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## Creation of Paranoia, Part II

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Title: Creation of Paranoia, Part II

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**Abstract.** This is the final section of an article that explores parallels between delusions and paranoia suffered by society and by the mentally ill. Motives behind the creation of paranoia are discussed. Focus is given to creation of paranoia toward the Jewish people, because this social pathology has infected most of the world for a greater period of time than any other. Reaction to rejection of ideology is found to be an important motive for creation of paranoia in society. Other manifestations of social paranoia, such as the creation of false memories, are also discussed. (Note 1: The article is written by Dr. Karl Ericson. Dr. Ericson has published articles on the prevention of mental illness in the Journal of Humanistic Psychology and is available through contacting IBPP.) (Note 2: The article casts attention on a number of Issues covered by IBPP. These Issues include the social construction and politics of mental illness as a construct, the epistemological vulnerabilities of the constructs of paranoia and delusion, the shortfalls of logic, the similarities among behavior termed normal versus pathological, the metaphysical status of mind and of reality, the psychological and social consequences of being labeled with a psychiatric diagnosis, and the strengths and weaknesses of positing collective psychological phenomena that mirror individual ones.) (Note 3: The first section of this article is available in the January 26th Issue, Volume 10, No. 3 of IBPP.)

#### Current Creation of Paranoia Toward the Jews

It's the dawn of a new millennium, but creation of paranoia toward the Jew is still going strong. Currently there is massive creation of paranoia toward the Jew in the Middle East.

A classic example of creation of paranoia toward the Jews in modern times was a speech given by Suha Arafat, wife of Yassir Arafat, to Hillary Clinton on November 11, 1999. In her speech she said

"For years, our people have been subjected to a daily, intensive use of poison gas by the Israeli forces, which has led to an increase in cancer and other horrible diseases among women and children ... Israel has [also] chemically contaminated about 80 percent of water sources used by Palestinians."

Hatred of Jews is taught in Palestinian schools. For example a 12th-grade text entitled "The Contemporary History of the Arabs and the World" directs teachers to convey the following messages to students:

1. Zionism is an example of Nazism, fascism and racism.
2. Zionism endangers Arab society and must be stopped.
3. The Jew's evil behavior causes anti-Semitic persecution.
4. Jews welcome their own persecution because it is profitable.

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Hatred of Jews is broadcast on Arab TV. In fact, the Palestinian version of Sesame Street encouraged children to fight holy war against the Jews (17). This particular show was discontinued due to threats from the United States to withhold funding from the Palestinian Authority. However, creation of paranoia by the Palestinian Authority continues. Kelley, a reporter for USA Today, listened to Palestinian broadcasts about Israeli atrocities and then investigated them. He wrote how in one broadcast the breathless correspondent said (18):

"The Israeli criminals have fired missiles into the homes of innocent Palestinians, Palestinian blood is flowing in the streets! Oh God, God, how can the criminals kill our innocent children?"

A trip to the town by Mr. Kelley immediately after the report, however, found no evidence of an attack. According to Kelley (18) the broadcasters explained their motive for their incitement (creation of paranoia) to him. He wrote that

"They view their work as part of their struggle for a Palestinian homeland." (This motive is congruent with that of "creation of paranoia as a byproduct of justification of aggression" described in the first section of this paper.)

In September 2000, Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The Palestinian Authority created paranoia among Palestinian Arabs by spreading the rumor that his visit was part of an Israeli plot to take control of the Al Aksa Mosque. Attacks of snipers protected by a human shield of young Palestinians throwing rocks were organized against the Jews. The young Palestinians provided cover to the gunmen (19). Often these boys functioned as a rock-throwing shield behind which stood grown men....throwing Molotov cocktails and firing rifles.

When deaths inevitably result, the Palestinians claim the dead youths as innocent martyrs, dispatched gloriously to heaven by the Zionist infidel's bullets (20). Often photographs of the wounded youth are distributed by the press, creating paranoia toward the Jews throughout the world. Another tactic used by the Palestinian Authority is to take over civilian homes by force and to shoot from them at Jewish homes. If the Jews retaliate, this creates paranoia among the civilians as well as the rest of the world against the Jews. An example of this is the attack on Gilo from civilian houses and from near a children's orphanage (21) in Beit Jalla. The Israeli newspaper Maariv reported in October 2000 that

"There is considerable justice in the call for increasingly harsh retaliatory measures by Israel to stop the continuous shooting at the Jerusalem neighborhood of Gilo - but....massive firing at Bethlehem's Christian suburb [of Beit Jala] is liable to arouse the Christian world against us. This is exactly what the Palestinians are striving for..."

