



The AMERICA FIRST Leader

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Time to Change Course in Iraq

By Michael Lynch
AFP New York Secretary

Recent milestones have confirmed that the invasion of Iraq has been a waste of money, manpower, and human life. Over 3000 American troops have died in Iraq since March 2003. This number exceeds the total of 2973 persons who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The report of the Iraq Study Group (ISG), a bipartisan committee co-chaired by former Secretary of State (and longtime Bush family friend) James A. Baker III and Lee Hamilton, confirmed what many Americans have said for a long time: that the situation in Iraq is "grave and deteriorating." The situation has grown so desperate that even President George W. Bush has finally acknowledged that the US is not really winning the war.

"President Bush used misinformation to persuade Congress to authorize military action in Iraq."

The invasion of Iraq was a tragic mistake from the beginning. It is time for our elected leaders to take decisive action to avoid further disaster.

President Bush used misinformation to persuade Congress to authorize military action in Iraq. He claimed that Saddam Hussein's government had ties to Al-Qaeda, and that he possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) which posed a threat to the United States. Many Americans were afraid that Hussein might either attack us with his arsenal or sell weapons to terrorist groups who would attack us.

Nearly four years later, the military has still not found any genuine WMDs. Intelligence reports have shown that Hussein's secular-Muslim administration had no ties to the Islamic fundamentalist Al-Qaeda organization; in fact, they did not get along at all. No evidence supports Bush's claims that Iraq posed any kind of imminent threat to the United States.

Our nation's preemptive military strike, based on such faulty justification, was a dangerous precedent.

Influenced by our historic Judeo-Christian values, most Americans would normally disapprove of such military aggression. Such invasions are the work of dictatorships like



On board the USS Abraham Lincoln May 1, 2003, President Bush announces that "major combat operations in Iraq have ended."

Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. The "good guys" (which America aspires to be) do not attack without clear provocation.

Arguments in favor of toppling Saddam Hussein's government were weak in many respects. It is true that he was a ruthless, evil tyrant and the Iraqi people deserved better. However, that statement could be applied to countless other rulers. Although Hussein frequently appeared on lists of the world's worst dictators, he was certainly no more harmful to his people, and no greater threat to America, than many others (like Kim-Jong Il of North Korea). In fact, in some respects (religious freedom, for example), Hussein was better than the rulers of Saudi Arabia, which Bush considers an "ally" in the War on Terror. Using President Bush's logic, it would make sense to invade half the

nations on earth and overthrow their governments.

At this time, the war in Iraq is a dismal failure. The ISG's report concluded that our government's policy in the country is not working. "The ability of the United States to influence events within Iraq is diminishing."
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From The Chairman: *Join the Revolution!*

By Jonathan Hill
AFP National Chairman

We are pleased to bring you important information in this issue of the America First Leader which major media rarely report. The articles presented here show some of the effects and root causes of our government's corruption and out-of-control policies. It is hoped that they will contribute to a realistic understanding of why our nation is in its present perilous condition, and motivate the reader to respond by assisting the mission of the America First Party.



afflict the country. The information that we acquire needs to be used in practical ways. I strongly urge all to look into their hearts and ascertain what they can do to respond to the present crisis.

An obstacle to progress is the failure of many to know what their role is. That being the case, people often say that it is time for a new third party, and insist that "someone should do something about it." However, few seem to realize that it is crucial that they personally be involved. This alone may constitute one of the most major factors in slowing party growth.

Contributing to this problem is the widespread laid-back political culture in our country, where little is required of the average citizen. The minority that participates in elections, rarely have any practical political involvement other than actually voting. But times are changing for the worse.

The reality of systematic government mismanagement in matters of foreign, fiscal, trade, and immigration policy, and the increasing lawlessness and corruption which is causing our political and judicial institutions to rot, necessarily will bring more and more painful consequences for all. Both these problems, as well as a non-participatory electorate, are unsustainable -- that is, our constitutional Republic will not survive if the mismanagement, corruption, and lack of participation continue. The realization of this should drive patriotic citizens to become active with a sense of urgency.

As the articles in this publication show, the situation is now grave. We are at a crossroads. Americans will have to take responsibility and work in effective ways to bring our government under control, or our country will cease to be.

So what can be effective? It definitely is not effective to use the methods of some third parties which have failed so many times over the



years. Our strategy needs to be different. It needs to focus on running for offices for which our candidates can be competitive, even if this often requires initially limiting our activity to the local level. Running for the sake of running, without adequate funds or name recognition, tends to do little more than support the popular voter-psychology that leads many to believe that third party candidates are a "wasted vote".

On the other hand, winning local races, and then going on to compete

didates, we need to have rank and file party members involved in activities which identify and attract more new members. One example of how this can rapidly be done is with the solicitation of petition signatures and contact information from the general public. We have found that a team of two petition workers can identify persons who agree with the AFP on two polemical hot-button issues at a rate of 7 per hour, and this is the case in liberal areas of Massachusetts!

"Americans will have to take responsibility and work in effective ways to bring our government under control, or our country will cease to be."

successfully for state legislative seats -- a sequence which is characteristic of the political careers of many, if not most, successful major party candidates -- will probably result in a more significant chance of building the America First Party into a vibrant political force throughout the districts of every state.

In parallel with competitive can-

Just one team working 8 hours per week can increase their state organization's contact list by over 1,500 quality contacts per year. If 20 people volunteered to do this, a state could quickly expand their contacts by 15,000 annually. Duplicating this effort in every state could annually expand our reach by 750,000 nation-

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Time to Change Course in Iraq

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ing" (The Iraq Study Group Report, p. 9). Furthermore, the report reprimands the government's intelligence agencies for not investing enough personnel and resources to understand insurgent groups and militias in Iraq.

Besides strategic and intelligence failures on our nation's part, there is also a decline in the quality of life in Iraq. The insurgents and militias are not killing only US soldiers; they are afflicting their fellow Iraqis as well. Crime is rampant in Iraq, and some observers argue that the Iraqi people are less safe now than they were under Saddam Hussein. Even as American troops and contractors attempt to restore the nation's infrastructure, essential human services are worse than they were in 2003. An Associated Press article, "Soldiers Reactions Mixed," which was posted on www.usatoday.com on December 27, noted that American soldiers acknowledge that many aspects of Iraqi life (including access to water and sewage) are worse now than they were when Saddam Hussein was in control. Keep that in mind the next time neo-conservative war-hawks tell you that we are doing a great job rebuilding the nation!

