

# *The Link*

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**by Geoff Simons**

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## About This Issue

In his more than 40-year career, our feature writer, Geoff Simons, has authored nearly 60 books focusing on international politics, history and philosophy. His latest book is "Pakistan: A Failing Nuclear State?"

This is Geoff's third article for us, and we are pleased to welcome him back to the pages of *The Link*.

Our website interview on page 13 is with Stephen L. Naman, president of the American Council for Judaism (ACJ). In June of last year, he was featured in The New York Times "On Religion" column, which triggered a spike in his organization's website traffic. In that article the Times suggested that intense criticism of Israel among American Jews was making the 69-year-old ACJ look significant and even—the paper's word—prophetic.

On page 14 Jane Adas reviews the three-volume "Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." The editor, Cheryl Rubenberg, has written two feature articles for *The Link* and the Encyclopedia itself includes entries by *Link* writers Naseer Aruri, Michael Dumper, Jeff Halper, Daniel McGowan, Norton Mezvinsky, Fouad Moughrabi, A. Richard Norton, Ilan Pappé, Michael Warschawski, and Alison Weir.



—Photo by Corneil Simons

**Geoff Simons**

Oh, and did I mention, it costs \$395.00!

We expect few, if any, of our readers will purchase this monumental work. The Encyclopedia is being marketed to libraries. We do suggest that readers might recommend the Encyclopedia to their local librarian. Or, if the library is on a tight budget, they might consider asking the librarian if they could give it as a gift. It would make a valuable addition to any library's resource section.

Our current video selections are found on page 15. These, along with our entire book catalog, are available on line at [www.ameu.org](http://www.ameu.org).

On page 16 we note with appreciation the bequest received from the estate of Aref Jabr. Aref was a steadfast friend of AMEU who supported our efforts during his lifetime and whose remembrance, now, insures the continuation of those efforts.

—John F. Mahoney  
 Executive Director

There are many types of international diplomacy intended to protect and further the interests of nation states. When Hillary Clinton, U.S. secretary of state, says that the United States will continue to fund the Palestinian Authority only if Mahmoud Abbas remains its leader, we witness a classic case of dollar diplomacy. And yet despite the U.S. funding of Israel and Egypt to the tune of billions of dollars per year, Washington was mysteriously unable to use dollar diplomacy to end the excesses of the Mubarak dictatorship, and still can't end the many Israeli violations of international law. Of course, behind the diplomatic options that economic dominance provides, there is also the unassailable diplomatic power facilitated by military muscle. The international diplomat, when able to speak for a superpower, can both bribe and bully.

It's called gunboat diplomacy, and it's as old as the conflict between nations.

The term originated in the era of European imperialism, when a show of military might off the coast was often sufficient to intimidate other states into granting trade or territorial concessions. The United States has long practiced gunboat diplomacy as an exercise of hegemony. Theodore Roosevelt favored "big stick" diplomacy, and Woodrow Wilson is judged to have practiced conventional gunboat diplomacy in 1914 when the rebel Cándido Aguilar occupied Veracruz during the Mexican revolution (countless earlier examples could be given from the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

The most dramatic example of American gunboat diplomacy was the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—not to impress Japan, since the war was already won, but to intimidate the Soviet Union. In March 1944 the Nobel laureate Professor Sir Joseph Rotblat was shocked to hear General Leslie Groves, head of the Manhattan Project, say: "You realize of course that the real purpose of making the bomb is to subdue our chief enemy, the Russians." Japan was defeated but the Truman administration wanted to teach the Soviets a *realpolitik* lesson. In 1948, Professor Patrick Blackett commented that the use of atomic bombs was "not so much the last military act of the Second World War, as the first diplomatic war with Russia." In the same vein, Secretary of State James Byrnes said in June 1945:

"The bomb was needed not to defeat Japan but rather to make Russia more manageable in Europe."

Today the United States, the most powerful military state on earth, continues to use gunboat diplomacy in different ways. In November 2010 the Christian Science Monitor observed in an article headed "Obama uses gunboat diplomacy with North Korea—and China" that the president had made a "clever strategic move" after a North Korean rocket attack had killed four people on a South Korean island. Obama had ordered the U.S.S. Washington aircraft carrier strike force into the Yellow Sea, off the western shore of North Korea but also in a maritime area that Beijing claims is its own regional zone. Perhaps the Chinese military strategists were suitably impressed. The old European imperialists would have applauded.

But there's more. Now, to the world's arsenals of jet planes, aircraft carriers and nuclear bombs, we can add drones.

Variouly described as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and remotely piloted vehicles (RPVs), they have facilitated an entire new level of diplomacy. The general principles are the same. *We have the technology. Do as we say or we will blast you into submission.*

Drone diplomacy is currently being implemented as a practical military device, deployed in various theaters of war and serving as a constant threat to weak states that may be rash enough to challenge the U.S. and other hegemonies, not least Israel's regional dominance.

### The History of UAVs

Unmanned aerial vehicles, like gunboat diplomacy, have a long evolutionary history.

In their simplest form they date back to centuries before Christ, when the ingenious Chinese first launched kites. On Aug. 22, 1849 the Austrians used unmanned balloons, some launched from the Austrian ship *Vulcano*, to attack the Italian city of Venice. Some of the balloons, each 23 feet in diameter and packed with explosives, worked as intended to alarm the Italians, while unpredictable winds blew some of the devices back over the Austrian lines.

