

## Alert #1

# CAMERA ALERT

COMMITTEE FOR ACCURACY IN MIDDLE EAST REPORTING IN AMERICA

CAMERA

SNAPSHOTS

## Mainstream Media Ignore Bigoted Treatment of Israeli Olympic Team

July 30, 2011

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IN BRIEF

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### Attention CAMERA E-Mail Team:

On Friday, July 27, prior to the official opening of the 2012 London Olympic Games, the Lebanese judo team refused to practice next to the Israeli team and Olympic organizers erected a barrier to split the gym in half.

According to a spokesman for Israel's Olympic Committee: "We started to practice. They came and they saw us - they didn't like it and they went to the organizers." (Reuters)

The organizers promptly accommodated the Lebanese demand and set up the separation screen.

[The Times of Israel](#) reported:

According to several Hebrew sports sites, the two teams were scheduled to use the same gym and mats at London's new ExCeL center for their final preparations. However, the delegation from Lebanon would not train in view of the Israeli team, and insisted some sort of barrier be placed between them.

[The Telegraph](#) (London) wrote:

London 2012 organising [sic] committee officials erected a makeshift curtain to split the two halves of a training gym at the ExCeL centre on Friday afternoon to placate the Lebanese team, which was refusing to train at the same time as the Israelis.

The UK's [Guardian](#) picked up Reuters' story as did [Yahoo Sports](#):

Olympic officials were forced to erect a screen between Lebanon's and Israel's judo fighters on Friday after the Lebanese refused to train on the same mat, the Israeli Olympic team said on Friday.

Yet, as of this writing, CAMERA has found no mention of the incident in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, Associated Press or networks such as CNN and ABC.

One of the fundamental principles of "Olympism," as outlined in the [Olympic Charter](#), states:

Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement.

Can accommodating the request of an Arab team not to share the mat with or be seen by Israelis be regarded as anything other than a form of discrimination based on race, religion or politics? Would it be allowed if it involved any country other than Israel? And shouldn't it be covered by major American news organizations?

Ironically, earlier in the week, when the IOC refused to include a moment of silence to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the terrorist murders of 11 Israeli Olympians, [Jibril Rajoub](#), head of the Palestinian Football Federation, sent a letter to IOC chairman Jacques Rogge thanking him for his position, writing:

Sports is a bridge for love, connection and relaying peace between peoples. It should not be a factor for separation and spreading racism between peoples.

And yet "separating and spreading racism between peoples" is exactly what occurred in the practice center for the judo teams in London. Where's the coverage?

**Please use the information in the alert as background for your own letter. Do not copy and paste directly from the alert and do not forward it to the media.**

**Please write to any or all of the following media outlets** and ask them not to ignore instances of overt racism against Jews and discrimination against Israelis:

1) *The New York Times*:

- E-mail [letters@nytimes.com](mailto:letters@nytimes.com)
- E-mail the News Department at [nytnews@nytimes.com](mailto:nytnews@nytimes.com)
- E-mail Jill Abramson, Managing Editor at [abramson@nytimes.com](mailto:abramson@nytimes.com) and [managing-editor@nytimes.com](mailto:managing-editor@nytimes.com)
- E-mail Arthur Brisbane, *New York Times* Public Editor at [public@nytimes.com](mailto:public@nytimes.com)

2) *The Washington Post*:

- Letter to the Editor at [letters@washpost.com](mailto:letters@washpost.com)
- Ombudsman Patrick P. Pexton at [ombudsman@washpost.com](mailto:ombudsman@washpost.com)
- Copy Foreign Desk at [foreign@washpost.com](mailto:foreign@washpost.com)

3) Comment to *USA Today* [by clicking here](#).

4) Comment to ABC [by clicking here](#).

5) Comment to CNN [by clicking here](#).

6) E-mail the AP at [info@ap.org](mailto:info@ap.org)

**If you are on Twitter, please tweet about this incident.** Sample tweets include:

- No min of silence AND barrier btwn #Israel & #Lebanon #Judo teams? Coverage? @nytimes @AP @CNN @USAToday @ABC #OlympicBigots @CAMERAorg
- Barrier btwn #Israel & #Lebanon #Judo teams an outrage! Coverage? @nytimes @washingtonpost @AP @CNN @USAToday @ABC #OlympicBigots @CAMERAorg
- No coverage of barrier btwn #Israel & #Lebanon #Judo teams? @nytimes @washingtonpost @AP @CNN @USAToday @ABC #OlympicBigots @CAMERAorg

**Please send blind copies (bcc) to [letters@camera.org](mailto:letters@camera.org).**

**CAMERA**

With thanks,

Sarit Catz

International Letter Writing Director

CAMERA

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## Alert #2

# CAMERA ALERT

COMMITTEE FOR ACCURACY IN MIDDLE EAST REPORTING IN AMERICA

CAMERA

SNAPSHOTS

## ***The New York Times'* Embattled Integrity**

July 25, 2012

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IN BRIEF

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### Attention CAMERA E-Mail Team:

On July 21, *The New York Times* ran an editorial entitled, "[Israel's Embattled Democracy](#)," about the Kadima party leaving Israel's coalition government. From this, editors extrapolate that:

- "secular Israelis are increasingly resentful"
- Israeli Arabs "feel like second class citizens"
- "many Israelis have a cultural mistrust of the democratic values on which the state was founded"

While editorial boards are free to express their opinions, no matter how foolish they may be, this particular piece is yet more evidence of the *Times'* obsession with criticizing Israel.

