

Foot In Mouth

Harold Weisberg

No question about it - Roy Meschum is a genius.

With his remarkable sense of timing he is the only journalist, if I may ~~use~~ fairly apply this word to his endless ~~columns~~ <sup>about</sup> columns of the Middle East, who can sit at a typewriter with his foot in his mouth.

The newest of his regular demonstrations of this unique skill is his June 29 column with the wishful-thinking caption, "No Jewish State." In it he suggests that Egypt's missile program is caused by Israel and fear of Israeli nuclear power that he says, with ~~no~~ <sup>out</sup> question, Israel alone in that area has, and that in that area Israel ~~also~~ has a "monopoly" on such weapons.

No question about it, he has oft and long proclaimed his expertise on that troubled area ~~and that he is~~ in particular <sup>as</sup> an Egyptologist. He knows and understands the Muslim world so well that if his red-headed Quaker lady were to put camel chips on his table he would immediately recognize them as Egyptian ambrosia.

Before getting to his wonderful sense of timing, as demonstrated in the <sup>missile</sup> news reported ~~in the~~ Washington Post of the same day, other of his comments <sup>establish</sup> demonstrate both his <sup>local</sup> ~~fiariness~~ <sup>local</sup> honesty and all-encompassing knowledge ~~and~~ and the papers' wisdom is seeing to it that his screed is never tainted by editing.

Happy that only five Palestinians had died in the previous week, bringing the eight-month total, including Israelis, to 230, he criticizes everyone else in the press; ~~except himself~~ "It is no longer news in this country when a mere handful dies, as long as they are Arabs."

Now if I wanted to needle him, I'd remind him that he has yet to use all the space he has had locally all these years to lament the millions of <sup>s</sup> Muslim casualties caused by Muslims in that period. Particularly by the mass-murderer/terrorist ~~George~~ <sup>an authentic</sup> Abu Nidal who to this day his columns regard as ~~no more than~~ a Palestinian George Washington.

Instead I merely note that <sup>recently</sup> ~~more than~~ 230 Palestinians were killed by Palestinians in eight days

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His political commentary also includes, "Abba Eban was dumped by his Labour Party." Losing a primary election in which his constituents, not the party hierarchy, voted is being "dumped" by the hierarchy?

without his <sup>deeming</sup> seeing it necessary to bring <sup>this</sup> ~~that~~ news to his readers.

Also a ~~renowned~~ lexicographer, he tells us that if anyone shoots somebody about to throw a firebomb it is not the bomber but one who would stop the bombing who is a "vigilante."

There is "the absence of a foreign ~~that~~ threat for all Israelis," <sup>he</sup> says, and "only in the minds of propagandists ... are all Islamic nations a solid bloc." How could they be a <sup>"solid"</sup> bloc against Israel when only one of the <sup>20-</sup> some has yet to agree to peace with Israel after 40 years? <sup>They are no "solid"</sup> It is no "bloc" when <sup>they</sup> all of them refuse to recognize the state of Israel either, <sup>is it? are they?</sup>

He <sup>expresses</sup> endorses Israel's "swapping" land for peace, the current ~~next~~ fairy-tale of those who will not face the reality that the Arabs have always rejected this without even discussing it and that all but one <sup>maintain</sup> remain in a state of war with Israel. He also does not report what the papers he reads did report, that the PLO <sup>and</sup> its ~~the~~ Arafat faction in particular, had just rejected exactly this proposal by another <sup>its</sup> of the many <sup>warring</sup> factions as soon as it got international attention.

Israel, he says, is that area's "only superpower." Does ~~he~~ think that Iran and <sup>Syria is in bed with on pogo sticks?</sup> Iraq are using cream-puffs? <sup>ed</sup> Saudi Arabia arming itself with Chinese ~~not~~ toothpicks when it <sup>got 1600-mile</sup> has their ~~missiles~~ with a 1600-mile range? (This is a range that includes <sup>much</sup> more than all of Israel. It encompasses much of the Arab world.)

That foot stays firmly in place when he shifts to political matters: "the dream of a Jewish homeland (that) aroused humanity's support in the wake of the Holocaust." <sup>west</sup> "humanity" includes the Muslim world, all of which then and all but one of which today oppose any "Jewish homeland," and along with the PLO, which includes this in its charter, are ~~dedicated~~ dedicated to wiping Israel out. Why else refuse to agree to a peace in "a solid bloc"? **INSERT here**

When he gets to "Cairo's attempt to obtain 'supercarbon' for its <sup>missile</sup> war-heads," "obtain" being Meachumese for violating U.S. law to do it, and says that maybe Israeli intelligence tipped the U.S. off "in at attempt to keep" Israel's "monopoly" his genius is apparent.

His political commentary also includes: "~~Abba Eban was dumped by his Labor Party.~~"  
loosing an election in which his constituents, not the party hierarchy voted, is  
being "dumped"?

*The day before this column appeared*  
The agreement between the U.S. and Israel reached *an agreement page one*  
the day before this column  
appeared is headlined in the Washington Post; "U.S., Israel To Develop New Missile;  
Reagan, Rabin Seek To Blunt Arab Threat" (my emphasis)

This agreement, ~~the new account states~~, is "for developing a defensive missile  
to combat a growing Arab missile and chemical weapons threat in the Middle East" that  
President Reagan described as "ominous" and, because of the Arab "proliferation of  
ballistic missiles and chemical weapons" deliverable by them, threaten to "change  
the military situation" there, "making any future war far more so costly, difficult to  
control and dangerous."

~~Thus~~ The President held that defending against Arab missiles is essential to  
U.S. national security.

~~This story says~~  
That account reports some of the proliferation of missiles in the Muslim world,  
without going into such things as Saudi Arabia's financing of Pakistani efforts to  
develop nuclear bombs; and the fact that Egypt started working on its own missiles as  
soon as it could bring Nazi war-criminal scientists there for that project; what the  
Baltimore Sun reported the same day, U.S. efforts to recover from another Arab  
country U.S. Stinger missiles it had obtained on the black market:

Saudi Arabia has Chinese CSS2-model ballistic missiles with a range of 1600  
miles and Syria is now seeking other Chinese missiles; "Iraq, modifying a Soviet-  
made Scud, has produced an intermediate-range missile; Syria "has Soviet-provided  
Scuds that can carry a one-ton payload and hit most populated areas in Israel"; and  
Egypt, which reportedly has its own missiles, "is collaborating with Iraq" and  
Argentine companies "to develop a ballistic missile with a range of 435 to 560 miles...  
Iraq is providing the money."

Iran is Muslim but not Arab. It began bombarding Iraq with missiles months ago.  
Iraq shot missiles back.

Now if Ronald Reagan knew as much as Roy Meachum, that Israel has a missile "monopoly" in that part of the world, he could have saved the ~~\$~~128,000,000 U.S. share of the <sup>cost of this</sup> joint project to develop a defensive missile to neutralize all those, according to our journalistic genius, ~~these~~ non-existing missiles, the Arabs do not have. ~~Our genius says.~~

Nope, no question, Roy Meachum is a real genius.

Wherever his feet may at any time be.