

12/16/85

Editor  
News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

Dear Editor,

Vincent J. Mooney's excellent and informative letter (12/16) furthurs the understanding your readers can have of the complicated and dangerous situation in the middle-east and it offsets some of the misinformation that amounts to propaganda Roy Meachum has been spewing out, columns I regard as anti-semitism, which is not the same as pro-Arab.

At one point Mr. Mooney, I think, misreads what I wrote, stemming in part from Mr. Meachum's language both Mr. Mooney and I quoted. In part also this comes from the ~~sample~~ incredible amount of error and misinformation in Mr. Meachum's 12/3 column and the amount of space required to correct what I did correct. I did not correct him, for example on his mixture of error and propaganda where he referred to Yitzhak Shamir: "... headed the Stern Gang ... responsible for the massacres of innocent Arabs. Dead Palestinian babies ... are no novelty to Shamir, scheduled again to become Israel's prime minister." The Stern Gang itself, in Meachum's flaunting of ignorance, he described as "pro- Israel. It in fact ~~preceded~~ establishment of the State of Israel and Shamir not only didn't head it - he didn't even belong to it.

In his propagandist's approach Mr. Meachum, instead of referring to "territory" Israel captured in war, war caused only by its neighbors' refusal to acknowledge its existence and their efforts to exterminate it, he referred to "lands." In the plural and in that usage lands is synonymous with countries, and in that sense I stated that Israel had not "swept up" those lands. In the same sentence, as Mr. Mooney quotes it, I followed immediately with, nothing omitted in quotation, "the small areas of territory involved are both the territory from which Jews come and was to have been made into Israel after World War I." I am correct in this in that the territories not part of Israel as approved by the United Nations that Israel took by war are both small and part of the original territories of the Jews, from which they also were driven by wars. This ~~is true~~ <sup>(No Wars)</sup> the Golan Heights, which Mr. Mooney mentions as "Syrian clear as can be." If Mr. Mooney will look again at the British map which accompanied my letter of 11/23/85 he will see that ~~all of it~~ <sup>the Golan</sup> was to have been made part of Israel after the first World War and that instead Britain ceded it to the French mandate in 1923, which later became the State of Syria.

Mr. Mooney's formulation is: "Israel is a creation of the United Nations in 1948." I suggest that instead he consider that what the United Nations did is recognize what Jews had already established as their State of Israel by force of arms and against all the Arab lands, outnumbered by about 200 to 1, In this the United Nations actually reduced the territory of Israel, as established in that struggle.

Mr. Mooney is correct in stating that Israeli construction and settlement on what is today known as "the West Bank" was "directly contrary to the U.S. policy," but at the Camp David agreement negotiated by Jimmy Carter between Israel and Egypt, Israel did not agree to U.S. policy and thereafter did not violate the agreement. The fact remains, regardless of what may be the policy of any United States government at any time, that "the West Bank" was taken by force of arms by Jordan and, historically, is Judea, from which comes the name Jews, and Samaria, and these small areas were to begin with taken by force of arms from the Jews.

Aside from the historical fact that these places and the Golan are Jewish, the real fact is that if they are not under Israeli control Syrians, Jordanians or Arab terrorists can fire artillery from that that could wipe out the cities on the Israeli coastline and even hit ships at sea, the width of Israel without them is that narrow.

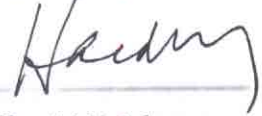
Once the Jews were driven out of their ancient land and Arabs for <sup>centuries</sup> occupied it, two peoples can make legitimate claims to that land. It is, as <sup>Mr.</sup> Meachum pretends is not true, quite complicated and various rights can be asserted. The solution after the first World War was to create two states from the Palestine territory, the Arab state of Trans-Jordan, or Palestine across the Jordan <sup>river</sup>, and what the statesmen did not live up to, Israel was to have been the smaller portion that remained of <sup>the</sup> Palestine territory. Moreover, aside from historical justice, in both World Wars Palestinian Jews fought heroically with British forces, as is well documented and, by those of us old enough, remembered. This cannot be said of Arabs so many of whom sided with the Germans, notoriously with the Nazis, from the Grand Mufti down.

Mr. Mooney's points reasons for stating that the so-called PLO has none of the characteristics of a government to be recognized are quite correct and it has none of these needed characteristics. I would like to add another consideration, that when it cannot even control itself and despite Mr. Meachum's propaganda is directly responsible for truly inhuman terrorism, it does not even deserve to be considered as the candidate for head of any state.

Israel did offer a "West bank" compromise, accepted by some Arabs, many of whom were soon assassinated by the extremists of the PLO, self-government by Arabs within it. Instead the PLO adheres to the stated policy of driving all Jews into the sea or a policy of extermination. How can anyone expect the State of Israel to recognize ~~it~~ <sup>them</sup> - even if they were today to say they abandon this holocaust policy, the policy with which it has lived and controlled its minions from the ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> outset. The stated reason for U.S. refusal to recognize the PLO is this ~~is~~ PLO policy.

For those of your readers who want a better understanding of the complicated and dangerous situation in that strategically important part of the world, Mr. Mooney's is a fine contribution that I, personally, welcome and thank him for.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg



## Letters to the editor

### Weisberg replies to critic, Meachum

J. Lee's letter (of Dec. 11) says of my criticisms of several of Roy Meachum's columns, "I am assuming it is the only part of the paper he reads." Like Meachum's assumptions, Lee is wrong but unlike Meachum, Lee is honest in describing the statement as assumption while Meachum, flaunting contempt for us yokels, presents his as fact. The most recent example is his lambasting the FBI for the deficiencies in the security investigation of the spy Pollard when the FBI had nothing to do with it. (Naval Investigative Service did and, characteristically, Meachum was unfair and inaccurate.)

After the first couple I've avoided Meachum's columns except where the headings attracted my interest because I do not need him to rehash the metropolitan newspapers for me and I've found his opinions unoriginal and shallow. I've also found he is less informed than he pretends, particularly about national and international affairs in which my own participation and writing began a half-century ago.

In the event Lee has any interest other than flacking for Meachum, I have no reluctance in stating that what I like best in the papers is their interest in and reporting on the many fine things

characteristic of this area and its people — who are not yokel, regardless of their knowledge or lack of knowledge of national and international affairs. An example in today's paper is the matter of improving the assistance to battered wives and their children. This reflects widespread community concern and decency.

Lee claims that Meachum "does not make the news he only comments on it," which Lee describes as "well-needed spice." Lee errs. In exonerating Arafat's terrorist assistant Abbas, Meachum was "making" news — making it up entirely, and he has been without apology. In stating that Jews kill Arab children Meachum also was "making" news and misleading and misinforming his readers as well as inciting anti-Semitism.

Arab fratricide is nearing holocaust proportions and in this Arab babies are being slaughtered — but by Arabs, not by the Jews as Meachum, without apology or regret did report, as supposed fact, not a matter of opinion.

Surely Lee knows better than to ape Meachum and allege that I "seem to be blaming Roy Meachum for all the past evils directed toward the Jews." I did

no such thing and didn't suggest it in any way. I did say that Meachum was parroting some of the more notorious of recent anti-Semitic propagandists and I understated that. I would not have been exaggerating if I'd compared his gross slander, that it is the Jews who are killing the Arab children, with the monstrous fabrication of the Russian czar's secret police, that Jews killed gentile children to use their blood in religious observances. Is there really much difference between this fabrication, still widely believed and distributed by racists under the title of "The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion" and the Meachum fabrication that it is the Jews who are killing all those innocent Arab children?

We are blessed to live in a land in which anyone can hold any opinion and if Lee wants to believe this dirty, rotten, unregretted and unwithdrawn slanders, whether of the FBI or of Jews as a people, is "spice" and "is well-needed," Lee was born with that right. I make my own assumption. It is that most of your readers do not agree with Lee on this.

HAROLD WEISBERG  
Old Receiver Road, Frederick



## Another view on Meachum, Weisberg

A pair of recent columns by Roy Meachum and a letter to the editor by Harold Weisberg (noted for his "Whitewash" books on the Kennedy assassination) have prompted me to write to you. The columns and letter have a number of interesting and debatable points.

Mr. Meachum wrote that "This country implicitly denies the existence of the only organization recognized by the Palestinian people themselves. Like him or not: Yasser Arafat is the legitimate voice of his people." First, some, not all, Palestinians recognize the PLO. Others are residents of Arab countries and have no dealings with the PLO. I have seen Arab Palestinians on TV disavow the PLO and wish it never existed.

Second, Yasser Arafat is chairman (as Mr. Meachum notes elsewhere) of a collection of organizations; Arafat is head of an organization within the PLO. There are other organizations within the PLO and Arafat heads the chairmanship body. He is elected, and not unanimously, by the other chairmen. Therefore, Yasser Arafat is the legitimate voice of some organizations which represent some Palestinians.

It would be impossible to recognize the PLO as if it were a government. What is its currency and the exchange rate? Its methods of elections? Its citizenship requirements? Its national holidays? Its national airline, national banking system, its sports federation? Does it have a postal system, any subdivisions (states, provinces, towns, etc.), a passport office, an educational system, and so on? No, and despite all anyone can say, the PLO is not a government.