In response to the grave situation in Iraq, the ISG proposed 78 recommendations for US-government actions in Iraq. The most widely reported proposal is to withdraw most US combat troops from Iraq by early 2008. In the short term, the group proposed embedding more American forces within Iraqi units to facilitate training. This would allow the Iraqi military and police to regain control of their country. The report also urges the US to embark on a robust diplomatic effort, involving other Middle-Eastern countries. This diplomatic approach would involve negotiations with Iran and Syria. Despite historic tensions between the nations, they would benefit by avoiding chaos in Iraq and the humanitarian crisis it would bring.

Since its inception, the America

First Party has offered viable solutions that would have avoided the current chaos in Iraq. Our statement of principles affirms that we "support a military whose mission is to protect our nation, not police the world." A "war on terror" in Iraq will not protect our country as long as our borders are open and unprotected. Instead of making Americans safer, our government's decision to promote regime change in Iraq has increased international hostility against Americans and provided a public-relations boon for recruitment by terrorist groups. A serious effort to protect America from terrorism would have begun by ensuring that adequate troops were stationed in the US to protect us from invasion.

The AFP's foreign policy platform is built on a foundation of seeking friendship with all nations while avoiding entangling alliances. Yes, we need to protect ourselves from rogue states and terrorists who want to smuggle dirty bombs into our country and kill our citizens. At the same time, though, we need to foster reasonable dialogue that will restore stability to the Middle East. The Iraq Study Group offers some valid food-for-thought when it urges diplomacy.

Finally, the AFP has opposed the war in Iraq since it began. Furthermore, the Constitution (Article I, Section 8) requires Congress to declare war before our military invades another country. Congress never declared war against Iraq; therefore, every day our troops are there, we are violating our own nation's laws.

It is time for our troops to come home. President Bush and the Congressional leadership should determine a strict deadline to withdraw our soldiers out of Iraq. We should work to restore sovereignty to the Iraqi people. We need to ensure that our nation is protected from malicious intruders. It is time for our nation's leaders to put America First and encourage other nations to preserve peace and seek prosperity for their countries' sakes.

Party Founding Principles

The Statement of Principles of the America First Party was adopted at the first meeting of the National Committee on April 20, 2002. The Principles provide an outline for the Party's Platform, which contains a section for each of the Principles headings. Each Platform section then expands upon that particular set of principles.

The Statement of Principles is the core statement of beliefs of the America First Party. As such, a two-thirds vote of the National Committee is required to adopt any change to the Principles.

The Party Constitution binds both the National Committee and the National Convention to adopt a platform consistent with the Principles. All party leaders are required to support and advance the Principles as a condition of holding a position of trust within the America First Party.

Preserve and Protect Our People and Our Sovereignty

- Support a military whose mission is to protect our nation, not police the world
- Strengthen our borders and promote rational immigration policies
- Protect English as our common language
- Seek friendship with all nations, but avoid entangling alliances
- Work to maintain our nation's sovereignty and oppose all attempts to make our nation subservient to the precursors of global government
- Apply American values to our foreign policy

Promote Economic Growth and Independence

- Restore accountability and Constitutionality to budgets and taxes
- Promote tax policies that adhere to the Constitution, enhance individual freedom, encourage savings and investment, and promote the family
- Eliminate unconstitutional portions of the federal government
- Rebuild our manufacturing base and protect American workers
- Protect our right to fair trade and oppose free trade, exit NAFTA and the WTO
- Help American businesses stay in America
- Promote a Buy American policy
- End taxpayer bailouts of corporations and foreign governments
- Implement a self-sufficient energy policy

Encourage the Traditional Values of Faith, Family, and Responsibility

- Protect and recognize the sanctity of all human life
- Defend the traditional family unit based on one man and one woman
- Promote the primacy of parents in the lives and education of their children

- Respect the free exercise of religion
- Recognize the Judeo-Christian heritage of our shared values

Ensure Equality Before the Law in Protecting Those Rights Granted by the Creator

- Defend the self-evident truth "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"
- Preserve and protect all of the Bill of Rights
- Oppose all quota systems - merit and behavior must prevail
- End judicial tyranny and restore balance to our political system
- Restore property rights and restrict government land confiscation

Clean Up Our Corrupted Political System

- Remove the primary source of corruption by sharply reducing the size and scope of the federal government to its limited powers under the Constitution, and return control over all other matters to the states
- Require that all political donations be promptly disclosed and come from voters
- Enforce fair, uniform standards for ballot and debate access to give voters more choice
- Implement clean election practices-restore paper ballots
- Reform the lobbying system so that the only organizations permitted to lobby are those organizations whose money is acquired strictly from voter donations. Reasonable individual voter donation amount limits must be established
- End lavish Congressional pensions-put them on Social Security
- Ban taxpayer funded Congressional campaign mailings
- Restore the rights of states in the manner of choosing Senators and Representatives and promote the citizen legislator

House Speaker Wields "Red" Gavel

By J. C. Schweingrouber
Public Relations Cmte Chair

Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), recently elected House Speaker, has already started flexing her newly gained political muscle. She has a long agenda ahead of her that has been building over her political career, and many American patriots and supporters of the Constitution are concerned.



There is a good reason for concern among patriots in the America First Party and other liberty loving citizens. Nancy Pelosi, just two heartbeats away from becoming President, is a long time friend and member of the Progressive Caucus.

Some recent news articles circulated among conservative and religious groups describe this organization of congressional members as a subdivision of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

Until recently, the Progressive Caucus' web page was hosted by the DSA, but this was recently changed to make their agenda seem more official. It is now shown as a congressional website. The purpose of the change was to make its radical agenda seem more mainstream and easier to sell to American citizens.

The Progressive Caucus is a congressional caucus composed of left wing radicals such as Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and Barney Frank (D-MA), an openly gay congressman who strongly supports socialist policies and gay marriage. Also on the membership list is Charles Rangel (D-NY) who now sits as Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, wielding the most

influence on government spending.

