

THE DIOGENES REPORT
The Wit, Wisdom & Wituperation of Emanuel L. Strunin
“A few steps ahead of the curve”
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(Items marked with an * were written by Diogenes.)

WHAT DOES THE ISRAELI ELECTION MEAN?

The following comments by Moshe Feiglin, head of Manhigut Yehudit (Jewish Leadership) faction of the Likud offer an interesting analysis of the Israeli elections. Feiglin has hope for a better future for Israel, but pay heed to what Lincoln said: “You can fool some of the people all of the time.”

“The Religious Jews and the Arabs are the only stable populace in Israel. If we just consider the Jewish population, the only sector that did not have any significant change is the religious sector. The ultra-Orthodox (6 Knesset seats) the Sephardic/Religious Shas party (13 Knesset seats) and the Nationalist Religious (9 Knesset seats) make up the 25% of the Israeli public that remains politically constant. The rest of the Israeli public -- a whopping 75% -- are in complete turmoil. Kadimah, Leiberman's party and the Pensioners party that make up 55% of the Jewish electorate are all default parties. In other words, more than representing a coherent ideological stand, they represent aversion to the present political reality. Very few people even know who is the number 2 Knesset member on the Pensioners list. The Labor party came in second with a significant achievement, but it is not the party of yesteryear. People who voted Labor were also voting for a basically unknown entity.

Despair replaced ideology

“There is one thing that these elections clearly tell us about the Jewish public in Israel. 75% of the public has no real political anchor. There are no more political "homes," for which entire families vote because that is their tradition. There is no more ideology, there is no one that can be believed and there is nothing in which to believe. The only constant in three quarters of Jewish Israel is apathy and essentially -- deep despair. Nobody seemed to have noticed, but in the week that Iran's President, who publicly calls for Israel's destruction, announced that he will have atomic weapons within the year, elections were held in the country targeted for destruction -- and the person elected to lead the sheep slated for slaughter did not relate to the subject at all. And actually, why should he relate to it? No other party gave it any notice either...

The good news

“The bad news is plain to see. The deep despair played into the hands of the most senseless political powers in Israel. But the good news is that the potential for a true revolution is tremendous. If in the past we were accustomed to Right and Left wing blocs with inconsequential percentages of people open to new ideas, today the calm winds of

change have become a virtual storm. Anything is now possible. Tens of Knesset seats move from here to there and essentially do not go anywhere. Olmert's scheming arrogance ("Living here is going to be great") will quickly shatter on the rocks of reality and the option for a belief based revolution for leadership of the country will be closer than ever.

“The big question that we must ask ourselves is if the Likud is still the appropriate platform to advance Manhigut's goals. In potential, the Likud could recover and again become the Nationalist leadership tool. But it depends on the ability of its leadership to be open and accept new ideas and people, as the Labor party has done. One thing is for sure. The question is not what will happen with the Likud, but what will happen to Israel. If it continues in its current direction, Israel has no chance for long-term existence. A total, belief-based revolution is crucial to its very survival. Israel does not need religious leadership that is disconnected from reality, but rather belief-based leadership -- with its feet on the ground and its heart with our Father in heaven.”

HANKY PANKY AT THE BIG DANCES?*

The “big dances” are, of course, the men and women’s NCAA basketball tournaments. By hanky panky, I am not implying in any shape, manner or form a relationship to the point-shaving scandals that plagued college basketball many years ago. However, I would like to explore other pressures that may have been placed on these outstanding amateur athletes by forces other than bookmakers.

Both CBS and ESPN and their advertisers have tremendous sums invested in maintaining high audience levels for their broadcasts of these basketball tournaments. Blowouts lead to viewers turning off their TV sets or turning to other channels. In this year’s games there have been almost no blowouts and most of the games have been nail-biters decided in the last five seconds...or less. No one turned off their TV sets. This makes one wonder if the networks and their advertisers prevailed upon the players and/or coaches to hold off their best play until the final seconds to keep viewers glued to their TV screens. I’m not accusing—just asking.

