

THE DIOGENES REPORT
The Wit, Wisdom & Wituperation of Emanuel L. Strunin
“a few steps ahead of the curve”
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DENNIS THE MENACE AND OTHER EMPTY SUITS

If you watch the news on TV—network or cable, especially cable—you get the opinions on international affairs of former military men and C.I.A. operatives whose closest connection to international affairs came, as Pat Buchanan once put it about Bill Clinton, when they had breakfast at the International House of Pancakes. They may not add very much to our knowledge, but it’s a way for these retirees to pick up a few—or a lot of—extra bucks. But the most egregious of the TV experts are the “empty suits” that served in the executive branch.

These so-called experts are advising the public how the very assignments that they fucked-up should be handled. They are prophesying the future when they didn’t understand the past or even the present that is swirling around them. And one of the worst of the bunch is Dennis “The Menace” Ross who was a frequent flyer to the Middle East as Bill Clinton’s representative but a very infrequent contributor to a peaceful solution there.

Now on TV, he is trying to tell the American public how the Israeli-Arab conflict should be solved and as head of a left wing “think tank,” he is trying to influence American policy. But with his political ambitions still driving him, he has veered so far to the Arab side that the Saudis could even accept this Jew as the American ambassador.

The “formerly even-handed” Ross now claims that the Israelis are at fault for the “Palestinians” not cleaning up their act. In other words, the Israelis are responsible for the widespread corruption in the Palestinian Authority. The Israelis also are at fault for the Arabs not cracking down on terrorism against Jews and for violence against other Arabs. And, naturally, the Israelis are responsible for the Palestinians not implementing their favorite political system—democracy—in the areas they control.

According to Dennis the Menace, it is Arab anger against the Israelis that prevents them from crawling out of the gutter but doesn’t stop them from destroying their own economy. If he really wanted to be even-handed, he should say that Israeli anger is an adequate reason for having them carpet bomb Ramallah and Jenin and Gaza. But so far the Israelis are controlling their anger. But no public figure ever expects the Arabs to control their anger.

The Menace has a long history of favoring the Arabs over Israel. He has been tagged by several authorities on the Middle East as a “Jewish Arabist.” Any kind of Arabist is bad but a “Jewish Arabist” is probably the worst specimen. Ross served as James “Fuck the Jews” Baker’s right hand man in the first Bush Administration. He continued his vendetta

against Israel in the Clinton Administration, which was influenced by a strong Peace Now contingent.

Now, he is becoming more shrill in his anti-Israel rhetoric as he tries to attract the eye of John Kerry. The New York Times reported that Kerry already regards Ross as a potential future U.S. envoy to the Israel-Palestinian Authority negotiations.

Not only should this tell us about the danger of Dennis the Menace, but it should also raise some red flags about Kerry. A number of my Jewish friends are saying, “anyone but Bush.” We can’t predict what a second Bush term holds, but if you are concerned about the welfare of Israel, Kerry is shaping up as a dangerous alternative.

NAMES

Names that fit and names that don’t.

Here is one that’s a perfect fit: An Indian take-out restaurant in New York City—Curry-In-A-Hurry.

HEADLINES AND COMMENTS

Headlines from the world’s press. Comments by Diogenes.

Obesity Named A Top Preventable Cause Of Death

But what a delicious way to die.

Ethics Opinion Could Hurt Judge’s Nomination

An ethics opinion could hurt every judge’s nomination.

GOP Chief: Many Interested In Empty Board Of Ed Seat

If the guy is playing hookey, why don’t they just send the truant officer to his house?

Martha Stewart Living At Danbury Prison Would Be Dreary

Not if she put some colorful curtains up to hide the bars on the windows.

U.N. Finds Black Box Sent After Crash That Unleashed Genocide In Rwanda

They’d accomplish more by going after their black Secretary General than the black box.

Trade Deficit Widens To Record Amount In January

We should raise some trade barriers. What will these other countries do, threaten to stop selling to us?

Iranian Officials Vow To Restart Nuclear Program

All they have to do is push the “on” button.

Diner Gets Salad With Thumb Part

The real question was the chef's opinion of the salad, thumbs up or thumbs down?

Internet Providers Sue Hundreds Of Spammers

Are they suing because their penises did not grow three inches, or the hot Long Island housewives were not really so hot, or because the mortgage rate offered was no lower than in their local bank?

Contractor Arrested In Botched Job

The cops had better be careful, if they arrest all of the contractors who botch jobs, there won't be any room in our prisons for drug dealers, muggers and crooked politicians.

NCAA To Institute Tougher Recruiting Standards

The recruits will actually have to be high school graduates and be able to shoot 3s from behind the NBA line.

Stamford Rabbi Is Network Exec

Boy could he network. (inside joke)

How Jerry Lewis Shed 58 Pounds

Just look at his head, it's almost down to human size.

