

Harold Weisberg

Self-Destructive Meachum

Roy Meachum has told us that Hitler had to be coerced into killing 6,000,000 Jews; that Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyon", was a minor character because the deaths for which he was responsible ^{only} number in the thousands; ^{only} that, coinciding with the Gulf war, Saddam Hussein was a ^{man} man of peace because he had found ^{Allah, proof} God, ^{and innocent} witness he was photographed at prayer; and that Arab terrorists, especially those who ^{kill unarmed civilians} kill unarmed civilians, are not terrorists at all - they are patriots, the Arab George Washingtons.

Now, with six weeks to consider how he would make the pretense of addressing my article again demonstrating how he is without exception wrong in ~~every~~ ^{n/} every column he writes about the Middle East, his screed appeared along with it on March 27.

Needing some kind of peg on which to hang his resumed Israel-bashing, titled "Killing...", he says it is "to update the ^e current Middle East disaster."

"Update" it is not. Out of date it is. The most recent event he mentions is the Arab barbarity in bombing the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in which only a ~~small minority~~, four, of the known 28 killed, were Jews.

His "update," which is really more of his propaganda, begins 20 years ago - in 1972.

And it is the dirtiest of dishonest writing. I address only a few examples.

He begins by saying that "these are particularly" anxious times for the Palestinians who live in "south Lebanon's refugee camps." Why? Because they fear retaliation from Israel over the Arab Buenos Aires monstrosity.

This tells the reader ^{or} that Israel retaliates by bombing the refugees, and that is a big lie. It retaliates against terrorist installations in Lebanon, against those who terrorize Israelis, almost always civilians. Israel has ^{m/} bombed these terrorist camps only in retaliation ^{against} of Palestinian atrocities.

~~Next~~ ^{Next} he justifies the ^{Arab} Buenos Aires slaughter by Palestinians by referring to it as revenge for the political assassination committed by U.S. helicopter weapons systems, "a dirty slanting to prejudice the reader, only slightly relieved by his saying they were "fired by Israeli military."

Mixing "choppers" up with "jets" he says the "murdered sheik" was retaliation for the ^{loss} loss of three Soviet immigrants." What he is really talking about is their being cut to

death by Arabs while they slept.

He says of this sheik only that he was "the leader of the pro-Iranian ^{Z/}Hixbullah faction." "Faction" of what? He could and he should have said of the most extreme of terrorists, those who among other abominable ^{acts} ^{ed} ^{world's uncivilized} resort to the barbarism of the remote past in ^{to king holding} took and held all those innocent americans and others hñstage, torturing some and dumping their bodies for the carrion eaters. They have murdered countless Israelis and this sheik was one of their leaders in these atrocities.

Or, ^{he was a} ^{meachum} as legitimate as any as a target for retaliation ^{as a terrorist leader,}
When ^{he} slips and gets close to the truth ^{he} understates it and misdirects the reader.

It is to a degree true that "The only common ground shared by all Arabs rests on a bitter hatred ~~of~~ for Israel," ^{But} the reality is that all Muslim countries save Egypt have persisted in maintaining a state of war with Israel and in the expressed determination to drive all Jews into the sea, to ^{wipe} ~~wipe~~ Israel out. ^{This also remains the PLO's objective}

Or, ~~they are determined that Israel will be wiped out and they agree on that as does the PLO, which still has this intent in its charter.~~

^{meachum} Next he says what is not so, that there was no real threat (of which he refers only to the allaged "Soviet threat to the world's oil supply") once "Sadat sent all the Russians ^{backing} ~~backing~~ out of Egypt in 1972."

And thus, of course, there was no reason for the U.S. to aid the only democratic state and dependable ally in the region, Israel.