During the American Civil War a surveillance camera was placed on a tethered balloon; during World War I a camera was placed on the leg of a homing pigeon. In 1915 the Kettering Bug, intended to be the first military drone, was devised as a remotely controlled weapon able to follow a crudely preprogrammed course, shed its wings and dive as a bomb on the selected target. It was never fully developed, partly through lack of funds; then the war ended, probably much to the chagrin of the Bug technicians.

The first operational UAV was A.M. Low's "aerial target" of 1916, soon followed by a more lethal machine. On Sept. 12, 1916 the Hewitt-Sperry Automatic Airplane, dubbed a "flying bomb" and controlled by Elmer Sperry gyroscopes, made its first flight and demonstrated the feasibility of unmanned assault aircraft. In 1924 the scientist Hugo Gernsback saw the advantages of a "pilotless plane which sees" via radio control and a television link, though the current technology was inadequate for such a device.

During the 1930s the U.S. Navy began experimenting with radio-controlled aircraft, and in 1937 produced Curtiss N2C-2 drones, remotely controlled from other aircraft. The following year the U.S. Army Air Corps signed a contract with the Radioplane Company, later the Ventura Division of Northrop Corporation, to produce three radio-controlled target drones. During WWII the United States Air Force (USAF) acquired hundreds of target UAVs, radio-controlled versions of the Culver Cadet two-seat light civil aircraft, and thousands of more sophisticated Culver designs. The German V-1 buzz bomb, used primarily to attack London during the war, has been classed as an offensive drone, a pilotless aerial vehicle carrying a bomb.

The concept of "assault drones" using television cameras began

development in the early 1940s. In April 1942 a drone successfully delivered a torpedo attack on a Japanese destroyer at a range of 20 miles from the control aircraft. Then the U.S. Navy Bureau of Aeronautics launched a television-assisted remote-control assault drone program of 162 control planes and 1,000 assault drones. At this time the notion of using UAVs as assault vehicles for military targets remained controversial on cost and tactical grounds, and assault drones were not used during the major allied advances in 1944. At the end of July 1944, four drones were used to attack a beached Japanese merchant ship in the Russell Islands, with two hits and two misses. Some 46 American drones were launched in the northern Solomon Islands but while some were effective others failed to reach their targets.

After WWII, with military strategists at last perceiving the many advantages of UAVs, the U.S. began to invest heavily in their development. In May 1960, U2 spy plane pilot Francis Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union, which further encouraged the development of unmanned surveillance aircraft, this time under the code name of "Red Wagon." Camera-carrying drones were used widely for surveillance operations in the Vietnam War, the first Gulf War (1990-91), the Balkans conflicts of the 1990s, and in many subsequent theaters. By 2000 the United States was ready to use drones extensively as launch vehicles for missiles, and in 2001 the Afghans began to feel the benefits. On Nov. 3, 2002, C.I.A. operatives in Djibouti fired laser-guided Hellfire missiles from a drone at a passenger vehicle in Yemen, killing all the



**Hellfire Predator, U.S. weapon of choice in Afghanistan. Source: U.S. Air Force**

passengers, including an American citizen.

### **The Predator**

The General Atomics MQ-1 Predator UAV and the GA MQ-9 Reaper UAV, Tier II systems, are among the most extensively used drones by the U.S. military and the C.I.A.

The Predator was designed in the 1990s to carry cameras and other sensors for reconnaissance operations, and was later upgraded to carry and fire two AGM-114 Hellfire missiles and other munitions. The C.I.A. became interested in the "Amber" drone developed by Leading Systems, Inc., whose owner, Abraham Karem, was a former chief designer for the Israeli Air Force who emigrated to the United States in the late 1970s. The company that took over Leading System sold five drones, then called the "Gnat," to the C.I.A., and Karem agreed to produce a quiet engine for the vehicle. Until that time the drone had sounded like a "lawnmower in the sky." The new machine, derived from the GA Gnat 750 UAV, became known as the Predator. Following successful trials in the mid-1990s the Predator was employed in the Balkans in the summer of 1995. At that time a single Predator cost around \$3.2 million.

By now the C.I.A. was becoming increasingly enthusiastic about the tactical options being opened up by drone technology, and arranged for USAF teams trained by the 11<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, to fly the agency's Predators in Bosnia and then in Kosovo. When a number of losses were caused by cold weather flight conditions, later Predators were fitted with de-icing systems, along with an up-rated turbocharged engine and improved avionics. The new system was designated the RQ-1B, or the MQ-1B when munitions were added ('R' denotes a reconnaissance function, 'Q' an unmanned aircraft system, and 'M' a multi-role capability combining reconnaissance and bombing functions). The Predator is now equipped with a multi-spectral targeting system, a color nose camera for flight control, a variable-aperture day-TV camera, and a variable-aperture infrared camera for cloud, smoke or night conditions. The cameras transmit full-motion video and still-frame radar images. Laser designators, standard equipment for all Predators, enables the "pilot" to identify targets for other UAVs and even provides laser guidance for

manned aircraft. The designator is also used to aid target-location for the Hellfire missiles.

The Predator has been used to bomb targets in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, Serbia and Yemen. It can fly up to 400 nautical miles to a target, loiter overhead for 14 hours, then return to its base. It relies on a ground control station (GCS) and a primary satellite link communication suite.

During operations in the former Yugoslavia the UAVs were controlled by a Predator pilot sitting with other specialists in a van near the runway of the drone's operating base, sometimes flying Predators secretly out of Hungary and Gjadar, Albania. Later it became possible to shift communications to military satellite networks linked to the pilot's van, and by 2000 the developing technology allowed operators to fly drones remotely from great distances.

