

A Nation That Still Dwells Alone



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Gerald M. Steinberg

Theodor Herzl's Zionist vision was of a state that would be like any other, bringing an end to anti-Semitism, isolation and vulnerability.

However, after 67 years of sovereignty, this is far from the reality. Israel is the focus of a new form of anti-Semitism, expressed through double standards and obsessive attacks, not only from Palestinians and many Muslim countries, but also among western elites. As a consequence, many Israelis and Jews have given up on the so-called "international community", the media, "human rights" groups and global bodies such as the United Nations and Red Cross.

The use of double standards and singling-out of Israel was most recently reflected in the exclusion of Israeli victims from the outpouring of sympathy and condolences following what are often referred to as "global terror attacks" in Paris, Mali, and California. On Facebook memorial pages, in media coverage, and in official memorial ceremonies, the Israeli flag is absent, as are the names and faces of the victims. Between Sept. 13 and Dec. 6, 2015, there were 88 stabbings, 32 shootings, and 14 car rammings, killing 22 and wounding 215 Israelis.

Among many western politicians, in the media and for groups claiming to promote human rights, there is more than a hint of the view that the Israeli victims "had it coming", and that the terrorists are the real victims. A typical BBC headline declared "Palestinian shot dead after Jerusalem attack kills two," turning terrorists into victims. Similarly, *Sky News* told viewers: "Palestinians shot dead in alleged knife attacks."

In a different way, the EU's Ambassador to Israel, Lars Faaborg-Andersen, tried to justify the European double standard by alleging that "ISIS [Islamic State] is organized terror, and it should be countered with force. Palestinian terror should be met with diplomatic and political means."

This moral inversion, including from many political leaders, led to an angry response from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, expressing the wider fury. “Whoever condemned the attacks in France needs to condemn the attacks in Israel. It’s the same terror. Whoever does not do this is a hypocrite and blind.”

However, Sweden’s Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, rejected Netanyahu’s demand. In a response to a question, he stated, “No, it [meaning the Palestinian attacks against Israelis] is not classified as [terrorism]. There is an international classification regarding what constitutes or does not constitute [terror]. As far as I know, the [stabbing attacks in Israel] are not defined as terror.” After some criticism, he issued what was termed a clarification, claiming “that it was unclear if the knife attacks are organized by a group classified as a terrorist organization.” This only served to highlight the problem.

But the double standards denying that Israelis are equal victims, and the repletion of Palestinian justifications for terror, are only part of the problem. In parallel, a widespread campaign is underway to delegitimize the Israeli defence against the terrorists, while approving the forceful (and late) responses following the attacks in Paris, Brussels, and San Bernardino.

A number of anti-Israel “human rights” groups, including Amnesty International, have exploited the stabbing attacks to repeat blood libels, again accusing Israel of using “excessive force”. The NGO created the fiction of “heavily armed soldiers and police wearing body armour facing a possible knife attack”, in contrast to the reality of unarmed victims, including children and elderly civilians.

The prize for hypocrisy goes to Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom, who, echoing Amnesty, accused Israel of conducting “extrajudicial executions” of Palestinian terrorists. (She also mentioned “Palestinian frustration” with Israel as a factor in the Paris attacks.) Following Israeli outrage, a confused “correction” was issued which, like her prime minister’s, only highlighted the problem.

By singling out the Jewish state repeatedly and in so many ways, Western politicians and “progressive” leaders are reinforcing the widely held view

among Israelis that Herzl's goal is a mirage. For this group, we have always been a "nation that dwells alone" and nothing has changed.