

Lethal Politics: Antisemitism as Human Rights

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Introduction

Human rights have become a weapon. A potent force for denunciation and defeat – not in the hands of the abused, but in the hands of the abusers. Those powerful few who know little - and want even less - of freedom or equality.

In little over half a century since the horrors that nearly vanquished an entire people, humankind has come almost full circle. The victims of the Nazis – and the Jewish homeland which is their refuge and their strength – are cast as the neo-Nazis of the 21st century. Human rights are now human wrongs.

The saga of the hijacking and corruption of universal rights and freedoms is one of profound betrayal. It is a betrayal of the victims of the Holocaust, the United Nations – the promised international beacon that rose from their ashes, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights envisioned by Eleanor Roosevelt and René Cassin as the gold standard for never again.

This plight is not a result of a sole cataclysmic event but the consequence of individual abominations, gone unnoticed or unchallenged. Ironically, the setting for this treachery has been the UN itself. An individual resolution of the UN General Assembly, a report of a UN special investigator, a decision of the UN Human Rights Commission – year after year after year. International norms are said to be nurtured through a constructive process in which the accumulation of state practice crystallizes beliefs that mirror the collective wisdom of nations. What has emerged instead – powered by a global, 20 billion-a-year megaphone – is the collective depravity of an immoral majority.

Discrimination

This story begins with discrimination against the Jewish state. Discrimination is the building block of hate and the UN has already erected a fortress.

Since the late 1940's until it was abolished in 2006, the lead UN human rights body was the Human Rights Commission. Over its lifetime it passed more resolutions condemning Israel than any other country on earth. It adopted nothing, ever, on serial abusers such as Syria, Saudi Arabia, or Zimbabwe.

In 2006 the Commission was replaced by the Human Rights Council. In its short life the Council has directed almost 60% of its decisions condemning specific states at Israel alone. And nothing at all on 187 of the UN's other 191 members.

The Council has had eight regular sessions which cover human rights in all countries – and four special sessions devoted only to human rights violations by Israel.

The Council – as the Commission before it – has a limited agenda of less than a dozen subjects. One is reserved only for condemning Israel. And one is called “human rights issues of concern” for all other countries.

The Commission and the Council have created only one UN human rights investigator with a job description which has no term limit – the investigator on Israel. The few other country investigators must be renewed frequently – or not. In the past 15 months, the Council has refused to renew or continue investigations on four states with some of the worst records on the planet – Belarus, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran and Uzbekistan.

The mandate of the Council investigator on Israel denies any possibility of finding human rights violations by any actor in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but Israel. Its only

purpose is “to investigate Israel's violations of the principles and bases of international law.”

The UN has only one standing human rights committee which has no generic theme, like civil and political rights or children’s rights. The UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting Human Rights is now in its 40th year of operation.

In 1975 the UN created a committee to implement its notorious Zionism is racism resolution. The resolution was rescinded in 1991. But the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People continues to sponsor events worldwide and year round.

There is only one whole UN secretariat Division devoted to a single group of people – the UN Division for Palestinian Rights. Created in 1977 it has a full-time staff of 16, while the number of UN staff for the entire Asia and Pacific Division is 22.

There is one refugee agency for Palestinian refugees. And one refugee agency assisting 26 million in the rest of the world.

The UN General Assembly has six subsidiary bodies which focus only on Palestinians. And none focusing on any other people anywhere.

There is only one UN online service dedicated to the claims of a single people – the enormous United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine. It transmits reports, resolutions, speeches, publications and press releases on a daily basis around the world.

Member states of the UN are divided into five regional groups – key vehicles for negotiating resolutions, obtaining important positions, and sharing information. Only one UN member is not permitted to become a full member of any regional group – Israel.

There have been ten emergency sessions of the UN General Assembly in its history – six have been about Israel – and the last and tenth one is effectively in permanent session having been “reconvened” fifteen times since 1987. A million dead in Rwanda and two million dead over two decades in Sudan never prompted one emergency session.

In 2007 the UN General Assembly – as is routine – adopted 20 resolutions condemning Israel for human rights violations, while adopting just a single resolution each on only six other countries. And nothing, for instance, on the egregious violation of the most basic civil and political rights of more than a billion Chinese.

