

## A United Nations Assessment Project Study

September 12, 1991

### REMOVING THE STAIN OF THE UNITED NATIONS' "ZIONISM IS RACISM" RESOLUTION

#### INTRODUCTION

One of the worst stains on the reputation of the United Nations is the General Assembly's 1975 vote to adopt Resolution 3379 condemning Zionism as a form of racism. While championing so-called national liberation movements throughout the Third World, the U.N. not only singled out the Jewish nationalist movement for criticism, but in a perversion of history, falsely accused Israel of inflicting on others the same kind of injustice—racism—from which Jews have suffered for centuries.

Since its passage over fifteen years ago, the "Zionism is Racism" resolution has been an obstacle to every argument that attempts to portray the U.N. in a favorable light. And since its passage, no attempt has been made to repeal the resolution. It is now time to do so.

With the Cold War over and the U.N. supposedly moving into an era of greater global cooperation, the time has come for the U.N. to demonstrate its commitment to promoting better understanding among all its members, including Israel. Resolution 3379, therefore, should be repealed when the General Assembly convenes its 46th session next week in Manhattan.

There are three reasons why the U.N. should want to repeal Resolution 3379.

**Reason #1: Repeal would make the U.N. more effective.** Resolution 3379 disqualifies the U.N., for example, as a mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel is well aware of the pervasive, anti-Israeli bias at the U.N. There is no chance that Israel will trust the U.N. as an active participant in the peace process unless Resolution 3379 is repealed.

**Reason #2: Jewish nationalism, as expressed in Zionism, is as legitimate as any other nationalism.** The U.N. long has championed so-called national liberation movements throughout the world. In fact, the U.N. in 1947 supported the birth of Israel. Why, therefore, should the Zionist brand of nationalism be singled out for criticism?

**Reason #3: The U.N.'s slandering of Israel has not only hampered the prospects for a Middle East settlement, it has harmed Israel's Arab and Third World critics.** The U.N.'s isolation of Israel has made the U.N. largely irrelevant for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab countries moreover, have not profited from abusing Israel at the U.N.

The United States should take the lead in repealing the "Zionism is Racism" resolution because repeal is in the U.S. interest. Repealing Resolution 3379 would remove an obstacle to Middle East peace and would strengthen Israel, an important U.S. ally.

U.S. Permanent Representative at the U.N. Thomas R. Pickering and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs John R. Bolton should devise a strategy and launch a campaign to repeal Resolution 3379. They should:

- ◆ ◆ **Inform the Israeli government that America will seek the repeal of Resolution 3379 in this fall's U.N. General Assembly session.** Notification of the impending U.S. decision will give the Israeli government time to plan for the repeal debate.

- ◆ ◆ **Announce that America is prepared to push for repeal in this and every successive General Assembly session until repeal succeeds.** This is critical if the resolution is to be repealed. The reason: it puts nations on notice that voting against the U.S. on this matter will expose them to political pressure, and possibly reduction of economic assistance in some cases. The announcement should be given a high profile. An appropriate forum might be George Bush's September 24 address to the General Assembly.

- ◆ ◆ **Announce that the U.S. will veto the candidacy of any eventual replacement for Javier Perez de Cuellar as Secretary General of the U.N. unless the candidate supports repeal of Resolution 3379.** This would impose an enormous penalty on defenders of Resolution 3379 and, conversely, would reward enormously those who oppose the resolution.

- ◆ ◆ **Announce that repeal of Resolution 3379 is a condition for U.S. support for a U.N. role in a Middle East peace process.** Whatever the outcome of Secretary of State James Baker's Middle East peace efforts, the U.N. will not be able to play a key role so long as it brands Israel a racist state.

**A First Step: De Facto Repeal.** A head count conducted last year by the U.S. found that a General Assembly vote on repeal of Resolution 3379 would be very close. Still, a vote to repeal this fall may not carry. But even if repeal cannot be achieved this fall, Resolution 3379 could be nullified *de facto* by a resolution that rejects the conclusions of Resolution 3379 without explicitly rescinding it. This would give some nations the face-saving ability to remove the stain of Resolution 3379 without having to admit that they made a mistake in 1975.

