

I The Case against President Jimmy Carter

I've known Jimmy Carter since February 12, 1976. That was the day the then obscure presidential candidate sent me a handwritten note from "Plains, Georgia," telling me that he had been "impressed with [my] ideas on crime and punishment," which I had expressed in a recent *New York Times Magazine* article. He asked for my help with "other ideas" that would be "very valuable to [him]" in his campaign. A "cc" on the bottom of the page to "Stu" indicated that he had sent a copy to Stuart Eisenstadt, his chief domestic assistant and a former student of mine. Stuart, who was a committed Zionist and an active member of the Atlanta Jewish community, had served as an important adviser to Carter when he was governor of Georgia. Stuart was then a leading figure in the former peanut farmer's unlikely run for president.

When I received the letter, I barely knew who Carter was, but I had always liked Stuart, who in addition to being a brilliant student was a great basketball player. So when Stuart called and told me that Carter was coming to speak at Harvard and wanted to meet me, I agreed. We met in one of Harvard's undergraduate

houses, where he repeated his request for my assistance on criminal justice matters.

I immediately liked the gracious Southerner and agreed to work on his campaign. In June of that year, *Newsweek* ran a cover story on “Carter’s game plan” that included a page on “the Carter brain trust.”¹ I was featured in that story, with my photograph (beard, long hair, and aviator glasses) and a report that I was a key part of the brain trust and a member of Carter’s “task force on criminal justice.” Following Carter’s election and inauguration, my name was included on several lists of lawyers the president was considering for Supreme Court appointments if any vacancies were to occur. (None did.)

When Natan (Anatoly) Sharansky was arrested in the Soviet Union in March 1977 and charged with spying for the United States, I was asked by his wife and his mother to represent him. I went to the White House to urge Carter to formally deny that Sharansky had ever spied for us. Stuart advised me that it would be a difficult sell, since no president ever admits or denies that anyone was an American spy. But after considerable efforts on Stuart’s part and mine, President Carter agreed to issue an unprecedented denial, saying he was “completely convinced” that Sharansky was innocent. Carter repeated his denial after Sharansky’s conviction in July 1978, declaring that the charges were “patently false.”²

Several years later, I closely followed the Camp David meetings between Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat. My friend Aharon Barak was Israel’s chief legal adviser at the talks, Stuart was an important adviser to Carter, and another former Harvard Law student, Osama El-Baz, was one of the leaders of the Egyptian negotiating team. Once peace was finally achieved, I was invited to the White House ceremony on March 26, 1979.

I campaigned for Carter during his losing reelection campaign in 1980, and I considered myself a friend and a supporter during his years of active retirement and good works. I was not then aware of some of Carter’s lapses of judgment, such as his failed

intervention on behalf of an ex-Nazi SS guard.³ In 1987, the former president forwarded a letter from the daughter of Waffen-SS guard Martin Bartesch to the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Special Investigation, which had deported Bartesch and taken away his citizenship. Bartesch had been a guard at the Mauthausen death camp whose involvement in the murder of prisoners had been documented by the Nazis themselves. After the war, he lied about his past to gain entry to the United States. His daughter's letter to the government claimed that Bartesch had "no control over his destiny" during World War II. Carter attached a note in his own hand: "I hope that, in cases like this, that special consideration can be given to affected families for humanitarian reasons. Jimmy Carter." It was the first of many humanitarian actions by Carter, siding with those who murdered Jews over those who protected Jews from being murdered.

Carter's "humanitarianism" seems to go in one direction only. His latest humanitarian intervention has taken the form of support for Hamas, which fires rockets at civilians in Sderot and other populated Israeli areas, rather than support for the victims of terrorism. On April 9, 2008, it was announced that Carter would visit Khaled Meshal, the leader of Hamas, in Damascus. He was strongly advised against doing so by the U.S. State Department, but he said that he felt "quite at ease" meeting with the leaders of the terrorist group.⁴ Before his visit with Hamas, Carter had never visited Israeli victims of Hamas rockets, but he made a point of stopping briefly in Sderot to show support for victims before his meeting with Meshal. But his shallow show of support for the victims of Hamas terrorism did not stop him from calling on the European Union to break from the United States and recognize the legitimacy of Hamas, despite that group's continuing terrorism and refusal to accept Israel's existence.

The last time I saw Carter in person was in January 2006, when we were both invited to speak at the Herzliya Conference in Israel. Following his talk, I asked the first question from the audience. Although my question had a somewhat critical tone, Carter's response to me could not have been warmer or more personal. We

met and talked after the session, and he told me he was going to observe the Palestinian parliamentary elections the following day, as I was also. Carter assured me that Hamas would be soundly defeated, because most Palestinians wanted peace. We parted amiably, with mutual regards to and from Stuart. Carter did not tell me that he was about to publish an explosive book titled *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. Nor did he tell Stuart, his dear friend and adviser, or most of his other Jewish friends and supporters. I first learned of the title of the book from a journalist who called me for a comment. I said I didn't believe Carter would have written such a book. The journalist then e-mailed me a press release.

When I told Stuart about the forthcoming book and its incendiary title, he, too, expressed surprise and disbelief. Stuart said that he would call Carter and try to persuade him to change the title. Several other friends and colleagues did as well, to no avail. The book was published amid great fanfare and controversy, which assured its ascent on the best-seller lists. Carter announced that he had written the book and had deliberately included the explosive word *apartheid* in the title to "stimulate discussion [and] debate."⁵ It was only natural that Carter would be expected to participate in that debate.

So when some hard-left professors at Brandeis University invited Carter to discuss his book on campus, the president of Brandeis, Jehuda Reinharz, proposed a debate, at Stuart's suggestion.⁶ Stuart, a member of Brandeis's Board of Trustees, also put my name forward as the appropriate person to debate Carter. I had worked for Carter, admired him, and had written the first mainstream review of his book—a respectful review in which I wondered why Carter, "generally a careful man," had allowed so many errors to mar his book.⁷ Carter adamantly refused to debate me, saying, "I don't want to have a conversation even indirectly with Dershowitz. There is no need for me to debate somebody who, in my opinion, knows nothing about the situation in Palestine."⁸ That was, of course, untrue, as Carter well knew, since we had discussed my several visits to the Palestinian Authority during our conversation only months earlier in Herzliya.

Following is part of an op-ed piece I wrote for the *Boston Globe*:

You can always tell when a public figure has written an indefensible book: when he refuses to debate it in the court of public opinion. . . . Carter's refusal to debate wouldn't be so strange if it weren't for the fact that he claims that he wrote the book precisely so as to start debate over the issue of the Israel-Palestine peace process. If that were really true, Carter would be thrilled to have the opportunity to debate. Authors should be accountable for their ideas and their facts. Books shouldn't be like chapel, delivered from on high and believed on faith. . . . When Jimmy Carter's ready to speak at Brandeis, or anywhere else, I'll be there.⁹

To its credit, Brandeis came up with a compromise under which Carter spoke first, left the stage, and then I followed—about half an hour later. Most of the students remained, although some from the hard left walked out on my talk. C-SPAN carried both of our talks sequentially, turning it into the functional equivalent of a virtual debate, although questions from the audience to Carter were selected in advance and filtered through a group of his supporters. During my lecture, I took live questions from the audience, including several hostile ones, and allowed each person the chance to follow up his or her question with a rebuttal.

