

The following article by Oriana Fallaci was published in Panorama. It is followed by some interesting comments by Wiesenthal center on reactions to this article.

Oriana Fallaci on Antisemitism Today  
(one of Italy's best known journalists)

(April 12, 2002)

I find it shameful that in Italy there should be a procession of individuals dressed as suicide bombers who spew vile abuse at Israel, hold up photographs of Israeli leaders on whose foreheads they have drawn the swastika, incite people to hate the Jews. And who, in order to see Jews once again in the extermination camps, in the gas chambers, in the ovens of Dachau and Mauthausen and Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen et cetera, would sell their own mother to a harem. I find it shameful that the Catholic Church should permit a bishop, one with lodgings in the Vatican no less, a saintly man who was found in Jerusalem with an arsenal of arms and explosives hidden in the secret compartments of his sacred Mercedes, to participate in that procession and plant himself in front of a microphone to thank in the name of God the suicide bombers who massacre the Jews in pizzerias and supermarkets. To call them "martyrs who go to their deaths as to a party."

I find it shameful that in France, the France of Liberty-Equality-Fraternity, they burn synagogues, terrorize Jews, profane their cemeteries. I find it

shameful that the youth of Holland and Germany and Denmark flaunt the kaffiah just as Mussolini's avant garde used to flaunt the club and the fascist badge. I find it shameful that in nearly all the universities of Europe Palestinian students sponsor and nurture anti-semitism. That in Sweden they asked that the Nobel Peace Prize given to Shimon Peres in 1994 be taken back and conferred on the dove with the olive branch in his mouth, that is on Arafat. I find it shameful that the distinguished members of the Committee, a Committee that (it would appear) rewards political color rather than merit, should take this request into consideration and even respond to it. In hell the Nobel Prize honors he who does not receive it.

I find it shameful (we're back in Italy) that state-run television stations contribute to the resurgent anti-Semitism, crying only over Palestinian deaths while playing down Israeli deaths, glossing over them in unwilling tones. I find it shameful that in their debates they host with much deference the scoundrels with turban or kaffiah who yesterday sang hymns to the slaughter at New York and today sing hymns to the slaughters at Jerusalem, at Haifa, at Netanya, at Tel Aviv. I find it shameful that the press does the same, that it is indignant because Israeli tanks surround the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, that it is not indignant because inside that same church two hundred Palestinian terrorists well armed with machine guns and munitions and explosives (among them are various leaders of Hamas and Al-Aqsa) are not unwelcome guests of the monks (who then accept bottles of mineral water and jars of honey from the soldiers of those tanks). I find it shameful that, in giving the number of Israelis killed since the beginning of the Second Intifada (four hundred twelve), a noted daily newspaper found it appropriate to underline in

capital letters that more people are killed in their traffic accidents. (Six hundred a year).

I find it shameful that the Roman Observer, the newspaper of the Pope--a Pope who not long ago left in the Wailing Wall a letter of apology for the Jews--accuses of extermination a people who were exterminated in the millions by Christians. By Europeans. I find it shameful that this newspaper denies to the survivors of that people (survivors who still have numbers tattooed on their arms) the right to react, to defend themselves, to not be exterminated again. I find it shameful that in the name of Jesus Christ (a Jew without whom they would all be unemployed), the priests of our parishes or Social Centers or whatever they are flirt with the assassins of those in Jerusalem who cannot go to eat a pizza or buy some eggs without being blown up. I find it shameful that they are on the side of the very ones who inaugurated terrorism, killing us on airplanes, in airports, at the Olympics, and who today entertain themselves by killing western journalists. By shooting them, abducting them, cutting their throats, decapitating them. (There's someone in Italy who, since the appearance of Anger and Pride, would like to do the same to me. Citing verses of the Koran he exhorts his "brothers" in the mosques and the Islamic Community to chastise me in the name of Allah. To kill me. Or rather to die with me. Since Hess someone who speaks English well, I'll respond to him in English: "Fuck you.")

I find it shameful that almost all of the left, the left that twenty years ago permitted one of its union processionalists to deposit a coffin (as a mafioso warning) in front of the synagogue of Rome, forgets the contribution made by the Jews to the fight against fascism. Made by Carlo and Nello Rossini, for example,

by Leone Ginzburg, by Umberto Terracini, by Leo Valiani, by Emilio Sereni, by women like my friend Anna Maria Enriques Agnoletti who was shot at Florence on June 12, 1944, by seventy-five of the three-hundred-thirty-five people killed at the Fosse Ardeatine, by the infinite others killed under torture or in combat or before firing squads. (The companions, the teachers, of my infancy and my youth.) I find it shameful that in part through the fault of the left--or rather, primarily through the fault of the left (think of the left that inaugurates its congresses applauding the representative of the PLO, leader in Italy of the Palestinians who want the destruction of Israel)--Jews in Italian cities are once again afraid. And in French cities and Dutch cities and Danish cities and German cities, it is the same. I find it shameful that Jews tremble at the passage of the scoundrels dressed like suicide bombers just as they trembled during Krystallnacht, the night in which Hitler gave free rein to the Hunt of the Jews.

I find it shameful that in obedience to the stupid, vile, dishonest, and for them extremely advantageous fashion of Political Correctness the usual opportunists--or better the usual parasites--exploit the word Peace. That in the name of the word Peace, by now more debauched than the words Love and Humanity, they absolve one side alone of its hate and bestiality. That in the name of a pacifism (read conformism) delegated to the singing crickets and buffoons who used to lick Pol Pot's feet they incite people who are confused or ingenuous or intimidated. Trick them, corrupt them, carry them back a half century to the time of the yellow star on the coat. These charlatans who care about the Palestinians as much as I care about the charlatans. That is not at all.