Why Meachum and others speak of the PLO as if the U.S. and other countries should recognize it, I fail to understand. Some countries which do so do it only to curry favor with others like themselves and the Arabs; and also, I suspect, as a sign of anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism. Mr. Meachum seems to feel that as the U.S. negotiated with North Vietnam and North Korea, negotiating with the PLO is allowed. I would

remind him that many Americans were very upset when the U.S. dealt with those two communist countries and I'd insist that they do not form a valid basis for comparison.

Finally, I should note, as Mr. Weisberg emphasizes correctly, the PLO is chiefly a terrorist group of groups, supported by other terrorist countries, both communist and non-communist. As with North Vietnam, North Korea, Libya and others, the U.S. should have no dealings if possible with brutal evil people and governments. We in the U.S. can effectively avoid all contacts with the PLO just on these grounds, and so be firmly committed to keep away from the PLO.

Mr. Meachum stated that Washington supports the right of a people to self-determination, and adds "while enforcing a denial of that right to the Palestinian people." That last remark I flat challenge — I want details when the U.S. has prevented Palestinians from voting, from filing a slate of candidates, from registering to vote, from making election speeches, holding rallies, etc. I want when, where, who, what and why (the official reasons given by official U.S. representatives, not Mr. Meachum's viewpoint). Then I will listen to Mr. Meachum's commentary of the U.S. actions taken to enforce a denial of the right to vote by the Palestinian people.

I should note that many Arab countries refuse Palestinians citizenship. They refuse citizenship to all except those born of citizen parents of the specific country. This is a hardship for many Palestinians and Iranian exiles, Iraqi exiles, and so on. Palestinians who have adapted U.S. citizenship, French citizenship, Israeli citizenship, etc. vote as Americans, Frenchmen, Israelis, etc., of course.

Before I spend all my time against Mr. Meachum, let me point out an area where I generally side with him, and am against Mr. Weisberg. Mr. Weisberg strongly objects to this quote by Mr. Meachum: "Since World War II the United States has opposed any nation retaining territory gained by military conquest — except those lands swept up by the Israelis in the 1967 war." Mr. Weisberg replies: "Forget that no lands were swept up and that the small areas of territory involved are both the territory from which Jews come and was to be made into Israel after World War I..."

Mr. Weisberg's reply has several problems. The first is that at least one area, the Golan Heights, was Syrian clear as can be; it became Israeli. Kuneitra on the Golan was destroyed by the Israelis. The reasons, from the Israeli point of view was clear — the heights were used by Syrians to incessantly shell Israeli Kibbutz below. The second problem is that the south of Lebanon is another area, where many suspect that the Israeli will never leave;

another location is a very small piece of land on the Red Sea claimed by Egypt from Israel.

It is sadly true that Israel, in responding to attacks, has taken land, killed innocents, and in the end, exacerbated the situation. The various Israeli governments have not intended to worsen their circumstances, of course. Yet the Israeli occupation of land not voted to them in the May 1948 U.N. decision to create Israel will not be forgotten easily by many Arabs. It does not matter what was to be made into Israel after World War I; Israel is a creation of the United Nations in 1948. The deliberate Israeli policy to "create history as a fact" in building houses on and settling the West Bank area was directly contrary to the U.S. policy.

The French have a saying which can be slightly modified to "The Israelis are like wounded animals — when attacked, they fight back." Who can forget the great Israeli rescue at Entebbe? A marvelous moment for Israel. But what of the destruction of the Iraqi atomic reactor not yet on-line? Was that justified? Whether yes or no, it is not just Iraqis who will not forget and seek to avenge it.

It has been said that where there are two Jews, there are three opinions. This illustrates the argumentiveness of people in general; in fact, of how we cannot always decline what should be and how to go about it. I am pleased that your paper is open to comments from all sorts of people — keep it that way.

VINCENT J. MOONEY JR.  
607 Wyngate Dr., Frederick

Editor,  
News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

12/11/85

Dear Editor,

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report, <sup>as supposed fact,</sup> for that is not a matter of opinion.

Surely Lee knows better than to <sup>ape Meachum and</sup> allege that I "seem to be blaming Roy Meachum for all the past evils directed toward the Jews," ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ I did no such thing and didn't suggest it in any way. I did say that Meachum was parroting some of the more notorious of recent anti-Semitic propagandists and I understated that. I would not have been exaggerating if I'd compared his gross slander, that it is the Jews who are killing the Arab children, with the monstrous fabrication of the Russian Czar's secret police, that Jews killed gentle children to use their blood in religious observances. Is there really much difference between this fabrication, still widely believed and distributed by racists under the title of "The Protocols of Learned Elders of Zion and the Meachum fabrication that it is the Jews who are killing all those innocent Arab children?"

We are blessed to live in a land in which anyone can hold any opinion and if Lee wants to believe that dirty, rotten, unregretted and <sup>un</sup>withdrawn slanders, whether of the FBI or of Jews as a people, is "spice" and is well-needed," Lee was born with that right. <sup>e</sup> In making my own assumption, <sup>It</sup> is that most of your readers do not agree with Lee on this.

Sincerely,

*Harold Weisberg*  
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Mr. Meachum does not make the news he only comments on it. Mr. Weisberg seems to be blaming Roy Meachum for all the past evils directed toward the Jews. Mr. Meachum did not create or condone Hitler. I find Mr. Meachum's articles add a well needed spice to *The Frederick News-Post*. He obviously got Mr. Weisberg's attention.

J. LEE  
116 W. 2nd St., Frederick

*F Post 12/11/85*

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# Weisberg extends criticism of Meachum to editor

Roy Meachum has a right to be anti-Semitic and you have the right to print anything you want to print. But he is less than honest in pretending not to be an anti-Semite and you assume responsibility for what you print.

In your publication of his inflammatory evil propaganda mislabeled "The Palestinian Problem," today (12-4-85) you, in effect, become both anti-Semitic and a propagandist and in this, I assume without so intending, you defame an entire people and give offense to what I am confident is a majority of your readers and not a few advertisers.

Aside from his unhidden prejudices and enormous ego, and whatever his background, Meachum is either deliberately dishonest or grossly ignorant. Of all the examples he now flouts I limit myself to a few because of the space a definitive response would require.

There is not a word of the decades-long ARAB terrorism, in Israel and elsewhere, not a word about the many innocent JEWISH babies, children, women and aged of both sexes in his Hitlerian account of the current situation in the mid-East.

We read — and he says and you publish — only that there were Jewish "massacres of innocent Arabs. Dead Palestinian babies. . . ."

And for this Goebbels-like convolution of truth he says the United States is responsible because, among other Meachum inventions, "it has aligned itself with those Israelis who have no genuine desire for peace."

Naturally, because they do not exist, Meachum does not identify the non-existing Israelis who he says do not want peace. (What he really means, of course, is that there are Israelis who do not agree with his propaganda line and

Hitlerian rewriting of history.) From this he leaps to more inflammatory fabrication, that what he refers to as "U.S. policy and action . . . make all Americans enemies of all Arabs."

Without question the middle-east situation is complex and critical, as I cautioned Meachum after you began publishing his disgraceful and dishonest assaults on an entire people, not just a country and a government he does not like. But cautions mean nothing to Meachum when he has his consuming ego and personal prejudice to indulge.

I have seen nothing he has written that is in any way a fair representation of the complex and serious situation in the mid-east. Nothing that would really inform your readers.

Domestically he is even more evil in equating all Jews with the miniscule minority in the Jewish Defense League when he has to know that this is a slanderous lie in the Hitler tradition and when he has to know that the Israeli government itself opposes the organizer and leader of the JDL.

However, the British map you published with my last letter does reflect the fact that by big-power broken agreements the Palestinians were given most of the Palestine territory as a homeland and the rest was reserved for Israel — including what is now known as the "west bank" of the Jordan.

And while Meachum represents the Israelis as the aggressors, the plain fact is that this relatively small area was taken by force of arms by JORDAN, which is, supposedly, entirely on the other side of the Jordan River and was originally called "TRANS-Jordan." (One party is Judea, from which Jews get their name, and the other is Samaria, whence came the good

Samaritan of whom Jesus spoke. These places are the origin of Jews.)

In what is either his flouting of ignorance or his contempt for fact and thus of your readers, Meachum says that "Since World War II the United States has opposed any nation retaining territory gained by military conquest — except those lands swept up by the Israelis in the 1967 war."

Forget that no lands were swept up and that the small areas of territory involved are both the territory from which Jews come and was to be made into Israel after World War I, forget that it is Jordan that took the west bank by military means, from which Israel retrieved it by arms. Can it possibly be that the omniscient Meachum, the man who represents that he knows it all, has no knowledge of what happened in Europe after World War II and was NOT opposed but in fact was RECOGNIZED by the United States?

Just look at the before-and-after maps of Germany, Poland, Rounmania, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. And how about our own holding of Pacific lands we took in World War II and whose lands we ruined with the testing of atomic and nuclear weapons?

