

How Israel Was Disarmed

By Bret Stephens The Wall Street Journal

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News analysis from the near-future.

Jan. 20, 2010 When American diplomats sat down for the first in a series of face-to-face talks with their Iranian counterparts last October in Geneva, few would have predicted that what began as a negotiation over Tehran's nuclear programs would wind up in a stunning demand by the Security Council that Israel give up its atomic weapons.

Yet that's just what the U.N. body did this morning, in a resolution that was as striking for the way member states voted as it was for its substance. All 10 nonpermanent members voted for the resolution, along with permanent members Russia, China and the United Kingdom. France and the United States abstained. By U.N. rules, that means the resolution passes.

The U.S. abstention is sending shock waves through the international community, which has long been accustomed to the U.S. acting as Israel's de facto protector on the Council. It also appears to reverse a decades-old understanding between Washington and Tel Aviv that the U.S. would acquiesce in Israel's nuclear arsenal as long as that arsenal remained undeclared. The Jewish state is believed to possess as many as 200 weapons.

Tehran reacted positively to the U.S. abstention. "For a long time we have said about Mr. Obama that we see change but no improvement," said Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki. "Now we can say there has been an improvement."

The resolution calls for a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East. It also demands that Israel sign the 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and submit its nuclear facilities to international inspection. Two similar, albeit nonbinding, resolutions were approved last September by the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

At the time, the U.S. opposed a resolution focused on Israel but abstained from a more general motion calling for regional disarmament. "We are very pleased with the agreed approach reflected here today," said then-U.S. Ambassador to the IAEA Glyn Davies.

Since then, however, relations between the Obama administration and the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, never warm to begin with, have cooled dramatically. The administration accused Tel Aviv of using "disproportionate force" following a Nov. 13 Israeli aerial attack on an apparent munitions depot in Gaza

City, in which more than a dozen young children were killed.

Mr. Netanyahu also provoked the administration's ire after he was inadvertently caught on an open microphone calling Mr. Obama "worse than Chamberlain." The comment followed the president's historic Dec. 21 summit meeting with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Geneva, the first time leaders of the two countries have met since the Carter administration.

But the factors that chiefly seemed to drive the administration's decision to abstain from this morning's vote were more strategic than personal. Western negotiators have been pressing Iran to make good on its previous agreement in principle to ship its nuclear fuel to third countries so it could be rendered usable in Iran's civilian nuclear facilities. The Iranians, in turn, have been adamant that they would not do so unless progress were made on international disarmament.

"The Iranians have a point," said one senior administration official. "The U.S. can't forever be the enforcer of a double standard where Israel gets a nuclear free ride but Iran has to abide by every letter in the NPT. President Obama has put the issue of nuclear disarmament at the center of his foreign policy agenda. His credibility is at stake and so is U.S. credibility in the Muslim world. How can we tell Tehran that they're better off without nukes if we won't make the same point to our Israeli friends?"

Also factoring into the administration's thinking are reports that the Israelis are in the final stages of planning an attack on Iran's nuclear installations. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who met with his Israeli counterpart Ehud Barak in Paris last week, has been outspoken in his opposition to such a strike. The Jerusalem Post has reported that Mr. Gates warned Mr. Barak that the U.S. would "actively stand in the way" of any Israeli strike.

"The Israelis need to look at this U.N. vote as a shot across their bow," said a senior Pentagon official. "If they want to start a shooting war with Iran, we won't have their backs on the Security Council."

An Israeli diplomat observed bitterly that Jan. 20 was the 68th anniversary of the Wannsee conference, which historians believe is where Nazi Germany planned the extermination of European Jewry. An administration spokesman said the timing of the vote was "purely coincidental."

Toward peace in the Middle East

By Aaron David Miller *The Los Angeles Times* September 25, 2009

Watching Tuesday's three-way meeting in New York between President Obama, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas -- and the administration's effort to spin it into a success -- reminded me that when breakthroughs in Arab-Israeli peacemaking come, they come with unforeseen and unpredictable urgency driven by big men and big events.

Today we have neither, just the prospects of a long, hard slog -- a thousand days of root canals created for the would-be mediator by Israeli and Palestinian leaders who are prisoners, rather than masters, of their political worlds, and by gaps on the core issues, such as Jerusalem, that are galactic in scale. In the middle sits a potentially transformative American president who somehow hopes to compensate for their absence of leadership with his own strength and vision.

Having spent the better part of a quarter of a century as a negotiator working on the Arab-Israeli conflict, I know how easy it is for longtime observers to get cynical about the prospects for peace. But that's unfair; after all, the wheel turns, and with it comes a new administration, new circumstances and new ideas that can sometimes lead to movement in an all-too-often stagnant process. Still, when William Faulkner wrote that "the past is never dead; it's not even past," he cautioned all of us to respect history's power.

And history, when it comes to the Arabs and Israelis, is worth pondering. It teaches that only when the regional table is set with the realities of pain and gain can America, pursuing relentless and reassuring diplomacy, forge agreements between the two sides.

