

Stick to local issues, Roy

In his July 14 column Roy Meachum attributed the recent terrorist attack on a civilian bus en route from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as retribution for alleged misdeeds against the terrorist's "own people." He implies that the Israelis should have expected such an act due to the recent prominence of Sharon and other "hard-liners" in the Likud party.

What is disturbing is that Mr. Meachum is giving legitimacy to such barbaric acts. These statements indicate that Mr. Meachum has no appreciation of the facts in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since even Arafat has not condoned or defended this terrorist attack.

I have recently returned from a year of study in Jerusalem and have personally experienced the latest conflict involving the intifada. The numerous statements in Mr. Meachum's column, which are portrayed as factual to the Frederick community, are merely the opinions of a columnist who masks his own ignorance of the situation with loosely-connected events. He offers simple explanations for complex problems. The tragic death of 241 U.S. Marines in Lebanon; the massacre of Palestinians in refugee camps, not by Israelis but by Arabs; and the reasons underlying Menachem Begin's abrupt retirement in 1986 are just a few examples of Mr. Meachum's selective and inaccurate interpretation of events concerning Israel.

Although Mr. Meachum feels that Sharon will create an obstacle to the peace process, he should be reminded that the Palestinian issue has existed for more than 40 years. Mr. Meachum also chooses to ignore the fact that the Arab nations in the region never addressed nor resolved the issue of a homeland for the Palestinians while the latter were under Arab rule (e.g. Jordan and Egypt).

This is not the first time that Mr. Meachum has been criticized publicly for his biased and inaccurate picture of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. I would suggest that he focus his attention on local matters of interest to the residents of Frederick County rather than repeating reports of international affairs which have already appeared in national papers who employ on-site columnists.

DAVID J. KELSEY
Walkersville