The caucus describes itself as the main American affiliate of an organization called the Socialist International.

According to a May 2006 article in the Post Chronicle, the caucus stepped forward to be a main sponsor of the Backbone Campaign, which is described as a communist front group. These very members of the caucus were instrumental in appointing Howard Dean as the Chairman of the Democrat Party.

Regardless of their politically correct language, their goals are clear. They plan on a long term redistribution of wealth, taking away from those who work and succeed and handing over their wealth to those who do not work, making the masses share in socialist misery.

This organization uses catch phrases like "social justice" and "economic equality" to mask their intentions. Socialists such as these have also spent decades cursing property ownership and pandering to political correctness to further their agenda.

They favor economic socialism, government controlled health care, gay marriage with adoption rights, partial birth abortion, expansion of welfare, open borders and uncontrolled illegal immigration, abusive and unbearably high taxes, and a Big Brother which attacks your privacy in excess of even the Bush Administration's abuses.

If politicians such as Pelosi and her colleagues in the socialist/communist movements succeed, the liberty our Founding Fathers intended will crumble. Our national sovereignty and states' sovereignty will be things



Democrat Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi is the first female to hold that position. Previously, she served as minority leader for the Democrat caucus in the House.

of the past.

Just as the Republicans and their neoconservatives have waged war against our civil liberties, so will the Democrats and

their version of radicals like Nancy Pelosi.

Either way, Democrat or Republican, the end result is the same.

Join the Revolution

(Continued from Page 2)

wide. So this means that by using tried-and-true methods, we could rapidly become a very potent political force! There is no doubt about it.

It only remains for enough Americans, who are disgusted with the direction of the country and inflamed with patriotism, to get active in doing this important work at the grassroots level.

Remember all the past generations of American fighting men who have sacrificed everything for us. We typically feel comfortable with the idea of people making these sacrifices for us in defense of the nation. But we need to also look into our hearts. Are we willing to fight equally important battles for the life of our country when it is threatened from within? What does it say about our character when we are happy that others sacrifice for us, and when through deliberate neglect of duty, we fail to defend our coun-

try on the home front? Dear friends, let us avoid the vice of hypocrisy, and love the joy and inner freedom which comes when we lay down our lives for our fellow countrymen.

We know that the greatest threat to our security is not Al-Qaeda or Iran, but rather the unrestrained government that we have in Washington. Much also needs to be done to reign-in state and local governments. Even though we are far from this goal, it can be done, but only if people like you participate. If we work together, and work smartly, then it is reasonable to believe that we can become the modern day equivalent of General Washington's force of revolutionaries -- but without the need to shed even one drop of blood.

But don't expect to be conscripted! If you haven't signed a membership form and volunteered your time, please consider doing so as soon as possible.

The National Debt - Will It Reach \$1 Zillion?

The Shocking and Hidden Truth

By Jonathan Hill
AFP National Chairman

Discussions of the national debt rarely touch on the root causes of the problem. They are typically long on statistics, many of which are frequently incomplete or misleading. Of course, the true statistics need to be mentioned, and they are so phenomenal that it is impossible not to be awed by them.

The Treasury Department's cash debt statistics show a debt of over \$8.6 trillion, or \$29,000 for every man, woman, and child citizen, or \$39,000 for every U.S. worker. The present annual interest cost of this debt is \$406 billion. To understand how the debt is increasing annually, we need to add the annual interest to the budget deficit.

But here is where it gets tricky. Every year, the federal government borrows from the Social Security Trust fund, but does not include this number in the deficit calculation. The slick theory is that the government is borrowing from itself, so it doesn't need to categorize this as debt. However, since these borrowings (now about \$2 trillion) are owed in the form of benefits to retirees, they must be repaid, and therefore they are truly part of the debt.

For 2006, the government borrowed 190 billion from the Trust Fund. So the true budget cash deficit for 2006 is not just the \$246 billion that the government reports, but really \$246 billion + \$190 billion = \$436 billion!

When the interest is added to the \$436 billion budget deficit, we get a debt increase of \$842 billion for last year alone. So at last year's rate of increase, the federal debt should be about \$12 trillion in 5 years, an almost 50% increase from what it is now! Stated another way, that would be \$40,000 per citizen, and \$53,000 per worker.

As disturbing as this may seem, it only scratches the surface. What

is little understood is that the Treasury Department's numbers, as well as all the numbers stated so far, are based on cash accounting methods only, and make no reference to all the commitments the federal government has made to veterans, government workers, and to the general public via the Social Security System and Medicare. To understand the true picture, we must recognize that the government is operating what amounts to a gigantic insurance company.

Traditionally, insurance companies analyze their accounting using both the cash and accrual methods. The accrual method takes into account all the liabilities, including the benefits that are realistically expected to come due when claims are made. In other words, it makes projections of future costs based on expectations of future obligations. To correctly understand our current debt predicament, we need to take all likely future costs relating to government pensions, veterans and social security benefits into account.

These costs are regularly projected by the Treasury Department in its rarely-mentioned and virtually unknown annual Financial Report of the United States, a report required by federal law since the mid-1990s. According to Congressman Jim Cooper, a member of the House Budget Committee, "very few people in government know this Financial Report even exists." He states that the 2005 report was pub-

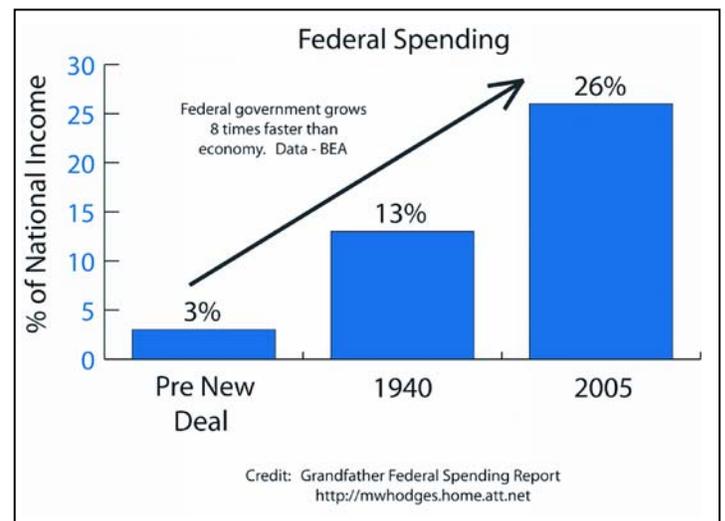
"The slick theory is that the government is borrowing from itself, so it doesn't need to categorize this as debt."

lished "before a major holiday without a press conference or even a press release there was no media coverage." The Government Printing Office only printed 2,100 copies.

