

Israel and The Charade of Europe's Annual 'Threats'

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There is something deeply mendacious and cowardly about this ritual leaking by European diplomats of their annual report on Jerusalem. This year they've chosen to deposit the "confidential" report in the hands of the Guardian.

Obviously, the Europeans – and Americans – want this information about how angry they are with Israel disseminated as widely as possible in the wake of Netanyahu's election win. "We're mad and we're not going to take it any more!" they shout – yet again, as they have done over the past four or five years.

As ever, the report is being described as "hard-hitting"; as ever, it threatens penalties against Israel; and as ever, it signifies nothing.

This is paltry theatre designed to persuade us – people with consciences – that our representatives care and that they are planning – at some point – to do something. But what it really indicates is that that something is going to amount to nothing more than empty threats. These are the same threats they have been making for more than a decade. And even were Europe actually to carry them out, they would have almost no impact on Israel.

Here's what these "threats" consist of:

Known Jewish terrorists may face "restrictions" on entering Europe. (One would have hoped such "restrictions" were already in place.)

Europe may give its consumers more information about whether they are being misled into buying products from illegal settlements. (Such products should not even be available in Europe.)

And efforts will be made to "raise awareness" among European companies that it could be bad for business to be associated with the settlements. (And yet, according to free-market ideology, market forces ought to be enough to dissuade most companies from such associations – after all, they are supposed to want to maximise profits.)

In short, this list of potential "sanctions" is complete hot air. It's zilch. And anyone claiming otherwise, including the Guardian, is simply conspiring in this diplomatic charade.

www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/20/jerusalem-at-boiling-point-of-polarisation-and-violence-eu-report

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