

25 October 1985

## CHAMBERLAINS GALORE

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was reported to have exclaimed on his deathbed: "Everything would have been all right if only Hitler hadn't lied to me."

He presumably harboured to the end a distorted view of his own role in helping Hitler bring on the Second World War. Everything could indeed have been "all right" if Chamberlain and his school had not mindlessly let themselves be manipulated by Hitler.

In a 1971 book – *The Chamberlain Cabinet. How the Meetings in 10 Downing Street, 1937-1939, Led to the Second World War* – Ian Colvin, one of the group of concerned journalists reporting (and warning against Hitler) from central Europe in the 1930s, demonstrated from the Cabinet minute and related documents that Chamberlain had really believed that Hitler was an honest and reliable person aiming at peace.

He had simply ignored the publicly known facts and indeed the mass of "inside" information that poured in on him. His passion to be what Churchill called "the Great Peace-Maker" consumed his commonsense; and, no doubt, if Hitler had not been aiming to dominate Europe maybe everything would indeed have been all right.

Hitler, happily, is dead, but the Chamberlain school lives on.

NEARLY THREE weeks have passed since seven people – a man, two women and four children – were watched by a group of Egyptian soldiers as they bled slowly to death in the sands of Sinai, after they had been shot in a sudden burst of fire at short range by one of the soldiers. They were part of a company of Israeli tourists.

Among them, it so happened, were a doctor and several medical students; and the murderer's fellow soldiers forcibly prevented them – under threat of being shot as well – from rendering first aid or to take the victims to hospital, some half-an-hour's drive away. The lives of five of them could have been saved.

No more than eight days later, Egyptian President Mubarak generously revealed, in a message to Israeli Premier Peres, that he was "as deeply concerned over the incident as the Israeli government." He promised faithfully, moreover, to order a full enquiry and, equally faithfully, to inform Mr. Peres of its findings without delay.

In fact, an enquiry into the murderer's behaviour was supposedly carried out immediately. It was announced that he was insane. Who the doctors were that so speedily carried out the necessary examination was not revealed. Maybe the soldier was insane.

There is, however, another subject for "enquiry": the behaviour of the soldiers who watched – a performance more gruesome and no less grave than the shooting itself. Assuming that they were not equipped to render first aid, they could legitimately have stood by and watched that aid being rendered by the Israeli civilians. Instead, they intervened actively, even committing the further crime of threatening the tourists with their guns, and made themselves accessories to the murder.

How did human beings come to behave in the unnatural, inhuman way they did – all of them, without a single exception? What is there in their collective make-up to explain their barbaric behaviour? Or the fact that no voice in Egypt has been raised, in horror, in shame?

The answer can be sought only in their background, in their education and training. There is no evidence of a training in sheer inhumanity in the Egyptian education

system or in Egyptian military manuals; but there is abundant evidence of the indoctrination of a hatred of Jews and of Israel. There is only too much evidence that the indoctrination has never ceased, that it was not even noticeably moderated, after the peace treaty. Books, newspaper, radio and television have continued to depict Israel and Jews as despicable, contemptible, subhuman.

THE MOST important obligation undertaken by the Egyptians in the peace treaty was precisely that designed to put an end to hostile propaganda, to erase the demonic image of Jews and Israel and Zionism long implanted in the Arab consciousness. The complete failure to fulfill this obligation has been the most glaring, and the most significant of Egypt's many violations of the treaty.

Sharing in the guilt are the Israelis. The government has over the years effectively suppressed, except for an occasional growl of protest, the truth of Egypt's perpetuation within the nation of a high level of hatred and contempt for Israel and its people. Had it not done so, the nature and dimensions of bluff in the peace treaty would at least have been made apparent. The government was aided and abetted by most of the professional Arabists and journalistic "experts" – who stood to be denied the joys of hobnobbing with their newfound friends and colleagues in Egypt.

Exactly six years after the signing of the peace treaty, one of them – and he an outstanding Israeli academic apologist for Egypt, Professor Shimon Shamir – decided suddenly, for reasons unexplained, to reveal the truth, published in *Yediot Aharonot* on March 29, 1985. After reading his statement, nobody need have been surprised at the incident in Sinai.

