

Thesis:

Israel is singled out by the West as part of “an international campaign to discredit the country” (Leon Panetta at the Saban Center), isolate it politically and delegitimize its very existence. We assert that the campaign is perpetrated primarily by non-governmental entities who adopted an anti-Israeli agenda that is driven by ulterior motivations rather than genuine or even justified criticism. We assert that such motivations originate in ideological, political, religious and pragmatic considerations. Furthermore the campaign to isolate or delegitimize Israel is counter-productive to the Western interests with negative implications on international relations. Our main argument is that there are structural conditions that made western public opinion more receptive to Islamic propaganda.

1. Israel is singled out:

- Obama May 21, 2011, Panetta December 3, 2011
- U.N commission resolutions (Seligman) 79 second 18 Iran 10 Uganda 5 Egypt, Syria 0
- Council resolutions 19 Sudan 8 North Korea 1
- More citations from Ben – Meir and Alterman
- Danish Foreign Minister (Yediot 5-12-11)
- U.S ambassador to Belgium (Yediot 5-12-11)
- Anti-Israeli NGOs
- (e.g., number of deaths in other conflicts or occupations)

2. Why Israel?

- it sells well - Proof number of mentions in media
- Centricity of Israel (holly Places) Christian, Muslims, Jews, Mormons, Church property Why is the West obsessed about Israel? Dershowitz asks this question.

- Colonial guilt
- Underdog , Israel power (no precedent in world war history)
- Israel Palestinian conflict obstacle to world peace

3. Who is doing it? Actors

-leftist academics and intellectuals who seek to hoard political power, left-wing parties

who seek to gain the Muslim vote, NGO's etc.

It is enabled by Islamic propaganda, popularity of topic, instant exposure, social media, self -hating Jews, Left radicals.

By answering why the west focuses on the I-P conflict, we are already understanding who are the actors pushing this. For instance, by pointing out that the Muslim immigration to Europe is a factor, we already point to the British Labor party etc.

- Use article references

4. What are the allegations?

This is puzzling for two reasons. First, especially since as Law professor the Israeli compliance with international law or even standards of human rights practices is far from being. Israel definitely upholds gay rights and yet the left chooses to criticize Israel.

5. What are the motivations?

- US justifies Israel alliance as beacon of democracy and western values. Criticism of Israel causes a defensive response from Democratic administrations. Held to higher standard. The Red Green alliance, The mass audience interest Political divide between Jewish Right and Left.

6. What are the tactics?
7. Are the allegations founded and justified?
 - Goldstone, UN inquiries (marmara)
8. Is the campaign effective? (effect on Israel)
 - towards Israel
 - towards their own self interest
9. How can the campaign be contained?
 - a) mellow, b) slow down, c) disappear d) reverse
 - Who are the interested parties to intensify or stop or reverse the campaign
10. Why is it counter-productive to Western interests and how it affects foreign policy
 - Are there irreversible factors that will affect IR and if so what are the consequences
 - Lessons learned and possible short and long-term implications
 - IR effect: Neutrality and balance are the best strategy (e.g. Britain), security in the region a key concern for the West. (Islamization of ME, Iran's threat, Isolation of Saudi Arabia, The fall of the Hashemite) The Euro foreign affairs. Arabs compromise already made - accepted notion. Where is oil in all of this? a factor to mask Arab failure at democracy and reform. Muslim vote = political power internal stability France - vent on Israel rather than on French Govt. The Islamic message sells. Solve this and everything will be solved. Second, even from a cold-minded realist perspective the European and American interests do not require such singling out of Israel. Moreover, the conflict is far less bloody than other conflicts. This is an important question for general International Relations theory for several reasons. First, because we want to understand what makes a pariah state.

Part I -- Indicators for the reality that Israel is being singled out

There are several such facts. First, if we look at the UN resolution we see that a disproportionate number of them is focusing on Israel. The human rights issue seems to most validate this.

Another indicator is to look at the number of resolutions that Israel did not follow. The two main resolutions are 242 and 338. Some would say that by not doing so Israel defied and is therefore in violation of international law. The facts are that the security council resolutions

Part II – why Israel?

Reason 1 – the western countries have an interest to keep friendly relations with the Arab countries since they are heavily invested in the Middle East (the oil)

The conventional wisdom, at least among the pro-Israeli scholars and pundits, that those Western elements who do so have an interest at stake since they are invested in Arab or Muslim countries, need their support

This does not however explain the hatred or focus at the popular level. In a recent poll most Germans pointed out that Israel pose the major threat.

MYTH

“Israel receives so much attention because it is the only country in the Middle East that affects U.S. interests.”

FACT

The Middle East is important to the United States (and the Western world) primarily because of its oil resources. Events that might threaten the production and supply of oil affect vital U.S. interests. The United States also has an interest in supporting friendly regimes in the region. Attention is warranted because the Middle East is the scene of repeated conflagrations that directly or indirectly affect American interests. Events in countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Iran have required the intervention of U.S. troops, and nothing focuses the attention of the public like American lives being endangered abroad. The United States has been deeply involved in each of the Arab-Israeli wars, but has also had its own independent battles, most notably the Gulf War

with Iraq in 1991 and “Operation Iraqi Freedom” in 2003. The media is now very focused on Iraq because of the continuing U.S. troop deployment there.

On the other hand, Americans are not typically interested in the fratricidal wars of people in distant lands when the fighting does not appear to have any bearing on U.S. interests. This is true in Africa, Latin America and even the Balkans. Similarly, inter-Arab wars have not generated the kind of interest that Israel's problems have. However, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute — two people fighting over one land — is a particularly compelling story. It is made all the more so by the fact that it is centered in the Holy Land.

Another explanation for the disproportionate coverage Israel receives relative to Arab countries is that few correspondents have a background in Middle East history or speak the regional languages. Journalists are more familiar with the largely Western culture in Israel than the more alien Muslim societies.

Reason 2 – prevent waves of immigration from the Middle East of Radicalized Muslims

The Palestine issue has been a source of instability for the regimes in the region. While the US has an interest to keep stability in the Middle East for mainly geo-strategic reasons, Europe has an interest to prevent waves of immigration by radicalized muslims to its continent.

Reason 3: the Palestine issue generates terrorism

Israel is at the center of several fault lines: cultures, religion and civilization. Hence, the Palestine issue **even radicalization at home**

Existing tensions in Transatlantic relations.

That conflict is inevitable because a bastion of the West in the Middle of the East. ¹

This is not so much because

For instance the prominent place that protecting Israel against the “evil” Islam has as a motif for evangelical churches.

The spillover is greater than in other conflicts. This explanation may be true, but it is uncertain to what extent it is sufficient. With the problems posed by Pakistan.

This perception may be in fact mistaken. The pro-Zionist organizations try to promote the idea that Bin Laden or any other extremist Muslim group that is attacking ostensibly because of convenient

Reason 4 – a way to soft balance against the US

As Realist scholars explain Israel is weak and can be more easily targeted.

Indeed, this puts the US in a predicament since it is way to put the US on the spot.

Explanation 4 – Israel as a norm entrepreneur (but of the “wrong” norms)

Contrary to what International Relations Realist scholars say states do not only emulate great powers or other successful and powerful states, they also emulate states which embody certain norms and thus affect the normative landscape of international relations. the prevailing

¹ huntington

international norms.² There is a lot at stake here and they must try to turn Israel into a pariah state.

The problem for some Western states has been that Israel has not only defied some western norm, but instead of becoming a complete has also de-facto been a norm entrepreneur of what they consider as very bad norms. Other states seek to emulate Israeli behavior. For instance, strategic assassination in the fight against terrorism (or as they are often referred to as “Extra-legal killings”) , the US drone attacks in Afghanistan.

In other cases, states would encourage moral support from the Israeli case – and justify their atrocious behavior by arguing that they are doing exactly

Hence, it is really important

In order to judge this issue

as Thomas Friedman notes

Israel has definitely defied the West more than once – It has adopted a pro-Serbian position

Explanation 5: a wedge issue in European politics and other muslim immigration

absorbing countries the need to mollify a Muslim presence in Europe

Efraim Halevy holds that they are not aware of the Islamic danger.³

Mark Steyn goes further than and argues that Europe is completely hijacked by these⁴

² On the Neo-Realist see Kenneth Waltz

I take this approach from the English school's notion of a global society.

³ Efraim Halevy

With their small birth rate they are beholden to the Muslim immigration to keep their economies flourishing. Bashing against Israel is therefore a small price to pay.

Israel has become a diving issue between different political parties -- the moral dimensions of the story “right against right.” Indeed, this is not a clear cut case where you can say that. Ineed the Staunch conservative Alberta-born Canadian Prime minister Stephen Harper so pro-Israeli precisely becaue he believes that this is right. There is no strong Canadian Jewish lobby.

It is also a wedge issue since support for Israel has always been seen by the European publics as being a pro-American step taken by countries.

Staunchly Conservative leaders like Spain’s former Prime Minister

Explanation 6: the European self need to absolve themselves of their own sins: the

Holocaust

Gerald Steinberg, who teaches political science at Bar-Ilan University, answers his own question. "Europe's failure in the Middle East is directly connected to the way it filters perceptions of Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Many Europeans see Israel through the lens of anticolonialist rhetoric. They perceive Israel as the representative incarnate of the West, its colonialism, imperialism, and behavior throughout the Second World War. Europe projects its own past onto Israel, and as a result the Palestinians become its victims."

"In Europe there is a dominant social climate where the continent sees itself as 'postconflict,' 'postnationalist,' and multicultural. Another frequently used expression in the discourse is 'post-heroic.' Europeans often try to universalize these images by mistakenly applying them also to the Middle East. But they are irrelevant to the ethnonational conflicts in this and other regions, and they may also reflect a passing phase of European culture.

"Europe thus wants to impose its own perceived reality on the rest of the world. In conflict regions, such as the Middle East, this approach can only lead to problems. Zionism is a nationalist movement and not a colonial one. When Israel is forced to confront violence, it cannot avoid a military response without inviting destruction. This attitude is very difficult for Europe to accept since for the European Community to function successfully, nationalism must be constrained and violence avoided. But the European conditions are far from universal."

"These European actions take place against the background of a major difference between the American and European discourse. In the United States there is an intense debate on issues such as democracy in the Middle East, the Iraq war, and Arab-Israeli relations. Anyone who takes a strong position on these issues has to be able to defend it when challenged. However, in Europe, particularly in academia, there is mainly one uniform narrative of Middle East history. If someone wishes to express another view he or she is rarely given the opportunity.

