

THE JERUSALEM POST

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MAGAZINE

ANTI-ZIONISM = ANTISEMITISM



Special issue:

Leading figures including Amb. Nikki Haley
and German Envoy Felix Klein weigh in

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK | MARC ISRAEL SELLEM

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Kristallnacht to 'From the River to the Sea'

We are pleased to bring to you this special issue of the *Magazine*, focused on the burning question of the day: Is anti-Zionism the new antisemitism – and how to address it?

While given Oct. 7, the answer may seem obvious to many – yes, of course, anti-Zionism and antisemitism are one and the same, with anti-Zionism being the wolf in sheep's clothing – the topic remains ever more complex. The *Magazine* therefore asked a number of experts from around the world to offer their perspectives, tackling the issue from various angles.

Ambassador Nikki Haley brings her experience to the UN, a breeding ground of anti-Zionism, and offers bold solutions to address antisemitism masked as anti-Zionism on college campuses and elsewhere.

Felix Klein, the German government's commissioner for the fight against antisemitism, shares his insight into the battle against anti-Zionism from Germany's front lines, clarifying that "antisemitism is antisemitism" – whether it is Israel-related or otherwise.

Col. Richard Kemp, former commander of British forces in Afghanistan, shows how Hamas successfully mobilized global Jew-hatred, using Israel both as its target and its primary weapon and taking advantage of the "post-truth world."

Gol Kalev, author of *Judaism 3.0 – Judaism's Transformation to Zionism*, argues that anti-Zionism is not only an existential threat to Judaism but also a threat to global stability; therefore, it must be treated by the Biden administration as a matter of national security.

Gina Ross, head of the Los Angeles-based International Trauma Center, places anti-Zionism in the context of collective trauma – linking the Oct. 7 events to the invocation of the trauma of the Holocaust embedded in the Jewish people, and arguing that a new strength emerges when the collective body and soul are united.

Barak Sella, an expert in Israel-US relations currently studying at the Harvard Kennedy School, brings in an insider look into campus antisemitism, sharing the loneliness of social isolation as an Israel supporter, and observing how young students around him are being "practically brainwashed."

Aaron Poris frames the issue by recounting highlights from a symposium held right before the current war about the imminent danger the anti-Zionism ideology poses, and how to address it. Who would have thought that this would become so relevant so soon?

Yael Rozenman-Isamel, a single mother of Palestinian Muslim and Jewish heritage, writes a letter to her two-month-old daughter, born in Israel during the war and now raised in Bolivia, explaining the perils of anti-Zionism that she was born into and will have to face.

This *Magazine* follows the special issue we published a year ago about Zionism morphing into the anchor of Judaism, in which various thinkers, including President Isaac Herzog, expressed their views on the Judaism 3.0 thesis that Judaism is transforming and Zionism is becoming its most relevant aspect. That followed other special issue *Magazines* we have done on cutting-edge topics, from the future of Europe to the legacy of Theodor Herzl.

We hope this *Magazine* triggers a broader conversation about the subject at hand.



(Marc Israel Sellem)

Ever your proud Zionist and editor,
Erica Schachne





Anti-Zionism – the new antisemitism?

• FELIX KLEIN

A sentiment often heard in debates about Israel and the Middle East conflict is “I’m not antisemitic, I’m just anti-Zionist.” But what I hear when people say this is “I’m not antisemitic, I’m just antisemitic.” Yes, you read that correctly. I’m firmly convinced that anti-Zionism isn’t the “new” antisemitism because anti-Zionism is just plain antisemitism. It’s nothing innovative or particularly novel; it’s just the same old anti-Jewish hatred in a new guise.

Israel is treated differently than every other country in the world

First of all, yes, it is true that in the history of Zionism there was a discourse within the Jewish community that included voices of opposition to the project of establishing a national home for the Jewish people. Anti-Zionist Jewish voices exist today, too. But at least since the Shoah – which was not the decisive factor in the founding of Israel but nonetheless starkly demonstrated the need for a protected space for Jewish people – these voices have been marginalized.

What they often have in common today is a broader affinity for extreme positions. Many of them either occupy the leftmost extreme of the political spectrum or are religious fundamentalists. In any event, such positions are found very rarely, if at all, in the Jewish mainstream anywhere on Earth. Not all Jews are explicit Zionists, but very few

are hostile to the notion of a Jewish and democratic Israel.

So when present-day antisemites, masquerading as “anti-Zionists,” invoke Jewish support for such a position in order to evade accusations of anti-Jewish hatred, this is unfair and disingenuous.

WHAT, THEN, are the grounds for my conviction that anti-Zionism is just ordinary anti-Jewish hatred in a veiled form?

Over the course of history, hatred of Jews has shown itself to be remarkably adaptable. Antisemitism adeptly shapes itself to fit the context of a given country or society. But the tactics of antisemitic narratives always remain the same: different treatment, demonization, and delegitimization.

When Christianity was the major influence on society – and often on politics as well – in Europe, antisemitism correspondingly expressed itself in religious terms. Jews were demonized as Christ-killers who murdered Christian children and, accordingly, were treated differently: They were not permitted to practice certain professions, were confined to living in ghettos, and generally had fewer rights than other members of society. Ultimately, their very humanity was denied, and numerous pogroms deprived them of the right to live.

With the advent of the Enlightenment, science and politics became more influential in society as spheres accessible to all. Anti-Jewish hostility adapted to this shift: Jews were then demonized in pseudo-scientific terms as “parasites” and, at the same time, in political conspiracy theories as secret rulers of the world; they were treated differently from others, for example, in being denied equality before the law, in suffering extensive societal discrimination, and ul-

timately in being forced to wear a yellow Star of David which made their Jewish identity visible to all. Here, hatred of Jews culminated in the deepest, most fundamental form of delegitimization: industrial mass murder with the intention of ending the existence of all Jewish life.

Both forms of antisemitism continue to exist. The primacy of human rights and the democratic norms which have become ever more important – at least in Europe and North America since the end of the Second World War – have, however, caused these open forms of hatred to retreat from the political and societal mainstream.

But this doesn’t mean that antisemitic narratives are less prevalent. They have simply found a new form of expression as they did many times before. They now refer primarily not to “the Jews” as such but to the State of Israel as a Jewish collective. This is reflected in a name that very deliberately purports to have nothing to do with antisemitism, claiming rather that it is solely directed against Zionism – that is, the striving of the Jewish people for a national home.

Demonized without any factual basis as a child-murdering, genocidal apartheid state, Israel is treated differently than every other country in the world. In international organizations, for example, it is subjected to especially harsh scrutiny and is singled out for criticism; its governmental action is held to higher moral standards than any other country in the world.

The slogan “From the river to the sea” is ultimately one of many forms of delegitimizing Israel’s right to exist; it is a call to annihilate the Jewish state and its population. This delegitimization also takes place in indirect ways; for example, by denying Israel the right to self-defense that every country has. A

country that is not permitted to defend itself and its people will perish sooner or later. Considering Israel’s geographical location and its neighbors, it seems likely this would happen sooner rather than later if Israel were to stop defending itself.

ALTHOUGH THEIR justifications shift over time, the patterns of antisemitism have remained the same for centuries, if not millennia: It’s the same set of ideas, the same narratives. And today, they are applied to Israel – not exclusively, but frequently.

Since Oct. 7, we have been seeing in real time how purported anti-Zionism actually expresses itself as antisemitism. Unlike so-called anti-Zionists, the Hamas terrorists make no bones about their clear antisemitism. In their public statements, they generally refer to “the Jews,” not to Israelis or Israel; and as soon as they had the opportunity, they followed their genocidal words with horrific deeds.

And even outside of Israel, theoretical musings on the fact that anti-Zionism is actually just ordinary antisemitism play a rather minor role in real life. Because for Jews in Germany, France, the UK, the US, and elsewhere, it doesn’t make any difference to their practical reality whether it’s called anti-Zionism or antisemitism.

