

The state of Poland, Middle East, U.S. immigration debate

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The state of Poland

Two articles on President Lech Kaczynski and Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski generate, in my opinion, a distorted impression of their political agenda and the outlook for Poland ("Poles see Kaczynskis tilting right" (July 19) and "New leader vows to guard Polish 'morals'" (July 20)).

Instead of obsessing with the looks of the twin brothers and using quotes from Poles with negative views of the leaders, the articles could have taken a positive spin on several key subjects. Some of those topics include: economic and social progress since the heroic days of Lech Walesa; Poland is far beyond a "fledgling democracy"; the country's relations with the European Union, Russia and the United States.

Many countries could learn from Poland's historical experience in using language and culture to maintain a strong national identity in turbulent times.

Jens A. Jorgensen, Brussels

Middle

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East

I am glad that Thomas Friedman has realized that "no Israeli government is going to unilaterally withdraw from the West Bank and risk rockets on Tel Aviv" ("You call this smart?" Views, July 20).

Perhaps now Israel's policy of unilaterally deciding what happens in the occupied territories and Lebanon has been shown for what it is. Israel cannot always set the terms for peace with its neighbors. Peace is something to negotiate - not impose by violence.

As the Good Friday Agreement has shown in Northern Ireland, there is another way to achieve a lasting peace and stability for all parties - include them.

M. Kelly, London

Since Hezbollah shares a propensity to thrive in chaos with every other terrorist organization, the most fertile ground for their growth will always be one that necessitates the destabilization of any regime.

It is within such a framework that they forge lasting bonds with other rogue nations who share one common objective, which also happens to be the stated goal of virtually every radical Islamic element in that region: the removal of the state of Israel.

This poses the question: What is the best way to negotiate with an organization that is solely and irrevocably committed to your destruction?

Bearing this in mind, it is not unreasonable to assume that as far as the state of Israel is concerned, negotiations with Hezbollah - as with any other group that has been declared a terrorist entity - can be likened to entering the cage of a hungry tiger with a generous serving of prime rib expecting that the animal will not tear you to pieces out of deference to your generosity.

Miguel A. Guanipa, Whitinsville, Massachusetts

Regarding your editorial "Diplomacy's turn" (July 19): The solution to the Lebanon crisis may lie in a robust UN force implementing Security Council Resolution 1559. Unfortunately, recent UN actions threaten its credibility as an honest broker.

The new Human Rights Council, in recent sessions, ignored gross violations in Sudan, Chechnya, Belarus and everywhere else in the world, and denounced but one country: Israel. Worse, the resolutions adopted at each session were entirely one-sided, failing to mention Hamas terrorism.

Until the United Nations breaks with its past, and moves toward a balanced approach, it will lack the trust required to effectively mediate disputes, in the Middle East as elsewhere.

Hillel C. Neuer, Geneva Executive director, UN Watch

U.S. immigration debate

Regarding the article "Unlikely duo may end immigration impasse" by Albert Hunt (Letter from Washington, July 17):

The statement that reads "Polls generally suggest that voters support a more inclusive, comprehensive approach like that passed by the Senate" is wrong. I don't know what polls Hunt has seen, but the ones I've read reveal a preference for a tough stance on immigration.

I have taken my own poll among my family, friends and coworkers, 90 percent of whom are registered Democrats, and we want illegal immigration shut down.

We are not racist, just average working Americans whose pay checks have not kept up with price increases. It bothers me to see non-English speaking people using government checks for their groceries while I have to use coupons to help pay for mine. I could go on about the schools




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