

“A Disaster of Another Kind”: Zionism=Racism, Its Beginning, and the War of Delegitimization against Israel

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The ongoing war of delegitimization against Israel has produced two major setbacks for the Jewish State: the passage of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379 on November 10, 1975 (Zionism is racism) and the UN World Conference against Racism, which took place in Durban from August 31 to September 7, 2001. Viewing these events from a historical perspective, it becomes clear that each represents a different phase of the same war. Although the General Assembly revoked this resolution on December 16, 1991, the players at Durban succeeded in reviving the libel that “Zionism is racism” and converting it into a political program. In fact, Article 418 of the NGO resolution of Durban of September 3, 2001 called for the “reinstitution” of UNGA resolution 3379.¹ In this context, the lineage of the current campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) goes back to the 1960s when, under the auspices of the UN, the earliest discussions that labeled apartheid as a form of racism took place. Indeed, the stated purpose of Durban and today’s BDS movement is to assure that Zionism is equated with apartheid and racism and, following the South African model, to bring about Israel’s destruction.² Both in 1975 and in 2001, the Palestinians, in cooperation with external sponsors and with the support of a group of African and Islamic countries, launched such initiatives. In the first case, the Soviet Union was the major mover and, in the second, Iran.

The meaning of the term “a disaster of another kind,” is rooted in the fact that the Soviet Union, the Palestinians, and their allies, “framed” Israel’s reality in ideological terms in a form that possessed a quasi-legal standing, which defamed it and singled it out for opprobrium.³ At the same time, they prevented the adoption of “an explicit definition of antisemitism as a form of racism” and a legally recognized human rights violation.⁴ With few exceptions, Israeli and Western leaders and the intellectuals of the time failed to appreciate the danger of this development. Since then, the Palestinians have persevered in their campaign of delegitimization

and incitement against Israel, making use of this resolution and drawing on the support of their allies and sympathizers, and receiving support from NGO front groups.⁵ Despite the mindless and opportunistic pronouncements of those who would have us believe that there could be a new beginning for the politics of the region and that the past is irrelevant, history *does* matter. Ignorance is not an asset. Without knowing the record, one cannot hope to grasp and confront the problems of the present, or imagine the future.

Many assume that UN Resolution 3379, equating Zionism with racism, originated in 1975. In March 1964, however, this analogy appeared in discussions that took place at the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities (a part of the Third Committee that dealt with social, humanitarian, and cultural matters).⁶ During these deliberations, Israel was outmaneuvered and never recovered the ground it lost. Yohanan Manor, former director-general of the Jewish Agency's Information Department, capably recounted how this happened in his pioneering monograph, *To Right a Wrong*.⁷ Nonetheless, the subject needs to be revisited. What happened in 1964 and 1965 represents an essential piece of the story and therefore merits a careful second look.

Contemporary Testimony

In March 1964, the US, which was motivated by the needs of domestic politics, namely the presidential election campaign between Lyndon B. Johnson and Barry Goldwater, proposed that the Third Committee of the UN recognize antisemitism as a form of racism, along with apartheid and Nazism.⁸ For its part, the Soviet Union was determined to prevent any discussion of the subject, not the least because the Soviets *were* antisemites. As a matter of official state policy, the Soviet Union used antisemitism to discriminate against, intimidate, and persecute Soviet Jewry. Seeking to remove the subject from the agenda, the representatives of the USSR at the UN warned the US that if the Americans did not drop the matter, they would submit their own amendment condemning Zionism and Nazism. In October 1965, when the final draft of the convention prepared by the Commission on Human Rights again came under discussion in the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, the US and Brazil introduced an amendment to condemn antisemitism. In turn, the Soviet Union called for the condemnation of "antisemitism, Zionism, Nazism, neo-Nazism, and all forms of the policy and ideology of colonialism, national and race-hatred, and exclusiveness and shall take action as appropriate for the speedy eradication of those misanthropic ideas and practices in the territories subject to their jurisdiction."⁹ At this point, the delegates of Greece and Hungary proposed an amendment that broke the impasse by moving to drop all reference to any

specific kind of discrimination. This proposal was accepted, and effectively the matter was dropped, despite an unsuccessful effort in 1967 to revive the issue.¹⁰

Dr. Meir Rosenne, who served as consul of Israel in New York from 1961 to 1967, delivered an important address in 1984 at a World Zionist Organization Information Department seminar held at the US State Department. Later, in 1987, Judge Hadassa Ben Itto went on record with a solid interview. These first-person sources are valuable not only because of the facts they contain but also because the individuals who gave them possessed a broad perspective and understood the importance of this episode. Each of these accounts conveys a sense of the contemporary mood. In view of their significance, they are cited at length. Ambassador Rosenne explained:

Among my duties at the time was to serve as Israel's observer in New York at various United Nations deliberations on human rights. In the context of human rights, our chief concern then was the plight of Soviet Jewry—which, I must insist, remains a high priority for us.