What they have had to endure since Oct. 7 is a hatred justified primarily by their purported opposition to Israel. A hatred that has been expressed in arson attacks on synagogues, in calls for violence, in hate speech, physical assaults, and even in planned terrorist attacks against Jewish people and institutions.

According to RIAs, an NGO that monitors antisemitic incidents in Germany, antisemitic incidents increased by 314% between October 7 and November 9. Almost all of these incidents were connected to the Middle East conflict. Or, to put it in another way, almost every one of these acts was committed in the name of anti-Zionism.

So I stand by my conviction that antisemitism is antisemitism, regardless of how it’s dressed up. I’m glad that I am not alone in my understanding of this issue. In 2017, Germany’s Federal Government endorsed the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)’s working definition of antisemitism. This definition clearly and unmistakably names Israel-related incidents antisemitism. It offers a foundation for us to protect Jewish life from every form of antisemitism – including anti-Zionism. ■

The writer is Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany and the Fight against Antisemitism.

FELIX KLEIN (2nd R) attends an international gathering on combating antisemitism in Berlin last January. Present (L to R): Deborah Lipstadt, US special envoy for monitoring and combating anti-semitism; US First Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, husband of US Vice President Kamala Harris; US Ambassador to Germany Amy Gutmann; and Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. (Sean Gallup/Getty Images)



Anti-Zionism proves why Israel matters

• NIKKI HALEY

I've seen antisemitism. I confronted it every day at the United Nations. And I know that the Jew-haters try to hide it by saying they only hate Israel.

All it takes is 24 hours at the UN to realize that anti-Zionism is just a modern name for the ancient evil of antisemitism.

The worst-kept secret at the UN is that antisemitism is operating just beneath the surface. I saw it in my first few days on the job as US ambassador to the UN, after I met with Israel's ambassador. I broke with precedent, putting Israel ahead of many countries that US ambassadors typically meet with first. For me, it was more important to show my support for Israel, one of America's closest allies and dearest friends.

The broader UN views Israel differently. How could I possibly call Israel a friend? They think Israel is a pariah, different somehow from every other country. But what, exactly, makes the world's only Jewish state different? When you put the question like that, it answers itself.

No other country is treated like Israel. The UN Security Council had a monthly meeting on "the situation in the Middle East," which was clearly designed to attack Israel. I refused to go along, using the meeting to discuss the actual situation in the Middle East – Iran's ambitions, Syria's brutality, and the evil of ISIS. Yet while I covered real threats and crises, other countries singled out Israel for things it doesn't do. It's accused of oppressing Palestinians, despite being the only democracy in the Middle East – one that respects the rights of Arabs, Jews, and anyone else who lives within its borders.

For that matter, Israel is singled out for things that every country does. Only Israel is denounced for choosing its capital. Only Israel is censured for defending itself from rocket attacks and suicide bombers. Apparently, it would be better if Jews let themselves be killed. The double standard clearly indicates something deeper at work – something far more hateful.

THIS VEILED antisemitism continues to this day. Last year, the UN General Assembly passed 15 resolutions condemning democratic Israel. It passed 13 resolutions condemning all other countries combined, in a world that includes murderous tyrannies like North Korea, Communist China, and Vladimir Putin's Russia.

Then there's the so-called UN Human Rights Council. It has a standing agenda item devoted solely to Israel. No other country gets that kind of treatment. We withdrew the US from the Council because it tolerates and even celebrates antisemitism and blatant human rights abusers. We also pulled out of UNESCO, which denies Jewish heritage, even as it claims to protect diverse cultures. And then there's UNRWA, which we stopped funding with American taxpayer money. UNRWA teaches Palestinian children to despise the Jews.

Now we know exactly where that leads. October 7, 2023.

Before Hamas's initial assault was over, anti-Zionists were already trying to justify the killing spree. It was the worst slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust. Only an antisemite could defend or apologize for such obvious evil.

And it's now clear that antisemitism, masquerading as anti-Zionism, is far more widespread than most people realized. It's on college campuses. It's in major cities across the West. It's even in parts of the US Congress.

When students, doctors, and elected officials praise Hamas for fighting the "oppressors" and "colonialists," they're tacitly saying it's fine to kill Jews. When they say, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," they're essentially advocating another Holocaust.

I hope that most people who say these things don't realize that. But I fear that many know exactly what they're saying. Israel exists to protect the Jews. That's why its enemies call for Israel's destruction.

Now is the time to confront this evil worldview with



moral clarity and unapologetic action. We need university presidents who denounce the anti-Zionist charade. We need business executives who refuse to hire people who condone violence against Jews. And yes, we need elected leaders who stand with Israel.

That starts with the president of the United States. We don't need a leader who promises to fight antisemitism while failing to condemn anti-Zionism, like the current president. We shouldn't have rejoined the UN Human Rights Council and UNESCO or restarted funding for UNRWA, which happened in the past three years. And under no circumstances should we be silent or timid in the face of antisemites in elected office, like Joe Biden has been with his fellow Democrats. Evil is evil, and it must be called out or else it will spread.

The Jewish people – and the Jewish state – are at greater risk today than at any point in the past 75 years. They need America to lead the fight against antisemitism, in all its forms. It's time to make clear in federal law that anti-Zionism is antisemitism, pull the tax status of universities and nonprofits that engage in Jew-hatred, and permanently end all taxpayer support for international bodies that stoke this evil.

There should be no doubt that America stands with Israel. We should give Israel everything it needs to defeat those who would destroy it, starting with Hamas.

The stakes are clear. The Jewish state needs to exist because the Jewish people have a right to survive. Two years ago, in the wake of Israel's last war with Hamas, I traveled to Israel's border with Gaza. I went to Sderot. I walked through Ashkelon. As I stood outside a home that had been destroyed by terrorist rockets, a woman walked out of the rubble. She started yelling. Then she started running toward me. She threw her arms around me, hugged me, and invited me into the ruins of her home.

She showed me where she was when the rockets hit. She was holding her baby grandson when she was thrown against the wall. I could see the outline of where they hit it. Her hair was embedded in the plaster. It's a miracle she survived.

Two years later, that woman is still in mortal danger. Her life is threatened by those who hate the Jewish people and the Jewish state. We owe it to her, and so many others, to ensure that evil never wins – no matter what name it goes by. ■

The writer is running for president of the United States. She was the US ambassador to the United Nations from 2017-2018 and is a former governor of South Carolina.

NIKKI HALEY, then-US ambassador to the UN, listens during a UN Security Council emergency meeting on Syria, in New York City. (Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

Before Hamas's initial assault was over, anti-Zionists were already trying to justify the killing spree

NEW YORK City: Anti-Israel protesters in 2021. (Luke Tress/Flash90)



Anti-Zionism is a threat to global stability

Not just an existential danger to Judaism but to US national security

• GOL KALEV

We are in the midst of a large-scale assault on the Jewish nation. Like previous large-scale assaults, the attack is being funneled through the most relevant aspect of Judaism at the time. In our era, it is Zionism that has become the anchor of Judaism.

Zionism is not the cause of the assault on the Jewish nation. It is the vehicle through which age-old opposition to Judaism is now carried.

More dangerously, the anti-Zionism ideology is expanding beyond Zionism and Israel. Anti-Zionists keep their expansion plans no secret: Right next to the banners “From the river to the sea” are the banners “Globalize the intifada.”

In the last two months alone, the anti-Zionist movement has triggered a series of “global” conversations that have nothing to do with Zionism or Israel, ranging from Muslims’ rights in Europe to the possible end of the concept of universities. Anti-Zionists even reversed a century of progress for women’s rights by placing some degree of “context” on the action of rape.

The Gaza war gave the anti-Zionism movement momentum, structure, funding, and legitimacy from credible media and politicians. That credibility has been deployed to the “globalization arm,” and from there one can do the simple math of what could come next: “From the Atlantic to the Black Sea, Eurostan will be free.”