So satellite navigation technology is used not only to help us navigate our automobiles from one city to another but to ensure that we can successfully bomb foreigners in distant villages. The modern Predator is very unobtrusive and since the Hellfire missile is supersonic, targets can be attacked with little warning. For transport purposes the UAV can be disassembled and loaded into a container dubbed "the coffin," while the entire ground control system can be conveniently rolled into a C-130 Hercules aircraft.

Following the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the Predator became the primary UAV for offensive operations in Afghanistan and Pakistani tribal areas.

Today the vast majority of Predators are operated by United States forces and the C.I.A. In their arsenal are tens of thousands of UAVs, including at least 7,000 of what some observers call "assassination drones." This makes the U.S. the biggest user by far of unmanned aerial vehicles in a vast range of different types from small surveillance drones that a soldier can control with a handset to the large Reaper-style machines that can pulverize entire villages.

By 2010, as part of the program of battlefield automation, the United States Air Force claimed to be training more drone operators than fighter and bomber pilots, with current plans to vastly expand

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its UAV fleet over the next few decades.

In 2006, the USAF was able to fly just a dozen drones at any one time, but now it can fly more than fifty. At a significant trade conference outside Washington in 2009, military contractors described a future vision of pilotless aircraft serving as fighters, bombers, transports, and even automatic mini-drones able to attack in swarms. Thousands of robotic vehicles and drones were already deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and by 2015 the Pentagon's arms procurement program of around \$230 billion for "Future Combat Systems" expects at least 15 per cent of the U.S. armed forces to be robotic.

One recent study, *The Unmanned Aircraft System Flight Plan 2020-2047*, predicted that by 2020 \$55 billion would be spent on drone funding. General Norton Schwartz, the Air Force chief of staff, commented: "The capability provided by the unmanned aircraft is game-changing. We can have eyes 24/7 on our adversaries." In years to come, most American pilots will be sitting at a keyboard in front of a screen rather than operating in the air.

Even now the USAF is flying around 50 drones in Afghanistan, with the number expected to increase to 65 by 2013. In July 2010, WikiLeaks revealed that Predator and Reaper drones, typically piloted by remote control from Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, were being used increasingly throughout Afghanistan. In January 2009 the Washington Post reported that the new drone surveillance system "Gorgon Stare," capable of feeding live video images of movement in an entire urban area, was being deployed to Afghanistan. Major General James Poss, the Air Force deputy chief of staff for intelligence, was quoted: "Gorgon Stare will be looking at a whole city, so there will be no way for the adversary to know what we're looking at, and we can see everything." Loren Thompson, chief operating officer of the Lexington Institute, a public policy group, observed, "The availability of surveillance drones and attack drones has grown by leaps and bounds over the last few years," and suggested that drones will have "saturated" the airspace in the coming years.

### Death by Joystick

One consequence of this escalation of drone

diplomacy is euphemistically called "collateral damage." Here are but a few examples of what has happened at the other end of the digital divide:

- On Feb. 4, 2002, 3 p.m., on a hill near Zhawa Kili, Paktia Province, Afghanistan. A Predator Hellfire missile kills Daraz Khan, Jehangir Khan, and Mir Ahmed, as they scavenge for scrap metal from previous missile attacks. Local villagers tell Doug Struck of the Washington Post that the men, desperately poor, were hoping to sell the scraps in Pakistan, where a camel-load of twisted steel goes for 50 cents. The 16-year-old niece of Daraz Khan asks: "Why did you do this? Why did you Americans kill Daraz? We have *nothing, nothing*, and you have taken from us our Daraz." Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clark says, "We're convinced that it was an appropriate target ... [although] we do not yet know exactly who it was."
- May 6, 2002, Kunar Province, Afghanistan. A Predator fires at a convoy of cars in an attempt to assassinate warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar because of his opposition to U.S.-backed Hamid Karzai, then president of the Afghan Transitional Administration. The warlord isn't in the convoy. Ten civilians are killed.
- Jan. 5, 2006, the Saidqi area of Pakistan. A Predator missile blows up a house where Al-Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is suspected to be. He isn't there. Eight civilians are killed.
- Jan. 13, 2006, predawn, the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of C.I.A. headquarters, Langley, VA. A computer operator gives a command to a Predator twelve-and-a-half time zones away to shoot four Hellfire missiles at three houses in Demadola, Pakistan. The missiles, made by Lockheed Martin and costing \$45,000 each, obliterate the houses of three jewelers. The target, Ayman al-Zawahiri, isn't there. Twenty-two civilians, including five women and five children, are killed while celebrating the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. "They acted on wrong intelligence," a Pakistani intelligence officer says of the Americans. An estimated 10,000 people rally in Karachi, many chanting "Death to American aggression" and "Stop bombing innocent people."