Carter's talk at Brandeis bore little resemblance to his book and to his many television and radio interviews. It was conciliatory in tone and compromising in substance. It had all the hallmarks of having been drafted by Stuart Eisenstadt. Carter backed away from some of his claims and apologized for "improper and stupid" wording in a passage that appeared to condone Palestinian terror. I had prepared to rebut what Carter had said in his book, and so I had to quickly change my approach. "Had he written a book which was similar to what he said from the stage," I told the audience, "I do not believe there would have been much controversy." I acknowledged that Carter supported the two-state solution and the peace process but noted that his book had done Israel—and peace—much damage.

I proceeded to point out specific misstatements in his book, all of which were against Israel. I criticized the former president for supporting Yasser Arafat's decision to walk away from the Clinton-Barak offer of Palestinian statehood in all of Gaza and more than 95 percent of the West Bank. I accused Carter of having become an advocate for the maximalist Palestinian view, rather than a broker for peace. That, to my mind, was the true tragedy of a decent man who worked so hard for peace and who now in effect was pressuring the Palestinians not to accept reasonable compromise and reasonable peace.¹⁰

In the weeks and months following the Brandeis debate, Carter's tone became more shrill and his substantive accusations against Israel more one-sided, even bigoted. He went so far as to publicly deny that he had been invited to debate me. Speaking to an audience at George Washington University several weeks after the Brandeis event, he said that he had "never received any invitation to debate, contrary to what a Harvard professor has said."¹¹

Reportage in the *Boston Globe*—which Carter has never challenged—makes it clear that he was lying: "Last month, the former president told the *Globe* he had declined an invitation from a university trustee to speak at Brandeis, because it came with the suggestion he debate Alan Dershowitz, a professor at Harvard Law School who has criticized Carter's book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*."¹²

Carter was also well aware of the numerous invitations to debate that I had issued in newspapers, on television, and over the radio. He simply lied in order to protect his views from scrutiny.¹³ If a lawyer engaged in such mendacity in court, he would be disciplined, if not disbarred, especially if the lie was part of a pattern of lying, as is the case with Carter. On April 22, 2008, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice accused Carter of a similar falsehood: Carter had denied that the State Department told him not to meet with Hamas leaders. Rice was "blunt in her account" that it had.¹⁴ "We counseled President Carter against . . . having contacts with Hamas," Rice insisted.¹⁵

Carter claimed to have been the victim of an orchestrated campaign of vilification, which was designed to quash any criticism of Israel. In fact, no one had objected to mere criticism of Israel, only to the support he had given to the delegitimization of the Jewish state by using the explosive and incorrect term *apartheid*.

The accusation of apartheid—an accusation Carter has never apologized for or retracted—is no mere exaggeration. It associates the Jewish state with an evil system that was declared a “crime against humanity.” That phrase, used against apartheid South Africa in the 1970s, was first applied by the Allies to describe the Armenian genocide in World War I and was subsequently used by the Allies against the Nazis in World War II.¹⁶ To accuse Israel of apartheid is therefore to strike at the foundations of the state itself. It implies—and many of those who make the accusation declare openly—that Israel is illegitimate, racist, and deserving of destruction. Just as the apartheid system in South Africa had to be dismantled entirely, the analogy posits, “apartheid Israel” must be utterly destroyed. It also suggests that academic boycotts and divestment campaigns, the tools used against apartheid South Africa, are appropriate for use against Israel.

Carter, despite the title of his book, offered no shred of evidence to prove that Israel practices apartheid. Search through the pages carefully, and you will find the word *apartheid* mentioned only three times. Carter does not even define what the term means. Jeffrey Goldberg, reviewing Carter’s book for the *Washington Post*, accused Carter of using “bait and switch” tactics, by failing to prove what he alleges.¹⁷ Sometimes you really can tell a book by its cover, or at least by its phony title. Carter even admits, toward the end of his book, that the term *apartheid* is problematic: the situation in Israel today “is unlike that in South Africa—not racism, but the acquisition of land.”¹⁸ He does not add that Israel gained control of that territory in a defensive war, that it has long offered to trade land for peace, and that it has pulled its settlers and soldiers off much of these lands in genuine good faith.

The Israel-apartheid analogy is a fraud, one that Carter perpetuates by citing imaginary sources. At Brandeis, he claimed that South Africa's Nelson Mandela had "used the same description."¹⁹ Carter appeared to be citing a fake memorandum from "Nelson Mandela" that was written by Arjan El-Fassed, an Arab journalist living in the Netherlands.²⁰ Anti-Israel activists often circulate the memorandum, pretending it is authentic, as does Carter, who has personal access to Mandela and has to know that the quote was made up.²¹

What is most striking about Carter's use of the word *apartheid* is his refusal to apply such labels to countries that actually deserve it. The Arab dictatorship in Sudan, for example, has murdered hundreds of thousands of black Muslims in the western province of Darfur. Its government-backed militia, the *janjaweed*, has displaced millions of people and used systematic rape as a weapon of terror. Yet when Carter visited Darfur in October 2007, he vehemently objected to the use of the term *genocide* to describe what was happening in Darfur. He said, "There is a legal definition of genocide and Darfur does not meet that legal standard. The atrocities were horrible but I do not think it qualifies to be called genocide."²² He said this in the presence of a "group of elders," including Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Carter added, "If you read the law textbooks . . . you'll see very clearly that it's not genocide and to call it genocide falsely just to exaggerate a horrible situation—I don't think it helps."²³ Carter was wrong. The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 defines genocide as killing "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group." Clearly, that is precisely what is happening in Darfur, but because the slaughter is being conducted with the support of Arab governments, the hard left that Carter has come to represent has refused to condemn it as genocide. Experienced prosecutors at the International Criminal Court in the Hague have a different view of the law.

Carter is wrong on apartheid, too. The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid of 1973 defines *apartheid* as "inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial

group of persons over any other racial group of persons.” That definition was reaffirmed by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2002: “‘The crime of apartheid’ means inhumane acts . . . committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.” That might describe the policies of Sudan’s Arab regime against black Darfuris. It has no relevance at all to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which Carter acknowledges is not based on racism, but rather, he claims, on “acquisition of land.” Racism is the *sine qua non* of apartheid, and without it the word has no accepted meaning except as an inflammatory provocation. The Jews of Israel are multiracial, multiethnic, and multireligious, comprising Europeans, Africans, Ethiopians, Yemenites, Georgians, and other groups. Israelis are not a “racial group.” They are not even a uniform religious group. Some actively practice Judaism, many do not. More than a million Israelis practice other religions. But Israel, unlike its neighboring Arab nations, does not use religious coercion; neither is there segregation or discrimination against minorities who are not Jewish.