Last summer’s riots in France, which resulted in

over 5,000 cars burned and 1,000 buildings damaged, did not “happen in a vacuum,” to use UN Secretary-General António Guterres’s terminology about Hamas’s action. Indeed, the Oct. 7 massacre raised fears of similar attacks in Europe.

As discussed in a previous *Magazine* article (“That night in Basel,” September 24, 2022), the lethal component of Western anti-Zionism does not come from the aggressive Israel-bashers in demonstrations but from the polite Israel-bashers-light in positions of power.

(While the common term is “anti-Zionism,” the more precise term used in my analyses over the last decade has been “Israel-bashing.” By now, those two terms can be used interchangeably.)

TAKE THE case of Spain. Generations of Spaniards have been taught about the “Reconquista,” the process of kicking out Spain’s Muslim invaders who inhabited Spain for 800 years.

It is due to the mainstreaming of anti-Zionism that this narrative now gets challenged. There is no “re” in the conquest of Spain, so the argument goes.

If one gives legitimacy to the term “Reconquista,” based on a questionable theory that the people who completed the conquest of Spain in the 15th century were somehow related to the people who lived there 800 years ago, then one gives legitimacy to Zionism, which represents a much more historically sound story about a nation coming back.

In other words, one can only be anti-Zionist if one is anti-Spanish.

Moreover, unlike in Zionism, in the Spanish case there was a complete displacement of the Muslim population from Spain. That is why there is an active conflict in Israel and not one in Spain. Spaniards live in peace today, thanks to the war crimes of Ferdinand and Isabella. Israelis do not live in peace because they refused to commit the atrocities Europeans have been

committing for centuries.

Add to that other unresolved conflicts in Spain, such as Basque and Catalanian’s quest for independence, and suddenly, the anti-Zionist movement triggered the “Spanish Question,” which remained dormant for over 500 years.

Indeed, for years, members of the so-called conflict-industry (employees of the UN, EU, and NGOs in Jerusalem) have joked that the two-state solution is merely a laboratory experiment for such a construct in Europe.

Now that the two-state solution has been reincarnated, one must wonder whether it should be considered in Europe in order to de-escalate mounting tensions with its Muslim population and accommodate new realities on the ground. Is it time for Europe to concede that they are no longer in the 1970s? Residents of Malmo, Sweden, are not listening to ABBA, and the people of Luton, England, are not watching *Benny Hill*. Did the Israel-bashing and anti-Zionist ideology also awaken the “Europe Question”?

STATING THE obvious, anti-Zionism is not pro-Palestinian. “Ceasefire now” – the third banner of the Israel-bashing movement next to “From the river to the sea” and “Globalize the intifada” – is anti-Zionists imposing on Gazans the rule of Hamas. This, along with blocking Palestinians’ employment in Jewish-owned businesses, is just an example of why anti-Zionism is, at its core, a colonialist movement housing elements of European supremacism.

Ceasefire does not only mean more Oct. 7s but also more Israeli retaliation against Hamas and, inevitably, more humanitarian crises in Gaza.

Let’s be clear: Hamas is the one responsible for the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, but secondary culprits are the United Nations, the media, and those pressuring Israel to refrain from destroying Hamas in previous rounds and now.

And still, shockingly, 13 out of the 15 members of the UN Security Council voted to force Israel to stop its counteroffensive. This is akin to those countries voting to stop the Allies' counteroffensive against Germany in World War II and prolonging the Holocaust ("Six million were not enough").

Anti-Zionism destabilizes global stability and is a threat to the survival of Judaism, but it has an Achilles heel.

Addressing anti-Zionism: Conflict management

The contemporary assault on the Jewish nation is perpetrated with a sword and a shield. The sword is anti-Zionism and Israel-bashing, the shield is Judaism 2.0 – the notion that Judaism is merely a religion – and hence one can advocate zero tolerance to traditional antisemitism (the existential threat to Judaism in the 20th century) while actively engaging in anti-Zionism (the existential threat to Judaism in the 21st century).

Once there is a paradigm shift – a broad global recognition that Judaism has transformed and Zionism is now its anchor (Judaism 3.0) – that shield gets decimated, and the anti-Zionism threat gets reduced.

After all, the Jewish state was born through such a paradigm shift: Theodor Herzl defied the conventional wisdom that Jew-hatred was ending, since Europeans of the 1890s were no longer religious. He concluded that European opposition to Judaism would evolve based on changing Jewish and European circumstances. A Jewish state would be a suitable construct to manage such opposition to Judaism. ("Conflict management," not "conflict resolution".)

Herzl understood that the nascent antisemitic ideology of his time was a natural reaction to the thriving of emancipated Jews in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Similarly, today's anti-Zionism ideology is a natural reaction to the thriving of Zionism and the State of Israel in the 21st century.

But antisemitism (a new term used in Herzl's time to describe this new form of Jew-hatred) did not just affect the Jews. It was the primary strategic threat to the French Republic, as expressed in the Dreyfus Affair.

Antisemitism was a national security threat to Europe

As patriotic Jews rose up the ranks of the French military, a Jewish officer, Alfred Dreyfus, was framed in 1894 for spying for Germany. He was convicted and exiled to Devil's Island.

Years later, once it became evident that he was innocent, French society became dangerously torn between two polar camps: the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusers.

This was no longer about the underlying question of was Dreyfus guilty? This question was as irrelevant as the question of whether Israel bombed a hospital in Gaza. The Dreyfus Affair was a referendum about Jews in France and, by extension, in Europe.

This is just as anti-Zionism today is a referendum about the Jews – in America, in Europe, and in Israel.

Back then, popular media such as *La Libre Parole* ("free speech") were instrumental in the campaign against Dreyfus and the Jewish nation, who were accused of polluting humanity. Today, popular media, such as the BBC and *The New York Times*, are instrumental in the ideological campaign against Zionism and the Jewish nation, who once again are accused of committing crimes against humanity.

Therefore, it is no surprise – then and now – that when someone rose up to protect humanity from the Jews, there was broad receptivity.

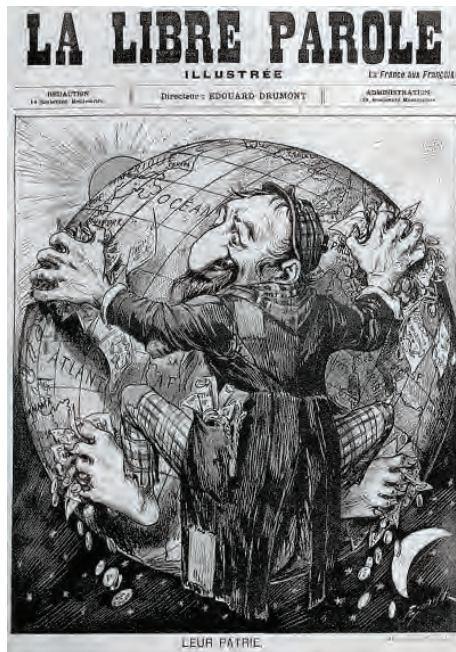
The Nazis could not have succeeded without the collaboration of the French and other Europeans, indoctrinated by the antisemitism ideology.

Similarly, the modern-day Nazis – Hamas – could



THANKING US PRESIDENT Joe Biden for his support on Jerusalem's Emek Refaim Street. (Marc Israel Sellem)

CARICATURE OF a Jew, 1893, in 'La Libre Parole' – a political newspaper that became the organ of Parisian antisemitism during the Dreyfus Affair. (Wikimedia Commons)



not succeed without the collaboration of de facto partners in the media and the UN, which indoctrinate the world with Israel-bashing ideology, which in turn puts public pressure on Israel to stop its operation and deliver Hamas the victory.

Twentieth-century antisemitism to Nazis is what 21st-century anti-Zionism is to Hamas: an independent, uncoordinated ideological assault on the Jews, which is an enabler for the physical assault on the Jews and a primary destabilizer of global security.

