

OPINIONS

Israel, take action



Avi Mechanic
Columnist

As a frequent columnist and editorialist, I wish the Jewish students and faculty on campus a Chag Semach and a truly blessed Passover. The holiday of Passover among the festive Seders and celebrations is most importantly about renewal of the continuing strength of the Jewish people.

At this very moment, like in the days of Nazi Germany, Jews are being slaughtered on Passover, this time not by Germans but by the Arab world.

As Israelis were sitting in the Park Hotel in the coastal city of Netanya, celebrating, socializing and enjoying each others company, a barbarian Palestinian terrorist blew himself up, killing over 20 innocent people, and by the end of this article that number will increase substantially.

Notwithstanding the attacks on Israelis from the Palestinian Terrorist Infrastructure, every single Arab country, from North Africa to Iraq, has been complacent in support of terrorism against Israel and the Jewish people.

The Arab World knows without a doubt that defeating Israel on the battlefield is impossible.

For instance, even when Israel had no army in 1948, the Arabs massed five organized, well-trained armies trained by the British, armed by British, and in the case of General John Glubb Pasha who commanded the Jordanian Army, were even commanded by active duty British officers.

After one year of fighting and 6,000 Israelis killed, which constituted around one percent of the population, Israel was victorious.

However, the Arab world has learned that since Israel is a democracy, which embraces a liberal democratic philosophy where a King or a dictatorship does not control every aspect of the citizens' lives, terrorism and barbaric violence can be used as a negotiating tool.

Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993 between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat, Israel has engaged in capitulation to the Palestinians and to the Arab World. The attack in Netanya, and more than 350 Israelis killed only because they were Jews are proof that peace is not on the minds of the Arab world.

Thus, what is the goal of continuing terrorism on Israel? Simply

stated, the destruction of Israel. The hope of the Arab world is that first Israel's army will withdraw from Judea and Samaria (West Bank) along with 200,000 Israeli civilians who live productive modern lives in the province of Judea.

By withdrawing from Judea, Israel would be in essence from the coast of the Mediterranean in Tel-Aviv to the border of a future Palestinian state and would be only 13 miles long.

No country, even Israel with its overwhelming military, can defend itself against a combined Palestinian and greater Arab alliance.

It is the view of the author that no Palestinian state is created, Arafat and his infrastructure be destroyed, and Israel re-conquer Judea. After eight years of Israeli compliance of the Oslo Agreement, what has been the Jewish people's return, 350 dead men, women and children?

In addition, I am sure that some enlightened individual will conclude the following: Hey, more Palestinians have been killed than Israelis, so the Palestinians are the innocents. The fact of the matter is, the Palestinian terrorists supported by Arafat, the royal family in Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syria, Lebanon and even Iraq (notice a pattern) are waging a campaign of terrorism against Israel to weaken her resolve and strength.

It is important to note that not a single democracy exists in the Arab world, nor does the respect of human life exist in the same standard as in Israel and the U.S. Yet, the world remains quiet and steadfast in the face of Jews being massacred. Where is Amnesty International, where is the enlightened United Nations, and wait a minute, what about Europe? Where is the leadership of the enlightened of the world? Once again, Jewish life is cheap and non-existent in the world community.

As I turn on the news, bodies of innocent Jews are being piled up on the sidewalk. Girls are walking the streets in a daze. The Palestinians are celebrating! To that there must be a clear response.

Israel, you must take the steps to destroy terrorism and you must disregard what some Ivy League-educated bureaucrat thinks is the right approach. Israel overcame the ancient Egyptians and Islamic Egyptians. Israel will overcome the Palestinians and reclaim the biblical land of Israel.

In support of cheerleaders

Dear Editor:

I have been intrigued by the recent arguments related to cheerleading. Some writers have made the claim that cheerleading is an activity of lesser stature than 'other' sports. Please allow me to express a view based on my experience with the subject.

As a student of traditional budo and martial arts disciplines, I have had the opportunity to interact with many individuals from various 'sport' backgrounds.

Traditional martial arts training includes rigorous endurance exercises and mental conditioning drills that rival in difficulty any legal 'sporting' activity in modern times.

The second most successful group of students I have ever worked around or with was dancers. The hardest-working, most committed, determined and technically proficient students, however, were cheerleaders.

Their work ethic is unrivaled. Their ability to push themselves beyond self-perceived limits is worth noting, and their commitment to a task is remarkable.

