**Obama's Broken Moral Compass On Display at the U.N.**

By Anne Bayefsky

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Today, the United Nations opens its annual debate at the General Assembly with President Obama making every effort to appear statesmanlike as he faces increasing criticism in his own backyard. Iranian President Ahmadinejad, who will mount the same platform later in the day, has exactly the same idea. At $20 billion dollars a year, the U.N. has become the world’s most expensive hot air balloon, with American taxpayers funding a quarter of the bill.

A White House press release on Monday spelled out the formula for the president’s sought -after makeover. The White House described the “dramatically” different Obama foreign policy as one which includes a warm embrace of the United Nations. It also claimed that “the new era of engagement” has been a major success, pointing to U.N. sanctions on Iran, momentum against nuclear proliferation, and U.S. participation in reforming the U.N. Human Rights Council.

The facts suggest otherwise. Nobody at the U.N. believes that the Iran sanctions will prevent an Iranian bomb. The weak Security Council sanctions adopted after 18 months of engagement garnered fewer votes than the sanctions adopted during the Bush years. The president himself has knotted together the issues of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, thereby making non-proliferation efforts much more difficult.

In May, the president agreed to co-sponsor an international conference intended to redirect the heat from Iran to Israel in the name of disarmament. And a year after the U.S. joined the U.N. Human Rights Council, Libya has become a member, anti-Israel hysteria has reached new heights, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference has informed the administration that reform is dead in the water.

None of that, however, is likely to mean the president will confront real world evils during his moments today at center stage. At a Monday press briefing with America’s U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice, Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes indicated that Obama will repeat his tired-out mantra on Iran. It’s still about an “open door” policy that remains open, despite Iran having made it crystal clear it has no intention of walking through. The president is evidently oblivious to the image of weakness he has projected, and will continue to project, in the General Assembly.

President Ahmadinejad, on the other hand, will take the opposite tack. On Tuesday, he issued another not-so veiled threat, telling the U.N. high-level meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that the “order of capitalism and the hegemonic approaches are facing defeat and getting close to their end.”

At the same MDG summit, President Obama unveiled to Americans another aspect of his “dramatically” different foreign policy. He chided “donor nations” yesterday for failing to “move beyond the old, narrow debate over how much money we're spending.”

The enthusiasm for engagement has left the Obama team with at least one immediate conundrum, which will be played out as Ahmadinejad’s speech unfolds this afternoon. How anti-semitic is anti-semitic? U.S. representatives have been instructed to sit in their seat during his harangue until the anti-semitism or other possible affront reaches such a level that they must get up and walk out. It would be useful to have the administration’s instruction sheet on the subject of what is or is not sufficiently offensive, but it has not been made available to the public.

After all, the Obama administration’s representative stayed put in June when the Syrian representative told the U.N. Human Rights Council: “Israel…is a state that is built on hatred…Let me quote a song that a group of children on a school bus in Israel sing merrily as they go to school and I quote 'With my teeth I will rip your flesh. With my mouth I will suck your blood."

Given that Ahmadinejad again questioned the Holocaust while talking to reporters in New York on Tuesday, it is disturbing that the president has still not decided to stay away from the Iranian President’s speech. The Israeli representative, needless to say, has already figured it out and will not be there. In fact, Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu – who last year felt that he had to come and show the members of the General Assembly the construction plans for the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp – will not be coming to the Assembly this year at all.

So we will just have to wait and see what it takes to move the Obama team.

Of course, Ahmadinejad doesn’t care a whit if Obama’s folks come or go. By the time Ahmadinejad ends his New York trip, the U.N. will have translated his words into six languages and webcast them around the world.

He will have been fawned over by many in the American media and scores of academics who have made careers of refusing to nail down what counts as right and wrong. As MIT research associate Jim Walsh told Fox News yesterday, while preparing to dine with Ahmadinejad that evening (for the sixth time), “every Iranian meal I’ve had has been delicious.”

A fairly accurate reflection of the moral compass of today’s engagement enthusiasts.