It was the 1973 war, for instance, that allowed Henry Kissinger to use crisis, pressure and incentives to broker three disengagement agreements in 18 months; it was Jimmy Carter, rescued by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's extraordinary trip to Jerusalem in 1977, who brokered an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. And it was Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait that triggered Operation Desert Storm and opened the way for James Baker's tough and smart diplomacy that compelled three strong but recalcitrant leaders (Yitzhak Shamir, Hafez Assad and Yasser Arafat) to send their negotiating teams to Madrid in October 1991.

The challenge, of course, for the Obama administration is that it lacks the stuff of which Arab-Israeli breakthroughs are made, particularly the leaders who must make the tough decisions.

On the West Bank, a Palestinian Humpty Dumpty offers itself up as a prospective peace

partner for Israel. Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad are good, reasonable men who know that history compels them to do pragmatic diplomacy. But although they have the incentive to make peace with Israel, they do not have the power. Hamas, on the other hand, has a different understanding of history's long arc. Consequently, it has the power but not the incentive to settle with Israel. Empowering Abbas makes sense on paper, but it is beyond the capacity of this Israeli government or even the United States. To do so would require Israel to adopt a real freeze on settlements and to take positions in negotiations that meet Palestinian national aspirations, including parting with half of Jerusalem as a Palestinian capital.

And even if the Israelis were to promise all this, they might well be making concessions to a Palestinian partner who lacked a monopoly over the legitimate forces of violence in Palestinian society and didn't control all of the guns. Can any Palestinian leader really recognize Israel and accept it as a state of the Jews and also provide the security guarantees to allay its existential concerns? Israel's fears run deep. "We fight the Arabs during the day and win," goes an Israeli saying, "and fight the Nazis at night and lose."

In Israel, meanwhile, a different battle rages within a deeply divided and rudderless society. Israel is burdened by history and shackled by a settlement enterprise it may not be able to escape; it is uncertain still about what price it is prepared to pay on Jerusalem, territory and refugees to end its conflict with the Palestinians.

The prime minister himself is a reflection of this terrible ambivalence. The part of him that is a tough, suspicious Likud Party pol wrestles with the part of him that aspires to greatness and to lead Israel out of the shadow of the Iranian bomb to a lasting peace with the Arabs. Which will win -- the surviving politician or the risk-ready statesman? Even he doesn't know. They say an Israeli prime minister sleeps with one eye open; this one is sleeping with two eyes open wide.

It's against this grim backdrop that Obama, the transformer, seeks to leave his mark. Smart and savvy, he knows that governing is about choosing, about setting priorities. Given all the other battles he's waging at the same time, the smart money is on his taking the easy road, the small deal, managing the Arab-Israeli issue, maybe nudging into being a Palestinian state with provisional borders.

But who knows? Maybe the president will conclude that it's worth taking a crack at breaking the Arab-Israeli impasse; maybe an American vision is in store on borders, Jerusalem, security and

refugees, and a package of security guarantees and real normalization with the Arabs to make it worth Israel's while. Indeed, perhaps the president sees that the kind of good fortune that smiled on Kissinger, Carter and Baker won't rescue America this time around, and that if he hopes to achieve what now seems unimaginable -- a conflict-ending Israeli-Palestinian solution -- he'll have to make his own breaks through tough, fair and reassuring diplomacy.

The coming war with Iran

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner The Washington Times October 4, 2009

War with Iran is now inevitable. The only question is: Will it happen sooner or later? Tehran's recent missile tests and war games suggest that the apocalyptic mullahs have reached the same conclusion.

Iran is on the march. Their medium-range Shahab-3 and Sajjil missiles can reach Israel, the entire Middle East and parts of Europe. Tehran is slowly expanding its regional sphere of influence. It has backed insurgency groups in Iraq, which have killed U.S. soldiers. It sponsors Hamas and Hezbollah. It has transformed Syria into a political vassal. It has forged an alliance with Hugo Chavez's Venezuela. It has purchased key air defense systems from Vladimir Putin's Russia.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a Holocaust-denier and virulent anti-Semite. He is a Persian Nazi strongman who vows to wipe Israel "off the map." He is a revolutionary Shi'ite. He believes the Jews must be extinguished in order to usher the coming of the Shi'ite Messiah, the so-called "Hidden Imam."

For years, the fascist theocracy has invested considerable resources into developing a clandestine nuclear weapons program. Mr. Ahmadinejad insists Tehran only wants atomic energy for "peaceful purposes." Yet, he cannot answer one simple question: Why does a country with the world's second-largest natural gas reserves and third-largest oil supply need domestic nuclear power?

Moreover, Mr. Ahmadinejad is a congenital liar. He repeatedly insists that Iran is a "democracy." Rather, it is a brutal police state based on rigged elections and the torture and murder of dissidents. He claims that Iran has "no homosexuals" and that women are treated "fairly." In fact, the Islamist regime routinely executes gays and subjugates women. He says Iran has "nothing to hide" about its nuclear program. The West, however, recently discovered a hidden, underground facility near the holy city of Qom capable of producing highly enriched uranium for weapons-grade nuclear material.

Since establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979, Iran has been engaged in an ideological struggle against the West. Its two main enemies have

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been the United States ("the Great Satan") and Israel ("the Little Satan"). From its inception, Tehran has sought to erect a world Muslim empire; to restore medieval Islamic civilization to its former dominance. The regime is reactionary and - in a twisted manner - even utopian. Nuclear weapons are about more than attaining great-power status. They are the means to achieve the final triumph of messianic Shi'ism.

