

NEWS REVIEW



8 OCTOBER 2009

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Deep denial: Why the Holocaust still matters

Michael Oren | The New Republic | 6 October

Toughened by their frontier ethos, steeled by serial wars, Israelis are not prone to flattery. Most, in fact, eschew using the closest equivalent to the Hebrew word for flattery--*chanupa*--in favour of the derisive Yiddish-derivative, *firgun*. An Israeli joke holds that the word, slashed by a red diagonal line, graces the exit from Ben-Gurion Airport, together with the warning, "You are now entering a Firgun Free Zone."

Not surprisingly, then, several Israeli commentators reacted unflatteringly to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent speech to the U.N. General Assembly. Though even the audience in the U.N. hall applauded Netanyahu, his words were lambasted in *Haaretz* by Tom Segev as "unnecessary and embarrassing" and by Gideon Levy as "demagogic" and "insulting to the intelligence." Aluf Benn, one of Israel's most respected journalists, faulted the prime minister for failing to address a global, rather than an Israeli, audience.

Detractors of Netanyahu alleged that, by asserting the reality of the Holocaust, he stooped to Ahmadinejad's level--worse, that he granted credibility to the Iranian thug by debating him over a universally accepted truth.

But in concentrating on the prime minister's preamble, critics overlook the deeper connections between the Holocaust and his subsequent themes. Recognizing the murder of six million Jews more than six decades ago is, in fact, vital for understanding the supreme dangers posed to six million Jews in Israel today by a nuclear Iran and by the Goldstone Report. Reasserting the factuality of the Holocaust is a prerequisite for peace. [READ MORE](#)

UN's human rights agenda hijacked

Vic Alhadeff | The Australian | 6 October

Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban once jested that if a resolution was tabled at the UN that the world is flat - and that Israel flattened it - it would pass by a majority of 170-5 with 17 abstentions.

An estimated 5.4 million people have been killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 1998, with 38,000 more dying every month. Yet not only are most people unaware of this, the worst toll since World War II, but there has been no hint of a General Assembly emergency session to discuss it, let alone condemn it.

The UN is mandated with the moral authority to adjudicate on matters of international concern, yet an alarming number of its agencies are headed by countries whose human rights records range from questionable to appalling, including Libya, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Sudan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Burma.

The Human Rights Council has studiously avoided condemning the brutalities in Darfur, Chechnya and Sri Lanka, but has directed 26 out of 32 resolutions condemning human rights violations

against Israel.

When an NGO urged Islamic authorities to outlaw honour killings, female genital mutilation and the stoning of women, Egypt, Iran and Pakistan objected to the initiative as an "attempt to link bad practices" to Islam. The council duly ruled "evaluation of a religious creed" inadmissible.

When it convenes, the council dedicates one agenda item to abuses by Israel and another agenda item to the other 191 UN countries. What hope of sensible debate when the starting premise is skewed?

The Goldstone report in its 575 pages blithely ignored Hamas's ideology - which declares that Israel will exist only until Islam obliterates it. Nor did its executive summary breathe a word about the impact of 10,000 rockets Hamas fired into Israel in eight years. And even though Hamas MP Fathi Hamad admitted Hamas "created a human shield of women, children, the elderly", Goldstone did "not consider it to constitute evidence".

There have been more than 400 anti-Israel resolutions in the General Assembly - more than against all other UN nations combined - and six emergency sessions on Israel. None on Rwanda, Darfur or the maltreatment of women in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan.

The institution of the UN is vital. The extent to which it has been hijacked has reached crisis point, however. The imperative to tackle human rights issues is thus subsumed by anti-democratic agendas. It falls to the democracies among us to haul this once-august body back on track.

Vic Alhadeff is chief executive of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

Arch Nemesis

James Kirchick | Tablet Magazine | 6 October

Desmond Tutu's Palestinian activism reflects South Africa's anti-Zionism

The two worst charges that can be hurled against Israel are that it's an apartheid state and that its actions toward the Palestinians in some way nullify the legacy of the Holocaust. Archbishop Desmond Tutu has done both. Last month, in a tour of Israel and the Palestinian territories with former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and former Irish president Mary Robinson, the South African noted that the West is rightly consumed with guilt over the Holocaust, but that "the penance is being paid by the Arabs, by the Palestinians." It's not the first time he has condemned Israel. In 1989, for example, he remarked that "if I were to change the names, a description of what is happening in Gaza and the West Bank could describe events in South Africa." But given his involvement in the anti-apartheid movement, Tutu has long been a difficult target of criticism for pro-Israel advocates. But often ignored is how South Africa's troubled history has played a significant role in shaping and sustaining an anti-Zionist narrative.

Comparing the aspirations of South Africa's blacks under apartheid (who sought merely equal opportunity, long denied them, in their own land) and those, say, of Hamas, (an organization constitutionally committed to the destruction of the state of Israel and the murder of Jews everywhere), ought to be seen as an insult to the ostensibly "progressive" South Africans who so frequently compare the two situations. But the obvious disparity in the analogy does not register. "There's no history in this," Shain says. "Just a contemporary look." [READ MORE](#)

Revolutionary Anti-Semitism

Mary Anastasia O'Grady | The Wall Street Journal | 5 October

Sometimes I ask myself if Hitler wasn't right when he wanted to finish with that race, through the famous holocaust, because if there are people that are harmful to this country, they are the Jews, the Israelites.

