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This is especially so if you are a believing Christian or religious Jew

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Trash reporting scribes whose poisoned pens conveniently go dry

Caroline Glick, JewishWorldReview, 9 July 2010

Two important statements this week shed a light on the nature of the Palestinian conflict with Israel. Both were barely noted by the media.

On Saturday the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper reported that Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas gave US mediator George Mitchell a letter detailing a number of concessions that he would make towards Israel in a final peace treaty. These included a willingness to accept permanent Israeli sovereignty over the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem's Old City and over the Western Wall. The Al Hayat report received enthusiastic and expansive coverage in the Israeli media and in media outlets throughout the world.

What was barely noted was that just hours after the report hit the airwaves, Abbas's chief negotiator Saeb Erekat categorically denied the story. In an interview with Israel Radio, Saeb Erekat said the story was untrue.

Abbas has been the recipient of adulatory press coverage in Israel over the past several days. Last week he thrilled the Hebrew-language media when he invited Israeli reporters to a sumptuous feast at his Ramallah headquarters. And then the Al Hayat story came out. Lost in the excitement was Abbas's eulogy for arch terrorist Muhammad Daoud Oudeh who died over the weekend. Oudeh was the mastermind of the PLO's massacre of 11 Israeli athletes during the 1972 Munich Olympics. Abbas himself served the operation's paymaster.

As Palestinian Media Watch reported, in a condolence telegram quoted in the Abbas-controlled Al-Hayat al Jadida newspaper, Abbas touted Oudeh as, "a wonderful brother, companion, tough and stubborn, relentless fighter," and described him as "one of the prominent leaders of the Fatah movement."

So while the local and international media pounced on the Al Hayat story as proof that the Palestinians are serious about peace, they failed to mention that their hope was based on a story that the Palestinians themselves deny. So too, in their rush to embrace Abbas, they failed to mention his glorification of an unrepentant mass murderer who commanded the terror squad that massacred Israel's Olympic athletes.

These statements by Palestinian officials the media routinely characterize as moderates, demonstrate how deeply distorted and largely irrelevant the discourse on the Middle East has become. As the "moderate" Palestinians insist they are uninterested in peaceful coexistence and territorial compromise with Israel, news coverage in Israel and throughout the Western world is dominated by other issues. Specifically, discussion of prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinians is dominated by an endless discussion of Israel's Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria and Jewish neighborhoods in eastern, southern and northern Jerusalem.

The most egregious recent example of this distortion was a 5,000 word article in Tuesday's New York Times regarding US charitable contributions to these Jewish communities. Titled, "Tax Exempt Funds Aid Settlements in the West Bank," the report was co-authored by five Times reporters. It was the product of weeks of research. And notably, the Times chose to publish it on its front page above the fold on the very day that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu visited the White House.

The Times article is a textbook case of the media's ideologically motivated aggression against Middle East reality. Any way you look at it, it is a premeditated affront to the very notion that the role of a newspaper is the report facts rather manufacture news aimed at shaping perceptions and skewing debate.

The article goes to great lengths to discredit the American citizens who make charitable, tax deductible donations to organizations that provide lawful support to Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria and Jewish neighborhoods in southern, northern and eastern Jerusalem. It paints a sinister picture of such contributions and contributors and accuses them of actively undermining US foreign policy.

The contributors, we are told in the opening lines of the report are the Left's bogeyman — Evangelical Christians and religious Jews. They are unacceptable actors in the Middle East because they both believe that Jewish control of Judea and Samaria is a precursor to the coming of the messiah.

Reacting to the Times' report, on Wednesday Honest Reporting noted that the article appears to be the product of active collusion between the Times and the radical, anti-Zionist, tax exempt Gush Shalom organization. As Honest Reporting relays, in July 2009, Gush Shalom sent out a communique to its supporters calling for the initiation of a campaign that, "includes a combination of legal action and public advocacy aimed at denying federal tax exempt (501c3) status to US charities supporting settlement activity."

The Times' article bears all the markings of a political campaign. First, despite the valiant efforts of five Times reporters, the article exposes no illegal activity. At best, its investigation of more than forty organizations that contribute funds to the hated Jewish communities in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria indicated that less than a handful of them are guilty of poor accounting practices.

