

Opinion

The U.S. needs to devise a new Israeli peace plan

The images of violence that have crossed our television screens every night provide the world with a vivid reminder of the plight of a homeless people. Israeli soldiers are seen dragging young Palestinians from their homes and hospital beds while their mothers shriek in horror. Most recently, soldiers forced four Palestinian youths to lie in the dirt while a bulldozer buried them alive.



John MacDougall

Though our government has expressed condemnation for Israel's violent treatment of Palestinians in the riot-plagued West Bank and Gaza Strip, it is evident that the Israeli government is neither committed to adopting a peaceful solution to the Palestinians' demands for autonomy nor concerned with re-

specting the civil rights of their neighbors.

It is time for the United States to adopt a tougher stance to promote peace in the Middle East.

Ever since the British gained control of Palestine after World War I, Palestinians have been trying to gain independence. In the 1967 six-day war that pitted Israel against Syria, both Jordan and Egypt unified Palestinians in their quest for independence. After the war the Israelis kept strict military control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas, where more than a million Palestinians resided. The Israelis, consolidating their control in the territories, further alienated Palestinians by populating the territories with makeshift "settlement communities."

By 1984, Israel had seized about a third of the land in the West Bank, forcing thousands of Palestinians to flee into refugee camps in the territories or across the border in Jordan. Palestinians now account for 60 percent of the Jor-

danian population.

The West Bank has become an important strategic element to Israel. With a border less than 20 miles from Tel Aviv, the West Bank serves as a buffer from possible Jordanian or Syrian attacks. The West Bank is a training ground for Israel's armed forces. Thus, the Israelis are reluctant to give the Palestinians complete autonomy.

For years, Israel has tried to keep the issue of Palestinian autonomy on the back burner. However, they have on occasion paid lip service to the United States. The Camp David Agreements signed by Israel and Egypt in 1978 that were designed to provide limited autonomy for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank turned out to be a failure. Most of the Palestinian politicians and leaders who were supposed to run the local government in the occupied territories in accordance with the treaty refused to cooperate with the Israelis and were replaced by Israeli officers.

In recent months, Israel has systema-

tically jailed or silenced most Palestinian leaders, making it difficult for any sort of negotiation process. Last week, Secretary of State George Shultz was in the Middle East to rally support for a peace plan but received a negative response from Israel's Prime Minister Shamir.

If the United States is really concerned about promoting a peace agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians, then we should use more concrete measures to encourage the Israeli government to work on a peace plan. The United States should consider withholding some of the billions of dollars in foreign aid we give to the Israelis annually until they make a decent effort to formulate a working peace plan. Also, any foreign aid should be granted contingent upon Israel's human rights record.

Such an idea is not new. In the Carter Administration, a bill was signed into law that makes U.S. foreign aid revocable if the receiving nation is a major violator of human rights. Since December,

Israeli soldiers have killed nearly 60 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more. Their human rights record is beginning to look a little bit like El Salvador's.

How ironic it is that the Israeli people, some of whom had fled persecution from Nazi Germany, have become oppressors. A recent poll published by Tel Aviv newspaper indicates that 70 percent of the Israeli public favors either the current policy of dealing with the Palestinians or a more stringent one.

If Israel truly desires peace in the territories, it first must respect the human rights of Palestinians. A peace plan has any hope of Palestinian approval will require Israel to extend itself strategically. If a plan isn't adopted soon, Israel may be exposed to an even greater risk from its hostile Arab neighbors.

John MacDougall is a graduate student in the MBA program and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