So it isn't really *really* relevant, right? Well consider a small portion of the U.S. Comptroller General's

written evaluation of the 2006 Financial Report and its implications for the debt: "... the U.S. government's total reported liabilities, net social insurance commitments, and other fiscal exposures continue to grow and now total approximately \$50 trillion, representing approximately four times the Nation's total

So we have now allowed government to expand its role to the extent that it has incurred a debt of approximately \$166,000 for every man, woman, and child who is a citizen, or \$224,000 for every worker! This situation can only have extremely grave consequences. How much longer will our govern-



output (GDP) in fiscal year 2006." This accrued debt is over 5 1/2 times the amount most of us have been told, and since the 2005 report was issued, it has increased by \$4 trillion!

This means that, for the government to pay for all its commitments, including pension and veterans' benefits, as well as for programs like Social Security and Medicare as they are administered today, for all

ment's uncontrolled spending go on before the American people fully appreciate the present situation?

Why have we fallen into the present crisis? The major reason is the failure of generations of Americans to apply the critical principle of subsidiarity in their analysis of the federal government's role. Subsidiarity mirrors the government of nature instituted by the Creator, and implies that individuals and organizations should provide for their own needs and manage their own affairs to the extent that they are capable of doing so, without interference or unnecessary support from higher governmental authorities. This principle is also applicable to the relationship between governments, such as local versus state, and state versus national.

Fortunately, the founders had either a clear understanding of subsidiarity, or an intuitive sense of it. Subsidiarity is strongly reflected in
(Continued on Page 9)

citizens alive today, the government will need to find \$50 trillion, and invest it immediately in order to have the revenue to serve all those commitments and entitlements when they come due. According to Cooper, this "is roughly the annual earnings of everyone and every company on earth."

Time to End Our Involvement in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

By Jonathan Hill
AFP National Chairman

We are all seeing the situation develop in the Middle East, and most recently, the worsening of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Clearly, what is happening now could lead to military action of greater consequence if the situation degenerates and other powers become involved.

The America First Party works to advance the position that we should be neutral in conflicts which do not relate to the national security of the United States. It is true that members of our party may personally favor either the Arab or Israeli side, or neither side. Regardless of what our personal assessment of the conflict may be, we believe that we must be steadfast in holding to the position that the military and financial resources of the U.S. government can not be legally used to favor foreign powers in matters having no relation to the constitutional purpose of our government.

As a nation we are far from neutral. The House and Senate resolutions supporting Israel in the Lebanon conflict, which overwhelmingly passed both chambers in July, demonstrate this, as do other policies which favor Israel in the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. Through this favoritism, we are unmistakably involved in this bitter and unrelenting conflict, and more likely to suffer damaging consequences. Therefore, we need to better understand the situation, why our government's present posture is inappropriate, and the history of this long-standing conflict.

The America First Party platform states that "The Constitution does not empower the Federal Government to ... protect other nations." Generally, there are dangers to showing favoritism to any nation. George Washington said it well in his

Farewell Address, which is still read at the opening of every session of Congress. Its words are almost prophetic:

"Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible."

Yet despite the wisdom of our founders, which has its roots in the experience of history, the U.S. finds itself strongly favoring and protecting Israel by showing partiality in the Arab-Israeli conflict, with the predictable result that we are increasingly the object of hatred for



Lebanon - According to the AFP news service, as of August 11, more than 1000 Lebanese civilians had died in Israeli attacks on Lebanon since the start of the offensive on July 12, 2006, while nearly a million had fled their homes. A total of 38 Israeli civilians had lost their lives from Hezbollah rocket fire, while 82 Israeli soldiers were lost in combat since the start of retaliatory operations.

Photo credit: Middle East Online

many in the Middle East. We have done this by permitting supplies of highly sophisticated weapons to Israel, while permitting less to be supplied to other Arab states which have historically opposed Israel. We have also heavily favored Israel in

-- \$2.1 billion a year.

The table below compares aid to Israel versus other neighboring Arab states which have historically been adversaries of Israel, with the per capita income for each nation.

Washington was wise to revile

Foreign Aid and Per Capita Income

	2004 Military Aid	2004 Total Aid	Total Aid from 1946 to 2004	Per Capita Income
Israel	\$ 2.1 billion	\$ 2.7 billion	~ \$ 91 billion	~ \$ 24,600
Egypt	\$ 1.3 billion	\$ 2.0 billion	~ \$ 59 billion	~ \$ 3,900
Jordan	\$ 208 million	\$ 609 million	~ \$ 8 billion	~ \$ 4,700
Lebanon	\$ 700,000	\$ 36.5 million	~ \$ 1 billion	~ \$ 6,200
Syria	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 539 million	~ \$ 3,900
West Bank Gaza	\$ 0	\$ 137 million	\$ 1.4 billion	~ \$ 1,100 West Bank; \$ 600 Gaza

Sources: USAID, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADF100.pdf; CIA World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>

our unconstitutional foreign aid commitments, even though Israel has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world.

The Constitution clearly does not authorize this. It only permits expenditures to "pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States," and so our aid to all Middle Eastern nations is illegal and should cease. Given that about 25% of our huge national debt is related to foreign aid, this is the only thing a responsible Congress would do.

