so much hatred and tribal calling for revenge. It is not just a political militaristic power struggle... We all have been defeated by Israel and that feeling of humiliation is now venting out against smaller enemies within ourselves. Israel has further brutalised us through torture and oppression and has caused so much pain and trauma that now, as before, is showing the ugly face of toxic and chronic violence."

Children of the intifada

The Israeli journalist Gideon Levy described the legacy of 40 years of occupation: "These violent young men, whom we saw killing each other so cruelly, are the children of the winter of 1987, the children of the first intifada. Most of them have never been outside of the Gaza Strip. They saw their older brothers beaten and injured, their parents imprisoned in their homes, without jobs or hope, for years. Their whole lives have been lived in the shadow of Israeli violence (4)."

Is there any way to halt the wreck of Palestine? It would help if, just for once, US and EU statements were followed by action and the international community imposed the creation of a

Palestinian state. In June 2002 even President George Bush agreed to peace founded on two states living side by side. But nothing has been done since.



Young Palestinians mourn for militant killed by Israelis last September.

In 2003-04 the Israeli government repeatedly claimed that the only obstacle to peace was Arafat. They besieged the leader, forcing him to retreat into a small office space in his Muqata headquarters in Ramallah. Ariel Sharon accused Arafat of being "our Bin Laden". The international community said nothing.

When Arafat died in November 2004 Abbas took over as the head of the Palestinian Authority. This most moderate of the Palestine Liberation Organisation leaders was determined to restart the peace process, but his attempts to create an opening went unnoticed. More settlements were built on the West Bank, and so was the separation wall. Checkpoints turned a short journey between two villages into an ordeal. The scene was set for a Hamas victory in the general election in January 2006.

Hamas won over voters by stressing its participation in resistance against occupation; its welfare network; and the unfailing loyalty of its officers. But Palestinians did not vote for the Islamists because they were against the idea of peace with Israel, or because they wanted suicide bombers. All opinion polls agree that a majority of Palestinians wanted a solution founded on two states. Even Hamas got the message. Its election manifesto was different from its charter, which (like the PLO equivalent in the 1960s) advocated the destruction of the state of Israel. Several Hamas leaders confirmed that, under certain conditions, the movement was prepared to accept the creation of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders.

Immediately after the election the US and Israel took measures, approved by Europe and assisted by a faction of Fatah, to thwart the outcome of the poll. Hamas wanted to form a government of national unity but US pressure prevented any such agreement. Economic sanctions punished the Palestinians for voting the wrong way. But all this had no impact on Hamas's financial and military capability, as the fighting in Gaza has demonstrated. It worsened poverty in Palestine and speeded the disintegration of its institutions.

The lessons of Iraq

The international community has forgotten the lessons of Iraq. A dozen years of sanctions against the regime of Saddam Hussein had no effect on its stability or the standard of living of its leaders but penalised ordinary people and sapped the state: officials abandoned their offices to earn a living, basic services stopped and tribal solidarity replaced the welfare state. When

US forces invaded Iraq in March 2003 the state collapsed. There is no such thing as a Palestinian state, but the international boycott destroyed organisations that the PA had struggled to establish since 1993.

There was a way out of this deadlock in February when Hamas and Fatah signed the Mecca agreement brokered by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. On 12 February, in an interview with the Saudi television channel Al-Ikhbariyya, Khaled Meshaal, the political leader of Hamas, explained: "This is not the program of a particular group. Each faction has its convictions, but as a government of national unity we have reached agreement on a political platform, which defines our national aims and our aspiration towards a Palestinian state within the June 1967 borders."

This statement, with many others, confirmed a shift in Hamas's position (5), which could be tested by the international community. Its flexible stance was backed by renewed support for an Arab peace initiative offering to restore normal relations with Israel in exchange for the creation of a Palestinian state (6).

Robert Malley, the head of the International Crisis Group's Middle East programme and former adviser to Bill Clinton, wrote: "The success of the Mecca agreement will depend largely on the international response. Some commentators, while hypocritically hailing the efforts of the Saudi regime, are already demanding that the future government comply with previously imposed conditions. We hardly expected anything better from the Bush administration. But from Europe? Has it learned nothing from this collective failure? An agreement was reached in Saudi Arabia because there was no injunction on Hamas suddenly to change its ideology, which it will not do, but rather an encouragement to evolve pragmatically, which it might do. Hamas's record is such that it deserves to be put to the test: is it prepared to accept and impose a reciprocal ceasefire? Is it prepared to give a free rein to President Abbas, duly mandated as the leader of the PLO, to negotiate with Israel? Does it agree to a referendum being held on any agreement Abbas may reach? And will it undertake to respect the result (7)?"