From [July 1 thru July 24](#), the grey lady ran 83 editorials. Of those 83, only 10 dealt with non-domestic issues and two of those -- that's 20% -- were critical of Israel.

Editors believe that Israel's commitment to "liberal values and human rights" is "in danger of being lost." Indeed the title states that Israel's very democracy is "embattled."

Consider. At this very moment, the Syrian regime is murdering its own citizens. Lebanon is run by a terrorist group, [Hezbollah](#). Jordan is an absolute monarchy that recently [revoked](#)

[the citizenship](#) of thousands of residents of Palestinian descent. Egypt's military rulers annulled the parliament and the alternative to this junta is the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood. Gaza is run by Hamas, a terrorist group that hasn't had elections in years and [probably never will again](#) and the West Bank is run by a [corrupt kleptocracy](#) that is also way overdue for elections. These governments are truly embattled and their citizens suffer.

Yet Israel's internal political machinations merit the lion's share of *The New York Times'* editorial page attention? To be fair, Syria -- where nearly 20,000 people have been slaughtered, [two dozen or more torture centers](#) reportedly dot the country and [weapons of mass destruction](#) may be used -- was the subject of an editorial during this time period, one.

One event that did *not* merit mention by the editors at all, however, was the massacre of Israeli tourists by a suicide bomber in Burgas, Bulgaria.

Israeli diplomats, tourists and expats have been targeted by terrorists around the world, yet instead of editorializing about a resilient little country that faces unmatched challenges, *The Times* heaps scorn on Israel.

Iran, believed to be behind most if not all this terrorist activity, is developing a nuclear program which has earned American and international sanction and the concern of the [International Atomic Energy Agency](#). Yet, not one editorial in this time period addressed Iran.

This obsessive hectoring and criticism of Israel contradicts any rational view about what should warrant public concern and attention.

Yet, despite the unbalanced editorials, many people continue to subscribe to *The New York Times* -- sometimes because of the popular crossword puzzles! For anyone in this category, there are *New York Times* crossword puzzle books. [Buy one of those](#).

Please see **In Detail** below for more information.

#### ACTION ITEMS

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**Please use the information in the alert as background for your own letter. Do not copy and paste directly from the alert and do not forward it to the media.**

**Please write to *The New York Times*** and ask editors to comment on issues more pressing than Israel's internal political situation:

- E-mail [letters@nytimes.com](mailto:letters@nytimes.com)
- E-mail Jill Abramson, Managing Editor at [abramson@nytimes.com](mailto:abramson@nytimes.com) and [managing-editor@nytimes.com](mailto:managing-editor@nytimes.com)
- E-mail Arthur Brisbane, *New York Times* Public Editor at [public@nytimes.com](mailto:public@nytimes.com)
- E-mail Editorial Page Editor Andrew Rosenthal at [editorial@nytimes.com](mailto:editorial@nytimes.com)

Let editors know that:

- *The Times'* constant beating up on Israel is unwarranted and unprofessional.
- Israel is a beacon of liberty and democracy not only in comparison to other nations in the Middle East but anywhere on earth.
- Israelis rank high in measurements of life expectancy and happiness, which is at odds with *The Times'* picture of Israelis as "resentful" and mistrustful of their state.
- By what logic do editors deplore Israeli democracy while ignoring Israel's ongoing efforts to protect its citizens from Iranian-backed terrorists, including the tragic attack in Burgas, Bulgaria?

**If you are on Twitter, tweet about this issue.** Sample tweets include:

- Hey @nytimes, quit picking on #Israel. #NYTimesHatesIsrael @CAMERAorg
- #Israel a beacon of democracy, despite what @nytimes says #NYTimesHatesIsrael @CAMERAorg
- #Israel-is rank high in happiness but not miserable @nytimes editors #NYTimesHatesIsrael @CAMERAorg
- Hey @nytimes, write an editorial about #Iran #nukes & #terrorism! #NYTimesHatesIsrael @CAMERAorg

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IN DETAIL

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## Restriction of Rights

In their July 21 editorial, *New York Times* editors write of Israel, "In the past two years, activists say, more than 25 bills have been proposed or passed by the Parliament to limit freedom of speech and of the press; penalize, defund or investigate nongovernmental groups; restrict judicial independence; and trample minority rights."

Perhaps *Times* editors don't realize that nearly anything can be proposed in a parliamentary democracy, a system quite different from ours. Their litany of vague accusations that lumps bills "proposed or passed" together includes no specifics. It echoes in part the assertions in a May 23 Op-Ed that included an unsubstantiated and counter-factual claim that Israel has "over 35 laws" that "discriminate against Palestinians who are Israeli citizens."

After [CAMERA challenged](#) the paper to substantiate the sweeping statement, a senior editor insisted *The Times* stands by the allegation because it is a reflection of the author's personal opinion.