Since the founding of Israel, we have given it about \$100 billion in direct military and nonmilitary aid. Our annual aid grants since 1997 have ranged from \$2.6 to \$4.1 billion (see *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* website at www.wrmea.com/archives/July_2006/0607016.html). Before the recent Iraq war, Israel was the top recipient of U.S. foreign aid worldwide, with Egypt second. Since 1979, Egypt has received about \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$815 million in economic assistance

unnecessary foreign involvements. Unfortunately, our choice of involvement in the Middle East is one of the worst choices possible. The conflict there between Zionists (those who favor a national homeland for Jews) and non-Zionists has



Potent resistance. Israeli tanks burning in Lebanon, August 2006. Photo credit: Middle East Online

been going on for almost a century, and as this article will show, is comparable to a can of worms. Both sides have possessed violent factions which have committed atrocities against the other. Among the violent factions today, there seems to be an attitude of revenge and reprisal, resulting in almost endless brutality on both sides. But with our military aid and favoritism, it is the

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Playing Politics with the Church

By Michael E. Lynch
Public Relations Committee

After the 2004 election, politicians and pundits discussed the power of "values voters." The media reported that George W. Bush won because many voters considered moral issues like abortion and gay marriage to be more important than any other issues facing our nation.



"Values voters" became the new term to replace "religious right" in public discourse. Pundits and political advisors realized they are a significant factor in the political arena. They comprise a significant portion of American society. Some surveys indicate that about 25% of all voters consider themselves evangelical Christians. There are also quite a few voters from other religious backgrounds (Catholic, Mormon, etc.) whose faith inspires them to vote for morally conservative candidates. According to some surveys, more women consider themselves pro-life than pro-abortion-rights voters. This is a significant voting bloc that cannot be written off as a fringe group of right-wing fanatics.

In recent decades, values voters have generally voted Republican, believing that the GOP upholds traditional Judeo-Christian values. Even if a Republican was pro-choice, many would assume he was not as hostile to their views as Democrats were.

Even after Democrats gained control of Congress in the 2006 elections, many commentators observed the role of religion in the results. Many said that values voters rejected Republicans who had forsaken traditional conservative principles. They either did not vote, voted for third-party candidates, or (more frequently) gave a protest vote in favor of the Democratic candidate. Some of the new Democrats in Congress profess pro-life and other socially conservative values.

As a result, Democrats are

beginning to take values voters seriously. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), a presidential candidate in 2008, has made several attempts to pass herself off as a "moderate." On December 26, 2006, NewsMax.com reported that she had hired a consultant to help her reach out to religious conservatives. The article reported that "Clinton's new hire is Burns Strider, an evangelical Christian who directs religious outreach for House Democrats and is the lead staffer for the Democrats' Faith Working Group, headed by incoming Majority Whip James Clyburn of South Carolina." Some articles now speak of Clinton's involvement in prayer groups, claiming that faith has always been important to her.

In a speech on June 28, Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) urged liberals to recognize that many issues, including poverty, racism, and gang violence "are rooted in both societal indifference and individual callousness -- in the imperfections of man." He urged that liberals need to appeal to religious sensibilities and recognize that "inner change" can solve many problems that government programs and policies cannot adequately handle.

"... one of the judges who permitted this murder was William Pryor, an allegedly pro-life judge appointed by President Bush."

Obama makes a few good points. Americans often expect the government to solve all of society's problems, even when religious institutions and other private organizations are better equipped for the battles. Many conservatives ignore the spiritual implications of issues such as the economy, trade, and national security. Christians need to keep in mind that Jesus summarized biblical faith in two commands: to love God and love one's neighbor (Matt. 22:37-40). This biblical concept of love is broad and challenges us to

promote human dignity throughout all phases of life, from conception until death. Such a perspective affects not only one's views about abortion, pornography, and gay marriage, but also foreign policy, social justice, the economy, and virtually every issue in the political sphere.

However, we do not need politics cloaked in religious language.



Abortion is murder; religious language is irrelevant unless it first acknowledges that the fetus is a living human being. We cannot justify gay marriage by baptizing it in pious talk about tolerance and acceptance. Religious language does not purify immorality. Usually, when socially liberal politicians speak of "reaching out" to values voters, they hope to foster "dialogue" and "tolerance." However, moral absolutes demand

decisive action, not dialogue.

Fortunately, Democrats do not dupe evangelical Christians often. When Sen. Clinton tried to defend amnesty for illegal aliens by claiming that our immigration laws would have criminalized Jesus Christ, many thought her to be a fool. Unfortunately, evangelical voters have not been as discerning when looking at the Republican Party. While some Democrats parrot religious lingo, Republicans vow to support traditional moral values but do not fulfill those promises.

In March 2005, Republicans at several levels of government made a series of impotent attempts to stop Florida resident Michael Schiavo from euthanizing his disabled wife, Terri. After an apparent ideological showdown between "pro-life" Republicans and activist judges, Mr. Schiavo was allowed to have her feeding tube removed. Congress seemed to be too busy discussing steroids in major-league baseball to worry about human life.

Since then, politicians have swept the debacle underneath the rug. Few, if any politicians, have sought ways to avoid repeating this episode in the future. Those who believe a pro-life administration gave its best effort need to realize that one of the judges who permitted this murder was William Pryor, an allegedly pro-life judge appointed by President Bush. Few legislators, if any, around the country have tried to address and correct loopholes in state legal codes that allowed this travesty.

As the death toll from abortion rises, Republicans claim that they cannot ban the barbaric practice without a constitutional amendment or a major change in the Supreme Court's makeup. However, no such action is required. Several pro-life bills currently languish in House of Representatives' subcommittees. The Right to Life Act, which would have identified unborn children as "persons" under the Fourteenth Amendment, had 95 cosponsors. The Constitution Protection Act, submitted by Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), would have limited the jurisdiction of federal courts, prohibiting them from nullifying laws against abortion, gay marriage, or similar moral issues by declaring them unconstitutional. Either bill would have provided a major step towards outlawing abortion, but Congressional leaders (in a Republican-led Congress) showed no interest in bringing them up for a vote.

Values voters must accept some of the responsibility for this mess. Again, they may want to take a closer look at the Bible that many of them believe in. Ephesians 6:12 says that "Our struggle is not against flesh and

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Minnesota Elects First Muslim Congressman

By J. C. Schweingrouber
Public Relations Cmte Chair

Newly elected Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN) has found himself in the middle of a controversy that will no doubt spark debate in the coming months. Ellison is the first Muslim elected to a national office. After Ellison announced that he will place his hand on the Quran, instead of the Bible, to take his oath of office, Virginia Representative Virgil Goode (R-VA) sent a letter to many of his constituents regarding their disapproval of Ellison's decision.

