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Muslims should stop apologising

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Legend has it that President Lyndon Johnson used to arm twist legislators so hard that some Senator or Congressman would simply give up and inform the President that he would vote as the President wished, just to get Lyndon off his back! America's Israeli lobby has mastered the technique of mind twisting. In 1981, when the new Regan administration wanted to sell AWAC early warning planes to Saudi Arabia, American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a pro-Israeli lobbying group, fought it tooth and nail. Although the bill eventually squeaked through, the point was made. Ever since, before proposing a name for any important appointment, the Reagan administration would check with AIPAC to make sure it met with their approval! Over the years, the American Jewish lobbies have transformed the adage "squeaky wheel gets the grease" into a refined art. With a view to intimidating Americans, any criticism of Israel is met with a barrage of loud and shrill denunciatory shouts -- literally on television and radio and figuratively in the print media. The shrill sends a chill down the spine of legislators, making them spineless. They are forced to think only one way -- pro-Israel. The US Jews have universally condemned Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's comments. Let us not forget, Mahathir was very civil in his criticism of the Jews. The Jews in America are anything but ... New York city radio stations regularly use the "b-word," to describe the Malaysian Prime Minister! You know, the word with connotations of illegitimacy!

The New York Times published a quarter page ad by The American Jewish Committee on October 26, which read: "SHAME. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad delivered a scathing anti-Semitic speech at the recent meeting of the 57-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference. President Bush and several other heads of state emphatically denounced his comments, but the Muslim leaders assembled for the conference, to their everlasting shame, gave Mahathir a standing ovation. Bigotry is bigotry. When an entire people or religion is assailed, all people and all religions are threatened. At such moments, people of good will need to be heard. History has taught us the danger of silence. SPEAK OUT. Go to www.ajc.org to send e-mails to Malaysia's ambassador to the United States and to the Organisation of Islamic Conference. Let them know you oppose hatred and stand for a world based on mutual respect. Signed David. A. Harris, Executive Director and Harold Tanner, President."

Anyone living in the New York metropolitan area cannot escape Mr. David Harris's incessant hate-filled, anti-Muslim bigotry in his radio commercials. For Mr. Harris to pretend to "oppose hatred and stand for a world based on mutual respect" would have been comical had it not been so sinister in intent. His sole aim is to goad Americans into hating Muslims even more, and to deceive the American public, at which his organisation has no peer. He implies, deceitfully as usual, through the shameful misrepresentation, "When an entire people or religion is assailed," as though Mahathir had attacked all Jews (he had actually praised some) and the Jewish religion itself (which he absolutely had not!). Such distortion and lies may intimidate Americans suffering from "anti-Semite label" phobia; it will not intimidate the Muslims. The writer has always condemned suicide bombing against Israeli civilians and had written an entire column denouncing the murderers of Daniel Pearl. He is still waiting for Mr. Harris to criticise one of Israel's thousand of atrocities against the Palestinians. Everlasting shame to you, Mr. Harris, for putting Israel's interest ahead of America's all these years! Muslim Americans have taken an oath of allegiance to America and America only. Muslim Americans do not promote the interest of a second country. Will your and other Jewish organizations, Mr. Harris, take an oath of allegiance to America only, and not put Israel's interest ahead of America's? Somehow, I doubt it!

Of 4223 words in Mahathir's address, only 373 made direct or indirect reference to Jews, Israel, Palestine and Western policies, including the line, "Even among Jews there are many who do not approve of what the Israelis are doing," which should absolve Mahathir of the charges of anti-Semitism in the eyes of the fair-minded people. What none of Mahathir's detractors have done is to come out and flatly say, "He is wrong!" Is Mahathir wrong about "Jews control the world"? Is it not true that the powerful Jewish lobby controls US's political system? Didn't President Nixon's speech writer and twice Republican candidate for the Presidency, Patrick Buchanan, label US Congress as "Israeli occupied territory?" Is it not true that the US has vetoed, killed or diluted every UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israeli crimes? Is it not true that the careers of many Israel-critical US politicians ended at behest of Jewish power and Jewish money (remember African-American Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney's Jewish-financed defeat in 2002)? Is it not true that the people behind President Bush's aggressive Israel-first foreign policy, the neoconservatives, are predominantly Jewish? Is it not true that, led by Israeli agent Deputy Defence Secretary Dr. Paul Wolfowitz, now stomping Iraq as a conqueror, these newcons had a blueprint for invading Israel's enemy Iraq as far back as 1992, well before September 11, and used the latter as an excuse?