Such a *de facto* repeal may appeal to Moscow. Thus the Soviet Union might cooperate with the U.S. at the U.N. on this issue, as it did before and during the Persian Gulf war. Soviet Foreign Ministry officials told The Heritage Foundation in Moscow in October 1990 that the Soviet Union would consider moves overturning Resolution 3379 through "indirect methods" that would avoid humiliating Moscow's Arab allies. One "indirect method" would be for the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to sponsor a joint resolution in the General Assembly stating:

The General Assembly, recalling and recognizing the continuing validity of its Resolution 1904 (XVIII) of November 1963, proclaiming the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which justifiably condemned all forms of "racial discrimination," recalling further its resolution 3379 of 10 November 1975, states categorically that Zionism is not a threat to world peace and security, and recognizes that Zionism is not a form of racism or racial discrimination.

A resolution constructed along these lines effectively would overturn the anti-Zionist passages of Resolution 3379 without actually repealing the resolution. Several years later, Resolution 3379 actually could be repealed. There is no doubt, of course, that repeal is the ultimate goal. Intermediate steps, however, may be needed to get there. The U.S. must declare that it will oppose any substitute measure that indirectly or directly criticizes Israel or Zionism.

Given the upheaval in the Soviet Union following the failed August 19 coup, a Soviet foreign policy influenced by Boris Yeltsin and other Democrats may be amenable to support efforts for direct appeal. If that is the case an attempt to obtain the *de facto* will not be needed.

## THE ORIGINS OF ANTI-ZIONISM IN THE U.N.

The "Zionism is Racism" resolution was approved by a U.N. that differed greatly from the body that first met in 1945. When the U.N. Charter came into force on October 24, 1945, there were only 51 countries in the U.N. On November 10, 1975, when Resolution 3379 was passed, the U.N. was made up of 142 nations. With this increase in membership came greater influence from the Third World. Of the 51 original U.N. members, 39 were from Europe and the Western Hemisphere; only ten were from Asia and the Pacific and four from Africa. Today, there are 52 African and 41 Asian countries in the U.N.<sup>1</sup> Scores of new nations transformed the U.N. from a Western institution with European roots into one in which Third World nations dominated General Assembly proceedings by sheer numbers of votes and aggressively pressed grievances and claims against the very founders of the U.N., the Western states.

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1 "Notes for Speakers," United Nations Department of Public Information, September 1990, p. 45.

**Changed Character.** These new Third World countries, growing in number and voting strength, typically were represented at the U.N. by radical intellectuals who flirted with Marxism and above all, hated the West. Their growing numbers changed the character of the U.N. Increasingly in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the U.N. stridently denounced the capitalist exploitation of the colonial world by the West, and proposed socialist policies for the economic development of the Third World.

By the mid-1970s the hostility of the U.N. General Assembly toward Western political thought, economic institutions and culture reached new heights as countries from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East joined forces with the Soviet Union to obtain a voting majority in the General Assembly.<sup>2</sup> Many Third World countries were highly critical of America. Among the most anti-American were Cuba, India, and Uganda. They accused the U.S. of being "imperialistic." American-based multinational corporations were called "exploitive." The American political system was denounced as "racist." Historian Paul Johnson, the author of *Modern Times*, observed in 1983: "...in 1974 the U.N. adopted a 'Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States' which condemned the workings of Western economies. The 1974 U.N. World Population Conference was a prolonged attack on U.S. selfishness. The 1974 U.N. World Food Conference denounced America and other states, the only ones to actually produce food surpluses."<sup>3</sup>

It was such attitudes that prompted Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the U.S. Ambassador at the U.N. from July 1975 to March 1976, to say that now: "Most of the world believes... in philosophies that do not accept the individual as distinct from and prior to the State, in philosophies that, therefore, do not provide any justification for the idea of human rights...."<sup>4</sup>

**Taking on Israel.** Anti-American attitudes in the U.N. soon focused on America's ally, Israel. There were three reasons for this: 1) Israel could be attacked as an American ally to vent rage at America; 2) as anti-Israeli Arab states gained more prominence in the U.N. as allies of the Soviet Union and Third World nations, and because of their mounting oil wealth, they stirred up the General Assembly against Israel; and 3) anti-Semitism in Arab nations, Third World countries like Uganda, and in the Soviet Union partly motivated U.N. hostility toward Israel.