The creation of paranoia occurs in the Jewish world as well. The paranoia in the Arab world has led Jews to constantly live under the threat of war and terrorism. The Jews are desperate for peace and have developed a hostile rift between those who believe territorial concessions to the Arabs will lead to peace and those who believe that territorial concessions will shift the balance of power toward the Arabs and will result in war.

One of the territories that Jews disagree about is the Golan Heights. When the Syrians were in control of the Golan Heights, they used to fire at Jews in the valley below. In 1999, Reform Jewish Leaders published an open letter in which they accused Jews opposed to giving the Golan Heights to Syria as

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"voices of hatred and intolerance" and "enemies of peace" who want to "deprive another generation of normal, peaceful existence."

Karen McQuillan, a reform Jew, told Israel's Channel 7 that

"Referring to opponents of a withdrawal as 'enemies of peace' or assassins' is slander. These Reform leaders [who say this] feel very moralistic...but the actual rhetoric is very destructive."

The creation of paranoia by Jew toward Jew is worse in Israel. There is a lot of such creation of paranoia by secular Jews to Orthodox Jews and vice versa. One reason for this is that many Orthodox Jews believe that Israel should hold on to what they consider to be God given land. Many of the secular Jews view this attitude as an obstacle to peace. Many of the Orthodox view the ceding of territory as against God's will and a danger to the security of the state. One result of this was the murder of Yitzhak Rabin by the orthodox Yigal Amir. Another source of hostility between the two groups results from the Orthodox Jews wanting Israel to be governed by religious law, while the secular Jews do not want to have to live according to religious dictates. Whatever the difference of opinion between secular Jew and Orthodox Jew it does not justify the examples of creation of paranoia assembled by Aryeh Stav (22) that I have listed below.

- 1) The secular-Jewish writer Amos Oz described the ultra-orthodox Jews as "armed groups of gangsters, criminals against humanity, sadists, progromists and murderers."
- 2) Gideon Samet, the Consul of Israel in Philadelphia called them "The obscurantist and ugly phenomena of our time."
- 3) Israel's former minister of education Shulamit Aloni described them as "bloodsuckers...snakes...suckling from the most darkest urges that the Nazi horror suckled from. They are greedy, domineering, evil and primitive, immoral, parasitical and power-hungry."

Ironically by creating paranoia toward Jews Shulamit Aloni is giving in to the same evil urges as Nazism. A widespread party slogan of the Nazis was "The Jew leech sucking the country's blood."

The Israeli left even goes as far as to incite Arab hatred toward their Jewish opponents. The Meretz party in their campaign for Ehud Barak in January 2001 put advertisements in Arab-language newspapers with pictures of Arabs massacred by Lebanese Christians which they blamed on Barak's opponent, Ariel Sharon (23).

### Creation of Paranoia by the Press

The press creates paranoia toward groups it opposes but generally does so in subtle ways. This is because the press often attempts to appear objective. One of the ways the press can appear objective while putting a spin on facts is by omitting crucial facts. Israel is often vilified in the press for creating Arab refugees, for occupying Arab land and so on without presentation of Israel's side of the story. For example, Israel was vilified for its presence in Lebanon by the press, which neglected to mention the reason Israel was there which was in response to the firing of Katyusha rockets from Lebanon into Israel.

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The press also creates paranoia through its choice of words. For example, when Israeli troops patrolled the border areas of Lebanon the New York Times called them an "occupying force" while referring to the Syrian occupiers of Lebanon as "overseers" (24).

### Creation of Paranoia by Psychotherapists

In 1692, women accused of witchcraft were burned at the stake in Salem Massachusetts. In the 1980s, another witchhunt began. Many in the social worker, therapist, conservative Christian and police communities went through a "Satanic Panic". They believed that a widespread, underground, secret network of Satanic cults were kidnapping, sexually and physically abusing children, and murdering them. In the United States and Canada, the scare reached a peak in the early 1990s. It spread to other English speaking countries from the U.S. Belief in Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA) burst into prominence in North America in 1980 with the first SRA survivor book Michelle Remembers. It described horrendous sexual and physical abuse allegedly suffered by the co-author, Michelle Smith, as a child over a 5-year interval. She described perpetrators as Satanists who felt that the pain inflicted upon their victims increased their black magical powers. The group also allegedly engaged in human sacrifice and cannibalism. Michelle was presented as a documentary and was followed by a number of copy-cat books: "...there has been no verification of these events, and it has been discovered that the alleged victim was attending school regularly, and was even photographed for the school yearbook, at a time when she was supposedly locked in a basement for months" (25).

