

Do Jewish Voice for Peace and the PLO Share the Same Goals?

Dan Diker, February 7, 2019



Arafat received at the United Nations General Assembly, November 13, 1974. (AP Photo)

Some Jewish groups across the United States have attempted to mainstream “anti-Zionism” – the rejection of Israel as the nation of the Jewish people. Jewish anti-Zionists see themselves as erasing the remaining “evil” of the last century following the collapse of Fascism, Stalinism, and South African Apartheid.¹ These self-proclaimed “progressive” anti-Zionists distinguish “anti-Israel Jews” from their Arab and Islamic counterparts. However, Jewish anti-Zionist enmity for the Jewish state parallels the goals of Arab and PLO rejectionism of Israel, which in the latter case is rooted in Communist, Arab nationalist, and radical Islamist manifestos.



Jewish Voice for Peace - Pittsburgh shared an event.

April 10, 2018 · 🌐

In solidarity with Gaza



Jewish Voices for Peace event supporting the Hamas-led surge on Israel's border. (2018)

Jewish anti-Zionists have avoided employing the terror tactics of the PLO and other Palestinian terror organizations. However, PLO and Arab anti-Zionist incitement and Jewish anti-Zionist condemnations reflect similar rhetoric, ideology, and goals. Both reject the Jewish state's existence as "the collective Jew," following millennia of religious, ethnic, and racial demonization and delegitimization of the individual Jew, rendering their shared crusade as demonstrably anti-Semitic.

Historically, the anti-Semitic dogma underlying Jewish anti-Zionist activity has roots in Soviet and PLO agitation in the United Nations. In 1965, the Soviet Union, the arch anti-Semitic power at the time in the UN General Assembly, refused to recognize anti-Semitism as a form of racism, such as Apartheid or Nazism. The Soviets "set a precedent for linking Zionism and Nazism" as a vengeful move against United States-led counter moves, as historian Joel Fishman points out in his path-breaking article, *Disaster of Another Kind*.²

The Soviets' association of Zionism with Nazism as forms of racism, a mere two decades after the Holocaust exterminated six million Jews, paved the way for PLO leader and terrorist Yasser Arafat's mendacious November, 1974 *Zionism is Racism* speech, delivered from the podium of the UN General Assembly. Arafat's anti-Semitic crusade resulted in the Soviet-aligned and Arab and African state backing for UNGA Resolution 3379 approved in November 1975 (and annulled in 1991), affirming that "Zionism is a form of racism..."³

Chaim Herzog, Israeli Ambassador to the UN at the time, declared at the UN General Assembly, "(This resolution is) another manifestation of the bitter anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish hatred which animates Arab society. Who would have believed that in this year, 1975, the malicious falsehoods of the 'Elders of Zion' would be distributed officially by Arab governments?"

U.S. Jewish leaders denounced Arafat's speech and the UN's assault against the legitimacy of the Jewish state a mere 24 months after Israel was threatened with annihilation by a *coordinated Egyptian and Syrian attack in 1973*. Just before the fateful UN vote, [Daniel Patrick Moynihan](#), the United States ambassador to the United Nations, cautioned, "The United Nations is about to make anti-Semitism international law," noting that, "a great evil has been loosed upon the world."

Arafat's infamous 1974 "gun in holster" speech was delivered in full PLO military regalia. Arafat declared, "Zionism is an ideology that is imperialist, colonialist, racist; it is profoundly reactionary and discriminatory; it is united with anti-Semitism in its retrograde tenets and is, when all is said and done, another side of the same base coin."



Arafat received at the United Nations General Assembly, November 13, 1974. (*AP Photo*)

Twenty-seven years later, Arafat reenergized his anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic UN speech at the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance, hosted in Durban, South Africa. Israel was targeted by Arafat and his supporters as the embodiment of evil, and like the apartheid regime in South Africa, had to be dismantled. Durban's NGO Forum's final declaration affirmed Israel's, "Acts of genocide and practices of ethnic cleansing as a racist system, which is Israel's brand of apartheid."⁴

Arafat's Disciples

Nearly two decades after the 2001 Durban conference, which Irwin Cotler, former Canadian Justice Minister and a Durban participant, branded “the *Mein Kampf* of terror,”⁵ Arafat and his supporters’ calls to dismantle the Jewish state are echoed in a growing chorus by Jewish anti-Zionist groups such as the Jewish Voice for Peace, If Not Now, and The International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN). These Jewish adversaries of the nation-state of the Jewish people have denounced Israel with virtually identical language Arafat and his followers used when referring to Israel for the past six decades.