"In this environment, it is also very difficult to question the multiple European myths. In view of its history, Europe perhaps cannot even afford an honest debate. Many Europeans are in a postrealist stage. They have an unquestioned belief in the ideas of progress, human and political evolution, and that international law will solve conflicts. To put it academically, they are adherents of Kantianism. This optimistic theory of achieving 'perpetual peace' through mutual agreement has become very dominant in Europe. There are, however, some exceptions to this approach, for instance when France talks about its security and nuclear policy. Another example can be found in the conservative wing of British culture. But these dissenting voices are rarely heard."

A recent statistical study has found a relationship between anti-Semitism and anti-Israel positions.⁵ However, Tel Aviv University professor and Israel's former Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben Ami points to a different kind of relationship. He argues that the paradoxically it is the very guilt over the Holocaust which causes

Relativism of your own crime.

The Belgian people , the king

Swedish king nazi in his past

Israel's former Shlomo Ben Ami ⁶

⁵

⁶ A place for all of us Ben Ami talks with Eliyahu bar Navi, p.

You could have done something. Every neighbor

Relativism.

<http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishFeatures/Article.aspx?id=241978>

Explanation 6: A story that can be easily understood – colonialism in a foreign land

Social and Political psychologists define a schema as

The Europeans have been there in the past, and therefore they believe they are the ones who know best that the Israelis are engaged in an illusionary project with disastrous consequences.⁷

To use the old repeated sentence of

"The demonization of Israel as an apartheid state is an idea that probably originated with the Palestinians. Many Western NGOs picked it up and amplified it. These NGOs also played a major role in the UN resolution of December 2003 that brought the issue of the Israeli separation fence to the International Court of Justice. Early in the proceedings in The Hague, they were very prominent in presenting their views that sought to condemn Israel. When the Court issued its advisory opinion, Christian Aid, Amnesty, Oxfam, and other major human rights organizations demanded, like the EU-funded Palestinian groups, that Israel conform to their version of international law. They never used the words 'advisory opinion.'

⁷ Deborah Larson, Schemas, Political Psychology

"The next demonization phase these NGOs are planning is to have sanctions imposed on Israel. These wealthy, partly state-funded organizations, with no accountability to anyone, could well be at the forefront of this campaign."

West cannot accept that Israel is truly threatened an existential threat. Security concerns are overblown.

Explanation 7: the sociology of knowledge-creating institutions

This seems to me the weakest of all explanations. There are two versions to this argument. First, as Dan Pipes and Martin Kramer point out -- the marriage of convenience between the leftist intellectuals and the Palestinian cause. While Kramer emphasizes the money issue, Pipes argues that there is more to it. Leftist intellectuals need. Sometimes even extreme left groups attack Israel since this allows more people to come to their demonstrations. This indeed creates the odd situation whereby

Explanation 8: Israeli diplomatic conduct and discourse in a way that fits western standards/bad public diplomacy

http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/international_security_bt/503.php?nid=&id=&pn=503&lb=btis&gclid=CLr5yeOvlaoCFUTBKgodCGcewg

Netanyahu lecturing to the Americans

Patronizing

The Israelis have underestimated public diplomacy for years. The appointment of Lieberman is just one of the latest manifestations.

What are the policy implications for International Relations?

Deeper causes than one can imagine. These are not just interests but stem from the Europeans perceptions of history, their desired self image and their. Not all transatlantic divides can be healed by a new meeting between the US President or enough attention given by the US secretary of State.

8. It is a unifying factor for all Islamic movements, states and sects. As such the Islamists communicate a cohesive consistent message that resonates and that is amplified by the Islamic diaspora. Pan Islamic grievance

9, The Islamists represent a political block in most European countries, export of elite Islamic scholars into positions of power in academia and as strategic advisors to U.S. Fouad Ajami

10. The red green revolution

11. NGO industry like any other it needs to grow and expand. Israel is the perfect issue in that it has all the popular ingredients occupation, colonialism, oppression.

Poverty etc. It is instantly recognized wide support base gets coverage in the media. Non-violent insoluble, nobody knows the fact except their beliefs. Has a religious spin

The NGO sector is now the eighth largest economy in the world — worth over \$1 trillion a year globally. It employs nearly 19 million paid workers, not to mention countless volunteers[1].

NGOs spend about \$US15 billion on development each year, about the same as the World Bank[2]. But while the NGO movement has been growing rapidly since the 1980s, the union movement has been in decline. Why, and what does this mean for unions and public services?

The links between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade unions run very deep. It was civil society activism, led by trade unions, which paved the way for the rise of NGOs after WWII. Many of them were directly established by unions[3]. The two work together in powerful coalitions (such as the Global Call to Action against Poverty and the anti-sweatshop movement), and run joint campaigns against free trade agreements and various huge companies (think Wal-Mart). It can be a winning combination, as the anti-apartheid struggle showed ten years ago, and the battle against water privatisation is showing today. In fact the term “social movement unionism” was coined to reflect this wider collaborative approach, which has changed the face of many developing countries, most recently in Georgia and the Ukraine, and previously throughout much of Latin America.

NGOs have often acted as proxies for unions in countries where the labour movement is repressed. Codes of conduct and corporate responsibility are often won through joint pressure, and NGO staff tend to be active members within their unions, just as union staff are often involved with NGO work. Each year the two exchange huge amounts of money in support of each other’s projects.

Some countries (such as Ireland and South Africa) are even going beyond tri-partism to include civil society and NGOs as a fourth social partner. The ILO is currently (and hotly) debating a

similar step. The United Nations has given advocacy groups an international framework within which to work. Is this an historical opportunity for unions and NGOs to form the ultimate international alliance?

It is not that simple.

THE POLITICAL AGENDA OF PALESTINIAN "ENVIRONMENTAL" NGO'S

NGO Monitor Digest (Vol. 3 No. 1)

September 15, 2004

Summary: Evidence indicates that Palestinian NGOs are using ecological issues primarily as a pretext for anti-Israel political and ideological objectives while making little substantive effort to carry out policies to improve the region's environment.

(Corrected September 19, 2004)

Images of an ecological catastrophe in the Palestinian territories as a result of Israeli "occupation" and "the enormous environmental impact of the Apartheid Wall and Segregation Zone plan on the West Bank and Palestinian agriculture" are frequently used by NGOs in criticizing Israel. [1] However, the evidence from events such as the 2002 World Environmental Summit in Johannesburg indicates that ecological issues are used primarily as a pretext for political and ideological objectives. [2]

Indeed, in the late 1980s pro-Palestinian groups had begun to link 'ecology' to human rights as part of their political strategy against Israel. Resolutions in international bodies often made reference to alleged ecological damage in the "occupied territories" as an aspect of the abuse of "Palestinian national rights". In 1989, 1990 and 1991, the UN General Assembly adopted resolutions that "expressed its concern over the impact of the military rule on the management of the environment and its natural resources in a way that hinders the pursuit of environmentally sound management." [3]

During the Oslo period, many Palestinian and pro-Palestinian NGOs began to receive funding that was tenuously linked to environmental concerns.

For example, the Ma-an Center, whose link to environmental issues is through organic agriculture courses, grew from a \$17,000 budget in 1989 to \$584,000 in 1996 and to 30 members of staff in three offices.

<http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article.php?id=689>

THE WORLD'S LARGEST COLLECTION OF ENEMIES OF ISRAEL AND BLEEDING
HEARTS WHO NEVER SEE JEWISH BLOOD AND SUFFERING!

Inquiry & Analysis Series Report No.697

French 'Free Gaza' Campaign Enlists Prominent Politicians, Journalists and Intellectuals

By: N. Maruani*

A year after the May 2010 Freedom Flotilla to Gaza, Freedom Flotilla II (FFII) is preparing to set sail to Gaza at the end of June 2011. According to reports, it is to include 15 to 20 passenger ships and cargo ships and some 1,000 participants from several European countries, five Latin American countries, the United States, Canada, and some Asian countries. Among the participants are members of parliament, politicians, journalists, intellectuals, and human rights activists. According to the campaign coordinators, FFII is expected to be twice the size of FFI and will set out from different ports across the world, convening in the Mediterranean Sea before sailing to Gaza.

The French FFII campaign, named “French Ship for Gaza,” has enlisted some 80 French organizations, which have so far raised some €600,000 in funding. The French Movement Against Racism and For Friendship Between Peoples (MRAP)[1] is in charge of handling the funds.

Following is a brief review of the preparations for FFII, with an emphasis on the French campaign:

Flotilla Participants

Freedom Flotilla II is set to sail on the third week of June, with ships departing from various European ports, including Marseilles. Its 15 to 20 passenger ships and cargo boats will carry building supplies, generators, medical equipment, and educational materials designated for the people of Gaza.

FII was originally to depart from southern Turkey, headed by IHH ship Mavi Marmara;[2] however, according to spokesman Dror Feiler, speaking from Istanbul on June 17, 2011, the Mavi Marmara will not set sail to Gaza due to technical reasons.[3] The departure date for FFII had initially been set as “sometime between May 15, in commemoration of the Nakba, and May

31, the first anniversary of the deadly 2010 flotilla mission.”[4] However, the date was eventually postponed to the end of June.

According to an IHH Foundation Facebook page dedicated to the Flotilla, the founding organizations of Freedom Flotilla II include the pro-Palestinian activist umbrella group Free Gaza Movement, the European Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza, the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, the Ship to Gaza, Sweden, and the Ship to Gaza, Greece. These organizations held a press conference in Rome hosted by the Association of Journalists of Rome, to declare Freedom Flotilla II.[5] During the conference, the vice president of the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Huseyin Oruc, stressed that the mission would bring together volunteers from “125 countries of the world.” President of the Palestinians in Italy Dr. Mohammad Hannoun said that the campaign in Italy had already collected €140,000 toward the flotilla. Additional organizations to take part in FFII hail from the U.S., U.K., Ireland, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Venezuela, Norway, Spain, Canada, the Netherlands, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Following is a brief overview of some of the flotilla campaigns underway on three different continents. The British organization Britain2Gaza Flotilla has dedicated a well-developed website to the project, as revealed in an IHH Facebook page[6] featuring a link to the Britain2Gaza Flotilla website:[7]

Britain2Gaza website

Lifeline 4 Gaza, or Talian Hayat Untuk Gaza in Bahasa, Malaysia, describes itself as a collaborative effort between Malaysian NGOs to join the international flotilla campaign.