The only condemnation of a country-specific violation of women’s rights anywhere made by the Commission on the Status of Women is its annual resolution on Palestinian women. Nothing, for example, directed at Iran despite its practice of burying women naked to the waist and stoning them to death for alleged adultery.

Taken together, the country subject to more human rights criticism across the UN system every year is Israel. Last year, it was condemned twice as often as Sudan – where millions are displaced, hundreds of thousands are dead in Darfur, and unfettered genocide and rape are the daily norm.

The meetings are webcast – the documents are translated into six languages – and the reports are accessible globally via the internet for free.

In UN circles, it is called protecting human rights. In reality, it is discrimination – antisemitism – in which the Jewish state is subjected to different treatment and held to different standards than all other nations. Given its reach and impact, the UN is therefore the largest global purveyor of antisemitism in the world today.

Demonization

Israel emerges from this so-called human rights campaign demonized – a country engaged in heinous acts with the worst of intentions.

June 20th, 2008 at UN Headquarters in New York. The occasion is a day-long event entitled “Special meeting to mark sixty years of dispossession of Palestine refugees.” A film – shown also at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris a few weeks earlier – is screened before a public audience in the main Economic and Social Council Chamber. Produced by a Palestinian, the film was designed to draw parallels between the Nazis final solution and the Zionists design for Palestinians. It is commonly billed with these words: “...the late-19th century Zionists...drew up plans, put them into practice, then...used... force, often brutal.”

Here is some of the script:

“Christians and Muslims alike...unite in their hatred of Zionism...I preferred to die as a martyr rather than be governed by the Jews ...We were against the Jews...The number of Jews increased constantly...The children cried ...The Hagana had no mercy, no pity. Zionists! They were Zionists!... The Jews were shooting at us, they were facing us...The Jews yelled “turn around you bastards, you dogs.” They machine gunned us...They started killing people who were asleep...[We]...found a poor woman...pregnant. They had killed her and the baby came out of the womb. They started slaughtering them until morning.”

This is how the UN marked the 60th anniversary of the creation of the state of Israel. This is antisemitism as human rights.

Perhaps the most virulent “human rights” theme which emerges repeatedly is the allegation of Jewish racism. In a February 2007 report UN special investigator on Israel John Dugard wrote:

“The IDF inflicts serious bodily and mental harm on Palestinians...Palestinians throughout the OPT are denied freedom of movement. Can it seriously be denied that the purpose of such action is to establish and maintain domination by one

racial group (Jews) over another racial group (Palestinians) and systematically oppressing them?”

UN reports analogize Israel to apartheid South Africa. The UN's 2001 Durban Racism Conference produced a Declaration claiming Palestinians are victims of Israeli racism. Durban II – the next so-called “anti-racism” conference scheduled for 2009 is devoted to implementing that Declaration, and is therefore certain to include Israeli racism on its agenda.

Nobody cares that one-fifth of Israel's population is Arab with more democratic rights than in any Arab state. No one wants to hear that Arab states have essentially been rendered Judenrein following the creation of Israel, 850,000 Jews having been forced to flee. Though UN resolutions denounce Jews living in Arab-claimed territory as “Judaization,” nowhere do people denounce “apartheid Palestine.”

The Legitimization of Violence

What follows discrimination and demonization is all too familiar. A demonized adversary is a much easier target. In the name of resistance and struggle, Israeli civilians have become fair game.

On June 16, 2008 the UN Human Rights Council discussed the latest human rights report from Dugard on Israeli practices. He said: “a distinction must be drawn between acts of mindless terror...and acts committed in the course of a war of national liberation.” The acts perpetrated upon Israeli civilians by Palestinians acting “against occupation” is the second kind of terror, the “inevitable consequence of occupation” and analogous to “the German occupation resisted by European countries in the Second World War.” According to this major UN human rights authority figure, therefore,

terrorizing Israelis is understandable and inevitable and their murderers are comparable to the liberators of Nazi Germany.

The European Union has a word for “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis” – antisemitism. Antisemitism as human rights

This is not academic exegesis. During the Human Rights Council discussions, Pakistan responded to Dugard’s hate-mongering on behalf of the 57 members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference or OIC: “We must note the wise counsel of the special [investigator] to make distinction between mindless terror and acts committed in the course of war of national liberation against colonialism, apartheid or military occupation.” As recently as four years ago, resolutions of the Human Rights Commission declared “the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples against foreign occupation and for self-determination” – (and incorporated by reference to an earlier General Assembly resolution) “by all available means, including armed struggle.”