Iran is on the verge of acquiring the bomb. The mullahs have reached the point of no return. Israel - the country that has to live in that dangerous part of the world - believes the mullahs are six to nine months away from getting it.

Hence, President Obama's policy of diplomatic engagement combined with possible sanctions is doomed to fail. It is ineffective, naive and reckless. Direct talks, like those conducted in Geneva on Thursday, only give Iran more time. Mr. Obama is simply providing the mullahs with the cover they need to finish completing their nuclear arsenal.

Washington now has two choices: Sanction an American or Israeli military attack to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities or allow Tehran to go nuclear. Either option means war.

A devastating strike would likely trigger a fierce Iranian response, including waves of suicide bombers targeting Israeli civilians and U.S. troops in Iraq. Iranian missiles would pound Israeli and, maybe, European cities. Vital shipping lanes in the Persian Gulf would be disrupted, driving the price of oil to more than \$300 a barrel - plunging the West into a possible depression. Hezbollah sleeper cells might be activated within the United States, unleashing deadly atrocities on American soil.

Yet, allowing a nuclear-armed Iran is likely to lead to an even worse regional war. Once the ruling clerics get their hands on nukes, a military showdown with Israel is inevitable. They will seek to destroy the Jewish state once and for all. Jerusalem will not stand by and commit existential suicide. It will retaliate. The result would be a nuclear holocaust in the Middle East.

The winds of war are blowing across the Persian Gulf. Following this summer's crackdown on pro-democracy protesters, the Iranian regime is weak,

desperate and fracturing. Washington should vigorously pursue a policy of internal regime change; otherwise, Tehran will drag the Middle East into a certain conflagration that could lead to the slaughter of millions.

Instead, Mr. Obama has ruled out "meddling in Iran's internal affairs." His peace-at-any-cost diplomacy guarantees military conflict. It is no longer a question of if this will happen, but when

and on whose terms. Mr. Obama is sleepwalking into disaster. America and the Middle East will pay the price.

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U.N. Strikes Again: Hamas not terrorist, but Israel Is?

By Joel Mowbray TownHall.com September 18, 2009

Looking at the latest high-profile "report" from the United Nations on the recent war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas, it's not difficult to understand why the vast majority of Americans harbor deep distrust of the international body.

Though the UN has a disturbing history of cozying up to thugs and tyrants—each dictator has a vote in the General Assembly equal to the United States—it is the international body's unrelenting obsession with Israel that reveals its moral bankruptcy.

Genuine massacres in Sudan and Rwanda or ongoing brutality in Burma and North Korea elicit barely a yawn at the UN. But Israel wages a carefully planned and orchestrated military campaign to root out terrorists who have intentionally embedded themselves in civilian areas and the UN issues a breathless 554-page report accusing the Jewish state of "war crimes" and "terrorism."

To appreciate the utter absurdity of the so-called Goldstone Report, consider:

- Even though the report was about the fighting between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian Authority is chastised for violating human rights — by closing Hamas charities and firing Hamas terrorists from the government payroll.

- Hamas is never referred to directly as a terrorist organization, and further, its intentional firing of rockets into Israeli civilian areas was not necessarily done to terrorize.

- Human shields were used, the report concluded, but by Israel, not the Hamas terrorists who chose to launch rockets and mortars from crowded civilian areas and near schools and hospitals.

- Only one party could be confirmed with certainty as terrorists: Israel.

Issues of balance aside, the quality of the evidence cited is at best dubious. Rumor and speculation provide foundation for some of the most outlandish allegations, and most of the report itself is not the work of first-hand research, but rather repeating claims made by various NGOs or news accounts from the likes of al-Jazeera.

Among the experts cited by the Goldstone Report were the unquestionably fair-minded Central

Commission for Documentation and Pursuit of Israeli War Criminals and an avowed and avid collector of Nazi memorabilia.

Such is what has become of the United Nations.

When the Goldstone Reports addresses Israeli actions, subtlety is the first casualty. Without mincing words, the Jewish state is deemed a war criminal—again and again. In the few instances where it even broaches the topic of possible Hamas wrongdoing, the report employs oddly tortured verbiage with no almost direct conclusions.

Here are some of the bold, unmistakable accusations leveled against Israel:

- Israel committed "continuous and systematic abuse, outrages on personal dignity, humiliating and degrading treatment contrary to fundamental principles of international humanitarian law and human rights law."

- The UN mission in Gaza "considers the attack was not only an attack intended to kill but also to spread terror among the civilian population."

- "It is in these circumstances that the [UN] Mission [in Gaza] concludes that what occurred in just over three weeks at the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009 was a deliberately disproportionate attack designed to punish, humiliate and terrorize a civilian population"

- "Such treatment amounts to measures of intimidation and terrorism."

- "In some cases the Mission additionally concluded that the attack was also launched with the intention of spreading terror among the civilian population."