Yet Carter reserves his legal “expertise” for Israel alone. Before we examine the reason behind Carter’s double standard, it is worth noting that his book is filled with errors of fact as well as of law, in addition to those regarding the false charge of “apartheid.” As I wrote in one review, “Mr. Carter’s book is so filled with simple mistakes of fact and deliberate omissions that were it a brief filed in a court of law, it would be struck and its author sanctioned for misleading the court. Mr. Carter too is guilty of misleading the court of public opinion.”²⁴ Other reviewers also pointed to numerous factual errors in Carter’s slim volume. Yet Carter brazenly told the *Washington Post* that “most critics have not seriously disputed or even mentioned the facts.”²⁵ This is simply a lie and Carter knows it. He also lied when he told Larry King that “everything in the book, I might say, is completely accurate.”²⁶ A mere listing of all of Mr. Carter’s mistakes and omissions would fill a volume the size of his book. The appendix to this book lists dozens of simple factual errors, all of which could easily have been

caught and corrected by a first-year college student tasked to find the truth. But truth was obviously not Carter's goal, since all of his errors paint Israel in a false, negative light. For example, Carter states that Israel carried out a preemptive strike against Jordan in the 1967 conflict.²⁷ But historians agree that Jordan struck first, after Israel pleaded with King Hussein not to join the war. In addition to such naked and malevolent errors, Carter is guilty of omitting key facts and context. He criticizes Israel's attack on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981 without mentioning that it was the site of Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons program, that Iran had already attacked the site the year before, and that the UN had failed to take any action to prevent Iraq from acquiring nuclear weapons. Carter also fails to mention that Iraqi leaders had said that the nuclear bombs Iraq planned to build were specifically intended for use against Israel alone.

Carter criticizes Israel for refusing to accept UN Security Council Resolution 242 but leaves out the fact that Israel did, in fact, approve the resolution's "land for peace" formula, while the Arab states categorically rejected it. At Khartoum in August 1967, the Arab states issued their infamous "three no's"—"no peace, no recognition, no negotiation."²⁸ Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat did not even accept Resolution 242 until 1988, under heavy U.S. pressure. Israel has consistently defended and maintained sites that are holy to Christians and Muslims, as well as Jewish sites, while Jordan destroyed synagogues—including an ancient site that was the Jewish equivalent of the Dome of the Rock—and other Jewish institutions as soon as it conquered the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem in 1948.²⁹ Yet Carter attacks Israel's administration of these sites, disregarding Israel's long record of careful stewardship and the Palestinian Authority's record of failure.³⁰ In recent years, Palestinians have destroyed Jewish holy sites and burned Christian churches, but Carter ignores these events.

Carter also misrepresents negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. He labels one map the "Israeli Interpretation" of the Clinton parameters of December 2001, when in fact that map is the actual U.S. proposal, which Israel agreed to but the Palestinians did not.³¹ (Carter was also accused of

misusing maps from Dennis Ross's book *The Missing Peace* without attribution.)

Other errors include Carter's false claim that the Palestinians have long accepted a two-state solution and Israel has rejected it, when in fact the opposite is true; his grim depiction of the Israeli legal system, which in actuality leads the world in human rights jurisprudence, and whose Supreme Court is trusted even by Israel's harshest critics; and his claim that the Second Lebanon War started when Hezbollah "captured" two Israeli soldiers, when they were really kidnapped by the terrorists.³² Hezbollah has not even provided a single sign that the soldiers are alive. If the Israeli soldiers had in fact been "captured," then their captors would have been required to abide by the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War.³³ But Hezbollah—and Hamas, which is still holding Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit—has made no effort to comply with international law. In both cases, Israel's soldiers were illegally kidnapped, and their fate remains largely unknown. Carter is simply, plainly, and malevolently wrong.

The list of errors goes on. Carter notes that "Christian and Muslim Arabs had continued to live in this same land since Roman times" but leaves out the fact that Jews have lived in Jerusalem (where they were a majority since the first modern census), Hebron, Tzfat, and other cities for far longer—continuously, in many cases. He also ignores the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab lands in the years since 1948. He hardly touches on the fact that Israel accepted the UN partition plan in 1947, while the Palestinians and the Arabs rejected it. He claims that Israel has caused an "exodus of Christians from the Holy Land," when there is actually a net *influx* of Christians (including Christian Arabs) into Israel. He disregards the Islamization of the Palestinian Authority by Hamas and the rise of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, both of which are the primary factors driving Christian emigration from the region.

Carter's mistakes aren't limited to Israel. He claims that "dialogue on controversial issues is a privilege to be extended only as a reward for subservient behavior and withheld from those who reject U.S. demands"—a gross exaggeration that confuses

terrorist states such as Iran and Syria, which the United States does isolate with states such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, France, and China, with which the United States disagrees but consults all the time.

Most egregious of all is Carter's use of the word *apartheid* and other terms associated with it. He fails to describe the apartheid system in South Africa, which does not remotely resemble Israel—the pervasive racial segregation laws; the censorship of the media; the banning of political parties; the torture and murder of human rights activists in detention; the indoctrination of children with racial ideology; the removal of voting rights from blacks; the use of the death penalty for political crimes; and so on. His omission is obviously willful, because any accurate description of real apartheid would make it clear to the reader that the word applies far more precisely to Palestinian governance than to Israeli governance, even on the West Bank.

All of these terrible features of apartheid were well known to those of us who were active in the antiapartheid movement. When Nelson Mandela was in prison, I was one of the lawyers enlisted to work for his release. When I was invited to speak in South Africa in the 1980s, I refused to go, because the apartheid government said it would offer me a visa only if I did not criticize its policies. Jimmy Carter should know the difference, too. It was during his term in the White House that the United States joined the international arms embargo against South Africa (although it did not take part in the economic sanctions until Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in 1986). President Carter spoke against apartheid while still vigorously opposing a Palestinian state.³⁴

As Rhoda Kadalie and Julia Bertelsmann, two black South African women, wrote recently,

Israel is not an apartheid state. . . . Arab citizens of Israel can vote and serve in the Knesset; black South Africans could not vote until 1994. There are no laws in Israel that discriminate against Arab citizens or separate them from Jews. . . . South Africa had a job reservation policy for white people; Israel has adopted pro-Arab affirmative action

measures in some sectors. Israeli schools, universities and hospitals make no distinction between Jews and Arabs. An Arab citizen who brings a case before an Israeli court will have that case decided on the basis of merit, not ethnicity. This was never the case for blacks under apartheid.³⁵

Kadalie and Bertelsmann are critical of Israel's policies in the occupied territories but add that "racism and discrimination do not form the rationale for Israel's policies and actions. . . . In the West Bank, measures such as the ugly security barrier have been used to prevent suicide bombings and attacks on civilians, not to enforce any racist ideology. Without the ongoing conflict and the tendency of Palestinian leaders to resort to violence, these would not exist."³⁶

At a recent concert by Daniel Barenboim with an orchestra composed of Israelis and Palestinians held at the Young Men's Christian Association in Jerusalem, I sat next to an Israeli Arab who was Israel's minister of culture. This is a cabinet position. The audience, too, was a mixture of Israelis and Palestinians, many from the West Bank. Hardly a feature of real apartheid!