Meachum still defends Arab terrorism, and your publication of his propaganda puts you in the position of defending not only Arab terrorism but those terrorists who in the coldest blood murdered an aged, ill and crippled AMERICAN. And Meachum does this despite my reminding him of his error in his defense of Ararat's henchman, Abbas, since indicted in Italy for his complicity in that terrorism and murder. Despite this and despite his murderous history, Meachum presents Ararat as presented by Meachum as the Arab "moderate," the man of peace.

And thus we and the Israelis should deal with him!

Would your readers know from Meachum's distortions, misrepresentations and outright lies that Ararat FROM THE FIRST has proclaimed a policy of driving all Jews into the sea?

If Meachum had the knowledge of the area he pretends to have he would, whether or not it shamed him, know that what he writes and you publish is exactly the line of the notorious Arab Nazi, the Grand Mufti, who spent World War II propagandizing for Hitler from Berlin and returned, immune for these terrible offenses, to the middle east to organize and lead the incredible murders of Jews by Arabs, for which Meachum finds no space in any of his by now numerous "columns" in your paper. He is a CALUMNIST rather than a columnist!

His last sentence disgraces you. I do not say disgraces him because by now I think nothing can or will. He actually pretends that all the dead babies are Palestinian and he suggests that "nuclear attack" be envisions.

All of this and more . . . is truly disgraceful and, I regret to say, in your publication of it and what terrible propaganda preceded it, you disgrace yourself. This is inflammatory anti-Semitism, it has already inflamed anti-Semitism, which in a private letter that is without response I sent to Meachum, and it is distinguishable only in degree and less intemperate language from the line of Hitler, Goebbels, and the many fabrications of earlier times in which anti-Semitism is based.

HAROLD WEISBERG  
7627 Old Receiver Road, Frederick

F Post 12/5/85



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All of this and more for which I do not take your space is truly disgraceful and, I regret to say, in your publication of it and what terrible propaganda preceded it, you disgrace yourself. This is inflammatory anti-Semitism, it has already inflamed anti-Semitism, which in a private letter that is without response I sent to Meachum, and it is distinguishable only in degree and less intemperate language from the line of Hitler, Goebbels, and the many fabrications of earlier times in which anti-Semitism is based.

*Handwritten signature*



Rabbi Marris Kosman  
201 E. Second St.,  
Frederick, Md. 21071

12/3/85

Dear Rabbi Kosman,

The description of Roy Meachum as a columnist in the enclosed copy of my today's letter to the editor comes from another rabbi, dear friend of my youth and never a disciple of Stephen Leacock, if you are old enough to remember that Canadian professor and literary figure.

The longer I live the more I appreciate the recalled wisdom of others, like Santayana's belief that those of us who forget history are doomed to relive it. Robert Kennedy had a fine corruption of Dante that I do not recall to offend you, that there is a special corner of hell reserved for those who, in time of moral crisis, preserve their equanimity.

I regret very much that you did not see fit to return my call which, I said, was for the specific purpose of discussing the increasing manifestations of anti-Semitism by Meachum. He is inciting anti-Semitism, which is separate from being pro-Arab and anti-Israel, both of which he obviously is. I've sent him a copy of one such vilification I received and, I assure you, that however the situation may be, within my experience, it is only after a letter to the editor that I've ever seen any local manifestation of anti-Semitism. Now he has Jews killing Arab babies and about to be responsible for the killing of other, including American, babies.

Until it was too late, most American rabbis were silent in Hitler's day. To the degree that when I wanted to expose what Hitler was doing I turned to representatives of the European underground. Even the Poles, in fact the Poles most of all, provided me with information and copies.

About 50 years ago this other rabbi and I read Robert Nathan's Road of Ages. I've never forgotten Nathan's message, that a Jew is primarily something else, like a banker, a Communist, an industrialist, a trades-unionist, etc., and thus their plight.

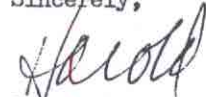
On a single day six Jewish merchants praised what I'd done and all refused to register any complaint with the papers. They thus feed the moth that bites them.

History, particularly Jewish history, teaches us that the past is prologue.

History also tells us about silence when men ought not be silent.

I am very sorry that you prefer silence and chose to ignore this updated libel, replacing Christ-killers. We are now all, collectively, responsible for the killing of Arab children and only Arab children are being killed.

Sincerely,

  
Harold Weisberg



Editor,  
News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

11/21/85

Dear Editor,

On 11/11 I criticized Roy Meacham's personal "yellow journalism" as irresponsible, deliberate misrepresentation, pontification and sometimes simply untruthful. I concluded with a caution, "He claims concern over the truly dangerous situation in the middle-east. I do hope that before he pretends further omniscience in that complicated area he does try to learn more about the actualities, historical, recent and present. Otherwise he'll do neither his reputation nor his readers any good." Apparently taking this caution as a challenge, which it was not, in his column "Israeli cooperation needed," Meacham proves that my criticisms were too understated and he tortures fact into anti-Israeli propaganda and into what amounts to deliberate anti-semitism: Jews are responsible for the plight of the hostages of the terrorists/assassins he continues to defend.

Defends to the point where the assassins/terrorists/common murderers/ kidnappers are no more than "hostage takers" who are to be completely indulged.

Both inherent and basic to Meacham's corruption of reality is the big-power pretense hated throughout the world that the only people who count are big-power citizens, in this case Americans. He has no concern at all for these who are the ~~more~~ usual victims of these subhumans who terrorize the world and abuse and even murder the innocents, none for the Kuwaitis those he defends continue to try to blackmail. Only if Israel (read Jews) give in to perpetual terror will the American<sup>s</sup> be freed, according to Meacham. And, he says, "The government of Israel has not been (as) cooperative; it continues to send its jets freely over Lebanon in violation of international law." Meacham as secretary of state, as international jurist. What international law, your omniscience, when there is a state of war only because all Arab/Moslem ~~and~~ countries other than Egypt perpetuate a state of war with Israel for 37 years? A different "international law" than permits Syria (which he also defends/extols) to occupy much if not most of the same Lebanon? Other than the one under which the United States sent marines there on several occasions?

Meacham also has Israel admitting that it invaded Syria, "The Israelis report they shot down two Syrian migs (sic) over Syrian soil." This is fabrication and the Israelis said no such thing. While Syria has yet to admit that its jets were shot down, it was over the stronghold of the terrorists in southern Lebanon, where the Israelis have openly and for a long time flown observation flights, to protect themselves from the slaughter of their wives, children in school and seniors <sup>held</sup> ~~based in that area~~. As today's Washington Post, which lacks Meacham's crystal ball and <sup>attribution</sup> ~~imagine~~ but has a reporter in Syria states, "Israel has said the dogfight took place when Syrian jets attacked a regular

Israeli reconnaissance flight over the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon near the Syrian border." Not over Syria, and not with Syria having any internal-law justification of self-defense for being in or over Lebanon.

More than the usual cloud imposed by his imagination blurred Meacham's crystal ball in "Washington backtracked on its public statements (not negotiating with terrorists); it is up to its hips in negotiations." He actually says this in the same paragraph that concludes, "the White House . . . fed back its standard line: 'no negotiations.'" (I am not a defender of the Reagan administration but a less blantly partisan, less anti-semitic Meacham might remember the history of which I reminded him, that after trying to deal with the Tripolitanian pirates U.S. policy became "millions for defense but not one cent for tribute," and, with <sup>the</sup> international law <sup>Meacham</sup> ~~invokes~~ <sup>says does</sup> not exist~~ing~~ wiped them out.)

Meacham even accuses the Israelis (again, read Jews) of deliberately trying to ruin the truly compassionate and courageous Waite effort by saying what it a gross lie, that the Israeli planes invaded Syria "this week as Waite was returning to Beirut." And if Israel tries to defend its own people, as it does and has without any change in its conduct for years, that, according to Meacham, "cannot be justified under any circumstances; but when they continue while efforts are underway to free the American hostages, they present a callous flaunting of concern for the best interests of Tel Aviv's principal ally, the United States." Aside from the fact that there is no reason to believe that capitulation <sup>to</sup> the blackmail of terrorists/assassins/murderers will accomplish anything other than encouraging them, which is long-standing United States policy that <sup>Regan</sup> did not invent, this is indecent and approximates the propaganda of Goebbels. And if Meacham had any knowledge of the actualities in that area, of the great number of children in school and other innocents slaughtered by terrorists invading Israel <sup>from</sup> that area, he could not have written this slander except as propaganda, as anti-semitism, which it is, whatever impelled him.

Inherent in this column, too, is defense and justification of those he never gets around to calling terrorists and their blackmail, which he espouses: "obviously, they resolved to end their waiting. Why else would they permit (his word, actually) the hostages to send those letters" asking for capitulation to the terrorists? Permit? All four ~~to~~ write similar letters after all this time at the same time? All saying the same thing? All satisfying the assassins? Permit, indeed! Not ordered, of course! Not for furthering ~~terror~~ terror. Not for further efforts at blackmail. Those <sup>Meacham</sup> defends and can't bring himself to refer to as assassins or terrorists have in his propaganda become compassionate for they are allowing <sup>it</sup> a French heart-specialist" to be "standing by to treat a captive countryman reported gravely ill." Standing by "



only with an innocent Frenchman "gravely ill?" Not to provide immediate medical care? Not even to release him, with other victims still captive and others available as long as anyone remains in Lebanon or, as we've seen, on the high seas or in airplanes or in autos and buses? This additional subhuman mistreatment of the "gravely ill" is to Meacham something "positive."