One of the UN organs—the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities—after weeks of bitter debate and negotiation drafted a “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.”

That forgotten episode ironically has a serious impact on the subsequent evolution of world opinion and international law regarding Israel and Zionism.

This is how it happened.

Early in the discussions [c. March 1965], the Sub-Commission quickly agreed to adopt a special Article condemning apartheid as a form of racism as [were] Nazism and neo-Nazism.

Because the Holocaust was still fresh in the minds of human rights advocates—and also because of an appalling worldwide epidemic of antisemitic incidents in the early 1960s—the American representative [Marietta Peabody Tree] during the debate in the Human Rights Commission proposed the explicit condemnation of antisemitism in this draft UN Convention.

The Soviet representative, staunchly supported by the other East European experts, countered this move by submitting an amendment that would have added the word “Zionism” to the list of forms of racism to be condemned.

This gave rise to a bitter discussion that culminated in a compromise, to wit: References to all specific forms of racism (except apartheid) were to be dropped from the draft.

The very same exercise was repeated later that year [October 1965] in the Third Committee (the Social Committee) of the UN General Assembly.

With this clever tactic, the USSR for the first time injected its own ideology and propaganda on Zionism and Judaism onto a world stage. In this, Moscow won a double victory:

(1) It prevented the explicit definition of antisemitism as a form of racism — and thus succeeded in downgrading the moral, political, and symbolic weight that a condemnation of Jew-hatred would have carried throughout the world.

(2) It established the precedent for linking Zionism with Nazism, which led to the overwhelming adoption by the UN General Assembly, eleven years later, of the resolution that equated Zionism with racism [UNGA Resolution 3379 of November 10, 1975].

It is essential to remember this history and to keep the record straight: In 1975 it was certainly the Arab states that took the initiative with this resolution. But it is the Soviet Union that is the source of this evil doctrine.¹¹

Judge Ben Itto also witnessed this episode. She had been a judge in the Tel Aviv Magistrate’s Court since 1960. In 1965 she received a special appointment with diplomatic status and joined the members of Israel’s permanent delegation to the UN. During the Assembly, Ben Itto was “on loan” to the Foreign Ministry (then under Foreign Minister Golda Meir) with the special permission of the minister of justice and the president of the Supreme Court.

In a 1987 interview, Ben Itto recounted the facts and was outspoken in her prediction of the consequences of Palestinian and Soviet incitement. Her clear language reflects the moral clarity of a judge. She said:

Something very similar to the '30s is beginning to happen. It doesn't have to be another Holocaust; it can be a disaster of another kind.

.... The world is now being prepared to hate the Jews, to delegitimize and dehumanize the Jews. We are being set up as the enemies of the world, so that Jews will deserve what's coming to them. It will be open season on the Jews in the name of the United Nations.¹²

The interviewer probed Ben Itto on the 1965 episode, and his description of the judge's response complements Dr. Rosenne's analysis:

Judge Ben Itto insists that there is an international conspiracy against the Jews at work here. It involves the Arabs, but it was begun—and is continued—by the Soviets. She makes no bones about declaring that it is a conspiracy by people who wish upon the Jews another genocidal fate such as they suffered in the Holocaust.

She dates it all back to the use of a technical argument by the Russians during the drafting of the first paragraph of the Convention against All Forms of Racial Discrimination at the United Nations in 1965, when she first spent three months in the UN building. The Russians, she said, were willing to name apartheid and Nazism as specific kinds of racism. But they strongly objected to the American delegation's insistence that it was inconceivable that antisemitism was adequately covered by the mention of Nazism.

"But Nazism is just one form of anti-Semitism," she points out. "We forgot all the pogroms. The killing of Jews did not start with the Nazis. They just did it on a bigger scale—but there were many atrocities practiced before the Nazis. Antisemitism," she emphasizes, "should have been mentioned as a form of racism because it is, in fact, practiced against a race. We thought that self-evident."

Instead, a "big fight" broke out over the issue because the Russians would have none of it. In her view, the reason is simple. The Russians know that they are anti-Semites, and emphatically didn't want antisemitism specifically pinpointed, "because they too would have to join that club of racists before the world."

The Russians wanted not even the merest mention of antisemitism, but they wanted to accomplish this goal without having to vote on the issue.

So they latched onto the idea as a technical maneuver of insisting that antisemitism was named as a form of racism, then Zionism must also be listed as a form of racism.

.... Behind the scenes the Russians did not at all seriously argue the proposition that Zionism is racism—"it was almost a joke. They said that they were only suggesting the idea to get the Americans off their antisemitism kick." Clearly, she says, at first the Russians knew full well that the idea that Zionism is racism is an indefensible proposition.¹⁵

Toward the end of the interview, Judge Ben Itto remarked that "the 'Zionism is racism' resolution of 1975 started in 1965, which was before the Six-Day War, before the West Bank, back when Israel still had relations with all the Eastern European countries, including the Soviet Union Today [1987] it [the resolution] is being pushed with Russian minds and Arab money."¹⁴ Except for the demise of the Soviet Union, the situation at present is very similar.

