

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DECLARES WAR ON ISRAEL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Amnesty International's attack on Israel:

Amnesty International has effectively declared war on Israel.

The 280-page report, released February 1, "Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity," is a full-throated denunciation of the internationally recognized state of Israel. Over and over again, it indicts Israel's 1948 origins, coming ever so close to calling into question its sovereignty.

Interestingly, the only time the words "right to exist" appears in the entire document is on p. 89, and it is in reference to a Jordanian citizen who had a residency dispute with Israel (he said his "right to exist in peace" was not being observed). That the authors of this report couldn't summon the courage to insist on Israel's right to exist is telling.

Being that it was the Holocaust that inspired the founding of Israel, one would expect that the report would have something pithy to say about it. But the word "Holocaust" appears only twice, once on pp. 14-15 and once on p. 63, and in a perfunctory way. To top things off, it's the exact same sentence that appears on these pages, a reference to Israel's founding "in the wake of the Holocaust." Nowhere in the report is Hitler mentioned; the Nazis are cited once, in a footnote. Mention of the Second World War merits one footnote.

This is the kind of ahistoricity we would expect from those out to delegitimize Israel. Why bring up inconvenient historical facts?

Catholics have long been unimpressed with Amnesty International's human rights record. When it was founded in 1961, it took no position on abortion. That changed in 2007 when it took a decidedly pro-abortion stance. So much for its mission statement which endorses unqualified human rights.

Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, said at the time that the organization "has betrayed its mission," and said that if it "persists in this course of action," Catholics should withdraw their support. He was right. In 2014, Amnesty International started a new campaign, "My Body My Rights," demanding the legalization of abortion-on-demand everywhere in the world.

It is the left that wants to sunder Israel, and it is now at a fever pitch. Last year, Human Rights Watch, another left-wing "human rights" organization—it also refuses to acknowledge the human rights of unborn children—labeled Israel an "apartheid" state.

Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are generously funded by George Soros. In fact, it was his seed money that launched Human Rights Watch (initially called Helsinki Watch), selecting Aryeh Neier, who had just left his post as executive director of the ACLU, to run it. Soros has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on these two Israel-hating entities.

No sooner had the Amnesty International report been issued when the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) gave it a High Five. "We welcome this exhaustive, landmark report as further recognition of what has been blazingly obvious: the Israeli government has been engaged in the systematic imposition of apartheid on the Palestinian people."

On the eve of the report's release (advanced copies were obtained by some parties in the last few days), Rep. Rashida Tlaib, who last September said, "Israel is an apartheid state.

Period,” tweeted, “U.S. foreign aid shouldn’t go to apartheid governments, period.”

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, another left-wing extremist, last year branded Israel “an apartheid state.” Rep. Cori Bush, who is cut from the same cloth, tweeted on January 20, 2022 that Israel was guilty of “apartheid.” In December, CAIR honored Rep. Ilhan Omar, a few months after she called Israel an “apartheid state.”

Condemning Israel is sport among left-wing commentators and celebrities.

Last year, Eric Alterman, writing for the Stalinist media outlet, the Nation, wrote a piece titled, “Yes, Israel Is Obviously an Apartheid State.” In November, more than 100 Hollywood celebrities signed a statement of support for Palestinian organizations that were designated by Israel as terrorist groups. Among them were Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon, Mark Ruffalo and Peter Gabriel.

Regrettably, more than a few Jewish Americans hate Israel. A survey released last year that was commissioned by the Jewish Electoral Institute, found that 25 percent of the Jewish electorate agreed that “Israel is an apartheid state,” and 22 percent agreed that “Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians.” The numbers were higher for younger voters, those under 40.

We at the Catholic League are well acquainted with self-hating Catholics, so we sympathize with our Jewish friends who have to deal with self-hating Jews, led, of course, by Soros.

It is important for the leaders of every faith community to speak up about Amnesty International’s unbridled attack on Israel. Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups should be the object of condemnation, not Israelis who are constantly threatened by them.

If Human Rights Watch, and now Amnesty International, get away with their pernicious campaign, it is only a matter of time before the United Nations carries the ball for them. Make no mistake about it, these same people who hate Israel, hate the United States, raising the stakes for all of us.