

To: Brith Sholom Media Watch Subscribers  
From: Jerry Verlin, Editor  
Subj: Brith Sholom Media Watch Alert #379, 4/6/08

This Week In The Inq: Flat Rejection of WHO Charge Purveyed as Meek Quibbling  
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It was only last month that Inq headlines hammered away daily at Israel's seemingly aggressive "attack," "action," "incursion," "invasion" in Gaza, without once adverting to that attack-action-incursion-invasion being Israel's reactive response to Gazans' sudden dramatic graduation from years'-long daily pounding of the Israeli town of Sderot with media-dubbed "crude" "homemade" rockets to pounding the Israeli city of Ashkelon with undeniably military-class Iranian Grad rockets.

The Inq's string of headlines not mentioning Arab Grad rocketing of Ashkelon but blaming Israel's "incursion into Gaza" for disrupting peace talks included

\*\*\* "Mideast Peace Talks Off"; "Palestinians Suspend Discussions; ISRAEL VOWS TO KEEP UP GAZA ATTACKS. Condoleeza Rice is Due in the Region This Week." (3/3/08, emphasis added throughout)

\*\*\* "Abbas Declines to Set Time for Resuming Talks; He Met with Rice, Who Pushed for the Resumption of Negotiations BROKEN OFF OVER ISRAEL'S INCURSION INTO GAZA" (3/5/08)

\*\*\* "Mideast Talks Back On Track, Rice Says in Visit to Region; Abbas Had Halted Them AFTER ISRAEL'S INCURSION INTO GAZA. No Date For a Restart was Announced." (3/6/08)

Echoes of that Inq-headlined media pitch that peace talks were interrupted not by that unprecedented escalation of daily Arab attacks upon Israeli civilians but by Israel's "incursion" into Gaza still reverberated This Week In the Inq. Inq, Tuesday, 4/1/08 (A2, Chicago Tribune): ". . . periodic meetings that were interrupted a month ago after a deadly Israeli incursion into Gaza in response to stepped-up rocket attacks." "Stepped-up"? Inq-speak. "Stepped-up" means an increase in frequency. This was an unprecedented escalation from "crude homemade" rockets pounding a town [not that Jews have to meekly sit there and take it] to imported military rockets pounding a city. But mere "step-up" or not, it was not for a newspaper's headlines to blame Israel's response to Arab Grad rocketing of Ashkelon, and not that response-provoking unprecedented Arab Grad rocketing of Ashkelon, as disrupting Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Now contrast that Inq portrayal of a seemingly bellicose, aggressive Israel launching a peace-talks' disrupting "attack," "incursion," "invasion" of Gaza with the equally flattering, equally unjustified, lame meekness which the AP and Inq attributed This Week

In the Inq to Israel's response to charges leveled at it by the World Health Organization's Gaza and "West Bank" representative.

Wednesday's (4/2/08, A4, AP) Inq's "In The World" squibs led off with "Report: Gazans Die Awaiting Care," commencing: "Dozens of Gaza residents have died waiting for medical treatment because of delays in obtaining permits to enter Israel, combined with a crumbling health system in Gaza, the World Health Organization said yesterday [Tuesday, 4/1/08]." Without quoting any Israeli responder, the article provided readers what "Israel says." "Israel says it needs to do lengthy checks on Gaza residents because of fears they could use illness as a pretext to carry out attacks. It has also challenged the number of cases WHO listed."

That's it, Inq fans. No flat rejection of the WHO-leveled charges, no direct reply that the WHO report is completely wrong. Just a meek "lengthy" delay acknowledgement grounded in "fears" about illness pretexts Gazans hypothetically "could use" to attack, coupled with quibbling over the number of delay-caused death instances.

Rubbish. On the very same day (Tuesday, 4/1/08) the WHO's Palestinian area's head held that press conference to level those charges against Israel, Col. Nir Press, commander of the IDF's Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration flatly rejected the WHO report as completely wrong.

OnLine Edition, Jerusalem Post, datelined "Apr 1, 2008" [sic]: "IDF: WHO Report 'Completely Wrong':"

"A World Health Organization (WHO) report that sharply criticized the IDF's screening of Palestinians who seek medical treatment in Israeli hospitals was flatly rejected by defense officials on Tuesday [sic], who called it 'completely wrong.'"

Col. Press responded, per Tuesday's Jerusalem Post, that of "the five case studies presented by the WHO, two of the sick Palestinians were in fact treated in Israeli hospitals," and the other three "were all granted permits that were never used due to internal Palestinian considerations." Indeed, one of those five whom the Palestinian areas' WHO head said in Tuesday's press conference had died recently while "they waited for a permit to enter Israel" had "in fact been treated in Israeli hospitals in July, August and October."

Col. Press added that "while the IDF was stringent with its screening of sick Palestinians – due to daily terror attacks in Gaza and attempts [i.e., actual, not hypothetical] to smuggle suicide bombers into Israel this way – over 90 percent of the requests were approved to visit Israeli hospitals." Indeed, 7,226 permits were granted sick Palestinians in 2007, versus 4,754 in 2006. And they can bring a family member. So far in 2008, "2,317 [i.e., an even higher annual rate] Palestinians have been allowed into Israel for medical treatment." And "the 10 percent denied permits – due to security threats – are, however, given the opportunity to take an Israeli [sic] shuttle to the Allenby Bridge and cross into Jordan or down to a crossing into Egypt."