Memories similar to those of Michelle Smith have surfaced when psychologists use recovered memory therapy. These psychologists believe that many problems are due to repressed memories of abuse and that recovery of such memories will lead to the cure of their patients. According to the False Memory Foundation, these therapists, in their zeal to recover memories of abuse, actually are creating false memories of abuse. The paranoia created by recovered memory therapy causes untold pain to the families broken up by them (26). Despite experiments showing that memories can easily be created (27), recovered memory therapy continues to be practiced. In addition, overzealous law officers and therapists have coerced false accusations and confessions of abuse. No one knows how many of those imprisoned for child abuse are really guilty of it. The accused of two famous cases of false accusations, the case of Country Walk (28) and the Paul Ingram case (29), are currently locked up in jail. Frank Fuster, the accused from the Country Walk case, has been in a Florida prison for the last sixteen years (30).

### Social Delusions

When faced with a delusional paranoid and threatening enemy, countries may develop a complimentary delusion that if they only appease that hostile enemy there will be peace. Historians and news columnists have also used the term "delusion" to describe such beliefs. Anthony Rhodes in his book *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators* (31) referred to Neville Chamberlain's beliefs that led him to appease Hitler as a delusion. Chamberlain believed that if he satisfied Hitler's demands for the Sudetenland, Hitler would be peaceful and war would be averted. Unfortunately, Chamberlain's delusions about Hitler's peaceful intentions resulted in his pressuring Czechoslovakia to turn over their defenses in the Sudetenland to Hitler and the fall of Czechoslovakia to the Nazis. The fall of Czechoslovakia may in turn have contributed to the conquest of the rest of Europe by the Nazis. When Chamberlain died, the last words he said were "If only Hitler hadn't lied to me." Chamberlain had such delusions about Hitler that he thought Hitler was an honest man! Chamberlain could never have carried out his policies if he did not have the support of the majority of the British people. His delusions were shared on a massive scale.

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Many believe that President Clinton's and Prime Minister Ehud Barak's policies of unreciprocated concessions toward the Arabs are those of delusional appeasement. News columnist Charles Krauthammer(32) wrote that

"What is astonishing is that these concessions are entirely unreciprocated, and without any assent from the Palestinians that they would bring peace. Indeed, the Palestinians are adamant that they will not."

And that

"There has not been an exercise of diplomacy this irresponsible -- a breathtaking mix of narcissism and self-delusion -- since Munich 1938."

In addition to concessions, the Israelis armed the Palestinian police despite ongoing Palestinian violations of the Oslo agreements and ongoing incitement. This delusional, mad policy has led predictably led to these arms being used against the Jews. In spite of this, the Israeli government insanely continues to provide financial assistance to the PLO. The United States does as well.

Why do so many Jews believe that financial assistance and territorial concessions will make the Arabs peaceful in spite of continuing Arab incitement and violence against the Jews? Why did Prime Minister Chamberlain and the British have delusions that Hitler was better than he was? I think the answer in both cases is wishful thinking. Chamberlain wanted to believe that he could avert war with Hitler. The Jews want to believe that territorial concessions will avert war with the Arabs, even if the Arabs do not reciprocate by ending their creation of paranoia.

Why doesn't appeasement lead to peace? Shouldn't satisfying one's opponent's grievances end the motive to be antagonistic? If the opponent government continues to incite their population, then there will be no appreciation of the concessions. The situation in Israel is an excellent example of that. After 7 years of Israeli territorial concessions, the Palestinian Arabs are more violent and more hostile than they were before the peace process. Despite generous territorial concessions and generous financial help from Israel and the United States, they still hate both countries (Figure 2). American mediator Dennis Ross shortly before his job ended with the inauguration of the Bush administration, told the Jerusalem Post (33) that the one thing he wished he had done differently was

"to ensure that there isn't incitement that there isn't socialization of hostility. If there is one thing I wish we had done more effectively, that's it."

Another reason that appeasement does not lead to peace lies in a basic tenet of behavioral psychology. Rewarding a behavior will lead to more of that behavior. Rewarding antagonistic behavior with concessions leads to more antagonistic behavior. In the same interview in which Ross said he regretted ensuring that there was no incitement, he said

"there are clearly some on the Palestinian side who seem to think violence serves their cause."

