UN Vote Legitimizes Arab Myth About Israel

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During a time when Syria’s Bashar Assad and Russia’s Vladimir Putin were barrel bombing and slaughtering the innocent people of Aleppo, the Russian ambassador to Turkey was assassinated and Berlin Christmas shoppers were murdered in a terrorist attack, the United States abstained from a United Nations vote that condemned Israel for its “occupation” in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

The UN resolution legitimizes the Arab myth that Jews (and Christians) have no historical connection to the Holy Land, and that the 430,000 Israelis living in the West Bank and the 200,000 Israelis living in East Jerusalem are illegal occupiers. At one time, the Palestinian Authority went so far as to claim that the Jews, and implicitly Jesus, had never lived in the Holy Land. Yasser Arafat, the late Palestinian leader, said that the events depicted in the Old and New Testament took place in Yemen. This contortion of history was necessary to validate the claim that Jews are mere “occupiers” and not legitimate inhabitants of the so called “occupied territory.”

However, we should remember that what is referred to as the “occupied territory” is land that was historically occupied by Jews since biblical times. Going back to the first census taken in 1820, Jews always constituted a majority of the population in Jerusalem. The Old Quarter of Jerusalem, now a part of the “occupied territory,” was and is almost entirely occupied by Jews and houses the Western Wall — a remnant of King Solomon’s Temple sacred to the Jews.

History teaches that the Jordanian army were the illegal occupiers of that ancient city during the 1947 war for Israeli independence. The conquering Jordanian army immediately burned down all of the synagogues, forbade the Jews to pray at the Western Wall, and used the sacred tombstones from the Jewish cemetery as urinals. The UN, which created the State of Israel, said nothing during that occupation nor did it condemn those atrocities. The UN did not raise its voice when, on three occasions, Arab nations — without provocation — invaded Israel. The UN also remains silent in the wake of ongoing persecution of Jews and Christians, as well as the desecration of their faiths, in many Arab nations.

Conversion to the Muslim faith was the only way many Jews and Christians were able to prevent property confiscation, persecution, and deportation in many Arab countries. The UN is silent on this score. On the other hand, 20 percent of Israel’s population consists of Israeli Arab citizens. It is virtually impossible to travel in Israel without going past Israeli Arab towns and villages. Mosques abound, and Arabs and Muslims in Israel enjoy the benefits of the only democracy in the Middle East.

The UN resolution was in line with a UN committee report that declared Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque are historical Muslim areas while refusing to recognize that those same areas are also historically central to Christians and Jews. The terrorist organization Hamas, which controls Gaza, is gloating that the resolution declared Jews are illegal “occupiers.” Hamas and many Arab nations do not recognize Israel’s right to exist. Their claim is that all of Israel is “occupied territory” and most persist in their call for driving the Israeli’s “into the sea.”

Perhaps now that the UN has shown such great concern about Israel’s “occupation” it will turn to other “occupations,” such as the U.S. occupation of California and New Mexico that followed its victory over Mexico, the Russia’s annexation of the Crimea peninsula, or China’s suppression of Tibetan culture and worship.

Israel negotiated peace with Egypt and Jordan by returning to those nations the land it had every right to claim after its invasion. However, both nations recognized Israel’s right to exist, something Hamas and the Palestinian Authority have refused to do. The UN resolution now seeks to deprive Israel of its only bargaining chip — and we can be certain that those who govern the Palestinian lands will never recognize Israel’s sovereignty. Instead of advancing the cause of peace in the Middle East as Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday the UN resolution would do, it will be used as an excuse by Palestinians to refuse to deal directly with Israel.

The UN vote will be applauded in every European capital, as well as those institutions and campuses that have bulled Israel with boycotts and sanctions for years. No matter what Israel does, or doesn’t do, it will still be subject to unprovoked aggressive forays by its neighbors. In the past, the Palestinians and many Arab nations have attacked Israel militarily. They are now armed with a UN resolution that brands Israel an outlaw for living and worshipping in a land that has always been its ancestral home.