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I ADMIRE AND I ACCUSE  
by Albert Russo

Let me first tell you, dear Emile Zola,  
my admiration for your honesty,  
your strength of character, your forcefulness,  
when you stood by the French officer Alfred Dreyfus,  
falsely accused of treason by his antisemitic opponents,  
your famous J'ACCUSE was a clarion call,  
a call for JUSTICE, for the whole world to hear

I accuse you, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon  
of having deported the whole Jewish population  
from Palestine to Mesopotamia, after destroying  
the First Temple in Jerusalem, built by king Solomon

I admire you, king Cyrus of Persia, for having freed  
the Jews from the Babylonian tyrant, permitting them  
to return to their land and to rebuild their Temple

I accuse you, general Pompey,  
of conquering Palestine  
and bringing it under the Roman yoke.  
By submitting its people to your legions,  
you abolished the Jewish nation  
forcing its denizens to emigrate once again  
and to relinquish the land of their ancestors,  
a land they would repossess only 2000 years later;  
I accuse you of spreading antisemitism  
around the Mediterranean, especially  
among your Greek and Roman subjects  
charging your Jewish residents with being dirt-poor  
lazy and anti-social, just because they did not eat pork,  
maintained the Sabbath and studied the Torah

I admire you, Josephus, for having  
written the first history of the Jews,

which, with the Torah, is the only real document  
attesting to their existence on the land of Palestine  
Yet, I also accuse you of collusion with the Roman authorities  
but maybe I am too harsh with you, Josephus,  
it was your only way to have them understand  
the philosophy and the customs of your compatriots,  
your only means of easing their plight

I admire you, dear Jesus, for your rectitude,  
your great tolerance towards your people,  
whether they were poor, mentally ill or sinners,  
for your revolutionary ideas of justice and of compassion,  
while practicing the precepts of Judaism,  
for you were a true believer, a rabbi emeritus

I accuse, both you, the Pope, and the Christian Church  
for having misinterpreted and twisted the words of Jesus  
and for having persecuted his people during  
more than 2000 years, charging them with the most  
absurd allegations, spreading your lies around the globe,  
like the fact that they killed the 'Son of God',  
that they drank the blood of infants,  
or that they wanted to control the world,  
lies now embraced by radical Muslims  
I accuse you for condoning the real culprits,  
the Romans who nailed Jesus to the Cross;  
and because of you there were pogroms in Russia  
and in Eastern Europe, there was the Inquisition  
in Spain and in Portugal, and yes, because of you  
the Nazis felt free to perpetrate history's  
most abominable of all crimes, the holocaust!

I admire you, the Hindus and the Buddhists of India,  
of China and of all the regions of Asia, for avoiding  
to embrace the scourge of antisemitism, for even  
admiring the industriousness and the intelligence of the Jews,  
and for collaborating with Israel in the fields of medicine,  
science and commerce, all to the good of humanity»'

I accuse you, the Islamists, because of your constant hatred  
of Jews and of Israel, because of your intolerance of other religions.  
All you are capable of is to loathe, to destroy, to take revenge and to kill,  
you, who have murdered and keep murdering  
thousands of innocent Muslims around the world  
just because they do not adhere to your stupid and archaic ideas,  
'tis not Allah that you adore but a deity concocted by your sick minds  
I know how useless it is to point a finger at you, for you only listen to  
your perverted imams, who would like the whole world to practice  
the barbarous laws of Sharia, like lapidation, the cutting of limbs  
and public hangings; you ought to be ashamed of applying such methods,  
but no, you are proud of practicing those monstrosities;

people sometimes compare you to animals, but I say,  
animals, even the fiercest among them, are more worthy than you are