Carter ignores these realities, and in wrongly exploiting the apartheid analogy, he has devalued the antiapartheid struggle itself. According to Congressman John Conyers, who helped found the Congressional Black Caucus, applying the word *apartheid* to Israel belittles real racism and apartheid; the word "does not serve the cause of peace, and the use of it against the Jewish people in particular, who have been victims of the worst kind of discrimination, discrimination resulting in death, is offensive and wrong."³⁷

The apartheid analogy is not the only analogy Carter abuses. When he was asked by Chris Matthews in a live television interview whether he believed that Israel's "persecution" of Palestinians was "even worse . . . than a place like Rwanda," Carter answered, "Yes. I think—yes."³⁸ The comparison is obscene. Nearly one million civilians were murdered in a matter of weeks during the Rwandan genocide. The number of Israelis and Palestinians killed during any comparable period of time has, at worst, been in the

hundreds, nearly all the direct result of Palestinian terrorism and Israeli efforts to stop it. The Rwandan victims never had a chance to prevent the killing. In contrast, the Palestinians have repeatedly chosen violence instead of negotiations and have refused to sign or honor any peace deal, from the generous terms of the Peel Commission in 1937 until the present day. To compare Rwanda to Israel is insulting not only to Israel, but to the memory of the Rwandan victims, who were brutally raped, tortured, mutilated, and murdered by soldiers and machete-wielding militias and civilians in what can only be described as a genocide.

Carter has backtracked on his Rwanda analogy, saying that he did not want to debate “ancient history about Rwanda.”³⁹ But the “genocide” bell cannot be un-rung. When you use the example of Rwanda in the context of a debate about human rights, it is commonly understood that you are referring to genocide. Similarly, the example of South Africa refers to racial segregation and political oppression. Carter uses these analogies, although he knows they do not fit, precisely because of such connotations. Yet he criticizes others for using the word *genocide* to characterize the mass killings in Darfur. This is not merely hypocrisy; it is double-standard bigotry.

When called upon to defend his arguments, Carter has refused—because he knows he cannot. Instead, he has resorted to a crude tactic with a long, infamous history: namely, blaming Jews for his own shortcomings. To Carter, the problem is not his unsubstantiated claims or the relentless hatred of Israel’s enemies that has blocked peace for years; rather, it is covert Jewish domination and disloyalty. Carter claimed, for example, that the United States sides with Israel for the following reason: “because of powerful political, economic, and religious forces in the U.S., Israeli government decisions are rarely questioned or condemned, voices from Jerusalem dominate our media, and most American citizens are unaware of circumstances in the occupied territories.”⁴⁰ This is untrue. The grievances of Palestinians dominate news coverage in the United States, as well as in European and Middle Eastern media. On U.S. campuses, the issue of Palestinian

rights pushes more urgent and pressing human rights issues—Darfur, Zimbabwe, Tibet—to the margins. No other occupied or victimized group receives as much attention per capita as the Palestinians, despite their refusal to accept offers to end the occupation in exchange for peace. The radical anti-Israel academic Beshara Doumani, for example, writing in a recent issue of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*—hardly a pro-Israel publication—acknowledged, “For a variety of reasons, the world has paid more attention to this conflict than to any other in modern history. This attention can turn the weaknesses of Palestinians into sources of strength.”⁴¹

The accusations that Jews control the media and that they use their “political, economic, and religious forces” against the countries in which they live has a long and sordid history. They have been the staple of extremist Jew-haters throughout history. To read them in the words of a former U.S. president is sad and disgraceful.

Initially, I defended Carter against accusations of anti-Semitism. I wrote in the *Jerusalem Post*, “In his book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, Carter unfairly, one-sidedly, ahistorically—even indecently—condemns Israeli policies, but in my view he does not cross the line into overt anti-Semitism.”⁴² His attacks on Israel, vehement and ill-informed though they were, were not in themselves anti-Semitic. The problem, I noted, was what Carter had said to defend his book whenever his bogus factual claims have been challenged. On *Larry King Live*, for example, Carter claimed that “the oppression of the Palestinians by Israeli forces in the occupied territories is horrendous. And it’s not something that has been acknowledged or even discussed in this country. . . . It is not debated at all in this country.”⁴³ When King asked Carter to explain why, Carter evaded the question. “I don’t know,” he said. But he repeated his claim at every opportunity. “For the last 30 years,” he wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* in December 2006, “I have witnessed and experienced the severe restraints on any free and balanced discussion of the facts.”⁴⁴ But no one has prevented him from making his opinions known, even without basis in fact.

Carter's claim of a thirty-year-silence would include his entire presidential term, which began in January 1977. Thus, he expects the world to believe, without proof, that even when he held the most influential office in the mightiest country on the planet, he was being censored by "powerful political, economic, and religious forces." This is the stuff of ranting conspiracy theorists, not former presidents or Nobel laureates.

As Walt and Mearsheimer had done, Carter points the finger at the "Israel lobby": "This reluctance to criticize any policies of the Israeli government is because of the extraordinary lobbying efforts of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee and the absence of any significant contrary voices," Carter claimed.⁴⁵ He added, "It would be almost politically suicidal for members of Congress to espouse a balanced position between Israel and Palestine, to suggest that Israel comply with international law or to speak in defense of justice or human rights for Palestinians. Very few would ever deign to visit the Palestinian cities of Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Gaza City, or even Bethlehem and talk to the beleaguered residents." This claim is demonstrable nonsense. Many U.S. leaders and public representatives have visited the West Bank and Gaza and offered support for Palestinian rights and goals. Carter did not limit his accusations to the "Israel lobby." He also stated, falsely, that "book reviews in the mainstream media have been written mostly by representatives of Jewish organizations."⁴⁶ He must know this to be a lie, unless he believes that all Jews are somehow "representatives" of Jewish organizations. The most critical reviews were written by Michael Kinsley, Ethan Bronner, Jeffrey Goldberg, and me. None of us are representatives of Jewish organizations—unless he believes that all Jews belong to some uniform and organized conspiracy. On NBC's *Meet the Press*, Carter claimed that the "Jewish lobby"—a term even Walt and Mearsheimer eschew—was part of the problem, never defining what he meant but leaving a clear implication of dual loyalty against "Jewish" Americans.⁴⁷

One is left to conclude, sadly, that Jimmy Carter has resorted to one of the oldest and deadliest conspiracy theories—the myth of Jewish money, power, and control—to defend his indefensible

claims. I had given him the benefit of the doubt, but I can do so no longer. One of the telltale signs of Carter's descent into scapegoating is how loudly he complains about being accused—unjustly, he says—of anti-Jewish prejudice. He told his audience at Brandeis, "This is the first time that I've ever been called . . . an anti-Semite."⁴⁸ That is not quite true, and he certainly knows that his harshest critics have made such accusations before.⁴⁹ Journalists Andrew and Leslie Cockburn, who generally sympathize with Carter's views on Israel, reported that when Carter was told that Israeli leader Menachem Begin was advising Carter's political opponents, Carter said, "If I get back in . . . I'm going to fuck the Jews."⁵⁰ During the 1976 Democratic primaries, he said of Jewish voters, "[Senator Henry] Jackson has all the Jews anyway. We get the Christians."⁵¹ But Carter now finds it useful to paint himself as a victim, to make his own views seem more credible, and to silence his critics by portraying them as intolerant toward any criticism of Israel.