The U.N. has not always been hostile to Israel. In fact, it was U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 passed on November 29, 1947, with pressure from Harry Truman, that recognized a new plan for the partition of Palestine. Soon thereafter Israel's existence as a state was proclaimed by David Ben-Gurion on May 14, 1948.<sup>5</sup>

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2 Paul Johnson, *Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 536.

3 *Ibid*, p. 691.

4 Daniel Patrick Moynihan with Suzana Weaver, *A Dangerous Place* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press/Little, Brown, and Co., 1975), p. 199. From his statement after the United Nations General Assembly vote on Resolution 3379 on November 10, 1975.

5 Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), pp. 525-6.

This benign attitude toward Israel began to change in the late 1960s. At that time the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Syria and other Arab states began to gain Third World support for a campaign to isolate Israel in the U.N. The U.N. General Assembly adopted on December 10, 1969, Resolution 2535B, which charged that the "Palestine Arab Refugees" in Israel were being denied the "inalienable rights" guaranteed them by the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>6</sup>

**Soviet Involvement.** The Soviet Union played an important role in forming the anti-Zionist bloc in the U.N. The first official Soviet anti-Israel move at the U.N. was in November 1965. In a move designed to curry favor with the Arab states, the Soviets attempted to amend the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which had been passed in November 1963 and which observed that "any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous." The Soviet-sponsored amendment stated:

States Parties condemn anti-Semitism, Zionism, Nazism, neo-Nazism, and all other forms of the policy and ideology of colonialism, national and race hatred and exclusiveness and shall take action as appropriate for the speedy eradication of those inhuman ideas and practices in the territories subject to their jurisdiction.

While the U.S.S.R. condemned anti-Semitism in this amendment, it also equated Zionism with "race hatred." An important point had been made: Zionism was linked with Nazism and other forms of fascist and racist ideologies condemned by communist and other left-wing governments in the Third World.

The political atmosphere in the General Assembly during the early and mid-1970s reflected the hostility toward the U.S. and the West. The twenty-ninth General Assembly, in 1974, was chaired by an Algerian radical, Abdelaziz Bouteflika whom Moynihan characterized as a "master of symbolic defiance and protracted insult."<sup>8</sup> Even though he was no longer in charge of the General Assembly when Resolution 3379 passed in 1975, Bouteflika personified the politics of the General Assembly in which underdeveloped nations angrily blamed their poverty on the U.S. and the developed nations of the West. Bouteflika and his Third World allies were publicly deferential toward totalitarian states like the Soviet Union, which seemed to them to represent the wave of the future as Soviet expansionism appeared unchecked.

**Increasingly Anti-Western.** The U.N. bias against the Western principles of free markets and economic and political freedom deepened in 1974. The General Assembly approved on May 1, 1974, the "Declaration and Program of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order." It proclaimed "the establishment of a new international economic order based on equity, sovereignty, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among states." The New International Economic Order

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6 Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, "How the PLO Was Legitimized?" *Commentary*, July 1989, p. 25.

