



## Fake Morality: The United Nations vs. Israel

**B**arack Obama entered the White House in 2009 with the world in a mess; he leaves it in an even a greater mess than he found it. The problems left behind will pose major challenges for the new Trump administration.

Obama promised to restore American prestige in the world by pursuing a transformative foreign policy that would make the world safer. The world is now a much more dangerous place, largely because of his foreign policies. Iran is as belligerent as ever; relations with Russia are more strained; North Korea is on its way to becoming a nuclear power; emboldened Islamic jihadist terrorists continue to launch attacks in Europe, Asia and Africa; America remains at war in Afghanistan and Iraq; Libya is in chaos largely because of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's insistence that Gaddafi regime be overthrown. Syria continues in a state of civil war that has led to genocide. In the Middle East, our former ally Egypt has drawn closer to Russia after being alienated by Obama's support of the former Muslim Brotherhood government and the "Arab Spring," which brought a dark winter to the country.

Obama's final act to ensure further chaos in the Middle East was the administration's abstention from a United Nations Security Council Resolution adopted two days before Christmas, on December 23, 2016, declaring illegal the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Obama instructed Samantha Powers, the American representative on the UN Security Council, to reverse a longstanding policy to vote against this resolution when it was brought up in the past.

This resolution reflects the UN's moral ineptitude; makes any peace settlement between Israel and Palestine more difficult; and fosters the growing movement to exclude Israel scholars from Western conferences and the Israel divestment movement in the United States.

### The UN Vote and Its Aftermath

**T**he UN Security Council by a 14-0 vote, with the United States abstaining, expressed "grave concern that continuing Israeli settlement activities are dangerously imperiling the viability of the two-State solution based on the 1967 lines."<sup>1</sup> The resolution further proclaimed that

settlement in "Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem," had no "legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law." In effect, the resolution declared that the state of Israel was acting as an outlaw nation. The resolution reaffirmed the two-state solution to resolve the Israel-Palestine problem. The Security Council ignored the refusal of the Palestinians, themselves divided into two warring territories, to recognize the state of Israel and continual terrorist activities by Palestinians on Israeli citizens, including missile attacks, suicide bombings, knifings and random assaults.

### 'A Shameless Ambush'

**T**he United States' refusal to veto the resolution drew immediate fire from Israel and pro-Israel groups. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused the Security Council and the Obama administration of staging a "shameless ambush" against his country.<sup>2</sup> Senator John McCain (R-AZ) issued a statement that "Today's passage of an ill-conceived resolution on Israeli settlement makes another shameful chapter in the bizarre and anti-Israel history of the United Nations." McCain pointed his criticism specifically at Obama by noting, "The abstention of the United States has made us complicit in this outrageous attack and marks a troubling departure from our nation's long, bipartisan history of defending our ally Israel in the United Nations."<sup>3</sup>

Charles Krauthammer, writing in *National Review*, described the resolution as a stab in the back: "Obama took the measure of Israel's back and slid a knife into it." Although the UN resolution has no mechanism for direct enforcement, Krauthammer pointed out that "An ordinary Israeli who lives or works in the Old City of Jerusalem becomes an international pariah, a potential outlaw. To say nothing of the soldiers of Israel's citizen army." Indeed, Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas reportedly told the press following passage of the resolution, "Every pilot and every officer and every soldier, we are waiting for him at The Hague [the International Criminal Court]."<sup>4</sup> Abbas's threat should be taken seriously. UN resolutions carry the weight

of international law. The UN resolution declaring Israeli settlements illegal will allow criminal charges to be brought against civilian settlers and Israeli soldiers in these disputed territories, including the Old City of Jerusalem in which Jews had long resided.

The backlash forced the Obama administration on the defense. Outgoing Secretary of State John Kerry in a long-winded address asserted that “If the choice is one-state, Israel can either be Jewish or democratic, it cannot be both and it won’t ever live in peace.”<sup>5</sup>

In his final press conference as president, Obama claimed that the resolution was a necessary symbolic act aimed at reinforcing America’s position that continued settlement of disputed territories by Israelis was “dangerous for Israel” and bad for the Palestinians and “American national security.”<sup>6</sup>

### The Moral Ineptitude of the UN

The sanctimony of Obama, Kerry and the UN in backing this resolution reflects a disturbing irony. On March 4, 2012, Obama told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the leading pro-Israel lobby in the United States, that “When the chips are down, I have Israel’s back.” The Obama-Clinton-Kerry foreign policy has always used high moralistic rhetoric reminiscent of Jimmy Carter. Rarely did they initiate any foreign policy action unless it was justified with claims of moral principles—whether in supporting the Arab Spring (furthering democracy), overthrowing Gaddafi in Libya (preventing genocide) or overturning U.S. immigration policy (human rights). Moralistic rhetoric sounded better for Obama and his foreign policy team than the realism of national interests.

