

## Ali Abunimah

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### Overview

When Ali Abunimah comes to your campus, be prepared for a sophisticated, smooth advocate of radical Palestinian positions. A graduate of Princeton University and currently a researcher in social policy at the University of Chicago, Abunimah is adept at weaving arguments and making verbal counter-attacks. But his calmness, highbrow style and constant references to international law and human rights cannot conceal his intense hostility about the very founding of Israel. He opposes a two-state solution and instead wants to see Israel and the Territories merged into one state-that is, he wants the Jewish State dismantled.

Abunimah was born in the U.S. to Palestinian parents, and raised in Europe. He rose to prominence in anti-Israel activism after he co-founded the Electronic Intifada in 2001, a website committed to countering what he argues is pro-Israel media bias by educating the public "on the question of Palestine, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the political, legal and human dimensions of Israel's 38-year occupation." [1] The site is filled with articles by Abunimah and others that relentlessly condemn Israel and defend or explain away Palestinian violence and controversial political choices. Since then, Abunimah has written numerous opinion pieces, been interviewed in the media on TV and radio, especially NPR, and lectured on campuses and in the wider community. [2]

You can expect to hear the usual litany of accusations and vilifications of Israel while Palestinian terrorism and human rights abuses are consistently ignored. Abunimah repeatedly makes unfounded comparisons between South African apartheid and the State of Israel, [3] referring to the anti-terrorist Israeli security barrier as an "apartheid solution," [4] and the "apartheid wall," [5] and claims Israel has an "apartheid system." [6] He also claims that Israel kills Palestinian civilians and steals their land with "total impunity." [7] He charges that Israel is involved in "relentless colonization" [8] and desires "complete colonization of the West Bank." [9] In October of 2005 Abunimah even sent out an e-mail in search of "Palestinian Americans who were tortured while in Israeli detention in the early 1990s . . . for an important research project" that apparently would allow him to make further indictments against Israel. [10]

Though Abunimah condemns suicide bombing, he provides rationales for the murder of innocents when he writes that "no power on earth is going to stop some of these occupied people" from "responding in kind" to Israel's "brute force" and "military occupation." [11] He calls terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians "counterattacks." [12] In 2002, he excused the violence of the Intifada, claiming that "the Palestinian people have decided that life under this brutal foreign military dictatorship is no longer tolerable and they are prepared to pay a very very high price to have...basic freedom and human rights." [13] Electronic Intifada's obituary of Yasser Arafat argued that characterizations of Arafat as bloodthirsty and vicious were "exaggerated," and that Arafat was a "larger-than-life" figure who was being made into a "simplistic caricature" that relied on "racist stereotypes." [14]

Abunimah is unyielding about the Palestinian refugees' right of return which he claims, incorrectly, is embedded in international law. [15] He objected vehemently to President Clinton's peace proposals in 2000 because they only recognized a Palestinian right to move to the proposed Palestinian state, not to Israel. [16] Arab states and Palestinians have called for the refugees' right of return since 1949, hoping to undermine the Jewish State demographically by flooding it with Palestinians.

Abunimah advocates a one-state solution to the conflict though it would doom both Palestinian and Jewish national aspirations for independence and self-determination. He claims that the "era of partition," otherwise known as the Israeli State living side by side in peace with a Palestinian one, is "over" and that the Israelis and Palestinians should "build a future as partners in a single state." [17] He is currently writing a book to make his case for the one-state plan, which will be published in September 2006.

Though Abunimah is a staunch advocate of free speech and has debated pro-Israel figures such as Morton Klein of the Zionist Organization of America and scholar Daniel Pipes,[18] he is not above trying to silence his opponents. He attempted to have investigative journalist Steve Emerson banned from National Public Radio (NPR) in 1998, arguing that Emerson was a “well-documented anti-Arab, anti-Muslim racist” because of his reports on radical Islam.[19]

More recently, Abunimah called the 2006 parliamentary victory of Hamas, a radical Islamic terrorist group responsible for suicide bombing, a vote for “clarity” which reduces the conflict to its fundamental elements: “There is occupation, and there is resistance.”[20] The “fundamental elements” of Abunimah’s philosophy are to demonize Israel, deny its right to exist and provide excuses for terrorists while attacking Israel’s right to protect its citizens.