Oblivious to such warnings the international community blundered into a dead end. It maintained sanctions that only strengthened the most radical elements of Hamas and watched, unmoved, as Palestinian society disintegrated. The outgoing UN Middle East envoy, Alvaro de Soto, condemned this behaviour in a confidential report (8). The West treats Israel, with great consideration, almost tenderness. The Quartet (9) has become "a body that was all but imposing sanctions on a freely elected government of a people under occupation as well as setting unattainable preconditions for dialogue". It has not put any pressure on the Israeli government over settlements and the separation wall.

When an Israeli soldier was taken hostage in June 2006 the international community hardly noticed Israeli reprisals, including the destruction of a power station and civilian build-



ings and a military offensive that killed hundreds. When Hizbullah captured two Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border last July western powers sat back for 33 days while Israeli forces damaged Lebanon and its infrastructure. These, we are told, are examples of Israel's legitimate right to defend itself. Meanwhile the steady spread of settlements makes the creation of a Palestinian state improbable.

This chaos cannot guarantee safety for Israelis. The war in Lebanon last summer showed that they are vulnerable to well-armed, determined guerrillas. Rockets still fall on Sderot and the army's inability to stop them is a serious setback, as Ze'ev Schiff, the (recently deceased) *Haaretz* military correspondent, acknowledged just before Hamas took control of Gaza. "Israel has in effect been defeated. Israel is experiencing something in Sderot that it has not experienced since the war of independence, if ever: the enemy has silenced an entire city and brought normal life there to a halt" (10). Recent events at Nahr al-Barid and other refugee camps in Lebanon, or in Gaza, where radical units linked to al-Qaida have taken root, should remind everyone that the wreck of Palestine will lead to uncontrolled radicalization, a disaster for Israel and all the Middle East.

*Alain Gresh is editor of LMD. Translated by Harry Forster. Read the English edition monthly at www.mondediplo.com.

Notes:

- (1) Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, "Fatah to Israel: Let us get arms to fight Hamas", *Haaretz*, Jerusalem, 6 June 2007.
- (2) All the Gaza Palestinians are Sunni Muslims, but Tehran's support for Hamas in some sense justifies such accusations.
- (3) "Sacrificing the Palestinian struggle", *Haaretz*, 14 June 2007.
- (4) Gideon Levy, "Flight from Gaza: Last to leave did turn out the lights", *Haaretz*, 17 June 2007.
- (5) See Paul Delmotte, "What Hamas really wants", *Le Monde diplomatique*, English edition, January 2007.
- (6) Contrary to propaganda from the Israeli government, often used uncorroborated by the media, this initiative does not provide for the right of return of Palestinian refugees. It calls for a just, negotiated solution to the refugee problem based on the UN General Assembly resolution 194.
- (7) "Palestine, l'Europe face à ses responsabilités", *Le Monde*, 13 March 2007.
- (8) Alvaro de Soto, "End of mission report" (PDF), May 2007.
- (9) Body set up in 2003 to coordinate action in the Middle East, bringing together the US, Russia, Europe and the UN.
- (10) "An Israeli defeat in Sderot", *Haaretz*, 8 June 2007.

BCA Condemns SPP

Urges MA Globalization Impact Law

by Dave Lewit, *Alliance for Democracy*, 10 July 2007*

The Globalization Impact Bill, H.374, as law, would ensure that we question the alluring but dangerous directions which the federal government is forcing upon us, and evaluate the impacts of those federal requirements upon our naturally endowed region and our control over our commonwealth and our lives. The same bill under an earlier number was endorsed by the Boston City Council and by the Massachusetts AFL-CIO state convention.

The bill was originally drafted in 1998, after this legislative body had written into law a penalty for doing business with a gross military dictatorship, Burma. Challenged by corporations, the US Supreme Court disallowed Massachusetts—or any state—from making a law regarding international trade. Never mind that the federal courts haven't had a problem with the states making arrangements to subsidize foreign trade. A few

years earlier the US Congress narrowly passed the North American Free Trade Agreement and endorsed a similar arrangement for the whole marketable world—the World Trade Organization. Only lately has the impact of these agreements been evaluated, showing that they *contribute* to poverty, not diminish it. Not to speak of its downgrading or eliminating more than a million American jobs, NAFTA has destroyed the livelihoods of millions of Mexican farmers, who have to emigrate, for them and their families to survive. Rather than protect sovereignty, NAFTA is forcing Canada and Mexico to give up their natural resources of oil, water, and timber to US refiners, developers, and privatizers at the expense of our municipal institutions and our needed conservation planning. Rather than strengthening democratic institutions, it substitutes hundreds of corporate-written regulations and corporate tribunals for the rule of law.

