

The BDS war against Israel

Its first goal is to delegitimize Israel

Washington Times, By Jed Babbin, August 13, 2019



In July, when Rep. Ilhan Omar unveiled her plan to visit Israel, she also introduced a resolution that supported the so-called Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement that has, as its first goal, to delegitimize Israel.

Later that month, the House voted 398-17 to oppose the BDS and other efforts to delegitimize Israel. Among the 17 votes opposing condemnation of BDS were three members of “the Squad,” Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib. The latter two are the most anti-Israel and anti-Semitic members of Congress.

Since it was founded, the BDS movement hadn’t previously attracted much attention here. Created in 2005 by Palestinian activist Omar Barghouti, BDS demands that every nation and business boycott Israel, divest all Israeli assets and impose economic sanctions on the Jewish state. Mr. Barghouti’s book, “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions: The Struggle for

Palestinian Rights,” argues falsely that Israel is a fascist, racist and apartheid state and a menace to international peace.

The BDS movement should have as its motto a quote from Mao Zedong — “A lie repeated a hundred times becomes the truth.”

Mr. Barghouti, the principal spokesman for BDS, often states that the movement’s principal demand is for Israel to give back the land it seized during the 1967 War, including Jerusalem and the West Bank. BDS supporters in Hollywood, the media and academia have based their support on that point alone.

But, as Mr. Barghouti has admitted in televised interviews, bringing Israel to its knees economically isn’t enough to satisfy Palestinians. BDS demands that the international community enforce a “right of return,” compelling Israel to allow not only those Palestinians who fled during its territory during the Israeli war of independence but also all of their descendants to emigrate there and become citizens.

On Nov. 29, 1947, U.N. Resolution 181 partitioned what had been British Palestine into a “Jewish state” and an “Arab state.” That meant, and still means, that Jews would have the fundamental right of self-determination in that new nation in a homeland established for that purpose.

When Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, six Arab armies attacked. The Israelis defeated them.

Before and during the war, about 700,000 Arab refugees fled. Why? Mostly because Arab leaders and Muslim clerics told them to. As then-Syrian Prime Minister Kahlid Al-Azm wrote in his memoirs, “... it is we who made them leave.”

In December 1948, U.N. Resolution 184 said that the refugees should be allowed to return to their homes and be compensated for lost property. There were about 700,000 refugees. Their descendants number about 6 million.

The population of Israel totals about 8.7 million, of whom about 1.9 million are Arabs. Add 6 million descendants of refugees and Israel becomes a Muslim state in which Jews no longer have the right of self-determination.

The two U.N. resolutions have to be read and understood together. Having first created a Jewish state, allowing the original refugees to return cannot have meant that the U.N. intended to remake it as a Muslim majority state in which Jews could no longer be self-governing. Thus, the “right of return” Mr. Barghouti and many Arab nations demand is a fiction.

Mr. Barghouti maintains that Israeli laws that permit Jews automatic citizenship and define Israel as a Jewish state are racist and exclusionary. Asked if that meant Jews cannot have their own state, he reportedly said, “Not in Palestine.”

From that we have to conclude that the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement’s real aim is to terminate Israel’s existence.

The BDS joins other Palestinian activists in frequently accusing Israel of every evil, including apartheid. South African Judge Richard Goldstone led a U.N. Human Rights Commission investigation into Palestinian accusations of Israeli war crimes in the 2008-09 Gaza conflict, including the charge that Israel intentionally targeted civilians.

His final report not only found that Israel did not intentionally target civilians, he also found that the Hamas terrorist network — Israel’s principal antagonist in that conflict — did precisely that.

In an October 2011 New York Times op-ed, Judge Goldstone also wrote that there is no apartheid in Israel according to international law. The many other accusations that BDS

supporters levy against Israel — too many to catalogue here — are just as false as the apartheid accusation. (My 2014 monograph on the BDS destroys each them seriatim on the basis of easily-proven and well-documented facts.) Part of the reason that the BDS hasn't — so far — spread widely in America is that its lies are so easily disproved and punctured, even those that aren't contained in its original platform. Mr. Barghouti, for example, claims that the movement is non-violent. But in a recent interview, he said that "armed struggle" — i.e., terrorism — against Israeli "occupation" is a legitimate right. Thanks to Reps. Omar, Tlaib and Ocasio-Cortez (who has made herself a co-sponsor of Ms. Omar's July resolution) we haven't heard the last of the BDS movement. We can expect them to ignore its lies and peddle its disinformation regularly.

President Trump has ensured that we have, so far, remained a staunch ally of Israel, as it deserves. If any Democrat is elected next year they will be under the influence of "the Squad." And he or she will strain or break that alliance, damaging us and our only real ally in the Middle East.

Jed Babbin, a deputy undersecretary of Defense in the George H.W. Bush administration, is the author of "In the Words of Our Enemies."

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