Ironically, while Carter makes use of anti-Semitic stereotypes, especially regarding money, it is he who has been bought off by millions of dollars in donations from Arab governments that refuse to recognize Israel and from Arab rulers who actively promote Jew-hatred in the Middle East and elsewhere. Investigative journalists have revealed the extent to which Carter has been "bought and paid for" by Arab and Islamic money. The Carter Center, a philanthropic foundation that the former president started after leaving office, has received donations in excess of \$1 million from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the Sultanate of Oman; and groups and individuals with close ties to these governments, including OPEC, the Saudi Binladin Group, and the late Saudi king Fahd, a "founder" member of the center.⁵² Other founders included the late Agha Hasan Abedi, whose Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) was an elaborate criminal enterprise fronted by Saudi billionaire Gaith Pharaon. As journalist Rachel Ehrenfeld noted in an exposé of Carter's funders, BCCI had ideological goals: building "the best bridge to help the world of Islam, and the best way to fight the evil influence of the Zionists."⁵³ And these are only

the donations we know about. Ehrenfeld has documented other contributions of a more personal nature, including Saudi funds that rescued Carter's failing peanut farm in 1976. Some donations have gone to Carter's presidential library and various other Carter projects. These sources have aims directly at odds with U.S. foreign policy and American values at home.

Carter has also accepted half a million dollars and an award from Sheik Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan, then the ruler of the United Arab Emirates.⁵⁴ Zayed's Center for Coordination and Follow-Up was the Arab League's official think tank until 2003. During that time, it promoted Holocaust denial, 9/11 conspiracy theories, and anti-Semitic claims that "Zionists," not Nazis, had killed the Jews of Europe.⁵⁵ When a student discovered that Harvard Divinity School had accepted \$2.5 million from Zayed, the school returned the money. Not so Jimmy Carter, who admitted to his audience at Brandeis that he gave Zayed's money to the Carter Center and refused to give it back, even once the views of his patron were exposed.⁵⁶ Upon receiving the money from Zayed, Carter gave a speech in which he proclaimed, "This award has special significance for me because it is named for my personal friend, Sheik Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan." Carter said that donations from "Mideast Arab nations" represent a small percentage of his foundation's overall budget, although he refuses to disclose financial reports that would allow an independent check of this dubious claim. Regardless, the donations have been enough to buy his silence on human rights abuses throughout the Arab and Islamic world. The Carter Center, since receiving payoffs from Saudi sources, has said little about Saudi Arabia's abuse of women, non-Muslims, and prisoners, or about the autocratic rule of the Saudi regime. Indeed, an examination of the Carter Center's human rights activities reveals that while it devotes a disproportionately large amount of attention to Israel, it says and does little about the Sudan, Iran, or North Korea, to name just a few places with far more pressing rights problems. It refuses to scrutinize the record of its contributors in the Arab world or question the near-total absence of democracy there.

Carter seems to recognize this kind of prejudice only when it serves his interest to do so. In a speech to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2007, he observed that its “singular focus on the violations committed by Israel, while failing to address with the same vigor serious human rights abuses in many other parts of the world, has been counterproductive” (not immoral or bigoted—just “counterproductive”).⁵⁷ Yet he is unwilling or unable to admit that he himself is often guilty of such bias. Nor has he tried to correct it because his silence has been fully paid for. Once again, he is speaking out of both sides of his mouth.

A particularly striking example of this is Carter’s refusal to recognize and condemn Palestinian terror against Israel with the moral fervor he reserves for Israeli actions. Shortly before the Brandeis event, he appeared on Al-Jazeera television to discuss his book and claimed that Palestinian rockets from Gaza that target Israeli civilians are not “terrorism”: “I don’t really consider . . . I wasn’t equating the Palestinian missiles with terrorism.”⁵⁸ These are antipersonnel rockets aimed at Israeli towns, schools, shopping malls, and hospitals, but to Carter they are not terrorism. Carter did criticize suicide bombings on Israeli buses. In an apparent attempt to appease his audience, however, he refused to condemn suicide bombings on moral grounds. Instead, he focused on the tactical and propaganda disadvantages for the Palestinian cause: “Such acts create a rejection of the Palestinians among those who care about them. It turns the world away from sympathy and support for the Palestinian people. That’s why I said that acts of terrorism like I just described are suicidal for the popularity and support for the Palestinian cause.”⁵⁹ Carter also suggested that the deliberate targeting of Israeli children by Palestinian terrorists was morally equivalent to Israel’s accidental killing of Palestinian children (who are, in some cases, armed) in legitimate attempts to stop terror. (I discuss in detail, in chapter 5, the deliberate use of human shields by Israel’s military enemies as a way of forcing Israel to the terrible choice of not responding to rocket attacks on its civilians or, by responding, risking the deaths of some Palestinian civilians. Carter implicitly encourages this unlawful

tactic by declaring those who fire the rockets morally equivalent to those who try to prevent the rockets from being fired.)

Journalist Joseph Lelyveld has generally supported Carter's attempts to draw analogies between Israel and apartheid South Africa, although he has also argued that Carter's use of the term was "basically a slogan, not reasoned argument." Yet even he noted that Carter failed to show empathy for Israeli victims of terror. "Carter condemns the dispatching of suicide bombers into crowds of Jewish civilians," he wrote, "but does so coolly, tersely, almost clinically, stressing that such attacks are counterproductive, without conveying the kind of visceral horror that the phenomenon arouses among Israel's supporters and many others as well. He's capable of such feelings when he turns to the [Israeli] settlements."⁶⁰ Carter's refusal to morally condemn terrorism against Israeli civilians, which even rights groups that are generally hostile to Israel (such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch) have recognized as "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity," highlights the shallowness of his human rights record—a shallowness that goes back to the beginning of his political career. In Georgia state politics, Carter eagerly sought racist voters. According to several Georgians interviewed on a PBS documentary,

He courted the racist vote. There were some radio ads that he ran in 1970. He said that "Unlike Sanders, I am not trying to get the" and he sort of slid over whether it was "block" or "black" vote. But it sort of meant the same thing. . . .