IJAN wrote in 2018, “We protest Zionism’s exploitation and debasement of histories of Jewish persecution and genocide to justify the unjustifiable – the colonization of Palestine and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.”⁶ IJAN also stated, “The Palestinian struggle against Israeli racist apartheid and the racism of Zionism is one of the most critical struggles against racism and colonialism of today.”⁷

The Jewish Voice for Peace is another leading Jewish anti-Zionist organization whose rhetoric is reminiscent of the PLO, particularly Chairman Yasser Arafat’s November 1974 speech at the UN.⁸ JVP and Jewish anti-Zionist fellow travelers have preached, “We have come to see that Zionism was a false and failed answer to the desperately real question many of our ancestors faced of how to protect Jewish lives from murderous antisemitism in Europe.” In rejecting Zionism as “racist, colonialist and Apartheid,” JVP has equated Zionism – the national movement for secure Jewish sovereignty – with the evil of anti-Semitism it was meant to overcome. This logic represents the intellectual and moral intersection between Jewish anti-Zionists and the terror-supporting PLO.

In 1974, Arafat stood before the world at the UNGA podium and predicted a “world free of colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, and racism... including Zionism.” Arafat insisted that “Our world aspires to peace, justice, equality, and freedom.” Rebecca Vilkomerson, JVP’s Executive Director, has carried Arafat’s message into the 21st century together with Mahmoud Abbas, Chairman of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO. In JVP’s January 2019 declaration, officially rejecting Zionism, JVP declared, “Jewish Voice for Peace is guided by a vision of justice, equality, and freedom for all people. We unequivocally oppose Zionism because it is counter to those ideals.”

Despite receiving the Nobel Prize for Peace, Yasser Arafat was unmasked at the end of his life as the same terror-supporting leader he was when he stood at the UN 30 years earlier. In 2004, the Israel Defense Forces recovered thousands of documents that proved him steadfast in his unending war to destroy the Jewish State, financing PLO terror groups, collaborating with Hamas, and accepting Iranian regime support.⁹ Ultimately, Arafat was marginalized, isolated, and reduced to pariah status.¹⁰



Leila Khaled, convicted terrorist and airplane hijacker (1969)



Leila Khaled in South Africa in support of BDS (2017)

The Jewish Voice for Peace's January 2019 declaration opposing Zionism and its full-throated support of the BDS warfare against Israel ties JVP to central aspects of PLO strategy. Both organizations back a BDS network across United States campuses that has endorsed and even glorified convicted Palestinian terrorists as models for BDS activists.¹¹ BDS groups such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) have supported terrorists such as PFLP's Leila Khaled and Rasmea Odeh, Islamic Jihad member Khader Adnan, and Hamas officials leading the Gaza Israel border protests.¹²

The Lesson to Be Learned

The Jewish world proceeds at its peril unless it loudly and uniformly delegitimizes and isolates terror-supporting and political warfare organizations such as the JVP. Jewish Diaspora leadership endangers the Jewish future unless it draws a red line at the entrance of the proverbial "Jewish tent," marginalizing anti-Zionist Jewish organizations such as *If Not Now*, *IJAN* and *JVP* with its supposed 12,000 paying members, 200,000 online supporters, and some 70 chapters. Otherwise, these misguided – and even malevolent – "progressive" Jewish groups, under the banner of universal justice, equality, and freedom, will intensify their efforts to abolish Israel as the only Jewish and democratic state, thereby destroying the 3,500-year-old national homeland of the Jewish people.

* * *

Notes

1 <https://www.oopen.org/view?docId=651122.xhtml>

2 <http://cic.biu.ac.il/cic.biu.ac.il/originals/1447084781War%20of%20Delegitimization%20against%20Israel,%20Fishman,%20Sept%202011.pdf>

3 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/000/92/IMG/NR000092.pdf>

4 <http://www.i-p-o.org/racism-ngo-decl.htm>

5 <http://www.crif.org/fr/actualites/durban-911-ten-years-later-irwin-cotler>

6 <http://www.ijan.org/who-we-are/>

7 <http://www.ijan.org/uncategorized/ijan-stands-with-angela-davis/>

8 <https://al-bab.com/documents-section/speech-yasser-arafat-1974> Arafat declared from the Podium of the UNGA: "Just as colonialism heedlessly used the wretched, the poor, the exploited as mere inert matter with which to build and to carry out settler colonialism, so too were destitute, oppressed European Jews employed on behalf of world imperialism and of the Zionist leaders. European Jews were transformed into the instruments of aggression – they became the elements of settler colonialism intimately allied to racial discrimination."

9 <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/drama-red-sea-capture-palestinian-arms-ship-karine-january-3-2002/>

10 <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2004/11/11/the-father-of-modern-terrorism-the-true-legacy-of-yasser-arafat/>

11 <http://jcpa.org/book/students-for-justice-in-palestine-unmasked/>

12 <http://jcpa.org/book/students-for-justice-in-palestine-unmasked/> P.8