Denial of the Right of Self-Defense

The human right universe denies the Jewish state the existential entitlement to self-preservation. After all, why should the abuser have a right of self-defense against his victim?

Denying Israel an effective right of self-defense has become a centerpiece of international human rights and humanitarian law. Almost nothing that Israel does against its enemies is legitimate in the eyes of the human rights world. In UN and human rights NGO circles, the carefully targeted killing of combatants is extrajudicial execution. The building of a security fence on disputed territory, with a significant numbers of lives saved, violates international law. Checkpoints and barriers limiting movement among a

population infiltrated by enemy combatants in a war zone are humiliating racist insults. Targeting civilian infrastructure in response to thousands of rockets (which forced one million Israelis into bomb shelters for over three weeks and displaced 300,000) was not a legitimate action with a military objective in the middle of a war, but collective punishment. Incidental civilian casualties caused by Israel, of any number, in any context, whatever the target, are always disproportionate. Incidentally destroying crops in southern Lebanon in the course of responding to Hezbollah rockets violated international humanitarian law. In effect, despite a continuing state of war and the genocidal intent of the enemy combatants, Israel can't hit people, can't hit inanimate objects, can't even hit the ground.

Consider the case of Hamas leaders Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantissi. The governing instrument of the elected representatives of the Palestinian people – the 1988 Hamas Covenant – states: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” “There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad.” With genocide as a frame of reference, Yassin and Rantissi exhorted their followers to violence, instigated suicide bombings, and in Rantissi's words “freed the hand of the brigades to do whatever they want against the brothers of monkeys and pigs.” By the time Israel killed each of them with a missile attack upon their vehicles, there had been at least 425 Hamas attacks killing 377 Israelis and wounding 2,076 in less than three and a half years. Four civilians were killed with Yassin, none with Rantissi.

The UN response? UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan condemned Israel's actions as “assassinations” and illegal “extrajudicial killings” – a charge which is potent –

and totally false. Yassin and Rantissi were combatants in a war and not entitled to judicial process before being targeted. They were also unlawful combatants, seeking to make themselves indistinguishable from the civilian population. International Committee of the Red Cross manuals state that civilians who take a direct part in hostilities forfeit their immunity from attack. In addition to the fact that Yassin and Rantisi were not entitled to judicial process, such a process was not an option for Israel without risking many more Israeli and Palestinian lives. The real legal limit in targeting combatants, according to the Geneva Conventions, is the rule of proportionality – the “incidental loss of civilian life” must not be “excessive.” This test was satisfied in the case of Israel’s actions, civilian casualties having been kept to a minimum. And yet in today’s world of human rights, killing antisemitic leaders at the apex of their genocidal campaign, which had successfully terrorized 5.5 million people, was a violation of the human rights of the homicidal antisemites.

There is another sense in which the Geneva Conventions are misread only when applied to Israel. The freedom of movement and associated rights of Palestinians are limited, but the question is: by whom? If an armed robber takes a hostage and in the course of the crime the hostage is killed by police, the law states that the death of the hostage has been caused by the robber, not the police. For if there had been no armed robbery, the hostage would not have been harmed. If there were no terrorism, there would be no need for barriers and checkpoints. The Palestinian civilian population is hostage to the terrorists and killers among them. Israel's actions, like those of the police officer, are taken in fulfillment of its legal responsibilities to protect its citizens from

violent and illegal behavior. And the Geneva Conventions specifically refuses to grant immunity to terrorists or military targets using civilians as human shields.

This is the law of self-defense – except in the case of Israel. In 2004 the UN’s International Court of Justice decided that Israel’s security fence violated international law by a series of contortions written for a party of one. They held that there is no right of self-defense under the U.N. Charter when terrorists are not state actors, when they operate across disputed borders, and when the measures are not forcible such as the building of a wall. The Egyptian judge even affirmed a “right of resistance” on the grounds that “violence breeds violence.” In short, the Court emasculated Israel’s right of self-defense, notwithstanding that the U.N. Charter was not intended to be a suicide pact.

The Absence of Human Rights

The bottom line is that for all practical purposes Israelis don’t have human rights.

