UN Investigators Fighting Wars on Paper

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<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4669440,00.html>

The wittiest comment I can think of right now is also the most overused and worn comment, but it's so true in this case: Sometimes even a paranoid is right, and he really is being persecuted.

The question right now is not if the State of Israel is being rightfully or unrightfully persecuted – the fact is that it is being persecuted. The report of the United Nations' commission of inquiry into the events of [Operation Protective Edge](http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4668390,00.html) in Gaza last year is just one symptom of a serious persecution disease, and not one of the gravest symptoms. We overcame Pharaoh, and we'll overcome this report too. The Defense Ministry archive may be overflowing, but there is still room in its drawers for another one of these reports.

Yet those who say "good riddance" and ignore what the report says, and especially the global atmosphere around us, are wrong: The world has changed, so have we, but we are still failing to understand what is happening here.

This report, like many before it and other similar reports, was authored by people who have never been in a battlefield. It was likely written in an air-conditioned room, under relaxed and good lighting, in an atmosphere which is completely different from the atmosphere in the middle of an exchange of fire. It does not contain the fear, the surprise, the bitter and tough enemy on the other side, the innocent civilians activating large explosive devices from surveillance by a window.

How do we know all this before the report has even been published? This is the nature of almost all reports. The wisdom of retrospect guides the criticism. The spirit of "if" and "should" stars throughout the pages.

Nonetheless, despite the criticism against the criticism, it turns out that the world is now dreaming of sterile wars. Legal and international law experts want a war like in an amusement park: No fire, no smoke, no fear and a lot of caution. A pharmacy, basically.

The international experts apparently have claims against the IDF's soldiers and commanders: From here to there, civilians were killed, and even worse – many children. The heart aches over every "uninvolved" person – another definition which should disappear from this world – in operations and wars of the past and of the future, but we must remember that Gaza is not the empty deserts of the Sinai Peninsula. The Gazans hold global birthrate records, their streets are filled with children, and some of them have already made it into their heroism myths, for example the RPG children of the first Lebanon War.

That doesn't mean that there is any justification for killing civilians and children. Everything, absolutely everything, should be done in order to avoid firing on innocent people. Still, I would like to be with the different report writers as they are targeted with accurate fire – what would they do in order to save their lives? The answer is that they would fire like crazy. Yes, even on civilians and children.

The Americans, for example, took the lives of 5,000 (and some say 15,000) Panamanians in order to reach drug-trafficking dictator Manuel Noriega. All of them, by the way, were innocent civilians, and many of them were children.

What does this mean? It means that wars will always be the same wars of life and death. The next wars will also claim the lives of innocent people. We must do everything we can do in order to avoid hurting civilians, but if the choice is between us and them in a war – they will be the ones who got caught in a battlefield. It's difficult. It's even horrifying. But it's the truth.

The conclusion among the senior political and military echelons should be completely different: To do everything to avoid a war, and if there is no choice and it must be launched, to plan it so that the penetration methods and fighting methods will prevent unnecessary victims. How can that be done? Our finest milk and blood have been invested for generations in the defense establishment, and it owes us answers.

In the meantime we'll continue being paranoid and believe in Israel hatred – we are hated, and we must do everything not to provide reasons for this hatred.