Among the charges you are likely to hear are the following:

The Jewish State: “Ending the occupation does not solve the problem. The Jews do not view all human beings as equal. The 1948 borders were calculated to harm Christians, Arabs, Palestinians and Muslims.”[21]

Apartheid: “There are many similarities between the Israeli and South African cases which make the comparison compelling.”[22]

Apartheid and Justification for Terror: “If Israel is going to maintain a military occupation over millions of people by nothing but brute force, then no power on earth is going to stop some of these occupied people responding in kind. The only way to end the violence is to end the occupation, and to allow Israelis and Palestinians to live side by side in peace as equals. Apartheid solutions, such as building ghettos or fences for Jews or Palestinians will only perpetuate the violence.”[23]

Electronic Intifada Arafat Obituary: “The Arafat who was routinely scorned by American politicians, talk show hosts, and in thousands of American newspaper editorials for years was not a real human being, but a crude and simplistic caricature that often relied for its power on racist stereotypes about Arabs pervasive in American popular culture. The meme had been entirely conceived to distract from the real issues.”[24]

One State, Two Peoples: “The insistence on partition, not on one state, is increasingly a delusional deviation from this reality . . . It is the moment, therefore, for us to declare the era of partition over and commit to a moral, just and realizable vision in which Israelis and Palestinians build a future as partners in a single state . . .”[25]

Hamas Election Victory: “It reduces the conflict to its most fundamental elements: there is occupation, and there is resistance . . . Hamas’ victory pulls the rug from under the project of trying to deflect the blame for the conflict from Israeli colonization to Palestinian internal pathologies.”[26]

Israel Killing Civilians, Stealing Land, Apartheid: “Meanwhile, Israel continues to build a comprehensive system of apartheid, to kill Palestinian civilians and to steal their land with total impunity . . .

Endorses boycott of Israeli Academics: “It seems that Israeli professors should never be deprived of their ability to enjoy conferences in Oslo, London or Florence no matter how bad things get in Palestine, no matter how imprisoned Palestinians are in their ghettos and no matter how complicit major Israeli institutions are with the apartheid system.”[27]

The EU: “In the absence of real solidarity from European and other governments, more Palestinians have concluded that armed resistance is the only means they have to stand up to Israel’s relentless colonization . . . I do not support violence of any kind, but there is no greater hypocrisy than calling on an occupied people to renounce violence when you are complicit in the occupier’s violence against them.”[28]

Disengagement From Gaza: "Israel is adapt at creating complications which then absorb and exhaust all available diplomatic and political energy, while it uses the time to entrench itself ever more deeply in the occupied territories." [29]

"Sharon's only reason for ever speaking of a withdrawal from Gaza was to reduce the cost of the occupation to Israel and to consolidate Israel's conquests in the West Bank." [30]

Palestinian Youth Indoctrination: "While many news organizations have taken seriously debunked claims that Palestinian children are routinely taught anti-Israel "hatred" and "incitement" in their schools, they have largely ignored evidence that Israeli children, particularly in West Bank settlements are indoctrinated with anti-Arab hatred." [31]

Colonization, Apartheid, Land Grabbing: "The Israelis want time to complete the colonization of the West Bank, especially the huge tracts recently grabbed through construction of the apartheid wall. Israel wants no discussion of such final status issues as Jerusalem or refugees as long as there exists any slight chance that such issues might not be settled their way." [32]

Israel will star war: "And, as Israel gets further into its corner, the chances increase dramatically that it will seek to resolve its existential problem not just at the expense of the Palestinians, but by spreading the conflict to its neighbors." [33]

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[1] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/aboutEI.shtml>

[2] Abunimah's articles are available at [www.abunimah.org](http://www.abunimah.org) and [www.electronicintifada.org](http://www.electronicintifada.org)