- Aug. 22, 2008, in the village of Azizabad, in Herat Province, Afghanistan. An estimated 78-92 civilians, mostly children, are killed by drone missiles. The Pentagon calls the attack a legitimate strike against the Taliban, and denies any civilian casualties. Five weeks later, the U.S. Department of Defense allows that 33 civilians were killed. An investigation by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan puts the number at 90 civilians, 60 of them children.
- On Oct. 13, 2008, in the town of Miran Shah, North Waziristan. A barrage of U.S. drone missiles kills five people. Local people say none of the dead were militants.
- Jan. 23, 2009, South Waziristan, three days after President Obama's inauguration. A Predator strikes the home of Malik Gulistan Khan, a tribal elder and member of a local, pro-government peace committee. Five family members are killed. "I lost my father, three brothers, and my cousin in the attack," says Adnan, his 18-year-old son. His uncle adds: "We did nothing, have no connections to militants at all."
- April 2, 2009, in the town of Tank, near South Waziristan. Drone missiles kill at least 12 people and wound many more. Some 150 elders protest the strike. Pakistani officials claim that, in the previous year, more than 30 U.S. drone strikes killed approximately 300 people.
- April 5, 2009, in the village of Data Khel, near the Afghan border. U.S. drone attacks kill 13 people, including women and children. Thousands of Pakistanis flee the area to escape such attacks, causing a colossal humanitarian crisis. Rabia Ali, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, and Maqbool Shah Roghani, administrator for Internally Displaced People at the Commission for Afghan Refugees, report that 546,000 people have registered as IDPs. Thousands more unregistered people are taking refuge with relatives. The Pakistani government is running short of resources to feed and shelter refugees.
- May 5, 2009, in the village of Gerani, near the Iranian border in Afghanistan. In the highest known civilian death toll since fighting began in 2001, over 100 people are killed as they seek shelter in a compound during coalition airstrikes. Using rudimentary tools, villagers dig out the bodies by hand.
- May 19, 2009, Khaisor, North Waziristan. A U.S. drone strikes the homes of villagers suspected of feeding alleged militants, killing 14 women and children and two elders, and wounding a dozen more.
- June 18, 2009, Raghazai, South Waziristan. A U.S. drone fires missiles into a suspected Taliban compound, killing one person. When villagers rush to help wounded survivors, a hovering drone fires a second missile, killing a dozen more people. The target of the assassination attack, Wali Mohammed, is not in the compound, according to a New York Times report.
- July 14, 2009, the Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. Daniel Byman, Senior Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, concludes that an average of 10 civilians to one militant are being killed in U.S. drone attacks.
- Oct. 9, 2009, the Datta Khel region of North Waziristan. Saddam Hussein, 13, loses his 10-month-old niece and sister-in-law in a drone strike on their home. "The drones patrol day and night," Saddam tells the Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC). "Sometimes we see six in the air all at once. When they swoop down, people run out of their houses, even at night."
- Dec. 26, 2009, the Barbar Raghazi area of North Waziristan. U.S. drone missiles kill four people and injure more in an attack on a private dwelling. Local officials tell al-Jazeera that all those killed were civilians. A week later, the independent media organization Global Research concludes that of the 44 drone attacks carried out in the Pakistani tribal areas over the past year, only five hit their actual targets. Pakistani officials put the number of children killed in 2009 at 708.
- March 2010. The Washington-based New American Foundation reports that 51 drone attacks on Pakistan occurred during the first year of the Obama administration, compared to 45 during the full two terms of the Bush presidency.

- September 8, 2010, Yemen. U.S. launches a series of drone attacks against suspected militants. Original report says 20 are killed. Later reports suggest that most of those killed were tribespeople with no connection to militant groups.
- Nov. 13, 2010, the village Ahmad Khel, in the Mir Ali area in North Waziristan. A U.S. drone kills five people. A correspondent for Geo News, a Karachi-based Pakistani news channel, reports from the attack site that the dead appeared to be ordinary citizens.
- Nov. 16, 2010, in the village of Bangi Dar, North Waziristan, near the Afghan border. Four drone missiles hit a house and vehicle. Al-Jazeera's Kamal Hyder reports 16 people, including women and children, are killed in the house and four people in the vehicle.
- Dec. 2, 2010, the Conflict Monitoring Center (CMC), an Islamabad based independent research center, issues a report on deaths by drones. It concludes that U.S. and Pakistani officials are deliberately overlooking civilian deaths, which outnumber those of militants. The CMC estimates 2,043 Pakistanis have been slain in C.I.A. drone attacks in the past five years, the vast majority innocent civilians.

Jan. 23, 2011, Mir Ali, North Waziristan. U.S. drones kill 13 people in the area. Some 2,000 local tribesmen hold a protest to demand an end to the drone strikes, saying they kill innocent civilians. 75% of all Pakistani deaths over the past five years have occurred during the presidency of Barack Obama.

### The Co-Pioneer

Israel is America's co-pioneer in drone technology.

Today it is the world's leader.

Israel has modified U.S. designs for its own arsenal and for export. Its primary model, the Hermes, is the Jewish State's answer to the Predator. It can hover at 18,000 feet for up to 20 hours. Its sensors can discern people on the ground and even distinguish between adults and children. The drones deployed in Gaza during Israel's 23-day Operation

Cast Lead, carried missiles with a lethal blast radius of 10 to 20 yards.