Goode echoed their discontent by saying that if America did not change its immigration policy to restrict the number of Muslims coming to our shores, then we would see many more Muslims elected to public office. With that statement the name calling began. Although Ellison has taken the high road so far and not made any comments, many organizations and political affiliates have called Goode a bigot, a racist, and many similar things. Despite calls from his own party to apologize, Goode has stood his ground and refused to apologize.

This article is not to discuss these two Congressman directly, but to touch on a deeper issue about the growth of Islam in America and how it could affect our political institutions, beginning with the election of Keith Ellison to the House of Representatives. Whether he takes his oath on the Bible or the Quran is not overly pertinent, as many other members have taken their oaths on other books, such as the Torah or the Book of Mormon, in private ceremony.

This article is about how the growth of Islam will affect our political institutions, our laws, and our heritage and traditions.

Islam has grown at a fast pace across Europe and our immigration policy has allowed Muslims to come to America at the fastest pace we've ever allowed. This growth has led to many cultural changes in Britain, France, Germany, and the

Netherlands. Those changes have not been positive, and they are currently starting to slowly come to surface right here in America as well.

Muslims have begun to gain more influence and clout throughout European nations and have reverted back to their calls for the implementation of sharia law. Sharia, which literally means "path" or "path to water," is the basis of sharia law, which is a legal system derived from the lessons and teachings of the Quran. It has been implemented in various degrees in Muslim nations around the world.

The growth of Islam in Europe has led to many international headlines over the past two years, including the eruption of riots and murders as a result of cartoons published in newspapers in Denmark that portrayed the prophet Mohammed, riots and fires set ablaze in Paris, and the growing likelihood of more terrorist attacks in Britain. On top of these, there are the general social pressures that the growth of Islam has pushed onto more tolerant religions such as Christianity.

As more Muslims come into politics, they historically revert to sharia law, which is believed to offer a code for all parts of life, not just religion. It is meant to govern all aspects including relationships, business and politics. Should Muslim politicians such as Ellison

"Would Ellison follow in the footsteps of other Muslim politicians from around the world by trying to convert U.S. law into sharia law?"

push for sharia law even in incremental and subtle ways, it would bring about the end of our American way of life and the destruction of our Bill of Rights.

In this nation, our traditions and the primary religion of its citizens promote tolerance and forgiveness. Although those may be concepts in Islam, they certainly have not been expressed properly in sharia law based on several modern examples in the news. According to a news article from Britain's Guardian

Unlimited dated August 20, 2002, an Islamic court in Nigeria stood firm on an earlier ruling that would allow for a woman accused of adultery to be stoned to death. Her death was

and around the world calling for the beheading of all who insult Islam. Does that sound like a respect for our much coveted freedom of speech?



Democrat House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and newly-elected Congressman Keith Ellison and family. For the first time in our nation's history, the oath of office was taken upon a copy of the Quran.

delayed until the end of the breastfeeding period for her daughter, which ended in 2004. For those not familiar with stoning, sharia law calls for the guilty to be covered in sand up to the head while those doing the stoning repeatedly strike the person in the head with rocks until death.

What would be the reaction

In 1998 Saudi Arabia moved to a more strict interpretation of Islamic laws that allowed for the observance of any form of religion other than Islam to be punished by prison sentences. Another example of sharia law is found in Indonesia. Although Indonesia seems outwardly tolerant and has a constitution that mandates religious freedoms, Muslims have scoffed at those provisions and unashamedly discriminate against Christians.

In Victoria, Australia, in 2005 two pastors were convicted when the Muslim Council of Victoria brought suit against them for holding a conference critiquing Islam and allowing articles of criticism to be posted. They exercised free speech and did not receive the same protections. At trial, the pastors asked to be allowed to read from the Quran on domestic law, the passages relating to beating women. This was blocked by the attorney representing the Council. They have been released from prison but the trial is still pending.

Sharia law only respects Islam.
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from a society such as ours that values the forgiving of trespasses? Sharia law also calls for many other cruel and unusual punishments for various crimes including beheadings and amputation of limbs. It also condones and encourages domestic violence, the beating of women.

Stoning is a cruel and unusual way to penalize adultery. Does that sound like it would agree with the Eighth Amendment of our Constitution? There has been an outcry of Muslims in the United States

The National Debt - Will It Reach \$1 Zillion?

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the limits imposed by their Constitution on the national government, and by its respect for states' and individual rights. But if the majority of citizens no longer adhere to subsidiarity, whether for lack of virtue or knowledge, then the result will be increased pressure to reinterpret aspects of the Constitution which restrict the federal role.

Historically, the debate on the proper scope of the federal government has centered on the "general welfare clause" of the Constitution. This clause, found in article I section 8, gives Congress only three permissible reasons to raise funds - to pay the nation's debts, and "for the common defense and general welfare of the United States."

For the first 140 years after the Constitution's ratification, "general welfare" was interpreted very restrictively, more or less in line with the thinking of the founders. This is evidenced by the fact that government spending was only about 3% of the national income prior to FDR's New Deal. But after World War II, with the redistribu-

tionists in charge in Washington, it edged up to about 13%, with the social spending programs during the 60s and beyond continually increasing that percentage to about 26% today, about 9 times what it was prior to 1933.

Based on this, it seems reasonable to conclude that if "general welfare" were interpreted strictly,

"... if 'general welfare' were interpreted strictly, the federal government's spending and size would be about 1/4 of what it is today"

the federal government's spending and size would be about 1/4 of what it is today, and as Thomas Jefferson inferred, this would properly and greatly limit its role in the manner intended by the founders.

Jefferson and others recognized that strict versus liberal interpretation of "general welfare" was a question of limited versus near universal power for the national government. Early on, in the early 1790s, strict interpretation was already under attack, drawing

responses from both Jefferson and Madison.

The following is attributed to James Madison: "With respect to the words general welfare ... To take them in a literal and unlimited sense would be a metamorphosis of the Constitution into a character which there is a host of proofs was not contemplated by its creators."

In 1791, Jefferson indicated that "general welfare of the United States" was correctly interpreted as referring to the welfare of the federal union: "To lay taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States They are not to lay taxes *ad libitum* for any purpose they please, but only to pay the debts or provide for the welfare of the Union."