The Political Context

Until the mid-1970s, the matter remained dormant, but during the decade that followed, a new geopolitical reality emerged. Israel won the Six-Day War, which damaged Russian prestige at home and abroad. Consequently, Moscow launched a state-sponsored campaign of vilification both against Israel and Jews in the USSR and in its satellite states, from which great numbers of Jews wished to emigrate. Later, as a result of the Yom Kippur War (October 1973), the Arab oil states quadrupled the cost of oil, which increased their international leverage. It is also possible that Palestinian acts of terror, such as the hijackings of TWA, Pan Am, and BOAC airplanes (September 6, 1970); the Munich Olympics massacre (September 5, 1972); and the murders in Khartoum (March 1, 1973) intimidated Western countries. For its part, Egypt gradually began to reduce the presence of Soviet advisers,¹⁵ left the Soviet camp, and in 1979 signed a separate peace treaty with Israel under American auspices. By default, Soviet diplomacy endeavored to isolate Egypt and made a large investment in the PLO.¹⁶

An internal research paper of the Information Department of the World Zionist Organization described the circumstances that immediately preceded the adoption of UNGA Resolution 3379:

...the stages and escalation of the process leading to the resolution were well planned and executed by the opponents of Zionism Although they had originally hoped to cause Israel's suspension from the UN during

this assembly [the thirtieth], along the lines of South Africa's suspension in 1974, the Arabs met with more opposition than they anticipated, even among the Third World countries who feared that the US would leave the UN in protest if Israel were suspended, taking with it its contribution to the UN budgets, which amounts to 25 percent of the total. Therefore, the Arab states chose to concentrate on passing a resolution against Zionism, assuming that this would succeed...¹⁷

Accordingly, in September 1975 Somalia introduced an amendment to the charter of the Program of the Decade against Racism and Racial Discrimination that would recognize Zionism as a form of racism.¹⁸

The International Environment

A meaningful discussion of the reasons for the Soviet success must also take into account the political environment of the era and the transformation of the international system that resulted from the UN Charter, which gave each member state a single vote. The structure of the UN has much to do with the way it functions. Single states can combine to form regional groupings and in turn produce an automatic majority against Israel. Although today we take this state of affairs for granted, in the 1960s and '70s, the UN represented a departure from the European balance of power system that had broken down. Writing in 1961, Harold Nicolson, a British author and former diplomatist, described the new situation:

.... It was not foreseen by those who drafted the Charter at San Francisco fifteen years ago that the principle of one-state-one-vote might in the end prove irrational. Today the votes of the ninety-nine sovereign states in the Assembly bear no relation to the amount of power they can exercise or the degree of responsibility they can assume. The strength of the United Nations is subject to so many variables that the exercise of its authority is unpredictable. Valuable as the tribunal ought to be in arranging for the pacific settlement of disputes, the incidence of its authority is too uncertain to give its decisions the inevitability of public law. The veto has paralyzed the Executive and the voting system may paralyze the Assembly. The major decisions of the world are taken by those who possess power and are prepared to exercise it. The substitution of consent, or votes, for force has given the United Nations a certain unreality which hampers its authority.¹⁹

Separately, Jeane Kirkpatrick, who was a member of the Cabinet and the American permanent representative to the UN (1981–1985), described the functioning of blocs within the UN voting framework, notably the “corrupt arithmetic,” which

obtained in the case of the “Zionism is racism” resolution. Although she expressed these views in 1984, Kirkpatrick’s observations have held their value:

The Zionism is Racism resolution has special significance in the campaign of destruction and delegitimization of Israel. First of all, it symbolizes the alliance of the African and Arab blocs inside of the United Nations with regard to all questions concerning the Middle East. That alliance, although not written on paper, clearly stipulates that African nations will vote against Israel on questions involving the Middle East, and Arabs will vote with Africans on all matters concerning South Africa. That alliance plus the Soviet bloc, which can always be counted on to join a vendetta, provides the famous automatic majority which is available for all resolutions against Israel. Together, these provide the stable structural base for anti-Israel actions inside the UN body.²⁰

Beyond the sequence of events that led to the adoption of the Russian libel, “Zionism is racism,” one should not forget that this slogan is propaganda and that during the twentieth century its use played an increasing role in the conduct of foreign relations. From the 1930s, the Soviet Union began the continuous use of propaganda in peacetime,²¹ and in the early ‘50s, toward the end of Stalin’s rule, the use of propaganda received high priority as a means of controlling human behavior.