CIA Invests In Start-Ups. The Dividend? Technology

Can it be that technology is more profitable than investments in poppy growing or the Medellin cartel?

Fox Praises Bush Proposal To End Fingerprinting Of Mexican Visitors

Bush is no dope, he knows we'll get their fingerprints when the cops arrest them.

More Insurers Deny Coverage For Weight-Loss Surgery

Insurance companies play the odds. They know it takes longer to die of overweight than to die in your prime on the operating table.

Russian Team Of Scientists Is Rescued From Ice Floe

Why couldn't they be left alone, they were just trying to escape from a Siberian Gulag.

Britain Offers Help With Gaza Security

Didn't they give the Arabs enough help the last time they were in the Land of Israel?

Delta Air, General Electric Say Jobs Abroad Help U.S.

I guess if we really want to help ourselves, we should send all of our jobs abroad.

Hamas Backs Off From Targeting Americans

Let al Qaeda kill them. The Koran says that Muslims shouldn't compete with each other.

QUOTES I LIKE

Diogenes considers them clever, not that he necessarily agrees with them.

The Passion of The Christ is merely Braveheart with peyos.

- Diogenes

Bringing democracy to the Arabs is like treating schizophrenics or bipolar sufferers with drugs. It masks the true person temporarily, and as soon as you reject the medication you return to your old self.

- Diogenes

Humor can't go hand in hand with revolution. Humor means multiple viewpoints, which revisionists cannot afford.

- Ned Rorem

1st kid: My dad can beat your dad!

2nd kid: Big deal! My mom can beat my dad.

- B. C. (comic strip)

In America, when a man puts something in another man, it better be a bullet.

- Bill Maher

To forgive and forget means to throw valuable experience out the window.

- Arthur Schopenhauer

Senator Snort: My record double-speaks for itself.

- Grin and Bear It (comic panel)

You may not be able to change the world, but at least you can embarrass the guilty.

- Jessica Mitford

The average man who does not know what to do with his life, wants another one which shall last forever.

- Anatole France

I have not observed man's honesty to increase with their riches.

- Thomas Jefferson

That's the trouble with being a heretic. One usually must think out everything for oneself.

- Aubrey Menen

The real exile of Israel in Egypt was that they learned to endure it.

- Hasidic saying

Undertaker: What do you want to do with his ashes?

Widow: I'm going to use them on my front steps this winter.

Undertaker: I take it you won't be joining the grief support group.

- WIZARD OF ID (comic strip)

Overheard remarks by a parent on a "snow day:" They could have gone to school today. No wonder the kids are so stupid.

- Anonymous

"President Bush" on TV: My fellow Americans...there are those who would like for us to stay focused on bad things...on the negative. They'll talk about the hundreds of young Americans dead and thousands wounded in Iraq. They'll say I misled the country about weapons of mass destruction.

These naysayers will tell you the economy is bad just because we have a massive budget deficit, and because American jobs are disappearing overseas faster than ever.

Well I believe in looking forward to a positive future for this country, and I'm here with some good news that all Americans can be happy about.

Ladies and gentlemen...I just saved a bunch of money on car insurance by switching to GEICO. Good night, and God bless America.

- BOONDOCKS (comic strip)

Duck: There I was on my way to an AFLAC commercial! Two guys jump out of the weeds and try to blow my brains out! I take cover in a barber shop and barely escape with my life! Luckily, I was able to ID them for the cops! You guessed it! Cheney and Scalia!

- Don Wright (editorial cartoon)

Every time I see John Kerry I say, " why the long face?"

- Anonymous

I just took out a home equity loan, now I can fill my car up with gas.

- Diogenes

READERS' COMMENTS

Re: My lettter on the Burg lecture, VOL. IV, #10

Hey! You can always go and heckle...!.

How surprised are you really?!

Always good to receive one of your well written and sharp epistles. In any case.....A bit over zealous , I would think. He (Burg) has a point of view. Besides I don't think that you can blame all the terrorism in Israel on these two events. It has been around way before Burg. If you were PM of Israel what would you have done considering all the pressure from all sides? And come to think of it I am not sure that I have heard of an alternative workable solution to the problems in Israel. Setting up two Jewish states for example albeit an aggressive and a cute or captivating (?) approach which you propose will not solve terrorism either

And you are really unfair to Rabbi Dratch and the Bennetts . Agudath Sholom is hosting a legitimate speaker who tried to help solve an almost unsolvable problem. History may show he may have made a mistake. Maybe not. However am sure his goal was not to weaken the State of Israel. Moreover I am sure that Burg will be glad to answer any of your questions if you attend. But maybe the Agudath homeland security police will have you on the trouble maker--don't allow in list .

Cancer, Islam and Reform Judaism. Are they all equally as bad?

In case there is any question, I am writing the following tongue in cheek.

I was going to suggest to Rabbi Dratch that he consider bringing your Uncle Tom in as part of a double ticket.