On June 16, 2008 the Human Rights Council discussed whether the mandate of the special investigator on Israel should be expanded to permit him to consider violations of the human rights of Israelis. The Jordanian Ambassador objected. He explained:

“there is a false impression here of a kind of symmetry that we are dealing with human rights...but we ...[ought] not to fall into this symmetry... of... equating the victim and the victimizer or the oppressed and the oppressors...[or] the root causes and ... the symptoms. The violation of human rights by Palestinian groups...is used as a pretext... or to confuse the issue...”

The newly appointed UN investigator Richard Falk is a man who has accused Israel of “genocidal tendencies,” “associate[s] the treatment of Palestinians with th[e]...criminalized Nazi record of collective atrocity” and is unconvinced that the events of 9/11 were not a Bush Administration plot. Falk therefore reassured the Jordanian

Ambassador: "...we are dealing with the suffering of the Palestinian people and *secondarily* of the victimizing of...Israelis..."

The absence of symmetry (the notion that Israelis have human rights too) is found across the human rights world.

Through suicide-bombing, kidnapping, rocket attacks, murder, and butchery of all kinds, Palestinian and other terrorists touch the lives of Israelis while praying, studying, working, shopping, eating, driving, sleeping – living. If the human rights of Israeli Jews were part of the equation, the list of rights violated by terrorism and war would be a long one:

- the right to life,
- the right not to be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment,
- the right to equality and freedom from persecution,
- security of the person,
- the right to health and well-being,
- the right to safe working conditions,
- the right to work,
- freedom from incitement to violence or war,
- freedom of religion,
- the right to the protection of the family,
- the right to the protection of the child,
- the right to education,
- freedom of movement,
- freedom of association,
- the right to an adequate standard of living, and
- the right to self-determination.

Add to this list: genocide – the commission of “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group,” ethnic cleansing – the effort to “render...an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove persons of given groups from the area” and the suicide-bomber’s crime against humanity.

And yet, in judging the legality of Israel's security fence the World Court never attempted to balance these individual rights of Israelis against the list produced of Palestinian rights. Their trick – no doubt a common one – was to place a lengthy list of Palestinian rights on one side and Israeli “military exigencies,” “national security” and “public order” – all faceless beneficiaries – on the other. Having weighted one half of the scale, the human rights weapon of the 21st century becomes a monstrous swindle.

Over and over again, the human rights of Israeli Jews seem to vanish. UN headquarters hosted an exhibit last November with a contribution depicting Israel's security barrier adorned with flowers and accompanied by the words “the flowers climb and hide its ugliness.” The aesthetics of Jewish men, women and children blown apart in the absence of a barrier was nowhere to be found.

The Human Rights Council recently commissioned a report on the limitations placed on Palestinian access to religious sites in the territories, but refused to permit consideration of Israeli access to Jewish holy sites in the same places.

On every November 29th, the anniversary of the day on which the General Assembly voted to adopt the partition of the British Palestine Mandate and celebrated in 1947 by Holocaust survivors everywhere, the UN holds an Annual Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Secretary-General Annan called it “a day of mourning and a day of grief.” Just two flags are flown inside UN headquarters in commemoration – the flag of the United Nations and the Palestinian flag.

Denying Antisemitism

Rights which do not exist cannot be violated. So it is, that in its entire history the United Nations General Assembly has never adopted a resolution *dedicated to*

condemning antisemitism or called for the production of a report dedicated to antisemitism in contrast to special reports on discrimination against “Muslim and Arab peoples” and “Islamophobia.” On the contrary, in human rights circles the definition of antisemitism is hotly disputed.

The reasons are not subtle. Jew-haters have a vested interest in denying Jew-hatred. On April 22, 2008 the Algerian ambassador told the Durban II preparatory committee: “antisemitism...targets...Arabs who are also Semites, and by extension, the whole Muslim community.” Pakistan said “Islamophobia is also a crude form of antisemitism.” After all, if the phenomenon can be appropriated, Jewish victimhood will disappear.

But Muslim states are not the only ones feigning confusion about antisemitism. Human rights authorities are nervous about addressing antisemitism primarily because they want to avoid any connection with Zionism and those troublesome human rights of Israelis.

Driving a wedge between Jews and Israel is now a prime activity for antisemites and their human rights cohorts. ‘Some of my best friends are Jews. It’s just Jewish self-determination I have a problem with.’