PAY THROUGH THE NOSE*

An editorial in the Washington Post takes issue with a trend that has bothered me for a number of years. The headline for the Post’s comment is: “The Right Visitor Fee: \$0.” This is in reaction to a suggestion by a Virginia congressman that the Smithsonian Museums change their no-fee policy and start charging a visitor’s fee of \$1. The \$25 million—from the 25 million people that visit each year—would help pay for the much needed-repairs to the Smithsonian’s 600 structures.

Hey, wait a minute; the Smithsonian belongs to the people of the United States, so why should we pay more than we already are paying for its operation. Furthermore, do not tell me that our government which pisses away \$10 billion a month in Iraq, and more elsewhere, cannot afford to keep this national treasure in good repair. I'm certain that refurbishing the museum structures also will cost us less casualties than Iraq or Afghanistan.

That takes me back to the trend that the Smithsonian proposal represents—the assessment of fixed or “voluntary” fees to visit cultural institutions. New York’s Museum of Modern Art now charges a \$20 entrance fee; the Metropolitan Museum of Art has a \$15 “recommended” fee; the Bronx Botanical Garden charges for entry plus parking, as does the Bronx Zoo. We already pay for these institutions even if we don’t visit them. They pay no real estate taxes for the valuable property they occupy. They make money from their tax-free gift shops and rental properties. They likely use municipal services at no cost or low cost. And they give donors the opportunity to pay less income tax.

I recall when all of these institutions could be visited without charge. I don’t believe that access to our cultural heritage should be a financial burden to any of our citizens. The cost of helping maintain cultural institutions should be shouldered by cities and states in which they operate. These costs will be more than offset by the monies these institutions bring in from tourists and other visitors.

Let’s bring back free culture, as we once knew it.

HEADLINES AND COMMENTS*

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

Bush Gets In Some Sightseeing In Mexico

Senor, dees eez from where the illegales start dee trip to your country.

Bush Pledges To Defend Israel From An Iranian Attack

Does he think he can get the American troops out of Iraq in time?

In Louisiana, Graft Inquiries Are Increasing

Hey, it’s Louisiana!

Former U.S. Ambassador Dennis B. Ross To Discuss “The Missing Peace In The Middle East” At Fairfield University

Why do they pay this guy who accomplished nothing as the roving “peace process” ambassador to advise the public on how the job should be done? “Dennis the Menace” is no more than an empty suit.

Sharon's Party Is Winner In Israel

But Israel is the loser.

Bush Opposes Iraq's Premier, Shiites Report

Don't the winners of the election get to pick the premier they want? Doesn't Bush claim that he wants to bring democracy to Iraq?

Plight Deepens For Black Men, Studies Warn

Is this about the proposal to raise the hoop to 12 feet?

Russian Company Moves Closer To Bankruptcy

Another step in putting humpty-dumpty together again. The first step was to get rid of the Jew who organized their biggest oil company. Isn't that always the first step?

Maryland Acts To Take Over Failing Baltimore Schools

Did they fail a standardized test?

Caspar W. Weinberger, Who Served 3 Republican Presidents, Is Dead At 88

He is either rotting in hell or banging a black-eyed virgin in Muslim heaven.

West Bank Withdrawal

The New York Times management, despite all of their efforts, couldn't prevent the establishment of the Jewish state so they continue to try to undermine it.

Softbank To Buy Vodafone's Japan Cellphone Unit For \$15 Billion

I can't hear you now.

U.S. Revokes Visa Of Pakistani Senator

How about revoking the visas of some U.S. Senators.

A Lone Voice Against Sex Offender Bill

Is it Michael Jackson? Is he singing his opposition?

Foreigners Returning To U.S. Schools

We should try to get more American dropouts to return.

Emirates Won't Follow 'Eye For An Eye' Policy For Ports Rejection

You can bet your donkey they won't because they know when it comes to the time to save their asses from another Saddam or Osama or the Iranians, they can't depend on their European friends, but only on Uncle Sam.

Arab, Dressed As Jewish Hitchhiker, Murders Four

Left-wingers dressed as Israelis are responsible for many more murders of Jews.