With Latin American resistance and the demise of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas, corporate-led US negotiators have spawned many bilateral trade agreements such as the US-Korea Trade Pact and regional agreements such as the Central American Free Trade Agreement. All these agreements carry much the same anti-democratic principles or consequences as NAFTA and WTO—export focus rather than domestic development; deregulation at the expense of labor, health, environment, etc.; monopoly patents rather than shared scientific advances; disempowerment of states and municipalities; emphasis on punishment—sanctions—rather than cooperative advances, and so forth.

As a freshman congress member in 1997, John Tierney participated in the Alliance for Democracy's conference on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment—an ill-fated corporate constitution for the world, and was appalled to learn that the MAI was 90 percent completed with absolutely no consultation with Congress, contemptuous of Congress's duty of oversight. Now, in 2007, a similar plan is being actualized with little publicity—SPP, the so-called Security and Prosperity Partnership. It is a super-NAFTA, which would not only compromise governmental protection of natural and human rights, but slice and dice our landscape with tens of thousands of miles of quarter-mile-wide SuperCorridors carrying water and oil pipelines and electronic cable as well as constant truck, car, and train traffic—condemning properties equivalent to the area of Vermont.

Besides the creation of a limited North American economic union and an international Homeland Security, the novel idea behind SPP is to open huge deep-water ports in Mexico and Nova Scotia to welcome Chinese goods which would then be shipped on taxpayer-supported infrastructure to the American heartland, for sale by large corporations to those who can afford to pay. The governor of Texas just last week vetoed a bill which would postpone SuperCorridor construction for two years. The work will be paid for by the US Department of Transportation, Texas taxpayers, private investors, and children and others who sacrifice coverage by social programs. That's just for the Texas segment. Mexican truck drivers will have a free pass. Chinese goods will displace still more American industry. Accelerated consumption of Mexican and Canadian oil will accelerate pollution and global warming. Canadian water will continue wasteful agricultural practices. Is this what we want? What Massachusetts laws and legislative powers does this ignore?

Scrutiny by the commission set up under H.374 would go a long way toward protecting our rights.

* *Testimony before Massachusetts Legislature's joint committee on Economic Development & Emerging Technology*

Save Public Land for Farming Massachusetts Faces Post-Carbon Crunch

by Nancy Lee Wood, Bristol Community College, 26 June 2007*

Bill H.60 threatens to push our communities further down the path of urban sprawl and unsightly development. It is little more than legislation for fast-tracking a rapid sell-off of so-called "surplus" state lands—lands that belong to the citizens of the Commonwealth—all the citizens of the Commonwealth. They are our *common wealth*...

H.60 undermines democracy and communities' rights to plan their own development. The bill allows the legislature to vote to sell off so-called surplus land without having held a hearing in the community and without a locally sponsored bill put forth by the local legislator, who by his or her very position in the community, is accountable to its citizens... Only after this [specified] gubernatorial committee had made its decision would concerned citizens and local planners be allowed to testify before these powerful and unaccountable state authorities...

By encouraging the sell-off of public land, H.60 exploits and marginalizes communities that are in "fiscal strangulation." The only way towns and cities would be able to hold onto state lands in their communities would be through paying the state government 50 percent or more of the land's appraised value. In so many words, communities would be forced to pay a "ransom" fee to maintain their local planning rights... This entire scheme would disenfranchise poorer communities, forcing them to give up their rights to local planning, and instead, would skew the selling-off of public lands to wealthy, private developers...

Soon We Must Grow Food Locally

H.60 fails to be accountable by not requiring a *priori* disclosure of how the land would be reused and by not requiring a "smart-use" review... Soon we are going to need every available piece of land for the *relocalization of agriculture*. We are entering a period of very real energy crisis. Our entire industrialized society—our whole way of life—has been built on and fueled by substances whose availability is now beginning to peak and that will go into steady, deep decline over the next 20 to 30 years, with oil being the first, soon to be followed by natural gas, coal, and uranium. Numerous geologists and oil experts including oil investment banker Matthew Simmons, adviser to Halliburton and the Bush administration, predict that if oil production has not yet peaked it soon will—sometime between 2005 and 2010. Once oil peaks, everything dependent upon it will rise in price as oil becomes more difficult to extract and thus, becomes scarcer and more expensive to produce...

Do you know that the average food item we consume will have traveled 1500 miles before reaching our plates? For every 1 calorie we consume in food, 10 calories of fossil fuel energy has been used in producing it. In the foreseeable future, lettuce from California, beef from Argentina, lamb from Australia, tomatoes from Mexico, pineapples from Hawaii, and oranges from Florida will become increasingly difficult or impossible to buy in local markets. Huge agribusinesses whose growing, processing, storage and transport operations are completely dependent on fossil fuels will decline rapidly once fuel prices make their operations prohibitive. Even if they could stay in business their products would be too expensive for the average consumer to buy. Our current food system simply is unsustainable...