Meacham pretends that there is a Lebanese government that controls Lebanon and prevents attacks on Israel from its territory, none of which is true. He refers to "Lebanon" as "frequently attacked" (read by Jews) and as "volatile." The truth is that Lebanon has been torn by fratricide for years, with many Lebanese forces in constant battle with each other. As I write this, Terry Waite himself is under siege in an office building, no Jews in either of the contending forces. <sup>Lebanon</sup> ~~is~~ most terrible plight is the direct result of the terrorism of those Meacham defends, the Arafat terrorists who were driven out of Jordan, where King Hussein had given them sanctuary, when they tried to capture Jordan from him. So, they tried to take Lebanon over, and these inspired by the Khomani followers - remember these who kept the American embassy personnel captive in Iran, Meacham? - add to the fratricide. Lebanon's real trouble comes not from being "frequently attacked" by Israel but from its internal factions and the Arafats still remaining. Israel has limited itself to self-defense as it sees self-defense, and neither Meacham nor I have the right to tell it how to defend itself from almost four decades of terrorism based largely in Lebanon.

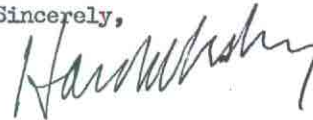
Before Meacham rewrites more history in his assault on the knowledge and understanding of your readers, I think they ought understand that there is a Palestinian state and it is Jordan. England made promises to both Arabs and Jews but it kept its promise to the Arabs only when, after World War I, it took the Palestine territory from the Ottoman empire, Turkey, which had sided with Germany. It then established the Arab state of Trans-Jordan in the part of Palestine that was across the Jordan River and it without consultation with the people put the Emir Abdullah in charge. Hussein confused the actuality further by eliminating the "Trans" from the name of his state, to hide the fact that it is the part of Palestine across the Jordan from what was to have been the Israeli state pursuant to the commitment on which England reneged. And Jordan is more than ~~was~~ twice the size of Israel.

After wrapping himself in the mantle of American journalism Meacham has again desecrated its noble principles. Writers, like all Americans, have the right to hold any belief, no matter how wrong or even evil. But writers, unlike others, have the burden of being honest, truthful and accurate. Propaganda, especially incitations to race hatred, is not American journalism, is not our tradition. In response to the caution that he has been irresponsible and less than factual and truthful Meacham,

with abuses of fact and truth not fully documented in this already long letter, compounds his errors of the past and in thinly-disguised partisanship and bias becomes a propagandist rather than a reporter or an expresser of opinion and in this column, no matter how he conceives himself, he is an anti-semitic. That in itself is genuinely evil and in all this evil, in which he claims, from the headline ~~down~~, that only Israeli cooperation is needed to obtain the release of the victims of this new barbarity he does not even come close to telling your readers how this can come about. His few hints are vapid and baseless. If it were within the power or the desire of the Syrian president they'd have been released long ago. (In Meacham's pretense of knowing it all the president, usually referred to as Hafez Asad, is both "al-Asad" and "Al-Adad" in consecutive paragraphs.)

No matter how baseless it is, no matter how disproven by recent history, Meacham is entitled to the personal belief that capitulating to the blackmail of these fratricidal assassins and terrorists will forever end their kidnapping and slaughter of the innocent. But neither this baseless belief nor the tradition of American journalism which he claims for himself entitle Meacham to make it up as he goes, to become an anti-semitic propagandist and to impose upon your trust and that of your readers. Again I suggest that two columns a day preclude responsible writing and that Meacham ought spend more time ascertaining fact. Even Walter Lippmann, and Meacham is not a Lippmann, did not average three columns a week. Unless he restrains his ego and his pretense of omniscience (and perhaps his assumption that all of us here are uninformed yokels) he will destroy what still remains of his reputation. I sorrow for him.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg  
7627 Old Receiver Road



article,

This map is from a lengthy ~~article~~, "Partioning Palestine," by Aharon Klieman in the 6/30/83 Jerusalem Post. It and another map are from a British book on "The Arab-Israeli Conflict." If it interests you I can get the complete article from the friend who was in Jerasalem when it was published. The painful truth, as I tried to warn Meacham, is truly complicated and the situation there is so fraught with great danger for the entire world, not just either Israel or the United States or both, I think it is a great disservice to any segment, no matter how small of our people to mislead them in any way.

# PARTITIONING

By AHARO

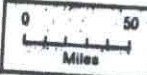
RY KISSINGER expressed longing of those perplexed by Arab-Israeli dispute and its critical legacy when in 1973 he pronounced majestically: "The past is dead." But as the article "Is Jordan Really Palestine?" (*Jerusalem Post* - 17 June) reconfirms, the past is very much with us. Bernard Wasserstein is correct in noting that many aspects of the conflict are of "more than merely anti-Jewish interest." The historical context, therefore, cannot be discarded; nor should it be dealt with superficially or bent to serve one's purpose.

Perhaps nowhere is this borne out than in the historical links in the quarter of this century between Transjordan or "western Jordan" on the one hand, and Palestine on the other. Precisely because this relationship — past, present and future — of the West Bank is at once so relevant and so little researched and understood, it deserves a more objective and comprehensive treatment than that provided by Wasserstein. His criticism stems primarily from his having confused historical fact with political advocacy. In placing upon himself the task of writing the "popular myth" that is Palestine, Wasserstein is not thorough in answering the question: in fact, ever was Transjordan

Other due to space limitations Wasserstein's ideological position, made explicit only in the article's final sentence, he abandons the historian's marshalling evidence selected by channelling it toward a predetermined viewpoint. Especially significant is his conclusion that, not even the facts, should be presented in the way of the Israeli in agreement he prefers and "must surely become the objective" of Israeli foreign policy.

Wasserstein's meritorious goal for the Kingdom of Jordan will be Palestine, but at a critical point it was abandoned, making its separation in the years 1921-1922 an act of partition.

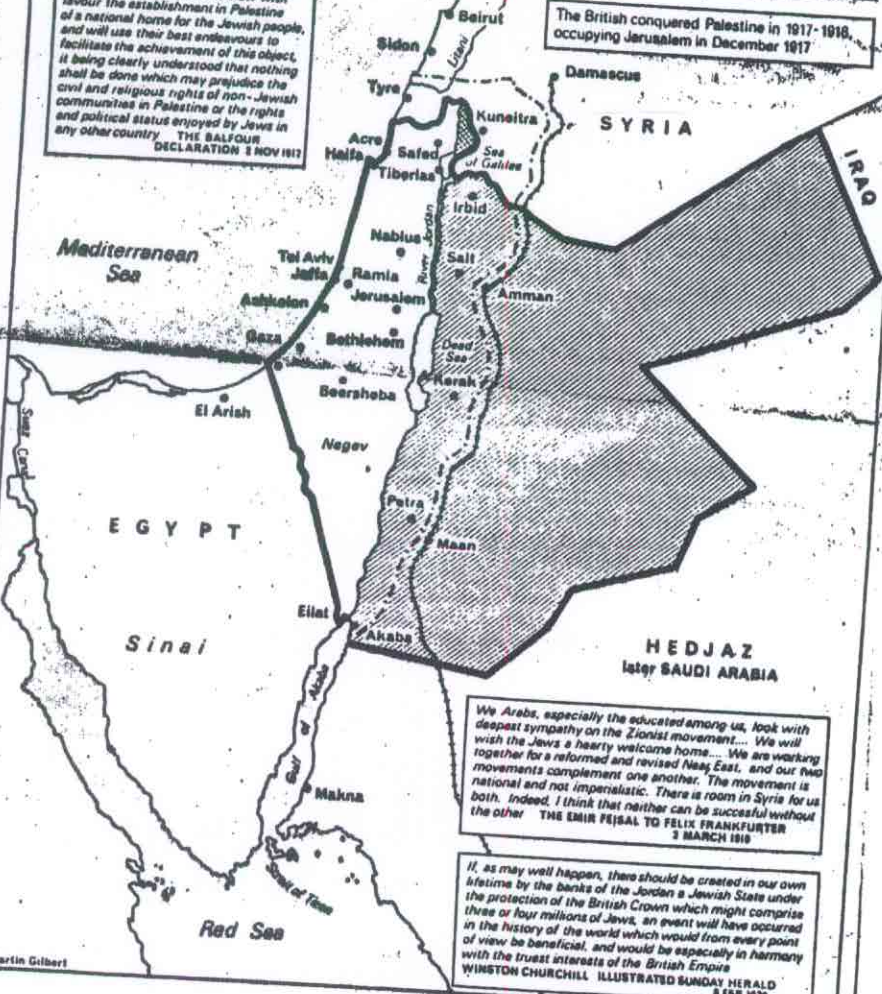
## BRITAIN AND THE JEWISH NATIONAL HOME: PLEDGES AND BORDER CHANGES, 1917 - 1923



