

The 'Winter of Bias' Against Israel Simply Won't End

This week, the world was treated to one of God's unusual creatures raising his head from the depth of darkness and poking its nose into its environs that's seen by many as foretelling of things to come.

No, I don't mean the unique American Groundhog Day ritual to see if spring will arrive soon or not. I am referring to U.S. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon sticking his head into a place that underscores the decades of darkness and anti-Israel bias from which the United Nations has yet to emerge. It looks like winter will continue for some time.

Speaking at the U.N., and in a subsequent *NY Times* op-ed, Ban shows his preoccupation with the alleged "occupation," using the term several times in just 750 words. He misrepresents reality in the Middle East in a way that would make Arafat blush.

His written diatribe was triggered by Israelis taking exception to his statement that it is "human nature" to resist occupation, and therefore a justification for Palestinian Arab violence. Ban took offense suggesting Israel was shooting the messenger. His words were inaccurate and misleading, and the fact that he took to the pages of the *NY Times* to double down, rather than calm things down, is foreboding.

The premise of his remarks, that it is "human nature" to resist occupation, is a faulty foundation upon which the rest of his rant is based. If it were the case, one would hear of terrorism in Northern Cyprus, Western Sahara, Tibet and in places occupied by others just as one hears of terrorism from Palestinian Arabs. And when the Soviets occupied other countries, or in occupations past, we'd have heard of

terrorism as a global plague, not one largely limited to the Arab world. We don't.

Claiming that resistance of occupation is "human nature" is also racist against Palestinian Arabs because it says they don't have the human capacity *not* to resist through terrorism.

And if the Palestinian Arabs are indeed occupied, Ban's referral to "nearly half-century of occupation" is dishonest too. In fact, Israel supported the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan to establish two states, and it was the 1949 occupation by Jordan and Egypt that prevented that. Did the Palestinian Arabs resist that occupation with violence? No. They made "armed struggle" a national pastime, and saved their best hate and terrorism to annihilate Israel, something to which many still subscribe and participate openly.

Ban ignores the fact that since 1949, a U.N. agency (UNRWA) not only propagates the problem of "Palestinian refugees" through use of its schools as safe havens for terrorists, and maintaining refugee camps in squalor. UNRWA enables this, and fosters the building of terrorist tunnels but prevents the relocation of families into permanent housing. UNRWA uniquely confers refugee status to now five generations, providing a perverse inheritance that continues to keep them in squalor. And he blames Israel for that.

When he references the "nearly half-century occupation," he's referring to the outcome of the 1967 Six-Day War. But U.N. resolution 242 that followed the war called for "Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." Ban is disingenuous when he suggests that all Israeli construction in "occupied" territory is "illegal" because as written and understood even in 1967, Israel was never going to have to withdraw from "all" territory. It was never stated, and was never inferred. Ban has become the Jedi master of revisionist U.N. history.

Regarding building, Ban is quick to decry building of homes like mine built in these areas, and equate that “thousands of Palestinian homes” are at “risk” of demolition. He neglects to note that building of my home, and those of my neighbors, is done largely by Palestinian Arab laborers who receive good pay and conditions, and provides them a source of income that does not exist in their own communities.

Ban is correct that investment in Palestinian Arab communities and industry would help. He lists a variety of public works, energy and utilities, and investments that could be created in this sector, as if Israel doesn't foster that already, and as if Israel is somehow singularly responsible for a lack of “housing, water, energy, communications (and) agriculture” or bears the sole responsibility to do so. If the Palestinian Arabs invested a fraction of what the world doles out to perpetuate their victimhood in things to improve their own environment, that would be refreshing. Abandoning the expense of millions used to invest in war, violence, terror and incitement would be a good next step. But maybe they can start by ceasing to siphon public funds to pad personal bank accounts, making poor Palestinian Arab leaders incredibly wealthy.

Ban is “disturbed by statements from senior members of Israel's government” that abandon a two-state solution as if that were the panacea to establish peace, or as if it were all Israel's responsibility. He decries terror, but not the incitement of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, nor the terror acts they support and celebrate, nor the firing of rockets at Israeli communities. He brushes over the fact that the “Palestinian territories” are presently ruled by two separate, conflicting and both illegitimate groups which cannot reconcile with one another, much less explain how Israel should make peace with them both.

Making his rant all the more offensive in the tradition of the U.N. and its endless bias against Israel, the *Jerusalem Post*

reported this week that his “finger-pointing at Netanyahu and his government ... are unprecedented.”

“Ban’s website lists 85 op-eds he has written since becoming secretary general in 2007 ... and not one of them has the finger-wagging tone toward a specific government that Ban used ... Of those 85 pieces, there is not one devoted to the scourge of terrorism, or to Iran, Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Venezuela or Armenia’s occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh. Of (them), 15 were written about climate control, 11 about global economic issues, and 10 generic pieces about the UN. He has now penned four on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—more than any other conflict on the planet.”

Friends have asked me my “Israeli perspective on Ban’s comments. Sadly they are not new and not surprising. Writing in *Commentary*, Jonathan Tobin sums up Ban’s misplaced comments very well:

“The reason why his speech deserves the most severe criticism goes deeper than one line—as offensive as it may be—and ... is rooted in a view of the conflict that is apparently impervious to reason or willing to take into account the evidence outlining the real reason for the ongoing violence. (Today’s) surge in terror was not the product of “frustration” with the occupation but a series of calculated lies about alleged Israeli threats to the Temple Mount mosques intended to stir up religious fervor and allow Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas to compete with his Hamas rivals.

“Israel has made it clear again and again that it is ready for peace if a sea change in Palestinian political culture ever allows their leaders to embrace a chance for a permanent end to the conflict. Until then, it has no choice but to manage the situation as best it can. It is unfortunate, but that does mean the status quo will continue. But if it is untenable for Palestinians, they have no one but themselves to blame.

“Whatever the ills of the current situation in the West Bank, it is not ‘human nature’ that drives the Palestinians to terror. Rather it is their belief that they can eventually destroy Israel. By legitimizing that fantasy, albeit unwittingly, Ban has become part of the problem, not the solution. Instead of complaining about his critics, he needs to re-evaluate his assumptions.

“That’s why criticisms of Ban’s rant about ‘human nature’ were neither unfair nor out of bounds. By focusing primarily on Israel and treating the real obstacle to peace as an afterthought, he does more than distort the truth about the conflict. He is feeding a prejudiced view of the dispute and effectively giving Palestinians a pass for terrorism. That is something that he would not dare to do with regard to any other outbreak of terror against a state. Only Israel remains the object of such persistent bias. Under the circumstances, it is only reasonable for observers to conclude that he, like the rest of the U.N. bureaucracy, is infected by a double-standard that is rooted in anti-Semitism.”

In 2000, 2001 and 2008, Israel offered the Palestinians a state on nearly all the territory “occupied” in 1967 with land swaps for areas Israel would retain. The Palestinians balked. Not only could they not come to terms and make peace, but they unleashed unprecedented waves of violence and terror, leaving thousands of Israelis dead and wounded. So if there were anything to Ban’s slander that it is “human nature” to resist occupation with violence, what also must be “human nature” is that offering to make peace should be met with violence as well. {eoa}

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