Indonesian organizations also joined the venture, including KISPA, the “Indonesian Committee for Palestine Solidarity.”[8]

The Australian Gaza Flotilla organization[9] is coordinating with a Canadian contingent to jointly purchase and crew a ship. To this end, the organization aims at fundraising \$145,000. The address where money orders may be sent is provided as follows: “‘Palestine Relief Fund, Inc. – 100 for Gaza,’ P.O. Box 542, Leichhardt NSW 2040; Electronic Funds Transfer – Bendigo Bank a/c: 141120758 bsb: 633108.” A list of people who have already donated is also provided.

On May 9, 2011, the European Freedom Flotilla site, which pools information on flotilla campaigns in the various European countries, posted a press statement reading: “We’re very pleased to announce the recent addition of a Swiss-German boat to the flotilla...”

Freedom Flotilla II European Homepage

The “French Ship to Gaza” Campaign

“French Ship to Gaza” campaign homepage

Campaign Activities

Launched as early as October 2010, the French campaign has been highly active. The campaign’s website provides daily updates.[10] On May 9, 2011, a campaign committee convened and, on May 11, an announcement was posted on the website’s homepage similar to the one posted in English on the European Flotilla campaign site, stating that its craft and crew were ready to set sail.

The announcement clarified that on May 12, members of the campaign committee had met with members of the European Parliament to request their “active support” for the Flotilla

venture.[11] Since then and until departure in June, it said, they were to meet with representatives from the U.N. and other international organizations to garner additional support. The campaign's homepage features a map of the different cities and towns across all of France which have been campaigning for the project through conferences, concerts, meetings with politicians, and other events.[12] These activities were organized by some 60 local organizations throughout France.

Localities involved in French Ship to Gaza campaign

The main goal of the French Ship to Gaza campaign website is fundraising. It asks each visitor to the website to donate €10:[13] "If 20,000 of us donate €10 – no more – we've got our ship," pro-Palestinian activist Sommer-Houdeville clarified in a March 2, 2011 video posted on the French Islamic site Oumma.com.[14] On April 24, spokeswoman Claude Léostic, who is vice president of the France Palestine Solidarité association, told Aljazeera.net that the campaign had so far collected €450,000.[15] In addition to holding events, the French Ship to Gaza campaign has also had tee shirts designed. They are sold for eight euros each, and an email address is provided for ordering online.

As an example of the campaign activities, following is a series of events held May 7-May 15, a typical campaign week. Similar events took place on an almost daily basis all over France. On May 7, the city of Blois organized a "Regional Day of Solidarity with Palestine" as part of the French Ship to Gaza campaign. Concentration camp survivor and diplomat Stéphane Hessel was requested to join as an honorary guest. Hessel was asked to give a conference on the "violations of human rights in Palestine" and the Palestinian band Haneen was to give a concert.[16]

On the same day, similar activities were held in the cities of Nantes and Quimper. In Nantes, an earlier such endeavor had already brought the campaign €1000 on April 20. Campaign partners Bernadette Briand (La Cimade Bretagne-Pays de la Loire), Barbara Durand (La Ligue des Droits de l'Homme), Pierre Leparoux (Association France Palestine Solidarité), and Michel Bernard (Association France Palestine Solidarité) discussed the campaign in a video posted on a Nantes-based website.[17] In Quimper, a “Solidarity for Palestine Day” was organized by the local L'Association des Travailleurs et Commerçants Marocains (“Association of Moroccan Workers and Traders”), the Awal Imazighen association, and the France Palestine Solidarité association, on behalf of the French Ship for Gaza campaign. The event included a dinner, followed by the screening of the film *Gaza, We Are Coming*. [18]

Other such events took place on May 12, 13, 14, and 15 in the French cities of Villejuif, Bagneux, Laragne, and Veynes. In Toulouse, a cycling tour of the city was organized “to show the colors of the campaign.” The site Unbateaupourgaza.fr has posted an announcement advertising a large meeting to take place on June 18 at 2:00 pm at the old Marseille port, aimed at showing support for the French Ship to Gaza campaign, as “more and more pressure is exerted against the flotilla.” Politicians and members of the French delegations are to give speeches at the event.

Campaign Partners Include “More than 80 French NGOs”

Campaign spokeswoman Claude Léostic said that since last winter, the French Ship to Gaza campaign has enlisted the support of more than 80 French NGOs. These include pro-Palestinian associations; political parties, such as the French Communist Party (PCF) and the French Green Party; human rights organizations, such as MRAP, LDH, and Cimade; and several French

unions. Deputies who support the initiative include communist Patrick Braouezec (GDR), rightist Etienne Pinte (UMP), socialist François Loncle, and Noël Mamère (Green Party).

The website of the French Ship to Gaza campaign includes a list of NGOs participating in the venture (see Appendix I).[19] Additionally, 402 French elected representatives and politicians have declared their support for the campaign. 314 have signed a petition to this effect on the campaign website (see appendix I for list). A list of public figures, artists, and intellectuals who have signed the petition in support the campaign is also provided (see Appendix II).

Marcel Almero, General Confederation of Labour (CGT) secretary for the railway workers of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, said that the flotilla would involve "80 to 150 people embarking on a four to seven day trip," and added that "the CGT bears the heavy burden of finding a ship." This statement raised questions as to whether the Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français ("The French National Railway Company," SNCF) were also a sponsor of the French Ship to Gaza campaign.

Political Purpose of the Campaign

On June 7, 2011, the Communist French daily L'Humanité reported that €600,000 had been collected toward the campaign. The article quotes several campaign activists whose statements reflect a clear political stance in support of Palestinian "resistance." For instance, Clémentine Autain, of FASE (Fédération pour une alternative sociale et écologique – "The Federation for Social and Ecological Alternative"), said, "Resistance is an absolute necessity." Communist Party member Pierre Laurent was reported as saying, "If there is, indeed, an occupier and an occupied party, the French government must be forced to take a clear position in favor of a Palestinian state."

The May 11 announcement that appeared on the website of the French Ship to Gaza campaign compared the flotilla to the Egyptian revolution, in an apparent effort to render the venture the start of a Palestinian uprising against Israel: “Just as the Tahrir [Square] Egyptians refused to accept anything less than the toppling of the former regime, we will refuse anything less than the complete end of the illegal blockade on Gaza and of any other form of Israeli occupation of Palestine.”

Thomas Sommer-Houdeville, an activist for the International Civil Campaign for the Protection of the Palestinian People (CCIPPP), who has published a book on the first Gaza flotilla with a preface by pacifist Michel Warschawski,[20] was detained by Israel for three days after taking part in the first IHH-sponsored flotilla. In an interview on the French Islamic site Oumma.com about the Israeli interception of the flotilla craft, he said that this marked a “first political and symbolic victory... We understood that it was possible for a large civilian movement to force the international community to take action against Israel...”

Sommer-Houdeville said that, like any other ship, the French ship to Gaza would be inspected by the French authorities before setting sail, warning that the activists “will not let any Israeli on the ships” to check their cargo.[21] He clarified that a campaign delegation had met with French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner to request his government’s protection of the French citizens who were to participate in the flotilla. The latest figure of those French planning to sail is reported as around 30.[22]

Tunisia to Participate in French Ship to Gaza Campaign

Thomas Sommer-Houdeville said that the May 2011 flotilla is expected to stop in Tunisia “to pay tribute to the Tunisian revolution and to invite aboard a Tunisian delegation...”[23]

Similarly, the Tunis Afrique news agency reported that Tunisia would take part in the venture,

with a dozen Tunisians joining the French ship. Mouldi Jendoubi, deputy general secretary of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), said that the toppling of Arab dictatorships had provided hope regarding the liberation of the Palestinians. UGTT President Féthi Tlili declared that the martyrs of the first flotilla were unforgettable. Tunis Afrique also reported that FFII ships would be awarded as gifts to the Palestinian people upon their arrival in Gaza.[24]

Appendices

Included in this report are three appendices in French, as follows:

APPENDIX I: A list of NGOs participating in FFII. It includes, among others, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the French Communist Party (PCF).

APPENDIX II: A list of 314 French elected politicians who signed a petition in support of the campaign. It includes, among others, far left candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections Olivier Besancenot, Green candidate for the 2002 French presidential elections Noël Mamère, and European Parliament member, co-president of the French Left Party, and 2012 French presidential candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon.

APPENDIX III: A list of artists, scientists, religious figures, and other public figures who signed a petition in support of the campaign. It includes, among others, famous French actor Ariane Ascaride, film director Claire Denis, highly popular French actor Jamel Debbouze and his wife, the prominent journalist Mélissa Theuriau-Debbouze, in addition to the radical imam, Hassan Iquioussen.[25]

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APPENDIX I:

List of NGOs Participating in FFII

APPENDIX II:

List of 314 French Elected Politicians Who Signed Petition in Support of Campaign

Elus et responsables nationaux :

- 1) Patricia Adam, députée PS du Finistère
- 2) Dominique Adenot, président de l'ANECR, maire PCF de Champigny-sur-Marne
- 3) Marie-Hélène Amiable, députée PCF des Hauts-de-Seine et maire de Bagneux
- 4) Pouria Amirshahi, secrétaire national du PS à la coopération et aux droits de l'Homme
- 5) Kader Arif, député européen PS
- 6) Jean Arneguy, exécutif national des Alternatifs

<http://www.spp.nus.edu.sg/ajpa/pdf/issue3/Global%20governance%20and%20Rise%20of%20NGOs.pdf>

<http://cnpublications.net/2009/05/08/ngos-promote-anti-israel-activities/>

Addressing this very issue, Prof. Gerald Steinberg, president of NGO Monitor commented:

Many organizations use US tax-exempt status to oppose Israeli government policy, and some are among the leaders of campaigns to demonize and wage political war against Israel. ...the article should not have been restricted to reflect a narrow and tendentious political position.

NGOs with 501(c)(3) status that promote anti-Israel agendas, demonization, and “one state” policies that single out Israel include:

"For many intents and purposes, among the attackers of Israel, the NGOs are the most independent and least subject to external monitoring. Post- Cold War European politics emphasize the role of civil society, which means the nongovernment sector. NGOs are the primary representative of civil societies. They are often funded by government agencies and given tasks by governments such as providing humanitarian aid around the world. They do so very prominently in Gaza and the Judean-Samaritan regions of the West Bank.