Compare the above slams against the meticulously ambiguous language about Hamas:

- "It is plausible that one of the primary purposes of these continued [Hamas rocket] attacks is to spread terror." (emphasis added)

- The UN report authors also found "significant evidence to suggest that one of the primary purposes [of firing rockets into southern Israel] ... is to spread terror." (emphasis added)

- "These acts [firing rockets and mortars into Israeli civilian populations] would constitute war crimes and may amount to crimes against humanity." (emphasis added)

Why does the UN have no compunction in characterizing the Jewish state's actions as "war crimes" and "terrorism," yet when it comes to Hamas, it meekly offers that there is "evidence to suggest" that it's "plausible" that the group's actions "would" or "may" constitute terrorism or war crimes?

Perhaps the answer can be found in the "experts" tapped by the UN. Among them was now-suspended Human Rights Watch senior analyst Marc Garlasco, who was recently revealed as an obsessive collector of all things Nazi and who said in an online posting that an SS leather jacket was "cool."

Two of the HRW Gaza war reports on which Garlasco was a lead investigator were cited several times by the Goldstone report. As noted by watchdog group NGO Monitor, Richard Goldstone himself was a longtime board member of HRW, and

the Goldstone report re-published without verification several of the claims made by Garlasco's unit.

Then there's Palestinian psychiatrist Dr. Iyyad El-Sarraj. In one of the "fact-finding" hearings conducted for the report, Dr. El-Sarraj compared Israelis to Nazis. The UN was smart enough to cut the Nazi reference from the final report, but still quoted approvingly the good doctor who thinks of Israelis as Nazis.

Given that U.S. taxpayers have lavished the UN with billions and billions of dollars over the years, one wonders why the group's report would stoop to relying on al-Jazeera and a Nazi fetishist as sources.

Unless, of course, the UN went looking for the sources that would give them the conclusions it wanted long before Israel ever launched its campaign against Hamas.

Deep Denial, Why the Holocaust Still Matters

By Michael B. Oren **The New Republic** October 6, 2009

Toughened by their frontier ethos, steeled by serial wars, Israelis are not prone to flattery. Most, in fact, eschew using the closest equivalent to the Hebrew word for flattery--chanupa--in favor of the derisive Yiddish-derivative, *firgun*. An Israeli joke holds that the word, slashed by a red diagonal line, graces the exit from Ben-Gurion Airport, together with the warning, "You are now entering a *Firgun* Free Zone."

Not surprisingly, then, several Israeli commentators reacted unflatteringly to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent speech to the U.N. General Assembly. Though many international leaders and even the audience in the U.N. hall applauded Netanyahu, his words were lambasted in Haaretz by Tom Segev as "unnecessary and embarrassing" and by Gideon Levy as "demagogic" and "insulting to the intelligence." Aluf Benn, one of Israel's most respected journalists, faulted the prime minister for failing to address a global, rather than an Israeli, audience.

The bulk of the speech highlighted the threat of Iranian nuclearization, the travesty of the Goldstone Report, and Israel's hopes for a peace with the Palestinians based on security and mutual recognition. Yet criticism of the prime minister virtually ignored these topics and focused instead on his opening remarks, about the Holocaust. "One third of all Jews perished in the great conflagration of the Holocaust," Netanyahu reminded the delegates. "Nearly every Jewish family was affected, including my own." He went on to assail President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the world's premier Holocaust denier, who had addressed the same assembly the previous day, as well as those ambassadors who did not walk out on him. "Have

you no shame?" Netanyahu upbraided them. "Have you no decency?"

Detractors of Netanyahu alleged that, by asserting the reality of the Holocaust, he stooped to Ahmadinejad's level--worse, that he granted credibility to the Iranian thug by debating him over a universally accepted truth. "If 64 years after World War II concluded with Hitler's fall ... the debate on the reality of the Holocaust has reached the UN General Assembly," Benn wrote, "then Ahmadinejad has succeeded in instilling doubt."

Perhaps because they were raised in a society suffused with Holocaust consciousness, some Israelis might be unaware of the extent of ignorance of the Final Solution throughout the world, even in the United States, and especially among youth. Confronted with the enormity of the horror, many young people today--much like American Jewish leaders in 1942--react with incredulousness, rendering them susceptible to denial. Millions of Muslims, moreover, subscribe to the syllogism: If Israel was created by Europeans out of Holocaust guilt, and the Holocaust never occurred, then Israel's existence is unjust. Where better than the General Assembly, a body established in response to World War II and affording a global audience, to reaffirm the veracity of an event now so widely questioned if not refuted?

But in concentrating on the prime minister's preamble, critics overlook the deeper connections between the Holocaust and his subsequent themes. Recognizing the murder of six million Jews more than six decades ago is, in fact, vital for understanding the supreme dangers posed to six million Jews in Israel today by a nuclear Iran and by the Goldstone Report. Reasserting the factuality of the Holocaust is a prerequisite for peace.

Many factors contributed to the Holocaust--European anti-Semitism, mass murder technologies, and Allied indifference--but none more elemental than the Jews' inability to defend themselves. Israel and its citizen Defense Forces represent the most palpable means for redressing that incapacity.

Accordingly, denying the Holocaust not only deprives Israel of its *raison d'être*, but, more nefariously still, it invalidates the Jews' need to defend themselves. So, the Iranian leader proceeds to arm Hamas and Hezbollah and produce nuclear weapons while claiming that the Jews of Israel--like those of 1940s Europe--have nothing to fear. But Ahmadinejad does not stop short at merely deeming the Holocaust a "fairy tale;" rather, he portrays Israel as a Nazi state--guilty of perpetrating the very offenses against the Palestinians that the Nazis never did to the Jews.