Assuming that Honest Reporting's eminently reasonable conclusion that the Times report is the product of collaboration between the newspaper and radical anti-Zionist groups, the report is shockingly hypocritical. By publishing it, the Times is engaging the precise behavior it argues the organizations it investigated should be punished for purportedly engaging in. To wit, in the service of radical, tax-deductible organizations, the Times seeks to undermine US foreign policy. For the past four decades, it has been the foreign policy of the United States to maintain a strategic alliance with Israel. The goal of Times'-aligned groups like Gush Shalom is to undermine that alliance by discrediting and criminalizing those who wish to strengthen and maintain it.

The Times' article uses dark language and innuendo to create the impression that there is something treacherous and evil about contributions to Jewish communities and neighborhoods in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. For instance, the article argues, "The donations to the settler movement stand out [from other charitable contributions that promote US foreign policy goals] because of the centrality of the settlement issue in the current talks and the fact that Washington has consistently refused to allow Israel to spend American government aid in the settlements. Tax breaks for the donations remain largely unchallenged, and unexamined by the American government."

What the Times' fails to acknowledge is that the reason these donations are "largely unchallenged, and unexamined," is because it is the constitutional right of American citizens to contribute to charities that promote policy goals even when those goals — like those of Gush Shalom — are antithetical to US policy as determined by the US government.

The Times' alleges that these communities are illegal. Its authority for this allegation is none other than Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat. Erekat opined to the paper, "Settlements violate international law."

The truth is that Israeli communities beyond the 1949 armistice lines are legal. But even if one were to accept the argument that they are unlawful, one would be accepting an argument based on the language of the 4th Geneva Convention from 1949 which prevents occupying powers from transferring their population to the areas under occupation.

There is no possible reading of the convention that would prohibit the voluntary movement of Israelis to Judea, Samaria and post-1967 neighborhoods in Jerusalem. Likewise, there is no possible reading of the convention that would prohibit the provision of financial support to Israelis who voluntarily move to the areas in question. Yet it is precisely this indisputably lawful, voluntary movement of Jews to these areas — which the Times acknowledges is often done against the wishes of Israel's governments — that the Times' article attacks.

In short, both the Times' contention that there is something legally problematic about these donations is preposterous both as it relates to US law and as it relates to international law. From a journalistic perspective, worse than the Times' decision to engage in precisely the behavior it seeks to criminalize when carried out by its political nemeses on the Christian and Jewish Right, and worse even than the article's false characterization of law, is the article's clear attempt to obfuscate the main problem with land issues in Judea and Samaria in the interest of manufacturing a false but ideologically sympathetic picture of the situation on the ground.

The Times only gets around to alluding to — and obfuscating -- the real problem with land issues in the 58th paragraph of the article. The Times reports, "Islamic judicial panels have threatened death to Palestinians who sell property in the occupied territories to Jews." Actually, while this may be true, it is not the problem. The problem is that the second law promulgated by the PA -- just weeks after it was established in 1994 — criminalized all Arab land sales to Jews as a capital crime. Since 1994 scores of Arabs have been killed in both judicial and extrajudicial executions for selling land to Jews.

This open move to hide the fact that since 1994 the PA has dispatched death squads to murder both Palestinians and Israeli Arabs suspected of selling land to Jews is a shocking miscarriage of journalistic standards. Whereas the Times required five reporters to work for weeks to come up with exactly nothing illegal in the operations of US charitable groups that support Jewish communities the Times wishes to destroy, the Times would have needed to invest no resources whatsoever to discover that the PA kills any Arab who sells land to Jews. The PA has made no effort to hide this policy. It is in the public sphere for anyone willing to look at reality.

And that is of course the real issue here. The entire Times' "investigation" of American charitable groups that support Jewish communities and neighborhoods in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem is a blatant attempt by a major newspaper to hide the real issues prolonging the Palestinian conflict with Israel. Those issues — exposed by Abbas's praise for a terrorist mass murderer, Erekat's denial that Abbas has any interest in compromising with Israel, as well as by the PA's policy of killing all Arabs who sell land to Jews — do not serve the Times' purpose of blaming the absence of peace on Israel generally and on the Israeli Right and its supporters in the US in particular.

And so it is that 17 years after the start of the so-called peace process between Israel and the PLO, and ten years after the PLO destroyed that process by launching a terror war against Israel, and four and a half years after the Palestinians elected Hamas to lead them, we are still stuck in a distorted, irrelevant discourse about the Middle East. We are stuck in a rut because politically and ideologically motivated media organs operate hand in glove with radical groups seeking to undermine Israel's national sovereignty and end its alliance with the US. Together they manufacture news that bears no relation with reality or the true challenges facing those who seek peace in the Middle East. But obviously for the New York Times, that is what makes it fit to print.

