

## Jeanie Kennedy's Description of Daniel Pipes's Talk

Daniel Pipes is one of the world's leading experts on the Islamic world, a member of the President's new US Institute for Peace, and Director of the Middle East Forum. He recently gave a talk at UC Berkeley. Here's how the event was reported by the *Daily Californian*, the student newspaper there. Notice how Pipes is described in the title as simply pro-Israel, as if he is only a member of a self-interested faction, and there is no such thing as objectivity.

My comments, as one who attended, are below this article.

### **Staunch Israel Backer Attacks 'Militant' Islam**

By GEORGE DERK, MEGAN REITER AND EMMA SCHWARTZ  
Wednesday, February 11, 2004

The controversial head of a Middle East watchdog organization delivered a searing attack on militant Islam at a campus talk last night to an impassioned but divided audience.

Like many campus events on the Middle East, Daniel Pipes' speech ignited antagonism between fierce ideological opponents. Supporters welcomed him with a standing ovation, but his opposition frequently interrupted the presentation, booing Pipes and calling him a racist.

Nonetheless, Pipes, who runs the Web site Campus Watch that tracks Middle Eastern studies in North America, sought to spread his own philosophy of action for the Middle East.

Pipes said the region has been overpowered by militant Islam, a force hostile to free speech that needs to be destroyed.

But he said achieving democracy in the Middle East would be slow and pointed to Iraq as a key example.

"I supported war against Iraq as any civilized person must," Pipes said.

For the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Pipes had a simple

cure: no diplomacy until all Palestinians recognize the state of Israel.

"Palestinians need to give up their foul ambition of destroying their neighbor," Pipes said to a burst of dissent from many audience members.

Pipes also took aim domestically, chastising his colleagues in Middle Eastern studies for "incompetence" and called campus Muslim students' associations bastions of militant Islam.

Aside from a lecture on the war in Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, the audience's internal crossfire seemed to tell a story of its own.

Throughout the speech, a handful of loud commentators were escorted outside by police, and a large faction of Pro-Palestinian students made a dramatic exit toward the end of Pipes' speech.

Pipes' supporters often shouted back for those students to listen.

And those somewhere in between, the moderate Jews, Muslims and community members said they found little resonance in Pipes' words and even less of an opportunity for real discussion.

Throughout the crossfire, the event was overshadowed by the question of what constituted appropriate free speech on campus.

To Pipes' denouncers, the protest represented the precise expression of free speech.

"This is a man who has made his career by vilifying Arabs and Muslims and spreading conspiracy theories on Middle Eastern studies," said English graduate student Snehal Shingavi, the first person thrown out of speech.

But for Pipes, the audience members' outbursts only reaffirmed what he had come to preach: that universities – UC Berkeley in particular – were the most intolerant institutions in the country.

"I thought this was an institution of higher education," Pipes said.

This article of course was *entirely* too even-handed in its assessment of the whole event. The disrupters were even warned by many signs on the front doors not to engage in disruptive behavior. The whole experience was extremely uncivil, and ruined Pipes' talk for those who actually wanted to hear what he was saying. There were constant interruptions, not only involving name-calling, but shouting back and forth within the audience. Moreover, the 6-8 police in the room (which was filled to its capacity of several hundred, with many more outside, unable to get in) had to wend

their way through the long rows of chairs to evict the worst of the disrupters. They and their placards not only called Pipes a racist, but also a Fascist and a McCarthyite. At one point, they all shouted together as a mob so that no one could be singled out to be evicted.

The evening wore me out. First, the location was changed to way up the hill and across campus. Then there was the suspense of possibly not being let in to this free event without possessing some blue ticket that had been sent out in advance, even though many of those ticket holders weren't going to show up. This during all the shouting outside. THEN, we had to line up in 3 groups, according to a number we chose in our heads, and then at first only one line got in. After that, the rest of us squeezed our way to the front door, then they frisked us and went through our bags. Last, there was the palpable tension in the air during the presentation. I didn't know if the loudmouth guys behind me, who were razzing me when we supporters of Pipes were giving him standing ovations for certain statements, were going to hit me or what!

We were supposed to start at 7:30, but the introductions didn't even take place until 8:20. Pipes only spoke until about 9:10, but with the interruptions, so I doubt he was given more than 20 minutes actual speech time. The Q&A went just past 9:30.

Whew! This was my first experience setting foot on the Berkeley Campus, even though I have lived really close for 2-1/2 years, and it may be my last. On the way out, I heard from some fellow supporters that the next pro-war type to speak there will charge \$20, which may keep this sort of thing from happening again, at least in the same way.

Anyway, it was heartening to hear about his Campus-Watch project. I think Pipes does a lot of good with that all over the nation, making Middle East Expert professors accountable for what they are teaching. He's an impressive guy, with very impressive credentials. Please go see him if he shows up in your area.

Jeanie Kennedy

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## Behaviour of idiotarians

Unfortunately, the extremist viewpoints of radical islamists will never allow opposing dialog of their self proclaimed cause.

So much for the quote.... is a peaceful religion..."

Was never able to fathom what it means, but then it's probably my fault not 'catching on' to what's really meant, but left unsaid.

Anyhoo, it's still all free entertainment. :o)

by a reader on Wed, 03/03/2004 - 17:06 | [reply](#)

## Pipes

I have heard Pipes talk. At no time did he denounce Islam, only

violent Islamists who are muffling moderate Muslims. I imagine that in the audience were also leftist, self-hating Jews who are so gullible that they believe the constant shrill of Muslim denouncement against any voice of reason and moderation.

by a reader on Fri, 05/21/2004 - 14:09 | [reply](#)

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