How are we going to feed local populations in the face of

impending peak oil and fossil fuel decline? The only viable answer is "relocalized" agriculture—relatively small in scale, labor intensive, and free of fossil-fuel inputs. Given that so many local farms have been forced out of existence, unable to compete with the huge agribusinesses which themselves will soon be entering decline, much of the local land once farmed now is filled with tracts of housing, shopping malls, and parking lots. Where are we going to grow the food needed to feed our local populations? How are we going to keep real hunger and famine—even die-off—from occurring?

We have reached a point when we no longer can afford the "luxury" of haphazard, sprawling, commercialized land use. Given the sobering times ahead, to pass legislation such as H.60 that weakens local access and control of publicly owned land and that encourages private investors— whose primary interest more often than not is the "bottom line" rather than the quality of life in a community—goes beyond mindless to irresponsible. The day may soon come when such practices are seen by the public as criminal, especially when food shortages and hunger threaten the well-being and health of our citizens. Who among you want to be sitting in that seat when a hungry public asks, "Who has stolen our common wealth?"

This bill is out of sync with what we as citizens in Massachusetts need to sustain ourselves through what promises to be a challenging transition to a post-carbon existence.

* Excerpts from testimony before the MA legislature's joint committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures, and State Assets.

ISRAEL & USA (Continued from Page 2)

the world as unreasonable, but Israel, Americans are assured, will always be on our side.

Israel is reaping economic as well as political rewards from its lock-down apartheid state. In the "gated community" market it has begun to sell systems and techniques that allow the nation to cope with terrorism. Israel, in 2006, exported \$3.4 billion in defense products—well over a billion dollars more than it received in American military aid. Israel has grown into the fourth largest arms dealer in the world. Most of this growth has come in the so-called homeland security sector.

"The key products and services," as Naomi Klein wrote in *The Nation*, "are hi-tech fences, unmanned drones, biometric IDs, video and audio surveillance gear, air passenger profiling and prisoner interrogation systems—precisely the tools and technologies Israel has used to lock in the occupied territories.

And that is why the chaos in Gaza and the rest of the region doesn't threaten the bottom line in Tel Aviv, and may actually boost it. Israel has learned to turn endless war into a brand asset, pitching its uprooting, occupation and containment of the Palestinian people as a half-century head start in the 'global war on terror.' "

The United States, at least officially, does not support the occupation and calls for a viable Palestinian state. It is a global player



Israeli corner-shooting gun allows Special Forces soldiers to fire while hidden.

with interests that stretch well beyond the boundaries of the Middle East, and the equation that Israel's enemies are our enemies is not that simple.

"Terrorism is not a single adversary," John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt wrote in *The London Review of Books*, "but a tactic employed by a wide array of political groups. The terrorist organizations that threaten Israel do not threaten the United States, except when it intervenes against them (as in Lebanon in 1982). Moreover, Palestinian terrorism is not random violence directed against Israel or 'the West'; it is largely a response to Israel's prolonged campaign to colonize the West Bank and Gaza Strip. More important, saying that Israel and the US are united by a shared terrorist threat has the causal relationship backwards: the US has a terrorism problem in good part because it is so closely allied with Israel, not the other way around."

US Ties to Israel a Kiss of Death

Middle Eastern policy is shaped in the United States by those with very close ties to the Israel lobby. Those who attempt to counter the virulent Israeli position, such as former Secretary of State Colin Powell, are ruthlessly slapped down. This alliance was true also during the Clinton administration, with its array of Israeli-first Middle East experts, including special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk, the former deputy director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, AIPAC, one of the most powerful Israel lobbying groups in Washington. But at least people like Indyk and Ross are sane, willing to consider a Palestinian state, however unviable, as long as it is palatable to Israel. The Bush administration turned to the far-right wing of the Israel lobby, those who have not a shred of compassion for the Palestinians or a word of criticism for Israel. These new Middle East experts include Elliott Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, the disgraced I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz and David Wurmser.

Washington was once willing to stay Israel's hand. It intervened to thwart some of its most extreme violations of human rights. This administration, however, has signed on for every disastrous Israeli blunder, from building the security barrier in the West Bank, to sealing off Gaza and triggering a humanitarian crisis, to the ruinous invasion and saturation bombing of Lebanon.

The few tepid attempts by the Bush White House to criticize Israeli actions have all ended in hasty and humiliating retreats in the face of Israeli pressure. When the Israel Defense Forces in April 2002 reoccupied the West Bank, President Bush called on then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to "halt the incursions and begin withdrawal." It never happened. After a week of heavy pressure from the Israel lobby and Israel's allies in Congress, meaning just about everyone in Congress, the president gave up, calling Sharon "a man of peace." It was a humiliating moment for the United States, a clear sign of who pulled the strings.