And yet, anti-Zionism is viewed in the context of antisemitism. This is akin to Israeli wines, now winning top awards in international competitions, being shelved in wine stores under "Kosher." (Yes, they are kosher, but that's not the point.)

Anti-Zionism is a national security threat to the United States

Anti-Zionism needs to be reclassified as a national security issue – a strategic threat to the US and to global

stability. Therefore, President Biden should consider appointing an anti-Zionism director to the National Security Council.

When Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused the Jewish state of the "killing of women, of children, of babies," he fueled the anti-Zionist movement and hence contributed to the range of global destabilizing events described above.

The US must act by, for example, reprimanding the Canadian ambassador. This way, other world leaders would be deterred from succumbing to their indoctrinated populace.

Indeed, the Spanish prime minister, in a reminder to Americans to "remember the *Maine*," attacked sacred American values by slandering Jews in Israel, accusing them of indiscriminately killing thousands of Palestinian boys and girls.

"America is an idea." That was what President Biden stated when he announced his run for president in 2019. This idea is now being attacked through the construct of anti-Zionism.

"Anti-Zionism" is a euphemism for "anti-Americanism." America was founded as a rejection of the oppressive dogmas of the European past, the renewal of an ancient promise, a utopian return to freedom. From the onset, Americanism was a form of abstract Zionism.

Biden also stated that he was prompted to run for president by mobs in Charlottesville, Virginia, "chanting the same vile [statement] heard across Europe in the 1930s: 'Jews will not replace us.'"

Those chants have since traveled from Charlottesville to college campuses in America and to public squares across Europe.

The murder, rape, and beheading of Jews in their own homes, along with the backwind it gets from the anti-Zionism movement, is the ultimate expression of "Jews will not replace us," in defiance of the essence of Americanism.

Biden is now president and leader of the free world. His courageous support for Israel, defending itself and the world from the physical threat of Hamas, is admirable. Now it is time to defend America and the free world from this mushrooming ideological threat of anti-Zionism. ■

The writer is author of Judaism 3.0: Judaism's Transformation to Zionism (Judaism-Zionism.com) and chairman of the Judaism 3.0 think tank. For his geopolitical articles, visit EuropeAndJerusalem.com

Anti-Zionism is antisemitism: Recent proof

• GINA ROSS

The trauma of Oct. 7 is still reverberating in the Israeli and the Diaspora's collective nervous systems.

It has awoken many Jews to the unbreakable bond between Israel, Judaism, and the Jewish people. It has confirmed the belief that anti-Zionism is antisemitism. Again, Israel under threat immediately affected Jewish safety worldwide.

But this time, the massacre triggered the Holocaust trauma. After decades of Jewish disunity within Israel and with the Diaspora, a new Jewish collective emerged. Every Jew now knows from the inside and outside the intrinsic connection between Jews, Judaism, Israel, and Zionism.

As Hamas's barbaric violence shocked the Jewish world, the immediate connection between Jews, Judaism, and Israel came from within. Some young Jews, lost in the West's internal civilizational convulsions, have not gotten the message.

The sheer magnitude of the numbers calling for gassing the Jews stunned the Jews and the West, which had convinced themselves they were fighting antisemitism. This was the inescapable call for Western Jews who saw themselves as Westerners first, then Jews. Jews may deny their connection to Judaism or Israel, but the world will never allow it.

This connection is the precious silver lining to October's horror. A new strength has emerged from having the collective body and soul united.

The Jewish people in Israel, the physical manifestation of the Holy Land and Covenant, the return to Zion, are the physical expression of Zionism.

To help ourselves (and the world) move out of the dark forces that took over, we need our full power and to trust our Jewish DNA that we will survive, no matter what.

We must insist that, by definition, anti-Zionism is antisemitism. Only we can define who and what we are: a historical people, a religion, a culture, and a land. This is why we remained strangers in the hosting countries – the wandering Jew around the globe. We had a land, which we lost and to which we knew we belonged and would return, and we did return.

Jews, the Abrahamic religions, and other nations knew that Zionism was the fulfillment of this eternal covenant. Anti-Zionism is antisemitic because it seeks to cancel the Jewish covenant and history. Because Israel recognized the right of Arabs to be part of that land, it



'BUT THIS time the massacre triggered the Holocaust trauma': Yad Vashem's Hall of Names. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

has not colonized anyone. But Islamic dogmas and Western antisemitism made Palestinians refuse to share the land, leading to their misery. Jew-hatred also overlapped with hatred of the West.

ACCUSING ISRAEL of being an apartheid state, a colonizer, or an oppressor is just another creative antisemitic expression. After the Holocaust, it was impolite for people to admit they hate the Jews. The "Palestinian cause" became the new, justifiable code of Jewish hatred, regardless of how much it hurt the Palestinians. They annulled or distorted Jewish history and denied Arab-Palestinian ongoing violence.

We have much to do to repair this situation. We must heal our collective trauma.

We must be fierce and unapologetic when using defensive force. We must deeply ground our newly found unity in our language and actions, re-educating ourselves to stop the polarization, and let go of hatred and demonization between the different sides. To secure our unity, we must understand and value how each group is a part of the collective Jewish, Zionist soul.

While the traumatic massacre and the worldwide unfair reaction to it are seared in our collective consciousness, we must make sure to release our traumatic emotions to free ourselves from trauma's yoke.

In my daily contact with Israeli students and families, I notice that, while the traumatic shock is still significant, the collective psyche is starting to get a grasp of the situation. The miracle of the spontaneous return to national unity, the return of many hostages, and the IDF's military advances in Gaza are all starting to reduce the traumatic activation that is essential for the recovery of our collective nervous system.

Yes, there is a tremendous collective sadness floating almost physically over Israel. As one client who recently visited Israel said, "There is silence in Israel. There is not the regular noise in the streets." The grief is a collective grief, emanating from this recovered sense of peoplehood, intrinsically united. When one part is hurt, we are all hurt.

American Jews still express their shock at the spread of antisemitism among American academic, political, and media elites. Nothing denounces more clearly that anti-Zionism is antisemitism than the rush of hostility that immediately sprang up in the anti-Israel camp on Oct. 7 and 8, before any Israeli response. Their instant joy at Jewish suffering, and the calls for more violence (intifada, genocide) worldwide are living proof of it.

America and its Jews woke up to the fact that many of these elites believe that being anti-Zionist and supporting calls for the death of all Jews is not antisemitic. The Jews realized that many, whom we regarded as allies, supported Hamas's massacre. They were not our allies – another confirmation that anti-Zionism is antisemitism.

WHAT IS hopeful is that this fight does not belong only to American and European Jews but to all Westerners interested in traditional Western values: compassion, freedom, equality, and tolerance.

Jewish students were helplessly subjected to the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement's malevolence for years. Congress hearings with university heads, a stark example of lack of moral clarity and shameless antisemitism among the educational elites, were the coup de grace that outraged the Jewish community. Consequently, it is now determined to fight

antisemitism and for Israel, one more time showing the indestructible tie between Judaism, the Jewish people, and Zionism.

JEWES KNOW they are in for a long ride. Thus we must strengthen our physical, emotional, and moral stamina. Hamas's jihadi violence and the outrageous support it received opened our eyes. We must have moral clarity about right or wrong, just or unjust. Without any doubt or hesitation, we must declare our rightful claim to our land and forgo any need to belong to progressive politics at the cost of our Jewishness or support of Israel.

This Jewish catastrophe has also opened the world's eyes, forcing it to confront the dangers facing it. Jews as the canary in the coal mine is followed by an immediate danger for all. The West has been astounded by the moral damage their universities have unleashed upon their students. It finally recognizes that virulent antisemitism makes Jewish students feel physically unsafe.

More devastating is the moral turpitude of the country's elite faculty and students. They find raping women, killing babies, decapitating, and burning people alive justifiable. Congress is trying to address this repulsive turpitude. It is a complex fight that involves the West, not just the Jews.

