

Letters

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However, style can be quite deceptive and when the substance of Dr. Zayid's article is examined, it is found to be quite inaccurate and misleading. He quotes several eminent Jewish personages to support the justness of the Palestinian cause. The only conclusion to be derived from these statements is that there are Jewish people of different political persuasions. The fact that Jews can hold points of view that are anti-Zionist or pro-Palestinian merely demonstrates that they hold different opinions than others. It does not affect the authenticity of their statements. For every Jewish personage which Dr. Zayid has used to support his claims, many other Jews could be found to support the opposite point of view.

In his discussion of King Solomon and the two women, Dr. Zayid commits the error of begging the question. He compares the real mother's desire to give away her baby, other than see her child cut in half, to the Arab peoples' refusal to accept half of Palestine rather than its totality. But this comparison is invalid, because it ignores the strength and authenticity of Jewish claims to Palestine which are certainly as valid as Arab claims. By this comparison, Dr. Zayid is ignoring the crux of the whole Middle East problem, i.e. the fact that two groups of people have legitimate claims to the same piece of land.

To deny Jewish claims to Israel, Dr. Zayid is displaying a profound lack of knowledge of Judaism and Jewish history. The essence of Judaism is intrinsically bound up with the land of Israel. The Jewish festivals, observed by Jews throughout the world, are largely agricultural holidays based on the seasonal activities of Palestine. Jews throughout the ages have prayed to be allowed to return to Jerusalem to live there and to establish it as the spiritual centre of Judaism. Jews have always been an active and vibrant presence in Palestine and if they were not a majority, it was only because they were forcibly prevented from living there.

Dr. Zayid casts aspersions on my comments because I am offering them "in the comfort of my home in Halifax." Yes, I am lucky to be able to enjoy a comfortable life in a wealthy, democratic country like Canada. Most of my people have not been so lucky. A third of them were killed during World War II. A quarter of those who remain are being culturally and spiritually destroyed in the U.S.S.R. Others want to be able to live in a country of their own, where their culture can be furthered and their future survival ensured.

There will be no solution to the Palestinian dilemma until Palestinian Arabs are willing to accept Israel as a concrete reality. At the present time, it appears that definite steps are being taken towards a peaceful settlement of Mid-East affairs. If Palestinian Arabs are willing to compromise their demands, then perhaps they too can reap the benefits of the present peace negotiations. If they continue to demand Israel's demise as a pre-condition for negotiation, and their leaders continue to assert, as Yasser Arafat did this week, that "Guns and Blood" are the only means to a settlement, then the future looks bleak for Palestinians and for all others involved in the Middle-East.

Sincerely,
Larry Barzelai

Snow in California?

To the Gazette:

I note with interest and amusement the photo, in the 08 December issue, of the rear license-plate and bumper of my automobile, with the caption "Just like home?" underneath. Indeed, the first snowfall of the season in Halifax was a bit different than I have been used to for the last several years. However, I believe you were correct only by chance, because no license-plate tells you what part of the state/province the auto is from, and in California, this makes a big difference.

One of the enduring myths of California is that the state is all sun and sand, etc., regardless of the section of the state in reference. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, in normal years, there is more snow in California than in Nova Scotia, for a very simple reason: the state is much larger than Nova Scotia and there is snow in a substantial part of the state each winter (I say "normally" because there has been a drought

the last few years in California).

One of the unique aspects of California is that there is an incredible divergence of topography, geography, and weather conditions in the state. Where I live in Los Angeles, there are in the metro area, beaches, mountains, valleys, deserts, canyons, and plains which produce very varied weather on the same day. Thus, on certain winter days, it is possible to go skiing in the morning, and sun-bathing the same afternoon at the ocean. The temperatures in the LA area sometimes vary as much as 45 degrees F (25 degrees C) at the same time, on the same day!!

Further east in California, the variances are even greater. Death Valley is only 170 miles east of LA, at its lowest point 282 feet below sea-level; yet just 85 miles north of Death Valley is Mount Whitney, 14,494 feet above sea-level!! The former is in the Mojave Desert, the latter in the Sierra Mountain Range. The Sierra's are slightly higher than the Rockies are in Colorado, etc.

The result of these extremities is that on certain days each winter, the reports of the weather on TV will include the fact that both the highest and lowest temperatures in the "continental" US (the 48-state part) during that one day were in

California—with a variance of over 100 degrees F (55 degrees C)!!

In northern California there normally is much rain along the coast, running from San Francisco north to Portland, Seattle, Vancouver, etc. (usually in the winter). Yet in either the Mojave or Palm Deserts of southern California, there are several sand-storms each year (usually in the Fall) which can completely bury a car on a highway in one day.

Finally, there is the famous San Andreas Fault, running throughout California, which produces the earthquakes. There actually are several thousand tremors each year, and china-rattling on one's kitchen shelves is quite common. The last quake of any substantial size was in February 1971 in a part of the city of Los Angeles known as the San Fernando Valley; about 65 people were killed.

All of this makes California one of the most interesting places around, with palm trees in many places in the southern part of the state, and ski resorts in much of the central and eastern parts of the state. Even in the county of LA, there is one part of the northern part of the county which is socked in with snow blizzards every winter, while it is beach weather in the

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on **Monday, January 16 at 7:30**

and **Thursday, January 19 at 7:30**