There were several reasons for the war in Iraq. The desire for American control of oil, the belief that Washington could build puppet states in the region, and a real, if misplaced, fear of Saddam Hussein played a part in the current disaster. But it was also strongly shaped by the notion that what is good for Israel is good for the United States. Israel wanted Iraq neutralized. Israeli intelligence, in the lead-up to the war, gave faulty information to the U.S. about Iraq's alleged arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. And when Baghdad was taken in April 2003, the Israeli government immediately began to push for an attack on Syria. The lust for this attack has waned, in no small part because the

Americans don't have enough troops to hang on in Iraq, much less launch a new occupation.

Israel is currently lobbying the United States to launch aerial strikes on Iran, despite the debacle in Lebanon. Israel's iron determination to forcibly prevent a nuclear Iran makes it probable that before the end of the Bush administration an attack on Iran will take place. The efforts to halt nuclear development through diplomatic means have failed. It does not matter that Iran poses no threat to the United States. It does not matter that it does not even pose a threat to Israel, which has several hundred nuclear weapons in its arsenal. It matters only that Israel demands total military domination of the Middle East.

The alliance between Israel and the United States has culminated after 50 years in direct U.S. military involvement in the Middle East. This involvement, which is not furthering American interests, is unleashing a geopolitical nightmare. American soldiers and Marines are dying in droves in a useless war. The impotence of the United States in the face of Israeli pressure is complete. The White House and the Congress have become, for perhaps the first time, a direct extension of Israeli interests. There is no longer any debate within the United States. This is evidenced by the obsequious nods to Israel by all the current presidential candidates with the exception of Dennis Kucinich. The political cost for those who challenge Israel is too high.

This means there will be no peaceful resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It means the incidents of Islamic terrorism against the U.S. and Israel will grow. It means that American power and prestige are on a steep, irreversible decline. And I fear it also means the ultimate end of the Jewish experiment in the Middle East.

Dependence on China Portends US Economic Collapse

The weakening of the United States, economically and militarily, is giving rise to new centers of power. The U.S. economy, mismanaged and drained by the Iraq war, is increasingly dependent on Chinese trade imports and on Chinese holdings of U.S. Treasury securities. China holds dollar reserves worth \$825 billion. If Beijing decides to abandon the U.S. bond market, even in part, it would cause a free fall by the dollar. It would lead to the collapse of the \$7-trillion U.S. real estate market. There would be a wave of U.S. bank failures and huge unemployment. The growing dependence on China has been accompanied by aggressive work by the Chinese to build alliances with many of the world's major exporters of oil, such as Iran, Nigeria, Sudan and Venezuela. The Chinese are preparing for the looming worldwide clash over dwindling resources.

The future is ominous. Not only do Israel's foreign policy objectives not coincide with American interests, they actively hurt them. The growing belligerence in the Middle East, the calls for an attack against Iran, the collapse of the imperial project in Iraq have all given an opening, where there was none before, to America's rivals. It is not in Israel's interests to ignite a regional conflict. It is not in ours. But those who have their hands on the wheel seem determined, in the name of freedom and democracy, to keep the American ship of state headed at breakneck speed into the cliffs before us.

Chris Hedges, who graduated from Harvard Divinity School and was for nearly two decades a foreign correspondent for The New York Times, is the author of American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America.

advice and public opinion and begin withdrawing US troops from Iraq is that the administration intends to rescue its unpopular position with false flag operations that can be used to expand the war to Iran.

Too much is going wrong for the Bush administration: the failure of its Middle East wars, Republican senators jumping ship, Turkish troops massed on northern Iraq's border poised for an invasion to deal with Kurds, and a majority of Americans favoring the impeachment of Cheney and a near-majority favoring Bush's impeachment. The Bush administration desperately needs dramatic events to scare the American people and the Congress back in line with the militarist-police state that Bush and Cheney have fostered.

William Norman Grigg recently wrote that the GOP is "praying for a terrorist strike" to save the party from electoral wipeout in 2008. Chertoff, Cheney, the neocon nazis, and Mossad would have no qualms about saving the bacon for the Republicans, who have enabled Bush to start two unjustified wars, with Iran waiting in the wings to be attacked in a third war.

The Bush administration has tried unsuccessfully to resurrect the terrorist fear factor by infiltrating some blowhard groups and encouraging them to talk about staging "terrorist" events. The talk, encouraged by federal agents, resulted in "terrorist" arrests hyped by the media, but even the captive media was unable to scare people with such transparent sting operations.

If the Bush administration wants to continue its wars in the Middle East and to entrench the "unitary executive" at home, it will have to conduct some false flag operations that will both frighten and anger the American people and make them accept Bush's declaration of "national emergency" and the return of the draft. Alternatively, the administration could simply allow any real terrorist plot to proceed without hindrance.