"About one and half a billion Euro from the EU's budget, go annually to various NGOs for what are called 'civil society tasks.' In addition there are a significant number of private NGOs - not set up and run by the government - that get government funding. Many of these are active in Palestinian issues. For example, Christian Aid in the UK has a budget of over 80 million pounds sterling. Its policy and campaigns consistently blame Israel for Palestinian suffering, while barely mentioning Palestinian terrorism and corruption. The Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists is another wealthy, extreme anti-Israeli NGO. It has a very formal and legitimate-sounding name, but is essentially a propaganda organization." "Oxfam Belgium became notorious in 2003 after producing an anti-Israeli poster based on the theme of the blood libel. Pierre Galand, a Socialist senator in Belgium and leading member of the NGO network that propels the radical and pro-Palestinian agenda in Europe and the United Nations, gained public visibility while heading Oxfam Belgium for three decades.

"Galand is involved in many different political NGOs, and is the European chairman of the Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ECCP), a Brussels-based association of NGOs cooperating with the UN Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the

Palestinian People. He is also president of the Forum des Peuples NGO and the Belgo-Palestinian Association. Using these platforms to promote his political agenda, wrapped in the rhetoric of human rights, Galand continues to refer frequently to the Vietnam War, illustrating the political evolution of the NGO community.

"Save the Children is another powerful NGO active in the UK and Sweden, with branches elsewhere. This group accompanies its fundraising for programs to assist the Palestinians with a highly distorted history of the conflict, told entirely through an Arab lens."

12. Elite left leaning Jewry contributes to the enforcement of the anti-Israeli message (Chomsky)
13. U,S Jewry is not willing to take sides or counter the campaign as to not stand out
14. Requires no sacrifice, incurred no risk on the ground, incurs no risk of retribution from Israel, instantly recognized topic, immediate media attention, automatically supported by 100+ states in the United Nations, a perpetual cause justifying NGOs, Remote control – no feet on the ground, Free speech without retribution, the ideal left wing agenda, the perfect diversification, amplification of core message (QAIA), Academic discourse (York U). = THE CONVENIENT FALSHOOD
15. Israel is held to a higher standard because it is an advanced enlightened country. Others are viewed as totalitarians, under developed, primitive, internal matters (Tibet). The mirror syndrome.
16. Trade Unions – Why? (left, anti-establishment?)
17. Perception of violation of International Law is a myth but it sticks.
18. Solidarity movements

18. America versus Europe

The exception to this scenario would be a broadly mobilized campaign of pro-Palestinian activists. However, if financial regulation and healthcare reform, which impact every American citizen, cannot garner enough public support to thwart opposing lobbies, the Palestinian cause will not mobilize a broad national movement in the foreseeable future. To most Americans uninformed on the issue, it is seemingly too remote, too inconsequential, and too tangential to American interests, although the reality couldn't be further from the truth.

<http://www.israel-palestineneews.org/2010/12/analysis-pro-palestinian-ngo-or-pro.html>

19. Apartheid:

South African Watchdog Declares Israel an Apartheid State

The Netherlands Cuts Funding from Anti-Israel NGOs

by Soeren Kern

June 30, 2011 at 5:00 am

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The Dutch Foreign Ministry says it will implement "sweeping reforms" to prevent the transfer of millions of taxpayer euros from going to Dutch humanitarian aid organizations that fund anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) activities and non-government organizations (NGOs) that deny Israel's right to exist.

The move comes after Dutch Foreign Minister Uri Rosenthal discovered that previous governments had allocated at least €10 million (\$15 million) to Dutch and Palestinian groups promoting BDS activities against Israel.

Debate over the issue heated up on June 15, when the heads of major Dutch NGOs were asked to testify at a special hearing convened by the Dutch Parliament "to discuss the activity of NGOs in Israel and Palestine."

According to a transcript of the event obtained by the Jerusalem Post, lawmakers heard the managers of leading Dutch NGOs defend BDS activities against Israel, as well as advocacy for a "one-state solution" for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During questioning, the director of the Hague-based Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (Cordaid), René Grotenhuis, defended BDS as "legitimate" because "it is important that people in Palestine look for ways to resist occupation, and it is a nonviolent way to do so."

The director of the Utrecht-based Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Marinus Verweij, said he believes that "the two-state solution is not the basic assumption for peace."

At the hearing, it also emerged that Oxfam Novib, the Dutch affiliate of Oxfam International, provided funds to the Dutch NGO "Stop de Bezetting" (Stop the Occupation). The group's

founder, the anti-Israel activist Greta Duisenberg, is famous for her participation in demonstrations calling for Jews to be gassed. She has also accused the Israelis of blood libel and trafficking in human organs.

After the hearing ended, Johan Driesen of the Dutch Freedom Party said: "It was the first time I sat down to talk with the directors of the aid groups and I found what they said not only surprising, but disgusting. And I think the Dutch government should cut funding to organizations promoting this agenda."

The scale of the problem has been documented by the Jerusalem-based NGO Monitor in a new report titled "Indirect Dutch Government Funding: ICCO and Cordaid Support for Radical NGOs." The study shows that the Dutch government grants hundreds of millions of euros each year to major Dutch aid organizations such as ICCO and Cordaid, and that these groups then transfer the funds to support some of the most radical NGOs active in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As a result, Dutch taxpayers are unknowingly funding anti-Zionist groups that promote BDS activities against Israel, including: BADIL, Coalition of Women for Peace, Defence for Children International –Palestine Section (DCI-PS), Holy Land Trust, Sabeel, Stop the Wall, and the Ma'an Development Center.

Several of these groups are currently organizing a pro-Palestinian "consciousness-raising event" (here and here) to be held in Israel in early July. Part of a propaganda effort aimed at delegitimizing the state of Israel, activists from across Europe plan to arrive at the Ben Gurion

Airport in Tel Aviv on July 8, and from there move on to Judea and Samaria for a week of solidarity with the Palestinians. They have chosen July 8 because the following day marks the anniversary of the day (July 9, 2004) that the International Court of Justice in The Hague declared the Israel security barrier to be illegal.

According to another NGO Monitor report, Dutch taxpayers are also funding Electronic Intifada (EI), a website that publishes articles that compare Israelis to Nazis and promotes campaigns for anti-Israel BDS activities. EI is being financed by ICCO, the Dutch NGO, which receives 90 percent of its budget from the Dutch government.

As documented by NGO Monitor, EI plays a central role in the Durban strategy of political warfare against Israel, with frequent accusations of "apartheid," "ethnic cleansing" and "slow genocide." Articles on the EI website justify violence against civilians, call Gaza a "concentration camp" and label Palestinian participation in peace talks as "collaboration." EI also has extensive sections (here and here) supporting the BDS movement against Israel.

The ICCO website devotes an entire page to Electronic Intifada, praising its work as "an internationally recognized daily news source" that provides a counterweight to "positive reporting" about Israel. ICCO's website notes its three-year funding pledge for EI. During his testimony to parliament, ICCO director Verweij called EI "an important source of information" and said "in no way is the EI anti-Israel or anti-Semitic."

According to NGO Monitor, groups such as "ICCO and Cordaid do not systematically provide information regarding funding to local NGOs. Full lists of partners and projects are not publically available. There does not appear to be government oversight or evaluation of the indirect Dutch funding for NGOs, or of ICCO's and Cordaid's decision making."

In response to the revelations, Foreign Minister Rosenthal promised to "look into the matter personally. If it appears that the government-subsidized NGO ICCO does fund Electronic Intifada, it will have a serious problem with me."

Rosenthal has also told the Hague-based Center for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI) that he will intervene to block funding to groups promoting the BDS campaign. "A meticulous reappraisal of subsidy applicants remains necessary. Intervention will occur in cases of organizations acting against Dutch policy," Rosenthal said.

Dutch aid groups are now feeling the heat. The Dutch government has reduced the amount of financial support it provides to Cordaid this year by a whopping 42 percent, forcing the organization to fire one-third of its 400 workers. Oxfam-Novib has seen its budget slashed by one quarter, prompting it to close down its operations in Latin America and Central Asia. ICCO has lost more than one-third of its government subsidies in 2011.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Maxime Verhagen set out the Dutch government's new plans to strengthen political and economic relations with Israel. In a June 14 speech at the Technion in

Haifa, Verhagen also announced the inauguration of the Dutch-Israeli Cooperation Council by January 2012. Invest rather than divest will be the new mantra.

Other moves also signal a sea-change in Dutch-Israeli relations. In April, the Dutch government cracked down on the Dutch affiliate of the Turkish group IHH – the main organizer of a planned flotilla to the Gaza Strip – because of its involvement with Hamas. The Dutch Foreign Ministry "placed IHH Netherlands on the Dutch list of terrorist organizations and froze its assets, because IHH Netherlands regularly transferred funds to IHH Germany. This organization is banned in Germany because it has raised funds for Hamas. Hamas has been on the EU list of terrorist organizations since 2003."

In February, members of the Dutch parliament approved a parliamentary decision in support of Israel as a "democratic Jewish state." The pro-Israel vote resulted in 113 of the 150 parliament members affirming Israel's existence as a Jewish state and urging the European Union not to recognize a unilaterally declared Palestinian state.

JULY 7, 2011 15:11

BY SIMON PLOSKER

[Translate]

The accusation that Israel is an "apartheid state" is a deliberate misuse of language as part of a larger strategy to erode the Israeli state's legitimacy and deserves to be confronted. This is particularly true when it occurs in South Africa where the term "apartheid" carries extra emotional and historical weight.

Public opinion will turn sharply against Israel if people believe that it is an apartheid state, just as it did for the real apartheid regime in South Africa. The use of the term is a blatant assault on Israel's legitimacy by the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement by linking Israel to the reviled South African regime.

So the South African Jewish Board of Deputies was absolutely right to make a complaint to South Africa's Advertising Standards Authority concerning a radio commercial featuring the voice of Dave Randall, lead singer of the UK rock group Faithless:

Hi, I'm Dave Randall from Faithless. Twenty years ago I would not have played in apartheid South Africa; today I refuse to play in Israel. Be on the right side of history. Don't entertain apartheid. Join the international boycott of Israel. I support southafricanartistsagainstapartheid.com.

According to the ASA's ruling, the complainants took issue with the implied claim that Israel is an apartheid state, a factually incorrect and irresponsible comparison, and that the commercial contained a lie amounting to false propaganda. Furthermore, the call to boycott Israel is racist and hateful.