The senior Sovietologist Professor Robert C. Tucker of Princeton University described the principles that governed the use of Soviet propaganda and these also apply to the slogan “Zionism is racism.” During the late ‘40s and early ‘50s, the population of the Soviet Union began to show clear signs of passive resistance. Rather than ameliorate their conditions, Stalin launched the Pavlovian revival that devised new ways to control human behavior. “The principle of the conditioned reflex was made the basis of a new Soviet concept of man. According to this concept, man is a reactive mechanism whose behavior, including the higher mental processes, can be exhaustively understood through the laws of conditioning, and can be controlled through the application of this knowledge.”²² “The basic premise of the new Pavlovian model of personality was that there was nothing in man that transcends in principle the conditioned salivary responses of Pavlov’s dog.”²³ On Stalin’s instructions, Soviet science devoted great attention to language conditioning, using language as an instrument of social control. “For this purpose it was imperative that words should always be signals that touch off responses appropriate with their meanings. Here was the needed link between semantics and politics....To take a familiar example from the Soviet context, on hearing the signal ‘warmonger,’ a properly Pavlovianized Russian should respond with a shudder of fury....Of all the monopolies enjoyed by the Soviet State, none would

be so crucial as its monopoly on the definition of words. The ultimate weapon of political control would be the dictionary.”²⁴

During the last years of his life, Stalin had good reason to tighten his grasp over the Soviet population. He planned to invade and conquer Western Europe (and announced his intention to do so at the National Party Congress on October 14, 1952). Simultaneously, and apparently as part of this project, he launched a major hate campaign against Soviet Jewry. That campaign began with the infamous Doctors’ Plot, which he intended to use as the pretext for spontaneous pogroms, followed by the deportation and decimation of the Jews.²⁵ Stalin was also planning a new round of purges, but only his sudden death terminated this nightmare. Here is the moral and cultural climate from which Soviet anti-Zionist terminology actually derives, with its clearly intended genocidal consequences.

The slogan, “Zionism is racism” is a Pavlovian proposition. Like the epithet “warmonger,” it is designed to produce an emotional response, a “shudder of fury”—and it still does. In retrospect, it is evident that the Soviets possessed an advanced understanding of propaganda and its uses, while the Americans and Israelis lacked this sophistication. The slogan also possesses what Jacques Ellul, the French theologian and philosopher, termed, *la fixité des concepts*, which means that this type of proposition takes on a permanent and immutable meaning. Thus, “Zionism is racism” is not subject to alternative interpretations that can evolve over time. In a somewhat different context, Ellul noted that “it is evident that things [can] change when they are not fixed ideologically. The regime of the Caesars in Rome was more susceptible to change than the Stalinist regime because it did not have any doctrinal and ideological framework.”²⁶ Thus, the “Zionism is racism” libel comes with a straightjacket which blocks out independent thought and reflection. This is exactly what one would expect from a totalitarian regime. (Is it a coincidence that the very same terminology and *la fixité des concepts* may be found in the contemporaneous Palestinian Covenant [1964], particularly in its Article 22, which refers to Zionism as “racist and fanatic”?)²⁷ This vocabulary and the ideological structure of which it is a part are intended to enslave those who use it.²⁸ This is the essence of the French term *la pensée unique*, which destroys intellectual freedom and uses intimidation to enforce the sterile uniformity of totalitarian thought.²⁹

Tucker’s second observation merits careful attention. He stated that “the ultimate weapon of political control would be the dictionary.” This effectively describes what happened in 1965. But even after the demise of the Soviet Union, the battle for the dictionary goes on. At the Durban Conference in 2001, Israel was effectively blindsided, and its enemies prevented antisemitism from becoming a human rights issue.

US Congressman Tom Lantos described the literal battle for the dictionary that took place at Durban:

.... These OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] delegates [Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and the observer from the Palestine Liberation Organization]³⁰ also worked to undermine constructive language on the Holocaust and on antisemitism from the Strasbourg and Santiago meetings by affixing new text to pollute the meaning of these concepts. Thus, whenever the word “Holocaust” was read during the plenary review of the combined text, one of the Islamic delegates—usually Egypt—intervened to change “Holocaust” to “holocausts.” Adding insult to injury, the same delegates requested that the phrase “and the ethnic cleansing of the Arab population in historic Palestine” be inserted after the appearance of “holocausts.”³¹

The Significance of Durban

Durban represented the bridge between the Soviet antisemitic campaign of the '60s and '70s and the Palestinian political war against Israel. At that time, it may not have been possible to appreciate the full meaning of historical developments but in retrospect, the relationships between seemingly detached events are becoming evident. At Camp David in July 2000, Yasir Arafat concluded that he could not achieve his real strategic objectives through peaceful negotiations. Prime Minister Ehud Barak had opened with Israel's best offer, but the *Rais* simply refused to relate to it.³² At Camp David, Arafat, “after telling Clinton—in Barak's presence—that there had never been a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem ... then asserted that all the haggling over Jerusalem was merely a Jewish conspiracy aimed at depriving him of his rights as a Muslim Arab.”³³ Members of the Palestinian leadership later disclosed that Arafat, upon his return in July 2000, gave the order to prepare for the war that is now known as the Second Intifada or the Second Armed Uprising.³⁴ It should be noted that throughout the summer Israeli intelligence had detected the Palestinian preparations for an armed confrontation.³⁵ Under these circumstances, Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount on September 28, 2000 was not the real cause of the intifada, as some claimed. Nevertheless, it provided an excellent pretext for the Palestinian Authority to open a new chapter in its war against Israel.