Interview with Zeyno Baran, senior fellow of the Hudson Institute and editor of *The Other Muslims: Moderate and Secular*. (Palgrave-Macmillan), on Moderate Muslims

Barry Rubin, 15 July 2010

<http://www.gloria-center.org/blog/2010/07/interview-zeyno-baran-moderate-muslims>

Barry Rubin: Zeyno, you begin your book with this sentence: "The most important ideological struggle in the world today is within Islam." Can you explain the nature of this struggle and how it is going?

Zeyno Baran: This struggle is essentially a Muslim civil war over whose definition of Islam will be accepted as "mainstream": will it be the version of the Islamists (shared by all political-religious radicals, both non-violent and violent) or that of traditional Muslims (cultural, secular, and pious) One will become accepted by a majority of Muslims, and by extension, of non-Muslims. Since the 1970s Islamists have made tremendous headway in this struggle thanks to money from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region; they were thus able to establish institutes and networks all over the world to spread Islamism.

Today, many Muslims don't even realize what they believe to be authentic Islam is in fact a primarily political ideology of recent origin. Non-Islamists are still lacking in the financial resources-whether state or private-necessary to organize effectively against the Islamists; this is true as much in the West (the focus of this book) as in Muslim-majority countries. So, in the short term I argue that Islamists will continue to be winning in this struggle. That said, I believe in the longer term both non-Islamist Muslims and non-Muslims will eventually wake up to the realization that Islamism is a serious ideological challenge to universal human rights.

Barry Rubin: Precisely what is a "moderate Muslim"? Hasn't that term been subject of a lot of misuse and misunderstanding?

Zeyno Baran: You are exactly right-the misuse of the label "moderate Muslim," by Islamist groups operating in the West, has indeed led to major misunderstandings. This is precisely why I used this term in this book-to clear up this misunderstanding and reclaim the term from the Islamists, many of whom represent themselves as "moderates" to Western policy makers. American and European policy makers have accepted as "moderate" people who do not commit violence; to me, however, that is a very narrow

definition.

An Islamist that participates in the electoral process yet does so with the goal of limiting women's rights or of introducing a sharia regime is not moderate. The contributors to this book are all true moderates-those who fully support both universal human rights and the teachings of the Islamic faith. Being "moderate" does not mean they are not pious, which is another common misunderstanding of the term.

Barry Rubin: Why is it wrong to base the definition of a "moderate" Muslim on simply those who don't use violence?

Zeyno Baran: The true divide within Islam is not between violence and nonviolence, but between moderation and extremism. Few Muslims resort to violence-but many more share the thinking of the violent extremism. Unless the ideology of Islamism is understood as the root cause of the violence, I don't believe we'll see an end to the terrorism and radicalism among Muslim communities. Moderation has to start with thought; if we are giving a free pass to those with extremist ideologies as "moderates," then the true moderates will continue to be weakened.

Barry Rubin: How have the U.S., Canadian, and European governments helped the radicals and hurt the moderates?

Zeyno Baran: Western governments, in their desire to "engage with Muslims," have often reached out to well-established Islamist organizations as their "partners". In doing so, these governments did not realize that they were lending legitimacy to these Islamists in the internal struggle against their moderate opponents. With the Islamists being the main "go-to Muslims" for Western governments, it has been much harder for the true moderates to make their voices heard.

Barry Rubin: Why are Western media and institutions so easily fooled by radicals, and why do they seem to favor them?

Zeyno Baran: I think when Western media and institutions look for "Muslim voices," they automatically gravitate to those who most closely resemble their preconception of what an "authentic" Muslim sounds like-a conception that has, of course, been shaped by Islamist propaganda. In recent years, an "authentic" voice has been one that is opposed to US policies, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that is strongly critical of Israel. Many in the media share these views as well, so it is in some ways a natural fit.

The true moderates are often accused of being neo-conservative or "not really Muslim" when they support US policies or express a more balanced view of the state of Israel; these ideas seem to Western journalists and policymakers to be "un-Muslim," as if there were a single Muslim way of thinking! Certainly, the Islamists argue there are certain "Muslim opinions" on some issues-such as the Middle East peace process-but that's because they are trying to establish their own view as the single dominant one. It is as wrong as saying there is a "Christian opinion" on an issue, given the vast range of views held by individual Christians.