High-minded moralism comes easily to the United Nations as well. A full recitation of the hypocrisy of the United Nations could fill volumes. Delegates at the UN do not like to be reminded of the organization’s moral failings. Shortly before the UN Israel resolution, the United Nations finally admitted that its peacekeepers in Haiti in 2010 caused a major outbreak of cholera in Haiti, a hurricane-devastated country to which the UN had sent aid workers coming from Nepal where cholera was present.<sup>7</sup> By dumping septic waste into a tributary of a Haitian river, they infected the waters with cholera, leading to the deaths of more than 10,000 Haitians. An epidemiologist traced the source of the infected waters back to the UN aid workers. These findings were confirmed by an independent team of scientists.

Nevertheless, the UN spent the next four years stonewalling the findings and blaming the cholera outbreak on poverty and poor infrastructure in Haiti. During the investigation, the UN peacekeepers charged with causing this cholera outbreak

went so far as to remove the underground piping they had installed in order to make it harder for epidemiologists to trace the source of the infection. Finally, the UN could deny their guilt no longer. In August 2016 the UN admitted its responsibility for the outbreak.

Haiti is just one example of the UN’s incompetence and proclivity to cover up its tragic mistakes. In April 2014, the United Nations deployed 12,000 troops from Burundi and Gabon to the Central Africa Republic to curb fighting between mostly Muslim rebels and Christian militias. Reports of sexual abuse of women by the UN peacekeepers began to drip out. The UN Department of Field Support Conduct and Discipline looked into the allegations by dozens of women only to conclude that there was a striking similarity in their tales of abuse, which suggested to the UN investigators that the allegations appeared to be motivated by hope for financial gain.

Yet in December 2016, an independent panel reviewing the allegations found that at least 41 women had been sexually abused by UN troops. The independent panel said that other women bringing charges of sexual abuse could not identify their abusers, but it was clear there was widespread and systematic victimization of women by UN troops. This report coincided with accusations that French troops in a separate UN mission in Central Africa had been involved in sexual abuse of African women.<sup>8</sup>

### Standing by for Genocide

Most haunting was the UN’s failure to prevent genocide in Rwanda in 1994. In 1993, the United Nations launched a peacekeeping mission to monitor a cease-fire agreement between the Rwandan Hutu government and the rebel Rwandese Patriotic Front. The mission, headed by Canadian Lt. General Romeo Dallaire, sent an urgent cable to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on January 11, 1994 warning of impending genocide unless more troops were sent. Annan received the cable but it was not shared with the UN Security Council. After an exchange of many faxes pleading for more troops, Annan decided that such action was beyond the original UN mandate. As a result, an estimated 800,000 minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered by Rwandan government-backed troops.

A subsequent investigation headed by former Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson and former South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung-Jo and General Rufus Modupe Kupoliti of Nigeria, after reviewing UN files, cables and archives, concluded that the United Nations and the Security Council bore major responsibility for not preventing this wholesale slaughter of innocent civilians. The UN, the report found, lacked the political will to get involved in Rwanda after its earlier failed peacekeeping mission in Somalia, which left 18 American soldiers dead.<sup>9</sup>

## Double Standards of Anti-Israel Academics

The hypocritical and elusive moralism found in the United Nations extends to the social activism aimed at excluding Israeli scholars and university divestment of financial assets with connections to Israel.

Modeled on British and European bans on Israeli scholars at academic conferences, activists within the American Historical Association and the Modern Language Association have attempted to push resolutions to exclude Israel academics. So far these resolutions have failed, but the battle will continue. The contradiction of a scholarly association, which is supposed to represent “academic freedom,” undertaking to ban a scholar from any country, especially given that most Israeli scholars are Jewish, does not seem to faze these moralistic activists. One might add that these activists will protest a temporary ban on immigrants from seven war-torn nations in the Middle East by claiming that any ban is targeting Muslims, but they believe that excluding Jewish scholars who come from Israel is not a problem.