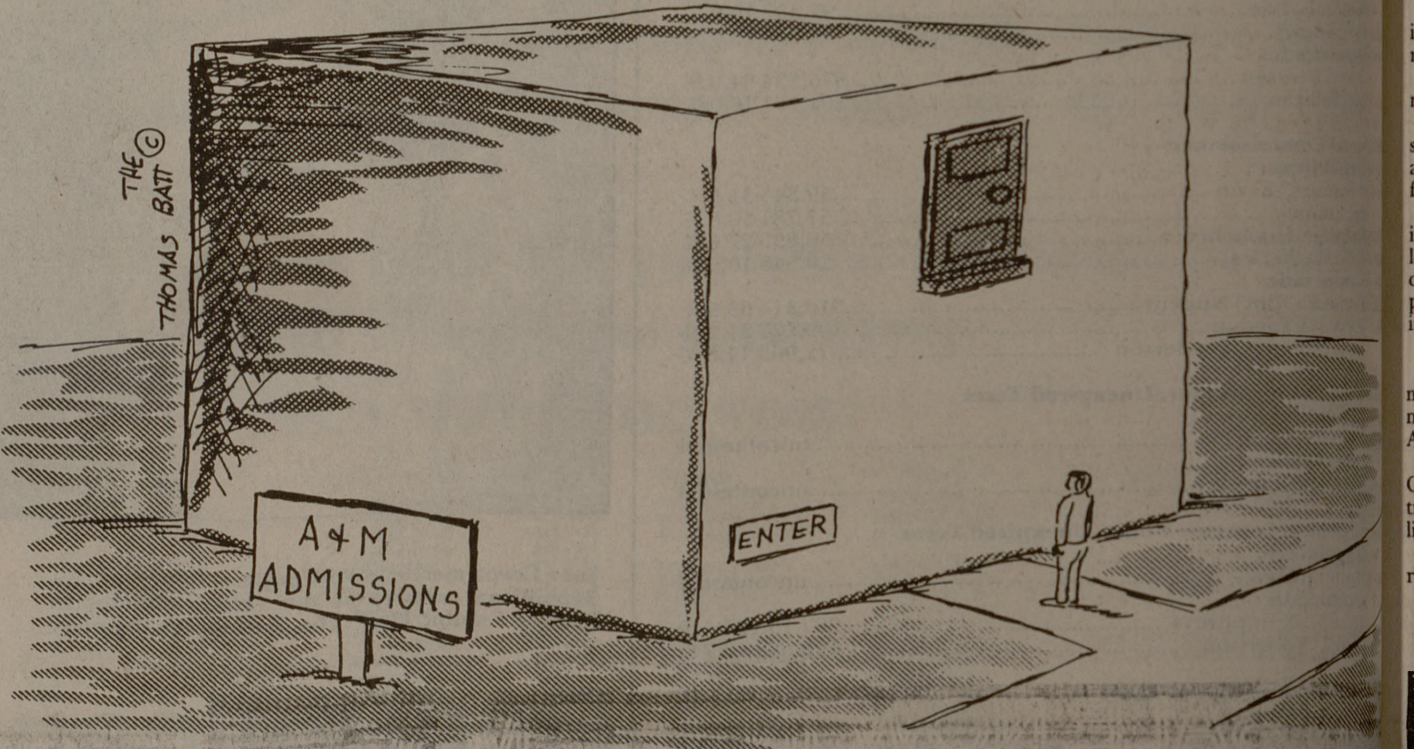
You say you want a revelation

EDITOR:
I was studying in the library the other day when, from across the table, came a shocking statement, "Brian Frederick is a fascist."
I was stunned. Brian is God, and from his mouth come the pearls of wisdom with which I live my life. I threw my verbal gauntlet at the man. "But he's opposed to welfare and other government programs that would weaken our economy."
He deflected my attack and returned with a wicked swing. "Yes, but he condones the oppression of women so that men can continue their natural role in society. Is that not fascism?"
I was reeling from this verbal onslaught. My hero, the columnist I have read since the early fifties, was being challenged. For God and Country I had to continue the fight. "That's not true! He was merely criticizing the overzealousness of the women's movement."
"Ah, and what of his hard line against communism? Fascists are famous for hating communists."
I was down, felled by his battery of neurons. "But, you're twisting his words..." I was feeling faint. I couldn't survive this attack on my common sense. He had me outgunned. And he didn't stop.
"He's paranoid about letting the Soviets sap our precious bodily fluids. He wants the education system turned over to the private companies. The poor will be denied an education."
He was towering over me, ready to deal the final blow. But just as he had me beaten, crawling in the dust from his barrage of lies, he changed tactics.
"Look at it this way," he reasoned. "Studies show that one-sixth of *Battalion* columnists are fascists. Another survey shows that eighty percent of all people who believe that humans don't have natural rights call themselves fascists. Pretty telling figures, would you not say?"
I couldn't respond. My world was shattered. I slowly dragged myself out of the dirt. Through my hyperventilating I wheezed, "You're right. He is a fascist." It was an like evil revelation. It can't be true. But it is. Oh, sick new world, that has such people in it!
Robert Dowdy, '88

