

# Not Knowing When to Leave

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By Robbie Friedmann

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When I wrote my weekly column, I criticized Jimmy Carter at least eight times for his statements and actions. Long before his book on "Israeli apartheid," he played the inconceivable role of being detached from reality, not understanding facts or enemy intentions, and willingly playing the role of the useful idiot. After his book was published, he received a great deal of criticism that included deconstructing his book and adding to it a list of his grievous errors as president (and as an ex-president). I do not intend to repeat all this here. I would like, however, to draw attention to two items from his current meddling in the Middle East.

First, despite a very pro-Carter editorial in Haaretz (what a shock), in an interview with the one-term president the newspaper's editor asked him how is it that when he was president, he refused to talk to the PLO until it recognized Israel, but now he is willing to talk to Hamas. Carter's response would have failed him in any introductory class in political science: Those rules do not apply to him because he is a private citizen. It is not only hypocritical to say so, but it indicates how detached he is from reality.

Second, after a meeting with Hamas officials in Cairo, Carter is reported to have said: "If you live in Gaza, you know that for every Israeli killed in any kind of combat, between 30 and 40 Palestinians are killed because of the extreme military capability of Israel," and he described the Israel-imposed siege of Gaza as an "atrocious." For a former president and a serviceman not to know that Israelis are not killed in combat but rather by terrorist acts that are against the Geneva Conventions ("Civilians are not to be subject to attack. This includes direct attacks on civilians and indiscriminate attacks against areas in which civilians are present") is asinine. "Any kind of combat" may include, to his liking, "combat" by terrorists.

It is precisely because he attributes equal moral standing to victim and offender that he lost his own moral standing.

The sooner he returns to building houses for Habitat for Humanity and fully retires his terror-supporting activities, the better this world will be.

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