

## **The rise of the fantasists**

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As the cliché goes, "A conservative is a liberal who has been mugged by reality." Like most clichés, this one exposes a larger truth. Namely, people often base their views on their fantasies of how the world should be, rather than on the reality of how the world actually is.

Following this line, the September 11, 2001 attacks can be seen as a large-scale mugging. After the attacks, the same American people that had ignored the threat of totalitarian Islam since the Iranian revolution first categorized the US as the Great Satan back in 1979, acknowledged the danger and recognized it was at war. The overwhelming majority of Americans supported President George W. Bush when he said that the US would fight to destroy all global terror organizations and take down the regimes that sponsor them.

But even before the fires were put out in Lower Manhattan, voices from two quarters were already claiming that the US should stay in Dreamland. First, there were the radical leftists like Susan Sontag and Michael Moore who wrapped themselves in the banner of the human rights of the wretched of the Earth. They claimed that al-Qaida was simply giving Americans their comeuppance for dominating the world through McDonalds and Levis.

Next there were people like former presidents Carter and Bush's national security advisers Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft, assorted university professors, and CIA analysts who wrapped themselves in the banner of realism. They claimed that American support for Israel is what brought the Islamic world to hate the country and kill thousands of its citizens by flying hijacked airplanes into buildings.

In both cases, the fantasists ignored completely Osama bin Laden's declarations that his goal is to conquer the world in the name of Islam. They disregarded the political and cultural milieus marked by inexhaustible envy towards the West and the US that gave rise to al-Qaida and its sister organizations. Rather than acknowledge the reality of real war with real enemies, both camps of fantasists argued that instead of slaying these twin dragons, the US should appease them by serving them Israel for lunch.

These voices were relegated to the margins of public debate until the lead up to the 2004 presidential elections. Ahead of those elections, backed by George Soros's financial muscle, the fantasists had an enormous impact of the debate in the Democratic Party. Politicians who until then had supported the war generally, and in Iraq particularly, clamored to decry it.

This week, two leftist institutions - the Center for American Progress and Foreign Policy magazine - published a survey of conservative, moderate and liberal foreign policy experts. The results of the survey show clearly that while still a minority, the fantasists are far from marginal today.

Fourteen percent of those surveyed believe that Israel is the US's least helpful ally. While unfortunate, this is far from the survey's most troubling result.

The Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group's report, which was released last December, recommended that the administration sell Israel off in order to buy Iranian, Syrian and Saudi cooperation in Iraq that could pave the way to an orderly American retreat from the country. Uber fantasists James Baker and Lee Hamilton asserted that if the US forces Israel to surrender the Golan Heights to Syria and Judea, Samaria, and Jerusalem to the Palestinians, all will be well with Iraq. Eighty-eight percent of the foreign policy experts surveyed agreed with them.

Fifty-three percent of the experts (38% of the conservatives, 59% of the moderates and 59% of the liberals) believe that the US should recognize Hamas. Forty-seven percent (29% of the conservatives, 49% of the moderates and 61% of the liberals) believe that the US should recognize Hizbullah.

As for Iran, 68 percent of the survey's participants think that the Iranian threat can be contained through negotiations. Only 10 percent think that the US should attack Iran's nuclear facilities. Indeed, a significant minority is of the opinion that the world stands to benefit from a nuclear-armed Iran. A quarter of the conservatives, 29% of the moderates and 41% of the liberal experts claimed that Iran will behave more responsibly if it acquires nuclear capabilities.

Only 32 percent think that Iran will attack Israel with nuclear bombs. Only 24 percent think it likely that Iran would transfer nuclear devices to terrorists.

A brief look at recent statements by Iran's leaders and its terrorist vassals suffice to show how cut off these views are from reality. Last Saturday, Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei said, "America and its followers are stuck in a whirlpool and they sink deeper as time passes. A dangerous future is predicted for them." Wednesday Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad signaled that Iran will share its nuclear know-how with others saying, "If nuclear energy is something good, all nations should enjoy it on the basis of law."

In an interview with Britain's Independent, Iraqi Shiite terror boss Muqtada al Sadr admitted that his group trains with Hizbullah. Sadr said, "We have

formal links with Hizbullah.... We copy Hizbullah in the way they fight and their tactics, we teach each other and we are getting better through this."