The ASA, however, ruled against the complainants. While some of the ruling was based upon technicalities, the ASA went further in order to justify its decision:

There have been numerous international missions that have observed the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories and have concluded that Israel is in contravention of International Law and is an apartheid state.

It further submitted reports by a UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories as well as a copy of the International Court of Justice concerning the wall in Jerusalem. Further to this it submitted copious academic studies, newspaper articles and cartoons concerning Israel. Affidavits from Professor Uri Davis and former Minister Ronnie Kasrils were also attached.

The expression of the view that Israel is an apartheid state in contravention of international law is based on a sound factual matrix and the connection between apartheid South Africa and Israel has been made numerous times in the South African media. The claim is therefore justified and arguably capable of substantiation through this range of documentary sources.

So who are the ASA's expert sources?

Could it be the same UN Special Rapporteur Richard Falk who only in the last few days posted an anti-Semitic cartoon (see below) on his blog before removing it after being exposed by UN Watch?

The International Court of Justice ruling on Israel's security barrier never referred to it as an "apartheid wall". This terminology was adopted by those seeking to delegitimize Israel. So why then, did the ASA also make this false linkage?

Aside from taking a lead from the media itself, did the ASA rely upon South African cartoonists such as Jonathan Shapiro a.k.a. Zapiro, whose crude anti-Israel cartoons have featured regularly on HonestReporting over the years, earning him a 2007 Dishonest Reporter Award?

What about Professor Uri Davis, an anti-Zionist so dedicated to attacking Israel that he is actually an elected member of Fatah's governing council?

And as for Ronnie Kasrils, his prominent political position has given him a platform to air his extremist views that Israel has no right to exist and his hatred of the Jewish state. Sadly, it appears that he was also able to influence the ASA.

The ASA's conclusion, not only that there is no case to answer for linking apartheid to Israel, but that Israel is actually an apartheid state, is nothing short of disgusting. That this has happened in South Africa, the victim of genuine apartheid is equally disturbing and demonstrates the extent to which this false comparison has become treated as mainstream opinion.

South Africa example. U.S touches nerves vis-a-vis Civil rights history and racism

March 04, 2009

Why Israel is an apartheid state

We are in Apartheid Week, and a good time to revisit the question. How similar is the regime in Israel to the defunct Apartheid regime? We can answer that question by pointing the many similarities, as many have done extensively. Stop The Wall has an excellent summary of all the aspects that justify the use of the term. Leila Farsakh has another excellent analysis of the

similarities and differences. See also Global Exchange, and the two parts Guardian's report by Chris McGreal, part I, and part II. Here's is Stop The Wall, on the very core of the analogy:

<http://jewssansfrontieres.blogspot.com/2009/03/why-israel-is-apartheid-state.html>

The Apartheid State Libel

[Translate]

The accusation that Israel is an “apartheid state” is a deliberate misuse of language as part of a larger strategy to erode the Israeli state’s legitimacy through what Professor Gerald Steinberg described as the Durban Strategy: just as South Africa’s apartheid regime had to be destroyed (and rightly so), Israel has to be destroyed too.

Here, in addition to HonestReporting’s own communiques dealing with this issue, we also present some further resources that put paid to this false analogy:

Addressing the Apartheid Slur

‘Why depict Israel as a chamber of horrors like no other in the world?’, Benjamin Pogrund, The Guardian, 8 Feb 2006

Myth – “Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians is similar to the treatment of blacks in apartheid South Africa”, Myths and Facts, Mitchell Bard

NGO “Apartheid State” Campaign: Deliberately Immoral or Intellectually Lazy?, NGO Monitor Middle East Apartheid Today, StandWithUs (PDF online booklet)

Franchising “Apartheid”: Why South Africans Push the Analogy, Rhoda Kadalie & Julia Bertelsmann, March 2008

The Campaign to Delegitimize Israel with the False Charge of Apartheid, Robbie Sabel, JCPA (PDF format)

Deconstructing the “Israel – Apartheid Equation”, Professor Gideon Shimoni, JCPA (Video)

Is Israel an apartheid state?, Maurice Ostroff

Israel Apartheid Week

Israel Apartheid Week Comes to Town, HonestReporting, 4 March 2010

Israel Apartheid Week, CAMERA

20. The Fetish

Mahmoud Darwish once said that Palestinians are famous because they are Israel’s enemy. That the interest in Palestinians stems from the interest in Jews, and Jews were seen as the victim until they began victimizing Palestinians. As Darwish has said: ”There’s more inspiration and humanity in defeat than there is in victory...In defeat there is also deep romanticism.”

This deep romanticism has taken over. In the continued bloody conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, there is a dramatically romanticized battle over the defeated. And every time one side is victimized, there is an opportunity to glorify that victimhood.

<http://972mag.com/the-israel-fetish/12047/>

First, Israel singles itself out and presents itself as special. It sees itself as a state based, as its Declaration of Independence declares, ‘on the precepts of liberty, justice and peace taught by the Hebrew Prophets’. In the words of Isaiah, ‘We are a light unto the nations.’ Israel is constantly lauded as the ‘only democratic country in the Middle East’ with the ‘most moral army in the world’. It invites evaluation in terms of its own founding principles and it constantly reaffirms its commitment to these values. It claims to be defending western values and presents itself as an outpost of these values. What better criteria to judge it by?

Second, Israel is special in that it controls a number of religious sites that are of special significance to three world religions. They have been contested over millennia. In recognition of this reality, UN resolution 181 of 1947, on which Israel’s legitimacy is based, called for the creation of a special international zone, encompassing the Jerusalem metropolitan area. Since then, religious concerns and motivations have deepened worldwide, and there are hundreds of millions of Christians and Muslims, in particular, who have grave concerns about their holy places. You don’t need to be religious yourself to appreciate the profound part that religious conflict has played historically and continues to play in the modern world.

Third, the United States clearly considers Israel special in that it has been far and away the largest single recipient of US foreign aid since the 1960s. From 1949 to 1996, the total of US aid to all of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean combined was \$62.5 billion – almost exactly the same amount given to Israel alone in the same period. Total aid to Israel was approximately one third of the US foreign aid budget until the Iraq invasion, and still remains at a very high level. The extent to which the US has singled out Israel as its

most loyal ally in the region is indeed extraordinary. Insofar as one believes that the US plays a dominant role in the international system, its choice of countries to support is of legitimate concern. When the US, often standing alone, vetoes resolution after resolution concerning Israel in the UN security council, Israel is singled out. Israel is singled out by the US, too, as the only country in the Middle East that it permits to possess nuclear weapons with no demands being made for their control.

Fourth, Israel singles itself out with regard to Jews everywhere. It presents itself as their real home, as opposed to the multiplicity of countries in which Jews have settled and integrated. Integration can never be permanently successful, the argument goes; anti-semitism is ever-present and persecution is always just around the corner. In that sense, there is always an implicit accusation of disloyalty made against Jews who do not give Israel their wholehearted support. And Jews who speak out against the actions of the Israeli government are often accused of ‘self-hatred’ or worse from within the Jewish community.

What so incenses many – and is felt so strongly by Jewish critics of Israel – is its claim to occupy the high moral ground. ‘Nobody should preach to us ethics, nobody,’ declaimed former prime minister Menachem Begin while engaged in daily prima facie violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention: administrative detention, torture, confiscation of land, collective punishment, house demolitions and so on.

<http://www.redpepper.org.uk/Singling-out-Israel/>

[Goldstone](#)

Goldstone explained that war crimes law came out of World War 2 and "the shadow of the Holocaust." And then for the 40 years of the Cold War, these laws slept. If only the law against apartheid had been enforced, Goldstone lamented, apartheid might have ended in South Africa 10 years before it did. But it was not until the last 15 years that these laws have been given life. The International Criminal Court was formed. There have been several prosecutions—lately involving four African nations.

The issue now is whether powerful nations are going to allow themselves to be subject to these laws so that the system will spread to the nations "outside the tent." If the powerful demonstrate their willingness to apply these laws to the powerful, the system will gain wide credibility, and we will have a better and more peaceful world.

The first turning point in the application of international law was the war crimes tribunal in the former Yugoslavia in 1993. Europe and the United States recognized that without justice there would be no peace. Let me repeat: No justice, no peace. And so the United States insisted on having a tribunal. Goldstone was made the prosecutor. When he first flew out to Belgrade, the Justice Minister said angrily to Goldstone that the tribunal was an American device. Why should Serbia be the first when Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein, and others all over the Third World went scot free with far more blood on their hands?

Goldstone didn't have much of an answer. He said that the Serbian minister would be correct if this was the last and only prosecution.

But it wasn't. A year later the Rwanda genocide was also investigated by order of the Security Council.

Still, this issue of unequal application nags. As Goldstone pointed out under questioning, there is gross unfairness in the application of international law. The Balkan war crimes were investigated because they were European, and the media brought back horrifying pictures of genocide. But this year the Sri Lankan government killed 20-30,000 Tamils and the media paid little attention, and the Human Rights Council of the UN has ignored that case. Regrettably in Goldstone's view.

And yes: Gaza got a lot of media attention, and the result was the Goldstone report.

Today the Israelis have said that they want to change war crimes law to deal with the reality of terrorists operating amid a civilian population. That's inappropriate. The laws still apply. If there are a few terrorists on the roof of a hospital shooting at you, you can't bomb the hospital—what I took to be a direct reference to the missile attacks on Al-Quds Hospital when there were hundreds of victims of Israeli violence inside it.

The Israelis have indicated that they are going to have a military investigation of the Gaza war. If that process is not open and credible and genuine, it is pointless, Goldstone said. Or if the aim of the process is the "rebuttal" of the report, an obvious reference to this NY Times story, that does nothing to make the allegations go away. They need to be investigated.

Back to inequality, the core value in Goldstone's universe. "In matters of international affairs, inequality is the rule," he said. Trade laws are unequal. The nuclear weapons club is unequal. The Security Council veto is unequal. There is "one law for powerful nations and a different law for the weak."

The mildmannered judge with the deep voice challenged his audience. You know about equality in this country because of the Civil War and the civil rights movement, remarkable events. Now look what role inequality plays out in war times. Inequality leads to assaults on human dignity; and the denial of human dignity leads to murder, killings, and rape.

"All citizens quite rightly demand to be treated equally," Goldstone said. "The greater the differentiation, the greater is the invasion of dignity."

The message of a South African who helped bring down apartheid, directed at Israel, which has denied basic rights to Palestinians for 62 years.