Not only does 20 years of history ^{prove} ~~prove~~ that as usual ^{meachum} is wrong but as I ^{along with new proof} pointed out he has an unerring sense of timing, his pro-Arab propaganda appearing ^{precisely} ~~precisely~~ when he is proven wrong. Here he says that since 1972 there was no real threat against Israel and March 11 he referred to "that tired ~~old~~ propaganda wheeze, to push ~~is~~ Israel into the sea."

The very day his "tired old wheeze," that Israel is under no threat, appeared the ~~Islamic Republics~~ Iranian News Agency reported that Iran's spiritual leader "called for attacks against Israel and its interests ^y and led thousands of demonstrators in chanting "Death to america' and 'Death to Israel'."

Also on that very day CIA Director Robert Gates testified to Iran's ^{now} "buying \$2 billion worth of weapons" yearly, including "advanced warplanes, antiaircraft missiles and some extended-range Scud missiles" plus "at least two ^{Russian} submarines." In 10 years Iran spent \$10 billion for offensive terror weapons.

Gates described this as "hostile to ~~the~~ U.S. interests."

He testified also to "Iran's growing support of radical Palestinian groups," to its closeness to Libya (which Meachum described as friendly in the Muslim world); ^{to its opposition to} ~~as opposed~~ ^{peace efforts.} ~~to~~ Middle East peace; and as promoting terrorism and other active measures to undermine it.

Iran alone, ^{Gates testified,} is close to achieving a nuclear-weapons capability and improved missiles, poison gas warheads for its ~~missiles~~ ^{missiles} of greater range and accuracy. He believes it is developing a bacteriological warfare capability, just what the U.S. wants those terrorists believing in "Death to America" to have!

Gates also testified that Meachum's man of peace, Saddam, still has Scud launchers ^{plus} ~~and~~ several hundred of those missiles along with some chemical and biological weapons and the means to make more.

As I pointed out, refuting his ^{Meachum's} "tired old wheeze" propaganda, ^{vily} Heavily-armed Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia ^{have been modernizing their military. They can} ~~in addition to Iran~~ ^{and rockets} are able to attack Israel and some of their long-range aircraft are for this purpose, ~~none other existing for them.~~

Meachum even argues that trying to bring the Libyans charged with the wholesale slaughter of Americans in bombing the ^{Pan Am} ~~jet~~ over Lockerbie, Scotland, is wrong because "there is no hope of grabbing their master," Gadhafi. This is to argue that [^]terrorists, especially wholesale murderers, ought [^]not be brought to justice because those who ordered their atrocities cannot be.

It is truly remarkable that self-important and pretently omniscient Meachum has this ineffable timing for his endless anti-Israel and pro-Arab propaganda so that it appears along with the proof that he is always wrong on both fact and opinion.

Hail, self-destructive Roy Meachum!

He is ^(thank God) unique in Frederick!

Iranian Urges Attacks On Israeli Interests

AP Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus, March 27—
Iran's spiritual leader called for attacks against Israel and its interests during a rally held today to display solidarity with Palestinians, Iranian media reported.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei addressed tens of thousands of Iranians at the Jerusalem Day gathering, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported. The demonstrators chanted "Death to America!" and "Death to Israel!" and called on Muslims to avenge the killing of a Lebanese Shiite Muslim leader in an Israeli raid last month.

Gates Warns Of Iranian Arms Drive

Nation Buys \$2 Billion In Weapons Yearly, House Panel Is Told

By R. Jeffrey Smith
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Iranian government is buying \$2 billion worth of weapons from foreign suppliers each year in a drive to again become the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf region, CIA Director Robert M. Gates said yesterday.

Russia, China and North Korea have been the principal sellers of armaments to Iran, although Tehran is attempting to buy hundreds of tanks from eastern European suppliers, Gates told the House Armed Services Committee.

Iran's burgeoning, foreign-made arsenal includes advanced warplanes, anti-aircraft missiles and some extended-range Scud missiles, said Gates, adding that the country has also contracted to buy at least two Russian submarines.