Carter himself was not a segregationist in 1970. But he did say things that the segregationists wanted to hear. He was opposed to busing. He was in favor of private schools. He said that he would invite segregationist governor George Wallace to come to Georgia to give a speech.⁶¹

Carter was a latecomer to human rights, only discovering the cause during his 1976 presidential run. As one journalist has noted, "Carter was also initially cold to the subject of human

rights. His 1975 book *Why Not the Best?* issued as a launching pad for his presidential campaign, makes no mention of it. Nor did he utter a word about human rights during the 1976 primaries. It was only in the course of hammering out the Democratic Party's platform that his interest was kindled."⁶²

Though Carter's presidency was generally seen as a high-water mark for human rights causes, he has been condemned by rights groups for a number of the decisions he made during his term. In 1977, for example, Carter gave millions of dollars in military assistance, as well as aircraft, to the Indonesian regime of General Suharto, which had invaded East Timor only two years earlier.⁶³ According to Amnesty International, that invasion and its aftermath resulted in the deaths of two hundred thousand people—one third of the population—who "were killed or died of starvation or disease."⁶⁴ Carter also reversed his administration's policy toward the Moroccan regime in 1979 and began to permit arms sales that allowed Morocco to maintain control of annexed Western Sahara, which it still occupies today.⁶⁵ His administration recognized the Khmer Rouge as Cambodia's legitimate rulers *after* the leader Pol Pot had slaughtered millions of people and his murderous government had been pushed out in 1979. Carter also sent arms through Saudi Arabia to the mujahideen in Afghanistan, whose fighters would later form the backbone of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. As Carter himself admitted, "We channeled assistance for those freedom fighters through Saudi Arabia, through Egypt and other places."⁶⁶ His most dramatic action on behalf of human rights—canceling the participation of U.S. athletes in the 1980 Olympics to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—is now widely regarded as having backfired and strengthened the hands of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. It did not stop Soviet tanks from rolling into Afghanistan. It helped the Taliban gain a propaganda victory. The rise of al-Qaeda (as well as the success of the ayatollahs in Iran) has been traced by some pundits to Carter's misguided foreign policy decisions.

As is typical of Jimmy Carter, the ex-president has now disclaimed responsibility for the 1980 Olympics fiasco, blaming it on

the Olympic Committee, which he states was “independent of government control.” That is total nonsense, since Carter threatened to revoke the passport of any U.S. athlete who defied his boycott and went to the games.⁶⁷

Carter also bears some responsibility for the current, dreadful human rights and strategic situation in Iran. In an editorial that was critical of Carter’s April 2008 meetings with Hamas leaders, in direct contradiction of U.S. policy, the *Boston Globe*—which is generally supportive of Carter—asked the following pointedly rhetorical question: “How would he have reacted if his predecessors made similar gestures while he was toasting the Shah of Iran on New Year’s Eve 1977 as ‘an island of stability,’ or when he had the Pentagon tell Iranian generals to allow Ayatollah Khomeini to return to Iran, or when he provoked the seizure of American hostages by permitting the exiled shah to receive medical treatment in the United States?”⁶⁸

One can explain or contextualize some of these actions by noting that they occurred against the backdrop of the cold war, in which both the United States and the Soviet Union backed unsavory client regimes. But Carter has continued to appease rogue states since then. In the mid-1990s, when a diplomatic confrontation erupted over North Korea’s nuclear program, Carter intervened, expressing sympathy for dictator Kim Jong-Il and ensuring that the final agreement blocked the option of sanctions.⁶⁹ This flawed deal, which North Korea never lived up to, broke down several years later. The truth is that in his term as president and in the years since, Carter has rarely honored the principles of human rights against which he judges Israel—and Israel alone. His one-sided criticism has exposed the hypocrisy of his stance.

It would appear that Carter also bears considerable personal animus toward Israel and Israelis. On the one hand, Israel is central to his presidential legacy. Without that famous handshake on the White House lawn, Carter’s presidency might be remembered only for the Iran hostage crisis, economic stagnation, and the “misery index.” On the other hand, Carter seems to resent the Jewish state and its leaders. Carter certainly has some Israeli friends and

supporters, mostly on the left wing of the Israeli political spectrum. He is, for example, a member of the international board of governors of the Peres Center for Peace, a pet project of Israel's long-time Labor stalwart (and current president) Shimon Peres. (So, however, is Desmond M. Tutu, who has joined anti-Israel extremists in likening Israel to apartheid South Africa.) But here is what Peres had to say about Carter's book: "To say there is apartheid, my God, what sort of an expression is that? . . . For Jimmy Carter to say that this is apartheid is for me a shock." Peres also said that Carter was "mistaken" in his claim that Hamas had unilaterally stopped terror attacks against Israel: "I mean, who is firing the missiles day in and day out every day?"⁷⁰

Nor is Carter's dislike of Israel limited to the Israeli right wing. Rather, it is aimed at Israel itself and stems in part from his religious convictions. While many evangelical Christians are ardent—some might say too ardent—supporters of Israel, Carter's own evangelical worldview has led him to the belief that Israel is deserving of punishment because Israeli Jews are not all strictly religious. When Carter met Israeli prime minister Golda Meir, for example, he scolded her about Israel's largely "secular" culture, then said that "Israel was punished whenever its leaders turned away from devout worship of God."⁷¹ Most observers of the Middle East would agree that religion has made conflicts far worse. But Carter frowns upon Israel's liberal, tolerant society; it falls short of his biblical ideal. Carter openly links his particular Christianity to the belief that it is his personal mission to restore true faith to the Holy Land. In many ways, the target of his book is not only Israel but also the mainstream evangelical community. That may partly account for the way he has defended his views so passionately, even when the facts are against him. His argument is grounded in faith, not reason.

One result of Carter's religious prejudice is that he always holds Israel to an impossibly high standard—one, as I have shown, that he never applies to Israel's neighbors. Carter does not care that he judges Israel more harshly than any other nation (or, for that matter, to his own administration). So does the Bible, after all.

This religious bias—and Carter’s eagerness to read himself into the prophetic tradition—twists his view of reality. He cannot accept contemporary Israel or Israeli Jews for what they are. He is open, for example, about his dislike for Menachem Begin.⁷² And he rarely shows affection for Israelis other than those who share his views. Contrast that with his friendliness toward the secularist Syrian dictator and mass murderer Hafez al-Assad or toward Yasser Arafat, a secular leader who was responsible for hundreds of American and Israeli deaths. Listen to the warmth with which he described a meeting with the man who directly ordered the cold-blooded murder of two U.S. diplomats and hundreds of other innocent civilians:

Rosalynn and I met with Yasir Arafat in Gaza City, where he was staying with his wife, Suha, and their little daughter. The baby, dressed in a beautiful pink suit, came readily to sit on my lap, where I practiced the same wiles that had been successful with our children and grandchildren. A lot of photographs were taken, and then the photographers asked that Arafat hold his daughter for a while. When he took her, the child screamed loudly and reached out her hands to me, bringing jovial admonitions to the presidential candidate to stay at home enough to become acquainted with his own child.⁷³

There is something profoundly unsettling about Carter’s coziness with a man who, even then, was involved in terror activities and incitement against Israeli civilians—especially when contrasted with Carter’s coolness toward nearly all Israeli leaders.