[3] <http://www.mediamonitors.net/abunimah9.html>

[4] [http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world\\_abunimah0508.htm](http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world_abunimah0508.htm)

[5] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3541.shtml>

[6] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>

[7] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>

[8] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4666.shtml>

[9] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3541.shtml>

[11] [http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world\\_abunimah0508.htm](http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world_abunimah0508.htm)

[12] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah061004.htm>

[13] "Ali Abunimah Debates Daniel Pipes on BBC Radio," Sept 29 2002 at <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article745.shtml>

[14] <http://electronicintifada.net/cgi-bin/artman/exec/view.cgi/10/3288>

[15] Israel should welcome the refugees, Financial Times (London, England), January 10, 2001

[16] <http://www.abunimah.org/features/010103roralert.html>

[17] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah171003.htm>

[18] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article745.shtml>

[19] [http://camera.org/index.asp?x\\_context=4&x\\_outlet=28&x\\_article=73](http://camera.org/index.asp?x_context=4&x_outlet=28&x_article=73) and [http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31\\_issue5\\_1998.pdf](http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31_issue5_1998.pdf)

[20] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4425.shtml>

### **Quotes:**

- [21] <http://%20www.frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=19813>
- [22] <http://www.mediamonitors.net/abunimah9.html>
- [23] [http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world\\_abunimah0508.htm](http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world_abunimah0508.htm)
- [24] <http://electronicintifada.net/cgi-bin/artman/exec/view.cgi/10/3288>
- [25] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah171003.htm>
- [26] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4425.shtml>
- [27] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>
- [28] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4666.shtml>
- [29] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4310.shtml>
- [30] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah061004.htm>
- [31] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3559.shtml>
- [32] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3541.shtml>
- [33] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah061004.htm>

## Biography

Ali Abunimah lives in Chicago, Illinois. He is the co-founder of the Electronic Intifada, an Internet web site (electronicintifada.net) that considers itself the provider of information about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a "Palestinian perspective." [1] In reality it is a Palestinian propaganda web page filled with inflammatory anti-Israel rhetoric. He founded the site with Nigel Perry, Laurie King, and Arjan El Fassed [2] who launched it on February 23, 2001, just five months after the second Intifada began and after the election of Ariel Sharon as Israel's Prime Minister. [3] Abunimah is also the co-founder of electroniciraq.net, launched in February of 2003, which claims to be an "alternative news moonshot" as well as documenter of the "US Occupation." [4] Abunimah, on electroniciraq.net, calls the war in Iraq "illegal" and decries Bush's shifting of "the goal posts of the Palestine-Israel debate such that Likudist thinking is now viewed as centrist." [5]

Abunimah himself is American born and was raised in Europe. Both his parents, according to Electronic Intifada, are "originally from Palestine." He received his BA from Princeton University and his MA from University of Chicago. He is a full-time researcher of social policy at the University of Chicago. [6]

In a 1998 article, Abunimah described how and why he became an activist. [7] Like many anti-Israel Americans with Palestinian parents, Abunimah remains outraged at the purported injustice done to his family and other Palestinians during and after the 1948 War which Palestinian Arabs and Arab states had launched against the newly-created state of Israel. These families lost their property because they chose not to stay in Israel and become citizens despite Israel's urging in 1948 that they remain. Instead, they fled.

Abunimah's sense of injustice seems particularly unjustified. His mother was from Lifta, a village on the outskirts of west Jerusalem, and Abunimah admits they fled during the preliminary phase of the 1948 War before Israel even established itself as a state. His father's family did not flee and still live in Battir, a village in the West Bank outside Bethlehem. But his mother's family did not fare badly either. His grandfather was prosperous and also owned property in the West Bank and Jordan. He relocated to Jordan where he quickly got "back on his feet again" and the family accepted Jordanian citizenship. [8] Abunimah's father became a diplomat, probably in the Jordanian government. Nonetheless, Abunimah remains incensed about the loss of the family's Lifta property and about the outcome of the war. He does not acknowledge the fact that Palestinians and Arab states launched the war that created this displacement.