One law which was passed, and to which *The Times* presumably refers, is the 2011 law requiring all NGOs -- across the political spectrum -- to disclose their foreign funding sources. This law is not, in fact, much of a constraint on NGOs and is based on an American law. According to a diplomatic cable regarding an earlier, stricter version of the law from the American embassy in Israel to the Secretary of State's

office, as leaked by [Wikileaks](#):

4. (C) NGO Monitor President Gerald Steinberg, a conservative professor of political science at Bar Ilan University who initiated the push for this legislation during a December Knesset conference that was boycotted by most NGOs, told PoOff on February 24 that the legislation aimed to replicate the U.S. Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA)

[...]

6. (C) B'Tselem Director Jessica Montell, who estimated her 9 million NIS (\$2.4 million) budget is 95 percent funded from abroad, mostly from European countries, told PoOff on February 10 that she did not believe the legislation would pass in its current form. ACRI's International Communication and Development Coordinator, Melanie Takefman, also told PoOff on February 10 that she believed the troublesome legislation would be amended and that the NGOs would likely be able to influence the draft legislation so that it would achieve its goal of greater transparency without restricting the NGOs' ability to operate. Both denied any need for greater transparency, but said they would welcome it if it applied equally to all NGOs, including NGO-Monitor and especially Jewish settler organizations.

However, when it comes to governments that "limit freedom of speech and of the press; penalize, defund or investigate nongovernmental groups; restrict judicial independence; and trample minority rights", it is incontrovertibly true that Israel cannot compare to its neighbors.

Limit freedom of speech and the press? Turkey has more [journalists in prison](#) than Iran and China. Saudi Arabia [sentenced a journalist to 50 lashes](#) for reporting protests over electricity shortages.

Penalize nongovernmental organizations? Egypt has arrested and put employees of NGOs [on trial](#).

Trample minority rights? Egypt's Coptic Christians continue to [suffer oppression](#). In Gaza, under the authority of Hamas, [political freedom](#), [religious freedom](#) and [freedom of association](#) are severely curtailed, women's rights are [limited](#), human rights activists are [targeted](#), and homosexuality is [a criminal offense](#).

Why then *The Times*' hyperfocus on criticizing Israel?

### **Israelis are Happy and Healthy**

If Israel is such a miserable place, it's indeed surprising that in April, Israel ranked

fourteenth in the first ever [World Happiness Report](#) commissioned for the United Nations. As reported by [Israel 21c](#):

The rankings in the report were based on a number called the "life evaluation score," a measurement which takes into account factors like people's health, family and job security and social aspects like political freedom and government corruption.

According to the rankings, Israelis are happier than Belgians, Britons, Spaniards, Italians, the French, Brazilians, Germans and residents of hundreds of other countries.

And, it's a good thing Israelis are happy because, according to the World Health Organization, they have among the [highest life expectancy](#) of residents anywhere in the world. There are numerous studies confirming Israel's high life expectancy. According to the [United Nations](#), Israel is eighth in the world, ranking above Canada, the United Kingdom and way above the United States. This despite the fact that Israel is the frequent target of military and terrorist attacks.

### **Ignoring Terrorism**

The devastating terrorist attack in Burgas July 18 killed five Israeli tourists -- including a pregnant mother -- and the Bulgarian bus driver. Yet, three days later, *Times* editors decided that, rather than comment on this atrocity, they would rather criticize internal Israeli politics.

Had they wished to write about Israel's constant battle against terrorism, they could have noted that the Burgas massacre was unique only in the fact that the terrorists achieved their aim. In 2012 alone, Iran has been connected to a number of planned or attempted attacks:

- January: a thwarted attempt to kill two Jewish teachers in [Azerbaijan](#)
- January: an earlier terrorist attack on Israeli tourists was foiled in [Bulgaria](#)
- February: the car bombing of an Israeli diplomat's wife's in [New Delhi](#)
- February: the botched attack on Israeli diplomats in [Thailand](#)
- February: a thwarted attack on the Israeli embassy in [Tbilisi, Georgia](#)
- February: another foiled plan to attack Israelis in [Azerbaijan](#)
- March: 22 people were arrested for planning yet another attack on Israelis in [Azerbaijan](#)
- April: [India](#) arrested and deported a man for spying on Israeli nationals
- May: the Mossad shared information on an Iranian effort to attack Israelis which was then thwarted by [Turkey](#)
- June: a foiled plot to attack Israelis in [Kenya](#)
- July: a preempted attack on Israeli tourists in [Cyprus](#)

Naturally, these don't include any of the terrorist attacks aimed at Israelis and launched from Gaza, Sinai, the West Bank, or inside Israel proper. Israel's successes -- and sometimes, sadly, failures -- to protect its citizens around the globe might have been



worthy of an editorial, but it wouldn't fit into *The Times'* entrenched view that Israel's thriving energetic democracy is on the verge of collapse. In fact, what *The Times* is engaged in is not reporting and it's not even editorializing. It's malicious wishful thinking.

**CAMERA**

With thanks,

Sarit Catz

International Letter Writing Director

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