A series of staged or permitted attacks would be spun by the captive media as a vindication of the neoconservatives' Islamophobic policy, the intention of which is to destroy all Middle Eastern governments that are not American puppet states. Success would give the US control over oil, but *the main purpose is to eliminate any resistance to Israel's complete absorption of Palestine into Greater Israel. [emphasis ours]*

Think about it. If another 9/11-type "security failure" were not in the works, why would Homeland Security czar Chertoff go to the trouble of convincing the Chicago Tribune that Americans have become complacent about terrorist threats and that he has "a gut feeling" that America will soon be hit hard?

Why would Republican warmonger Rick Santorum say on the Hugh Hewitt radio show that "between now and November, a lot of things are going to happen, and I believe that by this time next year, the American public's (sic) going to have a very different view of this war."

Throughout its existence the US government has staged incidents that the government then used in behalf of purposes that it could not otherwise have pursued. According to a number of writers, false flag operations have been routinely used by the Israeli state. During the Czarist era in Russia, the secret police would set off bombs in order to arrest those the secret police regarded as troublesome. Hitler was a dramatic orchestrator of false flag operations. False flag operations are a commonplace tool of governments.

Ask yourself: Would a government that has lied us into two wars and is working to lie us into an attack on Iran shrink from staging "terrorist" attacks in order to remove opposition to its agenda?

Only a diehard minority believes in the honesty and integrity of the Bush-Cheney administration and in the truthfulness of the corporate media.

Hitler, who never achieved majority support in a German election, used the Reichstag fire to fan hysteria and push through the Enabling Act, which made him dictator. Determined tyrants never require majority support in order to overthrow constitutional orders.

The American constitutional system is near to being overthrown. Are coming "terrorist" events of which Chertoff warns and Santorum promises the means for overthrowing our constitutional democracy?

Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration. He was Associate Editor of the Wall Street Journal editorial page and Contributing Editor of National Review. He is coauthor of The Tyranny of Good Intentions. He can be reached at PaulCraigRoberts@yahoo.com

Ed. Note: *Evidence is abundant, and contradictions not credible, that 9/11 attacks were orchestrated by US insiders. Read a detailed summary (first 80 pages) in theologian David Ray Griffin's Christian Faith and the Truth Behind 9/11 (2006), and Debunking the Debunkers (2007). Griffin calls for a real investigation by a combination of church groups if necessary, not the whitewash official investigation and report (2004). The big question is not why our government is trying to fool us (see Roberts' article above), but **why the bulk of the American public is apparently willing to be fooled**. The answer may lie in fear and powerlessness—fear of reproach by conformist or bullying neighbors and officials, and a sense of powerlessness to do anything about it without support and leadership.*

*Public opinion surveys show that there is widespread skepticism about who did it. Courage, leadership, and support is needed to publicly devastate the official misinformation, and to shift to truth and justice. Perhaps what activists can do is persuade **editors and TV producers** to scrutinize the evidence and publicize it. Many will fear losing their jobs. **So ask them what we can do to help them hold on to their careers.***

Prepare Now For Coup Engage Leading Local Officials

The Boston-Cambridge Alliance is considering another action to prepare communities against cooperating with a coup (see *BCA Dispatch*, June 2007, page 2 box). Locally, and in as many other communities as possible, question the mayor, the police chief, and the town council president (or moderator) about "what they are prepared to do in sustaining traditional constitutional governance in their area, and promoting normal police and judicial investigation of the 'emergency' event..." Note that on May 7th Bush ordered a virtual dictatorship in the event of a "catastrophic emergency" which he would define (see *Dispatch*, June 2007, page 1) and **now, on July 17th, Bush ordered the seizure of assets of any person or organization who or which would "pose a significant risk of committing an act or acts of violence that have the purpose or effect of threatening the peace or stability of Iraq or the Government of Iraq..."** (Read text at www.globalresearch.ca) That might include *reading this article*. We are all set up for a coup, folks.

Girls Suffer Deadly Abuses Britain Launches Worldwide Campaign

by Terri Judd & Harriet Griffey, *The Independent (UK)*, 15 May 2007

Almost 100 million girls "disappear" each year, killed in the womb or as babies, a study has revealed. The report, "Because I am a Girl", exposes the gender discrimination which remains deeply entrenched and widely tolerated across the world, including the fact that female foeticide is on the increase in countries where a male child remains more valued.

The report highlights the fact that two million girls a year still suffer genital mutilation*, half a million die during pregnancy—the leading killer among 15 to 19-year-olds—every 12 months and an estimated 7.3 million are living with HIV/Aids compared with 4.5 million young men. Almost a million girls fall victim to child traffickers each year compared with a quarter that number of boys.

Of the 1.5 billion people living on less than 50 pence a day, 70 per cent are female, with 96 million young women aged 15 to 24 unable to read or write—almost double the number for males.