Where Ahmadinejad leaves off, the Goldstone Report, or, as it is officially called, the "United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict," persists. The U.N. mission purports to have investigated Israel's military action in Gaza last winter, an operation launched in response to the firing of more than 7,000 Hamas missiles at Israeli towns since Israel's 2005 withdrawal from the Strip. But instead of probing Hamas's deliberate effort to maximize Israeli civilian casualties and its doctrine of hiding behind Palestinian human shields, the judges interviewed handpicked Hamas witnesses, several of them senior commanders disguised as civilians, and uncritically accepted their testimony. Inexorably, the report, which presumed Israel's guilt, condemned the Jewish state for crimes against humanity and for mounting a premeditated campaign against Gaza civilians.

The Goldstone Report goes further than Ahmadinejad and the Holocaust deniers by stripping

the Jews not only of the ability and the need but of the right to defend themselves. If a country can be pummeled by thousands of rockets and still not be justified in protecting its inhabitants, then at issue is not the methods by which that country survives but whether it can survive at all. But more insidiously, the report does not only hamstring Israel; it portrays the Jews as the deliberate murderers of innocents--as Nazis. And a Nazi state not only lacks the need and right to defend itself; it must rather be destroyed.

Ahmadinejad's genocidal rhetoric and the iniquity of the Goldstone Report notwithstanding, Israel will, of course, continue to defend its citizens. No amount of vitriol will compel Israel onto a course of self-destruction. But what will be destroyed is any chance for peace. Having twice withdrawn unilaterally to recognized borders and received only onslaughts in return, and having suffered censure for protecting themselves from that aggression, Israelis will understandably recoil from additional retreats that will leave them vulnerable. Israelis, moreover, will not withdraw from any territory liable to become staging grounds for terrorist groups empowered by international agencies and convinced of their ability to murder Israelis with impunity.

Israel will pursue policies with or without firgun. But by making the connection between the Holocaust and its denial, the Iranian nuclear program, and the Goldstone Report, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has exposed the venal narrative that concludes with Israel's paralysis. By reaffirming Israel's right to safeguard its citizens, he has demarcated the only path to peace.

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Israel's Professor Ada Yonath wins Nobel Prize for Chemistry

By Ofri Ilani Haaretz October 8, 2009

Prof. Ada Yonath of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot was awarded a Nobel Prize in chemistry yesterday, the Nobel committee in Stockholm announced. Yonath shares the prize with Britain's Venkatraman Ramakrishnan and Thomas A. Steitz, an American, for studies of the structure and function of the ribosome, a part of the cell that synthesizes protein and translates genetic code in the production of protein.

Yonath is the Martin S. and Helen Kimmel Professor of Structural Biology at Weizmann. She is the fourth woman to win the Nobel chemistry prize and the first since 1964, when Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin of Britain received the prize.

"I'm really, really happy," Yonath said after being informed of her victory. "I thought it was wonderful when the discovery came. It was a series

of discoveries ... We still don't know everything, but we progressed a lot."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Yonath to congratulate her and expressed his "enormous pride, along with the entire nation" in her achievement. "The Nobel Prize is a true Olympics of humanity," said Netanyahu. "It is an enormous achievement."

Yonath told reporters that from the very beginning her project seemed to her Nobel-worthy, but that along the way many had been wary of her ability to see the research through. "I must say I was shocked when they called me and said I was in the leading group. I was sure they were pulling my leg, so I said: 'Here, they found themselves a new victim,'" she said.

"I saw the number 46 on the caller ID, the country code for Sweden. So I said, 'they're taking this joke really far,' but the tone was very much Swedish, with a very Swedish accent, so it seemed fine after all. From the first indication that perhaps this project would work, I was told that this was a project of Nobel standards."

At another point, however, she was told that her project would not succeed. "You won't make it, what you want to do others have tried and failed, so it won't happen. They gave me the impression that the problems were cardinal, that there was no chance," she said.

"People called me a dreamer," says Yonath, recalling her decision to undertake research on ribosomes.

Yonath was born in 1939 in Jerusalem, and received her Ph.D. in x-ray crystallography in 1968 from Weizmann. She holds B.Sc and M.Sc degrees in chemistry and biochemistry respectively, both from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Yonath has won many prizes for her research in recent years, including the Israel Prize in Chemistry and the Wolf Prize in Chemistry.

She was the first Israeli biologist to work with NASA in sending research material to outer space. She cooperated with NASA on 12 missions. Her

research contributed greatly to the development of more effective antibiotics, which can overcome the phenomenon of drug resistant pathogens.

Yonath has one daughter, Dr. Hagit Yonath, a physician at the Sheba Medical Center, Tel Hashomer, and one granddaughter, Noa.

This year's three laureates all generated three-dimensional models that show how different antibiotics bind to ribosomes. "These models are now used by scientists in order to develop new antibiotics, directly assisting the saving of lives and decreasing humanity's suffering," the academy said in its announcement. "All three have used a method called x-ray crystallography to map the position for each and every one of the hundreds of thousands of atoms that make up the ribosome," the academy said.