In 1817, he explained the original intent -- that the authority to spend for the general welfare only

extended to spending relating to the enumerated powers of the national government: "Our tenet ever was ... that Congress had not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but were restrained to those specifically enumerated."

In 1825, he vigorously denounced the positions of the deconstructionists and called into question their motives: "Aided by a little sophistry on the words 'general welfare,' [the federal branch claim] a right to do not only the acts to effect that which are specifically enumerated and permitted, but whatsoever they shall think or pretend will be for the general welfare."

Perhaps it will take an economic collapse before Americans realize that the course they have chosen, that of an expansive federal government, is unsustainable, and that returning to the wisdom of the founders is the proper solution. Given the many negative economic and fiscal trends, this collapse could occur sooner than many might expect.

Playing Politics with the Church

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blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Essentially, this means that a Christian's battle is not against other people or manmade groups, but against spiritual enemies. In the political realm, our battle is not so much against a particular organization (the Republicans or the Democrats) as against the forces of evil and injustice in our world. Values voters need to stand on a set of principles and refuse to compromise those values for the sake of a group.

The America First Party offers an alternative that values voters should seriously consider. Our party maintains a philosophy of "fighting for faith, freedom, and the Constitution." We realize that our nation includes people from diverse

religious traditions which should be respected. However, we fight for the traditional moral positions that matter to values voters. We stand for the principles that made America great, and we will fight to restore those values in society. We realize this is the only way to preserve essential human liberties.

The AFP is committed to protecting all human life (from conception until death), preserving the traditional family (based on marriage between one man and one woman), and defending the values that strengthened America throughout history. We realize that actions speak louder than words.

However, we realize that morality and righteousness extend beyond these issues. Moral values affect all of life. Judeo-Christian values require us to preserve and protect our people and our nation's sover-

eignty, while respecting the right of other nations to do likewise. Our military has an obligation to protect our nation, not to mold other nations into America's image or police the world. We believe our country should seek friendship with all nations (as much as it depends on us) while avoiding entangling alliances.

The evangelical Christian who expects proponents of the New World Order to establish a One-World Government (from which the antichrist may come) should appreciate our commitment to national sovereignty. Both the Democrats and Republicans pursue policies that support a one-world government.

As an outgrowth of our commitment to national sovereignty, we believe our nation's economic policy should place the needs of American workers and families ahead of the

desires of multinational corporations and foreign nations. The America First Party seeks right and fair trade, as opposed to free-trade agreements that place American workers at the mercy of corporate outsourcing.

Justice and equality before the law are also cornerstones of our platform. This extends to the belief that all men are created equal and special preference should not be granted to particular racial, ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic groups. The major religions in our country all oppose injustice and corrupt leadership, and so do we.

We seek to elect leaders who are guided by Godly values - in thought, word, and deed. America needs leaders who will seriously take a stand for the inalienable human rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We need leaders who will put America, and all Americans, first.

Time to End Our Involvement in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

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Israeli government which has acquired the greatest capability to do harm, and to the grave detriment of our national interest.

Most of us have seen reporting in recent years of the terrible atrocities by Arab extremists. The many instances of barbaric suicide bomb-



One of the Hezbollah rockets that hit the Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona in July, 2006.

Photo credit: Middle East Online

ings in Israel which are directed at Israeli civilians, and which cause unspeakable carnage and misery, are a sign of the dangerous intensity of the conflict and of the hatred of the attacking parties. Systematic Hezbollah rocket volleys on civilian targets in Israel are also clear evidence of moral bankruptcy, as is the readiness of some Lebanese civilians to support an organization which engages in such indecent tactics.

In trying to get a sense of the history of the conflict, it can be difficult to find unbiased sources. Both sides



August 9, 2006 - Running for a shelter in Kiryat Shmona. Residents of Kiryat Shmona are undergoing evacuation, the first evacuation of the entire town since Israel's creation.

Photo credit: Middle East Online

have an agenda, and groups associated with each have appeared like moral relativists through the years, overlooking atrocities and acts of terrorism when their goals have been served by them. Since the morals of some Arabs and Zionists

are highly questionable, great care needs to be taken to find an information source which is likely to be truthful.

The little understood reality is that atrocities, hatred, and indecency have characterized factions on both sides of the conflict, although relatively little is said about these problems in the U.S. media when they come from the Zionist side. This is a strong indicator that devotion to the concept of a Jewish homeland, which is in itself fine, has degenerated into an obsession for many in our government and media, resulting in an undue bias in government policy and reporting.

This being the case, it is especially important to make an effort to understand the complete history. An article written by Matthew Hogan, an attorney from Texas, advances this purpose. It seems to be a sincere

"The America First Party works to advance the position that we should be neutral in conflicts which do not relate to the national security of the United States."

attempt to honestly portray the war between the opposing groups up to and slightly after the Deir Yassin massacre in 1948. Other massacres committed by both Arabs and Zionists are described, although the main purpose of the article, which includes over 100 footnotes, is to examine the events at Deir Yassin where about 150 Arab villagers were executed by Zionist gangs. The Deir Yassin Massacre was followed by the murder of about 70 Jewish medical students in an Arab retaliatory action. A careful reading leaves the impression that both sides have much to answer for.

During the early years before the founding of Palestine, the Jewish Zionist organizations often developed militias to protect Jews from Arab marauders. The Haganah, a paramilitary group controlled by the Jewish Agency for Palestine, was

one. Its members, like David Ben-Gurion, who would become Israel's founding Prime Minister, tended to be open to a two-state solution in Palestine. Other fringe groups



The remains of a bus destroyed by a suicide bomber. Eight people were killed in the attack which was carried out on February 22, 2004.

Photo credit: B'Tselem, Ayelet Even-Nur

attached to the Zionist revisionist movement opposed a two-state solution. They regarded all of British Mandate Palestine as rightfully

Jewish territory. The revisionists formed their own militias. Two of these militias, the Irgun and Stern gangs, were headed by future Israeli Prime Ministers, Menachem Begin and Yitzak Shamir, respectively.