7 Moynihan and Weaver, *op. cit.* p. 174.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

(NIEO) embodied the Third World claims that the rich nations of the “North” dominated the impoverished nations of the “South.” The NIEO was an attempt to redirect the wealth of the world toward the South through international political bodies like the U.N. Later that year, in December, the General Assembly adopted the “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.”<sup>9</sup> According to *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, this charter “stipulates that every state has the right to exercise full permanent sovereignty over its wealth and natural resources, to regulate foreign investments within its national jurisdiction, and to nationalize, expropriate or transfer the ownership of foreign property....” Thus the U.N. was endorsing the idea that the rights of the state were more important than those of property and the individual. Finally, also in 1974, the Centre for Transnational Corporations was established as part of the movement by radicalized developing nations to exert pressure on international markets and the business practices of multinational corporations. Essential to the Centre’s agenda was the imposition of state-enforced regulations on commerce and the flow of capital.<sup>10</sup>

The U.S. exhibited little energy in combating these anti-Western actions. It was reeling from the Vietnam War, Watergate, the first OPEC oil increases, heightened tensions in the Middle East, and Soviet expansionism in the Third World. John Scali, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. from 1973 to 1975, performed with great distinction, but he was not as verbally combative as his successors, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Jeane Kirkpatrick.

**Moscow’s Embarrassment.** After the 1967 War, when Israel trounced Arab countries whose military had been trained and supplied by the U.S.S.R., Moscow began to describe Zionism as “anti-Soviet and racist.”<sup>11</sup> This turn against Israel was motivated by a combination of domestic and foreign policy considerations. The U.S.S.R.’s Jewish population wished to escape religious repression in the Soviet Union and immigrate to Israel and the West. This was an enormous embarrassment for a country that claimed to be a worker’s paradise and a multinational state in which racism and repression had been eliminated. Further, the Soviet Union hoped to gain a strategic foothold in the Middle East by courting the Arab states. Since the time of the Czars, Moscow had wanted to expand its influence in the Middle East to gain access for its Navy to the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea and to consolidate its hold on its own Islamic peoples.

This anti-Western and anti-Israeli atmosphere at the U.N. was in full blossom when the General Assembly, on November 13, 1974, exuberantly welcomed to its podium PLO leader Yasser Arafat. With a gun-holster at his side, he told an enthusiastically receptive audience:

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9 *Basic Facts about the United Nations* (New York, June 1987), p. 71.

10 Economic and Social Council resolution 1913 (LVII) of 1974. See E/5500/Rev. 1, ST/ESA/6, 1974.

11 Moynihan and Weaver, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

Zionism is an ideology that is imperialist, colonialist, racist; it is united with anti-Semitism in its retrograde tenets and is, when all is said and done, another side of the same base coin.<sup>12</sup>

It was not long before other Third World leaders jumped into the fray to denounce Zionism and the U.S. In an October 1, 1975, speech before the General Assembly, Ugandan dictator Idi Amin claimed that the “United States of America had been colonized by Zionists,” that American Zionists “own virtually all the banking institutions, the major manufacturing and processing industries and the major means of communication,” and that the Central Intelligence Agency had become a danger to the world because of Zionist infiltration.<sup>13</sup> He ended his speech by demanding “the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations and the extinction of Israel as a State, so that the territorial integrity of Palestine may be ensured and upheld.”

Historian Paul Johnson records that, “The following day the U.N. Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly gave a public dinner in Amin’s honor.”<sup>14</sup>

## THE PASSAGE OF THE “ZIONISM IS RACISM” RESOLUTION

The road to Resolution 3379 began in December 1973 when the African nation of Burundi amended a resolution condemning South Africa. One Burundi-sponsored amendment denounced “in particular, the unholy alliance between Portuguese colonialism, South African racism, Zionism and Israeli imperialism.”<sup>15</sup> The resolution passed by 88 for, 7 against, and 28 abstaining.<sup>16</sup> Two years later, in summer 1975 in Mexico City, the first U.N. conference on women’s rights linked Zionism with colonialism and declared that the achievement of international cooperation and peace required the elimination of hostile ideologies like apartheid and Zionism.<sup>17</sup> That summer, too, the Organization of African Unity met in Kampala, Uganda, and condemned Israel as the “racist regime in occupied Palestine” which shared “a common imperialist origin” and racist structure with Rhodesia and South Africa.