According to journalist Douglas Brinkley, Carter once told Arafat that he considered the Palestinians’ plight his own “obsession.”⁷⁴ Brinkley also wrote that both Carter and Arafat enjoyed a “shared belief that they were both ordained to be peacemakers by God.” He quoted a speech that Carter wrote for Arafat that described “the excessive suffering of the Palestinians,” implying that alternatives to “excessive” patience might be legitimate. Carter has never shown Israeli leaders such indulgence.

During his visit to the Mideast in 2008, Carter made a point to visit the grave of Yasser Arafat, laying a wreath and calling the

mass-murderer of innocent children, women, and men—including Americans—a “dear friend.” He did not visit the graves of any of Arafat’s victims or of Yitzhak Rabin.

Carter’s ego is also at stake. As Lelyveld—again, a sympathetic reviewer—notes, Carter spends much of his book talking about himself. “The man’s ego is full of vigor,” Lelyveld concludes.⁷⁵ Carter is still disgruntled about his landslide loss in 1980 to Ronald Reagan and claims all would have gone well had he remained in office. He told the *New York Times* in 2003, “Had I been elected to a second term, with the prestige and authority and influence and reputation I had in the region, we could have moved to a final solution.”⁷⁶ This clumsy, counterfactual comment ignores the effect of Palestinian terrorism. Carter also routinely blames every administration that followed his own for failing to resolve the conflict. Even the *Economist* noted that Carter wrote his book as if he felt he’d been “had” by the Israelis he was negotiating with at Camp David, blaming them (and them alone) for the continued strife in the region. The review concluded that Carter’s book is “simplistic and one-sided as charged.”⁷⁷

In fact, Carter’s interventions in recent Israeli-Palestinian negotiations may have actually prolonged the violence. Carter argues in his book that it was Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, not Arafat, who walked away from negotiations at Camp David in July 2000. This contradicts the published recollections of President Bill Clinton and U.S. negotiator Dennis Ross, who were actually there.⁷⁸ Clinton is reportedly furious at Carter for accepting Arafat’s account over his.⁷⁹ Carter willfully distorts the narrative in order to shift the blame for the collapse of the peace process away from the Palestinians. Other radical anti-Israel commentators have made similar attempts to blame Israel. Bending the facts to justify their hatred of the Jewish state is their stock in trade. But it is possible that Carter may have had another motive for supporting the false, revisionist account: he may have wished to hide the extent to which he himself advised Arafat to reject Israeli offers and walk away from the table.

There is a wealth of circumstantial evidence to suggest that Carter indeed gave Arafat such advice. We know that Carter has

a long history of inserting himself into America's international negotiations, often to the disadvantage of the sitting U.S. administration. We also know that Carter opposed—and occasionally undermined—U.S. policy toward North Korea, Iraq, Syria, and Cuba, among other rogue states. In addition, we know, according to Brinkley, that Arafat had approached Carter for help in improving the PLO's (Palestine Liberation Organization) image in the United States. We also know that Carter actually prepared texts for Arafat to use. And we know—because Carter tells us in his book—that he believes, “There was no possibility that any Palestinian leader could accept such terms [the ones offered at Camp David] and survive.”⁸⁰

On the basis of this evidence, I and several students have put to Carter the following specific questions, which he has refused to answer:

- Was Carter asked his advice by Yasser Arafat, or anyone else in the Palestinian Authority, regarding whether to accept or reject the offer of Palestinian statehood proposed by President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak at Camp David and/or Taba?
- If not, did Carter offer any advice on this or related issues or express any views about the matter before the end of January 2001?
- If he gave any such advice, what exactly was it?
- Did he say before or at the time of these negotiations what we know he said thereafter, namely that “There was no possibility that any Palestinian leader could accept such terms and survive”? (What does this say about Carter's views of the Palestinian people?)

One of three possibilities must be true. First, it is possible that Arafat did not seek or Carter did not offer Arafat—directly or indirectly—any advice about Israel's offers at Camp David, despite the fact that Carter was advising Arafat about his image in the United States, and despite the connection between Carter's own successful mediation efforts at Camp David and the new

Camp David talks. This possibility seems extremely unlikely, especially in light of the importance to Arafat's image in the United States of any decision he might make about the Clinton proposals. The other two possibilities consider the likelihood that Carter did advise Arafat. Either Carter told Arafat to do what he really thought Arafat should do—namely, to walk away from Israel's historic offer—or else he told Arafat to do the opposite of what he believed was best: accept the offer and expose himself to the risk of assassination. Carter must have been relieved when Arafat chose self-preservation over continuing the negotiations.

It is hard to believe that Carter would have withheld his advice or masked his true feelings if he believed Arafat's life was at stake. After all, if Arafat had agreed to Israel's terms or made a counter-offer that allowed talks to continue, thereby legitimizing Israel's opening bargaining position, and he had then been assassinated by Palestinian extremists, Carter would have felt deep regret. (Recall his visit to his dear friend's grave.)

Only Carter knows the truth, and only Carter can tell us, since Arafat died in 2004. I—and others—have repeatedly asked Carter these questions.

Carter has yet to provide answers, despite having promised his audience at Brandeis that he would be happy to respond to any remaining questions that could not be answered during his lecture. In dozens of appearances since then, across the United States and around the world, he has failed to comment on the compelling evidence of his intervention, nor has he attempted to refute it.

It is not hard to see why Carter would want to hide any part he played in encouraging Arafat to scuttle the peace talks. The consequences of Arafat's decision were devastating. The prediction of Saudi Arabia's Prince Bandar—that walking away would be a crime against Palestinians and all Arabs—came to sad fruition. Had Arafat accepted Israel's proposal or even offered a reasonable counter-proposal that recognized the need for both sides to compromise, there would have been no second intifada, no suicide bombings, no Israeli raids, and no checkpoints or security barriers. Instead, there would be an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, and four thousand Israelis and Palestinians would still be alive.

Whether Carter advised Arafat or not, one thing is certain: his book has fed the anti-Israel hatred that helps keep the conflict going. He has granted undue legitimacy to the claims of a once-marginal group of extremists that has sought for years to equate Israel with apartheid South Africa. That was the goal, for example, of radical activists at the disastrous UN World Conference against Racism in 2001. The conference, which was held in the South African city of Durban, ought to have been an occasion for celebrating the end of apartheid and South Africa's happy entry into the family of democratic nations. Instead, it became an anti-Semitic carnival of hatred that embarrassed the UN and shocked the free world. The attempt by radical organizations to link Israel and apartheid was largely to blame. The final declaration of the nongovernmental organizations that had gathered in Durban accused Israel of "racist methods amounting to Israel's brand of apartheid," "racist crimes against humanity," and "genocide and practices of ethnic cleansing." Though devoting several paragraphs to Israel, the declaration included only one single, solitary sentence on racism and human rights abuses in the Arab Middle East: "Arabs as a Semitic people have also suffered from alternative forms of anti-Semitism, manifesting itself as anti Arab discrimination and for those Arabs who are Muslim, also as Islamophobia."⁸¹ This document was so offensive and one-sided, even by the standards of the UN, that then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson—not a friend of Israel's by any standard—refused to commend it to the official delegates of UN member states. It was the first time, she said, that she "was not able to commend a document in its entirety," pointing specifically to the paragraphs that equated Israel's policies with apartheid and genocide.⁸²

Carter's book has now made such notions acceptable within the mainstream of political discourse. Though Carter has recently been careful to apply the term *apartheid* to the West Bank and not to Israel as a whole, few of the extremists who endorse his book—including white supremacists such as David Duke and left-wing charlatans like Norman Finkelstein—care to acknowledge

such hair-splitting. They are delighted that it is now less taboo than it once was to assign Israel to the same pariah category that once applied to apartheid South Africa, and which South Africa escaped only by dismantling its government and forming a new unitary state. Similarly, opponents of Israel do not want a two-state solution or an end to occupation: they want a “South African solution” that would end the existence of Israel.

