

Saving Israel from itself

THE new book with this title by Andrew J. Hurley — the same title that headlines this column — is very unusual in many ways.

Last week in this column I discussed the book's central conclusion: That the US should provide an iron-clad security guarantee for Israel within her 1967 borders.

Such a guarantee should include, according to Hurley, American troops as a tripwire to make it crystal clear to everyone involved that the US would do anything and everything to maintain Israel's security. Only in this way can Israel be convinced to withdraw from the occupied territories and allow the setting up of a Palestinian state, Hurley repeatedly insists.

The "guarantee idea," as I discussed, last week, is not a new one. But the context in which Hurley raises it, is. Furthermore, at a time of considerable uneasiness about the situation in the Mid-east, Hurley's book is attracting considerable attention even though it is not available in bookstores.

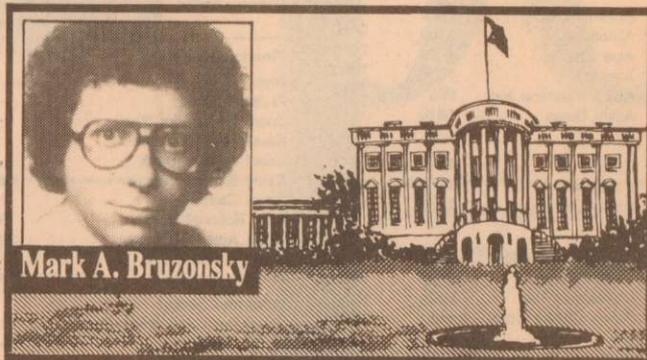
In a future column I plan to do a serious critique of Hurley's ideas and presentation. Right now I just want to put this unique book and this unique effort at citizen diplomacy into perspective.

Hurley is a retired former businessman of some means who has had a passion for some time concerning Israel. But rather amazingly for a man of such concerns, means, and passions, he has never been to Israel or any other place in the Mid-east other than Turkey.

Instead, Hurley takes his information from the press, from the history books, and from his friends — all American.

His friends it turns out, though not he, are in many cases liberal Jews in California. And it is primarily from these friends that Hurley has found the encouragement to publish his plan for Arab-Israeli "peace". Indeed, Hurley has teamed up with a Israeli-concerned Jewish publisher, a woman by the name of Davia Solomon, to publish

From



Washington

HOLOCAUST II?

Saving Israel from Suicide



and promote both his book and his "guarantee" idea.

Ms Solomon actually began her publishing house — Mission Publishing Inc in North Hollywood, California — specifically to get Hurley's book into print.

Furthermore, using their own money, Hurley and Ms Solomon are investing substantial funds in this venture; including promotional mailings, advertisements in newspapers and magazines, distribution to all members of

Congress, along with, of course, a great deal of their own personal time and energy.

So what we have here is a very unusual endeavour, a kind of partial vanity publishing effort but one with a very serious purpose and one involving interesting people who have quite literally come out of nowhere.

Nevertheless, assuming for the moment that Hurley and Ms Solomon are just what they say they are — concerned independent citizens desperately wanting to do something before it is too late — lack of prior accomplishments relating to the Mid-east situation need not necessarily disqualify these persons from having their say and from being taken seriously.

"First, and most important," Hurley writes in the Introduction to his book, "the book has been written in a race against time. One of the major challenges has been to keep ahead of current events."

Then Hurley goes on to outline that to make his book as credible as possible he has relied nearly entirely on the written words of "highly respected" and "well-known" American Jews and Israelis, as well as what has been reported, in English, in "responsible and generally accepted media" to which he includes *The Jerusalem Post* (international edition), *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *US News & World Report*, *Fortune*, *Business Week*, *the Wall Street Journal*, network television, etc."

In some ways the Preface should be a warning, for Hurley's sources of reference are not quite so impartial and balanced as he might actually believe them to be. My goodness, he doesn't even include *Time* magazine, apparently because some in this country erroneously consider it to have a "pro-Arab" tilt! Nor, of course, other than the for-export version of *The Jerusalem Post*, is there a foreign,

tion in his list.

The next indication that something may be amiss is Hurley's list of "urgent voices of reason

from Israel." This list is headed by Abba Eban, and then further includes Yehoshafat Harkabi, Simha Flapan and Amos Perlmutter.

One wonders, seeing these four persons put in the same kettle, just how Hurley has made this selection.

Rather interestingly Simha Flapan and Amos Perlmutter were always, during Simha's lifetime, in opposing political courts and hardly on speaking terms.

As for the verbally-eloquent chameleon-like Abba Eban, one of those who helped rule Israel during the years when today's problems were created — and also at a time when they were far more easily solveable — he has only come forward rather lately when his own party is out of power and has furthermore turned him away from a Knesset seat.

It is true that Harkabi has in fact made quite a turn in recent years; but Perlmutter remains one of the more crafty and conniving Israeli apologists on the American scene.

It turns out Hurley doesn't actually know any of his Israeli heroes. Rather he has simply turned to them because of writings he has read available in English in the US — writings it should be added he always seems to take at face value ... a definite no-no when dealing with matters Mid-eastern.

Yet, putting aside for the moment the author's limitations, the presumptions of this book — that Israeli may be on an extremely dangerous and suicidal course, that the US bears great responsibility for this situation, that the Palestinian issue must somehow be resolved, and most of all that time is running out and a major explosion may lie ahead — these are all valid.

The major problems with Hurley's unique book, however, lie not so much in the diagnosis he provides but in the serious limitations with the prescription he outlines. These serious limitations will be my focus in a future column.