Gates's testimony provided new details to earlier U.S. descriptions of the Iranian rearmament effort, estimating that the total cost of foreign-made weapons acquired by Iran between 1990 and 1994 will reach \$10 billion. That is a substan-

tial sum for the country, particularly in light of its struggle to repair the damage done by the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

"It is a real drain on their economy," a government analyst said later. "There will be a lot of belt-tightening to make it possible."

Although Gates also took note of recent signs that Iran is moderating its behavior toward neighbors, he presented a highly pessimistic view of the country's long-term goals in a brief, prepared statement before the House committee closed its doors for a classified session. Calling Iran one of several nations in the Middle East that are "hostile to U.S. interests," Gates said "its clerical leadership has not abandoned the goal of one day leading the Islamic world and reversing the global dominance of Western culture and technology."

U.S. and Russian officials have expressed concern about the potential spread of Iran's revolutionary brand of Islamic ideology to the new Asian nations created by the breakup of the Soviet Union. But Gates said that while Iran has begun forging diplomatic and other ties with these nations, the United States has "no evidence of Iranian efforts to subvert the secular governments" of the former Soviet republics. "For now, at least, Iran seems to want to preserve amicable relations with Russia, which has become a major source of its arms," he said.

As one recent sign of Tehran's

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Iranians Rearming, Gates Says

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moderation, Gates cited an Iranian effort to restrain Azerbaijan in its conflict with Armenia. He said that within the Middle East, Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani "is trying to cultivate an . . . image of responsibility and respectability" aimed at fostering foreign investment and appealing to those Islamic countries with which Iran wants to improve ties.

But Gates also said that "Iran's growing support of radical Palestinian groups may bring it closer to some Arab states such as Libya" and added that the U.S. intelligence community expects "Iran to continue to strongly oppose the [Middle East] peace process, and probably to promote terrorism and other active measures aimed at undermining progress toward Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation."

Gates reiterated an earlier CIA claim that Iran is trying to acquire a nuclear weapons capability, but added that this goal is unlikely to be achieved before the year 2000. Another Iranian weapons effort—the development of poison gas warheads to place atop Scud missiles—is likely to succeed sooner, Gates indicated, saying the country's "relatively crude" chemical weapons program is expected to produce such warheads within a few years. "We also suspect that Iran is working toward a biological warfare capability," he said.

"Tehran is rebuilding its military



BY RAY LUSTIG—THE WASHINGTON POST

Gates with House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin before hearing.

strength not only to redress the military imbalance with Iraq," said the CIA director, "but also to increase its ability to influence and intimidate its gulf neighbors."

Speaking also about Iraq yesterday, Gates said that the regime of President Saddam Hussein retains some mobile Scud missile launchers and as many as several hundred missiles. He said the CIA suspects that, despite the continued efforts of United Nations inspection teams,

some of Iraq's nuclear weapons-related equipment remains hidden. So do some chemical and biological weapons and the means to make more, Gates added.

He said that if U.N. sanctions were removed, Iraq could restore its conventional military arsenals to their pre-Persian Gulf War levels in three to five years. "Long before then, Iraq's forces could be strong enough to threaten its neighbors," the CIA director said.

Roy Meachum

3/27/92



Killing . . .

Since I fear more American bloodshed in the outcome, it seems time to update the current Middle East disaster:

Among families who call south Lebanon's refugee camps "home" these are particularly anxious days and nights. The anxiety springs from a bomb that killed four Israelis and leveled their Buenos Aires embassy. At least 24 others, mostly Argentine citizens, died in the March 17 blast.

The bombing itself came as revenge for the political assassination committed by U.S. helicopter weapon systems, fired by Israeli military. The Feb. 16 victims included a Shiite sheikh, his wife, 6-year-old son and assorted bodyguards.

The chopper strike should not be confused with attacks on the refugee camps happening at the same time. The jets were out over Lebanon in retaliation for the humiliating loss of three Soviet immigrants at an army training camp deep inside Israel. "Credit" for murdering the recruits went to a Palestinian group that opposes the PLO and its chair, Yasser Arafat.