Though he engaged in some pro-Palestinian activities when he was at Princeton, Abunimah's current activism began in the mid-90's when he started writing letters to the media to correct what he saw as their anti-Arab, pro-Israel bias. He was "determined not to allow others, particularly the media's representation of the Middle East, to decide what is, what was said and what will be." [9] He particularly took NPR to task when it presented Israel or Israelis in too favorable a light which led to his controversy with them when they interviewed investigative journalist Steve Emerson as an expert.

Abunimah also became active in Arab American groups. He is vice-president of the Arab American Action Network, which was started by Professor Rashid Khalidi in Chicago in 1995 and has been described as promoting "a broad range of artistic, cultural, and political programs that promote a radicalized, anti-Israel, anti-American agenda." [10] He has been deeply influenced by the writings of the late Palestinian-American anti-Israel activist Edward Said [11] and has worked closely with Hussein Ibish, a vituperative anti-Israel figure who was prominent in the ADC (Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee). In 2001, they co-authored an article arguing that the Palestinian right of return is embedded in international law. [12]

Abunimah's book contributions include "No Justice, No Peace" in *The Anti-Capitalist Reader*, as well as "The Media's Deadly Spin On Iraq" in the anti-war book *Iraq Under Siege*, both of which were published in 2002. [13] His own book, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, is set to be published in September of 2006. The book will "show" how "separation," otherwise known as the two-state solution, is "dead and cannot lead to the security Israelis desire or the freedom Palestinians must have" and advocates Abunimah's vision of "one shared state for two peoples." [14] This is otherwise known as the demographic path to the destruction of the Jewish State.

Other books and contributions include:

--"On violence and the Intifada," in "Live from Palestine," edited by Nancy Stohlman and Laurieann Aladin. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003

--(with Hussein Ibish) "The US Media and the New Intifada" in "The New Intifada," edited by Roane Carey. New York: Verso Books, 2001.

--(with Hussein Ibish) "The Palestinian Right of Return," Washington, DC: ADC, 2001[15]

On 14 June 2003, Nigel Perry and Ali Abunimah accepted the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's "Voices of Peace" Award on behalf of the founders of Electronic Intifada and the sister site Electronic Iraq.[16]

Ali Abunimah is a frequent lecturer at Universities around the United States. He is a writer and commentator on Middle East and Arab-American affairs and a regular contributor to the Chicago Tribune. His articles have also appeared in many other major newspapers such as the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and the Philadelphia Inquirer. He has written in foreign newspapers such as the United Kingdom's Financial Times, as well as Middle Eastern publications including the Jordan Times, Lebanon's Daily Star, and the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz.

He has appeared on both local, national, and international television news programs as well as Radio. These include CNN, Fox, MSNBC, Pacifica radio, radio Canada and the BBC.[17]

[1] Electronic Intifada Homepage, <http://electronicintifada.net/new.shtml>

[2] electronicintifada.net, About EI, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article2242.shtml>

[3] electronicintifada.net, Five years of Electronic Intifada: Selected milestones 2001-2005  
<http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article1187.shtml>

[4] electroniciraq.net, About This Project: Introduction, <http://electroniciraq.net/news/1.shtml>

[5] Ali Abunimah, Bush, America, and the Middle East, November 5, 2004  
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/1693.shtml>

[6] The Electronic Intifada Team, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article2242.shtml#ali>

[7] Ali Abunimah, "Dear NPR," The Link, Dec. 1998 at [http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31\\_issue5\\_1998.pdf](http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31_issue5_1998.pdf)

[8] Ibid. p. 2

[9] Ibid. p. 4

[10] <http://www.discoverthenetwork.org/groupProfile.asp?grpId=6462>

[11] Ali Abunimah, "Dear NPR," The Link, Dec. 1998 at  
[http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31\\_issue5\\_1998.pdf](http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol31_issue5_1998.pdf) p. 2

