

Top Ten Anti-Israel Lies

The Simon Wiesenthal Center

Lie #1: Israel was created by European guilt over the Nazi Holocaust. Why should Palestine pay the price?

Three thousand years before the Holocaust, before there was a Roman Empire, Israel's kings and prophets walked the streets of Jerusalem. The whole world knows that Isaiah did not speak his prophesies from Portugal, nor Jeremiah his lamentations from France. Revered by its people, Jerusalem is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures 600 times - but not once in the Koran. Throughout its 2,000-year exile there was continuous Jewish presence in the Holy Land, with the modern rebirth of Israel beginning in the 1800s. Reclamation of the largely vacant land by pioneering Zionists blossomed into a Jewish majority long before the onset of Nazism.

After the Holocaust, nearly 200,000 Shoah survivors found haven in the Jewish State, created by a two-thirds vote of the UN in 1947. Soon 800,000 Jews fleeing persecution in Arab countries arrived. In ensuing decades, Israel absorbed a million immigrants from the Soviet Union and thousands of Ethiopian Jews. Today, far from being a vestige of European guilt or colonialism, Israel is a diverse, cosmopolitan society, fulfilling the age-old dream of a people's journey and 'Return to Zion' -- their ancient homeland.

Lie #2: Had Israel withdrawn to its June 1967 borders, peace would have come long ago.

Since 1967, Israel has repeatedly conceded, "land for peace." Following Egyptian President Sadat's historic 1977 visit to Jerusalem and the Camp David Peace Accords, Israel withdrew from the vast Sinai Peninsula and has been at peace with Egypt ever since.

In 1995, Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel but neither the Palestinians nor 21 other Arab states have done so. In 1993, Israel signed the Oslo Accords ceding administrative control of the West Bank to the Palestinian Authority (formerly the PLO). The PA never fulfilled its promise to end propaganda attacks and drop the Palestinian National Charter's call for Israel's destruction.

In 2000, Prime Minister Barak offered Yasser Arafat full sovereignty over 97% of the West Bank, a corridor to Gaza, and a capitol in the Arab section of Jerusalem. Arafat said NO. In 2008, PA President Abbas nixed virtually the same offer from Prime Minister Olmert. In 2005, Prime Minister Sharon unilaterally withdrew from Gaza. Taken over by terrorist Hamas, they turned dismantled Jewish communities into launching sites for suicide bombers and 8,000+ rockets into Israel proper. In 2010, Prime Minister Netanyahu renewed offers of unconditional negotiations leading to a Palestinian State, but Palestinians refused, demanding more unilateral Israeli concessions, including a total freeze of all Israeli construction in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Lie #3: Israel is the main stumbling block to achieving a Two-State solution.

The Palestinians themselves are the only stumbling block to achieving a Two-State solution. With whom should Israel negotiate? With President Abbas, who, for four years, has been barred by Hamas from visiting 1.5 million constituents in Gaza? With his Palestinian Authority, which continues to glorify terrorists and preaches hate in its educational system and the media? With Hamas, whose Iranian-backed leaders deny the Holocaust and use fanatical Jihadist rhetoric to call for Israel's destruction?

Today, it is a simple fact that while the State of Israel is prepared to recognize all Arab States, secular or Muslim, these states adamantly refuse to recognize Israel as a Jewish State and demand "the right of return" of five million so-called Palestinian "refugees" -- a sure guarantee for Israel's demise.

Lie #4: Nuclear Israel not Iran is the greatest threat to peace and stability.

Though never acknowledged by Jerusalem, it is generally assumed that Israel has nuclear weapons. But unlike Pakistan, India, and North Korea, Israel never conducted nuclear tests. In 1973, when its very survival was imperiled by the surprise Egyptian-Syrian Yom Kippur attack, many assumed Israel would use nuclear weapons -- but it did not. Contrary to public condemnations, many Arab leaders privately express relief that Israeli nuclear deterrence exists. While Israel has never threatened anyone, Tehran's mullahs daily threaten to "wipe Israel from the map." The U.S. and Europe can afford to wait to see what the Iranian regime does with its nuclear ambitions. But Israel cannot. She is on the front lines and remembers every day the price the Jewish people paid for not taking Hitler at his word. Israel is not prepared to sacrifice another six million Jews on the altar of the world's indifference.

Lie #5: Israel is an Apartheid State deserving of International Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaigns.

On both sides of the Atlantic, church groups, academics and unions are leading deceitful and often anti-Semitic boycott campaigns demonizing what they call the Jewish "apartheid" State.