Peeking at the mysterious secret

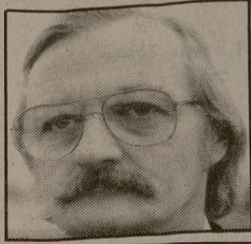
EDITOR:
Brian Frederick's Tuesday article on human rights, or rather the lack thereof, contains an unsupported and perhaps unsupportable tenet in its logical framework and a very serious inconsistency which makes one wonder if either he or his mysterious "visitor" has thought out this viewpoint.
The one elucidating point that he did make is that from a naturalistic point of view (i.e. one without a belief in the supernatural which Mr. Frederick refers to as "religious mythology") moral absolutes are indefensible. This is the price one must pay in order to hold to a naturalist's view of the world.
Now the problems. Brian's "visitor" states that none of the professors or intellectuals in good standing believe in this "religious mythology." This is simply not true. I know of several professors and intellectuals who do believe. The visitor goes on to say that belief in the supernatural has been displaced by science. Has it? I've met many people who claim that it has, but none of them were actually able to produce this definite proof. Could it be that the existence of such a proof is the real "myth?" A "myth" that people throw into discussions as a given, hoping that no one will call their bluff?
Summing up life as a power struggle where "the only human imperative is survival" and only the strong survive, the nameless visitor claims to have confronted Mr. Frederick because he "wanted to free (Mr. Frederick) from the pious nonsense" taught by the professors and society. Mr. Frederick, presumably, passes this same information on to us for the same reasons. But why would either of them want to do that? Do they feel they "ought" to enlighten the masses or that it would be a "good" thing to do? "Ought" implies responsibility and "good" implies a value judgement, i.e. a moral. But these are both destroyed by the same reasoning which they used to destroy the concept of human rights! If Mr. Frederick and his visitor truly lived by the ideology they espouse, they would see that enlightening the masses is the last thing they would want to do. If they are the only ones who "really" know how the world works, they would have a distinct advantage in the fight for survival. By letting us in on their secret they only make the competition tougher and hence their own chances of survival less certain. Maybe they just told us these things out of a sense of fair play — a sense that maybe, just maybe, we might all have an inalienable human right to a fair chance!
Myles Rippenhagen '86

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It's time to escalate the war on drugs

Nancy Reagan spoke an obvious but valuable truth the other day. Addressing the White House Conference for a Drug Free America, she said:



Donald Kaul

"We must be absolutely unyielding and inflexible in our opposition to drug use. There is no middle ground. We must be as adamant about the casual user as we are about the addict. . . . I'm saying that if you're a casual drug user, you are an accomplice to murder."
She went on to list some of the more notorious instances of drug-related violence here and in Central and South America where entire countries are run by drug cartels.
"And . . . the people who casually use cocaine are responsible because their money bought those bullets," she said.
"They provided the stakes that murdered those men plus hundreds of others in Colombia, including supreme court justices, 21 judges handling drug cases and scores of policemen and soldiers."
True, true, true; I agree with all of it. If nice people stopped using drugs the crime and violence in this country would fall to a whisper, more or less.
One of the best things about the Reagan administration has been Mrs. Reagan's anti-drug campaign. She has thrown herself into it wholeheartedly and has helped raise the public's awareness of the evils of drugs. Surveys show that the use of cocaine by high school students dropped for the first time last year. I think she had something to do with that.

Mrs. Reagan's husband is something else again. At the same conference at which his wife took out after drug users, the president declared that the war on drugs was "an untold success story. The tide of battle has turned and we're beginning to win the crusade for a drug-free America."

Wrong, wrong, wrong; another example of the president's invincible ignorance.

Fact: In 1982 an estimated 31 metric tons of cocaine was brought here from Mexico. In 1985, it was 72 metric tons. Those are White House figures.

Fact: Last year coca production for cocaine went up 10 percent in the top producing countries — Bolivia, Colombia and Peru — while the worldwide marijuana crop jumped 26 percent and the opium crop 18 percent. Those are State Department figures.