The Second Intifada brought a new round of deadly violence and Palestinian terror attacks against large numbers of innocent Israeli civilians. Since September 2000, the Palestinians have murdered 1,204 Israeli civilians, and have maimed and injured thousands more. (From the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO on September 13, 1993 until September 2000, 269

civilians and soldiers were killed in terrorist attacks.)³⁶ Until late November 2000, Prime Minister Barak denied the intifada, and because official Israel did not openly face up to this problem,³⁷ the Israeli public did not become consciously aware of the real scale and strategic objective of this war. Simultaneously, the Clinton administration downplayed Palestinian terror while pressing Israel for more concessions.³⁸

According to Yossef Bodansky, who served as director of the Congressional Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare from 1988 to 2004, Arafat's plan was to provoke a regional war "in which a coalition of Arab armies would defeat, perhaps even destroy, Israel."³⁹ The main partners of the Palestinian Authority were: Iran, Iraq (under Saddam Hussein), Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad.⁴⁰ Indeed, the scale of the war that the Palestinians actually waged against Israel would have been obvious to anyone who took a walk through downtown Jerusalem and saw the places of business that had been boarded up after having been the target of terrorist attacks. Furthermore, on January 4, 2002, the Israeli navy intercepted the *Karine A* and prevented large quantities of advanced heavy weaponry sent from Iran from reaching the Palestinian Authority (PA). This event provides hard evidence of the Palestinians' intention to wage a major war against Israel and of their bad faith.

At Durban, the PA and its supporters, both in the Arab world and the West, opened a second front—a full-scale political war. In this context, the Durban Conference was an integral part of the Second Intifada. The purpose of the political war was to support the military terror war then in progress. Once again, Iran was the main ally of the PA.

One new development was the proclamation of a sustained campaign to isolate Israel and which made use of the old Soviet propaganda accusations. While the PLO had previously taken the Algerian and Vietnamese wars as their model, they now adopted the example of South Africa. Their objective was, and remains, to stigmatize Israel as an apartheid state, negate its legitimacy, bring about its total isolation, and destroy its sovereignty.⁴¹

Effectively, the Durban Conference issued a contract against Israel, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that its program planned the politicide of the State of Israel. Durban was the equivalent of the Wannsee Conference with the Jewish State as the intended victim. Anne Bayefsky, who attended the Durban Conference, explained: "... Context is important; Durban was not an aberration. It was the culmination of a long campaign under UN auspices both to turn Israel into a pariah state—the new South Africa—and to deny antisemitism as a human rights issue of our time. The primary embarrassment of Durban for the United

Nations was that its role in this campaign to demonize and delegitimize Israel was so undeniably linked to antisemitism, and in the midst of an anti-racism conference.”⁴²

Depriving Israel of legal recognition and taking away its legitimacy as a member of the community of nations belongs to a method of revolutionary warfare known as “people’s war.” Stefan Possony, author of the Strategic Defense Initiative and advisor to President Ronald Reagan, described how the political and military dimensions of a people’s war complement each other. His insight was that a “people’s war is a political conflict, with military operations an adjunct to politics.”⁴³ In this type of revolutionary guerilla war, compromise is out of the question and victory must be total. The winner takes all. People’s war is waged over a long time frame, with varying stages, dormant and active. Its objective is to seize the *legitimacy* of the other side and appropriate it for one’s own cause.⁴⁴

A new mutation of antisemitism reflected the totality of this goal. Noting the emergence of genocidal hatred combined with a hatred of the West, the French scholar and researcher P.A. Taguieff called it “absolute antisemitism.”⁴⁵ Durban is ongoing and has spilled over into Europe, where the violence against Jews mounts. It has become globalized. In recent decades, large populations of Muslims have migrated to Europe and, particularly in the case of France, have victimized the local Jewish population. The hate-filled Durban program has slopped over onto other continents where the Red-Green alliances between leftist radicals and Islamic militants have become a potent factor. In addition to the deep hatred for Israel, a sub-theme of the animosity that found expression at Durban includes targeting the West and the US—“The Big Satan.”⁴⁶ It was not a complete coincidence that 9/11 happened two days after the conclusion of the Durban Conference. It is safe to say that the perpetrators of 9/11 drew inspiration from the same cultural environment.⁴⁷

Conclusion

The 1965 debates in the Third Committee of the UN are a matter of great relevance to the present. A failed attempt of Israel and the US to have antisemitism defined as a type of racism resulted in two important setbacks: the failure of Israel to achieve a universally accepted definition of antisemitism with the force of international law and, a decade later, the UN acceptance of the libel “Zionism is racism.” From then on, it was almost impossible to raise the problem of antisemitism as a human rights issue. Others framed the reality of Israel, attributing to the Jewish State a completely specious and negative meaning. By setting the agenda of the international community, Israel’s enemies caused lasting harm in obstructing its claim to legal recourse in the matter of antisemitism. As a consequence, Israel must

live with a disability and make do with a less than equal status in the community of nations.

