



## Dimensions

❖ JOYCE S. ANDERSON Special to the Jewish Times

### Climate of Anger and Hatred

Have we reached a tipping point in the crescendo of accusations and outrageous labels flung at President Barack Obama? Were you shocked when you heard that someone had posted a survey on Facebook asking respondents, "Should Obama be killed?" The possible answers were: "No, Maybe, Yes and Yes if he cuts my health care."

We cherish freedom of speech in the United States, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. However, that protects us against the government not each other. There are few limits to what a citizen can hurl at another citizen or even the president in oral or written speech. And we have heard an increasing number of outrageous epithets yelled at Tea Parties and town meetings, accusing Obama of being: Fascist. Socialist. Nazi. Enemy of the people. On crude signs, we have seen Obama depicted as Hitler or called a "lyin Muslim from Kenya." Hundreds of printed "Bury Obamacare with Kennedy" signs sent a twisted subliminal message during the Washington D.C. health care protest march.

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The Secret Service had the Facebook survey pulled and are investigating the person who posted it because it is against the law to threaten the life of the president of the United States.

The posting had crossed the line from free speech to threat of assassination and this country has a tragic history of presidential assassinations. The larger question remains -why has President Obama, elected by a sweeping 365 to 173 electoral votes on November 4, come under a relentless barrage of attacks?

Conspiracy theories have always been a favorite of extremists in America. The Birthers are people who question Obama's birth in Hawaii and claim that he is not a United States citizen. Three men known for their far-right beliefs launched this charge that Obama is not a legitimate president: the writer, Jerome Corsi, politician Alan Keyes and G. Gordon Liddy, the Watergate felon and radio talk host. They have been enthusiastically joined by Cable radio and Fox News TV hosts: Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity and Michele Malkin. Even Lou Dobbs, considered more of a mainstream anchor on CNN, has questioned Obama's birth and called for him to display his official birth certificate. The White House has answered these charges by making the Hawaii birth certificate public on the Internet, but this does not satisfy the Birthers, some of whom have filed lawsuits against his legitimacy as a native born American.

Some members of the United States Congress have joined the chorus of Birthers. They include Representative Michele Bachmann, Republican of Minnesota, who also stated on MSNBC that there should be an investigation of all members of Congress to determine their "patriotism." She is joined in this concern by Representative Spencer Bachus, Republican of Alabama, who believes that Congress contains "17 socialists." Bachman has said that she fears that the president is planning "reeducation camps for young people." She told Sean Hannity on radio, "It's like Thomas Jefferson said, a revolution every now and then is a good thing. We are at the point, Sean, of revolution. And by that, what I mean is an orderly revolution, where the people of this country wake up and get up and make a decision that this is not going to happen on their watch."

It is to the credit of Senator Lindsay Graham, Republican of South Carolina, that on October 1, he spoke out strongly against the "Birthers" and members of the Republican Party who are at the forefront of the attacks on President Obama. He said, "Republicans have to call out the crazies! The GOP won't be taken down by 'sinners and nuts.'" He continued, "Obama is an American. He was not born in Kenya. He was born in Hawaii." And to counter

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## Dry Bones YOUR UN GUIDE



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### Dishonest Intelligence

By Alan M. Dershowitz  
Special to the Jewish Times

In December of 2007, I wrote an article about the National Intelligence Estimate that had just concluded that Iran had abandoned its nuclear weapons program back in 2003. The immediate effect of this pollyannaish report was to diminish the need for tough sanctions against Iran and to take the military option off the table. We now know that the conclusion reached in the report was categorically false and that those who issued the report knew it was false. I entitled my December 2007 article "Stupid Intelligence," ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-dershowitz/stupid-intelligence\\_b\\_75663.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-dershowitz/stupid-intelligence_b_75663.html)) because I argued that its author had fallen hook, line and sinker for a transparent bait and switch tactic employed by Iran.

The tactic is obvious and well-known to all intelligence officials with an IQ above room temperature. It goes like this: There are two tracks to making nuclear weapons: One is to conduct research and develop technology directly related to military use...[T]he second track is to develop nuclear technology for civilian use and then to use the civilian technology for military purposes.

It was clear to many perceptive readers of the report, and to most other intelligence agencies, that Iran had simply and deceptively opted for the second track, and had certainly not abandoned its nuclear weapons program.

It now turns out that at the time this "stupid intelligence" estimate was released, our intelligence agencies were aware that the Iranians were building a secret military facility buried deep in the mountains near the holy city of Qom. The United States recently disclosed the existence of this facility (after Iran was forced to acknowledge its existence) and its firm conclusion that it could be used only for the development of a nuclear

weapons program. If the intelligence community knew then what they know now, then its 2007 National Intelligence Estimate was not only stupid. It was dishonest.

It seems clear in retrospect, as it seemed clear to me at the time, that those who released this deeply flawed report had a political agenda. As I wrote two years ago:

My own view is that the authors of the report were fighting the last war. No, not the war in Iraq, but rather what they believe was Vice President Cheney's efforts to go to war with Iran. This report surely takes the wind out of those sails. But that was last year's unfought war. Nobody in

Washington has seriously considered attacking Iran since Condoleezza Rice and Robert Gates replaced Cheney as the foreign policy power behind the throne.

Whatever the agenda was, it is improper—indeed it is illegal—for intelligence agencies to try to influence policy through a hidden agenda. Their job is to report truthfully to the elected policy makers so that they can make policy.

The time has come to withdraw the false and dangerous 2007 report, to admit it was wrong, and substitute an intelligent, honest, objective and up to date report on how close Iran now is to being able to construct a deliverable nuclear bomb. The issue of how to deal with the threat posed by an apocalyptic, terrorist nation about to obtain nuclear weapons is too important to be left to politicized intelligence agencies with hidden agendas.

Alan M. Dershowitz is a lawyer, author and the Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. His blog appears at [www.Huffingtonpost.com/Alan-Dershowitz](http://www.Huffingtonpost.com/Alan-Dershowitz).