Here are but a few examples of their "collateral damage":

- Dec. 27, 2008, Gaza City, the first day of the assault. An IDF drone-launched missile hits a group of youths who had gathered around a radio while waiting for a bus, across the street from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA). Twelve students are killed, two of them women, along with other civilian casualties. No military activity is reported in the area at the time. "We heard a buzzing noise in the air before the explosion," says Ibrahim Rayyis, 19, who was in a nearby store. "When I went out to see what had happened, my two brothers Hisham and Allam were lying on the ground, blood gushing from their wounds." Their father, Nehru Rayyis, later stumbles upon the body of another relative killed in the attack, 20-year-old Abd Allah, outside an overflowing morgue in a Gaza hospital.
- Dec. 27, 2008, Gaza. An Israeli drone missile hits the Gaza City police headquarters, killing at least 40 cadets during a police academy graduation ceremony. Human Rights Watch investigators at the site find hundreds of perfectly cubic pieces of metal shrapnel, circuit boards and other parts—including some marked with Motorola serial numbers—and four small impact craters, all consistent with drone-fired missiles.
- Dec. 29, 2008, east of Jabalya refugee camp, northern Gaza. An Israeli-launched drone missile strikes a truck outside a metal shop killing nine civilians, three of them children. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) say the men were loading rockets onto the truck, but after an on-site inspection, the IDF concedes they were oxygen tanks.
- Jan. 5, 2009, night time, Gaza City. An Israeli drone-launched missile hits the Asma elementary school run by the United Nations. Three young men from the Sultan family are killed. The school has lighted signs, and the U.N. had provided the IDF with the GPS coordinates of all



its schools and facilities. On the same day, in the al-Shaaf area of Gaza, an Israeli drone kills 10-year-old Mo'men Allaw, crushing his legs and scattering cubes of shrapnel throughout his chest. According to *The Nation*, his family was sitting on the roof of their home at noontime, when the missile came literally out of the blue.

- Jan. 16, 2009, Gaza. Mounir al-Jarah is having tea in his courtyard with his sister, her husband, and four of their children. He leaves to go inside his house to get something and when he returns he sees a ball of light hurtling down toward him. There is an explosion and Mounir is thrown backward. When he rises and stumbles into the courtyard, he sees the children: Mohammed, his body cut in half; Ahmed, his body in three pieces; Walid, his body badly burned, his eyes gone; and Nour, her decapitated head never to be found. This would be one of a dozen cases recorded by Amnesty International of civilian deaths by drones during Israel's 23-day assault on Gaza. Five and a-half months later, Human Rights Watch will release a 39-page report, "Precisely wrong: Gaza civilians killed by Israeli Drone-Launched Missiles," in which Marc Garlasco, senior HRW military analyst concludes: "Drone operators can clearly see their targets on the ground and also divert their missiles after launch . . . Given these capabilities, Israel needs to explain why these civilian deaths took place."

So advanced is Israel's drone technology – and so field-tested in Gaza – many countries now prefer made-in-Israel drones.

Turkey wants them. The daily Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* noted in June 2010 that Turkey was still using Israeli-made drones against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq. Early in 2010 Turkey concluded a deal worth \$185 million with Israel for the supply of ten Heron drones, and Israel's killing of nine Turkish activists in the flotilla incident didn't seem to upset the deal.

Other countries knocking on Israel's weaponry door include Brazil which has signed a \$350 million drone deal with Israel to enhance its border protection and police work. India uses Israeli drones to control Kashmir. Georgia used Hermes drones

against Russia in 2008, and Russia, impressed with Georgia's drone performance, has procured \$53 million worth of Israeli drones for itself. The British, Germans and Canadians all use Israeli Heron drones over Afghanistan. Even the United States buys Israeli drones for patrolling its border with Mexico. And the Pentagon uses Israeli Skylark drones in Iraq. To better service these contracts, Israel has set up drone factories in Starkville, Mississippi and Columbus, Ohio. Since 2005, it has been training many of these countries' drone operators and maintenance crews, some of whom have been deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

### ... and the Rest

Today's U.S. drone strikes on Afghanistan and Pakistan and Israel's attacks on Gaza are only part of the picture.

The WikiLeaks revelations show that the United States was using drones against Islamist targets in Yemen, and that Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh told General David Petraeus, then commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, that "we'll continue saying the bombs are ours, not yours." Drones also are being used to provide surveillance of Iranian targets, with Ali Fadavi, commander of the Revolutionary Guards naval forces, claiming to have shot down "many" Western drones. U.S. drones also protect ships from Somali pirates, and monitor the Manitoba portion of Canada's border with the United States to prevent transit by migrants, terrorists and drug smugglers.

But, as the narco cartels are proving, two can play the drone game. In September 2010, the Public Security Secretariat (SSP) of Mexico reported that drug cartels were using unmanned, ultra-light drones weighing around 100 pounds to send 220 pounds of cocaine into the United States, each flight earning the drug traffickers about \$2 million. So the question has to be asked, how long will it be before terrorists come up with their own ultra-light drones?

Today the United States is by far the most successful imperial nation—a role it took over from Japan and the European powers. Imperial ambition can of course be furthered in many ways, but the modern drone is an increasingly effective tool in

helping the U.S. to fulfill that role.

Other countries perceive this state of affairs and are working in various ways to catch up by acquiring drone technology. Even General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, one-time dictator friend of Washington, suggested in an interview with Fox News in September 2009 that Pakistan, today a victim of drone attacks, could usefully have a few drones of its own for use against terrorists. In early 2011 Pakistan was negotiating a deal with the U.S. to acquire a drone system, the Shadow-III, currently used by the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps.

The Royal Air Force of Britain, a U.S. ally, is heavily involved in U.S. Predator and Reaper operations, most of them launched against targets in Afghanistan from a base in Kandahar but controlled from the Creech U.S. Air Force base in Nevada. In December 2010, the U.K. ministry of defense refused to answer a parliamentary question about whether U.K.-operated drones were firing the Hellfire AGM 114N missile. This is a thermobaric weapon capable of widespread and indiscriminate destruction, and one condemned by human rights groups and judged by many observers to be illegal in international law. By 2011 there was growing speculation that Britain and France were to cooperate in drone production.