Ironically, the current method of avoiding a connection between demonizing Israelis and antisemitism, is to focus on the Holocaust. The general idea is to manifest concern – half a century too late – for Jews that died 60 years ago and then to deny the antisemitism of murdering Jews in a Jewish state today.

When the European Union refused to support a General Assembly resolution on antisemitism (on the alleged grounds that it wouldn’t garner consensus), Israel pushed for

a Holocaust resolution. It was adopted in November 2005, minus the word “antisemitism,” though it did mention the Jewish people along with “countless members of other minorities.” Since January 2006 there has been a Holocaust Remembrance Day at the UN on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Setting aside the constant struggle to ensure that the Day and related activities commemorate the uniqueness of the war against the Jews – the real battleground is over disassociating Israel from the lessons of the Holocaust. Today, there is a permanent display on the Holocaust at UN Headquarters which contains a timeline from 1933, and Hitler’s ascendancy to power, to May 2007 and the appointment of a UN Special Representative for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. Nowhere is the creation of the state of Israel mentioned in either the timeline or the exhibit – as if the birth and well-being of Israel is not the central remedial lesson of the Holocaust.

The Destruction of the Jewish State

Rendering asunder Jews and Israel brings this human rights playbook to its inexorable conclusion – the call for the destruction of the Jewish state in the name of human rights.

The argument for demolition is twofold. First, the Jewish state is corrupt. In the words of an invited expert to a public meeting at the UN in New York just two weeks ago:

“Israel demands that the international community recognize Israel as a Jewish state...The implications are...that Palestinian citizens of Israel will never enjoy equal rights because they’re not Jews...The imperative of Zionism...is to create a land without a people and replace it with the Jewish people...[We must] recognize[e] the untenable nature of the system of dispossession and discrimination that Zionism has introduced...The days of a Zionist Israel are numbered.”

This wasn't just the "expert's" view. The Chairman of the UN Committee hosting the event, the Ambassador of Senegal, thanked the speaker for her "captivating statement" and "valuable knowledge." The end of Israel is allegedly a corrective necessity of the state's inherently corrupt *raison d'être*.

Second, Israel has a corrupting influence on others. The 2008 annual report of Amnesty International, states:

"The international human rights system has been slow to develop in the Middle East and North Africa...[where] the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' references to non-discrimination...jar...with legal and customary systems...Such concerns, however, might have been overcome were it not for...the creation of the state of Israel and the resulting dispossession of the Palestinian population. The building of a Jewish state in the midst of the Arab Muslim world had a cataclysmic effect, setting off effectively a continuing state of war between Israel and its Arab neighbours."

In other words, the presence of a comparatively tiny number of Jews with control over their own destiny is responsible for the failure of the vast Middle East and North African nations to end their egregious treatments of their own peoples.

This game is obviously impossible for Israelis to win. The mere existence of a Jewish state is the real problem. This is antisemitism masquerading as human rights.

What follows this alleged corruption is a cacophony of players who are provided a UN platform to clamor for the political and economic strangulation of Israel through boycotts, divestment, and sanctions.

Never mind that the real corruption is that of the UN Charter itself – whose very essence is defiled by mounting the destruction of a member state under UN auspices.

Changing the *Status Quo*

At every step in this story, from discrimination to the clamor for the destruction of the state of Israel, it would have been possible for decent people, non-governmental

organizations and democratic states to refuse to turn the page. Instead, a series of fallacies have stood in the way of the necessary confrontation with the human rights gamers.

Fallacy #1: Israel deserves the attention and the criticism, even if other states are wrongly ignored. The discrimination and double-standards are unfortunate but not fatal.

The Response: At the end of March 2007 British soldier and kidnap victim Faye Turney was in Iran - stripped to her underwear, caged in a tiny, freezing cell and led to believe her death was imminent. At exactly the same time, the UN's lead human rights agency – the Human Rights Council – made two moves. It adopted yet another resolution calling for “the dispatching of...urgent fact-finding missions” to Israel. And its President made the following statement: “the Human Rights Council has in closed meetings examined the human rights situation in...Iran...[and] decided to discontinue the consideration of the human rights situation in...Iran...Members of the...Council should make no reference in the public debate to the confidential decisions and material concerning” Iran.