- The Palestine Mandate, granted to Britain at the San Remo Conference in 1920, as the region of a Jewish National Home
- Approximate boundary of the area in which the Jews hoped to set up their National Home
- Separated from Palestine by Britain in 1921, and given to the Emir Abdullah. Named Transjordan, this territory was at once closed to Jewish settlement
- Ceded by Britain to the French Mandate of Syria, 1923

*His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.*  
**THE BALFOUR DECLARATION 2 NOV 1917**

The British conquered Palestine in 1917-1918, occupying Jerusalem in December 1917



*We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement... We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home... We are working together for a reformed and revised Near East, and our two movements complement one another. The movement is national and not imperialistic. There is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be successful without the other.*  
**THE EMIR FEJAL TO FELIX FRANKFURTER 3 MARCH 1919**

*If, as may well happen, there should be created in our own lifetime by the banks of the Jordan a Jewish State under the protection of the British Crown which might comprise three or four millions of Jews, an event will have occurred in the history of the world which would from every point of view be beneficial, and would be especially in harmony with the trust interests of the British Empire.*  
**WINSTON CHURCHILL ILLUSTRATED SUNDAY HERALD 8 FEB 1920**

The maps above are taken from 'The Arab-Israeli Conflict'

contenders. Their memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference states unequivocally that the proposed advantage to those like Abdullah who were more purposive. Disproving It is at this point



F. Poch 12/3/85

# ROY MEACHUM



Viewpoint

## The Palestinian problem

(Part Two)

The Middle Eastern conflict kills Americans in this country. While there have been allegations of Arab conspiracies, terrorist acts were introduced into the United States by enemies of the Palestinians. Anyone who raises his voice to defend their rights as human beings is subject to attack.

A bomb murdered a policeman guarding the Boston offices of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). Just Friday, a suspicious fire swept through the organization's Washington office; an ADC employee narrowly escaped with her life.

Alex Odeh was not that lucky. California police say the ADC West Coast director was the direct target of a tripwire explosive device. The night before his violent death, the Roman Catholic father of three daughters had appeared on television and praised the Palestine Liberation Organization. In an unusual statement, FBI spokesman Lane Bonner attributed Odeh's death to his TV remarks; he linked the bombing to the Jewish Defense League.

Alone among the major Western nations, the United States refuses any dialogue with the PLO; this country implicitly denies the existence of the only organization recognized by the Palestinian people themselves. Like him or not: Yasser Arafat is the legitimate voice of his people.

Various efforts to replace the PLO chairman have proven futile exercises. Furthermore, evidence suggests Arafat represents the moderate range in the Palestinian political spectrum. For his willingness to talk about Middle East peace, he has lost key associates, murdered by radicals. (This type of reasoning cost Alex Odeh his life.)

Washington reiterates, like a broken record, there can be no meeting until Arafat recognizes Israel's right to exist. But this makes no sense. Israel's existence does not depend upon the PLO. In addition, refusing to hold discussions with Yasser Arafat does not weaken his position with his constituency: the Palestinians and the Arab world.

Meeting with the PLO chairman does not mean bestowing a U.S. blessing on the man and his umbrella of factions. Negotiations with North Vietnam and North Korea smacked more of dealing with the devil; both those regimes were guilty of atrocities involving thousands of American deaths.

This is America's Palestinian problem. This nation lacks any logical reason for refusing to consider the fate of 800,000 West Bank Arab men, women and children — plus those in the Gaza Strip. Since World War II, the United States has opposed any nation retaining territory gained by military conquest — except those lands swept up by the Israelis in the 1967 war.

Washington continues to give lip-service to Woodrow Wilson's doctrine of a people's right to self determination, while enforcing a denial of that right to the Palestinian people. These glaring inconsistencies make hypocrisy of America's claim to represent the free world.

French President Francois Mitterrand became last week the latest Western leader to call for a Palestinian homeland on a West Bank and Gaza Strip liberated from Israeli control. This further increases America's isolation on the issue.

In fact, this country adopted its approach to the Palestinian question in

deference to an Israeli government, which is itself divided in this regard. A sizeable body of the Israeli public stages mass demonstrations calling for direct negotiations with the PLO. These Israeli citizens understand there can be no Middle East peace without an accommodation with the Palestinians.

This leaves American policy on the side of Israeli hardliners — many with bloody hands from their own terrorist activities. To cite one example: Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir headed the pro-Israel Stern Gang, condemned by David ben-Gurion and other responsible Jewish leaders for its massacres of innocent Arabs. Dead Palestinian babies — as in the Egypt Air hijacking — are no novelty to Shamir, scheduled to become again Israel's prime minister. It was this hardline faction that promoted the betrayal of U.S. secrets, as revealed in the recent spy case.

In the eyes of much of the world, including the Arabs, this country has aligned itself with those Israelis who have no genuine desire for peace in the Middle East. U.S. policy and actions — notably the massive funding for Israeli military power — make all Americans enemies of all Arabs. This costs American lives. Furthermore, in the long run, it serves neither the best interest of the Israeli people, nor the cause of world peace.

On the plus side: many people in this country — including a growing segment of the American Jewish community — understand the danger. The New Jewish Agenda and similar organizations are bucking the Jewish Defense League and the other hardliners. Terrorist acts in the United States could prove helpful to a greater understanding of the Middle East's realities.

But the United States government must face squarely its responsibilities to all the human beings in that part of the world; it has no viable choice but to seek justice for the Palestinian people, in accordance with longstanding American principals.

The observation stands: continuing confrontation in the Middle East can have but one ending — either the Israelis or the Arabs will feel forced to launch a nuclear attack. A possible US-USSR shootout pales by comparison.

In that event, all the dead babies would not be Palestinians, forgettable for their lack of nationality.



Letters to the editor—the readers write

## Weisberg: 'Meachum's corruption of reality'

On 11/11 I criticized Roy Meachum's "yellow journalism" as irresponsible, deliberate misrepresentation, pontification and sometimes simply untruthful. I concluded with a caution, "He claims concern over the truly dangerous situation in the middle-east."

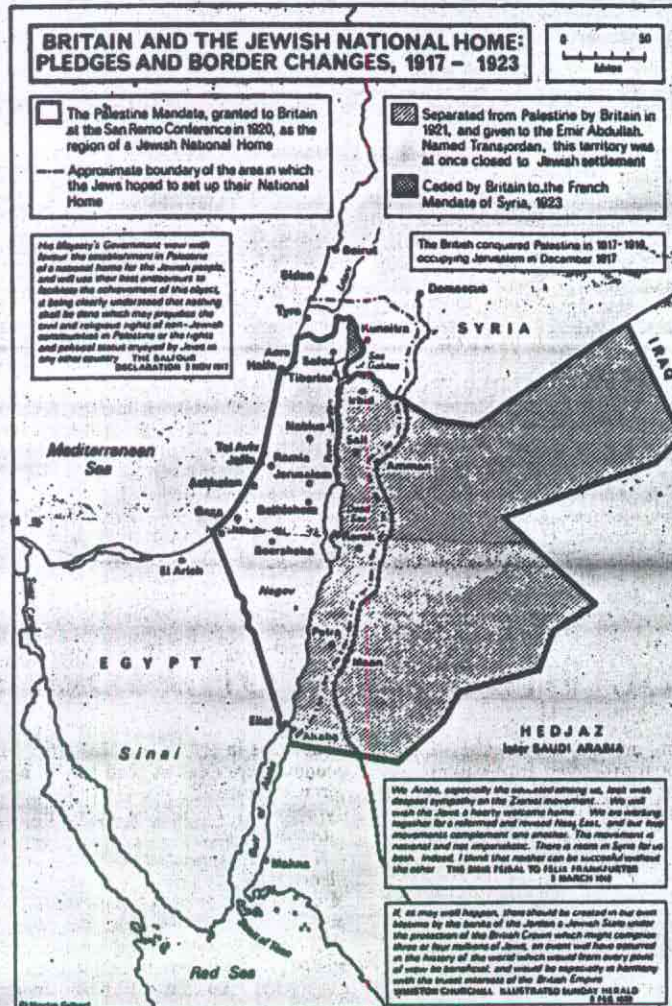
I do hope that before he pretends further omniscience in the complicated area he does try to learn more about the actualities, historical, recent and present. Otherwise he'll do neither his reputation nor his readers any good." Apparently taking this caution as a challenge, which it was not, in his column "Israeli cooperation needed," Meachum proves that my criticisms were too understated and he tortures fact into anti-Israeli propaganda and into what amounts to deliberate anti-semitism: Jews are responsible for the plight of the hostages of the terrorists/assassins he continues to defend.

Defends to the point where the assassins/terrorists/common murderers/kidnappers are no more than "hostage takers" who are to be completely indulged.

Both inherent and basic to Meachum's corruption of reality is the big-power pretense hated throughout the world that the only people who count are big-power citizens, in this case Americans. He has no concern at all for those who are the usual victims of these subhumans who terrorize the world and abuse and even murder the innocents, none for the Kuwaitis those he defends continue to try to blackmail.

