

Resource Guide:

Setting the Record Straight - Part 3

SCHOLARS CIRCLE



About Dr. Andrew Pessin

Andrew Pessin is Professor of Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Connecticut College and Campus Bureau Editor of the *Algemeiner*. His many books include *Anti-Zionism on Campus*, *Poisoning the Wells: Antisemitism in Contemporary America*, and *The Jewish God Question*, as well as several novels. One recent novel is *Nevergreen*, a satirical and now clearly prophetic account of campus cancel culture, its ideological excesses, and its deleterious impact on the Jews. Long ago he enjoyed some moments of fame portraying “The Genius” on the David Letterman Show.

DR. ANDREW PESSIN

Professor of Philosophy at Connecticut College and Campus Bureau Editor for *The Algemeiner*



Contact Andrew Pessin

WEBSITE: www.andrewpessin.com

EMAIL: apessin@conncoll.edu

SUBSTACK (ENCOURAGE SUBSCRIPTIONS!):

[HTTPS://ANDREWPESSIN.SUBSTACK.COM/](https://andrewpessin.substack.com/)

FOLLOW ON X: @ANDREWPESSIN

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Common Q&A's

What is a quick refutation of the Big Lie that Israel “occupies” Palestinian land?

The claim doesn't even make sense, since there was no pre-existing Palestinian state to be occupied. Nor is there any actual legal basis to the claim; if anything international law supports presumptive Israeli sovereignty over the entire territory. Wishing the region belonged to “Palestine” does not make it so. Nothing precludes some territory becoming “Palestine” by negotiation and treaty, such as by the Oslo Accords; but until then it's perhaps most reasonable to refer to Judea/Samaria in particular as “disputed territory.”

What is a quick refutation of the Big Lie that Israeli “settlements” in Judea/Samaria (“the West Bank”) are illegal?

Jewish communities in Judea/Samaria are not “illegal,” despite efforts to twist international law to make them so. The primary document cited to judge them illegal, the Geneva Conventions, does not actually apply; but even if it did it simply does not forbid them. What actually would be illegal would be forcibly removing those communities, and the only party actually building illegally are the Palestinians, with the support of the European Union, in Area C.

What is a quick refutation of the Big Lie that Israel is guilty of “apartheid”?

The allegation of Israeli “apartheid” is a defamatory lie, sustained only by twisting definitions, misrepresenting international conventions, and applying standards to Israel not applied to any other countries, including its enemies. In fact despite its imperfections Israel enshrines equality into its laws, is the only place in the Middle East where Jews and Arabs coexist, and its substantial Arab minority not only participates fully in society (in law, politics, medicine, education, etc.) but enjoys more rights and freedoms than Arab citizens or subjects do in most Arab countries. To the contrary, *genuine* apartheid may be found in the way Arabs treat not only the Jews but even other Palestinians.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ The campus campaign against Israel proceeds by means of numerous “Big Lies,” blatant flagrant falsehoods that are propagated relentlessly in order to delegitimize Israel and dehumanize Israeli Jews, marking them as purely evil actors to be destroyed. The campaign is thus profoundly antisemitic.
- ✓ Accusing the Jews of “occupation” is one such Big Lie. The claim doesn't even make sense, since there was no previously existing country of “Palestine” to be occupied. Wishing the region belonged to “Palestine” does not make it so.
- ✓ Accusing Israeli Jews of building “illegal settlements” is another such Big Lie. Jewish communities in Judea/Samaria are not “illegal,” despite efforts to twist international law to make them so. What actually would be illegal would be forcibly removing those communities, as some demand to do.
- ✓ Accusing Israel of practicing “apartheid” is a third such Big Lie. The allegation of Israeli “apartheid” is a defamatory lie, sustained only by twisting definitions, misrepresenting international conventions, and applying standards to Israel not applied to any other countries, including its enemies. To the contrary, genuine apartheid may be found in the way Arabs treat not only the Jews but even other Palestinians.

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