The inequality of Jews cannot be quarantined. It perverts priorities and purposes. Fairness, equality and human dignity cannot be built on the inequality of the few. According to the UN Charter, international peace and security are premised on the equality of all nations large and small, while human dignity is inseparable from the equality of all men and women. Equality is an end in itself. The discrimination and demonization of the Jewish state and the Jewish people is not just an extraneous flaw. It subverts the very foundation of the human rights movement.

Fallacy #2. Israel does not deserve the discrimination and the nature and extent of the condemnation, but poor treatment of Israel is a price worth paying for progress on other fronts.

The Response: The Global Advocacy Director for the NGO Human Rights Watch, Peggy Hicks, and I had an online debate sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations after the first two sessions of the Human Rights Council. Hicks wrote (in July 2006 and the middle of the Lebanon war): “There are legitimate concerns at the Council's handling of the situation in Gaza, and its decision to focus on that crisis to the exclusion of other pressing situations. It would be a mistake, however, to judge the Council on the basis of its actions on the occupied Palestinian territories...” In other words, treating the Jewish state differently than all other countries is a problem only for a small proportion of the world's population. For Jews to denounce the whole just because they are given the short end of the stick would be narrow-minded, callous and parochial.

Human Rights Watch's behavior at the Durban I racism conference took this argument to its logical conclusion. As the representative of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists at Durban, I personally beseeched the representative of Human Rights Watch – to support a vote against the NGO Zionism is Racism declaration. They refused – for the alleged greater good then too.

The same approach was never suggested by human rights organizations to South African blacks and the anti-apartheid movement – for good reason. The road to hell is paved with the cries of the insignificant, the marginal and irrelevant.

Fallacy #3: Jewish complaints are an attempt to protect Israel from any criticism. Jews shout antisemitism to avoid legitimate scrutiny.

The Response: Ken Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch told the Jerusalem Post: “there is a cottage industry of people out there who try to accuse of bias those who criticize Israel’s human-rights record not because the criticisms are unwarranted but as a way of simply defending Israel from any criticism.” Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has said: “...some regard any criticism of Israel as anti-semitic.” But “Israel’s supporters” should not “use the charge of antisemitism to stifle legitimate discussion.” And the Deputy Director of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Craig Mokhiber recently wrote about my criticism of his racist Israel allegations: “I assume that the picque...comes from her ideological conviction that any discussion of Israel’s human rights record is simply unacceptable.”

Such gibberish is the proverbial straw man. That Israel can do no wrong and deserves no criticism is a fiction never uttered by anyone, anywhere. There is a difference between legitimate criticism and the application of standards applied nowhere else.

Fallacy #4: Anti-Zionism is not antisemitism. There is a constant effort to urge the Jewish diaspora to forsake their brethren in favor of the global brotherhood of man.

The Response: The anti-Zionism in human rights circles is not enigmatic. As we have heard: Judaization is a crime; the Jewishness of a Jewish state is wrong; Zionists stole the land by gratuitously slaughtering pregnant women; murderous Israeli soldiers seek to oppress; Jews want racial domination over Palestinians; Israel is engaged in apartheid; and the ultimate slander, Israelis are analogous to Nazis. Martin Luther King recognized hate when he heard it, and stated in a now famous 1968 appearance at

Harvard: “When people criticize Zionists, they mean Jews. You are talking anti-Semitism.”

Zionism, or Jewish statehood, is the realization of the self-determination of the Jewish people. In their historical homeland. Continually inhabited, in fewer and greater numbers due to circumstances beyond their control. For thousands of years. In today’s human rights universe, however, Jewish statehood and self-determination is an inherent evil destined to oppress and harm the well-being of those amongst them, and debilitating to the advancement of the people of other nations. That Jews are a people incapable of self-government compatible with democratic rights and freedoms – the only people on earth suffering from this inescapable affliction – is a lie. It is also antisemitism.

Fallacy #5: The outcomes of UN human rights mechanisms may not be to our liking, but that is international democracy at work. It is not for the West to dictate right answers to the rest of the globe.

The Response: In the course of his failed reform efforts, Secretary-General Kofi Annan complained: “we all have to admit that the [security] council can be more democratic and more representative...There is a democracy deficit in the UN governance that has to be corrected.” What he didn’t advocate by way of reform was that Council members actually be democratic. On the contrary, what democracy means at the UN is idealizing the General Assembly, where less than half of the 192 members are fully free democracies. The Chinese explained such bogus global democracy in a 2005 paper this way: “the General Assembly is an important body of democratic decision-making” and the “UN [must] observe the following principles...non-interference in internal affairs.” In other words, tyranny is as likely to emerge from the UN majority as right answers.