Arab countries realize how this massacre and the ensuing war would threaten their own security if Israel did not destroy Hamas. They need a strong Israel and are trying to defuse the tension, sending discreet signals for connection with Israel, despite fearing the Arab street.

The massacre has also brought into focus the role of misguided or ideological media promoting misinformation and fueling violence – a theme to also address.

There are many pieces to the puzzle of bringing antisemitism and anti-Zionism to tolerable levels. We must all address each piece carefully and methodically. We have friends and allies to help. Let's take a deep breath and dive in to help wherever we can! ■

The writer, a Marriage, Family, and Child Therapist (MFCT), is founder/president of the International Trauma-Healing Institutes (ITI US, ITI Israel); co-founder of Jerusalem's Herzog Hospital's Trauma Center; and senior faculty in Somatic Experiencing. Her Ross Model includes stress-release tools for the collective level, and she authored the book series Beyond the Trauma Vortex into the Healing Vortex.

Hamas weaponized anti-Zionism

• COL. RICHARD KEMP

Hamas is by far the most successful antisemitic entity in the world today.

Beyond all competition, it has mobilized Jew-hatred around the world, using the State of Israel both as its target and its primary weapon. By waging war against Israel over many years, Hamas has inspired and energized international organizations such as the UN and the EU; governments and parliaments; the Western media; university authorities, professors, and students; human rights groups; businesses; and large sectors of the general population.

All dance to its pernicious tune: some out of malice, some out of ignorance, and others blindly jumping on the virtue-signaling woke bandwagon.

Consequently, the global scope and scale of Hamas's antisemitic influence dramatically exceeds even the Nazis from whom it takes much of its own inspiration.

The foundations of Hamas's success lie in the Soviet Union. Back in the 1950s and '60s, when Israel aligned with the West rather than the USSR, the Soviet leadership decided to undermine American and British influence in the Middle East by fomenting a war of national liberation against Israel. Moscow invented a Palestinian national identity in order to turn religious malice against the Jews of Israel into a struggle over land, a cause it correctly understood would gain much greater traction and support in the West than a religious war.

That developed into the most successful slur campaign in history, giving rise to accusations of land theft, unlawful occupation, illegal settlement, apartheid, and all the other lies and distortions that are now accepted as undisputed facts by so many around the world. Decades of this anti-Israel propaganda have taken us to the dangerous position we are in today.

That means that whatever is done to Israel and its Jews is justified as legitimate resistance. I've even heard some saying that the people of Israel brought upon themselves the undiluted evil and savagery of Oct. 7. They had it coming. By the same token, any action taken by Israel to defend its people is unjustified, unlawful, and unacceptable. Like so much else in our post-truth world, facts and reality don't matter. If the "oppressed" Palestinians are doing anything, it's justified and understandable. If Israel is doing anything, it's intolerable and wrong.

EVER SINCE Israel attempted a two-state solution in 2005, unilaterally pulling every soldier out of Gaza and uprooting every last Jew from the territory, Hamas has used all of its energies to intensify and expand this global anti-Zionist paradigm. Hamas has always known it does not have the military power to achieve its objective of eradicating the Jewish state or even coming close to it. Instead, it has weaponized Israeli self-defense to its own advantage.

Every attack against Israel has been designed with the overriding purpose of eliciting a military reaction. It has deployed its weapons, communications sites, command posts, fighters, and leaders in places where Israel would have to kill innocent civilians in order to protect its population from them – despite the unparalleled measures the IDF takes to minimize collateral damage. Added value is gained by positioning terrorist infrastructure in locations protected under international humanitarian law, such as schools, hospitals, and mosques.

Hamas's aim is to maximize Gazan civilian deaths,



RICHARD KEMP: Every Hamas attack against Israel has been designed with the overriding purpose of eliciting a military reaction. (Wikimedia Commons)

Hamas's aim is to maximize Gazan civilian deaths

especially of women and children, in order to provoke accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity; to delegitimize Israel; and to vilify and isolate it across the international community. This plan comes together every time, and Israel's necessary defensive action, rigorously adhering to the laws of armed conflict, is always accompanied by and followed up with outright condemnation in the UN Human Rights Council, by human rights groups and by hostile governments.

In what is the true cycle of violence in the Middle East, such denunciations in turn embolden and encourage Hamas to attack again and again.

These Hamas-provoked condemnations of Israel are amplified in the media and on campuses, including by the BDS movement and their like, as well as by the armies of useful idiots that slavishly follow Hamas's depraved agenda. The objective of these malignant groups is not so much to damage Israel directly, but more to intimidate Jews in the Diaspora. They seek to bully the strongest backers of Israel internationally, to coerce them to either abandon their support or to directly turn against the Jewish state.

Those who succumb to such manipulation do so both to avoid intimidation and to gain social acceptance in an environment where Jew-hatred posing as anti-Zionism is increasingly fashionable. It is particularly effective on university campuses, where the student targets lack intellectual maturity, experience, and depth of knowledge. And where life-long standpoints often take root. It has been well documented that the level of Jew-hatred is multiplied when Jewish anti-Israel organizations – themselves created through such harassment – are present on campus, which they are in increasing numbers.

POLITICIANS TOO are susceptible to anti-Zionist hate campaigns, especially when large numbers of Muslims are among their voters. Even those political leaders who support Israel will often seek to appease their anti-Israel voters. For example, in this war, the likes of US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi

Sunak have repeatedly called on Israel to observe the laws of war and to avoid killing civilians.

They say this time and again, despite knowing full well that Israel already does exactly that. This is especially dangerous because their words imply that Israel is, in fact, carrying out war crimes, and their "confirmation" serves to incite even greater Jew-hatred.

Thus Hamas and its supporters, in a carefully orchestrated campaign, stoke antisemitism around the world and feed off its malign effects. Terminating Hamas in Gaza, and hopefully elsewhere around the world, will have a major impact for as long as a successor to the terrorist group is not allowed to take hold there.

But although Hamas today is an antisemitism brand leader, it is of course far from the only major player. For its leading competitors, we don't need to look any farther than Judea and Samaria and, indeed, to the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose controlling hand lies behind so much of it.

The current conflict has caused a profound spike in Jew-hatred in the West, and there is no doubt that after the war, the steady-state level of antisemitism will settle at a new high. That should be of immense concern to governments in Europe, the US, and elsewhere, with their Jews facing this growing prejudice. It is their responsibility to suppress antisemitic hatred by defunding or shutting down those groups that are responsible, and taking a much harder line against the arch-offenders – the UN bodies in New York and Geneva.

As well as that, governments should be working to actively counter anti-Israel propaganda with the truth about Israel, rather than turning a blind eye or even fueling it as they so often do, even if inadvertently.

Here they could apply the same very effective approach that many of them took to persuade their electorates of the need to support Ukraine in its resistance to Russian aggression. ■

The writer is a former British Army colonel, who commanded British forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

PRO-PALESTINIANS gather at Harvard University, Oct. 14. (Joseph Prezioso/AFP via Getty Images)

BARAK SELLA: Did I sign a bad deal? (Yael Amir)



Bad education

Not the semester I expected at Harvard University

• BARAK SELLA

The moment my first semester at Harvard ended, I got on an El Al flight to Tel Aviv. After two extremely exhausting months at the university, I couldn't stay in Boston for another minute.

Until the war, it was one of the best times of my life. I was accepted into the most prestigious university in the world, met fascinating people, studied whatever I wanted, and interacted daily with prominent global figures. I felt like just another academic, freely moving from classes on democracy and AI to migrant rights, then discussing politics in bars with colleagues from India to Argentina over too many margaritas.

But the war changed everything. From a high point in my life, it became one of the hardest. Had I a legal case, I might sue Harvard. In a sense, I signed a contract with them: I pay a ridiculously high tuition fee, and in return they provide a valuable degree, opening new doors. But arguably, the value of this degree has plummeted by at least 50%. Did I sign a bad deal?

