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Israel never apologized for the Nakba

Israel never apologized for the Nakba – not for the ethnic cleansing, not for the destruction of hundreds of villages and the exiling of hundreds of thousands of people from their land. Neither did it apologize for the crimes of the occupation of 1967, or for the stealing of land and the construction of the settlements, or for the false arrests, the mass killing and the destruction of a nation's life.

It's hard to imagine a more unfounded, bizarre and insane scenario than this: The leader of the Palestinian people is forced to apologize to the Jewish people. **The one who was robbed apologizes to the robbers, the victim apologizes to the rapist, the dead to the killer.** After all, the occupiers are so sensitive – and their feelings, and only theirs, must be taken into account. **A nation that hasn't stopped occupying, destroying and killing, and has never considered apologizing for anything – anything – gets its victims to apologize for one measly sentence by their leader.** The rest is known: “apology not accepted.” What did you think would happen? That it would be “accepted”?

You don't have to be an admirer of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to understand the depths of the absurd. **You don't have to be an Israel hater to understand the extent of the chutzpah.**

Israel holds a magic card, the lottery of the century: the horror of anti-Semitism. The value of this card is on a dizzying rise, especially now as the Holocaust recedes and anti-Semitism is being replaced in many countries by criticism of Israel. **Playing this lucky**

card covers everything. Its holders not only can do anything they please, they can be insulted and put on the squeeze.

The world became agitated over Abbas like it never was over any Israeli incitement – the chorus of the European Union, the UN envoy and of course, the ambassador of the settlers, David Friedman, who never denounces Israel for anything, only the Palestinians. Even The New York Times took on an amazingly sharp tone: “Let Abbas’ vile words be his last as Palestinian leader.”

It’s hard to imagine that the newspaper the Jewish right has marked as an Israel hater, baselessly of course, would use similar language against an Israeli prime minister; the one responsible, for example, for the **massacre of unarmed protesters.**

There’s a double standard in Israel as well: It will never attack the anti-Semitic right in Europe as it attacks Abbas, who is certainly much less anti-Semitic, if at all, than Austrian Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache or Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Abbas said something that should not have been said. A day later he apologized. He regretted and retracted what he said, condemned the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, and reaffirmed his commitment to the two-state solution. It wouldn’t have taken much more for him to bend his knee to Israel’s hobnail boots and ask forgiveness for continuing to live under them.

But Israel won’t let any apology stop its nefarious gloating. Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman was quick to damn the other side, as usual: “despicable Holocaust denier apology not accepted.”

Abbas is much less of a Holocaust denier, if at all, than **Israel is a denier of the Nakba.** But denying the Nakba is allowed, in fact it’s a must in Israel, and denying the Holocaust is prohibited (and rightly so). **The fact that the Holocaust was much more horrific than the Nakba doesn’t legitimize denial of the other’s disaster, which is never-ending.** Anti-Semitism or not, the situation of every Jew in the world is better and safer today than the situation of a Palestinian in the territories or an Arab in Israel. There are hardly any Jews today without rights like the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, but Jews are discriminated against like the Arabs in Israel. And when a Jew in France is stabbed, the president of the republic comes to visit. And when an Arab in Israel is stabbed, the prime minister continues to incite. And when he incites, he never apologizes. **Israel never apologized for the Nakba – not for the ethnic cleansing, not for the destruction of hundreds of villages and the exiling of hundreds of thousands of people from their land.**

Neither did it apologize for the crimes of the occupation of 1967, or for the stealing of land and the construction of the settlements, or for the false arrests, the mass killing and the destruction of a nation's life.

Not one Israeli statesman today intends to do this as a necessary step toward a different future. But Abbas has to apologize, or Lieberman and The New York Times will demand his head. In fact, they'll demand it even after he apologizes.

<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-dear-occupiers-sorry-if-we-hurt-your-feelings-1.6055095>

Opinion // Dear Occupiers, Sorry if We Hurt Your Feelings

Not one Israeli statesman today intends to apologize for the Nakba – not for the ethnic cleansing, nor for the exiling. But Abbas had no choice but to apologize for his Holocaust remark

Gideon Levy May 06, 2018 1:18 AM