Barry Rubin: How does assimilation and acculturation work with Muslim immigrants in the West and how should it work?

Zeyno Baran: Each country has had different policies and different experiences, but in general, European countries for many decades paid little attention to assimilation; in particular, the UK and the Netherlands followed an openly multiculturalist policy that avoided any mention of assimilation and/or acculturation. This led to Muslim immigrant enclaves being formed in parts of European cities; when an area becomes heavily Islamic, then Islamists come in with their institutions and mosques, and establish themselves as the interlocutors between the immigrant community and Western authorities.

Even after many of these governments decided to change their policies and developed programs for increased acculturation, they continued to work with the Islamists, whose ultimate responsibility is not to Muslim immigrants, but to the global Muslim umma (community) as they understand it. Since these "representatives" had no interest whatsoever in promoting the integration and assimilation of European Muslims, this led to frustration on the part of Western governments and societies, which began wondering whether Muslims can ever truly become "Western." In turn, this frustration-directed towards all Muslims, not just the extremists-fostered a sense of anger and victimization on the part of the Muslim immigrants, who felt they would never be accepted as long as they remained Muslim.

A better way to ensure social cohesion would be to address the pragmatic needs of Muslim immigrants-jobs, education, equal rights-in accordance with the social norms of the country, with a sensitivity to different religious/cultural backgrounds. In practice, this would mean allowing the establishment of dignified prayer places for Muslims, while not assuming all Muslims go to the mosque all the time, or that the mosque is the only social place for Muslims. There need to be many other places where Muslims can go to socialize with each other and non-Muslims; these will develop naturally if Europeans can move away from characterizing these populations as "Muslim first."

Barry Rubin: Has the concept of multiculturalism helped or hurt in this struggle?

Zeyno Baran: Despite being born of good intentions, the Western policies of multiculturalism have made it harder for Muslims to become Western. The pendulum of respect for cultural/religious difference has swung too far, and Muslims have been trapped into their Muslim identity as "the other," instead of being assisted in becoming one of "us."

One of the recent and most clear examples of this is the wearing of the burqa in the West. For years multiculturalists have looked the other way when seeing women covered from head to toe in a style contrary to most Western norms as well as to Islam itself. Islam simply mandates modesty in dress, which for many women traditionally meant the headscarf, but never the full covering. Yet, until recently, in another unintended consequence of multiculturalism, few Westerners were willing to tackle this issue as they did not want to be seen as intolerant or bigoted. The few that have spoken out have been silenced with threats of being labeled "racist"; thus, intolerable forms of social behavior have continued to the point where they have become acceptable.

Barry Rubin: How can Western societies "win over" Muslims without losing their own identity or surrendering to the Islamists?

Zeyno Baran: The question is which Muslims? The Islamists would never be won over

since their long term goal is to see a world that is ruled with sharia. If Western societies continue to try to judge their success in "winning over Muslims" by giving into Islamist demands, then they'll continue to lose their identity and their basic freedoms. But if Western societies were to side with non-Islamist Muslims, and learn from them how best to counter the short- and long-term goals of the Islamists, then I would say there is a great possibility that the West will not only successfully defend its own values and norms, but also help Muslims usher in a desperately-needed Islamic Renaissance.

Barry Rubin: How can moderates justify their interpretations of Islam when they appear to differ with the most important and basic Islamic texts?

Zeyno Baran: Many of these texts have been written centuries ago and in a particular context. Many moderates read them recognizing that what may have been a great social advancement in the 8th century cannot be taken literally in the 21st century. Over the centuries, there were many different voices widely debating how to interpret the Qur'an or the hadiths; moderates follow the tradition of those who have used their rationality and interpreted revelation as well as historic developments within their correct context. There are also many moderates who have not read many of the basic Islamic texts; yet they are no less legitimate, because 1) many of the radicals have never read many of these texts either and 2) Islam is not just about the written text but the living tradition. Indeed, for centuries Muslims learned the basics of their religion orally, passing down teachings from one generation to another.