My parents were supposed to visit me in November. I bought Harvard sweatshirts for a family photo near the famous John Harvard statue. Due to the war, they canceled their trip, and the shirts remained in my suitcase. When I excitedly showed the shirts to my family, the response was "Maybe we should wait before wearing these publicly."



So, what's it really like at Harvard as an Israeli? Is it frightening? The truth is, I'm not scared. Campus antisemitism isn't physical and in your face but hidden between the lines. It's felt in loneliness, in how people look at you. When the war started, I wanted to leave Harvard and return home. But after two months and everything that's happened, I realize it's now more critical than ever to be a proud Israeli student on campus. Because it's not just about Israel; it's much bigger than that.

When the war began, I quickly realized that campus

reality would be deeply affected. Once I saw the university's initial response, failing to condemn Hamas's terror decisively, I understood the war would not only be in Gaza but also on campuses across the US and the world. The university president's embarrassing congressional hearing was a peak in Harvard's public missteps, simultaneously claiming opposition to terrorism and antisemitism yet repeatedly failing to provide a significant leadership response. What happened on the ground in the meantime?

One of my professors, a renowned academic teaching American politics at Harvard for over 30 years, said he had never seen Harvard so tense and chaotic. I have nothing to compare it to, but my studies have been wholly disrupted since the war, barely finishing the semester. From an outstanding student spending hours in the library, I started missing classes and submitted numerous assignments late, if at all.

Emotionally, I had less time to deal with studies that seemed detached when my friends at home were joining the reserves and my family was taking shelter from missiles. Thoughts of families losing loved ones or having relatives kidnapped to Gaza kept me awake at night, unable to focus on my studies. Moreover, I decided to invest my energy in more important things: organizing the Israeli community on campus; participating in events and lectures about the war; and meeting anyone who might help release the hostages.

Socially, it became very challenging. There are definitely unpleasant protests and debates, and even professors expressing infuriating positions. I've attended several lectures from visiting professors with zero academic integrity. As a mature and experienced

person, I can handle the lies about Israel and Zionism. But my heart breaks at the thought of a young 19-year-old student exposed to content that's practically brainwashing.

However, the most challenging aspect is social isolation. Most people prefer to avoid conflict if they can. For the average person, every conversation with me was an active choice to engage in discussion about the war. Every time they approached me, they had to ask about my well-being and my family's situation. I understand them; it's emotionally taxing. I have no choice but to deal with the war daily. They do. Additionally, we also isolate ourselves. With the bit of free time I have, I prefer to speak Hebrew with my Israeli friends, leaving less space to meet new people.

I also had meaningful interactions with people who proved themselves as true partners. Some of my fellow students are disconnected individuals with an abysmal understanding of events, captivated by dogmatic conceptions portraying Israel as an illegitimate, colonial entity. I don't waste time on them.

But it's important to remember that they are not the majority. Most students are moderate, and even if not necessarily pro-Israel, they are willing to be part of a complex conversation based on humanist and democratic values. In the past two months, many friends who are not Jewish or Israeli went out of their way to make me feel included. As someone who isn't afraid to express opinions publicly, I often face criticism.

After another exhausting, annoying debate in my program's WhatsApp group about president Gay's congressional hearing, one of my friends wrote: "I just want to reassure you what I said many weeks ago: I'm here for you. You are a kind, good-hearted person trying your best and trying to do good. I can see that. Any time you feel alone or with lack of support in the class, think of these words."

Although this touching support happens privately more than publicly, it teaches us about the many around us who can be genuine partners. They don't necessarily want to take sides. They want to engage in honest, intelligent conversations and came to Harvard for its original purpose - to foster a critical academic learning atmosphere based on democratic values.

The events at Harvard received international attention, igniting intensive debates within and outside the Jewish community. We now understand that Israel's war with Hamas, more than any other conflict, exposes tensions that the West would prefer to sweep under the rug. Often in the past two months, I felt that I didn't have the energy for this and would instead return to Israel, a place where kidnapped soldiers' signs are not torn down. I don't have to explain every day why Israel has the right to exist. Many in Israel ask me why I continue my studies there, as we are not wanted. But that would be a mistake. Antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment are just a symptom of a deeper phenomenon.

WHY DO students from all over the world come to study at Harvard?

Beyond potential employment opportunities, they come to soak in American ideas. Students from Shanghai and Moscow come to learn in Boston, not vice versa. The problem is that the tension around the Israel-Hamas war reveals a much deeper crisis - a lack of faith in the American project and the American Dream.

That same American Dream that allowed Jews to break admission quotas and contribute to Harvard's academic achievements significantly. That same American Dream promised minorities equal opportunities and freedom, and delivered. Completely giving up on the dream would be a mistake instead of fighting for it.

One of Hamas's outstanding achievements was that they managed to convince many Americans (50% of those aged 18 to 24, according to a recent Harvard-Harris Poll) to support them in the war against Israel. One way they did this was by linking the resistance against Israel with the fight for racial justice in the US. In a 2021 VICE interview, Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar said he wanted to take this opportunity to remember the racist murder of George Floyd ... The same type of racism that killed George Floyd is being used against the Palestinians." They managed to link their struggle to a broader, internal American struggle.



PLO LEADER Yasser Arafat speaks at Harvard's Kennedy School in Oct. 1995, cheered on by hundreds of faculty and students. Arafat was in the US for the UN's 50th anniversary. (Stuart Cahill/AFP via Getty Images)

THE JOHN F. Kennedy School of Government is reflected in a Harvard boathouse window, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (William B. Plowman/Getty Images)

This is a lesson we need to learn from Hamas. Israel's fight for survival, as difficult as it may be, is not only ours. It is about the future of democracy. It must be a struggle deeply connected to the identity of American society as the leader of the free world.

So next month, when I return to Harvard, I can't just think about my degree or next job. Something much bigger is at stake. They aren't giving up, why should we? ■

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Anti-Zionism: 'Gateway drug' to antisemitism



'GAS THE Jews': Pro-Palestinians rally outside the Sydney Opera House, Oct. 9.
(Lisa Maree Williams/Getty Images)

Just before the war, a symposium was held at Jerusalem's Begin Center about the imminent dangers of anti-Zionism. A few weeks later, it became strikingly relevant

• AARON PORIS/THE MEDIA LINE

In the Oct. 7 aftermath and the subsequent Israeli counteroffensive in Gaza, perceptions of a link between antisemitism and anti-Zionism have intensified.

Just three days after the massacre, pro-Palestinian demonstrators in Sydney led chants of "gas the Jews." Some individuals generally considered thoughtful appear hesitant to denounce antisemitism, especially when it coincides with criticism of Israel. This was evident when three presidents of major US universities did not define calls for the genocide of Jews as harassment during a recent congressional hearing on antisemitism in colleges.

In his 2022 book *Judaism 3.0*, Israeli author Gol Kaleb argues that Zionism is the anchor of modern Judaism, explaining that as Judaism has evolved to emphasize Zionism, antisemitism has similarly shifted its focus to anti-Zionism.

Arguments from the book were highlighted in a series of recent debates, culminating in a discussion on Sept. 12 with Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahoum and Herzl

Center chairman Uri Zaki.

Kaleb noted to The Media Line that anti-Zionism has emerged as the predominant form of antisemitism in the US, accounting for 60% to 80% of antisemitic incidents.

He further asserted that anti-Zionism, in addition to its prevalence, poses a greater danger than traditional forms of antisemitism. "Antisemitism can lead to violence and inflicts damage against individual Jews and their safety. Comments like 'Jews will not replace us' or 'The Jews control the media' ... can lead to violence. But it is not an existential threat to Judaism because there is no 'destruction' mechanism in antisemitism. Such a mechanism exists in anti-Zionism."

Hours after the Oct. 7 massacre, anti-Zionist protests broke out globally, with many openly displaying antisemitic sentiments. In the weeks following the start of the war, violent antisemitic hate crimes rose by over 400% in the US and by over 1,350% in the UK.