When the big and strong gave in because their bigness didn't serve them, the cheerleaders kept with it. The turnover rates of male 'athletes' in martial arts is high, perhaps because the ego is not celebrated.

Patience, perfection of technique, good leadership skills and an affinity for hard work—these are the traits of the cheerleaders I have known. My highest-ranking student is an ex-cheerleader. She represents our style well in many areas.

Please reconsider limited views on the worthiness of some of the hardest working members of any campus.

Spencer Bolejack
Senior, history

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Letters to the Editor

Response to Sewell's column

Dear Editor:

Words can kill. The Nazis understood and took full advantage of the destructive power of words.

In his recent *Blue Banner* column, "Irony found in Israel," Glennie Sewell compares Israel to Nazi Germany and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to Hitler.

Isn't it ironic, Sewell argues, that the people who were once victims of the Nazis have become just like Nazis themselves. Intended to shock, Sewell's comparison is false, unconstructive and clichéd.

The language Sewell uses attempts to demonize Israeli Jews. It represents a gross oversimplification of history. It perpetuates anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Can one criticize some of the policies implemented by Israel with regard to its treatment of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza? Yes.

Can one criticize Israel for its unfair treatment of its Arab citizens, those living within the green line? Again, yes.

Does Israel have a right to act to protect its citizens from horrific attacks in crowded public places? Unquestionably.

After the bombing at a hotel where Jews were celebrating the Passover seder (ritual meal), Israel exercised restraint in its response to allow American General Zinni time to continue trying to broker a cease-

fire.

After several more bombings, however, Israel felt "it must bring to bear its military power in order to minimize the violent element that Arafat has incorporated in his maneuvering over the cease-fire," write the editors of *Ha'aretz*, a liberal Israeli daily newspaper.

But, according to the editors, military force is not enough. It must be coupled with "an acceptable and achievable political goal toward which it is moving," something which, the editors conclude, the Sharon government appears to lack.

Israelis openly criticize government policy without fear of recrimination. Indeed, the editors of this paper urge the democratically elected government to initiate a dialogue with the Arab world on the basis of the recently concluded Arab League Summit in Beirut.

Are there extremists on the Israeli side? Yes, but they comprise a very small minority of the population.

A survey published within the last two weeks in another leading daily Israeli newspaper, *Ma'ariv*, found that 71 percent of Israelis favor "unilateral separation" from the Palestinians.

According to a recent editorial in *The Forward*, an American Jewish weekly newspaper, "such a plan would entail a pullback to a defensible line, marking off a border with barbed wire and dismantling the Jewish settlements on the other side, by force if necessary. A Palestinian state would arise, and would be free to negotiate final borders with Israel whenever it was ready to talk

sense."

Israel is a democracy, a society in which public debate is vigorous and in which free elections are conducted on a regular basis in a legal manner.

Everyone in Israel, from the taxi driver to the violinist in the symphony, has an opinion about how Israel should solve its external and internal problems.

Disagreement is the air Israelis breathe. Any one of the Israeli government's policies with regard to the Palestinians may be wrong. But together, the policies do not add up to a methodical plan to eliminate the Palestinians.

Every day, Israelis and Palestinians suffer tragic losses. The careless use of terms such as "Nazis" to characterize people on one side or the other will not help the Israelis and the Palestinians move toward a just, secure peace.

Rather, language such as this perpetuates a climate in which today one group is portrayed as demons in need of control or extermination and tomorrow another.

Words can kill. Words can also create peace. What we need are bold thinkers who can fashion a language of peace that will enable the Israelis and Palestinians to live together, in the words of the late Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai, "If not in peace, then in the absence of war."

Rick Chess
Associate professor of Literature and Language
Director, the Center for Jewish Studies

'Bad vibes' in recent articles

Dear Editor:

Perhaps it's a by-product of Asheville culture, but I'm starting to feel a definite sense of "bad vibes" from the students represented in *The Banner*.

Essentially, the negativity towards UNCA is ridiculous. I am sick to death of hearing about everything UNCA "isn't."

UNCA isn't "diverse" (whatever the bloody hell that means, or why it's so critically important. I went to a high school that was 42 percent black, and I could certainly not detect any measurable gains from this "diversity").

UNCA's student government "has

no power," as if they're a governing body and not a representative one.

If the students want real power, they should do something for themselves, rather than complain about how the representatives they probably didn't even vote for can't replace their math requirement with a free muffler upgrade.