The recent radical trend we see among Muslims is due to radicals picking and choosing certain passages from the Qur'an and other key texts, interpreting them in a way to make their case, and then presenting them as the most legitimate interpretations. Again, I'll draw an analogy with Christianity-it is as if saying that only one denomination's interpretation of basic texts is the correct one. Paraphrasing Bernard Lewis, the situation we face within Islam is as if a KKK-controlled state found major sources of oil, and used the money to spread its own version of Islam as the most correct form and the whole world gradually began seeing them as the most authentic voices.

Barry Rubin: The Islamists are so well financed and well-organized how can the moderates compete? How can they win?

Zeyno Baran: This is the most difficult question. The moderates have not been able to compete and won't be able to compete unless there is help from the West. Theoretically some of the Muslim-majority countries that are threatened by Islamists could help, but in practice they are often too afraid to challenge them for fear of being labeled as "apostates."

The West knows from its own history the damage religious extremists cause to societies and the religion itself; they can help the moderates by no longer giving Islamists a free pass while their activists are working to undermine Muslim moderates and Western (or universal) values. They can also help by increasing visibility of the moderates' work, such as those in *The Other Muslims* who argue for secular rule using Islam's own texts and history, or those who push for Islamic Renaissance, without which I believe we'll never quite win against the radicals who are increasingly becoming the mainstream.

The Immorality of the Moral High Ground

Daniel Greenfield, 14 July 2010

http://sultanknish.blogspot.com/2010/07/immorality-of-moral-high-ground.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+FromNyToIsraelSultanRevealsTheStoriesBehindTheNews+%28from+NY+to+Israel+Sultan+Reveals+The+Stories+Behind+the+News%29

Throughout the War on Terror, liberals have been lecturing us on the virtue of holding on to the "Moral High Ground", which is their way of saying that we should forgo trying to defeat terrorists militarily, and instead show them up with our superior civil liberties. Yes Abdul, you may have a suitcase nuke, but if we catch you, we'll still pay for your legal defence. Torture our soldiers if you will, Mohammed, but see if you aren't impressed when we TIVO your favourite team's soccer matches for you in that horrible 19 million dollar hellhole of misery and degradation at Guantanamo Bay.

Of course Mohammed is never going to be very impressed by his free legal team, Halal cooking, volleyball courts and pro bono prosthetic legs, because Islamists don't derive their moral high ground from doing nice things for their enemies. They derive their moral high ground from getting up on a high place and tossing rocks or grenades down at their enemies. A Good Muslim is willing to kill for Islam. The Koran says so explicitly. On the other hand liberals insist that only a Bad American is willing to kill for America. A Good American will believe that Islam is a religion of peace, even while he's having his head chopped off by Johnny Mujaheed. He will eschew any tacky American flags, in favour of Chomsky and Zinn essays that will enable him to understand what a rotten country he lives in, and why the terrorists chopping his head off might have a point. All this really means is that practicing the Moral High Ground is a good way to get beheaded and reading the works of mentally ill Communists is not a good survival strategy.

We can't win the War on Terror so long as we hold to liberal definitions of the Moral High Ground. We can't even begin to really fight it. What's worse, is that not only does this warped understanding of morality result in more American deaths, it results in more deaths of both fighters and civilians on the enemy side. Because where the soldier understands that the most moral way to win a war is, quickly. The bleeding heart liberal thinks that the most moral way to win a war is, never. To a liberal if we must fight a war, we should do it with our hands tied behind our backs, and after a decade of senseless bloodshed, we'll finally come to realize that war is a bad thing.

Putting liberals in charge of determining what soldiers can do in a war is like putting die hard big government advocates in charge of privatizing the government. Not only will they see that the whole thing fails, they'll make sure that it fails as painfully and horribly as possible in order to serve as a lesson to any future government that might flirt with any similar notion. They did it with the War on Terror, intimidating military interrogators with threats of legal action and exposure, while helping the terrorists realize that all they need to do is claim torture in order to be set free. They did it brilliantly in Iraq, subverting the reconstruction in the aftermath of a successful war, from within, until the entire thing collapsed into squabbling factions. They did it on Iran, feeding false claims that there was no nuclear program long enough for Bush to leave office.

Their goal is to break Western civilization. Break it of its exceptionalism. Break it of any

notion that it has any worthwhile accomplishments to its name. Break it of any idea that it has a right to exist. That is their real Moral High Ground. National and international suicide in favour of nobler and better Third World creeds that won't be as greedy or as industrially developed, and will build societies based on sharing and caring, and of course the obligatory head chopping. Nothing else matters.