Beyond inciting physical violence, anti-Zionism has also triggered ongoing International Criminal Court probes into Israel, potentially resulting in the arrest of Israeli citizens overseas and sanctions or other international actions against Israeli and Jewish entities.

Kaleb pointed out that comparable actions were implemented against Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, underscoring the gravity of this threat.

What Zionism is, and what Zionism isn't

Zionism is broadly defined as the nationalist movement expressing the Jewish people's aspirations to live in their ancestral homeland.

Theodor Herzl, credited as the founder of modern political



'TAKING OF Jerusalem by the Crusaders, 15th July 1099,' Emile Signol: Zionists argue it is more accurately an anti-colonialist movement, freeing the Jewish people from a history of foreign dominations such as the Crusades. (Wikimedia Commons)

In the weeks following the start of the war, violent antisemitic hate crimes rose by over 400% in the US and over 1,350% in the UK

Zionism, envisaged a Jewish state as a refuge for all Jews, irrespective of their level of religious observance, seeking sanctuary from pogroms and antisemitism.

After Israel's establishment in 1948, Zionism's focus shifted toward safeguarding and fostering the State of Israel, established as the nation-state of the Jewish people.

While anti-Zionists frequently label Zionism as a colonialist endeavor, Zionists argue that it is more accurately an anti-colonialist movement, aiming to free the Jewish people from statelessness and the land from a history of foreign dominations under the British, Ottomans, Mamluks, Crusaders, etc.

Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Hassan-Nahoum observed that the native connection of Jews to the Land of Israel is self-evident to Israelis, complicating their ability to tackle antisemitism.

"I don't think Israelis fully understand what antisemitism and anti-Zionism really are," she said. "They don't understand the importance of the narrative... that [Jews] are indigenous to the land. It's obvious to them. They don't feel that anybody needs to know. They think people already know."

Zaki shared his perspective on how the inherent connection of Jews to the Land of Israel renders anti-Zionism intrinsically antisemitic.

"First of all, I see any anti-Zionist criticism per se as a form of antisemitism," Zaki said, "because the notion of Zionism is that the Jewish people, as any other peoples in the world, deserve self-determination. An anti-Zionist premise assumes that the Jewish people is different from any other peoples... hence, a form of antisemitism."

The panelists discussed how anti-Zionism has found a foothold in contemporary, liberal environments, unlike traditional antisemitism. While classical antisemitism is often linked to white nationalist and neo-Nazi ideologies, anti-Zionism tends to align with progressive and anti-racist movements. Such associations gained prominence following a 1975 UN resolution, later retracted, which categorized Zionism as a form of racism, and were further reinforced by recent reports from human rights groups labeling Israel an apartheid state.

Consequently, anti-Zionism has thrived in Left-leaning settings, including on college campuses

and within the British Labour Party. Debate moderator Paul Gross noted that numerous self-proclaimed anti-Zionists do not recognize the antisemitic nature of their attitudes - characterizing anti-Zionism as "a sort of 'gateway drug' for antisemitism."

He discussed the UK Labour Party's infatuation with former leader Jeremy Corbyn, who spread "left-wing tropes about how Zionism is racism and colonialism and that the forming of the State of Israel is not just a sin against the Palestinians, but against a wider idea of justice in itself."

From there, the party became "literally infested, not only with criticisms [of Israel] but with down-right antisemitism, where you start hearing Labour municipal leaders talking about the Jewish lobby and Jewish power, or Jewish conspiracy theories about 9/11, or how the Jews ran the slave trade... and all these things come out of the woodwork that would otherwise have been inconceivable" had the anti-Zionist ideology not paved the way.

Given these dynamics, it can be hard to draw a line between legitimate criticism of Israel, anti-Zionism, and antisemitism.

Zaki, chairman of the Meretz Party's executive committee, stated that some criticisms of Israeli policies are legitimate, similarly characterizing the question of the IDF's adherence to international law. Yet, he mentioned that his sensitivity to critiques of Israel has heightened following the recent Hamas attacks.

Stressing the disproportionate focus on Israel's expected counteroffensive in Gaza rather than on the Oct. 7 atrocities, he continued, "I don't think we would have seen the same outcry had the attack been in any other place in the Western world." Zaki criticized certain progressive organizations for either showing sympathy toward Hamas or offering only formal condemnations before quickly turning their criticisms towards Israel: "The volume of the criticism toward Israel was much louder."

Kalev, for his part, affirmed that protections for critical debates should be enshrined and upheld, but "there is a line." He referred to prevalent accusations that Israeli Jews are indiscriminately killing women and children, and perpetrating a genocide against Palestinians. "That is absolutely antisemitism," he said, comparing such claims to a blood libel.

Solutions

Zaki, Hassan-Nahoum, and Kalev expressed different visions for responding to the wave of anti-Zionism.

Zaki opined that Israeli leaders' inability to sincerely address Palestinian political aspirations has inadvertently energized anti-Zionist sentiments, particularly among young, less informed progressive groups.

Hassan-Nahoum said the war "has woken a lot of these people up," including many Jewish students "who now understand that there's a lot more going on [in Israel] and they've been sold a lie" by their anti-Zionist universities.

She argued that a common misconception among anti-Zionists is that the core issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the absence of a Palestinian state - whereas, in her view, the actual catalyst for violence is the existence of a Jewish state. While some believe "the Palestinians want a state more than they want to destroy us... I believe the opposite."

Kalev, too, said that successful negotiations with the Palestinian Authority would do little to defang the anti-Zionist movement.

He said Herzl also once entertained the idea that "if Jews just behave better or stop irritating the Europeans, then antisemitism will stop or at least not be so bad. But in the end, Herzl concluded that you cannot reason with hate."

Kalev pointed to progressive friends and friends from the UN who once said that disengaging from Gaza, which Israel occupied from 1967 to 2005, would give Israel the moral high ground in the case of an attack from Hamas and lead to widespread international support in such a situation. "Now we see in that exact scenario we defend ourselves but get an official designation from the UN that our defensive operation amounts to crimes against humanity."

He also contended that public relations efforts, *hasbara*, have proven to be ineffective "You cannot change dogmatic minds."

The true remedy for anti-Zionism? Establishing Zionism as the "anchor of Judaism" in world-wide discourse, ensuring that anti-Zionism is universally recognized as being as reprehensible as antisemitism. ■

TAKING COVER during a siren at Tel Aviv's Hostage Square. (Miriam Alster/Flash90)



Letter to my two-month-old about her Palestinian-Jewish ancestry

• YAEL ROZENMAN-ISAMEL

Unlike your mother, who came from a Jewish father and a Palestinian mother, you were born a Jew. Unlike your mother, who seldom experienced antisemitism, you have experienced it from birth.

Dear Alma, Your life had exactly 11 days of peace before you heard your first siren. From the day I decided to become a single mother until the day of your birth, I've written you hundreds of letters. Some are about the happiness of bringing you – a new life – into this world, but one too many are about fear and guilt: the guilt of raising you alone, the grief of letting go of an idyllic family, and the fear of not being enough.

The aftermath of October 7 slapped me in the face and shattered the luxury of dwelling on doubt. Romanticism regarding your upbringing was replaced with realism. The world I thought I would be raising you in was a lie, I told myself.

But with all the difficult things that might be coming your way, on October 8 I knew I had already done something right in your life: bringing you into the world in Israel.

Following the most horrific attack on Judaism since the Holocaust, I have witnessed Israel exploding in fervor for life instead of nationalism. At this time, when our government completely failed us, it was civilians who took the initiative to donate blood, fund raise, and procure supplies for the displaced families of the South and the responding reserve units. The whole country mourned as if each person we had lost was

blood-related. Indeed, it felt like they were.

Alma, while the sirens sounded and we were all locked inside our homes as terrorists roamed the streets, we had close friends, family, colleagues, and acquaintances, some of whom I had met only once, offering to help us and make sure we were okay. They had the empathy to understand how this might feel with a newborn.