One of the most valuable insights of this study is that there is a nexus between the defamation of Israel, as is the case with the “Zionism is racism” libel, and the need to ensure that antisemitism is defined as an internationally recognized human rights violation. In recent years, efforts to establish a definition of antisemitism have received serious “push-back.” Bayefsky reported, for example, that in December 2003, Ireland quietly withdrew a draft UN resolution condemning antisemitism. The Irish foreign minister, Brian Cowen, had promised to sponsor this measure, but in the end succumbed to Arab and Muslim objections and reneged.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) Working Definition of Antisemitism, which was adopted on March 16, 2005, represents a step forward. One of its great refinements was the publication of a listing of ways in which antisemitism is manifested. Among the examples given was “denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.”⁴⁹ This marks a step forward.

It is highly unlikely that in 1965 Israel and the US could have overcome Soviet opposition to the definition of antisemitism as a form of racism. In retrospect, one may ask if the former USSR would have had a different destiny if it did not persecute its Jewish citizens, engage in the propagation of antisemitism at home and abroad, and initiate two wars against Israel. The struggle for Soviet Jewry actually helped break the Soviet regime—and not the opposite. As a consequence, the State of Israel gained about a million educated, hard-working, and well-motivated new citizens, adding to the strength and vitality of its society. Israel’s gain was Russia’s loss. This year, August 19 marked the twentieth anniversary of the failed counter-coup that sealed the fate of the Soviet Union, when Communist Party hard-liners attempted to overthrow President Mikhail Gorbachev and stop his reforms, including efforts to give the Soviet republics more freedom.⁵⁰ On this occasion, “Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin described the fall of the Soviet Union as ‘the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.’”⁵¹ Although great historical developments have multiple causes, it is a comforting thought that world Jewry and the State of Israel, with the vigorous support of powerful and courageous partners, contributed to this outcome. In the greater order of things, the Soviets were severely punished.

During the ‘90s, the would-be “architects of peace” in Israel, many of whom viewed the world through a Marxist-materialist prism, convinced themselves that the negotiating process and mutually profitable business projects would overcome the long-standing reality of an intransigent Palestinian refusal to recognize “the

existence of Israel as a truly legitimate entity.”⁵² For their part, the leaders of the Palestinian Authority have been consistent when they declared that they would never accept Israel as a Jewish State.⁵³ Despite being a signatory to the Oslo Accords, they have officially sponsored incitement to hatred and violence against the Jewish State, and at the moment of this writing, Israel’s Palestinian “peace partners” have bolted from the framework of dialogue and negotiation. In light of the large number of Israeli terror victims; the Second Intifada; the Durban Conference; the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement; and the relentless assault on Israel’s legitimacy, one must ask if the era of the “peace process” and the ceremonial signing of documents may in truth have been a digression from the normal course of history, a *parenthèse*, to use the French expression. The time has come to answer this question honestly, because in policy-making it is necessary to distinguish between one’s enemies and one’s friends.

Great efforts are still needed if Israel is to take its place in the community of nations. Patience, persistence, and clear thinking will be necessary, but this battle must be won in order to regain and safeguard the legitimacy of the Jewish State.

Notes

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¹ http://www.eyeontheun.org/assets/attachments/documents/durban_ngo_declaration_2001.pdf.

² See Omar Barghouti, “Our South Africa Moment Has Arrived,” in Barghouti, *BDS: Boycott Divestment Sanctions; The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights* (Chicago, 2011), pp. 191–204. See also Joel Fishman, “‘Boycott, Désinvestissement, Sanctions’ : l’incitation à la haine, Le message antisioniste et antisémite du mouvement BDS,” *Controverses*, No 16, (March 2011), 138–148.

³ Judge Hadassa Ben Itto first used the term “A Disaster of Another Kind” to describe the damage caused by UNGA Resolution 3379 of November 10, 1975, “Zionism is racism.

Lionel Rolfe, interview with Hadassa Ben Itto, *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, March 27, 1987, CZA/S110/48.

