

NO HATE HERE

Dear Mr. Buchanan,
I've always enjoyed reading your articles because you are a fair man. Please, in the future, do not use the words "Why They Hate Us" because it is not true that we all hate the American people! Yes, we dislike your administration and what they are doing to keep the truth far away from the American public.

I was taught in the U.S.A. and still hold many pleasant memories from your beautiful country and its fair people. I'm always honored to say that I have plenty of American friends whom I treasure as brothers. They looked after me while I was a guest in your country, and I looked after them.

Please never say that we hate you! We do not respect and tremendously dislike the injustice that your government applies on the Palestinian case.

HISHAM JAAFARI

via e-mail

POINT OF AGREEMENT

I'm shocked that Pat Buchanan and I have finally found something to agree on. As far right as I think he is, I'm as far left. However, he's absolutely correct about the treatment of Palestinians. When I was on the West Bank last fall, the situation was dire for this population that is occupied by the fourth-largest military in the world.

Now that the Palestinians have voted democratically, a step the U.S. urged them to take, they are being punished. Every contact I have on the West Bank blames the U.S. and Israel for their plight and wonders what we really meant when we pushed free elections.

Palestinians are just like the rest of us: they want their children to grow up and have a good life and be happy; they want to live without the threat of aggression, checkpoints, and that terrible wall that Israel has built on Palestinian land. Would any one of us tolerate a country

occupying us, taking away our freedoms, and starving us into submission?

GRETA BERLIN

Los Angeles, Calif.

WHAT ABOUT OUR WALL?

I agree that the Israelis and we have a moral obligation to allow food, medicine, and other supplies to the Palestinian population. However, calling the West Bank Wall "apartheid" or the idea of separation "racist" is hypocrisy.

How would the U.S. react if Mexico elected a government sworn to its destruction? You say their policies that motivate Mexicans to flee across the border destroy the U.S. as we know it. Your answer is to build a wall. However, you say the Israelis can't build a wall. You say the policy of separation is racist. Yet you say the U.S. is primarily a European-derived nation, which Mexicans are changing, although these immigrants share our desire for freedom, wealth accumulation through the free-enterprise system, and freedom of worship.

The Hamas plan is to use demographics as a weapon against Israel and the Jews. They do not share Israel's values, distrust freedom and capitalism, and do not wish to live in peaceful co-existence. Their ideology, while less strident than al-Qaeda and Iranian extremists, is still Islamo-supremacist in nature. What would you say if Mexicans coming across our border were fueled by an ideology to force the white man back to Europe? I think I know.

There must be a two-state solution in Israel and Palestine. The Czech and Slovak republics did it; Ukraine and Russia did it; Norway and Sweden did it; why not Israel and Palestine? To do so, both parties must accept the right of the other to exist peacefully and without the threat of warfare, be it demographic, terrorist, or open.

KALMEN SHILOH

Santa Barbara, Calif.

WHO OWNS SMALL-TOWN AMERICA?

Much praise to John Zmirak for his article on balancing liberty and order and for bringing further attention to the works of Wilhelm Röpke. I agree that localism—and implicitly a strong, united community—is one of the best ways to curb abuses of power, and I try my hardest to live up to it in my voting, shopping, and personal interactions.

A call for localism is insubstantial without an idea of how to sustain it, however. Thus, I wonder whether there might be extra discussion necessary concerning property rights. What good is localism if the rights to capital, primarily physical, can be transferred at will to someone who is not a citizen of the geographical community? Mr. Zmirak's article mentioned how much easier it is to keep account of community leaders than of national leaders. Can the same not be said of property owners? How do you hold accountable a non-citizen property owner?

What are the conditions of property under which local governance might best be sustained? This is a question that greatly concerns me when I read libertarian, anarchist, or conservative thought. Discussing the roles property rights play in both the protection and undermining of localism is a key component in the fight against global corporatism. Luckily, *TAC* is turning out to be a great place to find such discussions.

BRIAN ZUELKE

Laramie, Wyoming

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[COVER]

Divided & Conquered

BY SCOTT MCCONNELL A visit to Syria, Israel, and Palestine reveals the barriers—physical as well as political—to Mideast peace. **Page 7**

[POLITICS]

Border Bargaining

BY W. JAMES ANTLE III As the House and Senate negotiate an immigration bill, will amnesty survive? **Page 17**

[IRAQ]

Nation Breaking

BY JOE W. GUTHRIE A soldier finds that training the Iraqi army is an unwinnable battle. **Page 19**

[INTERVIEW]

Bleeding-Heart Libertarian

BY STEVE SAILER Can we aid the poor and shrink the welfare state? That's Charles Murray's \$10,000 question. **Page 24**