The murdered sheikh was Lebanese and the leader of the pro-Iranian Hizbullah faction. Revenge for his death was taken by the Islamic Jihad, another Shiite organization, also friendly with Teheran.

For those seeking to sort out the Middle East mess, I probably should explain the PLO bitterly opposed Iran in its eight-year conflict with Iraq. Moreover, some of the bloodiest fighting of Beirut's civil wars erupted between Shiites and Palestinians.

The only common ground shared by all Arabs rests on a bitter hatred for Israel and a deep mistrust of the United States, as the Jewish state's sole protector on the international scene. Something more.

During the Cold War, Washington right-wing circles delighted in making Israel a mini-superpower, intended to hold at bay any Soviet threat to the world's oil supply in the Middle East. It made no difference the threat lacked real substance after Sadat sent all the Russians packing out of Egypt in 1972.

Communism's collapse delivered unassailable proof that Moscow's leaders did not always play with a full deck. But none of Gorbachev's predecessors ever reached the lunacy of relying on Syria and Iraq,

their only friends in the region the past 20 years. Oh, yes, there was South Yemen. What? Never mind.

Libya's Gadhafi also enjoyed dressing up in outlandish costumes and having his face on Soviet TV, playing the Kremlin's bosom buddy. But his country sits in North Africa, not the Middle East. Furthermore, in its most desperate hours Moscow knew better than turn to the man many Arabs call the crazy man (*al-majnoon*).

As you will recall, Ronald Reagan

sent a strike force after Mr. Gadhafi in announced retaliation for the bombing of a Berlin night club, favored by U.S. soldiers. Suspicion that Syrian intelligence may have been involved was swept aside by our best friends in the Middle East.

For the Israelis, the Libyan's support of terrorist Abu Nidal made his public execution at American hands highly desirable. Their fabled Mossad intelligence service provided the proof the night spot casualties should be laid at the North African's feet, not Syria's Hafez al-Assad. Oh, yeah.

Hitting Damascus was fraught with complex problems that did not figure in an attack on Tripoli. Besides, as his nickname indicated, Mr. Gadhafi lacked respect, even among Arabs.

You know, Libya's leader survived the missiles. One of his children and assorted other civilians did not. The Reagan White House proclaimed a famous victory anyway, bragging the strike had ended the possibility of future terrorist actions from Libya. Right!

Two years later the skies over Lockerbie, Scotland, rained bodies from a Pan American jet. At this writing diplomatic mills run at full tilt, trying to nab two Libyan agents accused of killing all those Americans.

Having waffled on Iraq's Saddam Hussein, George Bush has set his election year jaw firmly on snagging Gadhafi, if only through stand-ins.

With brief exposure to the Nuremberg trials, I understand the principle that denies escape by claiming to follow orders. But is Washington willing to settle for the agents because there is no hope of grabbing their master? Is that justice?

Another question: How can we morally demand surrender of the two Libyans without offering to deliver to Tripoli the American pilots respon-

sible for killing Gadhafi's child and the other civilians?

One more: Granting monster status to those who blasted the embassy in Buenos Aires, what defense justifies the men who slaughtered the 6-year-old child and his mother in last month's helicopter attack?

Oh, the defense will come. We will hear again that murdering little Arabs is not the same as murdering little Israelis. The difference will always escape me. Neither the Talmud, the Bible nor the Koran teaches human life can be taken, except in genuine self-defense.

Still, I know men, women and children alive today who will not be around to eat this summer's strawberries. Some speak Arabic, others Hebrew and English.

Little girls and boys, along with their elders, are doomed to suffer pain and death at the hands of strangers, for no other reason but their blood, their religion or their nationality: American, Arabic or Israeli.

World without end, the oldest refrain drones on: Killing begets killing begets killing begets . . .