- ⁴ Formulation of Dr. Meir Rosenne, former Israeli ambassador to the US, "Address to Washington Seminar," December, 1984, Document IIIa, CZA/S110/48.
- ⁵ For background on the NGOs and their operations, see Gerald M. Steinberg, *NGOs, Human Rights, and Political Warfare in the Arab-Israeli Conflict; An Anthology of Journal Articles and Conference Presentations*, Volume 9, NGO Monitor Monograph Series (Jerusalem, NGO Monitor: 2010).
- ⁶ For background information, see John P. Humphrey, "The United Nations Sub Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities," *The American Journal of International Law*, LXII:4 (October, 1968), 869–888.
- ⁷ Yohanan Manor, *To Right a Wrong: The Revocation of the UN General Assembly Resolution 3379 Defaming Zionism* (New York: 2nd ed., 1997).
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ⁹ US–Brazil proposal L/1211, General Assembly Third Committee, as quoted by Y. Manor, *op. cit.*, p. 6. The above paragraph is a close paraphrasing of Dr. Manor's text.
- ¹⁰ Manor, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 7.
- ¹¹ Rosenne, *op. cit.*
- ¹² Rolfe, interview with Hadassa Ben Itto, *op. cit.*
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ See the following articles of Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez: "The Origins of a Misnomer: The 'Expulsion of Soviet Advisers' from Egypt in 1972," in Nigel Ashton (ed.), *The Cold War in the Middle East: Regional Conflict and the Superpowers 1967–73* (London, 2007); *History News Network*, <http://hnn.us/articles/41409.html>; and "The Tyranny of Vested-Interest Sources: Shaping the Record of Soviet Intervention in the Egyptian-Israeli Conflict, 1967–1973," *Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, I:1 (2010).
- ¹⁶ Manor, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- ¹⁷ Ruth Reali, "The Steps that Led to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379; ..." Research Section, World Zionist Organization Department of Information, November 1984, CZA/110/48.
- ¹⁸ Manor, *op. cit.*, p. 17. For general background on UNGA 3379, see particularly Bernard Lewis, "The Anti-Zionist Resolution," *Foreign Affairs* (October, 1976), 54–64.
- ¹⁹ "Diplomacy Then and Now," reprinted from *Foreign Affairs* (October, 1961) in Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1969), p. 146.
- ²⁰ Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Bracing for the Truth," adapted from a speech delivered to a Washington seminar, "The Zionism Is Racism Equation, An Assault on Human Rights," The State Department, Washington, DC, December 10, 1984, CZA/S110/48.
- ²¹ E. H. Carr explained, "The Bolsheviks, when they seized power in Russia, found themselves desperately weak in the ordinary military and economic weapons of international conflict. Their principal strength lay in their influence over opinion in other countries; and it was therefore natural and necessary that they should exploit this

- weapon to the utmost." E. H. Carr, *Propaganda in International Politics* (Oxford, 1939), p. 13.
- ²² Robert C. Tucker, *The Soviet Political Mind: Stalinism and Post-Stalin Change* (New York, 1972), p. 153, as quoted in the author's "The Cold-War Origins of Contemporary Anti-Semitic Terminology," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, *Jerusalem Viewpoints* No. 517, May 2–16, 2004, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp517.htm>.
- ²³ Tucker, op. cit., 160.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 165.
- ²⁵ Michael Heller and Aleksandr M. Nekrich, *Utopia in Power: The History of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the Present*, trans. Phyllis B. Carlos (New York, 1986), pp. 503–506. Also, Regina Elder [with Stefan Possony], "Stalin was Murdered by Stalinists," *National Republic* (May, 1958), 3, 4, 31–32.
- ²⁶ Jacques Ellul, The original text in French of the preface to Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi in Islam et judeo-christianisme* (Paris, 2004), pp. 100, 101.
- ²⁷ "Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist and colonialist in its aims, and fascist in its methods" Y. Harkabi, *The Palestinian Covenant and Its Meaning* (London, 1979), p. 88.
- ²⁸ In this light it is possible to appreciate how thoroughly pathetic former US president Jimmy Carter was when he applied the apartheid model to Israel and indiscriminately used the Cold War Russian propaganda libel of which it was a part. Jimmy Carter, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* (New York, 2006).
- ²⁹ "Glued up! In today's democracies, more and more free citizens find themselves [stuck with] glue, gunked up by a sort of viscous doctrine which, imperceptibly, envelops all rebellious reasoning, inhibits it, troubles it, paralyzes it and finishes by extinguishing it. This doctrine ... is *la pensée unique* [political correctness], the only one permitted by an invisible and omnipresent thought police." Ignacio Ramonet, "La pensée unique," *Le Monde diplomatique*, January 1995, <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1995/01/RAMONET/1144>.
- ³⁰ In various parts of his article, Lantos names some of the adversaries of Israel at Durban: Iran, Syria, Cuba, China, Sudan, Iraq, Chile, Jamaica, South Africa, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the PLO, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Vincent, and the Grenadines, "The Durban Debacle: An Insider's View of the UN World Conference Against Racism," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 26:1 (Winter/Spring 2002) and reprinted by the World Jewish Congress Research Institute (Jerusalem, 2002), passim.
- ³¹ Ibid., p.10; Harris O. Schoenberg, "Demonization in Durban: The World Conference Against Racism," *American Jewish Year Book 2002*, pp. 85–111; and Gerald Steinberg, "The Centrality of the NGOs in the Durban Strategy," *Yale Israel Journal*, July 11, 2006.
- ³² Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York, 2004), pp. 690–696.