At that time, when we were all in distress, people were not fending for themselves, they were looking after each other. I felt at ease and proud that the vast majority blamed Hamas and not the Palestinians.

To Israelis, it was obvious that the response to hostilities would be to live, not to conquer. To rescue our family. To secure our existence. Not to annihilate Gaza. If this war had been one of revenge and/or conquest, it would have ended on October 8.

The tenet of Judaism “When you save a life, you save a world” was palpable. These are values that very few outsiders have grasped

ALMA, THIS war awakened centuries of hatred toward my people, both Jewish and Palestinian. I will make sure you are well educated in history and philosophy so you will not fall for false narratives. I will be doing this with you as you grow. But knowledge should transform into wisdom.

While wisdom brings depth and direction to life, unfortunately you cannot always win an argument with facts; sometimes learning when to yield brings about a better resolution. This conflict lasted 75 years too many, inflicting indescribable mutual pain. It no longer matters who threw the first stone. From the river to the sea, several peoples live and they're not go-

ing anywhere.

Choosing one side means the extermination of the other, and I refuse to do that or normalize that thought. But for peace, there's no space for fundamentalism. Not Jewish. Not Muslim. Not Christian.

I see the destruction and death and am mortified. Wisdom, however, prevents me from calling for a ceasefire, even if every cell in my body screams for one.

Why? Because when you have to choose between ceasefire or existence, there's something unequivocally wrong.

I believe Hamas – every word they have stated. I believe them when they say they won't stop until Israel and the Jews have been wiped off the face of the Earth. If someone threatens to kill you, should you not fight for your survival?

Hamas is not fighting for peace or land. Hamas is fighting for the extermination of all Israelis regardless of ethnicity or religion, as well as the extermination of all Diaspora Jews – and they always have.

HOWEVER, MY love, even though Israelis are panicked about polls suggesting that over 70% of Palestinians support Hamas, it is wisdom that helps me understand that polls are merely a snapshot in time; that Palestinians too are a people under total distress, a product of Israeli defense and decades of corrupt oppressive leadership and abusive indoctrination.

One of the worst abuses I can think of is sentencing a child to a life of hate and violence.

Alma, unlike your half-Jewish, half-Palestinian mother, you don't come from a mixed household. You probably won't experience the nuances of two different cultures. But all your ancestors were good,

moral, and loving human beings.

I want you to remember that Germany did not remain under the grip of the Nazis. Remember also that the Arab nations are rapidly advancing the Abraham Accords, when 75 years ago they swore to destroy Israel. Nothing is static in this world.

I want peace. Our survival depends on the success of Palestine in thriving and building a future, not one fixated on destroying a country. Whether or not the Palestinians find it just, as of 1948 Israel has existed and has won all the wars that were waged against it.

At some point, Palestinians will have to accept that Israel is the lesser woe compared to their 75 years of horrible leadership. At some point, Israel will have to acknowledge that allowing tensions with Islamists to continue, instead of finding a way to assist moderate/secular Palestinians, is a dangerous policy. Israel must also acknowledge that allowing the expansion of settlements only puts us in more danger and perpetuates this conflict.

And when I say “us,” I mean the Jewish and Palestinian people.

And finally, the rest of the world has to acknowledge they failed Israelis and Palestinians. October 7 clearly showed us a world that overestimates Israeli intelligence and underestimates Palestinian capabilities.

They failed Palestinians by allowing international organizations to fund education based on hate and misinformation and to enable the perpetuation of their refugee status. They failed Israel by adopting narratives that single them out as the source of Palestinian pain and by maintaining an obvious bias, keeping the “us vs them” paradox, blocking the possibility of intercultural bridges and conflict resolution.

ALMA, ON October 5, we had a beautiful naming ceremony, and on October 7 a war exploded.

On October 16, one of my closest friends wrote on her Instagram, “What Hamas did is terrorism, what Israel is doing is genocide.” It was then that I realized that your path would be very different from mine. Unlike your mother, who came from a Jewish father and a Palestinian mother, your religion was set at birth. You were born a Jew.

Unlike your mother who rarely experienced antisemitism, you are experiencing it from birth.

Alma, my friend’s outrage is real and justified, but it is misguided to think it is genocide. My dear friend is a beautiful soul whom I admire. The deaths of the innocent, whether intended or not, are tragic. Though “collateral damage,” each number is a life that ceases and leaves behind immeasurable pain among their loved ones. Each body that is hurt is a life that won’t have a chance for normalcy in the future; each scar is a lifelong sentence to remember the war.

It’s unbearable. I share the outrage, but I do not share my friend’s language and the analysis that is formed from such language. Even though she would never justify the acts of Hamas, the trendy analysis and language du jour she has adopted are designed to subconsciously do so. Even though she is not an antisemite, the language and analysis adopted will make her one.

Her post triggered so much fear because by design, even though she was unaware, it was set to create irreparable and dangerous hatred.

Genocide. Colonialists. Apartheid. Oppressors. This narrative and language are not only inaccurate but also deepen the breach between Palestine and Israel and increase hatred toward Jews. This language is perfectly tailored to dehumanize, demonize, and delegitimize Israel and the Jewish people’s trauma, while not making the Palestinians in any way responsible for finding common ground and a solution to the ongoing conflict.



Moreover, such inflammatory dialect analyzes the conflict through the eyes of the West – white vs brown, oppressor vs oppressed, and the dangerous us vs them paradox – all absolutisms with no space for reconciliation and resolution.

YOU SEE, Alma, it is impossible for me to envision peace with Hamas, as their rhetoric is evil and their aim is real.

The pro-Palestinian side that has adopted such language and narrative feels the same way toward Israel. It is impossible to negotiate with evil. It’s morally deplorable to make a deal with the devil. So it’s even more reprehensible to defend the devil. And those who eliminate evil from the Earth are heroes.

The propaganda was convincing enough for my friend to think of the country I chose to call home as genocidal. With this logic, my actions as a Zionist, including your birth, became an act of genocide, apartheid, and colonialism.

My love, the sad truth is that the antisemitic element of the anti-Zionist movement couldn’t be more apparent. Instead of experiencing a yearning for peace, we’ve experienced an outburst of antisemitism, proving once again that there is no differentiation between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Otherwise, why did the tiny Jewish community

of Santa Cruz, Bolivia – 11,771 kilometers away from Israel – fear an attack to the point they had to cancel their Shabbat services? Why are protesters chanting “Gas the Jews” in front of the Sydney Opera House? Why did British Airways delay showing the Jewish comedy series *Hapless* on flights?

The world did not rise and ask Hamas to surrender and return hostages to avoid Israel’s right to defense. Instead, educated people justified indefensible acts of rape, mutilation, infanticide, kidnapping, and burning people alive. As one can properly distinguish Hamas from Palestinians, many are unable to distinguish Israelis from what they have determined as evil.

In their eyes, Israel has no right to defend itself and should allow its citizens to be killed. There is no peace without being pro-Israel and pro-Palestine, unless the goal is to achieve peace by committing the genocide of one or the other.

I’ve written you hundreds of letters, and this one has been the hardest to write. As I write, I finally accept the emotional toll this war has taken on my psyche. It has been as much a psychological war as it has been a physical one.

The writer is an entrepreneur and corporate strategist who has served as CEO of a number of companies in Latin America and Israel.



NOTHING IS static in this world: Signing the Abraham Accords, the White House, Sept. 15, 2020. Pictured from L: PM Benjamin Netanyahu; US president Donald Trump; Foreign Affairs Minister of Bahrain Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani; and Foreign Affairs Minister of the UAE Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. (Alex Wong/Getty Images)

SENTENCED TO a life of hate and violence: A child in full Hamas regalia, flanked by movement heads Yahya Sinwar (2nd R) and Ismail Haniyeh, in Gaza City, 2017. (Mahmud Hams/AFP via Getty Images)