The truth is that unlike apartheid South Africa, Israel is a democratic state. Its 20% Arab minority enjoys all the political, economic and religious rights and freedoms of citizenship, including electing members of their choice to the Knesset (Parliament). Israeli Arabs and Palestinians have standing before Israel's Supreme Court. In contrast, no Jew may own property in Jordan, no Christian or Jew can visit Islam's holiest sites in Saudi Arabia.

Lie #6: Plans to build 1,600 more homes in East Jerusalem prove Israel is 'Judaizing' the Holy City.

Enemies of Israel, exploit this phony issue. Jerusalem is holy to three great faiths. Its diverse population includes a Jewish majority with Muslim and Christian minorities. Since 1967, for the first time in history, there is full freedom of religion for all faiths in Jerusalem. Muslim and Christian religious bodies administer their own holy sites. Indeed, the Waqf is allowed to control Jerusalem's Temple Mount, even though it rests on Solomon's temple and is holy to BOTH Jews and Muslims.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem's municipality must meet the needs of a growing modern city. The unfortunately-timed announcement during U.S. Vice President Biden's visit of 1,600 new apartments in Ramat Shlomo, was not about Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, but for a long established, heavily populated Jewish neighborhood in Northern Jerusalem, where 250,000 Jews live (about the same population as Newark, NJ.) -- an area that will never be relinquished by Israel.

Lie #7: Israel policies endanger U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The charge that Israel endangers U.S. troops in Iraq or the AF-Pak region is an update of the old "stab in the back" lie that Jews always betray their own friends, and the libel spouted by Henry Ford and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion that "Jews are the father of all wars."

U.S. General Petraeus has stated he considers Israel a great strategic asset for the U.S. and that his earlier remarks linking the safety of U.S. troops in the region to an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal (which 2/3 of Israelis want) were taken out of context. A resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict would benefit everyone, including the U.S. But an imposed return to what Abba Eban called "1967 Auschwitz borders" would endanger Israel's survival and ultimately be disastrous for American interests and credibility in the world.

Lie #8: Israeli policies are the cause of worldwide anti-Semitism.

From the Inquisition to the pogroms, to the 6,000,000 Jews murdered by the Nazis, history proves that Jew-hatred existed on a global scale before the creation of the State of Israel. In 2010, it would still exist even if Israel had never been created. For example, one poll indicates 40% of Europeans blame the recent global economic crisis on "Jews having too much economic power," a canard that has nothing to do with Israel.

The unsettled Palestinian-Israeli dispute aggravates Muslim-Jewish tensions, but it is not the root cause. During World War II, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, a notorious Jew-hater, helped the Nazis organize the 13th SS Division, made up of Muslims. Unfortunately, in addition to respectful references to Jewish patriarchs and prophets, the Koran also contains virulent anti-Semitic stereotypes that are widely invoked by Islamist extremists, including Hezbollah (whose agents blew up the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in 1994), to justify murdering Jews worldwide. The disappearance of Israel would only further embolden violent Jew-haters everywhere.

Lie #9: Israel, not Hamas, is responsible for the "humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza. Goldstone was right when he charged that Israel was guilty of war crimes against civilians.

The Goldstone Report on Israel's defensive war against Hamas-controlled Gaza, from which 8,000 rockets were fired after Israel's unilateral withdrawal in 2005, is a biased product of the UN's misnamed Human Rights Council. The UNHRC is obsessed with false anti-Israel resolutions. It refuses to address grievous human rights abuses in Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Cuba and beyond. Faced with similar attacks, every UN member-state including the U.S. and Canada would surely have acted more aggressively than the IDF did in Gaza.

Yet, Richard Goldstone, a South African Jewish jurist, signed a document prepared by investigators whose main qualification was rabid anti-Israel bias. He accepted every anonymous libel against the IDF. But he insisted that hearings in Gaza be televised, guaranteeing that fearful Palestinians would never testify about Hamas' use of civilians as human shields and their hiding of weapons in mosques and hospitals. Harvard Professor Alan Dershowitz denounced Goldstone's Report as a modern "blood libel" accusing Israeli soldiers of crimes they never committed.

Lie #10: The only hope for peace is a single, bi-national state, eliminating the Jewish State of Israel.

The One-State solution, promoted by academics, is a non-starter because it would eliminate the Jewish homeland. However, the current pressures on Israel are equally dangerous. In effect, the world is demanding that Israel, the size of New Jersey, shrink farther by accepting a Three-State solution: a PA state on the West Bank and a Hamas terrorist state controlling 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza. All this, as Hezbollah, Iran's proxy in Lebanon, stockpiles 50,000 rockets, threatening northern and central Israel's main population centers.

In 2010, most Middle East experts believe that the only hope for enduring peace is two states with defined final borders. But too many diplomats, pundits, academics and church leaders ignore the fact that current polls show that while most Israelis favor a Two-State solution, most Palestinians continue to oppose it.