We don't have a football team. We don't have "comprehensive" Arts 310 and Humanities courses (students apparently missing the point that if they loved everything about a course, it would be fun, not school).

We don't fill potholes at the drop of a hat. And on and on and on. What else does UNCA not have? How about rapes in our parking lots? Students dying from cocaine overdoses? Or, if crime isn't your area, what about inept grad students teaching our classes?

Professors who actually know and

care about the students (heck, I ate a muffin with one of mine in Cafe Ramsey the other day).

We don't have two-mile hikes between classes, or thousands of cars winding their way through campus every day. We don't have dorms dating into the last century (our oldest are Governors Village, those being torn down as we speak).

Why not portray a UNCA that's worth going to, rather than finding negative things to focus on?

As a newspaper paid for by student fees, *The Banner* has a responsibility to speak the truth about the school. And the truth is, UNCA isn't all that bad.

Alan Moore
Junior, political science

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Bush administration announces broad value shift



Zev Friedman
Columnist

To the great surprise of environmental and social activists worldwide, President George W. Bush gave a speech at a press conference in Detroit (where he hosted a fundraiser for General Motors) detailing a profound reorganization of the nation's priorities.

Amidst the friendly drone of early morning Detroit traffic, Bush made it clear that he now realizes the current resource consumption paradigm the United States has clung to against the protests of other nations, and many U.S. citizens must be reconstructed with no further

delay to fit the realities of shrinking biodiversity and a burgeoning human population.

"No matter how far you are down the wrong road—turn around," Bush exhorted to the automobile and petroleum industry CEOs. Exhibiting some of his speechwriters' most poignant verbiage to date, Bush spoke eloquently of his new vision for the future, asserting that, "We must acknowledge that we stand at a defining moment in history, when we as the most consuming nation have the opportunity to sustain a healthy, vibrant world that

enables human happiness, or the grim authority to continuously concentrate wealth while our ecosystems fail and humans suffer. Really, there is no choice."

Maintaining the bold atmosphere he had created, Bush went further, delineating the policies with which he intends to implement his new ideals.

"When I get back to Washington, some things are gonna change real quick," he spoke deliberately to a room of tense silence. "The first agenda item will be Kyoto ratification; the U.S. produces a third of the world's greenhouse gases, and no attempt to abate global climate change will be meaningful until we take a leading role. The next priority is a sincere nuclear weapons disarmament schedule. I do not want my loved ones living under constant threat of nuclear war due to intentional proliferation of

'battlefield' scale nuclear arms, nor am I willing to put up with the environmental devastation wrought by the industrial infrastructure necessary for continued nuclear activity. I will be in Oakridge, Tennessee at the Y-12 plant, the only remaining nuclear weapons production facility in the U.S., for the protest on April 12 to assure protesters that I share their view, that Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bad enough.

"In addition, I plan to submit a revised energy plan to Congress later this week that will withdraw more than half of the funding traditionally reserved as subsidies for coal and oil to fund alternative energy research; if our nation really wants to be independent of OPEC, we need to start getting our energy some other way.

"This initiative will also reduce pressure on remaining wild places

in the southwestern U.S. and the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge, allowing us to preserve them as beautiful havens for humans and other life rather than exploiting them for brief energy yields."

Bush went on for more than half an hour, elaborating to an increasingly incredulous audience on a wide spectrum of policy recommendations that have the potential to drastically alter the approach the U.S. maintains towards land use, resource consumption and human rights.

The administration's abrupt change of tact has caught many policy makers, advocacy groups and corporations by surprise. Asked by a *New York Times* reporter how he justified his change of perspective despite the likely response he might receive from his corporate constituencies, Bush replied to a roomful of chuckles, "I guess I just realized

that no matter how big the tailpipe is that you're sucking on, it's still a tailpipe."

In an interview with an anonymous top executive of the nuclear energy industry, the executive frustratedly replied to a series of questions by assuring the reporter that, "We really don't understand what happened either. For a long time, Bush has really been our man, identifying deeply with our belief that the economy is the highest good, and that individual and ecological sacrifice is an acceptable and often necessary price to pay for a strong flow of dollars to the wealthiest one percent of our nation. Our scientists suspect that the president is the victim of a subtle biological warfare agent engineered by terrorists that infects its hosts with a sense of moral responsibility."

This article was written April 1. Go figure.