



How Israel's critics distort

By Oscar Miller

Efforts to delegitimize the Jewish state are not confined to the United Nations. They can be found in the statements of journalists, columnists, television newscasters and in op-ed articles in newspapers. The efforts are not difficult to identify, for they usually involve one or both of the following two categories of anti-Israel (and usually anti-Semitic) diatribes.

First, Judaism is categorized solely as a religious denomination (like Protestantism or Catholicism) and Jewish peoplehood and nationhood are alleged to be violations of the Judaic norm. Some who espouse this line, whether Moslem, Christian or Jew, are either ignorant of Jewish philosophy, history and thought, or are willing tools of the anti-Semitic effort to deny legitimacy to Judaism itself as well as to Israel.

They explicitly deny the right of the Jews to a state of their own, confining Judaism to the category of a religious group. Scholars as well as the mass of informed Jews know that central to Judaism is the concept of the Jews as a people and a nation, aspiring to live in their homeland, Israel, of which Jerusalem is the capital.

A second set of anti-Israel diatribes is found in attempts to revise recent Mideast history by inventing the myth of modern descendants of an ancient Palestinian people other than the Jews. Such inventions usually are coupled with the manufacture of a modern Palestinian Arab entity other than that existing in the part of Palestine now known as Jordan.

Joan Peters' excellent book, "From Time Immemorial," has provided extensive proof that only after the modern Zionists in the middle 1800s began rebuilding the wasted and relatively unpopulated western part of Palestine did large numbers of Arabs from areas now known as Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq (Jordan didn't exist until 1922) flock into western Palestine to reap the benefits of the Zionist investment of human and physical capital and labor. The British Foreign Office by 1922 began to violate the mandate of the League of Nations (awarded to the British specifically to assist the Jews in the re-establishment of Palestine as the Jewish national homeland). The British restricted Jewish immigration while encouraging Arabs from the surrounding areas to move to Palestine. This enabled the British Colonial Office to use the basic Islamic resistance to the re-emergence of Jewish independence as a means of encouraging Arab extremism, terrorism and divisiveness and permitting the British to divide and conquer.

The results of such invention are a series of rationalizations whereby the establishment of the Third Jewish Commonwealth by a people decimated by Christian pogroms, Moslem persecutions and the Holocaust itself has somehow come to be transformed

into an evil cabal by the demonic Jew. The ludicrous culmination of such inventions has led to obscene attempts to make Jewish efforts to defend themselves against Arab terrorism a form of oppression wherein the Arab terrorist becomes the victim.

An example of this distortion of recent events can be found in an Aug. 21 Perspective page article by journalist Mark Bruzonsky. The article, "Israel has lost its way," is replete with significant omissions and unsupported allegations as well as the use of the age-old technique of assigning the blame for antisocial behavior of individuals within a group to the group as a whole—a familiar form of anti-Semitism or to racism.

Bruzonsky described the four Arab terrorists who invaded an Israeli bus in April and threatened to kill its inhabitants merely as "four teenage Israeli Palestinians (who) commandeered a bus at knifepoint." He said they did not have guns, but in fact these "teenagers" were armed with pistols, knives and homemade bombs, weapons which have been used before (and since) to kill and maim Jews on buses, streets and in synagogues and not only in Israel. He dwells on the reported mishandling of the captured prisoners but fails to mention the terror created by these Arab "teenagers" and their weapons. His reporting style is designed to place the blame for the resultant casualties (including the death of an Israeli female soldier) on the rescue attempt rather than on the terrorists.

Bruzonsky offhandedly mentions the responsible behavior of the Israeli government in pursuing an investigation of what certainly appears to be gross misconduct on the part of some Israeli individuals. However, instead of praising the responsible action of the government of a besieged nation in the midst of a terrorist war, conducted with the assistance of powerful Moslem and Eastern bloc countries, Bruzonsky questions the propriety of Israel defending itself. Quoting a known anti-Israel leftist, Bruzonsky includes the dire prediction of Israel's future behavior, describing "bodies of prisoners (to be) found floating in some river in the end."

Bruzonsky knows full well that Israel has an exemplary record in identifying, pursuing and subjecting to the full extent of the law (with full due process) any and all in Israel who are charged with violating the norms of civilized behavior. Would that the rest of the world (especially the Arab countries) adopted such norms and lived up to them. Bruzonsky ultimately reveals his true purpose when he attempts to transfer the role of oppressor in the Middle East to the American Jewish community because they correctly identified former Rep. Paul Findley as the PLO mouthpiece in the U.S. and worked for his defeat.

Obviously emerging from his article is Bruzonsky's advocacy of the cause of the PLO, whose behavior and announced goal is the elimination of the Jewish State of Israel. To follow Bruzonsky's unbalanced and immoral strictures would indeed cause Israel not only to lose its way but significantly endanger its very existence. As long as Bruzonsky and other prominent anti-Israel publicists minimize the importance of terrorism against Israel while condemning Israel's self-defense against such terrorism, the Arab world will see no reason for coming to the negotiating table to discuss peace. Instead, the Arabs will continue their efforts to delegitimize the Jewish state.



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