Only if Israel (read Jews) give in to perpetual terror will the Americans be freed, according to Meachum. And, he says, "The government of Israel has not been (as) cooperative; it continues to send its jets freely over Lebanon in violation of international law." Meachum as secretary of state, as international jurist. What international law, your omniscience, when there is a state of war only because all Arab/Moslem countries other than Egypt perpetuate a state of war with Israel for 37 years? A different "international law" than permits Syria (which he also defends/ex-tols) to occupy much if not most of the same Lebanon? Other than the one under which the United States sent marines there on several occasions?

Meachum also has Israel admitting that it invaded Syria, "The Israelis report they shot down two Syrian migs (sic) over Syrian soil." This is fabrication and the Israelis said no such thing. While Syria has yet to admit that its jets were shot down, it was over the stronghold of the terrorists in southern Lebanon, where the Israelis have openly



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and for a long time flown observation flights, to protect themselves from the slaughter of their wives, children in school and seniors. As today's *Washington Post*, which lacks Meachum's crystal ball and imagination but has a reporter in Syria states, "Israel has said the dogfight took place when Syrian jets attacked a regular Israeli reconnaissance flight over the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon near the Syrian border." Not over Syria, and not with Syria having any internal-law justification of self-defense for being in or over Lebanon.

More than the usual cloud imposed by his imagination blurred Meachum's crystal ball in "Washington backtracked on its public statements (not negotiating with terrorists); it is up to its hips in negotiations." He actually says this in the same paragraph that concludes, "the White House ... fed back its standard line: 'no negotiations.'" (I am not a defender of the Reagan administration but a less blatantly partisan, less anti-semitic Meachum might remember the history of which I reminded him, that after trying to deal with the Tripolitanian pirates U.S. policy became "millions for defense but not one cent for tribute," and, within the international law Meachum says does not exist wiped them out.)

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Before Meachum rewrites more history in his assault on the knowledge and understanding of your readers, I think they ought to understand that there is a Palestinian state and it is Jordan. England made promises to both Arabs and Jews but it kept its promise to the Arabs only when, after World War I, it took the Palestine territory from the Ottoman empire, Turkey, which has sided with Germany. It then established the Arab state of *Trans-Jordan* in the part of Palestine that was across the Jordan River and it without consultation with the people put the Emir Abdullah in charge. Hussein confused the actuality further by eliminating the "Trans" from the name of his state, to hide the fact that it is the part of Palestine across the Jordan from what was to have been the Israeli state pursuant to the commitment on which England reneged. And Jordan is more than twice the size of Israel.

After wrapping himself in the mantle of American journalism Meachum has again desecrated its noble principles. Writers, like all Americans, have the right to hold any belief, no matter how wrong or even evil. But writers, unlike others, have the burden of being honest, truthful and accurate. Propaganda, especially incitations to race hatred, is not American journalism, is not our tradition. In response to the caution that he has been irresponsible and less than factual and truthful Meachum, with abuses of fact and truth not fully documented in this already long letter, compounds his errors of the past and in thinly-disguised partisanship and bias



becomes a propagandist rather than a reporter or an expressor of opinions and in this column, no matter how he conceives himself, he is an anti-semite. That in itself is genuinely evil and in all this evil, in which he claims, from the headline down, that only Israeli cooperation is needed to obtain the release of the victims of this new barbarity he does not even come close to telling your readers how this can come about. His few hints are vapid and baseless. If it were within the power or the desire of the Syrian president they'd have been released long ago. (In Meachum's pretense of knowing it all the president, usually referred to as Hafez Asad, is both "al-Asad" and "Al-Adad" in consecutive paragraphs.)

No matter how baseless it is, no matter how disproven by recent history, Meachum is entitled to the personal belief that capitulating to the blackmail of these fratricidal assassins and terrorists will forever end their kidnapping and slaughter of the innocent. But neither this baseless belief nor the tradition of American journalism which he claims for himself entitle Meachum to make it up as he goes, to become an anti-semitic propagandist and to impose upon your trust and that of your readers. Again I suggest that two columns a day preclude responsible writing and that Meachum ought to spend more time ascertaining *fact*. Even Walter Lippmann, and Meachum is not a Lippmann, did not average three columns a week. Unless he restrains his ego and his pretense of omniscience (and perhaps his assumption that all of us here are uninformed yokels) he will destroy what still remains of his reputation. I sorrow for him.

HAROLD WEISBERG  
7627 Old Receiver Road

While Geneva dominated the world's attention, negotiations proceeded quietly for the release of American and French hostages held in Beirut. A gentle, giant Englishman succeeded where all other Westerners failed; 6-foot-7 Terry Waite held conversations with the kidnapers.

Washington finally broke silence on Waite's efforts. Senior Reagan administration officials conceded the validity of the Brit's contacts. In London, Waite met at the American Embassy with a U.S. State Department team; he received an outline of how far this country is prepared to go to resolve the problem.

Obviously, Washington backtracked on its public statements; it is up to its official hips in the negotiations. It's about time. This nation is responsible for those held hostage; it can not refuse to discuss their fate. Four American captives sent identical letters two weeks ago; one copy reached the White House which fed back its standard line: "no negotiations."

Fortunately, the second copy went to England's Archbishop of Canterbury, who dispatched Terry Waite to Lebanon immediately. What the kidnapers said in those first meetings prompted a cautious optimism; some observers now expect the hostages' release.

Boosting this positive view, when Locke returned Tuesday to Beirut, he was accompanied by a Lebanese-born French heart specialist; he is standing by to treat a captive countryman reported gravely ill by the hostage takers.

However, Waite does nothing to encourage this cheery outlook for an early resolution. He continues to caution that his mission remains both delicate and dangerous. On that basis, media based in Beirut have shown themselves remarkably responsible: after some initial lashing about, reporters and TV crews are holding back. Waite does not have to play cat-and-mouse games with the media as he goes about his appointed rounds.

The government of Israel has not been as cooperative; it continues to send its jets freely over Lebanon in violation of international law. Not surprisingly, each flight raises tensions; the possibility of falling bombs always exists for frequently attacked Lebanon. Then there is the Syrian concern that the Israeli planes could turn their way. It happened this week, as Waite was returning to Beirut.

The Israelis report they shot down two Syrian migs over Syrian soil. Tel Aviv issued a near-apology based on where the "kills" took place; by implication, it would have felt no need for explanation if the Syrian jets had been down over Lebanon.

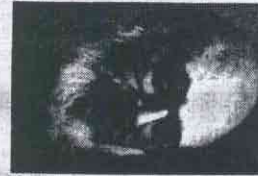
The Israeli over-flights can not be justified under any circumstances; but when they continue while efforts are under way to free the American hostages, they present a callous flaunting of concern for the best interest of Tel Aviv's principal ally, the United States.

Simple humanity demands full precautions attend upon Terry Waite's delicate mission. Lebanon's record for volatility has not been matched in modern times; however, the kidnapers rate as particularly erratic, even by Beirut standards. Obviously, they resolved to end their waiting. Why else would they permit the hostages to send those letters?

Of course, there is another possibility; but it also militates against provocations by the Israelis. The theory has been advanced that Damascus agreed to resume its efforts to free the Americans. Syria had angrily withdrawn good offices in response to the earlier Israeli attack on Tunis. Some sources think Jordan's King Hussein convinced Syrian President Hafez al-Asad that helping to secure freedom for the Americans would work to Damascus' advantage. The two countries recently patched up their differences after years of hostility.

Syria has always considered Israel and the United States as two faces on the same body politic. Washington's first, confused reaction to the attack on Tunis confirmed that view. Hussein's renewed relationship with Al-Asad could mitigate Damascus' reaction to this latest incident. But why take the chance of losing any potential Syrian influence in Terry Waite's negotiations?

The gentle, giant Englishman offers the best — maybe the last — hope to bring out the American and French hostages. Washington accepted that fact. The United States backed off its former hardnosed, no-win position. Some cooperation from Tel Aviv now seems appropriate.



# ROY MEEACHUM

Viewpoint

Israeli cooperation

needed

11/21/85



Mr. Roy Meacham  
Frederick News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

11/16/85

Dear Mr. Meacham,

Although I presume that such outbursts of ignorance, bigotry and hatred are not outside your experience, I send you this anti-semitic display of it in my today's mail. And I am not suggesting that you tailor your columns. These people exist and they will exist and they are not, by normal standards, rational. But I do suggest that they thrive on misinformation and that those of us who write for popular consumption ought not forget that we can feed them. We can be entirely accurate and they will distort what we write. But when we are not accurate or not fair they don't even have to corrupt what we write.

I know the pressures of deadlines and I've published books faster than magazines are published. And about 15,000 strangers have written me in the past almost 20 years. While this is not the first anti-semitic response to my infrequent letters to the editor, I've never received one in response to either my books or my public appearances. And I have been much more critical of the government than most people would be willing to believe. Right now I have the FBI and the Department of Justice charged in federal district court with felonies, in addition to my critical writing, which they've never been able to fault on accuracy. As my own lawyer and myself subject to the penalties of perjury I've alleged fraud, perjury and misrepresentation. So, perhaps more than you, I live with the urgent need to be more than merely accurate.