Each Nobel prize comes with a 10 million kronor [\$1.4 million] purse, a diploma, a gold medal and an invitation to the prize ceremony in Stockholm on Dec. 10.

The last Israeli to receive a Nobel Prize was Yisrael Robert Aumann, who was awarded the prize in economics in 2005 for his work on conflict and cooperation through game-theory analysis. He shared the prize with Thomas Schelling.

Revolutionary Anti-Semitism

By Mary Anastasia O'Grady *The Wall Street Journal* October 4, 2009

Sometimes I ask myself if Hitler wasn't right when he wanted to finish with that race, through the famous holocaust, because if there are people that are harmful to this country, they are the Jews, the Israelites. David Romero Ellner Executive Director Radio Globo, Honduras, Sept. 25, 2009

Meet one of Honduras's most vocal advocates for the return of deposed president Manuel Zelaya to office. He's not your average radio jock. He started in Honduran politics as a radical activist and was one of the founders of the hard-left People's Revolutionary Union, which had links to Honduran terrorists in 1980s. A few years ago he was convicted and served time in prison for raping his own daughter.

Today Mr. Romero Ellner is pure *zelayista*, hungry for power and not ashamed to say so. This explains why he has joined Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Mr. Zelaya in targeting Jews. Mr. Chávez has allied himself with Iran to further his ability to rule unchecked in the hemisphere. He hosts Hezbollah terrorists and seeks Iranian help to become a nuclear power. He and his acolytes cement their ties to Iranian dictator Mahmoud Ahmadinejad by echoing his anti-Semitic rants.

The Honduras debate is not really about Honduras. It is about whether it is possible to stop

the spread of *chavismo* and all it implies, including nuclear proliferation and terrorism in Latin America. Most troubling is the unflinching support for Mr. Zelaya from President Barack Obama and Democratic Sen. John Kerry—despite the Law Library of Congress review that shows that Mr. Zelaya's removal from office was legal, and the clear evidence that he is Mr. Chávez's man in Tegucigalpa. On Thursday, Mr. Kerry took the unprecedented step of trying to block a fact-finding mission to Honduras by Republican Sen. Jim DeMint, who is resisting Mr. Obama's efforts to restore Mr. Zelaya to power.

Mr. Zelaya, recall, was arrested, deposed and deported on June 28 because he violated the Honduran Constitution. He snuck back into the country on Sept. 21 and found refuge at the Brazilian Embassy in the capital. Mr. Romero Ellner's calumny against Jews was a follow-up to Mr. Zelaya's claim that he was being "subjected to high-frequency radiation" from outside the embassy and that he thought "Israeli mercenaries" were behind it.

The verbal attack on Jews from a *zelayista* is consistent with a pattern emerging in the region. Take what's been going on in Venezuela. In the earliest years of Chávez rule, a Venezuelan friend, who is a Christian, confessed his fears to me. "In his speech, he always tries to create hate between groups

of people," my friend told me. "He loves hate speech."

For a decade, Venezuelans have been force-fed the strongman's view of economic nationalism laced with this divisive language. Venezuelans are encouraged to seek revenge against their neighbors. Crime has skyrocketed.

The Jewish community has been targeted as Mr. Chávez's relationship with Mr. Ahmadinejad has blossomed. In 2004, I reported on a police raid at a Jewish school for young children in Caracas. The pretext was a "tip" that the school was storing weapons. No weapons were found, but the community was terrorized.

In recent years, Venezuela and Iran have signed joint ventures estimated to be worth \$20 billion. There are similar pacts, estimated at \$10 billion, between Iran and Venezuelan satellite, Bolivia. Both South American countries accused Israel of genocide in Gaza in 2008 and cut diplomatic ties. Mr. Chávez's tirades against Israel during that time emboldened his street thugs. In January 2009, vandals broke into a temple in Caracas and desecrated the sacred space with graffiti calling for the death of Jews.

New York District Attorney Robert Morgenthau recently gave a speech to the Brookings

Institution in which he said "Iran and Venezuela are beyond the courting phase. We know they are creating a cozy financial, political and military partnership, and that both countries have strong ties to Hezbollah and Hamas."

Iran has courted Honduras as well. When Mr. Zelaya was still in power, the Honduran press reported that his foreign minister Patricia Rodas met with high-ranking Iranian officials in Mexico City. That raised plenty of eyebrows in Central America.

Neither Venezuela nor Honduras has any history of anti-Semitism. But with Mr. Chávez importing Mr. Ahmadinejad's despicable ideology and methods, an assault on the Jewish community goes with the territory.

Honduras recognizes that it was a mistake to deport Mr. Zelaya after he was arrested. But it argues that fears of *zelayista* extremism and use of violence as a political tool in the months leading up to June 28 provoked desperation. Mr. Romero Ellner—whose radio station was closed down by the government last week—provided exhibit A with his remarks. If the U.S. State Department is opposed to the exile, let it call for Mr. Zelaya to be put on trial now that he is back in Honduras. It has no grounds to demand that democratic Honduras restore an anti-Semitic rabble rouser to power.

U.N. fact-finding mission

By Robert P. Barnidge, Jr. The Washington Times September 30, 2009

Mark Twain once wrote, "Truth is stranger than fiction," and the largely negative international reaction to Operation Cast Lead, Israel's military effort to stop thousands of Hamas rockets from being launched into southern Israel from the Gaza Strip at the turn of the year, certainly seemed to confirm this.