The JP quoted Col. Press: “Despite the non-stop rocket fire, Israel is doing all it can when it comes to allowing sick Palestinians into Israel from Gaza and the West Bank,” Press said. ‘The reality is the outcome of the terror that does not stop against Israel and which targets [sic, actually, not hypothetically] the crossings that are used to take people out of Gaza for medical treatment.’”

Jerusalem Post: “Last May, two women who had received permits to enter Israel for treatment were discovered to be on their way to carry out suicide bombing attacks in Tel Aviv and Netanya.” Ah, yes, Israeli “fears” about pretexts Palestinians “could use.”

### Quickie Editorial: Two Ways To Stand Up

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When David Bar-Illan, a ground-breaking giant who stood in relation to the growing movement for media balance on Israel as Herzl stood in relation to the Zionist Movement, passed on, I lamented in this media watch that our world, which measures the stature of role models in millions of dollars of merchandise sold, took little note of the passing that week of a role model who sold self-respect for the Jewish soul.

What I peddle in this media watch is not mere hand-wringing over the unfairness of it all, but acting against that unfairness. One way is by making vividly clear, first to ourselves and thence by our action to the media, the poisoning of western public perceptions by the magnitude and persistence of its anti-Israel imbalance, and a second way is to create and support alternative channels of purveying Israel news to Westerners, starting with Jews.

About a hundred and fifty folks have signed the 1-page letter shortly to go to the Inq’s bigs with the “thick tome” of Inq citations (currently being edited by Dr. Bob), in anticipation of its coverage of Israel’s upcoming 60<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary.

As for alternative channels bringing people balanced perspectives of Israel news, we have a remarkable one right here in Philly, and it very much needs and deserves our support. Each Wednesday for an hour at noon, on 50,000 watt 1540 AM, Steve and Lori interview incredibly important timely guests, from Israeli officials to U.S. leaders to prominent authors and journalists, to Israelis in the thick of too-often terror-laced current news, on which they report Israeli perspectives, on Philly-originated and produced “ZOA Report.”

Do you have a business which might advertise on this radio program? Would you support a WHYY-like membership campaign offering a choice of autographed books and other appreciation expressions to subscribers? If you could get, e.g., a bi-weekly CD with two shows you could hear on your car radio during your morning and evening commute were available, would you support the show as a WHYY-like subscriber? Email me or Philly ZOA’s Steve Feldman, [zoa@netreach.net](mailto:zoa@netreach.net), and let us know.

This Week In The U.S. House If Not In The Inq: The Jewish Refugees From Arab Lands  
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From issue #1 of Brith Sholom Media Watch, we've insistently cited the mainstream Western media's imbalance in endlessly referencing "Palestinians-who-fled-or-were-forced-from-their-homes-in-the-war-that-followed-Israel's-creation" without mention of the greater number of indigenously Middle Eastern Jewish refugees who fled in that same era from Muslim lands, the bulk of whom Israel absorbed. We've cited two lonely Inq news references over these years to Jews from two of those countries – from one of which they "emigrated," and one from which they "left."

Haaretz, if not the Inq, reported This Week on this week's U.S. House of Representatives' "unprecedented resolution recognizing Jewish refugees from Arab countries who were forced to flee their homes in the aftermath of the creation of the state of Israel [i.e., Arab invasion rejecting the remaining Palestine Mandate's UN Partition]." The resolution calls on U.S.-led peace negotiations to embrace both sides' refugees.

A welcome resolution, but the significance of these Jews runs far more fundamentally deeper than their compensation claims and even their offsetting equity on the refugee issue. Along with the ever-present homeland Jewish Yishuv, these thousands-years-long indigenous Middle Eastern Jews establish the genuineness of the Jewish people as a native indigenous people of the Middle East, giving the lie to the Arab et al canard of Israel as an alien colonial implant in an "Arab" or "Muslim" Mideast.

This Week Not In The Exponent: Why Wolsey Withdrew From the American Council For Judaism  
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The Exponent This Week ran an article, "The Meaning of 1948," mentioning some of the many ways Philadelphia Jews supported Israel's War of Independence, and mentioning too that "Philadelphia was also known for being home to the leadership of the American Council for Judaism, an organization opposed to the creation of the Jewish state," citing particularly members of reform congregations KI and RS.

Not mentioned in the article was a widely-noted address that Rabbi ("Cardinal") Wolsey gave May 15, 1948, to the Rodeph Shalom Men's Club (a venerable august group of which I had the honor years later to serve as vice president) titled, "Why I Withdrew From The American Council For Judaism," the final paragraph of which included the following:

QUOTE

"I am today neither a Zionist nor an anti-Zionist, but an objective student of the whole situation. It is morally incumbent upon every fair-minded Jew to recognize what Mr. Austin calls 'the realities' of the Palestine claim. That Jews have set up and proclaimed a government on the land partitioned by a decision of the United Nations on November 27,

1947, that to date six nations have recognized that government, chief of which are Russia and our own United States, that Jews defend it with their lives and with great courage – should move every Jew whether he be a nationalist or anti-nationalist to support Israel....”

UNQUOTE

How about that?

Regards,  
Jerry