Israeli Arabs Observe 'Land Day' In Lod, Wave Hamas Flags

That's what happens when you keep poisonous snakes in your house.

Long-Awaited Medical Study Questions The Power Of Prayer
Baruch HaShem!

Massachusetts Court Limits Gay Unions
The Screen Actors Guild?

Church Sex Abuse Costs Rise Despite Drop In New Allegations
Love/sex, the gift that keeps on giving/taking.

Study: Praying Won't Affect Heart Patients

It's safe for all you heart patients to go to your churches and synagogues, but for the time being, keep away from mosques—no Muslims were included in the study.

Favors Found In Air Force Contracts

The Secretary of Defense says the problem is not as bad as that of the woman who took \$500 in welfare checks to which she wasn't entitled.

Most See Visa Program As Extremely Flawed

That's the way it looked to me, so I switched to Master Card.

EPA May Weaken Rule On Water Quality

As Marie Antoinette, or the Republican environmental mavens, may have said: "Let them drink Evian."

Students Across The Nation Protest Immigration Bills

They want to insure that they are treated well when they go to Mexico on Spring Break.

QUOTES I LIKE

Diogenes considers these quotes clever and/or informative, not that he necessarily agrees with them--not even his own.

You can't measure the difference between sectarian violence and civil war.

- Diogenes

Democracy is unstable as a political system as long as it remains a political system and nothing more, instead of being...not only a form of government, but also a type of society and manner of life.

- R. H. Tawney

Reagan won because he ran against Jimmy Carter. Had he run unopposed he would have lost.

- Mort Sahl

If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?

- Abraham Lincoln

When you go into court you are putting your fate in the hands of twelve people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.

- Norm Crosby

Illegal aliens have always been a problem in the United States. Ask any Indian.

- Robert Orben

If you're looking for someone who won't cheat, date a paranoid personality who always fears someone is watching. If you want someone who is more likely to think of the details in a relationship (and is sure to remember the little things), date someone with a healthy obsessive-compulsive disorder. Dating someone who is hysterical has a number of exciting advantages, especially their ability to express their feelings.

- David Zuccolotto (The Truth About Psychology: Dr. Sickmund Fred's Case Notes and Diary)

Zonker: Yikes! It's a costumed concept! Who are y'all pray tell?

Concept Guys: WE'RE THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST!

Zonker: No kidding?! Oh, Wow...lay some hubris on me, fellahs!

Concept Guys: WE CAN WIN THE WAR IN VIET NAM!!

Zonker: Outstanding!

- Doonesbury (c. 1974)

Suggested title for a biography of Ariel Sharon: "A Coma, Too Late."

- Diogenes

Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely.

- Karen K. Clark

There is no such thing as free will. The mind is induced to think this or that by some cause and that cause is determined by another cause, and so back to infinity.

- Baruch Spinoza

We hear about Constitutional rights, free speech and the free press. Every time I hear those words I say to myself, "That man is a Red, that man is a Communist." You never hear a real American talk like that.

- Frank Hague (Mayor of Jersey City, 1938)

It is thus with most of us; we are what other people say we are. We know ourselves chiefly by hearsay.

- Eric Hoffer

Christ cannot possibly have been a Jew. I don't have to prove it scientifically. It's a fact.

- Joseph Goebbels

An incompetent attorney can delay a trial for months or years. A competent attorney can delay one even longer.

- Evelle J. Younger

Knowledge can be communicated, but not wisdom. One can find it, live it, be fortified by it, but one cannot communicate and teach it.

- Hermann Hesse

Selections from the Ten Top Talents of the Contestants in the Miss Iraq Pageant

- Getting plastic explosives through airport security.
- Making poison gas out of common household cleansers.
- Pointing to Mecca after being spun around three times blindfolded.
- Blowing self up in car in parking lot.
- Beating the crap out of Miss Kuwait
- David Letterman's Top Ten List

READER'S COMMENTS

Who authored "The Devil Made Me Do It"? It is terribly clever. Since the Salvation Army did refuse my furniture, I guess I qualify as a Redneck too.

Visit my new blog, DIOGENES # XXI at <http://diogenesxxi.blogspot.com/>!

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