Israel, which has its own hard-at-work left, has something similar called "Purity of Arms" which is Hebrew for the "Courageous Restraint" medal that General McChrystal was thinking of handing out to US soldiers in Afghanistan for not killing terrorists. Purity of Arms is one of the best strategic advantages Israel has ever handed to the terrorists, because it gives the terrorists a free pass to carry out attacks behind civilians, while threatening soldiers with severe penalties if they fire without being 100 percent certain that they're about to be murdered if they don't. The ongoing captivity of Gilad Shalit and the entire Second Lebanon War would probably never have happened, if the IDF weren't constantly trapped in the Purity of Arms madness, as soldiers in a war zone are forced to second-guess their own survival, because Jewish self-defence is bad for public relations.

How many people died in both Israel and Lebanon because IDF soldiers are trained not to shoot, rather than to shoot, thereby allowing themselves to be ambushed by terrorists and turned into hostages and the causes of a war? How many more people will die when Noam Shalit finally gets his way and thousands of terrorists with blood on their hands are traded in for Gilad Shalit's freedom? And how many more will die when the cycle repeats itself? The numbers become more horrifying as you trace them back to their source.

Why does Israel have a terrorist problem, and not Jordan, which has the same Arab population that Israel does? It's not simply because Israel is mostly Jewish and Jordan is mostly Muslim, though that is a contributing factor. A primary focus of Islamists is to take over countries with majority Muslim populations in order to build the Caliphate. The reason is because in 1970 when the terrorists began hijacking planes and declared that a part of Jordan belonged to them, King Hussein sent in the army. He didn't kill a mere 52 Palestinian Arab terrorists, as Israel did in Jenin; or a mere 107 in Deir Yassin. Not even the 800 or so killed in fighting between Arabs in Sabra and Shatilla. No, according to Arafat, King Hussein's troops killed an estimated 25 000 Palestinian Arabs.

This wasn't some sort of unique event by Middle Eastern standards. When the Islamists tried to stage an uprising in Hama, Syrian troops killed somewhere between 20,000 to 40,000 people. When Arafat sided with Saddam during the Gulf War, Kuwait expelled 400 000 Palestinian Arabs. Why did they do it? Because by 1990, Kuwait had some 564,000 native Arabs, and some 450,000 Palestinian Arabs. So the Kuwaitis began bombing Palestinian Arab neighborhoods, top officials boasted about "cleansing" Palestinian Arabs from Kuwait, and tanks and troops were sent into Palestinian Arab neighbourhoods, setting up checkpoints, killing, imprisoning and torturing thousands. There were plenty of atrocities that got brief mentions in the media, before the Palestinian Arabs were gone from Kuwait, and everyone moved on.

Just to grasp the sheer scale of the double standard here, in the same year that the Bush Administration was pressuring Israel to negotiate with the PLO in the name of human rights, President H.W. Bush gave a blank check to the Kuwaiti royal family to do anything they wanted to the Palestinian Arabs in their country. He told the Kuwaiti ambassador, "*The war wasn't fought about democracy in Kuwait*" and justified

everything they were doing, saying, *"I think we're expecting a little much if we're asking the people in Kuwait to take kindly to those that had spied on their countrymen that were left there, that had brutalized families there, and things of that nature."* The Kuwaiti government newspaper Sawt Al Kuwait featured Bush's comments under the headline, "We Would Be Asking a Lot, If We Asked Them to Show Mercy."

And that just about says it all. The same Western governments which think it's asking a lot to expect Muslims to show mercy, make those demands of Israel all the time. They make those demands of their own forces, while never expecting Muslims to show mercy.

There are no efforts to indict the Kuwaiti Royal Family or the Assad or Hussein clans for atrocities or war crimes. Bashar Assad is an honoured visitor to the same UK, which calls in the Israeli ambassador every other week, to preach to him about restraint. King Hussein remains widely popular. His wife Raina has a YouTube channel in which she talks about how important human rights are, and how awful the Israelis are to the same people that her hubby's regime rules over, and which his father massacred. The web isn't cluttered with piteous sites about the Black September massacres or the Kuwaiti ethnic cleansing of their Palestinian Arabs or the Syrian massacres at Hama. Aside from a few people who were directly affected by it, no one actually cares.

