



OPINION: THE ANTI-ISRAEL DELUSION - RICH LOWRY

Posted on April 20, 2024 by Rich Lowry



Surely, you've heard of the brutal conflict that has displaced millions of people and killed more than 14,000, while aid convoys have trouble getting where they need to go?

No, the Sudanese civil war hasn't been on your radar screen?

OK, but how about the crisis that has led to more than half the population of a country needing humanitarian assistance amid constant turmoil and war?

You haven't heard much about the conflict in Yemen lately, either?

Perhaps, then, the war that has forced large numbers of people to flee the fighting multiple times, while as much as a quarter of the population is facing hunger or illness?

Actually, the fight between the military and armed opposition groups in Myanmar also isn't top of mind?

These are terrible situations that garner very little or almost no attention, in contrast to the overwhelming level of focus on Israel's war in Gaza, almost all of it through a hostile lens.

This is nothing new. The Jewish state has long been singled out for opprobrium and held to a standard different than that of other societies. Some of this is justified. As an advanced Western-style democracy and ally of the United States, Israel should be better than whatever armed faction is preying on people in some Third World country -- and, indeed, Israel is better.

International organizations, the media and left-wing activists create exactly the opposite impression, though. Given the amount of time and energy devoted to condemning Israel, one would be forgiven for thinking that the world would be a much more peaceful, just place if only it weren't for the existence of a Jewish state.

There are important distinctions between the war in Gaza and the other conflicts mentioned above. Israel isn't staging a coup or fighting a civil war. It was perfectly content -- indeed, in retrospect, much too content -- to live with a Gaza controlled by Hamas, until it was subjected to a heinous attack that no other society today or in any other period in history would tolerate.

Israel also fights differently. It seeks to honor the rules of war while operating in a dense urban environment against a merciless enemy

that wants as many civilians to be killed as possible. In other conflicts around the world, there are no rules. In Myanmar, people aren't just fleeing the fighting, but "executions and killings, forced recruitment, torture, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and persecution," according to the European Union.



Nonetheless, it is Israel that is accused of committing genocide. The people braying about Israel's alleged crimes against humanity apparently never spare a thought for the Uyghurs, subject to a massive ongoing campaign of repression by the Chinese government; or the Rohingya people, viciously targeted by the government of Myanmar; or the Baha'i in Iran, the Hazaras in Afghanistan or the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh.

There are all sorts of candidates for a list of the most oppressive countries in the world, from North Korea to Equatorial Guinea, from Turkmenistan to Venezuela, from Russia to China. Yet, practically all we hear about is Israel.

The old Soviet Union was long at the forefront of propagandizing against Israel, a cause readily taken up by the so-called non-aligned countries and the left around the world. This tendency has been rife with antisemitism and hypocrisy, exemplified back in the 1970s by the brutal tinpot dictator of Uganda, Idi Amin, denouncing Israel at the United Nations.

Since then, the names and the players have changed, but the tendency -- to single out Israel for special obloquy and lie about and obsess over the world's only Jewish state -- has remained the same.

A common lament in commentary about other conflicts is that they aren't getting enough attention. An official with the World Food Programme lamented recently, "The people of Sudan have been forgotten." The EU noted, "In a world of growing humanitarian emergencies and fleeting media attention, Myanmar is getting ignored."

There's a reason for that.

(Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry)

(c) 2024 by King Features Syndicate