The other night I got down a lot of the Q-and-A, and Goldstone's remarkable admission that Israel was being treated "unfairly." He said, "Israel isn't the only nation that's being treated disproportionately and, let me say, in my view, unfairly... It's a matter of politics, not of morality. The United Nations has a dominant group of the non-aligned movement, and the issue of the Palestinians has assumed a tremendous importance to them, and they're using it."

This group used to harp on the South Africans, he said. There were as many or more UN resolutions passed against South Africa as Israel.

But he heard this very same grievance, we are being singled out, from the Serbian foreign minister. And yes it is unfair. But does that mean that we don't prosecute war crimes by powerful countries? Here Goldstone made the analogy to 9 murderers getting away in New Haven, and one being prosecuted. The one defendant can rightly claim that the law is unfair. But we don't release him on that basis.

And he threw in this idea also: If Israel considers itself a democratic nation, then it must not complain if it is held to a higher standard. Later, in the reception room, I heard him say to an Israeli who was angry about being singled out, Look, if a priest hurts someone, we go after the case because we hold the priest to a higher standard. I don't have the quote right; but that was the judge's point. It left the Israeli answerless.

I hope I've conveyed the sequence of the judge's moral reasoning. But let me say how I heard his speech: The world is a terribly unequal place. He saw this in South Africa. People were denied their dignity. The world took too long to address the problem. The world is still a very unequal place; and today a symbol of that inequality that justifiably upsets the Third World is Palestine. And so Israel, that self-described "outpost" of western democracy, is arraigned in world opinion for crimes that pass relatively unnoticed in other parts of the world, because of this symbolism.

No, this is not a perfect world. But today this is where the pursuit of justice carries us. And powerful nations must demonstrate their commitment to justice by responding fairly. The Goldstone Report.

It may not be a perfect world, but it was a perfect performance. Goldstone has thought through all these points for years. His experience has fitted him for this moment better than anyone else we might imagine, and I thought if he did not exist we would have to invent him: A Jew raised in South Africa, who fought apartheid there and then went to Europe to apply laws generated in the Holocaust to war criminals there, and then to Africa, to extend the same standards. And now he is knocking on our door.

<http://mondoweiss.net/2010/01/goldstone-explains-why-israel-is-being-singled-out-after-south-africa-and-serbia.html>

By Adam Keller, The Other Israel – 1 Aug 2010

http://toibillboard.info/Is_Israel_singled_out.htm

Googling for “Israel singled out” + “anti-Semitism” would immediately get you many thousands of results. All over the world, supporters of the policies enacted by the government of Israel are busily churning out article after article, repeating with minor variations the same message – Israel is being unfairly singled out, harshly criticized for the kind of acts which others are allowed to get away with, and the motive is anti-Semitism.

In a way, this is a second line of defense. There had been a time when this kind of people took the line that Israel can do no wrong. That it is an utterly wonderful place, little short of an utopia,

a vibrant democracy and the only one in the Middle East, the home of tireless and dauntless pioneers who made the desert bloom. But this way of looking at things had become increasingly difficult to sustain. There has been too much unsavory TV footage of Israeli soldiers broadcast into every home around the globe, too many nasty revelations, quite a few of them by Israel's own dissident citizens...

It is far easier to freely admit that Israel is not blameless, that some of its actions and policies do deserve criticism – but as a matter of fact, “everybody does it”. Many others all over the world also violate human rights and/or international law, others discriminate against ethnic or religious minorities, others launch military offensives which claim the lives of innocent civilians.

Muslims, it is quite true, have been killed by other Muslims as well as by Israel. So, why pick on Israel, specifically? Why, if not out of anti-Semitism? “Anti-Israelism is the New anti-Semitism”, period.

True, as far as formal international diplomacy is concerned, it is easy to show that – if Israel is singled out at all – it is singled out for a rather lenient treatment.

Should Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir land in any European country, he is bound to be arrested by the local police and extradited to the International Criminal Court in the Hague to stand trial for the misdeeds of his army, and of militias backed by his army; in Darfur. Binyamin Netanyahu need fear nothing of the kind. When private groups attempted to start criminal proceedings against Israeli civil or military officials, the governments of Belgium and Spain enacted legislation to make this impossible, and the British government is about to follow suit.

Iran is facing increasingly tough international sanctions – and increasingly vocal threats of war – for its attempts to produce a nuclear bomb. Israel faced nothing of the kind for its own highly successful enterprise in the same field. (Instead, the Government of Germany provided to Israel, free of charge, several submarines so modified that nuclear-tipped missiles could be installed on them and create a “second-strike capacity”).

Many countries violate human rights in one way or another – but few have the consistent backing a Permanent Member in the UN Security Council. Most proposed resolutions condemning acts by the government of Israel get aborted by the US veto. And even when a resolution gets past this barrier (invariably, after having been considerably watered down), the Government of Israel can (and often does) ignore it brazenly and with complete impunity. Non-compliance by Israel would never entail a second Security Council Resolution, and a third and fourth and a fifth each tougher than its predecessor – such as heralded the end of Saddam Hussein’s regime, and eventually the end of Saddam’s own life.

Still, even if baseless when directed at diplomats and ministers and heads of state, the charge of “singling out Israel” cannot be dismissed out of hand when much of civil society in the world today is concerned. It is a fact – which can be easily proven statistically – that there are intellectuals and university lecturers who write more articles condemning Israeli actions than they write against comparable actions in other countries. It is an easily proven fact that a considerable number of activist groups, and student organizations, and militant trade unionists, and a host of others, are busy passing sharply worded resolutions, and holding protests, and

sometimes calling for a boycott against Israel – while falling short of acting as vehemently against each and every culpable country around the world.

For the likes of Alan Dershowitz and Nathan Sharansky and Ben Dror Yemini, this is a clear and sufficient proof of anti-Semitism. The proper course for a genuine upholder and defender of Human Rights should be to compile a full and comprehensive list of all violators (Amnesty International used to be a fairly reliable source for such, except that nowadays Amnesty has also become stained with “singling out Israel”). Then, a rota of pickets should be set up in front of all relevant embassies, with the Israeli one visited for three-quarters of an hour every third Monday, and anyone overstaying this quota by more than ten minutes would stand condemned as an anti-Semite (or a self-hater if a Jew oneself, or a traitor if an Israeli citizen, or all three combined...)

In practice, of course, the government of Israel and its adherents are well aware that public campaigns, to achieve any result, must be focused on a specific issue – which necessarily means that somebody is “singled out”. To cite one prominent example, the eminently successful worldwide campaign of the 1970’s and 1980’s, conducted under the slogan “Let My People Go!” was based on singling out the Soviet Union as against all other countries violating the Human Rights of their citizens; and on singling out Soviet Jews as against all other oppressed Soviet citizens; and singling out Soviet Jews wanting to leave their country as against those wanting to stay and have their rights respected at home; and on singling out Soviet Jews wanting to go to Israel as against those wanting to go somewhere else (the latter were the target of a particularly vituperative campaign...).

The result of all these forms of singling out is that Russian has become Israel's de-facto second language, with Russian-speakers comprising some 20% of its population (a large part of them not being recognized as Jews, and not being able to get married in Israel – but this is a subject for another article...) An unfocused general campaign, against all forms of injustice everywhere, singling out nobody, would hardly have achieved this (or any) result.

Still, granted that focusing on a specific issue is the indispensable precondition of a successful campaign, the reason why it is particularly Israel which has become the target of such a campaign still needs to be looked at. It is my contention that the singling out of Israel for a special consideration and a treatment different from that given to anybody else is nothing new, nor has it always been directed against Israel. In fact, it has been actively initiated and promoted by Israel itself, or rather by the Zionist movement at the very inception of the project which would culminate in the creation of Israel. Zionism very specifically and explicitly asked the international community to be singled out for a very specific and very unique privilege, which was never ever granted to any other group anywhere else. Namely, the right to claim a land as its “National Home” on the basis of ancestors having lived in this land 2000 years ago.

In 1897, when Theodore Herzl and his fellows held the First Zionist Congress in Basle, national movements have already been a regular feature on the international agenda for about a century. Zionism has taken up many of the tenets and practices of European Nationalism – in particular East European Nationalism.

After all, many of the founders of Zionism had started out as patriotic Poles, or patriotic Magyars, or patriotic Germans, people who had wanted nothing more than to be accepted as equal citizens of the country where they lived – and who, faced with a painful and humiliating anti-Semitic rejection, recoiled into forming a national movement of their own. And naturally enough, it was modelled on the kind of nationalism they had known. And still, there was a major difference.

It is all too common for national movements to gain widespread international sympathy for the plight of the oppressed ethnic group they seek to represent – and once gaining state power, to engage in discrimination and oppression of other groups. And it is common for national movements to make sweeping territorial claims, often based on the narrative (historical or mythical) of some ancient warrior king. The Biblical King David, whom ardent Zionists cited, was far from the first such.

Still, the essential aim of all other national movements I ever heard of was to get control of a core area where their own ethnic group constituted the whole of the population, or at least an overwhelming majority. None but Zionists had ever put forward a claim for a country in whose entirety its ethnic group constituted at the time less than ten percent of the population, making implementation of its aspirations dependent upon a radical change of the status quo in that country.

Many factors converged to make possible the Zionist success in getting such a claim endorsed by the international community – utterly unique, and sharply singling out Zionism and Israel from everybody else in the world.

There was a widespread, genuine sympathy for the persecuted Jews and horror at the Russian pogroms in the early days of Zionism, later dwarfed by the Nazi genocide. But side by side with this was the frankly racist wish to “get rid” of what were often portrayed as “the flood of East European Jewish hordes” – and Zionism seemed to offer a convenient way of getting these “hordes” as far away as possible, out of sight and out of mind for respectable Europeans.

Even so, it would have likely been impossible but for the fact that the land claimed by Zionists was the well-known “Holy Land”, a land whose Biblical past was widely seen as far more important than its present. For centuries, Christian pilgrims had gone there to look for the shades of the past, “to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ”. Often, they regarded present-day inhabitants of the land as an unimportant appendage, shadows fleeting through the ruins of past glory.

It's true Israel is singled out – here's why

Guest Post, November 14th 2011, 5:38 pm

This is a guest post by Matt Hill

I was worried my last piece at this site – ‘We need to have a serious talk about Israel-Palestine’ - was too blandly agreeable to provoke much comment. I needn’t have worried: my appeal for a reasonable debate about the subject led to a gratifying deluge of criticism.