It was truly amazing to see the streets of major international capitals filled with the protests of self-proclaimed "human rights" and "peace" activists joined in lock step with militant Islamists and anti-Semites. It seemed as if Hamas could do no wrong and Israel could do no right. Unsurprisingly, the United Nations Human Rights Council took an immediate interest in Cast Lead. On Jan. 12, it adopted Resolution S-9/1, which called for a fact-finding mission to "investigate all violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by the occupying Power, Israel, against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the occupied Gaza Strip, due to the current aggression."

The mission, led by South African Justice Richard J. Goldstone with the assistance of Irish Col. Desmond Travers, University of London international law professor Christine Chinkin and Pakistani Supreme Court Advocate Hina Jilani, released its report Sept. 15.

Perhaps the best place to start in critically evaluating this ad hoc exercise in the manipulation of law and legal discourse is the resolution's underlying terms of reference. There were a number of obvious problems with them, not the least of which was that the mission members clearly already had presumed that Israel had violated its international legal obligations during Cast Lead. This leads one to wonder, of course, exactly what "facts" the resolution actually tasked the mission with finding because any process that can even pretend to be taken seriously surely requires ascertaining facts before reaching conclusions of law.

When and through the agency of who or what, furthermore, had allegations of violations morphed into categorical violations, as the resolution stated? And why did the resolution's mandate not charge the mission with looking into possible Palestinian violations during the conflict? Was it so clear that there were not any? It is true that there were some attempts, particularly by the then president of the Human Rights Council and Justice Goldstone himself, to "massage away" the resolution's unfortunate underlying terms of reference, but those attempts were inconsistent and convoluted and likely exceeded the powers extended to the mission.

The mission was bound to play the conclusory cards it had been dealt and could not convincingly

create an illusion to the contrary. If the underlying terms of reference in the resolution were an unfortunate example of putting the cart before the horse, a perception that the members of the mission were at least potentially biased was even more regrettable, and problematic. Consider that Justice Goldstone until recently sat on the board of directors of Human Rights Watch, a human rights nongovernmental organization that has thrown its hat into the ring on Cast Lead. Justice Goldstone also, along with Col. Travers, Ms. Jilani and others, signed a letter, "Find the Truth About the Gaza War," in which they called for an "international investigation of gross violations of the laws of war, committed by all parties to the Gaza conflict."

Ms. Chinkin, as a signatory to an opinion piece in London's Sunday Times on Jan. 11 titled "Israel's Bombardment of Gaza Is Not Self-Defence - It's a War Crime," effectively had argued and legally concluded, as early as Jan. 11, that Cast Lead had violated the law related to the use of force and that Israel had committed an act of aggression in Gaza.

The report, about 575 pages long, concluded that Israel essentially had violated the whole panoply of international law. Given its mandate and membership, this was wholly to be expected. Rather than appreciating the good-faith efforts the Israel Defense Forces had made to comply with the laws of war and international human rights law in a complex urban environment of asymmetrical warfare, the mission seemed more interested in caricature than dispassionate inquiry. For the mission, the Israelis seemed to be the modern equivalent of the "noble savage" of yesteryear.

Surgical Strike? By Paul Johnson

How worried should we be about Iran? Should we encourage the Israelis to make a defensive strike on Iran's nuclear facilities? Israel has carried out similar strikes twice before--once against Saddam Hussein's French-built reactor in Iraq and, more recently, against a Syrian nuclear plant. Both were successful.

Knocking out Iran's nuclear capability would be much more difficult because of the distance to be covered by Israeli aircraft and because the plants are underground. These difficulties must be weighed against the fact that the Iranian regime is unpopular everywhere because of its recent crooked election and the savagery with which protests against the results were put down.

The extent of this unpopularity is evidenced by Saudi Arabia's recent agreement to allow Israeli aircraft to fly over Saudi territory en route to Iran. The agreement was secret but was widely leaked by the Saudis--a message to Tehran that its stance and putative bomb are unpopular in the Muslim world. In fact, Saudi Arabia, other Gulf States and Iraq--all with which Iran has had longstanding and bitter

To quote from the report, Israel, the most robust liberal democracy in the Middle East, had engaged not in legitimate self-defense in Gaza but, rather, in a "deliberately disproportionate attack designed to punish, humiliate and terrorize a civilian population, radically diminish its local economic capacity both to work and to provide for itself, and to force upon it an ever increasing sense of dependency and vulnerability."

Unfortunately, this report is just the beginning of a process that will continue to unfold in the coming months. Thirsting for its own version of accountability, the report seeks to set in motion a series of actions against Israel by, among others, the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly and the International Criminal Court.

It also encourages individual states to exercise universal jurisdiction over certain crimes related to Cast Lead, though it insists, perhaps naively, that this be done in conformity with "internationally recognized standards of justice."

When the Human Rights Council met Tuesday in Geneva to discuss the report, it was a sight to see, though the script already had been written.

All this confirms what has long been true about Israel in international affairs. To turn George Orwell's words on their head: All states are equal, but some states are less equal than others.