At the January 5-8 annual conference of the American Historical Association, open to any history scholar or teacher, participants presented a resolution for the association to review and investigate “credible charges of violations of academic freedom in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.”<sup>10</sup> This resolution was fiercely debated but ultimately defeated. Another resolution was passed, supported by these same activists, condemning “in strongest terms the creation, maintenance, and dissemination of blacklists and watch lists—through media (social and otherwise)—which identify specific individuals in ways that could lead to harassment and intimidation.”

The “watch lists” referred to in the resolution were Canary Mission, Campus Watch, and Discover the Networks. These sites provide students, faculty and the public with information relevant to reviewing the scholarship, teaching and speeches of left-wing professors. These activists dismiss the view that a university community should represent the free exchange of ideas and transparency for student and public review of professoriate “scholarship,” public writings, speeches and activism.

While the debate raged at the American Historical Association, members of the Modern Language Association (MLA) were debating a similar resolution at their convention in January 2017. The resolution called for “the boycott of Israeli institutions” and scholars from these institutions.<sup>11</sup> The resolution was defeated 113-79, but this setback will not dissuade activists from bringing the resolution up again.<sup>12</sup> Whatever else the Left is, it is persistent, driven by a peculiar moralism that tolerates no diversity in thought or scrutiny from outsiders.

While their professors engage in anti-Israel resolutions, student groups across the country are leading an orchestrated

campaign to force universities to divest university funds from corporations involved with Israel. The divestment movement calls for university divestment in companies including G4S, Caterpillar, CoreCivic and Hewlett Packard.

The campaign has taken the form of putting resolutions calling for university divestment on student government ballots. These resolutions are non-binding on university trustees, but enable student campaigns to promote anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian propaganda. For example, an Ohio State University Divest measure alleges that corporations such as Hewlett Packard are “engaged in the violation of human rights [of Palestinians] and other practices deemed unethical by the Buckeye community.”<sup>13</sup> At the University of South Florida in Tampa, the chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine demands that the university divest from “companies complicit in human rights violations in Palestine and Yemen.” At the University of Michigan, campus chapters of the Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, and the Arab Student Union call for divestment.

## Selective Outrage in Divestment Campaign

Broad support for this divestment has formed at other universities. At the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 15 student groups have organized to sponsor an initiative describing Zionists as “murderers,” and accusing Israel of genocide and Jews of not having a birthright to Israel. Similar rhetoric is being used at Georgetown University, where the Forming Radically Ethical Endowment Coalition, endorsed by 17 student organizations, named nine corporations that are complicit in Israeli “human rights violations” against “indigenous” Palestinians who have had their land occupied and colonized.

Divestment activists have disrupted pro-Israel speakers. In Canada, one student divestment activist, Igor Sadikov, advised on Twitter to “punch a Zionist today.” The campus newspaper, *The McGill Daily*, of which Sadikov formerly served as editor, enacted a policy to ban “pro-Zionist” opinion from its pages.<sup>14</sup>

These anti-Israel activists ignore Palestinian terrorism and the fact that Palestinian children are taught explicit anti-Jewish (not just anti-Zionist) propaganda in their classrooms from grade 1 onward. Textbooks used to educate Palestinian refugee children teach that Israel does not exist as a legitimate state. A textbook for grade 7 states, “The Zionist colonist greedy ambitions in Palestine started in 1882. . . The coming of the Jewish throngs to Palestine continued until 1948 and their goal was taking over the Palestinian lands and then taking the original inhabitants’ place after their expulsion and extermination.” Other textbooks praise jihadism and martyrdom in the cause of Palestine.<sup>15</sup>

Purchases of these textbooks are funded through the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency. When Chris Smith (R-NJ) brought this to the attention of Congress, the UN responded



that the selection of textbooks is a “state” decision of those receiving the funds and not a decision of the UN. Once again the UN avoids taking any moral responsibility for its actions.

Campus divest activists take what they think is the high moral ground in defending “human rights” (in this case Palestinians), while willfully overlooking the teaching of hatred, terrorism and anti-Semitic propaganda to young children. They also turn a blind eye to investments connected to countries with far worse human rights records than Israel, such as China. These activists spend their moral outrage only for their own side.

Progressives have a long history of contradiction, relativism and hypocrisy when it comes to promoting their cause. What they reveal is not moral coherence, however, but the progressives’ desire for power—self-serving, global and naked for all to see.

## The Most Important Person on Earth is a Mother

Cardinal Mindszenty’s respect for mothers was deep. Below is the Cardinal’s quote, available on a 5 1/2" x 3" card in color.



The Most Important Person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby’s body ... The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God’s creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in

performing this act of creation ... What on God’s good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?

—Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty

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