

[Michael Brull](#)

Immoderate demonising of governments and their defenders

[UNGA supports Goldstone Report, Clinton backtracks, Abbas stands down for Fayyad, and Galus Australis takes on Orthodox homophobia](#)

The UN General Assembly [supported](#) the Goldstone Report by a vote of 114-18. Look at how racist Haaretz is though:

A total of 44 countries abstained.

The resolution enjoyed wide support among the Non-Aligned Movement bloc and the Arab bloc. These states comprise an automatic majority of 120 votes.

The support doesn't count because of the "automatic majority" of countries that aren't even white. Right? Note that the "automatic majority" didn't even get the 120 votes Haaretz predicts.

Clinton's [backtracking](#). The Obama administration hasn't changed policy in the slightest – it is committed to rhetoric that slightly disapproves of Israeli settlement building with tepid language and occasional other issues (demolishing homes in East Jerusalem is "unhelpful" etc). Now Clinton says she wants Israel to stop building settlements. Everyone knows she's not serious, but this can get played up in the Arab puppet countries.

Also, apparently Abbas has said he won't stand for the next elections. Considering his tremendous unpopularity, and the media and US courting of Salam Fayyad, this isn't so surprising.

The Australian features the appalling [ravings](#) of notorious bigot Daniel Pipes. He concludes:

In conclusion, fascists never developed a 2.0 version, nor did communists; only Islamists have done so. Because it threatens our values and our civilisation, this evolution represents perhaps an aspect of their movement no less frightening than their brutality.

Basically, political Islamic parties are like fascists and communists, and are worse than al Qaeda. This is one of the things that really pisses me off about Christians like Greg Craven: complaining about atheist bigotry towards Christians, at a time when people of all faiths (and none) are able to write vicious, fact and argument free attacks not only on Islam, but Muslims more generally. I mean, there's no shortage of harsh opponents of various Islamist political parties. Tariq Ali, As'ad AbuKhalil, the late Maxime Rodinson and Eqbal Ahmad and so on. They're just not considered good enough, because a) they're consistent secularists, not just anti-Muslim polemicists b) they are limited by things like evidence, and don't say frivolous, silly or outrageous things c) they don't consider Muslims worse than the Nazis.

Oh, and Galus Australis features a [discussion](#) of homophobia in Orthodox Judaism. I find the rabbi's response appalling, and its not helped by his attempt to be cautious in his language. I think this just reflects the usual spin for public relations purposes, and its still not good enough.

Second caveat: I agree that if people were completely honest, we would find that gender attraction is a continuum, not an "either/or" proposition. Likely, most people would be on the heterosexual end of the spectrum, a good number would be somewhere in the middle

(having some feelings of attraction to both genders), and some would be on the homosexual end. For the “strongly heterosexual” and the “people somewhere in the middle”, the **expectation of a heterosexual lifestyle is very achievable**, even if it involves some self-limitation (indeed, what healthy marriage wouldn't?!) On the other hand, history shows that **even after serious effort, some individuals will find that they are unable to pursue a heterosexual lifestyle**. That being the case, the expectation that they do so would have to fall away. If an individual felt that to sleep with someone of the opposite sex would be as unnatural as it would feel for a heterosexual to sleep with someone of the same sex, then to tell them to do so anyway would be cruel. Conversely, treating them with empathy and understanding is nothing short of *pikuach nefesh*, saving a life.

For people in such a situation, the appropriate course of action would be to pursue a **compromise position**, the substance of which extends beyond the scope of this brief response.

This is *outrageous*! This fanatic apparently thinks that gay people should make a “serious effort” to become straight. Why shouldn't straight people make a “serious effort” to become gay, oh learned rabbi? The answer is homophobia, pure and simple, and as long as these rabbis pretend to take the homophobic bits of the Torah literally (they've already discarded the killing gays bit, why not all of it?), I don't think any decent person should want anything to do with Orthodox Judaism. I shudder to think of what the “compromise” solution to homosexuality is. I can propose a compromise: liberal democracies will practice pluralism and acceptance, and religious fundamentalists can go live in peace in Saudi Arabia where the government puts their bigotry into practice. I know Rabbi Caplan thinks he's being open minded and tolerant: that's just compounds the shockingness of what he writes.

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1.  *On December 6, 2009 at 1:16 am [Michael Barnett](#) Said:*

Thank you for your incisive rebuttal of the rabbi's response Michael. That there was practically no intelligent debate on my article about homosexuality disappointed me. What it did highlight was the dangerous level of misinformation, prejudice and intolerance that still pervades sections of the Jewish community.

Michael.

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