The criticism of Israel continued as the Non-Aligned Movement—more than 100 nations, ostensibly committed to neither East nor West, which typically take anti-U.S. and pro-Soviet positions—met in Lima, Peru, in August 1975. It condemned Zionism as a “danger to world peace.” Two months later, Cuba, Libya, and Somalia introduced a draft resolution condemning Zionism as racism to the U.N. General Assembly’s Third Committee, which oversees matters and resolutions related to social, cultural, and humanitarian issues. Despite vigorous opposition by Leonard Garment, the U.S.

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- 12 Provisional verbatim record of the two thousand two hundred and eighty-second meeting, U.N. General Assembly, November 13, 1974, p. 21. U.N. call number: PV. 2282.  
13 Harris Okun Schoenberg, *A Mandate for Terror: The United Nations and the PLO* (New York: Sapolsky Publishers, 1989), p. 313.  
14 Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 536.  
15 Moynihan and Weaver, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.  
16 Schoenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 312.  
17 *Ibid.*

Representative to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the resolution passed the U.N.'s Third Committee on October 17, 1975.<sup>18</sup> The vote was 70 in favor, 29 against, 27 abstaining, and 16 not voting.

**Outcome Determined.** The draft resolution then moved to the General Assembly on November 10, 1975. Resolution 3379 was considered along with several other issues that day in a session that lasted seven hours. Because the outcome had already been determined by the vote in the Third Committee, there was little debate before the vote. Resolution 3379 was endorsed by Fayez al-Sayegh, a P.L.O. member who represented Kuwait, and Jamil Baroodi spoke for Saudi Arabia in support of the resolution. After these speeches Belgium attempted to adjourn the debate when Resolution 3379 was raised, but the motion was defeated.

At 8:30 p.m. on November 10, 1975, the "Zionism is Racism" resolution was approved by the General Assembly. The vote: 72 in favor; 35 against; 32 abstentions; and 3 not voting.<sup>19</sup>

With respect to the strength of the coalition supporting Resolution 3379, Paul Hofmann of the *New York Times* observed, "Moderate Arab countries and other third-world nations that had opposed extremist demands for the expulsion of Israel went along with the anti-Zionism campaign."<sup>20</sup>

After the vote, Chaim Herzog, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, rose and spoke. He tore the resolution in two, while concluding his address with a reference to the fact that November 10 was the anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, the night 37 years before on which Hitler's storm troopers launched a coordinated attack on the Jewish community in Germany. Herzog also claimed the resolution would have a poisonous effect on the spirit of the U.N. He said: "For the issue is not Israel or Zionism. The issue is

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18 *Ibid.*, p. 316.

19 The countries voted as follows on Resolution 3379:

**For (72):** Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian S.S.R., Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chad, China, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian S.S.R., U.S.S.R., United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, and Yugoslavia.

**Against (35):** Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Federal Republic of Germany, Fiji, Finland, France, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Swaziland, Sweden, U.K., U.S.A., and Uruguay.

**Abstaining (32):** Argentina, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Burma, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Zaire, and Zambia.

**Not voting (3):** Rumania, South Africa (seated in the General Assembly but unable to vote), and Spain.

20 Paul Hofmann, "U.N. Votes 72-35, to Term Zionism Form of Racism," *New York Times*, November 11, 1975, p. A16.



the continued existence of this organization, which has been dragged to its lowest point of discredit by a coalition of despotisms and racists.” U.S. Ambassador Moynihan then delivered a ringing denunciation of Resolution 3379 in which he proclaimed: “The United States of America declares that it does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act.”<sup>21</sup>

The resolution began by “Recalling its resolution 1904 (XVIII) of November 1963, proclaiming the United Nations Declaration of the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and in particular its affirmation that ‘any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous’ and its expression of alarm at the ‘manifestations of racial discrimination still in evidence in some areas in the world, some of which are imposed by certain Governments by means of legislative, administrative, or other measures.’”