Let me cite an example of what the Muslims are up against. A few days ago, the writer attended a seminar given by a panel of Republican legislators, including a US Congressman. They were so afraid of the "anti-Semite" label that they

treaded very carefully on any question on Israel. Their favourite line is like Bush's: "the Palestinians must stop the violence." They would not condemn, not even acknowledge Israeli violence! The writer pointed out that there is a perception, not only in the Islamic world, but also in the world at large that America is unjust and unfair in its foreign policy, especially when it comes to Israel, and that is not good for America. The writer added that the three recent US vetoes to protect Israel from paying for its crimes were detrimental to America's long-term interests. (Some legislators professed ignorance of the vetoes!) Finally, in exasperation the writer commented that he detected some reluctance, if not outright trepidation on the panel's part to criticise Israel! The writer's question was like a hot potato, which no one on the panel wanted to handle!

Because of the fear of retaliation from the Jews, Americas have become de-sensitised to Israeli crimes. When Israel demolishes three apartment complexes or murders ten Palestinians, the news is presented as though Israel had no choice. When Palestinians resist occupation and kill even Israeli soldiers, America's moral backbone shores up, and from Bush on down condemnation rains down on the Palestinian "terrorists." Even CNN gives a pro-Israeli twist to its news coverage. According to CNN, any Palestinian Israel kills are some sorts of a "militant" or a "terrorist." Even when Israel destroys three apartment complexes contravening all international laws against collective punishment, making thousand of Palestinian men, women and children homeless, CNN justifies it by toeing the Israeli line, "they were lookout posts!" Thanks to this Jewish-Wolfowitz-Bush convoluted logic, the invaders and occupiers of Iraq are its "liberators," and the Iraqis resisting occupation are "terrorists."

"Every few years, the Jewish lobby 'eliminates' an American politician who does not support the Israeli government unconditionally. This is not done secretly, behind the scenes, but as a public 'execution'. Israel manufactures and exports anti-Semitism that threatens Jews around the world." Words of Mahathir Mohamad? No, these are the words of Uri Avnery, the well-known Israeli peace activist. Just imagine what would have happened if Mahathir Mohamad has uttered those truths? (For the record, President Bush did not condemn Mr. Avnery for his "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Semitic" remarks!) "The days of Holocaust are over. The Zionist state of Israel has become the oppressor." Mr. Avnery added, "David has morphed into a Goliath." "The oppressive state of Israel cannot be allowed to keep everyone hostage based on historical wrongs perpetuated on the Jews by the Christian world." The Muslims are being made to pay for the guilt of the Christians.

The instantaneous condemnation of Mahathir by the high and mighty like President Bush, and Jewish threat of an economic boycott of Malaysia only reinforce Mahathir's point about the stranglehold the Jews have over the world and its leaders. (The Muslim world is still awaiting Mr. Bush's condemnation of Deputy Defence Secretary General Boykin's anti-Muslim tirade.) Under no circumstance should Mahathir apologise for speaking the truth. As Mahathir says: "We are all oppressed. We are all being humiliated. Today, we the Muslim ummah are treated with contempt and dishonour. Our religion is denigrated. Our holy places are desecrated. Our countries are occupied. Our people are starved and killed." So, why should WE, the Muslims apologise, not THEY, our oppressors? If Islam is guilty of harbouring terrorists within its ranks, so are Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Islam, therefore, cannot be singled out as the only religion "hijacked" by terrorists. The terrorists have been hijacked by their personal, distorted beliefs; they have not hijacked the religion they profess to practice. Muslims should stop apologising and start standing up for their rights and their religion.