Harold Weisberg

Meachum wrong on Israel

3/27/92

Roy Meachum, who has more pairs of feet for his own shooting than cats have lives, shoots them both repeatedly in his March 11 column pretending on the death of Menachem Begin but actually still again his vehicle for pro-Muslim, anti-Israel propaganda.

Boasting still again about his journalistic career and accomplishments, he says of the Camp David accords that "they removed the only potential adversary that really matters," i.e., Egypt. "Without Cairo, Tel Aviv's other enemies cannot hope to make good on that tired old propaganda wheeze, to push Israel into the sea."

In Arab propaganda Tel Aviv is Israel's capital. In fact, Jerusalem is.

That heavily-armed Iraq, Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia in particular can't do this is ludicrous. With his unerring instinct this Meachum column appeared the very day other papers reported that a North Vietnamese ship escaped U.S. Navy efforts to intercept it and landed in Iran with a cargo of advanced Scud missiles for Syria and Iran.

Has Meachum forgotten that when he was fighting the Gulf war for his own survival and Israel was not in that war, Saddam Hussein rained his Scuds on Israel?

From what enemy does Syria's dictator, one of the bloodiest in the Muslim world in which they are not uncommon, need Scuds to defend himself, more advanced missiles that can have nuclear and chemical bacteriological warheads?

Who, when the U.S. has so thoroughly defeated Saddam Hussein, is going to attack Iran?

Why has Saudi Arabia obtained warplanes with a range that includes far-away Greece and parts of what was the U.S.S.R. and why has it asked for ownership of the advanced weapons the U.S. took there to defend it in the Gulf war?

The only Muslim-world need for advanced weaponry is for use against Israel and all that prevents

the effort is fear of the havoc Israel can inflict in retaliation.

Is it because wiping Israel out is only "that tired old propaganda wheeze" that save for Egypt the entire Muslim world remains in a state of war with Israel from the day it was established, through all the wars it lost to Israel? Is that why destroying Israel remains in the PLO's charter? Or why the Muslim world boycotts all who do business with Israel?

Meachum says it is "natural" for him to object to Israel's costly invasion of Lebanon to protect its northern border from endless Arab terrorism and to drive the PLO away from it "because I object to all killing."

Any reflection of this is missing from his innumerable columns condemning Israel without condemning, even reporting, the simply enormous slaughter of Arabs by Arabs. On single days more Arabs killed other Arabs in Lebanon than were killed in the entire intifada. On a single day Saddam killed more than 10 times as many as died in the entire intifada with poison gas attacks on his own people.

Syria's Assad equaled or exceeded this slaughter of his own people also on a single day because he believed those who lived in the city he decimated opposed him.

The greatest tragedy of the Muslim world is fratricide, not the existence of Israel.

There is no peace in the Middle East only because the Muslim world is determined that there be no peace there. This and its fierce determination to end Israel, the only true democracy in the area, is the only reason not a single Muslim state agreed to any peace treaty after losing all those wars against Israel.

Meachum "objects to all killing"? Is this why he has yet to "object" to any Arab attack on Israel, to any of the perpetual Arab terrorism? Is this why he hailed Arab terrorists as the moral equivalent of George Washington?

However one may feel about the

Arabs and Israelis: A history of conflict

Key to achieving peace in the Middle East after the Gulf war is settling the dispute between the Arabs and the Israelis. Its history, issues:

Arab position:

- Egypt, Syria and Jordan want Israel to return occupied lands
- Palestinians, many of whom live in Israeli-occupied lands, seek homeland

Israeli position:

- Wants all Arab nations to recognize its statehood, as Egypt has
- Politically divided: Likud (government party) opposes return of occupied lands; Labor Party advocates peaceful agreement with Arabs, Palestinians

History of conflict:

1947: United Nations divides Palestine into Jewish and Arab zones

1948: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan attack Israel; Israel gains territory

1956: Israel, Britain, France attack Egypt after Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal; U.N. settles dispute