Among other things Resolution 3379 “condemned the unholy alliance between South African racism and Zionism.” It quoted Resolution 77 of the Organization of African Unity, passed only three months before “that the racist regime in occupied Palestine and the racist regimes in Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common imperialist origin, forming a whole and having the same racist structure and being organically linked in their policy aimed at repression of the dignity and integrity of the human being.”

Finally, Zionism was “most severely” condemned “as a threat to world peace and security.” It “called upon all countries to oppose this racist and imperialist ideology.” The last sentence indicated that the General Assembly had determined that “Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.”

Resolution 3379’s branding of Zionism with the phrase “threat to world peace and security” is very significant at the U.N., for Article 42 of the U.N. Charter permits the Security Council to “take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.” The use of force is allowed only after peaceful means had been exhausted. Resolution 3379’s inclusion of this language thus declares that Zionism is so dangerous that the Security Council could use force against a Zionist state. In fact, the resolution invites “all countries” to “oppose” the racist ideology.

## **THE U.N., THE U.S.S.R., AND THE REPEAL OF RESOLUTION 3379**

Changes in world politics over the past two years make this the time to revisit Resolution 3379. First, the revolutionary movement toward democracy and free markets in the Soviet Union have lessened tensions between Moscow and Washington. The feelings of antagonism between the two nations have been reduced not only around the world, but also at the U.N.

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21 Moynihan and Weaver, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

Second, the newly freed and democratic nations of Eastern Europe, which formerly marched in lockstep with Moscow at the U.N. (and elsewhere) surely are open to arguments favoring repeal. Third, with the collapse of Marxist ideology and of the U.S.S.R. as a model, many Third World nations want to emulate Western economic and political systems. The West should attempt to persuade Brazil, Mexico, Portugal and similar nations that voted for Resolution 3379, that the reasons that may have prompted them to side with the anti-Israel forces no longer exist.

What also argues for revisiting Resolution 3379 is the dissolution of reflexive U.S.-Soviet antagonism. In fact, U.S.-Soviet cooperation at the U.N. already has begun and with the ascendancy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin almost certainly will increase. Both nations are working effectively to bring U.N. spending under control. The U.S. and the Soviets are also interested in reducing the duplication of organizations that characterizes the U.N. bureaucracy.

U.S.-Soviet cooperation on Resolution 3379 is also possible. In a visit last October to Moscow, Heritage Foundation staffers were told at the Soviet Foreign Ministry that the U.S.S.R. might consider supporting a *de facto* overturning of the resolution, so long as it did not require a specific Soviet vote on repeal. This might be accomplished by passing a new resolution that supersedes 3379. Then in a meeting this March at the Soviet Mission to the U.N. in Manhattan with a Heritage staffer, a senior Soviet official expressed satisfaction at the progress that Israel and the Soviet Union have been making toward normalizing their relations with each other. He suggested that repeal of Resolution 3379 may be part of the process of arranging a Middle East peace conference. The greatly enhanced power of Russian Democrats after the failed August coup increases the likelihood of Russian assistance on this matter.

## OVERTURNING OR NEUTRALIZING RESOLUTION 3379

Washington must take advantage of the new climate in international politics. Ridding the U.N. of Resolution 3379 will serve American interests in two ways:

**First**, it would be the first step in undermining the legitimacy of the U.N.'s twenty-year campaign against Israel. This prejudice has eliminated the U.N.'s capacity to serve as a mediator in the Middle East peace process. Israel is justified in viewing that U.N. as hostile to Israeli vital interests. If this resolution could be eliminated, the healing process in the U.N. could begin. This, in turn, could improve the political climate for peace in the Middle East.

**Second**, repeal would be an important test of improved cooperation. Moscow should be invited to work with Washington in overturning or neutralizing Resolution 3379—whether directly or indirectly.

To overturn Resolution 3379, the U.S. should:

- ◆ ◆ **Inform Israel immediately that America will seek repeal of Resolution 3379 in this fall's U.N. General Assembly session.**

America should notify the Israeli government of its intention to seek repeal. Israel then could muster its own resources and devise a strategy for action. Washington of

course, could decide not to take the official lead in the call for repeal. American sponsorship might cost the measure votes. If so, Sweden, Luxembourg or a similar nation should be recruited to introduce the resolution in the General Assembly. Yet America must remain the driving force behind the effort to repeal.