[12] Hussein Ibish and Ali Abunimah, "Point: The Right of Return," Human Rights Brief, Dec. 2001 at  
<http://www.wcl.american.edu/hrbrief/08/2palestinians.cfm>

[13] The Electronic Intifada Team, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article2242.shtml#ali>

[14] Henry Holt & Company Subsidiary Rights Guide,  
<http://www.henryholt.com/rights/Fall%2006%20Rights%20Guide.pdf>

[15] Ali Abunimah Profile, [http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/ali\\_abunimah/profile.html](http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/ali_abunimah/profile.html)

[16] Nigel Perry Bio, <http://nigelperry.com/news/nigel-parry-bio.shtml>

[17] Ali Abunimah Profile, [http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/ali\\_abunimah/profile.html](http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/ali_abunimah/profile.html)



## Strategies/Counter-Strategies

Though Abunimah seems calm and even reasonable, he is extremely radical. When countering him, maintain your own composure and be as rational as he is. He has written many articles and made many public statements. Use his own words to expose and challenge him.

The most effective strategies are the following:

1. Expose Abunimah's radicalism, especially his implicit support for terrorism. Make sure to use his words when it comes to Palestinian terrorism. Despite the fact that he overtly condemns suicide bombing, he provides a rationale and justification for terrorism.

Example: You have expressed support for the Palestinian Intifada, characterized by terrorist violence and suicide bombings and even named your website "Electronic Intifada." You excused the Intifada's violence, writing that "some will always conclude that their only course is to impose as high a cost as possible on Israel, no matter the cost to themselves." [1] You never refute this line of thinking as counterproductive or wrong-headed. DO you support the murder of innocent Israeli civilians through terrorist activity, even if it has led Palestinian society down a path of destruction?

Example: You justify terrorism when you write that "If Israel is going to maintain a military occupation over millions of people by nothing but brute force, then no power on earth is going to stop some of these occupied people responding in kind." [2] Why do you provide excuses for the intentional killing of innocent Israelis and how will continued Palestinian terrorism lead to peace?

Example: According to the Hamas Charter "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it." [3] Yet you call the electoral victory of Hamas a "vote for clarity." [4] Didn't the Palestinians give a parliamentary victory to a terrorist group whose primary purpose is to obliterate Israel? How can this be anything but a Palestinian declaration of war on Israel and isn't this policy the reason the international community cut off aid to the PA?

2. Expose the fact that despite Abunimah's moderate façade, he supports a radical agenda that is far outside the mainstream. Point out that his agenda betrays the Palestinian national movement and is a recipe for further conflict. His "one state for two peoples" may seem rational to those who are ignorant of its implications. Be sure to expose the fact that this solution is in fact an explicit agenda for Israel's destruction.

Example: You passionately endorse a one-state solution, and refer to the two-state solution, or a Palestinian state living in peace side by side with Israel, as a "deviation from reality." [5] Isn't "one state for two peoples" another way of saying that Israel should be enfolded within a larger Palestinian-dominated state stretching from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River, and doesn't it in essence mean that Israel will be eliminated as a Jewish State?

Example: If you advocate a one-state solution, you are repudiating the Palestinians' national movement and their goal of independence and self-determination in their own state. Do you support Palestinian nationalism or would you rather sacrifice it for a one-state plan that would destroy the Jewish State?

Example: You passionately endorse a one-state solution, and refer to the two-state solution, or a Palestinian state living in peace side by side with Israel, as a "deviation from reality." Wouldn't it be suicidal for Israelis to voluntarily incorporate a hostile and virulently anti-Semitic population into its midst and wouldn't they be justified in fighting against such an outcome?

Example: Palestinians have demanded a one-state solution since 1937 but the international community called for partition, repeatedly acknowledging that Jews would not be safe in a Muslim-Arab majority state and

would not have the freedom to develop their unique culture. What changes have occurred in the past 60 years that lead you to think a one-state solution would work now?

