

Welcome [arnoldroth](#) | [Log Out](#) | [My Account](#)

5 Iyar 5764, Monday, April :

ONLINE EDITION
JERUSALEM POST


[America's Voices](#) | [JPost Français](#) | [International JP](#) | [SMS Alerts](#) | [Personals](#) | [JPost Archives](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Adv](#)

opinion

[JPost.com](#) » [Opinion](#) » **Our right to grieve**

Apr. 25, 2004 20:15

Our right to grieve

By [FRIMET ROTH](#)

I used to wonder whether our calendar of commemorative dates wasn't rather insensitive. What a struggle bereaved families must face, I thought, as the nation crosses from gloom to jubilation the moment the clock strikes seven on the eve of Yom Ha'atzma'ut.

Advertisement

LONG DISTANCE BREAKTHROUGH!
2.9¢
 DIRECT DIAL STATE TO STATE
 Avail. in NY NJ & PA

Today, from the bereaved side of the fence, I know that no alternative scheduling could have eliminated that struggle. For us, it is always Remembrance Day. The pain, the longing, are full-blown every day of the year.

And the holidays are no longer joyous pauses for celebration – regardless of when they take place.

Of course, none of us expects the rest of the Jewish people to share these sentiments. Yet a disturbing attitude toward the fallen has evolved over recent years. As the body-count from this current war rises, empathy seems to be in shorter and shorter supply.

Increasingly, we, the bereaved, are made to feel that our grief ought to be subdued, even submerged. Some fellow Jews go so far as to blame us for having caused our own losses. They caution that killing our children's murderers is murder itself.

While these views are extreme, they are widely disseminated.

For example, several weeks ago Israeli victims of terrorism took to the streets of The Hague to remind the world of our nearly 1,000 victims. A sizable clique of Haaretz newspaper columnists sounded a collective cry of indignation at this

- [Printer Friendly](#)
- [E-mail This Article](#)
- [Subscribe](#)



More Opinion

- [No local will, no way](#)
- [Bush alienates moderate Arabs](#)
- [Our right to grieve](#)
- [My first yizkor](#)
- [Israel's neglected debt](#)

[more »](#)

Columns

- [Interesting Times: Meat and milk](#)
- [Think Again: Liberty, not libertinism](#)
- [Eye on the media: The meaning of Vanunu](#)

Latest News

- [Cosmetics queen Estee Lauder dies at 95](#)
- [Palestinians protest Sharon's threat to Arafat](#)
- [Vanunu in dispute with Church leaders over stay](#)

Features

- ['Shir' poetry](#)
- [The way of feng shui](#)
- [A star is born](#)



Rapha Interr

SERVICES

[Classifieds](#)
[Subscribe](#)
[Archives](#)

SECTIONS

[Home Page](#)
[News](#)
[Opinion](#)
[Columns](#)
[Business](#)
[Features](#)
[Arts & Leisure](#)
[Real Estate](#)
[Travel & Tourism](#)
[Jewish World](#)
[Books](#)
[Sports](#)
[Science & Health](#)
[Audio Programs](#)
[In Jerusalem](#)
[Current Poll](#)
[Readers' Letters](#)
[Financial Tables](#)
[Weather](#)
[Shabbat Times](#)

JPost Guides

[Israel Programs](#)
[Charitable Funds](#)
[Dating & Relationships](#)
[Coping with Tragedy](#)

JPost Super Deals Independence Day

- [Flag of Israel](#) NOW ONLY **\$4.99**
- [Plant a tree & get a satellite map](#) **\$15.95**
- [The Ghetto Warsaw Uprising book](#) **\$34.95**

[Israel-Catalog.com](#)

Specials**JDate.com NEW!**

The only Jewish dating site you'll ever need.

EI AI Online

Information, special services, e-ticketing & online booking.

Judaica Webstore

The best classic and contemporary Jewish and Israeli Music.

Fit for a Queen!

Selah Parfums - Gifts from Jerusalem. Happy Mother's Day.

public display. One of them, Yoel Marcus, lambasted the "undignified, cry-baby" performance. It made him feel, "so low, so embarrassed, so humiliated."