While many of the most shocking figures in the Plan International report relate to developing nations, sexual discrimination is still prevalent in the north. In the UK, two women a week are killed by current or former partners. The country also has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe and having a baby at a young age means women are more likely to miss out on education and slip into poverty. There has also been a substantial rise in obesity in young girls in the UK.

While girls in Britain often outperform boys in school, they are still victims of discrimination in the workplace. The report points out that a recent study found they were still woefully underrepresented in the boardroom, in politics and the courts. While the pay gap between young men and women is 3.7 per cent, it rises to 10.7 per cent for those in their thirties.

"Even if you look at the UK, life is still difficult for some minority girls," said Marie Staunton, chief executive of Plan UK. "More girls are going to university but then it flattens off. They have broken through the marble ceiling into management but not through the glass ceiling into the boardroom."

The "Because I am a Girl" campaign launched today highlights discrimination and will work towards improving gender equality worldwide. Designed to run until 2015, the campaign will also follow the lives of 125 girls born in 2006 until their ninth birthday. Today's report is the first in a series of nine studies by Plan International—a global child development agency.

Statistics show that 62 million girls are not even receiving primary school education while an estimated 450 million have stunted growth because of childhood malnutrition. "Why, in an era that saw the term 'girl power' coined, are millions of girls being condemned to a life of inequality and poverty?" the report asks.

Graça Machel, the children's rights campaigner from Mozambique, said: "The study shows that our failure to make an equal, more just world has resulted in the most intolerable of situations. To discriminate on the basis of sex and gender is morally indefensible; it is economically, politically and socially unsupportable."

**Ed. Note: Our own Susan McLucas of Somerville's campaign in Mali has, after 10 years, sharply reduced clitoral excision.*

How Cities Fight Global Warming

BCA Miniforum, 21 June, at Cambridge Friends' Meeting

by Joanna Herlihy, *Alliance for Democracy*, 3 July 2007

Some 20 people were in attendance, including a dozen BCA members—some from outlying towns, and a half dozen energy professionals.

Guest speaker **Rosalie Anders**, coordinator of Cambridge energy conservation initiatives, described global warming as a social justice issue. She said that we are already seeing global warming refugees, that there will be 100's of millions in the next 25 years. Local governments know that they'll be dealing with the consequences, so they must provide solutions now. Indeed, cities are part of the answer. Calculations show that the environmental footprint of New York City residents is one half that of suburbanites. The challenge is to make all cities more livable and attractive.

Cambridge's commitment was leveraged by various means. First, the city joined Cities for Climate Protection, a project of ICLEI [International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, aka Local Governments for Sustainability, founded, incidentally, by former Cambridge Peace Commissioner, **Jeb Brugmann**] now comprising more than 700 cities world-wide. The offer of a free intern to do monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions by the Henry P. Kendall Foundation hooked the first communities to join this initiative. Later, Cambridge responded to a challenge to U.S. cities from Seattle, via the U.S. Mayor's Conference, to meet the commitments which our national government chose not to make under the Kyoto Agreement.

The Cambridge inventory of greenhouse gas emissions revealed that 13% is from vehicles, 1% from waste, and 86% from buildings (heating, cooling)—65% commercial and institutional (due to the fact that Cambridge has many biotech firms and 2 major universities: Harvard and MIT). Climate protection outreach includes encouraging rivalry among institutions and businesses, Go Green business awards and, recently, a program which will offer energy inventories and loans for improvements to property owners. Grassroots neighborhood groups are an important part of the implementation. An ordinance requiring higher energy efficiency in new buildings is being drafted. The loan funds will come largely from private investors, mobilized by the Kendall Foundation as a pilot project; 20% will come from the utility companies (who actually collect funds for this purpose from rate-payers). The stance of the utilities is problematic, since their profits are tied to *increased* energy use. The state government is talking about decoupling, such as California has done.

Toni Serafini recalled her experience as a property manager in Kendall Square. She noted that owners could generally be talked into changes if they were demanded by the tenants. She was able to initiate a recycling program and a roof garden in 2001 with tenant requests. How tenants dealt with efficiency issues in their private space related more to incentives such as utility rates favoring efficiency. Businesses tend to delay retrofits until required by building codes.

Brandeis professor **Eric Olsen** noted that, if this program really gets rolling, it could soak up all the available professionals. Others responded that appropriate training has begun in several sectors, especially community and technical colleges. Rosalie observed that the qualified people needed in community groups seemed to "come out of the woodwork" once the plan

was in place.

Charlie Derber asked where the driving force—the social and political energy—comes from and whether ordinary folks are engaged. Rosalie replied that it depends on the locality. In Cambridge, neighborhood groups have always had an impact. As to ordinary folks, the city council was emboldened by Al Gore's movie and Hurricane Katrina issues. Town to town interactions occur mostly at the governmental level. The Mass Climate Action Network pays attention to legislative matters.