In April 2010, Northrop Grumman Corp., the producer of the RQ-4 Global Hawk surveillance drone, was happy to report that South Korea, Australia, Singapore, Britain, Spain, New Zealand and Canada were considering adding versions of the Global Hawk, already used by the U.S. Air Force in Iraq and Afghanistan, to their air forces. Japan had already been moving to ditch its own self-imposed ban on arms manufacture, and to move into the global arms industry. This would involve a conversion of Japan's robotics industry from civilian to military use to produce remote-controlled hardware, such as drones, to counter military developments by other Asian states. In November 2010, no fewer than 25 different drone models were on display at the Zhuhair air show in China, a record number for a country that revealed its first concept UAVs at the same air show only four years before. Jeremy Page, writing in the Wall Street Journal, commented: "The apparent progress in UAVs is a stark sign of China's ambition to upgrade its massive

military as its global political and economic clout grows."

In August 2010, a North Korean drone was spotted near the sensitive sea border with South Korea, perhaps a response to U.S. Global Hawks being used to spy on the North. It was known that for some years North Korea had been trying to obtain remotely-piloted UAVs from Europe in order to establish its own drone production program.

In March 2009, the U.S. military confirmed that it had shot down an Iranian drone, an Ababil-3, inside Iraq's airspace. Already Iran had a growing fleet of unmanned aircraft, some of them with "stealth" features in order to avoid enemy radar, and had supplied Hezbollah with both Misrad and Ababil surveillance drones. At least one had been shot down by Israeli fighter planes. In August 2010, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad spoke at an inauguration ceremony for Iran's first unmanned bomber aircraft, the Karrar ("striker"). "The jet," said the president, "as well as being an ambassador of death for the enemies of humanity, has a main message of peace and friendship."

Which brings us to our last two questions:

### **Are Drones Ethical? Or Even Effective?**

According to news reports, Faisal Shahzad, the Pakistani-American who failed in his attempt to bomb Times Square on May 1, 2010, told investigators that he was acting in retaliation for U.S. drone attacks in Pakistan. This led David Sanger, chief Washington correspondent for The New York Times, to ask: "Have the stepped-up attacks in Pakistan—notably the Predator drone strikes—actually made Americans less safe? Have they had the perverse consequence of driving lesser insurgents to think of targeting Times Square and American airlines, not just Kabul and Islamabad? In short, are they inspiring more attacks on America than they prevent?"

That certainly is the case in Pakistan, according to David Kilcullen, a counterinsurgent expert who worked for General Petraeus. In a May 17, 2009 New York Times article, he wrote that the "highly unpopular" drone attacks were leading to a loss of the Pakistani government's control over its people. "We need to call off the drones," he advised. "They

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are creating more enemies than they eliminate." Every dead noncombatant "represents an alienated family, a new desire for revenge and more recruits for a militant movement that has grown exponentially even as the drone strikes have increased."

This, too, is the assessment of Hamid Mir, veteran Pakistani journalist, news anchor, and security analyst. Speaking at the University of California Berkeley on April 9, 2009, he insisted that civilian deaths, attributed to American drone attacks, were contributing to a process of radicalization. "We realize—Pakistan, America, the whole international community—everybody wants to defeat al-Qaeda and the Taliban. But blunders in our treatment of the tribal areas are only strengthening their hand."

Drone manufacturers in the U.S. and Israel claim that drones save lives, that is, no pilots are lost in combat. Yet, as we have seen, for every pilot saved, many innocent civilians are killed or maimed.

Drone supporters also argue that the drone's laser-guided missiles are more precise killers than unmanned planes. Yet, as Human Rights Watch noted in its June 30, 2009 report on Israel's attack on Gaza: "Drones, much like sniper rifles, are only as good at sparing civilians as the care taken by the people who operate them. The accuracy and concentrated blast radius of the missile can reduce civilian casualties, but in Gaza, Israel's targeting choices led to the loss of many civilian lives."

If the military aim is to exterminate and/or isolate extremists from the communities in which they live, bombing civilians thousands of miles away from the safety of Creech Air Force base in Nevada seems an unlikely way to win hearts and minds.

As for those military "pilots" behind their high-tech consoles: It turns out, they suffer post-traumatic stress disorders at higher rates than soldiers in combat because, it is thought, they have to face with raw immediacy the grisly results of their finger-pressing. This is not the uncertainty of battlefield warfare, where survival and victory depend on a variety of risk factors. This is shooting fish in a barrel, then, going home to supper.

Ethicists are beginning to challenge the morality of drone warfare. An editorial in the May 18, 2010

issue of the Protestant magazine *The Christian Century* concluded that, while drones have killed enemy leaders, "they raise terrible questions to those committed to the just war principle that civilians should never be targeted." Even the "risk-free" argument, that drones prevent U.S. casualties, is challenged because, says the *Century*, the just war theory holds that it is better to risk the lives of one's own combatants than the lives of enemy noncombatants.

### **Are Drones Legal?**

There is now a growing debate about the legality of using drones to attack foreign targets, with David Glazier, an American law professor, suggesting that drone pilots could be charged with committing war crimes.

In May 2010, Philip Alston, U.N. special representative on extrajudicial executions, raised a number of concerns, not least the prevalence of a "Playstation" mentality among drone operators. Were they just playing video games with depersonalized and distant targets, games that nonetheless resulted in indiscriminate slaughter of human beings? Alston, a professor of law at New York University, writes:

I'm particularly concerned that the United States ... asserts an ever-expanding entitlement for itself to target individuals across the globe. But this strongly asserted but ill-defined license to kill without accountability is not an entitlement which the United States or other States can have without doing grave damage to the rules designed to protect the right to life and prevent extrajudicial executions.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949, which provides the basis for international humanitarian law, were expanded in 1977 by Additional Protocols I and II.