Fact: The number of teen-aged and adult cocaine users in this country increased 38 percent between 1982 and 1985, from 4.2 million to 5.8 million. During roughly that same period, cocaine-related deaths rose 124 percent. Those are congressional figures.

That's winning the war? God help us if we ever lose it.

We've seen some gains in slowing the rising epidemic of drug use among the young of the middle class, almost none in stopping drugs from coming into the country. We've spent \$16.5 billion on drug interdiction during the Reagan years and use is up, prices are down and the drugs are of purer quality. Why? Because the money has been spent, like most expenditures in the Reagan administration, without a coherent policy. More than half of the U.S. Coast Guard's drug fleet is now idled because it lacks \$60 million tied up in a budget squabble between the administration

and Congress. Eight Navy frigates heavily involved in drug interdiction are scheduled for budget-related moth-balling. Promised patrol planes have not been delivered. Is this what Mr. Reagan means when he says he's for smaller government? More drugs?

In a sense, it is. There is no way to fight the drug war on the cheap. The amazing thing is that we've managed to do as well as we have with kids, considering our piddling effort. You watch television and the soft drink ads come on and people are smiling and dancing and having a good time and it makes you want a soft drink. A car ad comes on and this beautiful car is hurtling over a mountain road and everybody is gorgeous and you want to buy a car. The anti-drug ad comes on with an athlete telling you to "Just say No" and you want to go to the bathroom.

We have to turn Madison Avenue loose on drugs and let it come up with ads as remarkable as those they use to convince us that soft drinks are the secret of eternal youth. Then we have to ram those ads down the throat of the public, endlessly. That's the American way.

We also have to get serious, really serious, about waging war on countries who produce our drugs. The real untold story of the Reagan administration is that we're losing Central America to communism but to drugs. We have to win it back.

As Congressman Charles Rangel of New York said:

"It's tragic for anyone to believe that we are winning this battle against drugs when we haven't fired the first shot. If we didn't have Nancy Reagan, we wouldn't have anything."

Why doesn't the president know that? Copyright 1987, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

The Battalion

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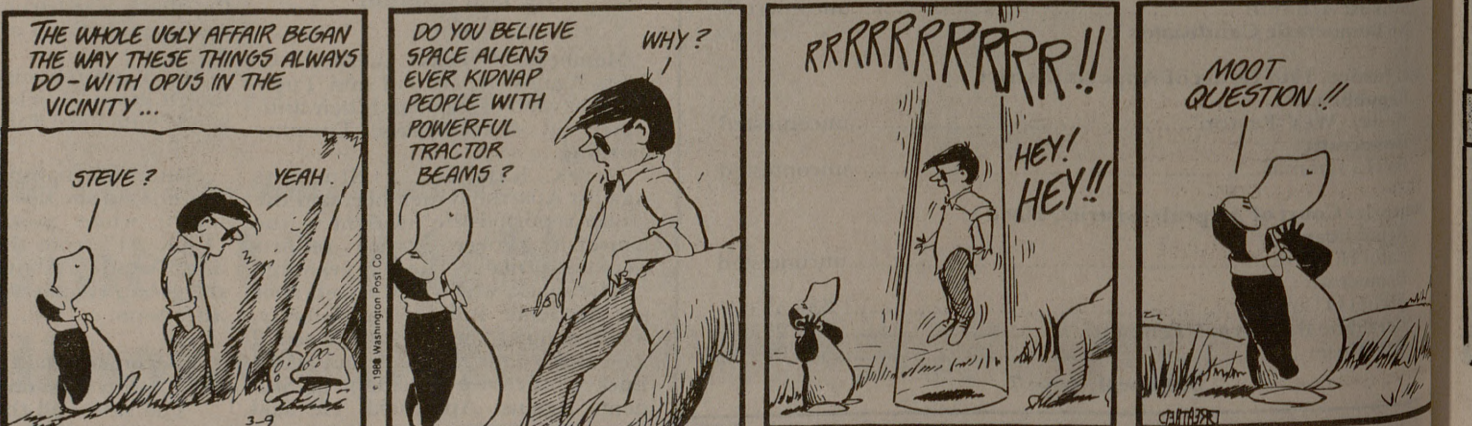
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