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by Gilead Ini

On CNN, Many More Carter Fabrications

Part of Jimmy Carter's promotional tour for his [widely criticized](#) book, *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*, were two CNN interviews with the former president. As with his book and his other media appearances, Carter used the CNN platform to promote one blatant falsehood after another.

The Situation Room (November 28, 2006)

On this CNN [segment](#), Carter pushed host Wolf Blitzer into accepting and parroting the false allegation that Israel's security barrier is built entirely on Palestinian territory:

BLITZER: Let's talk about your new book, "Palestine Peace, Not Apartheid." The book jacket, the book cover, has a picture of you. It also has a picture of the wall that Israel has constructed...

CARTER: Yes.

BLITZER: ... along the West Bank to protect itself, presumably, from terrorists coming into major Israeli cities and towns.

CARTER: Not along the West Bank, but inside the West Bank.

BLITZER: Inside the West Bank...

CARTER: OK.

BLITZER: ... to separate, if you will, the Palestinian territories from Israel, pre-'67 Israel...

CARTER: Well, as a matter of fact...

BLITZER: ... or close to those lines.

CARTER: As a matter of fact, that's not correct, Wolf.

What the wall does is separate Palestinians from other Palestinians. This wall is not built between Israel and Palestine. It's built between the Palestinians and other Palestinians.

BLITZER: In terms of going a little bit further than the pre-'67 lines...

CARTER: I wouldn't say a little bit.

BLITZER: **You're right, it's all built on Palestinian occupied territory.**

In this case, Carter used Wolf Blitzer, who was neither ready to withstand Carter's pressure nor armed with the facts, to convey false information about Israel's security barrier. Carter made the same assertion during his Dec. 3 appearance on CSPAN2's Book TV:

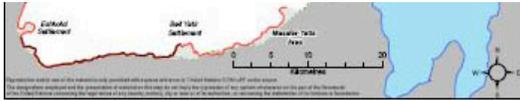
... this wall is not built between Palestinian land and Israeli land. No place does the wall touch Israel. The wall is entirely inside Palestine. And the wall is designed as it's presently planned and being built **completely inside Palestine** not to protect Israelis but to take Palestinian land, and **all you have to do is look at a map ... it shows the route of the wall.**

It certainly is a good idea to verify claims with reputable source material, especially when the source of the claim has a [history](#) of prevarication. And if one were to call Carter's bluff and "look at a map," the map would look like the one below—an official United Nations map showing the route of Israel's security barrier.



The map clearly shows that in the far southern and northern portions of the West Bank, the barrier runs almost entirely along the pre-1967 boundary (or Green Line). The only sections where the barrier substantially varies from the Green Line are *a*) in the Jerusalem area, where it encloses large Israeli settlement blocks, and *b*) to the north, where the Ariel and Kedumim settlement blocks are protected by the fence. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs analysis that accompanies the map explains that "20% of the Barrier's length runs along the Green Line" ("Preliminary Analysis of the Humanitarian Implications of the April 2006 Barrier Projections, Update 5").

Although the UN's 20 percent figure reveals Carter's claim to be patently false, that figure understates the barrier's close adherence to the Green Line. The barrier follows a circuitous path when it enters the West Bank so as to protect the largest number of Israelis without enclosing large amounts of West Bank land. In the northern



West Bank, for example, the planned route turns away from the Green Line to encircle the large Ariel settlement block, then veers

sharply back toward the Green Line, and then changes direction again to protect Israelis in the Kedumim block before finally returning to the Green Line. This intricate route, in turn, substantially increases the total length of the barrier. (In other words, if the area around Ariel and Kedumim were to be enclosed with one large "bubble" rather than several winding "fingers," the total length of the barrier would *decrease* but the amount of West Bank land on the "Israel side" of the barrier would *increase*.) And because the length of the barrier increases, the *percentage* of the barrier that follows the Green Line decreases.

