

THE DIOGENES REPORT
The Wit, Wisdom & Wituperation of Emanuel L. Strunin
“A few steps ahead of the curve”
December 2004, VOL. IV, #36

This the last issue for 2004. I want to wish my readers a happy, healthy, prosperous and victorious new year. Keep those cards and letters and especially those e-mails coming.

Your not so humble and not so obedient editor

- - - - -

SOME MISTAKES ARE COSTLY...SOME MISTAKES CAN BE FATAL

Both the United States and Israel are fighting wars. Both the American Government and the Israeli Government are following policies that clearly show that they do not understand their enemy. I use the singular because it is the same enemy—the Muslim Arabs. At this point in time it is sheer insanity not to understand an enemy that has left an open record of over a thousand years of behavior. But who is to say that governments have to be sane or even competent?

America at war

In Iraq, the U.S. is expending thousands of American lives and hundreds of billions of dollars to create democracy. Every day hundreds of Iraqis and their fellow Muslims are putting their lives on the line to tell us that they don't want democracy (whatever that is) or America or the West (whatever that is). While they are fighting an all-out war, we are putting our fighters at risk by pussyfooting around mosques serving as arms depots and sniper stations. We don't want to offend the religious sensibilities of the murderers of thousands. We try to be oh so careful of harming civilians while these people are slicing off the heads of civilians.

Those that aren't battling us right now—the Shiites—are looking forward to elections so that they will be able to dominate their fellow Iraqis. The Kurds are biding their time until they disengage themselves from the non-nation that masquerades under the name of Iraq. Every day—and often, many times a day—we hear pronouncements that we are winning the war and are close to achieving our noble goal of bringing “democracy” to Iraq. Let's test our optimistic words and pull our troops out—if only as far as Kuwait—and see how far the “Iraqi” people have advanced toward “democracy.”

Israel at war

In Israel, over a thousand Jewish lives have been lost and many thousands more Jews have been maimed during the current Intifada. This Arabic word is a euphemism for “we couldn't destroy your country with national wars, so we'll try an insurrection.” On the Arab side, it is being fought like an all-out war—go after soldiers and, mainly, civilians.

On the Israeli side it is being fought with kid gloves—kill terrorist, but not all of them, and be very careful about harming civilians. When you bomb a military building, make sure that it empty.

The Israeli leadership, including many in the military, keep spouting about taking the “moral high ground.” They seem to believe that this will win “brownie points” with the enemy, as well as with Israel’s “friends” in Europe and in the U.S State Department. And they even believe it is good for Jewish souls. But all that “taking the high moral ground” does is give you a clear view of Auschwitz. This policy is directly responsible for hundreds of Israeli deaths and thousands of maimings. In a war in which the enemy targets women and children, the Israeli leaders should be more concerned with protecting bodies than saving souls.

Forget about a “moral” war

Both America and Israel are trying to fight a “moral” war against an immoral enemy. Their policy can only lead to disasters. The level of disaster, however, will be different for the U.S. and for Israel.

America’s miscalculations about the Arabs of Iraq have already led to over 1,200 American deaths and about 10,000 maimed. These tragic numbers will surely rise significantly in the months and years ahead. Nevertheless our war in Iraq, while it will cause much pain to a great many families, will not destroy our republic.

The noble-sounding concept of bringing “democracy” to the Arabs—if that’s why we’re there is insanity. These people have never shown the slightest interest in democracy. When they have been dissatisfied with a tyrannical leader it was only because each out-of-power group wanted to install its own tyranny. In the millennium-and-a-half of Islam, there was never a truly “democratic” government in the Arab world—it is a foreign concept to their religion and culture.

If there is any sane reason to remain In Iraq, it is to do what we are accused of doing anyway—control the Iraqi oil facilities—oil fields, pipelines and oil terminals and use the oil for the exclusive benefit of the U.S. and our coalition partners. Except for controlling these facilities we should leave the rest of the country to the three peoples that live there and let them decide their future by peaceful means, if possible, or by civil war.