The first of these, understood to represent customary international law, specifically addresses the "Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts." It has served as a key document in the International Criminal Tribunal prosecutions of war criminals in regard to the conflicts in Sierra Leone, the former Yugoslavia, and The Democratic Republic of Congo. The United States is a signatory to the

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Additional Protocols but has not yet ratified them, unlike 168 other states, including every European state.

However, the U.S. failure to ratify does not render it immune to this international law. On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Additional Protocols the International Committee of the Red Cross clearly stated the general legal view that the 1977 amendments "form a set of rules of customary law valid for every State, whether or not it is party to the Protocols." In short, no state can evade international law simply by ignoring it.

It is enough here to mention some Articles of Protocol I: Article 17 (role of the civilian population and of aid societies), Article 51 (protection of the civilian population), Article 52 (general protection of civilian objects), Article 53 (protection of cultural objects and places of worship), and Article 57 (precautions in attack). In particular, Article 6 of Additional Protocol II, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights are directly relevant to a legal assessment of drone policy. Case studies of actual drone attacks in Pakistan—and those in Gaza—demonstrate comprehensive and

unambiguous U.S. and Israeli violations of international law.

Nothing in this analysis is surprising. In recent years the United States has frequently shown itself indifferent to international law. Interviewed on CBS's 60 Minutes on May 12, 1996 about economic sanctions, Madeleine Albright attempted to justify the deaths of 500,000 children in Iraq in consequence of U.S. policy objectives: "We think the price is worth it." She showed no awareness of the copious legal violations that this policy involved. Similarly, President Bush's invasion of Iraq in 2003 and his attempts to justify torture as a part of American policy showed contempt for both domestic and international law. This attitude, shared by some U.S. allies, is well conveyed by Tzipi Livni, for years a key member of the Israeli government: "I was the minister of justice. But I am against law-international law in particular."

On 18 February 2011 a U.N. resolution condemning the illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land was vetoed by the United States. Yet again the U.S. had demonstrated its criminal contempt for international law. ■



Tribesmen sit with Sadaullah Wazir, 17, who lost both legs and an eye in a September 2009 drone attack on his village of Machi Khel, in which two cousins and an uncle were killed. Wazir is bringing a civil suit against U.S. officials claiming wrongful death. His lawyer realizes no U.S. official will show up in court. What he hopes for is a symbolic victory and some headlines beyond his village letting the world know what the United States is doing.—Reuters Photo



## From **The Link's** Links

<http://www.acjna.org>



*Stephen Naman is president of the American Council for Judaism (ACJ), founded in 1942, in part, to combat Zionism. Lessing J. Rosenwald, former chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co., was an early Council leader, and numerous Jewish intellectuals such as Erich Fromm and Hanna Arendt, were associated with it. This interview was conducted by AMEU Executive Director John Mahoney.*

**Q. Last June, the "On Religion" column of The New York Times spotlighted the American Council for Judaism, under the caption "American Jews Who Reject Zionism Say Events Aid Cause." How did this publicity impact your website?** The response was positive from all sources, the primary one of which was the Internet, although many of our associates are older and thus inclined to snail-mail us. We no longer routinely monitor hits on our website so I can't give you statistical evidence, but we had over 100 e-mails and numerous contributions from our Donations link. Comparing the two to three week period after the article to a normal period of similar duration the communications and contributions through our website were up 80%, which I believe would translate into a similar increase in traffic to our site. Even now, some eight months later, we see an increase in comments regarding articles on our site which we attribute to the Times article. Since we are a niche player we do not attract the masses, nor is that our objective, which is more designed to meet the needs of our current associates and those who think similarly.

**Q. According to the NYT's column, the intense criticism of Israel now growing among American Jews makes the ACJ look "prophetic." In what way**

**do you see your work as prophetic?** I would say that the perceptive founders and supporters of the ACJ had it right. The problems that exist in the Middle East today were predicted by the ACJ leadership and basically concurred with by the U.S. Department of State at the time. Some of our critics have privately stated, "you were right, you won," but of course they would never say this in public because of the retribution that would most surely befall them, and which the ACJ has lived with for nearly 70 years. And what does this mean anyway, under today's difficult circumstances? The reality is Israel exists and so do the issues that were predicted, so isn't the real question now how can the world make the case for freedom, equality, and security for all peoples. How can Israel become not a Jewish state but a democratic state. How do we promote the concept that it is legitimate for Americans of the Jewish faith to believe that Israel is not the centrality of Judaism, God is; that Israel is not the homeland of all Jews, one does not have to live in or love Israel to be a good Jew; and that it is not acceptable for any Americans to support the positions of foreign governments in opposition to those of their own government.

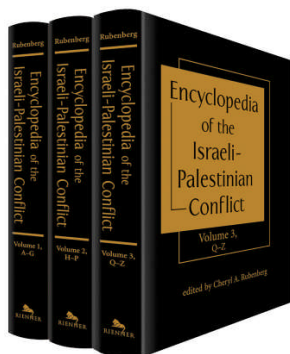
**Q. All of the engaging articles on your website are written by Allan C. Brownfeld. Who is he?** Allan has edited ACJ's publications for nearly 30 years. He is the recipient of a Wall Street Journal Foundation Award and five George Washington Honor Medals from Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, PA, where he lectured for many years. A syndicated columnist, he has written for numerous newspapers, journals and periodicals, and is the author of five books. He has also served on the staff of the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives and the Office of the Vice President.

