Expel Iran from UN

It's time to expel Iran from the United Nations. Article 6 of the Charter of the United Nations explicitly allows for such a procedure: "A member of the United Nations which has persistently violated the principles contained in the present charter may be expelled from the organization by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council."

The first principle enshrined in the charter is the very one that the government of Iran contemptuously flouts, constantly. "The organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members." (Our emphasis)

Tehran rejects the right of a Jewish state to exist in its Muslim Middle East. It abhors, therefore, that Israel must be regarded as equal in sovereignty along with all other member states of the UN. Iran is the world's chief denier of the Holocaust. It is the world's chief sponsor of terrorism around the globe. And it routinely calls for the annihilation of Israel, a fellow member state of the UN.

Could there be more compelling, more persuasive evidence of Iran's "persistent violation of the principles contained in the present charter" than its belligerent, boastful public campaign each day to deny any, let alone sovereign equal, rights to the Jewish state?

The latest Iranian outrage against the Jewish state and the Jewish People occurred last week at a UN-sponsored meeting on global drug enforcement.

Iranian Vice-President Mohammad Reza Rahimi declared that "the Zionists are in firm control of the drug trade... The Islamic Republic of Iran will pay for anybody who can research and find one single Zionist who is an addict." Rahimi also advised his audience that the Talmud "teaches them [Zionists] how to destroy non-Jews so as to protect an embryo in the womb of a Jewish mother."

It was reported that even other Iranians in the room were appalled by his fevered, frenzied declaration of hatred for Jews and Israelis.

Apparently UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was also upset by Rahimi's remarks. Ban's spokesperson issued the following statement in the secretary general's name: "The secretary general has on many occasions called on Iranian officials to refrain from these kinds of statements. He believes it is the responsibility of leaders to promote harmony and understanding and he deeply regrets expressions of hatred and religious intolerance." (Our emphasis)

Rahimi's remarks were disgusting, ignorant and inciting of hatred. Ban's remarks were craven, pusillanimous and entirely inadequate. He couldn't even find the courage, if not too the will, to actually condemn Rahimi for his ugly bilge about the Jewish faith and Jews.

It's time that steps were taken to remove Iran from the organization whose rules, purposes and principles it so cavalierly disdains.

25 years ago in The CJN

Canadian Jewish Congress expressed "disappointment" at the Supreme Court of Canada decision not to grant Jewish day schools in Ontario the right to government funding. Instead, the court "sent it back to the politicians, telling them not to ask the court to make the laws," said CJC Ontario region chair Charles Zaionz.

Raising kids without day school

I was upset by the perspectives piece "The moral costs of Jewish day school" (June 7), by Rabbi Aryeh Klapper, the dean of the Center for Modern Torah Leadership in Sharon, Mass. In big cities, it is argued, in every city, to every children who has a strong commitment to Judaism and knowledge of who they are, without sending them to Jewish day schools. Yet the message in articles such as this one is that parents are not capable of doing so.

Public schools are already paid for with tax dollars, and the education in many public schools is excellent. By sending children to public schools, parents do not need two jobs to pay the high cost of day school. Time and energy are left on Friday afternoons to teach your children to make challah and enjoy Shabbat dinners regularly as a family. Parents without the financial burden of day school have money left for joining synagogues, enrolling their children in Hebrew schools and Jewish summer camps and family trips to Israel. There are also many opportunities to be active in the Jewish community: by volunteering and fundraising by attending Jewish cultural events, many of which are for children, and by participating in community-wide celebrations, such as the one at Yom Ha'atzmaut.

My children are committed young Jewish adults, living and working in the Jewish community. Parents need to know they can make a Jewish home and raise Jewish children no matter what school they send them to. Maja Bulimun Toronto

Objects to Bob Rae's remarks

It is absolutely unacceptable and perverse for interim Liberal leader Bob Rae, who must know better, to call the result of the Six Day War started by five Arab nations planning to push Israel into the sea "imperial adventure" ("Interim liberal leader touts two-state solution", June 21). Rae talks about "more than one narrative." Is that the Liberal Party of Canada's narrative? Is that how he intends to gain credibility with the Arab world? He will certainly not gain my credibility.

Nathan Leipciger
Past Co-chair, Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

The United Church report

In the guest voice "The United Church should not boycott Israel" (June 21), Shimom Fogel, the CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), takes the United Church to task for urging a boycott of settlement products and characterizes their recent report as "marked by historical distortions" and one-sided. I have, as a historian, perused the report and find it to be fairly balanced, giving due weight to the legitimate security concerns of Israelis, as well as to the national claims of both peoples. I would congratulate our Christian friends for having produced a balanced and thoughtful document. Fogel, however, takes exception to their call for a boycott of settlement products. Again, we might congratulate the church for eschewing the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, which they rightly regard as an assault on the legitimacy of Israel and the democratic forces within the country. They have taken a moderate and responsible position.

Fogel acknowledges the Jewish community has a healthy diversity of opinion, presumably extending to the settlements, but then proceeds to argue that CIJA must react when the church aims to target Israelis for boycott. Fogel has thereby extended CIJA's legitimate defence of Israel to the defence of settlements, which is still a hotly debated issue. In The Crisis of Zionism, Peter Beinart urges us to distinguish between the democratic Israel, behind the green line, and the undemocratic Israel of the occupation and settlements, the correct target for a boycott. Likewise, Peace Now joined the settlement boycott, after the Knesset made it illegal to advocate such actions and subject to civil damages. Fogel and CIJA are out of line in extending their protection to the settlement enterprise.

Stephen Scheinberg
Co-Chair, Canadian Friends of Peace Now
Montreal

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