3. Point out that Abunimah consistently ignores context and the big picture. One of Abunimah's techniques is to counterattack by turning around condemnations of Palestinians and accusing Israel of similar misdeeds. He does so by picking out examples of wrongdoing by individual Israelis or by making unfounded charges. It is critical to point out that there is a world of difference between established government policy and the acts of individuals. The difference in the cases he brings up are usually that while misdeeds-terrorism, incitement, targeting civilians etc.-are often official PA policy, they are not official Israeli policy.

Example: You have argued that claims of anti-Israel incitement in Palestinian schools are untrue but that "Israeli children, particularly in West Bank settlements are indoctrinated with anti-Arab hatred." [6] I challenge you to prove Israel's public education policy is to teach hatred and to present evidence that Palestinian children are taught to respect Jews and Judaism and Israel's right to exist.

5. Challenge Abunimah's misleading or untrue statements. Point out that Abunimah conveniently ignores certain facts that may not fit well with his agenda.

Example: You have written that "claims that Palestinian children routinely taught anti-Israel 'hatred' and 'incitement' in their schools" are "debunked." [7] Yet it is a fact that maps used by Palestinian schoolchildren do not show Israel. It is a fact that the Palestinian media is inundated with anti-Semitic vitriol of the worst kinds, including racist sermons. Do you think that trivializing or ignoring these facts will help bring peace?

6. Expose his misconstruing and abusing of history for cheap political potshots at Israel. This is most evident in his constant references to Israeli "apartheid" and his comparisons between Israel and South Africa. This also applies to the fact that he believes Israel desires the "complete colonization" of the West Bank.

Example: You refer to the Israeli "apartheid system" and Israel's "apartheid solutions," [8] thereby trivializing the unique suffering of Blacks in South Africa and exploiting it for political gain. Are you blind to the fact that Israel is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, majority rule democracy? If you were truly worried about "apartheid," why do you not focus at least as much of your energy on Arab despotic regimes that actively oppress their own citizens and discriminate against minorities in legal systems?

Example: You have said that Israel desires the "complete colonization of the West Bank," [9] when in fact Israel has shown repeatedly that it is willing to exchange land for peace, and only acquired the West Bank through the defensive 1967 war. Yet isn't it true that you and many Palestinians are bent on the irreversible conquest of Israeli land and society from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea-what you euphemistically call a one-state solution?

6. Trip up Abunimah by expanding the context and forcing him to criticize the Palestinians.

Example: What do you think the Palestinian national movement's greatest mistakes have been and what steps would you advise them to take to end the violence and get independence?

Example: Radical Islamic and Palestinian terrorism and suicide bombing in the West and in Israel have severely compromised the public's image of Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims in general. Many of your comments seem to justify their violence or minimize it. Don't you think you consequently contribute to this negative image and aren't there more constructive steps you can take-or do you believe the violence is justifiable and should continue?

[1] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah061004.htm>

[2] [http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world\\_abunimah0508.htm](http://discuss.washingtonpost.com/zforum/02/world_abunimah0508.htm)

[3] <http://www.frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=21418>

- [4] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4425.shtml>
- [5] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah171003.htm>
- [6] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3559.shtml>
- [7] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3559.shtml>
- [8] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>
- [9] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3541.shtml>

## **Questions to Ask the Speaker**

### **One-State Solution Questions**

1. What exactly is your goal--a peaceful end to the conflict or the defeat of Israel?
2. You passionately endorse a one-state solution, and refer to the two-state solution, or a Palestinian state living in peace side by side with Israel, as a “deviation from reality.”[1] Isn’t “one state for two peoples” another way of saying that Israel should be enfolded within a larger Palestinian-dominated state stretching from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River, and doesn’t this mean that Israel will be eliminated as a Jewish State?
3. You passionately endorse a one-state solution, but wouldn’t it be suicidal for Israelis to incorporate a hostile and virulently anti-Semitic population into its midst and wouldn’t they be justified in fighting against such an outcome?
4. Palestinians have demanded a one-state solution since 1937 but the international community called for partition, repeatedly acknowledging that Jews would not be safe in a Muslim-Arab majority state and would not be free to develop their unique culture. What changes have occurred in the past 60 years that lead you to think a one-state solution would work now?
5. The one-state solution did not work for the former Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, or for the Muslim regions of India which broke off to become Pakistan and Bangladesh. What makes you think this one state would be successful in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, when there is as much if not more ethnic strife as in these other areas?