**Q. To new visitors to your website, which of Allan's current articles would you recommend they read first?** I'd pick four which go to the heart of our concerns: "Israel is Not the Homeland of American Jews," "Remembering the Prophetic Vision of Zionism's Jewish Critics," "Increasing Politicization Threatens Judaism's Moral Integrity," and "Needed: An American Jewish Community Which Welcomes Free Speech and Diversity."

## BOOK REVIEW

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE  
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Cheryl A. Rubenberg, Editor



Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010

AMEU price, including postage:  
\$395.00

Reviewed by Jane Adas

*To order, see page 16.*

What an accomplishment! Cheryl Rubenberg has already contributed so much to our understanding of the Palestinian-Israeli issue, particularly with *Israel and the American National Interest*, a book she wrote a quarter-century ago raising questions that are only now beginning to be articulated.

Now Rubenberg has completed a five-year project of writing and editing the three-volume *Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. According to the publisher, each of the more than 900 entries was “subject(ed) to an exhaustive, bias-hunting editorial process.” The result is even-handed, authoritative, and comprehensive.

The entries, arranged A – Z and thoroughly cross-referenced, include people—the assassinated U.N. mediator Count Folke Bernadotte, Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, bingo tycoon and major funder of settlements Irving Moskowitz; incidents like the 1985 Palestine Liberation Front’s hijacking of the Achille Lauro and murder of the wheelchair-bound Leon Klinghoffer; political parties, both Palestinian and Israeli; cities and individual Israeli settlements; organizations—Rabbis for Human Rights, Sabeel, Adalah; occupation practices—administrative detention, the permit system, deportation; and so much more.

In addition to researching and writing many of the entries, Rubenberg recruited an international team of 120 experts to write substantial essays with extensive bibliographies. “Demography” by an

“Anonymous Israeli Scholar,” for instance, shows that already by 2000 the Jewish and Arab populations had reached parity within the area under Israel’s control.

Under “Peace” we find three approaches: one by an American, Gordon Fellman, arguing for two states; another by Palestinian Omar Barghouti making the case for a one-state solution; and a third by Israelis Arif Nadler and Nurit Schnabel discussing approaches to reconciliation.

In addition, Michel Warschawski assesses the “Oslo Process” as well as the history and present state of the “Israeli Peace Movement.”

As for war, Ilan Pappé thoroughly covers 1948, Augustus Richard Norton addresses “Terrorism” and Richard Falk describes how both are viewed under “International Law and U.N. Authority.”

The arts are not neglected: there are entries on Israeli and Palestinian cinema, Hebrew literature (Uri Cohen), Palestinian poetry (Naseer Aruri), and so much more.

The encyclopedia includes 50 maps, a glossary, a chronology from pre-historical times to June, 2009, and a list identifying the contributors.

The *Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, while probably too great an investment for most, would be a truly valuable addition to public libraries, Middle East studies departments of academic institutions, and organizations concerned with peace and justice in the Middle East. Googling, to be sure, is a marvelous, at-your-finger-tip source of information. But it is no substitute for the convenience, clarity and thoroughness of this landmark work. ■



Editor Cheryl Rubenberg

## AMEU's Video Selections: Use Order Form on Page 16

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- AJPME, **Israel: Myths & Propaganda** (2008, DVD, 58 minutes). Israeli historian Ilan Pappé challenges the official Israeli version of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war in Part 1, and responds to his critics in Part 2. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- Baltzer, Anna, **Life in Occupied Palestine** (2006, DVD, 61 minutes). By the American granddaughter of a Holocaust refugee. This is her powerful account of the occupation. **AMEU: \$20.00.**
- DMZ, **People and the Land** (2007, DVD, updated version of 1997 film, 57 minutes). This is the controversial documentary by Tom Hayes that appeared on over 40 PBS stations. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- FMEP, **Searching for Peace in the Middle East** (2006, DVD, 30 minutes). A film by Landrum Bolling. **AMEU: \$10.00.**
- Munayyer, F. & H., **Palestinian Costumes and Embroidery: A Precious Legacy** (2008, DVD, 38 minutes). Rare collection of Palestinian dresses modeled against background of Palestinian music, with commentary tracing the designs back to Canaanite times. List: \$50.00. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- NEF, **Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land** (2004, DVD, 80 minutes). Excellent analysis of how the U.S. media slants its coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- IHF, **USS Liberty Survivors: Our Story** (1992; DVD; 60 minutes). The truth as provided by the men who lived through it. **AMEU: \$25.00**
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**In Appreciation: Aref Jamil Jabr**

Aref Jabr was born in Jaffa, Palestine, in 1925. In 1948—the year of the Nakba—he fled to Jordan. Three years later, he helped establish Jordan's first mission in Washington, D.C. In 1953, he graduated from the American University Washington College of Law and, for a time, represented Jordan at the United Nations. In 1957, he moved to St. Paul, MN, to work for the West Publishing Company, where he became Manager of Statute Planning.

Aref contributed to many social causes in Palestine, and was a strong AMEU supporter. In addition, to assure our ongoing work, he thoughtfully remembered us in his will.

To his wife Barbara and his children Jamil and Nadia we extend our heartfelt condolences.

—John F. Mahoney, Executive Director

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