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territorial disputes--are more scared of Iran's bomb being used against them than are the Israelis.

I do not despair of a negotiated agreement with Iran that would halt its bomb program in exchange for access to nuclear technology. I once spent many weeks in Iran making a documentary and learned a lot about the country and its people. Iran is an empire composed of different elements, and we must bear in mind that generalizations can be misleading. Persia is only a part of Iran--albeit the most important part. I was present at a dispute between the late Shah and his prime minister. As I recall, the discussion went something like this:

Prime Minister: "I wish we could go back to our old name of Persia. People in the West are always confusing us with Iraq." Shah: "I told you not to raise that issue again. Persia is inaccurate; we are much bigger than Persia. Iran is the only possible name. It is the Iraqis who should change their name, back to Mesopotamia." Iran is not a monolithic entity. There is a large Kurdish element, and there are huge areas occupied by nomadic tribes. Iran is

diverse, disunited, decentralized. Most of its people are Shia Muslims, but even they are divided: The clerics centered in the holy city of Qom are often opposed to the ayatollahs in Tehran, with the clerics of Meshed, another religious center, forming a third party.

Many Iranians are well educated and are deeply shocked by the excesses of the current regime. Iran has ancient traditions of poetry, painting--especially illuminated manuscripts--and gardening, with some of the world's most beautiful rose gardens. Iranians can be subtle and sensitive, philosophical and melancholy. They have nothing in common with the shouting, highly drilled and organized mobs we see on TV. They love leisurely and involved discussions, in which religion, politics and literature are skillfully interwoven. And women play an important part in Iranian social and intellectual life.

Of course, many Iranian intellectuals now live abroad, driven from home by intolerance and the religious bigotry they hate every bit as much as we do. Their lives are filled with infinite sadness over what is happening to their country. Some are busy organizing opposition to the ayatollahs, but they must be careful because many have relatives still living in Iran who are at the mercy of the regime's political police. I noticed during recent demonstrations outside the Iranian embassy in London that two photographers from the embassy's staff were systematically taking photographs of all those taking part. The same thing was reported in Berlin and Paris.

Assessing the Risks If Tehran's ayatollahs could be overthrown by a combination of religious opponents and secular liberals a moderate government could be formed and Iran's nuclear program changed. What we don't know is if a successful Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would discredit the regime to the point that it would be forced out of power or if such an attack would be used to discredit the opposition, causing Iranians to close ranks behind their extremist leaders. Any decision by Israel will require intelligent, informed guesswork and will be made by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Far from being the "bigoted right-winger" described in the Western press, Netanyahu is exceptionally bright and superbly well informed and has an open and flexible mind. At one time I worked closely with him in organizing the first worldwide conferences against international terrorism, held in Jerusalem and Washington, D.C.

Netanyahu comes from a distinguished family of intellectuals and men of action. His elder brother, Jonathan, a lieutenant colonel and commander of a special forces unit, was killed during the successful raid to rescue Jewish hostages held by pro-Palestinian terrorists at Entebbe airport. If the prime minister does give the go-ahead for a strike against Iran, I'm sure it will be a meticulously prepared plan carried out with utmost efficiency--and that its diplomatic, political and military consequences will have been carefully thought out. We must hope such an attack on Iran will not be necessary and that that beautiful, historic and delightful country's civilized elements will soon come to power.

Judging Israel By William Choslovsky

As many pious, civil-rights-minded people have noted, constructing fences to cage people in is "inhumane." As some have editorialized, it is even "racist" and creates an "apartheid" state. No wonder Israel is so criticized. After all, what kind of country would construct high walls, ditches, blockades and checkpoints and use sophisticated surveillance and armed border patrols to keep two people divided?

Oh, that's right, we do. Specifically, the United States is building a 2,000 mile fortress with Mexico. Israel's still incomplete 300 mile divide between itself and its Palestinian "neighbors" is puny in comparison.

Neither is wrong. Both work. As the U.S. Department of Justice reported, after we increased border security, alien arrests fell to 25-year lows near San Diego. Crime rates fell more than 40 percent in border towns like Nogales, Ariz. As the DOJ's "Fact Sheet" later bragged: "Today, Gatekeeper is the model for operations in other vulnerable border regions."

And before all the high-brow critics cry foul, keep in mind that our enhanced, beefed-up divide

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was originally a Clinton administration initiative. That's right, "Operation Gatekeeper" was launched Oct. 1, 1994, to stem the tide of illegal aliens across our porous border. Our wall only "protects" us from people who mainly seek passage for work and a better life. The people on the other side of our wall dream only to join us, not kill us. Yet we keep them out, or try. Imagine what we would build -- or do -- if instead of trying to take a job, those on the other side were trying to take... our lives. Imagine what we would do if people 10 miles away lobbed rockets each day at our children and "taught" their children with textbooks that have maps that omit our country. Imagine what we would do if instead of suffering one terrorist attack since 2001, almost 20,000 were attempted against our people. Viewed in this light, I ask, what took Israel so long?

Simply stated, Israel's "inhumane" walls and policies are the effect; the cause is terrorism. Israel seeks the same thing she has sought since her founding: true peace. As judged by deeds, not sound bites, she still awaits a willing, sincere Palestinian partner. **The writer is a Chicago attorney.**