What has in fact surfaced, from the majority of countries who have in common a desire to avoid external scrutiny, is an aversion to universal rights. Self-styled global “democrats” flaunt instead, moral, cultural and religious particularities. The practical implications of such priorities are exemplified by Saudi Arabia, a current member of the UN Human Rights Council. The Saudi Vice-Minister for Human Rights told the Council in March “...human rights principles ensured the respect for peoples identities, peoples who refused to be dictated and who held on to their special cultures.” Saudi human rights reports therefore say: “Lawmaking in an Islamic state proceeds from the Islamic Shariah...Islam holds that full likeness between men and women is contrary to the reality of their being...” Accordingly, last year a Saudi court sentenced a 19-year old woman to prison and 200 lashes after she had been gang-raped, for the crime of having been found by the rapists in a car with a male friend who was not her relative. This is “cultural particularities” at work.

On June 16th at the Human Rights Council an NGO pointed to practices in Islamic states, such as honor killings, marriage of very young girls, and the stoning of women, and urged Islamic religious authorities to play a leadership role in ending these practices. Representatives of Islamic states – Egypt, Iran, Pakistan – immediately objected to the statement as an “attempt to link bad practices” to Islam. The President then ruled that henceforth any “evaluation of a religious creed, law or document” would never be permitted at the Council.

Global democracy in action is the tyranny of non-democracies.

Fallacy #6: Western democracies – including Israel – are the real enemies of human rights.

The Response: The foes of human rights know that the best defense is a good offence – so rather than addressing those who violate human rights in the name of Islam, they allege the real problem is the bigotry of non-Muslims. They are not talking about isolated and certainly wrong incidents of xenophobia – they speak of a deliberate global Western-inspired plot against the whole of Islam. They call it Islamophobia. As Egypt told the Human Rights Council last September, with regards to the Danish cartoons affair:

“...the offensive publication of portraits of the Prophet Mohamed...lead to, not only hurting the religious feelings of more than a billion people, but also their freedom of religion and their right to respect of their religion.”

The freedom of religion of a billion people has been gravely harmed by a few cartoons in a remote newspaper? These kinds of remarks – now daily fodder in the human rights world – are nothing short of lethal demagoguery.

The human rights offensive reaches a high-water mark when it comes to Israel. Pakistan articulated the mindset before the Human Rights Council on June 16th: “Israel’s forcible occupation is the root cause of all human rights issues in the Palestinian territories.”

Not the terrorists who deliberately operate in the midst of a civilian population, using their family and friends as human shields. Not the bigots who feed their children – in schools, on television, in textbooks – the daily bread of intolerance and hate for their neighbors. Not the Arab nations that have cynically kept Palestinians as refugees for three generations instead of offering them citizenship and its benefits. Not the war launched by Arab states that rejected the UN partition plan and the creation of Israel in

1948. And not all the wars and attempts at annihilation that rejectionist forces have launched ever since.

But then one might expect the killers to blame their victims for their own demise.

Fallacy #7: The glass is half full and not half empty. There is progress in the human rights world. Look how far we've come since the Nuremberg Tribunals and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was first adopted.

The Response: How far indeed. Genocide in Rwanda and Sudan without intervention. Millions of women suffering genital mutilation. Billions without elementary democratic freedoms. And Jews without human rights.

The Nuremberg Tribunals taught us crimes are not committed by abstract entities, but today just naming and shaming abusers is widely criticized as uncooperative and counter-productive.

The stranglehold of cultural relativism ensures that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could never be adopted today.

Fallacy #8: The UN is a harmless talking shop. At worst it is a place to blow off steam. Dialogue is always good.