"Today," he writes, "the most dangerous impediment to relations between the two peoples is [not, in my view, the absence of implementation of normalization, as detailed in paragraph three of the Peace Treaty, not in the absence of an Egyptian ambassador in Israel but] in the unbridled incitement against Israel in the Egyptian press.

"Many journalists regard it as their national duty to serve as watchdogs who protect Egyptian society from any positive contact with Israelis. [They denounce any connection in the cultural sphere as a cultural attack by Israel on the Egyptian personality, and any economic activity as domination of the Egyptian economy.]"

Negative news from Israel is inflated to monstrous proportions, while positive moves are not published at all. Even a newspaper like *Al Ahrām* (Egypt's leading daily) permits itself to publish, for example, an article which tells its readers that the Israeli soldiers in Lebanon "operate ovens of extermination which they learned to build from the Nazis."

PRESIDENT MUBARAK now appears at centre stage. Questioned by a journalist on television, he brusquely dismissed the murder in Sinai as an unimportant matter. As for the soldiers who presided over the death agonies of the victims, Mubarak did not even mention them. Nor, in subsequent statements, did his deputy foreign minister, Butros Ghali, or former prime minister Mustafa Khalil.

Within days, a chapter of accidents laid bare further dramatic and damning evidence of Egypt's posture on PLO terror. Mubarak was trapped by circumstances into exposing himself, on worldwide television, not only as an active collaborator of the PLO but an accessory *post factum* to a specific murder.

The driver of a murderer's getaway car goes to jail; Mubarak arranged for the getaway of three of the hijackers of the ship Achille Lauro – in an Egyptian plane – to their base in Tunis, many hours after he learned that they had murdered Leon Klinghoffer on the ship. Had they reached Tunis as planned, nobody could have proved he was lying in his teeth when he told the world he had packed them off to Tunis before he learned that they had murdered Mr. Klinghoffer.

The juxtaposition of these events should surely have been enough to demonstrate to even the most gullible Israeli the true attitude of Egypt to the PLO and its terror and to Israel, its people and to the peace treaty. Surely, even at this late hour the repeatedly echoing hollowness of Egypt's signature to the treaty demands a rethinking of Israel's future policy.

Yet, the government and the media have been smoke-screening Egyptian malfeasance in an orgy of condemnation directed exclusively at Arafat – as though we needed the Achille Lauro episode to prove him the liar and master murderer of civilians that he has ever been.

The fiction of a “friendly” Egypt is evidently to be kept alive at all costs.

THE AMNESTY granted to Arafat's Egyptian collaborators naturally extends to Jordan. Mr. Peres and his fellow-promoters of the hoary myth of a peace-seeking Jordan have for months pointedly pooh-poohed the significance of Hussein's hosting a PLO terrorist headquarters at Amman.

They have now, in an official document published this week, revealed that they have known all along that Amman is in fact an active base, where visiting Arabs from Western Palestine are crash-trained and then sent back across the Jordan River to kill Jews. They continue to pretend that Hussein, Arafat's landlord, is deaf and blind, liberal and moderate, only waiting (since 1967) to take Israel to his bosom.

The pronouncements and behaviour of Peres and his colleagues – not to mention the arrogance and ferocity with which some of his followers lambast all who decline to share in their folly – suggest that even now they refuse to face the unpleasant truth that Hussein and Mubarak, Assad and Fahd, are all members of the same company united, for all their differences and family quarrels, behind the central concept of Arafat's “Palestinian Covenant.”

In truth, Hitler is dead but we have, it seems, plenty of Chamberlains.

*ing pageSee Letter to the Editor on the follow*

*Readers Letters – 13 November 2010*

**CORRECT FORM**

Sir, – A passage in my article “Chamberlains galore,” in *The Jerusalem Post* of October 25 suffered from some confusing punctuation and I take leave to restore it to its correct form. It is a quotation from an article by Professor Shimon Shamir in *Yediot Aharonot* of March 25. The final paragraph of my direct quotation from his article, dealing with the Egyptian media, reads:

“Negative news from Israel is inflated to monstrous proportions while positive moves are not published at all. Even a newspaper like *Al Ahram* (Egypt’s leading daily – S.K.) permits itself to publish, for example, an article which tells its readers that the Israeli soldiers in Lebanon ‘operate ovens of extermination which they learned to build from the Nazis’.”

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