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Former President



Jimmy Carter
(Archive photo)
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Carter is no friend

Open letter to former president in wake of his recent anti-Israel book Yariv Nornberg

Former President Carter Shalom!

Last year I had the privilege to join your conflict resolution task team to assist you in your worthy goal of "waging peace."

The opportunity to facilitate dialogues between warring parties in conflicts outside of the scope of the Israeli-Arab conflict was a tremendous experience. It convinced me that a goodwill ambassador could actually play a constructive role in facilitating the reconciliation of two enemies. Unfortunately, your last publication is a total contradiction to this notion. Not only is the book counter-productive, Mr. President, but it completely contradicts all that I was taught about conflict resolution at the Carter Center.

I find "Palestine Peace Not Apartheid" to be an outrageous one-sided accusation against Israel. It puts all responsibility for the failure of the peace process on Israel and goes as far as insinuating that its presence and control of the disputed territories constitutes a form of Apartheid regime. Throughout the book the reader gets the impression that Israel is the source of all wrongdoings in the region and that if it were just willing to comply with the Arab demands, peace would already be flourishing in the Middle East.

The book pretends to give a descriptive account of the main actors, developments and realities of the region. In actual fact, this work presents a relatively simplistic and distorted view of the conflict. By entirely ignoring the countless examples of Palestinian rejection of Israel, inadmissible involvement in terror, and the culture of hatred promoted by the Palestinian Authority, the reader is expected to see Israel as the key party responsible for the conflict.

Dozens of factual errors throughout the book detract from the knowledge and expertise you claim to have accumulated from your involvement in the region. Your unyielding positions sometimes coincide with those of the most radical actors in the region, like your stance on the Shebaa Farms issue, and are in total opposition to the notion of international law you praise in other parts of your book.

You suggest, Mr. President, that Israel is to blame for the failure of the road map by attaching Reservations to its acceptance while the Palestinians "unequivocally accepted" it. By writing that, you choose to ignore the fact that the Palestinians never even implemented the first point of the agreement, which said that a two-state solution "will only be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism, when the Palestinian people have a leadership acting decisively against terror and willing and able to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty."

Ardent advocate of Palestinian cause

The Palestinian Authority has consistently said it has no intention to fulfill its promise to dismantle terrorist organizations or to confiscate illegal weapons. Ironically, we have recently witnessed the use of those weapons in internal Palestinian clashes, which

Controversial Book

Carter's book: Anti-Semitism, not peace / Rabbi Levi Brackman

Jimmy Carter's latest offering reeks of anti-Semitism, not because of what he has written but because of how he has written it, what he has left out

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threaten to push the entire Palestinian society into a tragic civil war.

I was especially offended when you equated the "ejection" of Palestinians from their homes to the Indians in Georgia being forced out to make room for "our white ancestors." You deliberately chose to ignore that Jews, unlike your ancestors in the Great Peach State, were always living in their homeland and that the Palestinians were not ejected, but rather, most fled during the battles of the 1947-1949 war provoked by the Arab rejection of UN partition resolution 181.

Prior to that, the Arab population in that area had been growing, as you acknowledge elsewhere when you state that the two populations increased dramatically from 1931 to 1945. You note that the Arab newcomers were attracted by economic opportunity, but neglect to mention that it was the influx of Jews from the Diaspora that created those opportunities.

Sadly, I must reach the conclusion that in writing "Palestine Peace Not Apartheid" you decided to transform yourself from a goodwill player to an ardent advocate of the Palestinian cause. I am not suggesting that it is not your right to do so, but I would have expected a more evenhanded account from a man of your stature.

Unfortunately, instead I see that you have become an obsessively biased critic of Israel, and even worse, due to your perceived credibility, a new hero for those seeking to undermine Israel's very right to exist. This destroys your reputation as an honest broker, a distinction you earned through the years since your great achievement at the first Camp David summit, a reputation that granted you in recent years the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize.

Today, modern Israel lost a friend, while Israelis and Palestinians remain with no peace. No Shalom and No Chaver.

The writer, a Legacy Heritage Fellow, recently graduated from Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, and worked as a graduate assistant in conflict resolution at Jimmy Carter's Center in Atlanta. He recently returned from an electoral observation mission on behalf of former US President Carter in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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