A more dangerous miscalculation

Israel’s miscalculation is far more dangerous for that country than America’s. During the four-year Intifada the Israelis have lost over one thousand men, women and children—mostly civilians. In addition, many thousands more have been maimed. Only the Arabs, here known as Palestinians, are fighting an all-out war to the best of their ability. The Israeli response is a sick joke consisting of attacking empty buildings. Generally not attacking the terrorists when they are hiding behind women and children—a time-honored Arab fighting technique. The Israeli army fights door-to-door—as the Americans

do—thus unnecessarily risking the lives of their soldiers-- instead of using artillery, tank fire and bombers against urban targets. They make sure that all of the terrorist are out of the weapons smuggling tunnels before they collapse them. And the fiasco goes on and on.

Now the Sharon Government plans to add injury to injury by uprooting Jewish communities in the Gaza area thus bringing the terrorist rockets ever closer to Israeli cities. The arrogance of Sharon saying that he won't let terrorism from Gaza continue after the evacuation reminds me of the arrogance of Moshe Dayan before the Yom Kippur War. When asked what he was doing to stop a possible Egyptian invasion, he said: "I have six tanks on the Suez Canal." We know the terrible results of that arrogance. Today, Sharon is fearful of the American and European reactions to strong military actions in Gaza, He will do even less than the little he is doing now when Gaza is an "independent" country.

Unfortunately for the Israelis, Sharon's lack of judgment—or, more accurately, insanity—knows no bounds. He is taking the Egyptians at their word that they will prevent the flow of weapons into Gaza after the Israelis pull out. These are the same Egyptians who are currently participating in smuggling arms into Gaza. How do you say in Hebrew, "that's like letting the fox guard the henhouse?" Further, the government along with the Egyptians say they will train the Palestinian police. The last time Israel provided weapons and training, the Arab police turned their guns on the Jews.

If you put your hand on a hot stove you know not to do it again. How many times are the Israelis going to put their trust in the burning hatred of the Arabs. The only safe way to live with the Arabs is to have your heel on their throat. Anything else can be fatal.

HE SHOULD HAVE ADDED

At a recent meeting in Kuwait between Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and American troops, one serviceman asked why many military vehicles are not armored and why our fighters are not properly armed. The Secretary answered: "You go to war with the army you have, not the one you might want or the one you might wish to have at a later time." To me, this response smacks of a cop out for incompetence at the highest levels in our Defense Department and our military.

The national guardsman should have come back with: "We have gone through extensive training and preparation to do our job—and we are doing our job." And, he should have added: For four years you have talked about and forced changes on the military to create the army that you wanted—an army that would be ready to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. Where are those changes—changes that would enable America's fighting men to defend themselves while they're fighting a war of the 21st Century? We continue to do our job, but you did not do your job. And we're dying because you did not do your job."

We must make certain that “Rummy” or his successor does not become another Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense during the Viet Nam War, who admitted long after the war that he knew that the war could not be won but continued to send thousands of Americans into useless battles to be killed and maimed.

THE SKY IS NOT FALLING

Despite George W. Bush’s shrill cries that Social Security is in crisis, there ain’t no crisis now, nor does there have to be ever. It looks like George is just being a shill for Wall Street. George and the boys want you to put some of your Social Security dollars into “safe” investments so you’ll have a lot more money when you retire. Lucky you didn’t do that 20 years ago and are ready to retire today. Have you looked at your mutual funds lately? The same experts who make fortunes for themselves and do such miserable jobs for the funds they manage will be looking after your Social Security investments.

But what’s more basic to leaving Social Security alone and let it keep on working as it has for over 60 years is that there should be no concern that the fund will run out of money as long as the United States is in business. The practitioners of the aptly-named “dismal science”—the economists—predict that there will be more retirees than workers at some point in the future. These prognosticators who can’t tell what will happen next week want you to accept their long-range predictions.

Even if these predictions come true, the recipients of Social Security will not suffer. Just as the government has been “borrowing” from Social Security to pay for other obligations and programs, funds from future general taxation can be used for Social Security. And if the numbers of senior citizens predicted for the future are correct, Congress would be very, very hard pressed to refuse funding for Social Security including annual cost-of-living increase.

So relax George, those of us who don’t have family connections to bail us out of stock market losses prefer Social Security the way it is.

NAMES

Names that fit and names that don’t.

This one fits. Thomas R. Saving is the co-author of “Dollars, Sense and Fixing Social Security”, an op-ed piece on how to “save” the system.

This is a questionable one from the Stamford, CT Police Blotter. Franklin Degree of Bridgeport was charged with violation of probation. The Blotter did not indicate if this was a 1st, 2nd or 3rd degree violation.