On the occasion of the one-year anniversary of last year's war against Israel, Hizbullah chief Hassan Nasrallah told Iranian television that Hizbullah acts at Teheran's pleasure. "I am a lowly soldier of the Imam Khamenei. Hizbullah youths acted on behalf of the Imam Khomeini... and sent their blessings to the Iranian people," Nasrallah said.

On August 6, Osama Hamdan, Hamas's representative in Lebanon, told al-Kawthar television that Hamas is preparing for war not because expects it Israel to attack, "but because the final goal of the resistance is to wipe this entity [Israel] off the face of the Earth.

This goal necessitates the development of the capabilities of the resistance, until this entity is wiped out."

Although president Bush insistently rejects the fantasists' approach to world affairs, his current policies towards Iran and Israel reflect their views. Indeed the administration's policies towards both countries read like a page out of the Baker-Hamilton playbook.

The administration maintains its slavish devotion to negotiating with Iran over its nuclear weapons program in spite of the fact that the diplomatic track failed demonstrably three years ago. It recently expanded its diplomatic offensive to include conducting direct talks with the Iranians on Iraq. Iran has responded to America's conciliatory stance by expanding its uranium enrichment activities and escalating attacks in Iraq.

As to Israel, the Americans are pressuring Israel to conduct negotiations with Fatah towards an Israeli surrender of Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem. Such withdrawals would foment the rise of yet another base for global jihad run by Iran's Palestinian proxies in the center of the shriveled Jewish state.

To advance this aim, the US pressured Israel to pardon some 178 Fatah terror fugitives and is now pressuring it to pardon another hundred.

This is despite the fact that this week the Fatah terrorists announced they would renew their attacks on Israel.

The Americans have pledged to renew training of Fatah's Force 17 militia. This week the New York Sun published an interview with Abu Yusuf, a Force 17 commander who admitted that previous US training sessions enabled Fatah to murder Israelis more effectively.

Other Fatah leaders told The Jerusalem Post's Khaled Abu Toameh this week that Fatah forces are openly cooperating with Hamas cells in Judea and Samaria.

If the Americans want to know what will happen if their foreign policy fantasists take charge of their affairs, they have only to cast a glance at what is happening in Israel today. Because in Israel, the fantasists are firmly in charge of policy. With the twin goals of fostering peace and enhancing Israel's international standing, Israel's fantasist leaders are driving the country to the outer reaches of La La Land.

In the name of peace, the Olmert government is conducting semi-secret negotiations with Fatah chief Mahmoud Abbas. According to press reports Olmert and his colleagues are offering Abbas 92 percent of Judea and Samaria, the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, and land in the Negev which will connect Gaza to Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. Furthermore, according to press reports, the Olmert government is willing to accept Israeli responsibility for the fate of the Arabs who left Israel in 1948 and for their descendants.

What this means in the real world is that Israel is seeking to extend Iran's control over Gaza to Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and then to fill these Iranian enclaves with hostile foreign Arabs.

In the interests of enhancing Israel's international cache, Israel is courting the UN which in the Olmert government's fantasy world is Israel's friend. To foster good relations, Sunday the government endorsed the extension of UNIFIL's mandate in south Lebanon despite the fact that UNIFIL's 13,000 soldiers did nothing to prevent Hizbullah's rearmament and reassertion of control over Lebanon's border with Israel over the past year.

On November 29, the government is planning to have Israel's parliamentarians reenact the General Assembly's decision to partition the Land of Israel on November 29, 1947 and so promote the fiction that Israel owes its existence to the UN. The government has asked UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to preside over the session.

In the real world, the UN is a hostile institution controlled by tyrannies that works actively to delegitimize Israel's right to exist. To this end, next week, the UN will convene two anti-Israel forums in Europe. First, the European Parliament will host an anti-Israel hate fest sponsored by the UN's Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

Second, in Geneva, the UN will convene the first planning session for its second anti-racism conference scheduled to take place in 2009.

That the conference will be a reenactment of the anti-Semitic orgy of hatred which took place in Durban, South Africa in 2001 is made clear by the fact that Libya is chairing the planning session. Iran, Cuba and Pakistan are all members of the planning committee.

Fantasies are alluring. Peddling them can even get you elected. But the majority of Americans who reject fantasy as a basis for making real world decisions should take heed of Israel's example.

That example shows that despite the fantasists' fervent efforts to smother it, reality never goes away. Sooner or later, it mugs you.

Sometimes, all it does is pick your pocket. But the longer you ignore it, the more dangerous it becomes.