

PEACE NOT APARTHEID: MORE FICTION THAN FACTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, in today's Washington Post, former President Jimmy Carter defended his book, "Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid."

President Carter wrote, "... most critics have not seriously disputed or even mentioned the facts ..."

But after reading the book, I have become a critic and today will only correct the facts that he purports in his book. Regarding our policy towards Israel, there is little room for mistakes, let alone outright misstatements of fact.

For that reason, I want to present to the House eight factual inaccuracies found in President Carter's book.

Error number one, on page 62, President Carter quotes Yasser Arafat as telling him, "The Palestinian Liberation Organization has never advocated the annihilation of Israel." No evidence is provided, and the book does not contain a single footnote.

Fact check, article 22 of the PLO's charter states, "The liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence." Yasser Arafat supported this charter, and he directly lied to President Carter.

Error number two, on page 57 President Carter writes, "The 1947 armistice demarcation lines became the borders of the new nation of Israel, and were accepted by Israel and the United States, and recognized officially by the United Nations."

Fact, the 1949 armistice lines were never accepted as the official borders of Israel, United States or the United Nations. The error reflects a very poor attention to detail in the book.

Error number three, on page number 127, President Carter writes that there was "a surprising exodus of Christians from the Holy Land."

Fact, Israel is one of the only Middle Eastern nations where the Christian community has grown in the last half century. But Christian communities and other faith communities like Baha'is have dropped in size in many Muslim nations.

Error number four, on page 152 President Carter writes, "It was later claimed that the Palestinians rejected a 'generous offer' put forward by Prime Minister Barak with Israel only keeping 5 percent of the West Bank. The fact is no such offers were made."

Fact, according to President Clinton's lead negotiator, Ambassador Dennis Ross, Prime Minister Barak accepted President Clinton's proposal, offering to withdraw from 97 percent of the West Bank, to dismantle isolated settlements, and to accept the Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Arafat rejected this proposal, and a quick call between President Carter and President Clinton would have corrected this error.

Error number five, on page number 148 President Carter presents two maps he claims were considered at Camp David, one of them labeled "Israel's interpretation of Clinton's proposal."

Fact, there were no maps at Camp David. The map President Carter labeled as Israel's interpretation is a copy of a map that was created later by Dennis Ross for his book, "The Missing Peace." Ambassador Ross's map is a representation of an offer agreed to by Prime Minister Barak and rejected by Arafat. President Carter violated Ambassador Ross's copyright of the map.

Error six, on page 197 President Carter writes, "Confessions extracted through torture are admissible in Israeli courts."

Fact, the Israeli Supreme Court banned the use of torture in interrogations in a decision handed down by the court on September 6, 1999, by Supreme Court President Barak.

Error number seven, on page 188 President Carter writes, "Kadima had been expected to gain 43 seats based on its pledge of a unilateral expansion of the 'great wall.'"

Fact, Israel's Kadima Party ran on Prime Minister Sharon's platform of disengagement, a pledge to dismantle settlements and unilaterally withdraw from territory.

Error number eight, on page 215 President Carter writes that the one option for Israel is "withdrawal from the 1967 border as specified in U.N. Resolution 242."

Fact. The U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 does not define a border.

Madam Speaker, these errors, in fact, diminish the credibility of President Carter's book. President Carter is entitled to his own opinions, but not to his own facts. The errors I present here are only a sampling of the other errors included in his book.

Now, in the twilight of his career, with many at the Carter Center resigning from their posts, President Carter should recall the book and hire competent assistants to assure that his future work does not reflect such poor scholarship.

I want to thank, especially, Dr. Mitchell Bard and the Committee for Accuracy in the Middle East Reporting in America for helping compile this list of errors.

SEED DEMOCRACY IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, there is one nation in the world where seeding democracy right now might take root. It is Cuba. It is only 90 miles away from our shores, but we are using the same sort of wrong-headed thinking regarding Cuba that we are using in international affairs around the world with equally dismal results.

Today the Bush administration has draconian travel restrictions in place

for any American trying to visit family members in Cuba. It is their idea of promoting democracy by punishing the people we are trying to befriend. It makes no difference if a relative is well, sick or dying in Cuba. You get one chance every 3 years to visit Cuba legally. If an American visits a relative in Cuba and that relative is stricken by a heart attack the day after you leave, you cannot go back for 3 years.

The administration thinks that by cutting off families in Cuba from loved ones in the United States, they will encourage the overthrow of Castro.

When will we ever learn? This policy plays right into the hands of those who want to portray the United States as an arrogant bully willing to use innocent people as a wedge against a regime we don't like.

Our policy regarding Cuba is hurting innocent people here and there, not the government we have been trying to overthrow for a generation. It has hurt one of my constituents, an Iraq war hero, who came to the United States from Cuba 15 years ago risking his life coming on a raft floating in the ocean.

Sergeant Carlos Lazo made national headlines last year when he tried to get to Cuba to visit his teenage sons. Carlos is a man who joined the Washington National Guard to give service to his new country.

As a combat medic in Iraq, he risked his life to save others, and for his heroism he was awarded the Bronze Star. I had the honor to pin that medal on him in a ceremony in Seattle last year.

Carlos is an American citizen, a decorated war hero, and he is barred from boarding a flight to visit his family in Cuba. That is not how you promote democracy in Cuba or anywhere else for that matter. And the fact is, there are countless stories just like Carlos. It makes no diplomatic or strategic sense. We hurt U.S. interests by hurting U.S. citizens who reach out to family in Cuba.

Who could possibly be a better ambassador representing the United States than the blood relative of someone living in Cuba? The most powerful statement we could ever make to the people of Cuba is to let them interact with Americans who are related by blood or marriage.