And who's to blame? The Moral High Ground is. Terrorist groups can only win, if you let them. Their entire strategy relies on drawing you into a conflict, on the understanding that you won't have the nerve to really crush them. If you do crush them, the conflict goes away. But if you try to be Mr. Nice Guy, the terrorists now have you hook, line and sinker. If you restrain yourself, you'll be involved in endless little fights, dying the death of a thousand cuts, until the terrorists and their international backers successfully replace you with a Pro-Appeasement government. And if you recognize the terrorists and make concessions to them, you'll be up to your neck in terror.

The only way the terrorists can win against superior forces is if those forces have their hands tied behind their backs. Governments that focus on "Hearts and Minds" campaigns, and care about posing and primping against the background of the Moral High Ground are the terrorists' best friends. But what is the real Moral High Ground? It's not mercy toward those who show you none. For governments it is about doing their duty by protecting their citizens. For soldiers it is about serving as the protectors of the home front. It is not about sparing enemies, either those under arms or those who aid and abet them. Because that is the surest way to prolong the conflict, and in the long run will cost more lives on both sides.

Not only that, but this false mercy actually kills more civilians, because it turns human shields into a viable tactic. A terrorist who hides behind a civilian, and doesn't get shot, learns that hiding behind civilians is a useful strategy. Other terrorists learn from him that civilians are better than bulletproof vests, because vests won't stop automatic fire, but human shields will. A terrorist who hides behind a civilian and gets shot, is dead, and a warning to other terrorists that hiding behind civilians is not a good way to stay alive. In the long run, the "cruel" act of disregarding a hostage is a much better way to protect civilians in conflict zones.

In the same way, stamping out the first terrorist attacks will save you from engaging in a prolonged struggle. That means doing it with decisive finality. This is a simple truth that every Middle Eastern country, but Israel understands. And a simple fact that every

Muslim country understands, but the United States does not. Throw a dart at any major Muslim nation, and you find repression, mass graves and even genocide. Indonesia, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Turkey-- it never ends. There's a very simple reason for that. In Islam, force is the only real morality.

Mohammed is not the Prophet of Islam because he offended the Meccans and got killed for it. He's the prophet of a worldwide religion, because he killed everyone in his path. And then his followers killed everyone in their path. And then their followers went on doing the same damn thing for over a thousand years, right into the present day-- where Muslims are still killing and making war on everyone who isn't a Muslim, and refuses to become one. Islam has only one real revelation, death. But it has to be death with a purpose. The purpose is the triumph of Islam. If victory is possible, then the Islamists have plenty of volunteers to die, because they believe in the Islamic paradise and its 72 virgins. If on the other hand, the Islamists get stomped into the dirt, their religious credibility runs at an all time low. When victory is impossible, Islam withers and goes into the long sleep of cultural hibernation to awaken in a more permissive time.

There's only one way to defeat terrorists. To fight them without any more restraint than they impose on themselves. Under such conditions, superior force and technology makes the victory of the civilized side inevitable, and creates an incentive for the uncivilized side to become civilized, or pay the price. The Moral High Ground, the whole idea that restraint toward those who would kill you is the essence of morality, is one of the most perniciously self-destructive ideas ever coined. It is suicide with a slogan. The Moral High Ground is not moral and it is not the high ground, it is the way by which civilians go to their death over the cliff of their own warped ideals.

There is only one Moral High Ground that that can defeat, the moral high ground of standing up for civilization, against those who would drown it in the ichor of their own hate, the stench of their own greed, the lust of their own power and the blood of their endless murders. It is not moral to let your family be murdered, rather than harm the murderers. He who slays those who kill his loves ones, stands on the true moral high ground. The only true Moral High Ground that there is.

***Bits and Pieces* Clips from various media in the Middle East and elsewhere**

ICEJ News, 19 July 2010: The semi-official *Fars* news agency in Iran reported on Sunday that the government in Tehran has authorized the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps to continue advancing Iran's renegade nuclear program despite pressure from the United Nations and mounting criticism from opposition figures over the damage it is doing to Iran's economy and political stability.

ICEJ News, 19 July 2010: The European Union's foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton started her Middle East tour on Saturday in efforts to restart peace negotiations and pressure Israel to follow through with its vow to reopen the border crossings with the Gaza Strip; marking her second regional tour in the past four months. "The European Union has been calling for an urgent and fundamental change of policy regarding the closure of Gaza," said Ashton. "We have welcomed the announcements made by Israel following the flotilla incident and are now awaiting their implementation."