The paper's Benny Tzifer saw in the demonstrations a "craving to be miserable." In a piece entitled "Everyone is for the fence, even the dead," the Haaretz television critic charged the Foreign Ministry with "transforming every terror victim into government propaganda property and drafting them post-mortem."

BUT THE prize for self-loathing must go to op-ed writer Tamara Shreiber, whose mother was murdered in a 1994 terror attack on a Jerusalem bus. In her Haaretz tirade, she expressed concern that her mother's name and photo might have been among those shown in The Hague. Her fear was unfounded, and she probably knew it, since only the nearly 1,000 victims of the current conflict were included.

Nevertheless, she whined: "Would she be there too? Could it be they would drag my dead one out of her grave and march her through the streets, a smiling shaheeda, to fight the Israeli government's jihad war?"

Perhaps I am overreacting. Surely these are merely the isolated voices of the fringe Left? The fact is, however, that across the board our society has striven to minimize the gravity of the losses we have suffered in this war. Conscious or not, as a coping mechanism or not, the disheartening trend is clear.

Each year, the Department of Education distributes circulars to school principals regarding Remembrance Day school ceremonies. The current guidelines advise honoring only those students who fell as soldiers. They make no mention of those murdered as victims of terror.

My 15-year-old daughter, Malki, killed in the Sbarro bombing of August 2001, has never been mentioned on Remembrance Day in the elementary school she attended for six years, though her younger sister continued to study there. No reminder of Malki's death graces even the tiniest corner of a wall in that school's building.

Two years ago, the Jerusalem municipality first announced plans to erect a central memorial for its victims of terror. It selected a site outside the city already landscaped as a failed park. Since then, whenever the media has queried it about memorializing the victims, the municipality has boasted of that planned memorial.

Yet nothing has ever been done. The site remains smothered in weeds and litter.

In Jerusalem, municipal policy dictates that memorial plaques bearing the victims' names must be erected within one year at the attack site. The owner of the building where my Malki and 14 others perished objected to this "defacement" of his property. Only after two years of pressure on city officials by the victims' families was the owner cajoled into granting approval.

Even renowned psychiatrist Dr. Yoram Yovell, keeper of the national psyche, does not seem to get it. In a 2003 interview in the Post, he discussed the effects of long-term exposure to terror attacks and threats on Israeli society.

"The price in the long run is that you become less sensitive to suffering in general. You can see it, for example, in that we are totally oblivious to the suffering of children on the other side. We've stopped caring about the deaths of Palestinian children."

And what of our own children? But perhaps this is the only way to maintain equilibrium. Perhaps if Israelis did not distance themselves from the tragedies surrounding them they would lose their grip on normality.

But my guess is this would not happen. While we risk rocking the boat by confronting our losses, we are paying too high a price by blocking them out.

The writer is the mother of Malki Roth, murdered by terrorists in an August 2001 Jerusalem bombing.

Help Address Hunger

There are many volunteer positions. Join us today to make a difference.

www.mealexchange.com

Public Service Ads by Google

JPost Sites: [JPost Audio](#) · [Shopping](#) · [Personals](#) · [International JP](#) · [JRep.com](#)

Sections: [News](#) · [Business](#) · [Features](#) · [Opinion](#) · [Arts & Leisure](#) · [JPost Français](#) · [Sports](#) · [Books](#) · [Travel & Tourism](#) · [Estate](#) · [Hi-Tech](#) · [Science & Health](#) · [Jewish World](#) · [In Jerusalem](#) · [Maps of Israel](#) · [Looking Back](#) · [Cartoon](#) · [America's Voices](#) · [Supplements](#) · [Useful Links](#)

Services: [Print Edition](#) · [JPost CD-Rom](#) · [Subscriptions](#) · [Print Classifieds](#) · [Online Classifieds](#) · [JPost Advertisers](#) · [Isr Programs](#) · [JPost Charities](#) · [Readers' Letters](#)

Information: [About Us](#) · [Feedback](#) · [Media Kit](#) · [Sales](#) · [Staff E-mails](#) · [Privacy Statement](#) · [Copyright](#)

Links: [Chicago Sun-Times](#) · [Telegraph.co.uk](#) · [The Spectator](#)

© 1995 - 2004 The Jerusalem Post. All rights reserved.

[About Us](#) | [Media Kit](#) | [Advertise with Us](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#)