

# Bernard Lewis Drops His Scholar's Robes

by Scott Thompson

Dr. Bernard Lewis, professor emeritus at Princeton University, has upon two recent occasions dropped his scholar's robes to reveal the truth of *EIR*'s charge that he has been one of the leading architects of the Anglo-American establishment's "perpetual war" policies for the Middle East. It is a matter of strategic importance that Muslims finally realize the Jekyll-Hyde nature of Dr. Lewis, who honed his skills at deception during World War II in British military intelligence.

At scholarly events such as one May 7 lecture and debate at the Library of Congress, diplomats from Islamic states fawned over Dr. Lewis, who waxed poetical about the unfortunate decline of Islam since the Arab Renaissance, which was at its height during the Dark Age in Europe. Except for his lying insistence that Islam failed because it lacked science (when, to take just one example, the 11th-Century scientist Ibn Sina was one of the greatest minds in history, in the field of medicine), anyone would have thought that Dr. Lewis had a passionate love for the resurrection of Renaissance Islamic culture. This scholarly dissertation and calm debate presented his "Dr. Jekyll" side.

However, the same Dr. Lewis's "Mr. Hyde" personality came flying out in an April 30 interview with this author, and in a revealing April 18 interview with the Public Broadcasting System's "Charlie Rose Show." Dr. Lewis maintains:

- Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat is an irredeemable terrorist who must be replaced by unnamed "moderates."
- The Oslo Accords were a strategic miscalculation by Israel.
- The House of Saud must be replaced in Saudi Arabia, since it is the chief funder of terrorism and is totalitarian in nature.
- There must be a "regime change" (Newspeak for coup d'état) in Iraq based upon the lessons of the Afghanistan War, regardless of the fact that Afghanistan has been proven to be quicksand, with no clear victor despite repeated invasions by Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States.
- The Iranian government must be overthrown, including the "Westernizing" President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, whom Dr. Lewis proclaims to be a "clever fraud."

This comes as no surprise to readers of the profile of Lewis that appeared in *EIR*'s Jan. 25, 2002 feature, "'Open Conspirators' Behind September 11 Coup Plot." We reported



*“Clash of Civilizations” progenitor Bernard Lewis has long cultivated a Princeton scholar’s reputation in the Mideast; but his public demands to get rid of Yasser Arafat and the governments of Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq immediately, are loud as those of any Washington warmonger.*

that it was Lewis, writing in the September 1990 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, who coined the phrase “A Clash of Civilizations,” which has become the new battle-cry for the utopian, perpetual-war camp. *EIR*, since nearly three decades ago, has exposed the “Bernard Lewis Plan,” for destroying the sovereign nation-states of the Middle East and dividing them into tribal and ethnic cantons: This policy underlay Carter Administration National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski’s own “Arc of Crisis” policy against the Soviet Union.

## Eliminating Arafat

Appearing on the April 18 PBS “Charlie Rose Show,” Dr. Lewis said, that when “the Soviet Union disappeared . . . the PLO, Palestinian leadership, found itself in a very parlous position. . . . (They had also made the mistake of identifying themselves with Saddam Hussein.). . . So they . . . were isolated, impoverished and enfeebled.

“Now at that time, the government of Israel made the decision to throw a lifebelt. They brought Arafat to these discussions in Oslo. . . . What went wrong? . . .

“Where they went wrong was in going public too soon, before they had really reached an effective agreement. And second, bring[ing] in President Clinton as mediator. . . . Now the crucial point, I think, was the offer made by then-Prime Minister [Ehud] Barak to Arafat. . . .

“Some people will tell you that this was an extremely generous offer, that he was offering more than any Israeli leader had ever before offered, even including compromises on Jerusalem. And one is irresistibly driven to the conclusion that he [Arafat] didn’t want peace and that the reason he rejected Barak’s offer was that there was a serious danger that peace might break out.

“Try to look at it in a different perspective. Arafat is a terrorist. He had been all his life a terrorist. . . . He was a pioneer in this new art of terrorism in the age of television. And the Irish and the Basques and others are his disciples.