The Response: Iranian President Ahmadinejad would agree. In the late 1990's Iran initiated the idea of a "Dialogue among Civilizations." Naturally, Iranian authorities consider their own regime – in which stoning, public hanging, and cross-amputation of feet and hands are legally-sanctioned punishments – as one of those civilizations.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour experienced the idea of a cost-free dialogue with Iran first-hand. Last September she visited Tehran to attend a

“Human Rights and Cultural Diversity” conference. She sat in the front row for Ahmadinejad’s speech, during which he said:

“...it is a right for the most righteous to be considered as the best humans...[S]ome powers...think of nothing but destroying the traditions and customs of different nations in the world in order to keep them under their illegal sway...The...story of Palestinians has been going on for the last 60 years. The usurper Zionist regime has continued to exist through murder...[B]y the grace of God Almighty...the nuclear issue is closed...[T]he Non-Aligned Movement’s struggle against...racism, Zionism...has to be praised and lauded.”

The day after she listened attentively and held dialogues with his officials, the regime executed 21 people, stringing up the bodies on cranes in public places. Arbour had lent an enemy of human rights credibility and thereby encouraged his pathological behavior, rather than inhibited it. In other words, talk isn’t cheap at all.

Moreover, many international actors evidently cannot talk and walk at the same time. It has been over five years since the International Atomic Energy Agency first reported that Tehran had failed to comply with its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Since that time there have been a few baby steps by the Security Council, while the jawing continues between European Union representatives and Iran. In the meantime, the genocidal plans of Ahmadinejad loom ever larger. A civilized dialogue with an anti-civilization regime has brought us closer to a military confrontation, not farther away – as the military option fast becomes the only means to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Fallacy #9: And last, but not least: The corruption of the human rights world may leave Israel the worse off, but the rest of us have been spared.

The Response: The lessons of the Holocaust have in fact never been learnt. The fate of Israel does, and will, affect all freedom-loving people.

When the World Court found the UN Charter's self-defense provisions did not apply to non-state actors, the ability of every democratic society to combat terrorism was diminished.

In 2007 the UN human rights regime put Israel at the top of its list of offenders, but the United States was fourth – tied with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Australia was 20th, criticized more frequently for human rights violations than Syria at 21 and Libya and Zimbabwe at 22.

Because the 57 members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference believe blowing up Israelis and Americans in the name of self-determination is not terrorism, they have successfully blocked the adoption of a comprehensive convention against terrorism and prevented the UN's lead counter terrorism agency – the Counter-Terrorism Committee – to this day from naming a single terrorist, terrorist organization, or state sponsor of terrorism.

When the centerpiece of the UN's anti-racism agenda – the Durban conference – was hijacked to promote a Zionism-is-racism campaign, the credibility of all anti-racism efforts at the UN suffered. Durban II will not only be bad for Jews; it will be an attack on freedom of expression, period.

Pakistan declared this past April at the Durban preparatory conference: “the most serious manifestation of racism is the democratic legitimization of racism and xenophobia.” The inversion of human rights has come full circle, having manufactured not only the Israeli Nazi but also the democratic fascist.

UN investigator Dugard made the Orwellian nature of the human rights world particularly plain when he said in a 2007 report:

“For years the occupation of Palestine and apartheid in South Africa vied for attention...In 1994 apartheid came to an end...the OPT has become a test for the West, a test by which its commitment to human rights is to be judged. If the West fails this test, it can hardly expect the developing world to address human rights violations seriously in its own countries...”

In other words, why should Sudan stop genocide? Why should Zimbabwe stop murdering its own people? Why should China grant anybody freedom of speech?

According to the human rights intelligensia, unless and until the Jewish state is rendered defenseless or defeated, the protection of the human rights of the 6 billion people in the developing world is on hold.

Israel – as Jewish scapegoats have been over the centuries – is the ultimate diversionary tactic.

Conclusion

Antisemitism has become the bread and butter of the human rights movement – as much to the detriment of the movement as to Jews. The enemies of human rights have taken control of the global mechanisms created to oppose them. The global institution intended to lead and inspire has been morally neutered. And solutions for vast numbers of victims of human rights abuse are in abeyance until a Jewish state disappears.

Jews, however, cannot change the ending of this saga alone. Democracies must be convinced to reject moral relativism; name, shame, and sanction the real villains; deny global platforms to the opponents of equality and dignity; use the label antisemitism every time it fits; and stand with Israel against the antisemitism that masquerades as human rights.

Human rights are the most powerful ideological currency of our time. Unless the free people of this earth take back the nomenclature, the institutions and the

implementation tools of human rights, I fear we will witness the destruction of Israel, if not by lethal force, then by lethal politics.