Suzy Pearce asked whether people relate global warming to a broader understanding of issues (like the Green Platform) since most of the discussions are technical. Someone noted that Al Gore doesn't challenge basic social assumptions. Rosalie observed that people's views are related to what they feel they have control over. Charlie Derber said that mobilizing and educating the people of Cambridge is not a technical issue... The real payoff could be to do technical stuff and awareness so that people will claim the issue before corporations do. The key to change is mobilizing ordinary people to claim the issues. Is there anything of that nature in Cambridge? Rosalie said that she goes to all the neighborhood meetings because she believes in their potential. Even when a plan as modest as "adopt a sidewalk" is advanced, it's about taking control. It's part of the answer. But she can't see the city government saying that we must get rid of global corporations. **Jed Schwartz** raised the possibility of de-privatizing utilities, returning to a mixed (public/private) economy.

Robert McElaney cited Portland Oregon as a city with long-range vision. They have free buses. See more on the metro Portland sustainable cities website. In Greater Boston, regional planning has little power which makes transport planning hard. Communities compete for tax dollars. Doubling the price of the T spoils incentive to use it.

Greg Brown from Sharon questioned the fate of Carter's solar programs under Reagan. Lapse of that program was attributed to lowered fuel prices, inadequacy of technology and failure of some companies to stand by their warranties.

Will Thompson, a solar energy installer from Ipswich, noted that the Iraq War motivates people to think about energy issues. He said that people he does work for want to retrofit because of utility prices and because they feel responsible. He cited a woman, responding to a neighbor who thought her new photovoltaic panel were ugly, saying, "I did this for you." Will's clients want to know everything. He gives them 10-page reports. He noted that consumer demand for installations is causing many towns to change ordinances to accommodate PV installations encouraged by government grants. Approximately 1/4 of the value of installations is returned by the MTC, a public/private Massachusetts partnership. Federal tax credits also apply. A typical home installation of 1.8kw would cost \$16,000, but only \$7,000 after incentives. Will mentioned a couple of websites: DSIRE (Database of State Incentives for Renewals & Efficiency) and SEBANE (Solar Energy Business Association of New England) and others which can be found at his own www.NexGenEnergy.com.

Kae Clarke mentioned that, despite all the new construction, she hasn't heard of any Boston plans for green buildings. Change won't be quick enough. We'll need new forms of energy.

Charlie Derber, Boston College sociologist, observed that we're dealing with a global problem of extreme urgency. Voluntary movements won't do. This is a problem of a different scale. Patchwork responses (aren't adequate). The big players

are not motivated...In a short time this patchwork has to coalesce into a larger force... Global warming must be dealt with at all levels... What's missing is the way these efforts will coalesce into a project to create standards at the global level.. so that in a few decades we don't [see] energy as a commodity. We're dealing with a problem that could end life as we know it... We need democratic processes to move this issue.

Rosalie agreed, adding that it is worse than a void on the federal level... except that the new CAFE (corporate average fuel efficiency) standards are positive.

Chris Carrick, an Olin College student working at the Democracy Center, said that this comes to educating younger people. Global warming is a big issue on college campuses. In designing a new building at Olin College, the architects didn't think about energy. The students brought in energy initiatives. A recent senior class gift was a fund for green initiatives. Dave Lewit asked about Green Party activity at Olin. Chris replied that Olin students take a technical approach.

Charlie Derber concluded: There are technical and social themes... corporations are not persons [with rights]... there are basic rights. The environment has rights that are not built into the constitution. Regional entities could advance this concept, like the abolitionists had to change the mentality about the rights of persons. This will come out of municipalities...not a civil war, but a fundamental change in the ways people are thinking about this.

Dave Lewit announced that there will be no more BCA meetings until September. See *BCA Dispatch* and email for announcements. Dave also displayed a water pitcher suitable for taking to meetings and conferences where bottled water may be encountered—along with Sierra Club brochures on bottled water, and yellow CAUTION tape. (Note: Call Dave at 617-266-8687 for your kit—pitcher, cups, etc.—if you plan to attend a conference where you can set them up.) #

JOIN THE BCA

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN BOSTON TO LOVE BCA

Please help us as we fight to make a better future for ourselves and our children -- Join the Boston/Cambridge Alliance for Democracy. (Cut out or copy this form and send it to

Dave Lewit, 271 Dartmouth St., Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY PLEDGE

___\$26/Year - "Count me in!"

___\$52/Year - "Contributor" (We need to average this amount.)

___\$104/Year - "Sustainer" (Helping us thrive.)

___\$208/Year - "Community Steward"

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COLOPHON

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