COLUMNS

6 Patrick J. Buchanan: America is due for an “agonizing reappraisal.”

35 Taki: When it comes to yachts, bigger isn't always better.

NEWS & VIEWS

4 Fourteen Days: Haditha Crimes Go to the Top; With this Amendment, I Thee Patronize; Talking to Tehran

23 Deep Background: What's Hebrew for Shut Up?; Qatar's Emir Can't Please Ahmadinejad

ARTICLES

13 Peter Wood: Elaborate memorials are often less about honor than ostentation.

15 Stewart Nussbaumer: A traffic accident ignites an anti-American powder keg in Kabul.

26 Doug Bandow and Michael D. Ostrolenk: Advocates of limited government should look to their left.

ARTS & LETTERS

28 Steve Sailer: Garrison Keillor's “A Prairie Home Companion” hits the silver screen.

29 Lee Congdon: *June 1941: Hitler and Stalin* by John Lukacs

30 Nicholas von Hoffman: *The Good Fight: Why Liberals—and Only Liberals—Can Win the War on Terror and Make America Great Again* by Peter Beinart

33 Paul Gottfried: *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography* by David S. Brown

[WAR]

WHERE THE BUCK STOPS

The last weeks have seen a flurry of reports of war crimes by American troops in Iraq. It now seems likely that last November U.S. Marines, in the aftermath of an IED attack on a convoy, went on a rampage in the town of Haditha, killing two dozen Iraqi civilians. Reports of other U.S. atrocities are now widespread in Iraq, though a military investigation recently found the killing of several Iraqi civilians in the town of Ishaqi fell within the rules of engagement. But many Iraqis, including the new prime minister, believe unjustified American killings of Iraqi civilians are widespread.

The Marines will investigate thoroughly the Haditha killings, and those immediately culpable will be tried. The U.S. military is aware of how detrimental these incidents are not only to the success of its mission, but to its own honor and that of the U.S. in general.

But Americans ought not rest easy with the conclusion that the Haditha killings were the work of a few “bad apples” or “overstressed troops” forced to serve too many tours. American troops have been placed in an environment in which atrocities against civilians—mostly carried out by warring Iraqi factions—are commonplace. In Iraq, Americans now have few friends or natural allies. They are part of an army of occupation, one that invaded Iraq under false pretenses. For years, the majority of Iraqis have wanted them gone.

An army of occupation, a savage guerrilla insurgency, an “unseen enemy”—as it was in Vietnam’s My Lai, this is a recipe for war crimes. The problem of Haditha won’t be solved by the two-hour ethics refresher the military is now initiating nor will justice be served by the prosecution of a few low-level Marines placed in an impossible situation.

Responsibility for Haditha goes higher. It includes those who planned



and plotted to push the United States to invade and occupy a country that posed no threat to America whatsoever and those who sold the American people the lie that the operation would be a “cake-walk” and our soldiers “welcomed with flowers.”

While we have no expectation that those ultimately accountable for Haditha will ever be brought to justice, we ought to have no illusions that those who will be charged are solely responsible for this crime.

[CLOSURE]

ABU MUSAB AL-ZARQAWI (1966-2006)

Can we declare victory and come home now?

[BELTWAY]

UNDERVALUATED VOTERS

It must be the beginning of campaign season when Republicans pay lip service to the religious conservatives they need to turn out on election day. That’s the only explanation for the Senate’s decision to hold a vote on a constitutional amendment preventing same-sex marriage even though it was sure to fail.

Think back to 2004, when values voters beat back heavy Democratic turnout to re-elect President Bush and increase GOP congressional majorities. Same-sex marriage is one of the main issues that brought social conservatives

to the polls. State referenda prohibiting gay nuptials passed in 11 out of 11 states, aiding many Republican candidates’ vote totals.

What does the Religious Right have to show for its electoral contribution? On gay marriage, not much. Senate Republicans opportunistically scheduled this vote less than five months before the 2006 elections, and President Bush waited until two days before the vote to give a speech in favor of this ineffectual gesture, much as the GOP once tried to placate pro-lifers with a futile anti-abortion amendment. A resurrected flag-burning amendment is reportedly not far behind. Social conservatives don’t dominate the Republican Party—it is more accurate to say they are used by it.

[DIPLOMACY]

BUSH GETS REALIST

“Better to jaw-jaw than to war-war” was Winston Churchill’s not very euphoric remark about the preferability of negotiations to battle. America’s neo-conservatives have tried to appropriate Churchill as their patron saint, but the prime minister was a broader and more interesting figure—and not one who always considered war the best solution. The neocons are unhappy that President Bush has authorized Condoleezza Rice to open talks with Iran, despite Rice’s precondition that Iran abandon in advance the nuclear pro-