◆ ◆ **Announce that America is prepared to push for repeal in this and every successive General Assembly session until repeal succeeds.**

Resolution 3379 will never be repealed unless America demonstrates resolve. Only America has the influence to wage political war at the U.N. against Resolution 3379. Opponents of repeal, moreover, need to know that they will face the issue and pressure from America repeatedly. Only then will they take the issue seriously and possibly vote for repeal.

To make the U.N. member states believe that America is committed to this issue the Bush Administration must campaign publicly for repeal. George Bush should launch the offensive when he addresses the U.S. General Assembly on September 24. There he should state his categorical opposition to all forms of anti-Semitism, and he should then announce that the U.S. will press repeatedly until Resolution 3379 is rendered null and void.

Washington should warn, moreover, that economic development grants for some Third World countries may be reduced if they oppose overturning Resolution 3379. Because economic development assistance to most Third World countries usually is wasted, ending aid to Bangladesh, Mozambique and other countries that voted for Resolution 3379 in 1975 will not harm U.S. interests. Of course, supreme U.S. interests at times require that assistance, particularly military aid, be provided regardless of votes at the U.N. Example: American aid to Egypt. But such cases are exceptions.

◆ ◆ **Announce that the U.S. will veto the candidacy of any eventual replacement for Javier Perez de Cuellar as U.N. Secretary General unless the candidate supports repeal of Resolution 3379.**

The U.S. can impose costs on those not supporting repeal of Resolution 3379 by denying the Secretary Generalship to anyone who will not forcefully advocate wiping Resolution 3379 off the books at the U.N. The Secretary General of the United Nations is the symbolic focal point of the organization. For that reason the U.S. should use its veto power in the Security Council to ensure that the replacement for Javier Perez de Cuellar respects human rights in the way that the U.N. Charter originally intended.

Having a Secretary General committed to repeal would strengthen the effort to repeal Resolution 3379. It would give the U.S. and its supporters in this effort an important ally at the U.N. who can use the "bully pulpit" of his office to advocate repeal.

◆ ◆ **Announce that repeal of Resolution 3379 is a condition for U.S. support for a U.N. role in a Middle East peace process.**

The rapid pace of events involving Secretary of State James Baker's trips to the Middle East dictates that the issue of repealing Resolution 3379 be considered immediately. If not, a tremendous opportunity for repeal may pass. Israel and several Arab states may agree to attend an initial peace conference tentatively scheduled for

this October. Syria and other Arab countries hostile to Israel may find it politically difficult to participate in a Middle East peace conference while refusing to repeal Resolution 3379. If they do not support repeal, then the rejection of the Arab states will reveal their true intentions; if they go along with repeal, then this stain on the U.N.'s reputation can be removed.

◆ ◆ Work with the Soviets to overturn Resolution 3379.

Assistant Secretary Bolton and Ambassador Pickering may decide that they cannot win a vote this fall to repeal the "Zionism is Racism" resolution. A head count taken last year by the U.S. in the General Assembly revealed that a vote on repealing Resolution 3379 now would be very close. While much of the sentiment for the original resolution may have dissipated, some states may not want to admit having made a public error. If so, America should propose not a repeal of Resolution 3379 but a new resolution. This would state that Zionism is not a form of racism.

This approach may attract Russian support. Soviet officials seem to be looking for an "indirect" way to reverse Resolution 3379. The U.S. should be willing to back an indirect reversal if it unambiguously repudiates the meaning of Resolution 3379. Washington may invite Moscow to collaborate in drafting a joint resolution for the General Assembly that, in effect, would say:

The General Assembly, recalling and recognizing the continuing validity of its resolution 1904 (XVIII) of November 1963, proclaiming the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which justifiably condemned all forms of "racial discrimination," recalling further its resolution 3379 of 10 November 1975, states categorically that Zionism is not a threat to world peace and security, and recognizes that Zionism is not a form of racism or racial discrimination.<sup>22</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Little has handicapped or discredited the U.N. more than its persistent anti-Israeli bias, represented most harshly by the "Zionism is Racism" resolution of 1975. Because of this, the U.N. rightly has been shoved to the sidelines in the Middle East peace process.