Carter has given hard-line opponents of Israel the opportunity to spread their own rejectionist messages. The Council on American-Islamic Relations, for example, which has been linked to terror groups, mailed Carter’s book to public libraries throughout the United States.⁸³ Radical groups frequently cite Carter’s book—not to support his call for renewed negotiations, but to support their calls for Israel’s isolation and delegitimization. Churches that share Carter’s religious hostility to Israel now feel that they may use anti-Israel rhetoric to justify classic anti-Jewish bigotry. In October 2007, for example, Boston’s historic Old South Church hosted a conference endorsing the Israel-apartheid analogy. Quotes from Carter were featured in the program, and Archbishop Tutu delivered a keynote address accusing Jews of “fighting against God.”⁸⁴

Tutu has taken a prominent role within what Kadalie and Bertelsmann call the “cottage industry that exploits the Israel-apartheid analogy for personal and political gain.”⁸⁵ Tutu has compared the struggle against apartheid in South Africa to the Palestinian struggle against Israel. “Yesterday’s South African township dwellers can tell you about today’s life in the Occupied Territories,” he wrote in 2002.⁸⁶ Like Mearsheimer and Walt, he has also attacked Israel’s supporters in the United States; Tutu went further, however, referring explicitly to the “Jewish lobby” and suggesting a comparison between the power of the Jews today and that of Hitler and other powerful leaders of the past: “People are scared in this country [the United States], to say wrong is wrong because the Jewish lobby is powerful—very powerful. Well, so what? For goodness sake, this is God’s world! We live in a moral universe. The apartheid government was very

powerful, but today it no longer exists. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pinochet, Milosevic, and Idi Amin were all powerful, but in the end they bit the dust.”⁸⁷

Tutu's fellow South African John Dugard has exploited the Israel-apartheid analogy for years, much to the delight of the Arab dictatorships that were instrumental in appointing him the UN Commission on Human Rights special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories. Dugard's only job was to condemn alleged Israeli human rights abuses against Palestinians, not the other way around. As he admitted in his 2007 report to the UN Human Rights Council, “I shall not consider the violation of human rights caused by Palestinian suicide bombers. Nor shall I consider the violation of human rights caused by the political conflict between Fatah and Hamas in the OPT [Occupied Palestinian Territories]. . . . My mandate precludes me from examining them.” Citing Carter's book, Dugard contended that “Israel's practices and policies in the OPT are frequently likened to those of apartheid South Africa.”⁸⁸ Dugard had to admit that “the two regimes are different,” so in order to make the Israel-apartheid analogy seem to fit, he redefined Jews as a “racial group.”⁸⁹ Ironically, the last time Jews were defined as a “race” was in Nazi Germany. That is how low defenders of Carter's analogy are prepared to stoop. “Can it seriously be denied,” Dugard asked, “that the purpose of such action is to establish and maintain domination by one racial group (Jews) over another racial group (Palestinians) and systematically oppressing them?”⁹⁰

Speaking at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government later that year, Dugard seemed to condone Palestinian terrorism: “Without justifying it [suicide bombing], I think one can understand it.”⁹¹ He reiterated that view in his final report to the UN Human Rights Council in 2008: “While such acts cannot be justified, they must be understood as being a painful but inevitable consequence of colonialism, apartheid or occupation.”⁹² He then went on to compare Palestinian terror against Israeli civilians to European resistance to Nazi occupation in World War II. In a

similar vein, Dugard's successor, Richard Falk, recently compared the situation in the territories to the Nazi Holocaust.⁹³ (More on this in chapter 4.)

Carter's book has given aid and comfort to such bigots. But if Carter had intended to shift the attitudes of ordinary Americans away from Israel, however, his book must be judged a dismal failure. Survey data released in May 2007, shortly after his book's successful run at the top of the best-seller lists, indicated that more than two-thirds of Americans supported Israel—the highest level ever recorded—while fewer Americans than ever said they supported the Palestinians.⁹⁴ The leadership of Carter's own Democratic Party, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, disagreed explicitly with Carter's views while reaffirming their support for Israel's security and for the two-state solution. The Bush administration pressed ahead with the roadmap for peace and a Palestinian state.

Carter's claims have found resonance among some overseas audiences that are more hostile to Israel. Yet the international community correctly rejected Carter's view of Hamas's rockets and supported Israel's refusal to negotiate with it while it pursued the annihilation of the Jewish state through terror, despite Carter's insistence that the European Union break with the United States over this issue. Though Carter may have achieved commercial success and strengthened the radical fringe, his book was a political failure.

Yet we ought not dismiss the long-term effects of *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. The analogy between Israel and apartheid South Africa fuels anti-Semitism in the Arab world and features frequently in the forums of the United Nations. Carter's ideas allow the enemies of peace to cast their views and goals as reasonable and legitimate. The encouragement that Carter continues to provide to Arab regimes that reject Israel and to extremists who seek to undermine support for Israel in the West has left a stain on his legacy. Equally, his distortion of historical facts and his resort to execrable anti-Jewish motifs have tarnished his image as an

elder statesman. If he advised Arafat to reject Israel's peace offer, as seems likely, he may be remembered not as a Nobel peace laureate but as a vain and destructive meddler.

I once worked with Jimmy Carter, and I once admired him. He is not someone I would have wanted to oppose, especially over the security and legitimacy of Israel. But it was he who has written a book with a title deliberately designed to provoke debate. Yet he refuses to debate, engage, or even acknowledge his critics. In the July 20, 2008, issue of *New York* magazine, Carter said, "I don't read Dershowitz." This from a man who describes such mass murderers and terrorists as Khaled Mashal, Yasser Arafat, and Hafez al-Assad as "very nice," and with whom he has always been willing to engage.

However substantial some of his achievements, Carter has done his best to undo them. For that, he, and not Israel, must stand in the dock and face the judgment of history. He must be exposed as an enemy of a compromise peace, an inciter of Palestinian extremism, and an apologist for those who would continue to employ terror in an effort to destroy the Jewish state.

In an article titled "The Sad End of Jimmy Carter," the French intellectual and journalist Bernard-Henri Lévy asks, "So what happened to this man?" In response, he suggests vanity, loss of touch, and "a variant of self-hatred."⁹⁵ Whatever the reason or reasons for Jimmy Carter's recent descent into the gutter of bigotry, history will not judge him kindly.