An alternate and perhaps more indicative figure describing the barrier's relationship to the Green Line can be reached by determining to what percentage of the *Green Line* is followed by the fence. Based on the UN's numbers, the pre-1967 boundary and the barrier overlap along **45 percent** of the Green Line.

Regardless of whether one looks at percent of the barrier's length (20 percent) or percent of the Green Line (45 percent), though, it is obvious that Carter's claim about the barrier being "entirely inside Palestine" is well off the mark.

Of course, Carter also avoids mentioning that those sections of the barrier built inside the West Bank are not necessarily in "Palestine" or on "Palestinian land." Every agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinians—and even an agreement between Israel and Egypt that was [signed by Carter](#) himself—has made clear that the boundaries between Israelis and Palestinians must be negotiated between the two sides.

CNN has been made aware of the error regarding the barrier's location, but has yet to broadcast a correction.

Carter again erred when he told Blitzer that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak did not accept President Bill Clinton's peace proposal in December 2000.

CARTER: ... I hate to dispute Bill Clinton on your program because he did a great and heroic effort there. He never made a proposal that was accepted by Barak or Arafat.

BLITZER: Why would he write that in his book if...

CARTER: I don't know.

BLITZER: ... if he said Barak accepted it?

CARTER: I don't know...

BLITZER: And Arafat rejected it.

CARTER: **You could check with all the records. Barak never did accept it.**

Again, the ex-president urges viewers to check the records, and again those records prove Carter wrong. On Dec. 28, 2000, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Chicago Tribune* and others all reported on the Israeli cabinet's acceptance Clinton's parameters as a basis for discussion.

Dennis Ross, who headed the American negotiating team during Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in 2000 and wrote the authoritative account of those negotiations, similarly notes that Israel accepted the Clinton parameters.

And as Blitzer pointed out in the interview, Bill Clinton wrote in his memoirs that "Arafat's rejection of my proposal **after Ehud Barak accepted it** was an error of historic proportions" (emphasis added).

(Carter even ignores sources sympathetic to the Palestinian narrative and other accounts by overtly anti-Israel sources. For example, Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, who have sought to rationalize Palestinian intransigence at Camp David, [admitted](#) that Barak accepted the Clinton proposals, as did the [Journal of Palestine Studies](#) and anti-Israel activists [Joel Beinin](#) and [Norman Finkelstein](#).)

Larry King Live

Other blatant factual errors were broadcast during Carter's Nov. 27 [appearance](#) on CNN's Larry King Live.

- In line with his tendency to whitewash Palestinian violence, Carter claimed that "**since August of 2004 ... Hamas has not been guilty of an act of terrorism that cost an Israeli life.**"

But on Jan. 13, 2005, Hamas took part in an attack on a Gaza Strip border crossing that killed six Israeli civilians. (Another Hamas suicide bomber blew himself up less than a week later, but failed to kill any Israelis.)

And it was on June 25, 2006 that Hamas-affiliated attackers crossed into Israel, kidnapped Gilad Shalit and killed two Israeli soldiers.

- Carter also claimed: "**Gaza is surrounded by a high wall. There's only two openings in it**, one into Israel which is mostly closed, the other one into Egypt."

In fact, there is no wall surrounding the Gaza Strip. While there is a wall between Gaza and Egypt, between Gaza and Israel there is a border *fence*. And there are not two but *five* crossings out of Gaza. Some of these crossings are closed at various points due to security threats, but in the month of November, they have all been open at various times. (See [here](#) for details.)

- Finally, Carter claimed that "**the Israelis have rejected almost entirely" the Road Map peace plan.**

But on May 25, 2003, less than a week after the Road Map was presented to both sides and despite having several [reservations](#) about the text, the Israeli government "[agreed](#) to accept the steps set out in the Roadmap."

The sheer number of factual errors in these two CNN appearances suggests that Carter either has scant knowledge of the facts, or little desire to truthfully discuss those facts. Either way, the basic points used by Carter to support his anti-Israel judgements continue to wither under scrutiny.