I find it shameful that many Italians and many Europeans have chosen as their standard-bearer the gentleman (or so it is polite to say) Arafat. This nonentity who thanks to the money of the Saudi Royal Family plays the Mussolini ad perpetuum and in his megalomania believes he will pass into History as the George Washington of Palestine. This ungrammatical wretch who when I interviewed him was unable even to put together a complete sentence, to make articulate conversation. So that to put it all together, write it, publish it, cost me a tremendous effort and I concluded that compared to him even Ghaddafi sounds like Leonardo da Vinci. This false warrior who always goes around in uniform like Pinochet, never putting on civilian garb, and yet despite this has never participated in a battle. War is something he sends, has always sent, others to do for him. That is, the poor souls who believe in him. This pompous incompetent who playing the part of Head of State caused the failure of the Camp David negotiations, Clinton's mediation. No-no-I-want-Jerusalem-all-to-myself. This eternal liar who has a flash of sincerity only when (in private) he denies Israel's right to exist, and who as I say in my book contradicts himself every five minutes. He always plays the double-cross, lies even if you ask him what time it is, so that you can never trust him. Never! With him you will always wind up systematically betrayed. This eternal terrorist who knows only how to be a terrorist (while keeping himself safe) and who during the Seventies, that is when I interviewed him, even trained the terrorists of Baader-Meinhof. With them, children ten years of age. Poor children. (Now he trains them to become suicide bombers. A hundred baby suicide bombers are in the works: a hundred!). This weathercock who keeps his wife at Paris, served and revered like a queen, and keeps his people down in the shit. He takes them out of the shit only to send them to

die, to kill and to die, like the eighteen year old girls who in order to earn equality with men have to strap on explosives and disintegrate with their victims. And yet many Italians love him, yes. Just like they loved Mussolini. And many other Europeans do the same. I find it shameful and see in all this the rise of a new fascism, a new nazism. A fascism, a nazism, that much more grim and revolting because it is conducted and nourished by those who hypocritically pose as do-gooders, progressives, communists, pacifists, Catholics or rather Christians, and who have the gall to label a warmonger anyone like me who screams the truth. I see it, yes, and I say the following. I have never been tender with the tragic and Shakespearean figure Sharon. ("I know you've come to add another scalp to your necklace," he murmured almost with sadness when I went to interview him in 1982.) I have often had disagreements with the Israelis, ugly ones, and in the past I have defended the Palestinians a great deal. Maybe more than they deserved. But I stand with Israel, I stand with the Jews. I stand just as I stood as a young girl during the time when I fought with them, and when the Anna Marias were shot. I defend their right to exist, to defend themselves, to not let themselves be exterminated a second time. And disgusted by the anti-Semitism of many Italians, of many Europeans, I am ashamed of this shame that dishonors my Country and Europe. At best, it is not a community of States, but a pit of Pontius Pilates. And even if all the inhabitants of this planet were to think otherwise, I would continue to think so.

\*\*\*\*\*

Here is what Wiesenthal Center had to say about the Fallaci article.

\*\*\*\*\*

Polemic in Italy after anti-Semitism article by top journalist. ROME, April 12 (AFP) - An article denouncing anti-Semitism by one of Italy's best known journalists, Oriana Fallaci, caused a polemic on Friday after she pointed the finger at the Roman Catholic church and the political left over the current Mideast crisis. A specialist in the Middle East, Fallaci, 71, uses the word "I find shameful" at the head of a long list of reasons she gives to attack inaction on anti-Semitism by the church and left-wing political leaders. Among her targets are "the presence of people disguised as Kamikazi's during a pro-Palestinian protest in Rome," anti-Semitic attacks in France, and moves to have the Nobel Peace Prize taken back from Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. She attacked the church saying, "I find it shameful that the Catholic Church can allow a bishop housed at the Vatican ... to take part in a protest in Rome during which he used a megaphone to thank in the name of God the Kamikazes who have massacred Jews," she wrote. The incident refers to Bishop Hilarion Capucci, 77, a Syrian in charge of helping Greek-Catholics in Europe, who took part in a pro-Palestinian protest. Fallaci's article was published in the form of a pamphlet by the weekly Panorama magazine, owned by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Reaction was led by the Palestinian Authority's representative in Rome, Nemer Hammad, and leaders of the left-wing opposition. "It is a shame that Panorama has published an article like this one by Oriana Fallaci," said Hammad. "This type of propaganda does nothing but create hate and adds to the danger of a clash between religions." Leader of the Italian Green Party Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio said: "The words of Oriana Fallaci do not help dialogue and do not reduce the

danger of anti-Semitism." And the leader of a Communist party in Parliament, Franco Girodano said: "The words are shameful because they feed hate between religions." Support for the journalist, who now lives in the United States came from the head of the Jewish community in Italy, Amos Luzzato and by some members of the government. "I believe she has grounds (for the article)" said Defence Minister Antonio Martino. In the same edition of the magazine a former spokesman for Berlusconi, Giuliano Ferrara wrote an article strongly in favour of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He has put forward the idea of a "day for Israel" on April 15, after having been the inspiration behind Berlusconi's demonstration in favour of the United States on September 11. Fallaci's book, "Rage and Pride" strongly in favour of the United States, published two weeks after the September 11 attacks has topped the best seller lists in Italy since.