Maybe as a result I'm more sensitive to inaccuracy and unfairness in intensely controversial areas. But if I am, that does not in any way diminish the responsibility to be both accurate and fair all of us who take information to the people assume.

Believe me, I do not hold you responsible for this disgusting business. The last time it happened I had suggested that governments, like their citizens, ought live within the law. To some, today, that is subversion.

Sincerely,

  
Harold Weisberg

# ROY MEACHUM



## Viewpoint

11/11/85

### We get letters

"Ignorant," "evil," "lacking intellectual integrity," and "caught in a 60s time-warp" — take your pick. In recent days those are some of the charges thrown my way in this newspaper's Letters to the Editor.

Name-calling comes with the territory. Every working columnist earns his share. This branch of journalism exists to incite thinking among the general public; to convert the passive reader to an active citizenry. At least, in a free society.

For totalitarian states, of course, columnists have a different function. They tell a reader what he must think. Dictatorial regimes fear nothing so much as the exercise of free will; they suppress all diversity in newspapers.

Soviet handling of President Reagan's interview with Russian reporters presents an example. Moscow excluded major portions. Commentators deliberately misconstrued several basic points in the interview; and then, they attacked the U.S. president on the basis of their misrepresentations.

With no access to the original text, Russian readers had no choice but to accept the regime's view as presented by Soviet columnists.

Even in our free society, any misrepresentation repeated frequently enough becomes accepted as the truth; this pattern appears developing among letters to this newspaper. My columns are on the public record; they can be read in the library, or at this paper.

Recent letters have distorted my opinion; other people have accepted those distortions as truth and written letters citing the misrepresentations of what I said in this space. One misquote appears assuming a life of its own; the other should be corrected immediately.

At no point did I defend the Palestinians who pirated the Achille Lauro. In fact, I suggested their executions, if found guilty; in the same column — "Innocent blood" (Oct. 11) — I decried the senseless death of Leon Klinghoffer and of other victims to the Middle East violence based on revenge.

I do not advocate the military retain AIDS victims, as the most recently published letter alleged. I am concerned that "the blunderbuss brains in the Pentagon" contributed to the general AIDS hysteria by ordering testing for all U.S. armed forces personnel — "The old politics of AIDS" (Oct. 22).

The couple who wrote on AIDS linked themselves with those who protested my columns on the Middle East; they repeated misrepresentations of my views. They joined in attacking me for what I never said — adding a new untruth.

The assaults carry with them a delicious irony; for in each instance, the column quoted is "The new 'yellow journalism'" (Oct. 15). The thrust of that piece lay in my assertion that howling criticism of the media for its coverage of the TWA hijacking affected reporting on the Achille Lauro. My concern was summarized:

"Give people what they want to hear and there are no complaining phone calls, using language that used to be obscene. This time around, no news operation faces attack from any ranking politicians. But in playing to the country's lynch mob mentality, the media could wind up with American blood on its collective hands."

That paragraph expresses my concern for the lack of balanced reporting on the Middle East: I worry about the effect on individual Americans and these United States. I fear my country is being led blindly into untenable positions in that part of the world; positions that are not in our national interest and that threaten the safety of our citizens. Most of all, I'm scared to death because I see the possibility of World War III starting in the



**Middle East.**

This is my view; other people have theirs. I do not question their parentage or patriotism for disagreeing. In arguing their dissenting opinion, they may call me names. They bear none of the restraints imposed by this profession. I am responsible for what I say — to the truth and to conscience. The newspaper grants a columnist's license based upon my accepting that responsibility.

My editor and I are both old-fashioned journalists: we consider sacred the trust reposed by people in their newspapers. Consistent with that trust is the duty to protect the readers' right to protest any and all opinions that appear in this space. Calling me names is a part of that right; it permits an instantly understood disagreement.

Your letters are always welcome: they are the active response to thinking about what is offered here. Thank you for writing.

Editor  
News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

11/11/85

Dear Editor,

The laboring mountain of Roy Meacham's ego has finally delivered itself of a mouse of self-condemnation. He labored a month before pretending to respond to my letter critical of his "Yellow Journalism" column and then, with timing the very perfection of ineptitude, it appeared the very day the issuance of a warrant for the mastermind terrorist he defended was announced. Of course, from his attempt at self-defense in his "We get letters" column you'd never know that he in effect did defend the chief terrorist Abbas. Nor, for that matter, would you from his supposed response have the vaguest idea of what I did write. Not a word of it is in his newest scribbling. Instead there is misrepresentation - knowing and deliberate misrepresentation - and a futile attempt to cloak himself in the mantle of American journalism and a false claim to his adherence to its noble traditions.

According to Meacham, all criticisms of his columns, particularly mine, are personal, as mine was not. "Name-calling comes with the territory," he pontificates. And, according to him, without a single reference to what I actually wrote, "any misrepresentation repeated frequently enough becomes accepted <sup>as</sup> the truth." This, he says, is the pattern of the critical letters, including mine.

Before he dares say that I misrepresented, he ought, in self-respect if not out of the tender concern he pretends for the minds of the readers, be specific. Because he cannot be, he indulges in a blend of the more conspicuous faults of Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon: no matter how wrong he is, someone else made the error; and instead of responding, he attacks his critics.

I criticized Meacham for not being factual and for being irresponsible. He does not defend himself with quotations from the column I addressed or from my letter for, indeed, he cannot. Instead he quotes an entirely different column and says his critics "may call me names." He knows very well that I didn't.

His and the "old-fashioned journalism's" code is "to consider sacred the trust reposed by the people in their newspapers." His manifestation of this is to misrepresent again and to impose further upon "the ~~trust~~ <sup>sacred</sup> trust <sup>re</sup> imposed by the people." He does this by deliberate misrepresentation of what I wrote on the subject of his "Yellow Journalism" column (in which he could not even define the phrase correctly) and by plain falsehood in now telling his readers that I called him names.

I don't know how old Meacham is or what his journalistic credentials are ~~is~~ but I am past three score and ten and my reporting goes back to 1930. I don't know



how many words he has published, but I doubt if he has a better record than mine, one of more than a million published words in seven books on highly controversial materials without a single significant error being called to my attention and without a single letter claiming that I had been unfair in any way.

The one point at which Meacham pretends to come even close to what I wrote about his column emerged in the paper as gibberish: "The thrust of that piece lay in my assertion that howling criticism of the media for its coverage of the TWA hijacking affected reporting of the Achille Lauro." It is bad enough to pretend that the <sup>reporting of</sup> (unprecedented <sup>piracy</sup> <sup>13114</sup> piracy, jeopardy <sup>to</sup> hundreds of innocents, and <sup>the</sup> incredibly cold-blooded murder of an aged and crippled American is "yellow journalism", <sup>as which is</sup> ~~as~~ which ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> the actual thrust of his column in question, but it is indecent to continue to pretend that it was not a legitimate major news story or that it was not worthy of the considerable attention it received in all the media.

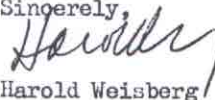
Perhaps if Meacham did not try to write so much and spent a little more time thinking about what he writes and some time getting as close to the facts as a garlic waved over the stew he'd get less criticism and his readers and his claimed <sup>own</sup> devotion to the tradition of American journalism would be better served.

I think he'd serve himself and particularly his <sup>own</sup> personal and his journalistic integrity better if he confronted the factual record and didn't indulge in the name-calling he attributes to others. A little humility and less pretense of omniscience wouldn't hurt a bit, either.

He claims concern over the truly dangerous situation in the middle-east. I do hope that before he pretends further omniscience in that complicated area he does try to learn more about the actualities, historical, recent and present <sup>otherwise</sup> he'll do neither his reputation nor his readers any good.

The major media and the <sup>share</sup> government are only too often justly criticized and I've done at least one man's <sup>share</sup> share of that. But neither the government nor the major media ought be criticized unjustly, and that is what Meacham did in the column I addressed. If he still insists he is right and I am wrong, then I invoke another ancient and honored tradition, stick to the facts. If he claims I erred, then let him specify, with direct quotation. He demeans himself when instead he prates that "Name-calling comes with the territory," with vague and untruthful allegations of "misrepresentation" and with his own quotation of the wrong one of his columns, not the one I addressed.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg  
7627 Old Receiver Road

F. Park  
10/22/85

## 'New yellow journalism' is Meachum's

Roy Meachum could hardly have picked a worse case on which to base his column on "The new yellow journalism" than the brutal murder of an innocent, aged, ill and virtually crippled American by Arab terrorists.

In fact, he makes no mention of this barbarity, has no criticism of terrorism, distorts and misrepresents to impart credibility to his complaint that, while it may be justified in many other areas, is not valid with regard to this particular, monstrous crime.

And while Meachum pretends to political sophistication and understanding, his column is careful to hide and omit the political motives of those he defends — all the other governments, not ours.

The boss terrorist, whose name he gives as Abul Abbas and who is known by other names, should not have been arrested by Italy, according to Meachum, because he was only "suspected" — Meachum's "evidence." Has he forgotten that until conviction one is only "suspected" of any crime?