What Dennis Ross neglected to say was that as long as the Israelis reward violence with concessions, and as long as there is no financial penalty, violence does serve the Palestinian cause.

Senator Connie Mack addressed many of these issues in a speech he made in March 1999 in which he said

"If the Palestinian leadership fails to abandon incitement of hatred, persecution, and terrorism, then we are all dreaming - only dreaming. And our President's behavior must be labeled foolish appeasement. Today, the Israeli people are exhausted by fifty years of violence against their homes and families - of sending their sons and daughters into the army -and they dream of a promised peace now. This is our hope and our dream. But we must not get confused. History is replete with examples of compromises that bring terror and destroy dreams. In the United States, many people seem to think that if we do not confront these obstacles to peace, and if we look the other way, then we will be able to come to an agreement. The reality, however, is just the opposite. If we don't acknowledge the attitudes and acts of those at the peace table, then the peace process is over already and we just won't admit it. In other words, the surest way to kill the peace process is to avoid confrontation, to fear upsetting a belligerent force, and to avoid addressing incitement, violence, persecution and terrorism. The only way to keep the peace process alive is to focus on truth, freedom, security and justice. The United States must demonstrate principled leadership and end the appeasement that perpetuates the cycle of violence....Now is the time for a return to our principled stand that the only way to truly attain peace is to support freedom, democracy, and justice and oppose the cycle of hatred. We must face tyranny and oppression where it exists, condemn it, and stand up for peace -real peace based on security, freedom and a change of heart."

One way to start facing tyranny is to stop funding it. The United States and Israel should cut off all financial assistance to the Palestinian authority until all violence and incitement ceases.

#### The Role of Psychologists and Historians in Curing Social Delusion

The problems of creation of paranoia and delusion are psychological ones. There may be an important role to play for psychologists in assisting people to resist the creation of paranoia and delusion by society. Unfortunately, psychologists need to address the creation of paranoia and delusion by members of their own community.

Although there are books that discuss history from a psychological perspective such as *Prisoners of Hate* (34) and *Political Paranoia* (3), the knowledge they convey is only known to a small audience. Historians need to integrate psychology into high school texts so that the pervasiveness and the destructive role of incitement and delusion in society are more widely understood.

(Figure 2) (Figure 3)

(See (17) *Jihad for Kids* <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/english/radio/ram/eng-video/jihad.ram>; (18) Kelley, J. (October 25, 2000). *USA Today*; (19) Kelley, J. (October 23, 2000). *USA Today*; (20) Dreher R. (October 26, 2000). *Palestinians cynically exploit children in Arafat's children's crusade*. *New York Post*; (21) Dan, U. (October 29, 2000). *Fighting is too close for comfort*. *New York Post*; (22) Stav, A. *Notes on the dialectics of Israeli anti-Semitism*, <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/2527/press17.htm>; (23) *Israel's Channel 7 News*, Tuesday, January 9, 2001; (24) Sachs, S. (April 8, 2000) *Beirut's unwanted goal*. *The New York Times*; (25) Authors. (1994). *Journal of Psychohistory*, 24(4); (26) Goldstein, E. & Farmer, K. (1992). *Confabulations, Creating False Memories, Destroying Families*. Boca Raton, FL.: Upton Books; (27) Loftus E. (1997). *Creating false memories*. *Scientific American*, 277, 70-75; (28) Nathan D. (1993). *Revisiting Country Walk*. *Issues in Child Abuse Accusations*, 5, 1-11; (29) Ofshe, R., & Watters, E. (1994). *Making Monsters, False Memories, Psychotherapy, and Sexual Hysteria*. New York: Charles Scribners; (30) Isaac R, (2000) *Janet*

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Reno and Her Record as a So-Called Champion of Children, Independent Women's Forum, <http://www.iwf.org/news/000427.shtml>; (31) Rhodes, A. (1974). *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators*. New York, Holt Rinehart and Winston;(32) Krauthammer, C. (January 12, 2001). Middle East Madness. *The Washington Post*, p. A25; (33) Zacharia, J. Ross to Post: Palestinians missed historic opportunity. *The Jerusalem Post*, Internet Edition, January 9, 2001;(34) Beck, A. (1999). *Prisoners of Hate: The Cognitive Basis of Anger, Hostility, and Violence*. New York, Harper Collins. (Keywords: Ericson, Paranoia.)