1967: Six-Day War with Egypt, Jordan, Syria; Israel claims Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Golan Heights

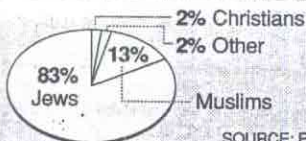
1973: Yom Kippur War; Egypt, Syria attack Israeli forces along the Suez Canal

1979: Egypt, Israel sign peace treaty

1982: Israel completely withdraws from Sinai Peninsula

1988: Palestinian uprising ("Intifada") begins in Israeli-occupied territories

Religious groups in Israel (excluding occupied territories)



SOURCE: Europa Yearbook, World Book; Research by PAT CARR

great tragedy of the Middle East, understanding of it by Americans can come only from their being truthfully and accurately informed.

We cannot believe any of Meachum's columns on the Middle

East. They are all Arab propaganda. I can't recall a single one that wasn't, or when he reported on the Middle East accurately and truthfully.

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Vincent J. Mooney

Reid wrong on Israel

The column on Feb. 27 by Robert Reid incorrectly assesses the relationship between Israel and its neighbors. The column begins with a broad discussion of American foreign aid, and Mr. Reid is generally right there.

Then he starts on Israel and begins to err rapidly. He writes: "The Israelis have been constructing housing units at a frantic pace to create Jewish enclaves on land beyond their borders, in order to establish a legal foothold on the territory."

But Israel would dearly love to have safe, secure borders. The problem is that none of Israel's neighbors will do that. Must it be continuously thundered that Israel is surrounded by nations that have several times tried to destroy the country by military invasion?

Of course Israel has been led to conclude that its security is in doubt. Massacres of Jews have and still occur. Small scale military action against Israel has and still occurs.

Just whose legal territory is the West Bank? Mr. Reid does not say. Should it be like Jerusalem before 1967 when, as a divided city, Jews were not allowed in the Jordanian sector? Should it be like Gaza once was, a large training camp for terrorists to invade Israel?

In the 1960s, I was shocked by some Jewish friends who, on their return from Israel, showed me photos of kibbutzim that were shelled by Syrians from the Golan Heights.

Israel wants security and peace for itself and its neighbors. Its neighbors and the PLO will not allow that.

Mr. Reid also wrote: "The Israelis show little interest in either stopping the expansion in the occupied territories, or negotiating peace with the Arabs."

Nonsense!

The Israelis are as divided as are the people of any nation about what their country should do. But all would be delighted to find a lasting

peaceful settlement with every country in the world, not merely the Arabs.

Israel has given land for peace— with Egypt. The Sinai was returned and a good peace treaty was signed with Egypt. The Egyptian president who signed the accord, Anwar Sadat, was assassinated for his efforts. I have met Egyptians and other Moslems who have applauded that killing. Their hatred for Israel must be without limit.

Israel would again give land for peace, if it could find a trustworthy partner in the peace process.

Who does Mr. Reid feel is trustworthy? The Jordanians who supported Saddam Hussein, gave him arms sent to Jordan, and have been a home for the PLO? The Syrians who have already occupied another country (Lebanon) and are the base for many terrorist groups? The Lebanese, to the extent there are any left with a free will as they stare at the guns of the Syrian Army, or the guns of the Iranian sponsored terrorists? The Iraqis who sent rockets into Israel when the war was with the Kuwaitis? Who can the Israelis trust?

In his column, Mr. Reid does make valid points and a single column (or even a book) cannot do the subject full justice.

I do not agree with all that Israel does. Some of what Israel has done is deeply, morally wrong and stupidly harmful to a peaceful solution. But the central point is that Israel's right to exist is what its enemies challenge and to meet that challenge, Israel is doing things it never dreamed would be necessary.

In face of its unique challenges, I applaud its restraint and end simply by noting that Israel is not the enemy and never has been.

Vincent J. Mooney Jr. lives in Frederick.