

Nov. 20, 2010.

The Editor,

The Chronicle Herald.

Dear Editor:

Mark David, in his [Nov. 20 opinion piece], is indulging in a series of falsifications, in his attempt to defend Israeli policies. The campaign that Israeli apologists, including Messrs. Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney, are conducting to falsely label any criticism of Israeli policies as Anti-Semitism, is a charade that must be answered. The policies of all countries must be open to justified criticism and Israel cannot be allowed this unique immunity from criticism, that is not available to any other nation. Such criticism must not be equated with deligitimization of any state, including Israel. Critics of communism and fascism did not call for the elimination of Russia, Spain or Italy.

Israeli illegal occupation of Palestinian territories for the past 43 years stands in defiance of international law and repeated Security Council resolutions. The practices, throughout this illegal occupation, include extra-judicial executions, detention of thousands of prisoners without charge or trial, torture, humiliation, denial of health care, demolition of thousands of homes and expropriation of territory for the creation of illegal colonies [settlements]. These practices are in violation of virtually every article of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and are identified by international law as war crimes. These policies are condemned by all international human rights groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch and Israeli human rights groups, including B'Tselem.

Mark David mentions Hamas kidnapping of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit but makes no mention of over ten thousand Palestinian prisoners held by Israel mostly without charge or trial. Rachel Corrie was crushed by an Israeli bulldozer, when she was attempting to prevent the demolition of a Palestinian home and not subterranean tunnels, as Mark David claims.

Finally, it is to be maintained that Israel must abide by the UN Charter and cannot remain above international law.

Yours sincerely,

Ismail Zayid, MD.