I accuse you, the professors of some prestigious universities  
in North America and Europe, short-sighted do-gooders that you are  
- your veiled and atavistic antisemitism fools nobody -,  
not to mention you, the imams of madrassas everywhere,  
of demonizing Israel, finding fault with everything it does,  
while it remains the only democracy in a region where tyranny  
and fundamentalism reign, and whose neighbors would only  
be too happy to eradicate, emptying it of its Jewish element,  
Just look at the ratty president of Iran and his ayatollas, who deny  
that there ever was a holocaust, who treat their women  
as if they were their servants, nay, their slaves  
who behead homosexuals as young as thirteen,  
who send the Hamas in Gaza and the Hesbollah in Lebanon  
sophisticated weapons in the hope of destroying the 'Zionist entity'

I accuse some Jews of being worse than their antisemitic 'peers'  
because of their self-hatred which pushes them to extremism  
I accuse you, Karl Marx, of turning your back, not to your religion,  
but to your own people, and consequently to its history  
Yet, I admire your major work, Das Kapital, which, even though  
I do not entirely adhere to its contents, was intended to help  
the leaders of our developed world to bring about a more just society

I admire you, Mahatma Gandhi, for your patience,  
your understanding of history, for your magnificent philosophy  
of non-violence which you professed relentlessly  
to counter your British oppressors  
I admire you for having wished that the religions  
of India coexist in peace and harmony  
and I cannot but accuse your fanatic murderer  
of wanting the opposite by killing  
one the twentieth century's most admirable human beings

I accuse you, men and women who sit today at the United Nations,  
at least, the majority among you, of setting a double standard,  
where Israel and the Jews are concerned.  
You keep mentioning the expulsion of the Arab population  
from their land - they weren't called Palestinians yet -;  
when in 1947 the UN general Assembly had accepted  
the Partition Resolution, thus allotting a swath of territory  
to the Jews and another one to the Arabs,  
the five surrounding Arab countries, all as 'artificially' created  
as Israel, rejected that resolution, prompting the Arab settlers  
to flee their land temporarily, since they promised them  
to throw all the Jews to the Sea  
- most of whom had escaped the holocaust -  
and to secure for them a triumphant home coming.  
But to everybody's surprise and bafflement

Israel / David once again defeated Goliath.  
If it were true that the Jews had ejected all the Arabs from Palestine  
how do you account for the million and a half of Israeli Arabs?  
Arabs who, though Palestinian themselves, would never want to  
live in any of the neighboring countries, since they know what freedom  
feels like, even though some of them are discriminated against.

I accuse you, the negationists, and the fake historians,  
of omitting to mention an event just as, if not more hurtful  
than the displacement of the Arabs of Palestine,  
and that is the expulsion of one million Jews,  
yes, indeed, you have read me well, 1,000,000 human beings  
- there are facts attesting to this, open the books -,  
from the Arab countries in the late nineteen forties and nineteen fifties,  
countries they had settled in, in some cases long before  
the Arabs had conquered North Africa,  
These Jews were expelled with just their clothes on  
and a few belongings, having lost their homes, their businesses  
and the cemeteries in which their loved ones had been buried,  
with no regret and no compensation whatsoever  
from the Arab governments.

Where are the demonstrations remembering that tragedy?  
The original people of these regions, the Berbers,  
were forced to embrace Islam, whereas  
the Copts, who were among the earliest Christians  
living there, were both and still are considered  
second-class citizens

I accuse you Gamal Abdel Nasser, the so-called liberator of Egypt,  
of having shown the way to your other Arab brethren, emptying your country,  
not only of Jews, but of all foreigners, making Egypt, which was  
a wonderful melting pot of races and languages, a much poorer place,  
not only economically, but socially and intellectually.

I admire the peace-loving peoples of all stripes and beliefs,  
whether they are Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, or atheistic  
who join their forces to build bridges between nations  
for a more loving and compassionate world

I admire Barenboim who has founded an orchestra  
with young Israeli and Palestinian musicians  
I admire Nelson Mandela who has reconciliated the peoples of South Africa  
after having been jailed by the horrendous apartheid regime for nearly 30 years  
I admire Mohammed Yunus for pioneering the institution of microcredit,  
thus helping the poorest of the poor to create their own businesses  
and for giving them back their dignity.

I admire the man and the woman in the street who take their time  
to help an old lady or a blind youth walk through the traffic.