Are the Cubans more likely to listen to U.S. propaganda or to a son or to a daughter? The answer is obvious, and it should be just as obvious that the U.S. needs to revise its travel ban to Cuba.

As it stands now, we are separating families. Instead, we should be reuniting loved ones. We don't promote freedom by denying it to innocent civilians, and we don't make new friends anywhere when an American citizen is denied the ability to visit a dying mother in Cuba. Imagine the propaganda of a press release, Americans barred from visiting mother on death bed in Cuba. A story like that can and will be used against us all over the world.

We don't gain from a policy that forces separate families, and it is time

to change. We don't have to lift the embargo against Cuba to restore family relations among Cubans and their relatives who live in America. We have a real opportunity to make progress promoting democracy in Cuba, and we ought to take it.

We need to revise the U.S. travel policy to Cuba to recognize that the American people are the best ambassadors we could ever deploy. Every visit by an American citizen to a loved one in Cuba will do more to promote freedom and democracy than all the leaflets and all the broadcasts and all the saber rattling that we have tried unsuccessfully in the last half century. We don't need to tear down a wall, we do need to tear up a policy and start over, and we should do it now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE MISSOURI MIRACLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, they are calling it the Missouri miracle, but it didn't start out that way. In fact, it was a parent's worst nightmare. A 13-year-old gets off a school bus near his home in rural Missouri but never makes it home. The local sheriff's office works frantically to locate the missing boy but has few leads. That was the real life saga for Ben Ownby's family last week near Beaufort, Missouri, in my congressional district.

Last Monday, January 8, after a normal day at school William Ben Ownby rode the bus to school. He got off and disappeared. The wrenching news energized the local community. Volunteers turned out in droves to assist law enforcement and to search the nearby woods. Friends and neighbors began prayer chains and offered moral support to Ben's family. Police officers and sheriffs' deputies from surrounding counties lent their assistance.

Fortunately the single lead provided by 14-year-old Mitchell Hults was a good one. Mitchell had gotten off the school bus with Ben and described having seen a beat-up white Nissan pickup truck with a camper shell, even describing the trailer hitch to a T. Two police officers who had gone to a Kirkwood, Missouri, apartment complex to serve an unrelated warrant saw a truck matching the description, sought additional legal authority and, lo and behold, last Friday, January 12, when officers approached the apartment, not only did they find Ben Ownby unharmed, but a second youth, Shawn Hornbeck, a boy from Washington County, Missouri who had been missing since 2002.

More than 4 years ago, October 6, 2002, when he was 11, Shawn Hornbeck disappeared while riding his bike. In a similar fashion, the community and law enforcement worked hard on that case to no avail. Yet Craig and Pam Akers, Shawn's parents, never gave up. Their ability to persevere 4½ years is a testament to their strength and faith.

During that time, the Akers family established the Shawn Hornbeck Foundation, whose mission it is to help families and law enforcement search for missing children. Craig Akers' commitment to finding Shawn and helping families has come at great personal expense and took a physical and emotional toll, and yet he remains devoted to helping others deal with cases of missing children.

What a miracle that both youths were rescued.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the hard work of area law enforcement, especially singling out Franklin County Sheriff Gary Toelke and the Franklin County Sheriff's Department. Gary is a friend of mine. This happens to be the second time in 4 months that Sheriff Toelke has reported a happy ending in a missing child case.

You may remember last September, his department recovered an 8-day-old baby girl when a woman attacked the baby's mother. That case became a national news story, as has this one. The outcome of both of these cases is a testament to that department's professionalism and commitment to the community.

I also applaud the great detective work of young Mitchell Hults by remembering the details of that suspicious white pickup truck right down to the dents, rust spots and trailer hitch. Mitchell not only saved the life of his friend Ben, but also rescued Shawn from 4½ years of captivity. All are true heroes, and their diligence saved the lives of two young boys and brought solace to the Akers and Ownby families.

On behalf of all Americans and parents nationwide, this House appreciates their good work. To the Akers and Ownby families, I am sure my colleagues will join me in expressing your shared beliefs that your prayers have been answered. Truly, a Missouri miracle.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GILCHREST addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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PREVENTING IRAN FROM OBTAINING NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons ought to be the number one foreign policy objective of the United States. A nuclear Iran would spark region-wide nuclear proliferation. In fact, (Saudi Arabia and its allies have already announced that they are beginning a nuclear program to respond to what Iran is doing). Further, if the Iranian Government were close to being overthrown, and some of us look forward to that day, it could smuggle a nuclear weapon into the United States—either in an effort to reassert popularity with its own people, or with the idea that they would rather go out with a bang.

Now, we cannot stop Iran's nuclear program just by meeting with Iranian emissaries. Secretary Rice has offered to meet with representatives of the Iranian Government anywhere, at any time, to discuss any agenda—so long as during the talks Iran suspends uranium enrichment, just as Iran suspended uranium enrichment when they were talking with European leaders. The refusal of Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, even for a few days in order to speak with Secretary Rice, speaks loudly about their willingness and desire to speak with us.

Likewise, we cannot stop Iran's nuclear program by making unilateral concessions to Iran. We did that in the year 2000. We opened our markets to everything Iran would want to export to us, except oil—things like carpets and dried fruit. In fact, we opened our markets to everything we didn't need, and they couldn't sell anywhere else. The result in public was nasty comments from the Iranian foreign minister. In private what they did was redouble their efforts to obtain nuclear weapons, and provide assistance to the 9/11 hijackers, according to the 9/11 Commission, though they apparently didn't know the exact mission of those they were assisting.

But we can block Iran's nuclear program only if we can pass extreme Security Council sanctions. The mere adoption of strong sanctions at the United