These gangs committed numerous atrocities. In 1944, the Stern gang assassinated Lord Moyne, a British Minister for the Middle East and in 1948 they assassinated the UN Mediator Count Bernadotte. Both Stern and Irgun participated in the Deir Yassin Massacre in 1948, and in attacking British targets. The Irgun also bombed the British headquarters in Jerusalem, the King David Hotel, killing about 100 (the British government protested on the occasion of this year's commemoration in Jerusalem).

There has been a power struggle between the moderate and the revisionist forces, and there continues to be one. In 1944, when Lord Moyne was assassinated, the Haganah took action against the Irgun gang, but was not able to take action against

the perpetrators in the Stern gang due to an "understanding" with that group. But when Israel was formed in 1948, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion continued to take action to suppress revisionist militias, and at one point, ordered an attack on the Altalena, a ship which was providing supplies to the Irgun.

But clearly, as evidenced by the eventual ascendancy of Messrs. Begin and Shamir, leaders in the revisionist faction have come to the forefront, even if the majority in Israel favor a two-state solution and respect for the rights of non-Jews.

It is interesting to note that, during Prime Minister Begin's tenure in the 1980s, the "Lehi Ribbon" was introduced as a military decoration for those who served in this terrorist group, and a similar decoration, the Irgun Ribbon, exists for Mr. Begin's former band of murderers. One might think that the political risk of associating the state of Israel with Jewish terrorists would cause a more cautious approach, but apparently the people who lead the Israeli gov-



A Palestinian car in flames after having been set on fire by settlers on the Ramallah-Nablus Road, opposite the settlement of Beit El in 1993.

Photo Credit: B'Tselem

ernment don't think it is a problem.

As we have mentioned, factions of both sides have been radicalized.

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Minnesota Elects First Muslim Congressman

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Our traditions and freedoms are in stark contrast to that, which would put our society in the crosshairs of Islamic politicians. Would Ellison follow in the footsteps of other Muslim politicians from around the world by trying to convert U.S. law into sharia law? That's a question for Ellison.

However, there are several other common practices of sharia law that must be understood. According to many sources found on the Internet, Islam and sharia law allow for hus-

bands to beat their wives for what is called "high-handedness." It also provides for revenge, literally an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. So much for due process. Thieves must have their hands cut off, and punishment of some crimes can be mutilation. Furthermore, it calls for the possible death of non-Muslim critics of Muhammad, the Quran and sharia law itself.

In a society where the vast majority of Americans consider themselves Christian, we become offended when retailers remove the

word "Christmas" from the holidays and feel singled out when the Pledge of Allegiance has been removed from the schools our children and grandchildren attend. We feel chastised when groups like the ACLU constantly attack our nation's traditions and Christian values.

What would be the repercussions if our country were subject to sharia law? The Quran's laws are no respecter of our heritage, our values, or our Bill of Rights.

Would Ellison, or other elected Muslims, follow their Muslim col-

leagues in other nations? I hope not.

However, one thing that Virgil Goode did not mention in his letter about Ellison is that he has close associations with a man named Nihad Awad, co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR, which some believe to be tied to terrorism, has openly called for sharia law right here in the United States, according to the same article from the Guardian Unlimited.

Perhaps Ellison should address that.

Time to End Our Involvement in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

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As Hogan shows, this has been the case in the 20s, 30s, and 40s, and is still true. We easily recognize this radicalization in the attacks of Hamas and in the terror-suicide bombings of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, and in Hezbollah's rocket attacks.

We also see radical measures



Cars of Palestinian farmers which were burnt by Israeli settlers during the olive harvest near Ramallah, in October 2002.

Photo credit: Iyad Khadad, B'Tselem

being applied by the Israeli government - the destruction of the Gaza's power facilities, the bombing of the homes of Palestinian Authority (PA) security officials, and the past destruction and degrading of PA police capability through aerial bombing, while simultaneous demands are made that the same PA police disarm terrorists. Israel has also directly targeted civilians in the occupied territories, where they destroyed 4,000 Palestinian homes

in only 4 years. This is corroborated by Israeli human rights groups (visit the websites of B'Tselem and The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions). An extensive report on Israeli house demolitions can be found at the U.N. web site.

Notwithstanding Israel's need to defend itself, it seems to be bent on using the most inflammatory tactics, both in the occupied territories, and in Lebanon. When Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, spoke to a crowd of supporters in New York recently, he had this to say about the situation in Lebanon: "to those countries who claim that we are using disproportionate force, I have only this to say: You're damn right we are."

The problem is not just that Israel is using disproportionate force and is comfortable with this approach, but that it is making the suggestion that the Lebanese government was able to disarm Hezbollah, and failed through negligence. This is almost certainly not the case. It is common knowledge that Lebanon has recently come through 15 years of civil war, and that a Lebanese military action against Hezbollah could easily split the military along sectarian lines, leading to more years of bloody

chaos in Lebanon. But this mirrors Israel's approach to the Palestinian Authority, which was expected to use its weak police force to do what Israel, with all its might, was not able to do -- disarm Palestinian terrorists. Is this part of Israel's provocative strategy -- to demand impossible goals, and then respond with disproportionate force when weak governments cannot deliver? It does seem that these diplomatic maneuvers are likely a pretense to justify ruthless military actions.

There is little hope of a positive outcome from our involvement in the region, as long as attitudes of reprisal, revenge and a desire for hegemony dominate the parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict. And there is great



Palestinians dig under the rubble of houses to search for people trapped by IDF house demolitions in the Jenin Refugee Camp. Photo credit: B'Tselem

danger that we will be dragged into additional military conflict if we do not disengage now.

The solution is to do the responsible thing and stop foreign aid. In



November 23, 2003 - Two Palestinians who were blindfolded as punishment after they refused to cleanup trash around the Huwarra checkpoint as they had been ordered by IDF soldiers.

Photo credit: Eliezer Moav, B'Tselem

the case of Israel, we did this in 1953 when a military unit commanded by Ariel Sharon massacred about 60 people in the village of Qibya. But we should not have just stopped our aid to Israel alone, we should have ceased aid to all Arab nations.

It is urgent that we follow General Washington's advice and work to establish neutrality in this and all foreign conflicts which do not impinge on our vital interests. And if in the future we are perceived as not favoring one side, we will be better positioned to serve as a trustworthy mediator in the region, and less likely to suffer terror attacks on American soil.



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