David Romero Ellner, Executive Director, Radio Globo, Honduras, Sept. 25, 2009

Meet one of Honduras's most vocal advocates for the return of deposed president Manuel Zelaya to office. He's not your average radio jock. He started in Honduran politics as a radical activist and was one of the founders of the hard-left People's Revolutionary Union, which had links to Honduran terrorists in 1980s. A few years ago he was convicted and served time in prison for raping his own daughter.

Today Mr. Romero Ellner is pure *zelayista*, hungry for power and not ashamed to say so. This explains why he has joined Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Mr. Zelaya in targeting Jews. Mr. Chávez has allied himself with Iran to further his ability to rule unchecked in the hemisphere. He hosts Hezbollah terrorists and seeks Iranian help to become a nuclear power. He and his acolytes cement their ties to Iranian dictator Mahmoud Ahmadinejad by echoing his anti-Semitic rants.

The Honduras debate is not really about Honduras. It is about whether it is possible to stop the spread of *chavismo* and all it implies, including nuclear proliferation and terrorism in Latin America. [READ MORE](#)

ElBaradei won't be missed

Editorial | The National Post (Canada) | 6 October

Mohamed ElBaradei is stepping down at the end of the year as head of the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and not a moment too soon. Mr. ElBaradei may have been awarded a Nobel peace prize for his work on nuclear non-proliferation, but only an organisation as politically correct and naive as the Nobel committee could think his bias and blind-eye-turning has made the world safer from nuclear war.

In Tehran over the weekend, the Egyptian-born lawyer held a joint news conference with the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, at which he proclaimed that Israel's atomic weapons are the "number one threat to the Middle East."

Just what was the basis for Mr. ElBaradei's preposterous claim? In 30 years, Israel has never used or even threatened to use its nuclear arsenal. Still, Mr. ElBaradei seems to feel the Jewish state is a greater risk to world peace than Tehran because Israel has refused UN inspectors access to its nuclear facilities, whereas Iran has permitted some, however sporadic.

Never mind that until last week Iran had for years hidden the existence of a second nuclear-materials processing plant from the IAEA and the world. Forget that some Iranian leaders have promised to use a nuclear bomb against Israel and the West the moment their country acquires one. (Current President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has infamously vowed to wipe Israel "off the map.") Apparently, the yardstick against which the IAEA estimates a threat to peace is not the likelihood of a nation nuking its enemies, but rather the extent to which one pretends to co-operate with the agency's toothless inspections.

This is the same international bureaucrat who late last year said he favoured a "grand bargain" between the West and Iran that would see the West grant the Islamic Republic "the power, the prestige, the influence" it lusts after in return, not for the dismantling of Iran's nuclear program, but merely a suspension of its bomb-making quest a few meters from the finish line.

The French government last week also alleged that Mr. ElBaradei abetted Iran's pursuit of a nuke by withholding evidence of Iran's second nuclear plant from European negotiators engaged in multi-party talks aimed at curbing Iran's arms program. By contrast to his frequent charges against Israel -- he also rebuked it in 2007 for bombing a Syrian reactor, but never once criticized Damascus for building the plant in secret -- the worst Mr. ElBaradei has ever managed to say about Iran was a convoluted admission last year that it had failed to "provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities."

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In a job that requires inscrutable objectivity, Mr. ElBaradei has never tried very hard to contain his prejudices. The world is better off with him retired.

UNRWA to teach the Holocaust in Gaza

UNWRA will teach about the Holocaust to students in Gaza secondary schools.

John Ging, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's director of operations in Gaza, told the British newspaper The Independent that he was "confident and determined" that the Holocaust would be taught in curriculum being developed by the organisation that administers relief to Palestinian refugees. "No human rights curriculum is complete without the inclusion of the facts of the Holocaust and its lessons," Ging told the paper.

The statement comes after officials of Hamas, which controls Gaza, condemned the inclusion of the Holocaust in the curriculum. The Muslim fundamentalist group denies that the Holocaust occurred and has called Holocaust education part of a "Zionist plot." Ging said the Hamas government in Gaza did not try to interfere with UNRWA.

An initial draft of the curriculum is slated to be published in the next few weeks and then presented to parents and the public for consultation. It will "inculcate the values" of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person," said Ging. He said the curriculum is necessary to counter the effects of the Israeli "siege" and the other "illegalities that are the daily life of Palestinians here in Gaza." It "is a seemingly endless list of travesty and injustice, but we can't wait for those to be righted before we also do more to counter the effect of all that," Ging told The Independent.

He said the current human rights curriculum was not adequate to address issues such as the illegality of firing rockets and the effect of propaganda, and "anti-Semitic rhetoric". (JTA, 7 Oct)

Israel helps restore calm after Typhoon Parma

Israel 21C | 7 October

With the necessary skill and experience, Israelis are often first on the scene to help others in the aftermath of disaster, and Typhoon Parma is no exception.

Tens of thousands of people in the Philippines have been evacuated to prevent more tragedies from the after-effects of Typhoon Parma. Coupled with the earlier tropical storm Ketsana, an estimated 300 people have been killed in the Philippines recently due to the worst weather the country has seen in 40 years.

With an antenna tuned to natural disasters and distress, Shachar Zahavi from **IsraAID**, started organising his relief troops as soon as he heard the news. Following a call for help from the Filipino government, for the first time Israel will be sending aid to the Philippines.

The idea of Israel helping the world is a no-brainer, he says: "The importance is not only for the Philippines, but whenever there is a disaster, crime or request for assistance. Especially given everything that Israel and the Jewish people have gone through - we should be the first to respond and reach out our hand in assistance. [READ MORE](#)