A few posters found my words overly saccharine, perhaps even cynical (Discredited Andrew: ‘I hate to read this stuff more than anything else’). I can sympathise with that: claiming the middle ground can be a useful rhetorical means of portraying your opponents as extreme. I hope I was clear that I don’t value neutrality in and of itself. On controversial topics, such as whether the Holocaust actually happened I try to steer a middle course (following Bill Hicks) – between those who consider Holocaust deniers annoying idiots and those who consider them evil fucks.

Indeed, more than a few posters doubted my claims of moderation (Peter: ‘Hill as an honest broker? What a joke.’). That’s fair enough too: what’s moderate from one point of view may seem extreme from another, and I’ve made no secret of my sympathies for pro-Palestinians (while holding several opinions they would consider anathema). But while I have all kinds of strong views, a few of which I mentioned in the article, I hope I have enough common ground with most Harry’s Place readers occasionally to play the role of, as it were, an emissary from planet Palestine.

A few posters even seemed to like what I wrote. But the vast majority of dissent was summed up by Ohad: ‘Palestinian intransigence is what makes the conflict unresolvable for now’. I admit I was surprised by the vehemence and uniformity of those who disputed my claim that the

Palestinians are eager for peace. I hope to have the chance to address that issue soon – after I’ve done some homework.

At times it felt, rather dauntingly, like I was being asked to defend every single claim made by supporters of the Palestinians. For now I want to answer just one criticism that appeared several times beneath my piece. Nick (in South Africa) drew attention – with a rather felicitous turn of phrase – to the ‘gimlet-eyed obsession’ the issue commands in the Muslim world. Lamia complained that too many ‘British liberals’ feel they have a right to ‘weigh in’ on either side of an issue that has little to do with them. These, and other comments like them, are versions of the common complaint that Israel is singled out for special criticism compared with other nations. The argument often comes with the implicit or explicit suggestion that this is due obsessive prejudice against Israel – or outright anti-semitism.

First, let’s acknowledge one obvious fact: Israel is singled out for special criticism, way out of proportion to its misdeeds. Take, for instance, the monstrous regime that hijacked the Iranian Revolution of 1979. If its campaign of Cromwellian joylessness is sometimes darkly humorous (for many years its chief cinema censor was – true story – blind), its frequent bouts of murder, torture and persecution of women are anything but. Compared to Iran, Israel is an oasis of democracy, freedom and culture. Let’s agree it’s a different story beyond the 1967 lines, even if we won’t agree whether that’s due to security needs or senseless oppression. We can also agree there are far worse countries in the Middle East that aren’t subjected to a fraction of Israel’s scrutiny. Neither is Israel’s situation unique: Kashmir has been fought over since 1947; Turkey has occupied northern Cyprus since 1974; the 1982 Hama massacre in Syria claimed more

victims than Deir Yassin, Qibya, Sabra and Shatila and Operation Cast Lead combined. But how many western liberals know much about any of these facts?

Some anti-semites undoubtedly use criticism of Israel as an outlet for their racism, and many supporters of the Palestinians let their anger at Israel blur into hatred of Jews. I wish more pro-Palestinians would make it clear such views have no place in their movement. But I can't convince myself that anti-semitism is one of the main reasons Israel is singled out for special criticism. Here are some reasons why.

First, Israel singles itself out for special evaluation. It is the 'only democracy in the Middle East', with the 'most moral army in the world'. Its idealistic founders hoped it would be, not just superior to its neighbours, but a 'light unto the nations'. It claims to be at the front line of the 'clash of civilisations', a western outpost in a sea of barbarism and tyranny. If you claim to belong to the world's respectable states, you must expect to be judged by their standards.

Second, precisely because Israel is a democracy that's concerned about its global image, there's a sense it's susceptible to world opinion. We can argue all day about the despicable treatment of women in Saudi Arabia, but until we give up our addiction to their oil, they won't take the blindest notice. Criticism of Israel, meanwhile, might just have an effect.

Third, many observers in the west – especially in the UK and US – have special reasons to take an interest in Israel. Both countries have many citizens with links to the region (my parents live in Israel, for instance). The British mandatory government played a special part in fomenting the

Israel-Palestine conflict. And the US provides more financial, strategic and diplomatic support to Israel than any other country (Egypt, following close behind, is largely paid to play nice with Israel). It's similar elsewhere: a high percentage of French citizens are Muslims, making Palestine an electoral issue in that country; and Germany's reasons for taking an interest in the conflict are obvious.

Third, Israel controls some of the world's most famous religious sites – from the Temple Mount or Haram-al-Sharif in Jerusalem to the remains at Qumran - and believers all over the world have a passionate interest in what happens to them. (There are also a depressingly large number of people, primarily in the US, who believe supporting Israel is somehow a way of ushering in the battle of Armageddon – supposedly a good thing. The less said about them, the better.)

Fourth, by its very nature Israel will always have some of the most eloquent and effective critics in the world: I mean, of course, dissenting Jewish intellectuals. If there is a Kashmiri Noam Chomsky, or a Cypriot Avi Shlaim or David Grossman, I'm afraid I don't know of them.

Indeed, there are several ways in which Israel's special treatment proves beneficial. It is the only country in the world the US allows to keep nuclear weapons without pressure to sign up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The US almost automatically vetoes any resolutions against it at the UN Security Council. It is the only country, so far as I know, that refuses to define its own borders (a sine qua non, normally, for statehood).

Ultimately, if I believed that, when people complained about Israel's special treatment, they meant that they wished people cared as much about other oppressed peoples as they do about the Palestinians, I'd sympathise. But I can't help thinking that some of them mean: if only people cared as little about the Palestinians as they do about the Cypriots or Kashmiris.

Such was the mind-set of Christian Zionism which preceded and heralded the Jewish one. A mind-set which made plausible for this one specific country an idea that would have seemed the strangest of lunacies anywhere else: to turn the clock back two or three thousand years and restore the land to remote descendants of those who lived in it in past millennia. And in turn, the idea became plausible to mainstream opinion makers and decision makers in key Western countries, not all of them devout Christians themselves.

For all that, the Zionist movement never gained an unconditional international endorsement for its demands and aspirations. Throughout his career, Herzl dreamed of gaining for Zionism an International Charter. By considerable effort and quite a bit of luck, later Zionists got two of them – both of crucial importance, but neither providing an unrestricted license to dispossess and displace the people which Zionism found in the land, who would become known as Palestinians.

In the 1917 Balfour Declaration, His Majesty's Government declared that it would "view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" – but "it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine". Thirty years later, the United Nations at last explicitly authorized fulfillment of the Zionist dream by the creation of a Jewish State in

Palestine – but with an Arab State at its side. In effect, Zionism can be seen to have signed a contract with the international community. Fair treatment of the Palestinians and respect of (at least some of) their rights as the clear condition for the recognition of its own national aspirations.

It took very long before Zionism would be seriously accused of defaulting on its part of this deal. In 1948, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the young Israel was internationally applauded as a plucky David defeating a vicious Goliath. It is hardly remembered that at this time Zionism and the young Israel had been a progressive cause, supported worldwide by much the same kind of people who would nowadays support the Palestinians, and for much the same reason – sympathy for the underdog.

In 1949 Israel was accepted as a member of the UN without being asked to give up the territory which was not assigned to it in the partition plan, and the Palestinian refugees were regarded mainly as a humanitarian problem to be given a humanitarian solution. The Israeli position – that what the Palestinians lost in 1948 was forfeited due to their intransigence – was generally accepted on the international arena (and is in fact still so accepted). It was only after 1967 that Israel started to be seen as a Goliath rather than a David.

It is now 2010 – 113 years after the First Zionist Congress, 93 years after the Balfour Declaration, 63 years after the UN Partition Resolution, 43 years after the beginning of the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It would be very difficult for even the most brilliant lawyer to seriously assert that the leaders of Zionism and of the State of Israel had kept their part

of the deal made with the International Community. By every possible standard, the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities which existed in Palestine in 1917 have been grossly prejudiced, over and over again. The Jewish State in Palestine was created in 1948 and greatly overstepped the boundaries set for it by the United Nations, while the Arab State in Palestine is yet to come.

And thus, to go back to the question posed at the beginning of this article: Is Israel singled out, by international civil society if not (yet?) by international diplomacy? Yes, it is. Is it unfair and biased? To my view, it is not. It is but a quite fair demand upon Israel to pay at least part of a long-overdue debt, and keep their part of a contract which Israel's Founding Fathers solemnly signed.

Yes, there are many countries whose conduct fully deserves condemnation – but none was given such a unique privilege as the Zionist movement was given, none had made such a binding obligation in return for being given such a privilege, and which it failed to keep.

In recent years the State of Israel has been vociferously criticized for planting settlers in the occupied territories – which it can be argued that China is also doing in Tibet; and for killing civilians in the bombings of Gaza, which it can shown that Americans and Europeans are also doing in Iraq and Afghanistan; and for lethally raiding the Gaza Aid Flotilla, for which some apologists also tried to find various precedents and parallels. Yet Israel is singled out because it, and it alone, is in obvious default of a fundamental obligation, an obligation which was the condition for Israel coming into being in the first place.

The plan which is now on offer – and had been on offer for quite a long time – gives Israel the possibility of settling this debt on quite comfortable conditions. The West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are to be given up and become the State of Palestine, are after all little more than 22% of what was Mandatory Palestine, and by giving them up Israel would be intentionally recognized as having at last discharged its debt and kept its obligation. But continued persistence in refusing to pay the debt – continuing it until the international balance of power has fundamentally changed, some years or decades from now – might put Israel at the risk of what happens to those who fail to pay their debts: going into liquidation.

Tagged as: diplomacy, history, international-law, US-Israel, Zionism

Posted August 19, 2010 at 1:10 pm

Q: Why is Israel singled out for punishment? What about China's repression of Tibet, or Russia in Chechnya, Darfur, or other abuses? Surely this singling out of Israel is because of hatred of Jews?

◆ This is an appeal to fairness that even a child would recognise, in fact especially a child: it's what every child says to deflect attention from an irrefutable mis-deed it has been caught out committing. And as any parent knows, it's completely beside the point, which is all about establishing Right and Wrong. So the question should be, are the demands of the BDS movement a valid reason for taking such action? But this is a question that Israel will neither ask nor

answer: if it did, that would shift the whole matter into issues of rights and wrongs, away from Israel's stock line of defence that this is all SO unfair.