“Now the question is, was this a step towards getting a peace process . . . or . . . was it a step towards the ultimate objective of the destruction of Israel? . . . The terrorist activities, as far as we know, are almost entirely planned, or at the very least, approved by him. . . . Asking Arafat to give up terrorism would be like asking Tiger Woods to give up golf. . . . And if the peace succeeds he would become the tin-pot dictator of a mini-state. His dream of establishing a Palestinian state is genuine . . . [but,] in the ultimate program there is no room for Israel. . . .

“I would agree with [Israeli Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon on this particular point, that Arafat is not and is never likely to be a peace partner. And that Arafat should be—dealing with Arafat should be seen as part of the war against terrorism. . . . For Arafat and his people, peace is a tactic; war is a strategy.”

Thus, Dr. Lewis makes himself a bedfellow of Sharon, demanding what even the Bush Administration has not yet agreed upon; namely, the elimination of Arafat as a partner, as he had been with slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in what both partners called “the peace of the brave.”

Asked by this author who might replace Arafat, the so-democratic Dr. Lewis said: “He should be excluded from the political process. He has nothing to worry about. He’s definitely the richest terrorist in history. . . . There are more reasonable among the Palestinians, and to name them would be to sentence them to death. . . . This is an internal Palestinian affair, and I’m afraid that they have to do that themselves. What we can do is stop things from outside. I mean, why do you think the Iranians are exporting large quantities of arms, shiploads of arms? And, why do you think that Saddam Hussein raised the bounty from \$10,000 to \$25,000 for suicide bombers?”

So, Lewis proposes to exclude Arafat from the political process—as do both Sharon and fellow Likudnik, former

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—while also preparing the overthrow of the Iraqi and Iranian governments, which he accuses of trying to “muddy the waters” of their own involvement with terrorism by standing behind Arafat.

### **‘Axis of Evil’**

In his interviews, Lewis stood foursquare behind the Teleprompter-Reader-in-Chief’s State of the Union assertion that there is an “axis of evil,” including Iran and Iraq. Speaking about the escalation of violence by the Sharon-spawned Hamas, Lewis said, “The only thing I’m quite sure of is that the worsening of the situation in the last few weeks is directly inspired from Iraq and Iran. They are really worried about President Bush’s war against terrorism and against the ‘axis of evil.’ And, then the obvious tactic on their part is to create a diversion and muddy the waters. I mean this thing has been totally successful.”

Asked whether the “Afghanistan template” might be used against Iraq, by casting Dr. Ahmed Chalabi’s Iraqi National Congress (INC) in the role of the Afghan Northern Alliance, Lewis replied: “Well, I do think it would be much easier in Iraq. The free zone in the north is one-quarter of the total land area of Iraq, and that is far more than the Northern Alliance ever had in Afghanistan. . . . I don’t see this as a major military operation against Iraq. I see this as help for the Iraqis in the north, when they [the INC] proclaim an independent regime.”

What about the potential to overthrow the government of Iranian President Khatami? Lewis seemed to believe that it would be even easier than a “regime change” in Iraq: “I believe that he’s just one of the gang: a little more sophisticated than the others. He’s trying to preserve the regime. . . . The vote for Khatami was a vote against the leadership, and he has now forfeited most of the goodwill that he had won by appearing to offer an alternative. But, in fact, he’s not an alternative. And, he’s no better than the rest, which is to say a little more sophisticated. . . . All the indications that I have from my Iranian connections is that the regime is fragile and frightened, and could easily be tackled by the Iranian people, with purely symbolic help.”

### **House of Saud in the Crosshairs**

Lewis also called for toppling the House of Saud, which he ridiculed as being “Made in England, 1925”: “Yes, I would go further and say that the entire Kingdom in its present form is in danger. I mean, remember, the Saudi Kingdom is not an ancient one.” Asked whether the United States should seize Saudi Arabia’s oil fields, if the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fell, Lewis said: “At a certain stage it might be useful to, shall we say, set up a friendly regime in that area [chuckling]. But only if it becomes necessary.”

It should come as no surprise that it is Osama bin Laden, whom Dr. Lewis had previously praised, who, he told this author, was the chief enemy of the Saudi regime.