Will wonders never cease? I was amazed when I received that "Burg" announcement card. I guess money talks. The Bennetts may or may not be that sophisticated to know Burg's politics but certainly Dratch should

P.S. Its a free country but why give a platform to a Beilin ally, to spew his drivel at an audience, many of whom may be taken in by his "credentials"? HAH!

Your letter to Rabbi Dratch is premature, since Avraham Burg is not scheduled to speak until March 28, and your letter is clearly an attempt at censorship. I am fully in favor of the current Israeli policy of capital punishment of murderers via missiles as well as the proposed withdrawal from Gaza, where the only Jewish historical presence was Samson, not exactly a Jewish role model. However, the recent dispatch of Sheik Yassin, which was obviously done to show the "macho" status of Israel in a vain attempt to damp down Hamas taking credit for driving the Jews out of Gaza, will only result in more Israelis being murdered in the near (and hopefully not the far) term. A much wiser course for Sharon would have been, as Tom Friedman suggested recently, offering the evacuation of Gaza in return for Palestinian concessions, thus putting the Palestinians on the defensive, greatly improving Israel's moral standing in the world, and at least counteracting to some extent, the anti-Semitism in Europe. But as with Bush, Sharon had to cater to his base.

By not even listening to what Avraham Burg has to say, you are trying to tamp down the "Give Peace a Chance" crowd in Israel. The current mess in Iraq has shown what the "Give War a Chance" crowd has wrought.

Diogenes response to the above comments:

Anyone who believes that “Give Peace a Chance” in Israel, as well as In Iraq (because that’s what the policy in Iraq has become) will work is as crazy as its Israeli and American advocates. As for improving Israel’s moral standing in the world, my only question is—which world?

Rabbi Dratch’s response to my first letter--

Thank you for your note and your concern about the program. Burg’s appearance does not mean that the synagogue endorses his political position. It is an opportunity for the community to hear from and learn about a significant position and personality on the Israeli scene and is part of a comprehensive series of programs and speakers that we offer this year. Check our website for details, almost all of whom I believe you would find acceptable. I trust our people to be intelligent and thoughtful.

Thank you as well for your passionate concerns about the direction of the shul and its religious future. I can assure you that our future is a bright one.

My response to Rabbi Dratch’s letter:

I appreciate your friendly and measured response to my objection to having Avraham Burg as a speaker at Agudath but when it comes to the welfare of Israel "even-handed" approaches are unsatisfactory when so much of the world, even numbers of Jews, stand in opposition to the State.

I do not believe that every advocate and every position warrants a platform—particularly a platform at a synagogue. I should hope that you would not invite a member of the KKK or Hamas or Islamic Jihad to speak from your pulpit although these organizations have “significant positions” on Jews and Israel.

Giving a platform to an Avraham Burg is no less dangerous than supplying Israel's Arab enemies with advanced weapons

Let me quote some comments by Amnon Lord, an Israeli writer who once shared the same ideas as the positions advocated by Avraham Burg. Lord writes: “The word ‘treason’ is unsuitable in the context of various figures on the Left and their actions. It is an issue of an entire elite class turning its back on its nation and country. Yossi Beilin and his people’s Geneva agreement expresses that moral collapse in the most poignant way. It includes a willingness to collaborate with PLO propaganda against Israel, a surrender of matters of principle such as Jerusalem and refugees, and especially a waiving of Jewish sovereignty in Israel along with a waiver of our ability to defend ourselves. “

Amnon Lord, who had been a leftist for many years literally had to tear himself away his powerful emotional ties to this heritage when he realized the terrible damage it was doing to his people and his country. I hope the individuals with the left-wing orientation who are responsible for bringing Burg to Stamford have the strength to escape from this ideology which is so dangerous to Israel.

Rabbi Dratch's reply to my second letter:

Thank you for your note. I would be very happy to discuss the issues with you. However, I understand that the first letter you sent to me was widely distributed on your "Diogenes Report." You did not share that information with me when you sent the first e-mail. I assumed it was private correspondence. Did you distribute my response to you as well? Not knowing that I might have been writing for a wider audience, I might have responded differently. I might not have agreed to have it shared. And if it was not circulated, then I find it inappropriate that you feel free to criticize me and my congregation without giving us a chance to explain our position.

Re: THE PASSION

In regard to the Passion of the Christ, you missed the "son of god" shtick, which Paul, in his travels through Greece, picked up from the many myths of Zeus and others descending from Mount Olympus and impregnating earth women to produce lower tier gods, (Hercules etc.).

Secondly, rather than increase anti-Semitism the Passion of the Christ should actually make Caiphaz and those other evil Jews heroes to Christianity, because if they had let Jesus continue, he would have done a "Howard Dean", peaked and forgotten along with other "messiahs" (which, by the way he never said he was).

Comments welcome. e-mail to: editor@diogenesreport.com

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