◆ Any child, too, knows that the cry of "that's not fair" does tend to turn the spotlight on the claimant. Has Israel been fair to its minority Palestinian population? Does it uphold legal rights to land and property fairly? Have its 24,000 (and counting) house demolitions been fair? Did all the 70,000+ Palestinians prisoners, including children, get a fair (or even an unfair) trial? Was it fair to kill 1400 people in Gaza because 14 Israelis had died? Is it fair for its police and army to support settlers who steal people's houses, stone their children, burn their crops and take their water? Etc etc

◆ Yes, Israel has indeed been singled out: for help, money, weapons, for overlooking of its contraventions of international law and UN resolutions, singled out to expect and get a US veto of any criticism or demands of it brought to the Security Council, singled out for a wink and nod to its unauthorised nuclear weapons.

◆ Singling out is what campaigning is about. Maybe if there were as many Tibetans and Chechens living in Europe and America as there are Palestinians and critical Jews, and if they had also issued a boycott call (which they have not) their campaigns would be just as prominent. It doesn't mean we don't care about the other wrongs, just that we have to make a choice, and for one reason or another this one is closer to our hearts.

◆ Perhaps we also feel an urgency, watching Israel relentlessly put into place every piece of its plan right under our noses.

◆ In fact BDS is not so much a campaign as a counter-campaign, finally seeking to challenge and reverse Israel's 60-year campaign for unconditional approval, indeed applause, for all its deeds, right or wrong. Every time we hear the twisted facts and upside down version of events, every time we see on our news media the absurd assumption that Israel is the vulnerable victim, we feel driven to get up and insist on the truth. Much of the energy of the Palestine solidarity campaign is generated, like the force of a ricochet, by Israel itself, as was evident in the own-goal of its handling of the Mavi Marmara event.

◆ Israel has grown fat and successful and powerful on foreign support, arms, tax-free dollars and preferential trade, and then used this power to subdue the Palestinian claims. It's hardly unfair to place some conditions on this relationship: we will buy your goods, supply your bulldozers, sing at your gigs - when you end the occupation, let the refugees return and become a state with equal rights for all its citizens.

◆ They say what goes around comes around. Israel was never content to keep its head down and quietly enjoy its ill-gotten gains, but stepped out to trumpet its "unbreakable friendships" with powerful world players. So those of us living in those countries (US, Britain, Europe) feel especially complicit. Our taxes have financed Israel's wars. Our media and our leaders echo Israel's myths. Jews among us probably went for a subsidised holiday in Israel as youngsters. We feel responsible: we cannot sit on the fence, or put our energies into other campaigns.

◆ Speaking of boycotts and sanctions, Israel singled itself out when all the world stood against Apartheid era South Africa and Israel defied the UN arms embargo to do business with a regime whose leaders had form for supporting Nazi Germany.

◆ Israel singles itself out by insisting that anyone not for it is against it, and that we must all buy its message. Little wonder we refuse to buy its goods.

◆ Double standard? Yes indeed. Zionists may organise worldwide to disseminate anti-Arab lies and stereotypes, but once anyone organises in support of the people they have maligned and expelled, they cry foul. If Hamas say they want to kill Jews (if indeed they did) that's genocide. But when talk of killing "Arabs" is utterly commonplace in Israel, in its grotesque jokes, graffiti, T-shirts and cartoons, that's just laughed off as bad taste.

◆ BDS is not punishment, it's non-violent political pressure. Without such pressure there is little doubt that the programme of Israel's fascist parties, which openly advocate ethnic cleansing on a massive scale, could be put into practice.

◆ After it was singled out to be given a country in 1948, Israel reneged on all the conditions placed on it. That the international community agreed a national homeland in an already inhabited territory for an ethnic group that mostly didn't even live there was an extraordinary "singling out" of Zionism for special favour. But, as Adam Keller points out in *The Other Israel*, neither Balfour nor the UN in 1948 provided an unrestricted license to dispossess and displace

the people that Zionism found in the land, who would become known as Palestinians. Balfour declared that it be clearly understood “that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”. And when the UN resolved to permit a Jewish state, it was as part of a deal that was to give Palestine a similar amount of land (albeit for many more people).

As Keller asks, could even the most brilliant lawyer “seriously assert that the leaders of Zionism and of the State of Israel had kept their part of the deal made with the International Community?” And he concludes that far from being unfair and biased, the BDS campaign “is but a quite fair demand upon Israel to pay at least part of a long-overdue debt, and keep their part of a contract which Israel’s Founding Fathers solemnly signed. ... Israel is singled out because it, and it alone, is in obvious default of a fundamental obligation, an obligation which was the condition for Israel coming into being in the first place.”

<http://onedemocracy.co.uk/faq/q-why-is-israel-singled-out/>

This is reaching the level of self-caricature. No sooner does Iran get a seat on the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women than it uses it with tragicomic predictability:

[The] U.N. policy-making body dedicated to “gender equality and the advancement of women” adopted a resolution accusing Israel of holding back the advancement of Palestinian women, but it took no action on the emergency in Libya or the legally enshrined discrimination faced by women in Iran. The only country-specific resolution passed by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at its recent session in New York was one condemning Israel over the Palestinian issue.

Iranian prison guards rape female dissidents before executing them, lest their victims go to heaven as virgins. Iranian men get to avail themselves of temporary marriages, de facto legalizing the institutionalized slavery and rape of prepubescent girls. Iranian women are consigned to the backs of buses, have to shroud their bodies from head to toe, and can't wear anything bright or shiny.

That's just what's happening in a single CSW member state.

The greater hypocrisy is what was ignored globally so that the Commission could spend time demonizing Israel. It's not necessary to belabor the second-class status that women are consigned to throughout the Muslim world, except maybe to note two things that diverge from the quotidian misery.

First, it's worth noting what's happening to women in ostensibly egalitarian Turkey, and for that Michael Rubin's recent post is mandatory reading. Second, not calling out what's happening to women in Egypt right now is simply unconscionable. A body charged with promoting women's freedom can't ignore when freedom in general comes at the expense of women's physical security, even if horrific gender apartheid has been woven into Egyptian society for centuries. Nina Burleigh is instructive on that last part.

Turkey and Egypt have horrific records on women's rights. Iran, a CSW member state, is worse than both of them. And yet again Israel got singled out for condemnation, because it's the UN so why not?

<http://www.commentarymagazine.com/2011/03/20/un-womens-rights-commission-singles-out-israel-for-condemnation-ignores-iran/>

What is the real motivation behind singling out Israel for boycott? Meir Perez, University of Johannesburg

June 17, 2011 — David Hirsh

This piece is written in a personal capacity by Meir Perez, a lecturer at UJ

The argument made by the proponents of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement as to why only Israeli academics deserve to be singled out for boycott is that the Palestinians themselves have called for such a boycott. This, they claim, is not the case with oppressed people's from other countries such as China (Tibet is illegally occupied by China) and Belarus (the country with the worst human rights record in Europe), both of which still have formal research agreements with the University of Johannesburg. This argument is morally questionable since surely there is a higher moral imperative to stand up for those who don't even have a voice to call for a boycott of their oppressors? What would happen to a Chinese academic who called for a boycott of his or her own institution? Surely the voiceless should be championed at least as vivaciously as those who already have so much international fiscal and

political support (compare the number of condemnation issued by the UN against Israel to any other country).

The motivation behind the Palestinian call to boycott Israeli academics needs to be assessed. According to a recent study done by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education, the Palestinian education system is amongst the most intolerant systems in the Middle East. Palestinians have received decades of anti-Semitic education, being taught to hate Jews, glorify suicide bombers and aspire to be ‘martyrs’. The democratically elected rulers of Gaza, Hamas, in their charter, explicitly call for the murder of the Jews and act on that call by firing missiles into southern Israel. The true obstacle for peace in the Middle East is the incitement to hate, so rampant in the Palestinian territories. It is this intolerance towards Jews which motivates the call for the destruction of Israel, the only Jewish state. It is this intolerance which has prevented the formation of a Palestinian state by perpetuating terrorism. And it is this intolerance which is driving the movement to boycott Israeli academics.

Furthermore, instead of encouraging dialogue between Israeli and Palestinians, the boycott promotes the extremist agenda on both sides. The Palestinians who are interested in peace and dialogue are convinced that they do not need to engage like-minded Israelis since they are told that their national aspirations can be achieved through boycott and disengagement. Similarly, Israelis who would like to engage with Palestinians cannot since they are under boycott, playing into the hands of those who do not wish to have any dialogue. It is only through dialogue that two peoples’, who have an equal right to self-determination, can reconcile their differences.

It is not reconciliation which is the agenda of the boycott movement, but rather the de-legitimization of Jewish self-determination. The insistence of comparing Israel to Apartheid South Africa, the Israelis to the white South Africans, indicates a lack of historical perspective and insensitivity towards those who suffered under the real Apartheid. Anyone who has visited an Israeli hospital knows that Jewish and Arab patients receive equal treatment by equally qualified Jewish and Arab doctors. Arabs in Israel have the right to vote, the right to education, the right to health services. This did not exist under apartheid. Recently, a former president of Israel was sentenced to imprisonment by non-other than an Arab judge... certainly not the sign of an apartheid state.

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<http://engageonline.wordpress.com/2011/06/17/what-is-the-real-motivation-behind-singling-out-israel-for-boycott-meir-perez-university-of-johannesburg/>

It is a religious category for me and nothing more, and quite rightly so.

The trouble is that Israel promotes itself as the state for all Jews, including – despite themselves – my friends. And because some of my friends are Jews and it is therefore their country, it is in

some subliminal sense my country too. This produces a particular attitude towards Israel – it means that I do not think of Israel as truly foreign either. It is foreign, of course, but not emotionally, not like Thailand or Uzbekistan, and I do not respond to it as I do to most other foreign states. It is, emotionally, almost an English county planted on the Mediterranean shores.

So I judge this by domestic standards, not foreign ones. I do not expect Israelis to behave like Burmese generals; I expect them to behave like Englishmen, like my friends.

The number of news items about Israel-Palestine has created a self-reinforcing cycle – my appetite for yet more items is whetted by each new article or drama. All of which would appear to vindicate the complaints of the pro-Israel lobby – except that they should consider how they themselves contribute to this.

No Palestinian awareness till 1967. Perception is that Israel hid this “huge injustice” under the rug. Western feel they were not told the whole story

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jun/22/obsession-israel-palestinians-conflict>