Decide this one for yourself. Shawn Boocock, a computer programmer for the Rhode island Department of Health was fired for using his computer to download child pornography.

HEADLINES AND COMMENTS

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

Greenwich Could Be First In State To OK Deer Sharpshooting Program

Here is a better idea that will prevent anyone get hit by a stray bullet. Allow motorists who see deer standing by the side of the road to go off-road and hit them.

Salmon Are Reproducing Naturally In Connecticut

Those sex education courses work wonders.

Aristotle Sees Jump In Quarterly Earnings

Suddenly, everyone wants to be an ancient Greek.

Realists Flee State Dept. As Rice Moves In

Are they fleeing to their natural habitat—the Saudi Foreign Service?

PA Bans Incitement On TV, Not In Schools

The Arabs recognize the value of education

Appellate Court Ruling Gives Parents Leeway In Hitting Kids

It's OK John, you can give Junior 25 more lashes.

Some Women Object To Airport Patdowns

I would like to meet those that don't object.

Authorities: Alleged Mobster Made Deals At Starbucks

Hey kid, give me some extra whipped cream and I'll make it worth your while.

Malpractice Pinch Has Md. Doctors Mulling Whether To Wait -- Or Leave

Have they mulled whether to improve the quality of their work?

Red Cross Finds Detainee Abuse In Guantánamo

The Red Cross should serve coffee and donuts to the prisoners. That will solve the problem

Controversial Evangelist Billy James Hargis, 79 (obit)

If an evangelist has sex with his male and female students, is that considered controversial?

Appeals Judge Lets Former N.Y. Lawmaker Stay Out Of Jail

Don't they mean lawbreaker?

Life Is Too Short! Watch A Sunset (headline from a funeral home ad)

That's an appropriate place to watch from. It's a house of sunsets.

Jailed Terrorist Says He Wants To Follow in Arafat's Footsteps (radio news)

Barghouti asked for it. The Israelis should inject him with the AIDS virus.

Needy Seniors To Receive \$2.3 Million In Prescription Drugs

That will take care of one family for a month. What about the rest?

Opposition Leader In Ukraine Was Poisoned , Doctors Say

He should stay out of those Ukrainian Chinese restaurants.

Injured Doctor To Get \$6.4M From Greenwich

Since it's not a malpractice award, 6 million bucks is fair Doc.

World Hypnosis Day Is On Jan. 4

Well, at least for one day Islam can be the religion of peace and George W. Bush can pronounce a two syllable word correctly.

Brown, NAACP President Reelected

Is this a sign of Political Correctness? I remember when the president of the NAACP was White (Walter, that is).

Violent Crime In Schools Cut In Half Over 10 Years

Are they trying to drive our kids into white collar crime?

(Gov.) Rell Discusses Tribal Recognition Process

Is she including the tribes of Levi, Shimon, Yehuda and Issacher?

Rail Fares To Increase In 2005

Nothing to be concerned about, the increases in fares will be balanced by decreases in services.

Bloomberg Says Kerik Made Mistake

One mistake?

Man Accused Of Abducting Wife Is Injured Jumping Out Of Car

Who was abducting whom?

Celebrix To Remain On Market

But Pfizer plans to donate billions to triple the number of cardiac facilities across the country.

Survey Shows Support For Curbing Freedoms Of Muslim-Americans

Does this mean they may not be able to contribute to Islamic “charities” that support terrorist organizations?

Bin Laden Tape Suggests Hurting U.S. Oil Industry

Is he taking up the cause of American consumers?

Victims Divided Over Public Tactics Of Support Group For Clergy Abuse

Is this a case of the ”converted” vs. the “protestants?”

Spectra Finishes Last In Crash Tests; KIA Stands Behind Car (radio news)

I’d also be afraid to stand in front of it.

Guard Pins Hopes On New Recruiting Plan

A \$10,000 bonus and you serve in your own neighborhood. That should help meet recruiting goals.

Israel To Release 170 Palestinian Prisoners

Ah, Mr. Sharon, don’t worry that the sleeves are too long, we’ll tie them up neatly behind your back.

Debate Surrounds Doctors’ Roles In Execution

Forget about their death row executions, what about their operating room executions?

