



## Straight Talk

by Muriel Sluyter

## How Would America React?

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Greetings, Gentle Reader,

Arafat is holed up in his compound one more time, and he is down to just one building. If his homicide bombers keep murdering women and children, the Israelis might pull that building down. They are demanding that 20 known terrorists come out of that structure; since terrorist leaders prefer sending idiotic young people to do their murdering, as opposed to exposing their own hides, it is anyone's guess what will happen.

Are the Israelis justified? What would John and Janie American Doe do if the country had been repeatedly and regularly attacked by surrounding nations, not only within our lifetime, but for generations? What if we were, today, under constant attack by mortar fire and missiles from a neighboring country, as the Israelis are even as this is being written?

What if, only a few decades ago, any woman caught alone had been gang raped, hideously mutilated, then butchered by enemies within our own country? How would we have reacted to that? Would we have tried to "feel the pain" of the rapists and murderers? Probably not. Most likely, we would have concentrated on causing them pain. Anyone who thinks differently is lying to himself.

How did each of us feel when we saw the World Trade Center hit by planes? How about the Pentagon? I know there are Americans (traitors, all) who cheered. A New Mexico professor said anyone who bombed the Pentagon had his vote. Did you feel that way? I didn't.

How did I feel? I'll tell you, and while I'm sorry now that I was in such a rage, I am not so naive as to think it was unreasonable. As I watched the people jumping from the windows of those burning buildings, I said aloud, "I want our military to start on one side of Afghanistan and burn everything to the ground, and continue to burning until they reach the opposite border." That's how enraged I was. In absolute honesty, how did you feel? Can you be totally honest with yourself, since you don't have to tell anyone else how you felt?

America has given multiple millions in aid to the

Palestinians, just as we have to Israel. We can see what kinds of structures the Israelis have built for their people. But what have the Palestinians done with their millions? The people still live in abject poverty, while Arafat has become vastly rich. (His people know he is corrupt.) He has also spent it on weapons and ammunition. What he hasn't spent it on is housing and creating an economy to make his people's lives pleasant.

As Donald Rumsfeld explained, the "occupied" territories were won back from surrounding countries by Israel in a war they tried to avoid. The Jews only had two and three-quarter million people back then, and they were surrounded by 50 million Arabs, plus another 60 million in their allied countries who avidly supported them. The Soviets had given the Arab states about \$2 billion worth of military equipment, including fighter planes, tanks, heavy artillery and ground-to-air missiles. The Arabs had 631,000 fighting men, 2,382 tanks and 862 war planes. In short, they had twice the ground forces, three times the number of tanks and more than twice the fighter and bomber planes. That's how *U.S. News and World Report* described the situation on June 12, 1967.

Would John and Janie American Doe have shed their tears, buried their dead, then fought ferociously to defend themselves as the Israelis have? I think they would have, just as they did 225 years ago.