- ³³ Yossef Bodansky, *The High Cost of Peace: How Washington's Middle East Policy Left America Vulnerable to Terrorism* (Roseville, CA, 2002), p. 566.
- ³⁴ Palestinian Authority Communications Minister Imad Faluji disclosed that the most recent intifada was not a spontaneous reaction to the September visit of then opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount but was planned after the peace talks failed in July 2000. Lamia Lahoud, "PA Minister: Intifada Planned since July," *Jerusalem Post*, March 4, 2001.
- ³⁵ Bodansky, op. cit., p. 317.
- ³⁶ See: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0cc40> and <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Palestinian+terror+since+2000/Victims+of+Palestinian+Violence+and+Terrorism+sinc.htm>.
- ³⁷ Bodansky, op. cit., pp. 403, 404.
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 346, 451.
- ³⁹ Ibid., p. 307.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 361.
- ⁴¹ Some of the key articles of the NGO declaration relating to Israel are as follows:

422. Call for the establishment of programmes [sic] and institutions to combat the racist media distortion, stereotyping and propaganda, including the demonizing and dehumanizing of Palestinians as all being violent and terrorists, and undeserving of human rights protections. Call for the correction of misleading information surrounding their status as indigenous peoples, the history of the violations perpetrated against them, and the ongoing distortion of the facts and nature of the peace negotiations.

423. Call for the launch of an international anti-Israeli Apartheid movement as implemented against South African Apartheid through a global solidarity campaign network of international civil society, UN bodies and agencies, business communities and to end the conspiracy of silence among states, particularly the European Union and the United States.

424. *Call upon the international community to impose a policy of complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state as in the case of South Africa, which means the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, the full cessation of all links (Diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel.* [author's emphasis] Call upon the Government of South Africa to take the lead in this policy of isolation, bearing in mind its own historical success in countering the undermining policy of "constructive engagement" with its own past Apartheid regime.

425. Condemnation of those states who are supporting, aiding and abetting the Israeli Apartheid state and its perpetration of racist crimes against humanity including ethnic cleansing, acts of genocide.

http://www.eyeontheun.org/assets/attachments/documents/durban_ngo_declaration_2001.pdf.

- ⁴² Anne Bayefsky, "The UN World Conference against Racism: A Racist Anti-Racism Conference," *ASIL Proceedings* (2002), pp. 65, 66.
- ⁴³ Stefan T. Possony, *People's War; The Art of Combining Partisan-Military, Psycho-Social, and Political Conquest Techniques* (Taipei, 1970), p. 85 as quoted in the author's "Ten Years Since Oslo: The PLO's 'People's War' Strategy and Israel's Inadequate Response," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, *Jerusalem Viewpoints* No. 503, September 1, 2003, www.jcpa.org/jl/vp503.htm.
- ⁴⁴ Fishman, "Ten Years Since Oslo: The PLO's 'People's War' Strategy and Israel's Inadequate Response," op. cit.
- ⁴⁵ Pierre-André Tagueiff, *Rising from the Muck* (Chicago, 2004), p. 62; Bernard Lewis, "The New Anti-Semitism," *The American Scholar*, LXXV:1 (Winter, 2006), 25–36.
- ⁴⁶ Tagueiff, op. cit., pp. 29, 30. This hate-targeting of three enemies, The West, the United States, and Israel, could easily have come from Cuban propaganda as well as that of the Muslim Brotherhood.
- ⁴⁷ For the ideology of the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack, see Matthias Küntzel, "Islamic Antisemitism and Its Nazi Roots," *Antisemitism International*, Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (Jerusalem, 2004), 44–52.
- ⁴⁸ Anne Bayefsky, "The UN and the Jews," *Commentary* (February, 2004), 42.
- ⁴⁹ <http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf>.
- ⁵⁰ "Civilian resistance in Moscow and other cities, aided by military units who refused to move against the protesters, effectively foiled the plot and made a popular democratic hero of Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin. By the time Mr. Gorbachev resigned on Christmas day and Mr. Yeltsin took power over Russia, most of the republics had declared independence and Soviet Communism was dead." Nancy de Wolf Smith interview with Richard Pipes, *The Wall Street Journal*, August 19, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111903596904576516652848445180.html?mod=opinion_newsreel.
- ⁵¹ Seth Mydans, "Disillusion in Russia revives a longing for Soviet Past," *International Herald Tribune*, August, 19, 2011.
- ⁵² Yehoshafat Harkabi, "Arab Positions on Zionism," in Shmuel Almog (ed.), *Zionism and the Arabs* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 191.
- ⁵³ "PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas: 'We Refuse to Recognize a Jewish state,'" Palestinian Authority TV, June 2, 2011, *Memri* item # 2959 <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/2959.htm>; "Abbas: We won't recognize Israel as Jewish state," *Ynet*, October 15, 2010, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3969948,00.html>; Report: Abbas reiterates refusal to recognize Israel as 'Jewish state,' *Haaretz*, December 1, 2007, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/report-abbas-reiterates-refusal-to-recognize-israel-as-jewish-state-1.234351>. For comment on this problem, see Irwin Cotler, "New Anti-Jewishness," *Alert Paper* No. 1, Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, November, 2002, <http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Alert%201%20New%20Anti%20Jewishness.pdf>.