With New Law Looming, Vehicle Donors Hit The Gas Pedal

Probably trying to run down some guys from the IRS

Rumsfeld Says He Will Sign Condolence Letters

Has he said anything about reducing the need for condolence letters?

Kerik’s Disgrace Is A New York City Story

Like mother, like son. His mother also was a prostitute.

Sudan Begins To Withdraw Troops From Darfur

Will they be allowed to take their black slaves with them?

Annan, At U.S. Urging Seeks Special U.N. Session To Mark Liberation Of Nazi Death Camps

Interesting. There was a previous head of the U.N. who helped fill those camps.

U.S. Gets Another Chance To Support Mideast Moderation

From an op-ed piece by Joe Biden...I wonder from whom he plagiarized this idea.

QUOTES I LIKE

Diogenes considers them clever and/or informative, not that he necessarily agrees with them.

If everyone swept in front of his own door, the whole town would be clean.

- Goethe

Cooking tip: Wrap turkey leftovers in aluminum foil and throw them out.

- Nicole Hollander

Any ship can be a minesweeper ... once.

- Anonymous

Not to know what happened before one is born is to remain forever a child.

- Cicero

The tragedy of innovators is their followers.

- Hillel Kook (Peter Bergson)

Israel would do well not to trust anybody. Trust is not an element of international relations.

- Barbara Tuchman

Dagwood: It says the new head of a major corporation is donating half his salary to charity...and he spends his weekends working in a soup kitchen...apparently the Feds are keeping a close eye on him.

Blondie: I would think so.

- BLONDIE (comic strip)

I've never before seen so much cleverness, blood and filth all together in one man. I felt a compulsion to take a shower whenever I had been kissed by Arafat, or even just shaken his hand.

- Romanian Intelligence Officer

Athens is always a dangerous rival to Sparta.

- Israel Zangwill

They (Notre Dame) want to be Princeton on the weekdays and Oklahoma on the weekends.

- Anonymous Athletic Director

The message to the next Notre Dame football coach is unmistakable: Winning with thugs and academic misfits is a far wiser course of survival than losing with character and high grade point averages.

- Adrian Wojnarowski

One who starts out by being merciful to the cruel ends up by being cruel to the merciful.

- Yehoshua ben Levi

I knew Eugene V. Debs and Marwan Barghouti is no Eugene V. Debs.

- Mahmoud Abbas

We are all worms. But I do believe that I am a glow worm.

- Winston Churchill

The finish line is only the beginning of a whole new race.

- "Teddy" Ebersol

The state is an instrument and not a value. When the state is seen as a value, we have the essence of fascism. Since it is, in essence, a system of power and coercion, the state is the enemy of man. States merely serve as a framework in which men may strive for values.

- Yeshayahu Leibowitz

Your mind begins to work the day you are born and doesn't stop until you stand up to make a speech.

- Anonymous

Loneliness is like a hammer blow that shatters glass but hardens steel.

- Fania Klausner

An Englishman thinks he is moral when he is only uncomfortable.

- George Bernard Shaw

George W. Bush: A man with a one gallon head in a ten gallon hat.

- Diogenes

Wizard: What did the doctor say?

Blanch: He said I need to get more exercise.

Wizard: So, what are you going to do?

Blanch: Get a second opinion.

- WIZARD OF ID (comic strip)

You do not need to be merciful until you have ceased being just.

- Ludwig Lewisohn

THE LIMERICK CORNER

From memory, friends and various collections.

There once was a nun from Peru,
Who said as the bishop withdrew,
The vicar is slicker,
And thicker and quicker,
And six inches longer than you.

Nymphomaniacal Alice,
Used a dynamite stick for a phallus.
They found her vagina,
In North Carolina.
And part of her asshole in Dallas.

A spinster who came from the Ruhr
Was grasped by a vulgar young boor.
This detestable varmint
Unfastened her garment,
But she found he was just a voyeur.

READERS' COMMENTS

I enjoyed #34. Right on!
I don't know how u manage to be funny and smart all the time. It's a gift, I guess.

Diogenes comment: "you guess right!"

Re: "SOME THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE INNAUGURAL,"
I have two additions.
30. Take a tranquilizer to obliterate these paranoid fantasies.
31. Take a memory pill to try to recall who the hell John Kerry was
and what he stood for.

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