Yet the global atmosphere that transformed the U.N. into a reflexively anti-Israel organization is changing. Because the Soviet Union no longer automatically opposes all U.S. policies in the U.N., Moscow could work with Washington to overturn Resolution 3379. Soviet officials indicate a willingness to back a *de facto* repeal of the resolution, by passing a new resolution. The U.S. should pursue this intriguing suggestion. U.S. of-

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22 The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination was passed as Resolution 1904 (XVIII) on November 20, 1963. The declaration proclaims in its first article that "[d]iscrimination between human beings on the ground of race, color, or ethnic origin is an offense to human dignity and shall be condemned as a denial of the principles of the U.N. Charter...."

officials should broach the topic with Soviet officials and then invite the Soviets to join in drafting such a resolution.

At the same time, the U.S. should begin a campaign for full repeal of the "Zionism is Racism" resolution. Moving publicly for a complete repeal would make it more likely that the U.N. would back a compromise that nullifies Resolution 3379 through a new resolution.

**Test of U.N.** Deciding whether or not to repeal Resolution 3379 will test the character of the U.N. If it fails to right its unjust action from 1975, it will not only continue to be unfit to speak legitimately on peace in the Middle East, it will have missed an opportunity to demonstrate that it has emerged from its quarter-century Dark Ages in which few responsible nations took it seriously.

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## Milestones In The History Of Zionism

- 1881** Beginning on April 29, a long series of pogroms begin against Russian Jews -- incited by the Czarist regime in St. Petersburg.
- 1894** French Army Captain Alfred Dreyfus is falsely convicted of espionage; anti-Semitism plays a central role in his prosecution.
- 1896** In the midst of this new wave of European persecution, Theodore Herzl publishes *A State for the Jews (Der Judenstaat)*, in which he argued that Jews could only protect themselves by establishing a sovereign, Jewish state. Herzl is considered the intellectual father of Zionism.
- 1906** In response to a new wave of anti-Jewish terror in Russia that began with the Kishniev pogrom of 1903, the American Jewish Committee was organized.
- 1917** The "Balfour Declaration," issued by the British government on November 2nd, promised the Jewish people a homeland in Palestine. The British government hoped that this gesture would prompt many Jews to desert their Central Power governments then fighting in World War I.
- 1938** Germany's Nazi government begins its public and overwhelming attack against German Jews in the morning hours of November 10th -- referred to as *Kristallnacht* -- "the night of the broken glass." During the ensuing violence, the Berlin synagogue is burned down, 101 other German synagogues are destroyed, over 7,500 Jewish businesses are destroyed, nearly 100 Jews are killed and thousands more are beaten.
- 1942** In Wannsee, a Berlin suburb, an executive conference of high-ranking Nazi SS officers and other officials decides upon a "final solution" for European Jewry on January 20.
- 1942** The first, massive use of gas begins at Belzec on March 17 -- a death camp capable of killing 15,000 persons per day. The extermination camps become fully operational within the year. 8,861,000 Jews come under Hitler's control either directly or indirectly during WWII. Of these, some 6 million are killed by the Nazis. Ninety percent of Poland's 3,300,000 Jews are put to death.
- 1947** U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 passed on November 29, proposes a plan for the partition of Palestine that would create a Jewish nation.
- 1948** David Ben-Gurion on May 14 declares Israel's existence as a state.
- 1975** The U.N. General Assembly's Resolution 3379 of November 10, condemns Zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination."
- 1991** The Forty-sixth session of the U.N. General Assembly convenes on September 17.