**Marketing Brand Israel**

Jack Dresser, Ph.D.

Co-director, Al-Nakba Awareness Project

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[www.registerguard.com/rg/opinion/29741943-78/israel-rights-brand-israeli-palestinians.html.csp](http://www.registerguard.com/rg/opinion/29741943-78/israel-rights-brand-israeli-palestinians.html.csp)

As a faithful apologist, Craig Weinerman provides us a proud resume of Israel ([www.registerguard.com/rg/opinion/29714680-75/israel-israeli-countries-developing-agriculture.html.csp](http://www.registerguard.com/rg/opinion/29714680-75/israel-israeli-countries-developing-agriculture.html.csp)).

Of course, every competent job applicant knows how to craft a resume.  In this case, the predictable inventory of accomplishments promotes “Brand Israel,” an Israeli campaign designed to improve its international image, keep US tax dollars flowing in, maintain US protection in the UN Security Council, distract attention from its so-called “conflict” with the Palestinians, and glamorize Jewish Israel in contrast with a purportedly backward Arab Middle East of which the Palestinians are presumably a part. Thus, the “conflict” seems entirely reasonable - as Islamophobe Pamela Geller’s billboard ads proclaim, “the civilized man” vs. “the savage.”

Brand Israel report cards at this time celebrate Israel’s (Gregorian calendar) 65th birthday on May 14.  This date is sadly commemorated by Palestinians as *al Nakba,* their “catastrophe” when 3/4 million were dispossessed and expelled by Zionist terrorism including 33 massacres and depopulation of over 500 villages and 11 urban areas, following which they were prohibited from returning ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=buhpHTGAlTE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buhpHTGAlTE)).  Their right of return, supported by Articles 13 and 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, affirmed by UNGA Resolution 194 in 1948 and pledged as a condition of Israel’s 1949admission to the UN, remains an obligation unfulfilled by Israel.

But we aren’t allowed to make up our own report cards, and resumes are understood as self-promotion with references carefully checked by any prospective employer who wants to remain in business.  Sensible Americans should view the Brand Israel campaign with similar skepticism and listen closely to its language.  Just for starters, the word “conflict” is a deceptive framing to disguise what in reality is a relationship between invader and invaded, occupier and occupied, oppressor and oppressed, thieves and their victims. We don’t ordinarily refer to an armed robbery as a “conflict.”

But some serious distortions aside, let’s assume that the Brand Israel resume is largely accurate. It sounds impressively progressive. Unfortunately, however, half the population under Israeli control is denied the benefits of this glorious society.

Palestinians in Gaza, 80% of whom are refugees, suffer under a suffocating blockade with menacing drones and attack helicopters overhead, bombings and missile strikes, assassinations, sonic booms from fighter jet overflights awakening them nightly, and denial of elemental supplies and the dignity of self-sufficiency.

West Bank Palestinians under military occupation, including 19 refugee camps and nearly 200,000 refugees, are subjected to dispossession, home demolitions, olive grove uprootings, household break-ins by soldiers, arbitrary arrests, denial of due process required by international law with some 5,000 locked in Israeli prisons ([www.addameer.org](http://www.addameer.org/)), tanks in their streets, checkpoints on their roads, sniper killings of their children ([www.rememberthesechildren.org](http://www.rememberthesechildren.org/)), assassinations and crippling injuries upon those who dare to resist, electronic surveillance, agent infiltration, and permission and protection of settler violence against them on their own land.

Palestinian citizens of Israel are denied equal rights with over 50 laws that discriminate against non-Jews in property rights, marriage rights, citizenship status, education, employment, rights of the accused, and allocation of community resources ([www.adalah.org](http://www.adalah.org/)).

The Brand Israel propaganda (“hasbara”) campaign developed by the Reut Institute in Israel targets “human rights activists” for “attack” and “sabotage” as “delegitimizers” of Israel by exposing these inconvenient truths.

Efforts by the UN Security Council to correct Israeli abuses have been blocked 43 times by US vetoes, each time providing the only pro-Israel vote among the five permanent and 10 rotating UNSC members ([www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/UN/usvetoes.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/UN/usvetoes.html) ). US indulgence of Israeli international law violations has isolated us in the world and should stop. The international BDS movement provides non-governmental, non-violent sanctioning methods to bypass these US roadblocks to justice ([www.bdsmovement.net](http://www.bdsmovement.net/), [www.usacbi.org](http://www.usacbi.org), [www.whoprofits.org](http://www.whoprofits.org/)).

Why does Israel refuse justice and decline to share its proclaimed achievements with those whose land they have taken?  The motives are racist, reinforced by grotesquely dehumanized views of Palestinians ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWKPRC-\_oSg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWKPRC-_oSg)).  If Palestinian rights under international law are respected, Israel will predictably lose its Jewish majority, supremacy and privilege within historic Palestine and become transformed into a normal multi-ethnic democracy instead.  This would end the dream of Zionism, perceived by Israel as an “existential threat.” Nevertheless, this democratic outcome is increasingly supported by truly progressive Jewish organizations ([www.ijsn.net](http://www.ijsn.net) , [www.jfpror.wordpress.com](http://www.jfpror.wordpress.com/)).

Moreover, as an allegedly advanced and successful nation, why is Israel the largest recipient of foreign aid dollars from US taxpayers, receiving over 10% of our total bilateral aid?  Their annual allowance is approximately equal to the combined US aid for 38 Sub-Saharan African nations, the poorest region of the world in real need of help with health care, education, clean energy and programs to mitigate the ravages of climate change.

Brand Israel’s glowing report demonstrates that Israel can easily take care of itself and should receive no further assistance from US taxpayers.  Perhaps its birthday could be celebrated by matriculation into the company of fully independent and law-abiding countries.