Could Meachum not have indicated the bias in favor of the terroristic PLO by both Italy and Yugoslavia, which was amply reported elsewhere as fact and not as yellow journalism? Had he no question at all when Italy claimed that Abul Abbas had Egyptian diplomatic immunity while Yugoslavia claimed he has Iraqi diplomatic immunity — and he is not a citizen of either land?

There is no evidence at all that the United States tried to "force" Italy to turn the captured terrorists over to it. Rather did it seek to try them after they were tried in Italy.

It is grossly unfair to state baldly only that "Washington proposed to land a man wanted by the Israelis." In this sense Meachum is also wrong in what he says about the conspiracy charge — only that "Israel should have demanded extradition" of the terrorists because they planned violence in Israel, allegedly.

There is absolutely no evidence, not even a reasonable suspicion, that Washington had in mind anything at all related to Israel, only that it wanted those who conspired to kill this innocent American to be brought to justice. He was murdered as the end product of a conspiracy, which is a combination to do what the law says is wrong. Murder, certainly, is wrong, and all those in any way involved are subject to trial on the charge of conspiracy. Otherwise how could Italy hold four men when only one pulled a trigger?

The legitimate criticism of TV for its

handling of these events also is entirely missing in Meachum's column. Without exception, all the networks aired so-called Arab spokesmen, diplomats, political leaders and scholars, and without exception all took the line and were aired in the libel, that Israel really is responsible for both the hijacking of the ship and the murder of this innocent old man. That is an added outrage and the acceptance of it as well as its airing by TV is worthy of the strongest condemnation.

If he intended impartiality and fair comment, how could Meachum fail to mention the great lie by Egyptian President Mubarak, that the murderer/terrorists were not in Egypt when they were and when he had arranged for them to escape and not be tried by anyone?

Mubarak has his own crazies/terrorists to worry about. Their assassination of his predecessor made him president, so he knows them. But do his personal political problems outweigh the demands of justice and decency?

Whatever he may have intended, Meachum wrote an anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic column that also is a defense of terrorism. How other than as veiled anti-Semitism can this line be interpreted: "It remains to be seen how his resistance might affect Wineberger's (Meachum's misspelling) political future."

There is, in fact, no reason to believe that Weinberger is in any danger and, in fact, few officeholders have been able to survive their own failings and errors as successfully.

The four young men in Italian prisons and to be tried are of Abul Abbas' terrorist organization, admittedly. It is beyond question that whatever the crime they planned it is not one in which they were self-starters. They acted as members of that terrorist group, on its behalf, in its interest, and the terrorist Meachum defends headed it and is their boss. On this basis alone there is reason to suspect him of possible involvement.



Neither Meachum nor I can say what evidence our government had, or what evidence might have been available from other sources, but that the official accounts include "transcripts" of conversations does not indicate, particularly when those transcripts were to be used in a public trial, that they are as valueless as the Italian premiere, who has his own public prejudices and problems, or the entirely uninformed Meachum pretend.

Meachum also has no questions about the fact that of all the Arabs who could have "negotiated" with the four murderers only their boss was sent to "negotiate." In plain English, he was sent to reduce the damage to his and his associated terrorist groups because, despite Meachum's rewriting of this wretched business, the entire world was outraged.

As a general proposition, our major media is only too often properly criticized as Meachum does inappropriately in this matter. In this matter, the true "new yellow journalism" is his.

He characterizes himself further in the false representation that TV gave this terrible thing the attention it did for "bigger ratings" and because it "guarantees large audiences." This is sick, indecent and entirely untrue.

There is absolutely no question of the news importance or public interest.

And shades of Lincoln Steffens, he says that "The old word for the handling of current events is 'yellow journalism.'" Thus, dear editor, the next time you report a council meeting or decision you are engaging in "yellow journalism" and your reporter, another word of the era Meachum misrepresents, is a "mudslinger."

Meachum misrepresents to deceive and misinform your readers. I hope it is from ignorance only, for, otherwise, it is evil. Either way, I sorrow for him as I do for his omission of any sense of outrage over this horrible crime and his complete lack of criticism of all those involved in it, from the direct participants to the heads of other states, all of whom failed their responsibilities to their nations and the world.

The end product also is a defense of terrorists — whatever Meachum may have had in mind — and is unjustified criticism of those who, when an opportunity to punish terrorists was available, as it rarely is, took steps to bring them to justice.

HAROLD WEISBERG  
7627 Old Receiver Road, Frederick

Editor  
News-Post  
Frederick, Md. 21701

10/15/85

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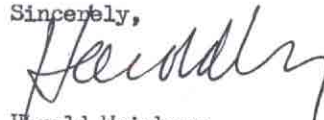
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Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg  
7627 Old Receiver Road

# ROY MEACHUM



Viewpoint

## The new 'yellow journalism'

America's media learned their lesson. Battered by criticism of their coverage of the TWA hijacking, television news organizations seemed to compete with each other — like boys at a game — in proving their 100 percent Americanism last week. There was little attempt at balance.

Every turn in the twisting, tangled cruise-ship piracy was prejudged and presented the way the media assumed the U.S. public wanted to hear it; everything was boiled down to black and white.

With their blood-lust up, Americans were not prepared for any hesitation by other governments in marching lock-step with the White House. In the process, the public — goaded by the media — transformed the U.S. government into a bully's role. Egypt suffered the most damage. Italy and Yugoslavia also took their licks.

These are different nations. When Washington demands their strict compliance with its dictates, it portrays them as puppets; this is how Moscow treats the Eastern Bloc. But Rome and Belgrade have value as America's allies, precisely because they are independent.

Fortunately for the United States, and its leadership role among the countries of the free world, the White House toned down its pressure on Italy and Yugoslavia; it came to a screeching halt. Reason triumphed over hysteria.

With the news media leading the way, the American public demanded the arrest of Muhammad Abul Abbas, *suspected* as the leader of the cruise ship pirates. The United States claimed it had conclusive proof, but failed to convince Rome and Belgrade. Instead Italy and Yugoslavia acknowledged Abul Abbas' role in releasing the ship's hostages — and gave the Palestinian public thanks. (By the way, the man's "last" name is Abul Abbas: the father of Abbas, in English. America's media, in shortening his name, reveal their own lack of knowledge about Arabs.)

Having failed to force Rome to yield the four Palestinians accused of murder, Washington threw a fit over the failure to land Abul Abbas. The charge was conspiracy; but on that count, Israel should have demanded extradition — if there was proof. The planned goal of the ship's pirates was an attack on the Israeli port of Ashdod; it was a suicide mission in retaliation for the raid on Tunis. Nothing on the public record indicates Abul Abbas conspired to hijack the ship.

Washington proposed to land a man wanted by the Israelis. Lawyers may argue otherwise, but there is no proof on the public record that Abul Abbas intended any harm to Americans. Of course, this is not what the U.S. public wanted to hear.

One week after the cruise ship was seized, the media continue to feed Americans' thirst for revenge. High administration officials played their part.

Attorney General Ed Meese hinted another military operation would be mounted to snatch Abul Abbas; he has thwarted Israeli attempts for years. U.S. Secretary of the Treasury James Baker joined in the chorus, calling for revenge.

Defense Secretary Casper Wineberger stood apart; he resisted first orders to send Navy jets to down the Egyptian airliner. Wineberger expressed concern for the damage to America's staunch supporter, Egyptian Husni Mubarak. The damage is there. It remains to be seen how his



resistance might affect wineorenner's political future. The answer lies with the media.

Unless another major story comes along, the electronic gadflies will ride the ship's piracy; this is their way. They will continue to play the public's emotions; bad news draws bigger ratings than good. By orchestrating America's frustrations over the Middle East, television guarantees large audiences.

The old word for the handling of current events is "yellow journalism." The label was invented in the 19th century for newspapers who abandoned their sense of responsibility to pander to public tastes. The prime group practitioner was William Randolph Hearst.

To sell newspapers, Hearst played fast and loose with the facts of the Spanish rule in Cuba; he exaggerated every alleged atrocity, and ignored any evidence to the contrary. The Hearst newspapers so enflamed the public mood that America plunged into the Spanish-American War; the national sentiment, whipped up by the press, silenced all the voices of reason.

History corrected the record; even the sinking of the Maine turned out an accident, caused by a U.S. sailor. Americans still died in Mr. Hearst's war.

These are other times; but we face a similar danger. It is a small move from sending up U.S. jets to force down an unarmed airliner to ordering a bombing mission — to public cheers. With luck, there will be no more women and children among the casualties than those strikes in Lebanon. There is no evidence those missions saved a single American life. On the contrary, they helped create a hatred for this country being paid for by the six U.S. citizens being held hostage in Beirut. These realities are known, and remembered, by media executives, including my old friends in television news. But they learned their lesson in the TWA hijacking.

Give people what they want to hear and there are no complaining phone calls, using language that used to be obscene. This time around, no news operation faces attack from any ranking politician. But in playing to the country's lynch mob mentality toward the Middle East, the media could wind up with American blood on its collective hands.

However, killing young Americans didn't bother William Randolph Hearst; it can not be imagined today's media will suffer any remorse.