### **Extremism and Terrorism**

6. You called Hamas’ electoral victory a “vote for clarity.”[2] Yet Hamas is a terrorist group whose primary goal, as the Hamas Charter claims, is that “Israel will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it.”[3] Do you claim this provides clarity because it reflects Palestinians’ true intentions or because it means Palestinians will continue their violent war until their maximal demands are met?
7. Where is your outrage at suicide bombers and terrorists who attack Israel and hide among civilians? If these fighters and the civilians they use as human shields are killed in counter-terrorist operations, why don’t you blame the Palestinian fighters for consciously putting Palestinian children and civilians at risk?
8. You have expressed support for the Palestinian Intifada and defended its terrorism and suicide bombings, writing that “some will always conclude that their only course is to impose as a high cost as possible on Israel, no matter the cost to them.”[4] You never refute this line of thinking as counterproductive or wrong-headed. Do you support the murder of innocent Israeli civilians through terrorist activity, even though it has led Palestinian society down a path of self-destruction?
9. You claim Israelis kill “Palestinian civilians” with “total impunity.”[5] How can you deny Israel’s basic right and obligation to defend itself against the onslaught of terrorism that specifically targets its civilians including children or do you believe that no national group, including the Palestinians, has a right to use violence under any circumstances?

### **Free Speech and the Media**

10. You claim to believe in free speech yet you lobbied very hard to get NPR to stop interviewing former CNN investigative journalist Steve Emerson so that NPR because you opposed his reports about radical Islam. Do you believe in free speech or do you believe that certain voices should be silenced and if so, how do you justify that position?

### **Factual Errors**

11. You refer to the Israeli “apartheid system” [6] yet Israel is a multi-racial, multi-cultural, majority rule democracy while neighboring Arab regimes oppress their own citizens, legalize discrimination against minorities and deny basic human rights. Do you make this false charge against Israel because you don’t understand apartheid or how radically it differs from Israel’s government or because you want to divert attention away from the tragic failures of Arab regimes, including the PA?

12. You have said that Israel desires the “complete colonization of the West Bank.”[7] Why do you ignore the fact that Israel has routinely exchanged land for peace with neighboring countries that show a willingness to negotiate? Isn’t it more true that you and many Palestinians are bent on the irreversible conquest and colonization of Israeli land and society from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea-in what you euphemistically call a one-state solution-and that it is Palestinians who want to colonize Israel?

13. You wrote that “claims that Palestinian children routinely taught anti-Israel ‘hatred’ and ‘incitement’ in their schools” are “debunked.”[8] It is a fact that maps used by Palestinian schoolchildren do not show Israel. It is a fact that the Palestinian media is inundated with anti-Semitic vitriol of the worst kinds, including racist sermons. Do you think that trivializing or ignoring these facts will help bring peace?

### **General Questions**

14. What do you think the Palestinian national movement’s greatest mistakes have been and what steps would you advise them to take to end the violence and achieve their goal of national independence?

15. The Palestinian cause has lost international support because of the PA’s culture of suicide bombing, corruption and especially its election of the extremist terrorist group Hamas in January 2005. Don’t you think your views contribute to negative images of Palestinians as almost irrational extremists who refuse to accept the 60-year old political realities in their region and who don’t want peace or their own state but rather want to destroy a neighboring state?

[1] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah171003.htm>

[2] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4425.shtml>

[3] <http://www.frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=21418>

[4] <http://www.countercurrents.org/pa-abunimah061004.htm>

[5] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>

[6] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article4696.shtml>

[7] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3541.shtml>

[8] <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article3559.shtml>