

# Former University of Texas Professor Would Like Israel to Be Bombed “Until the Sand Turns to Glass”

by Hugh Fitzgerald



**Spencer Wells** is a geneticist, a co-owner of Antone’s, blues bar in Austin, and – some would say – an antisemite, if we may be permitted to thus describe someone who has murderous fantasies about destroying Israel and its apartheid-loving Jews

The unedifying brief tale is [here](#):

*Spencer Wells, a former adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Austin, recently tweeted that Israel should be bombed “until the sand turns to glass.”*

To me that sounds like wishing for mass murder: Wells would like the state of Israel, and all of its Jews (I presume he would somehow, in his homicidal fantasy, manage to spare all the non-Jews in the country) to be completely destroyed, by being bombed until “the sand turns to glass.” Sand turns to glass when it is heated to a temperature of 3090 degrees Fahrenheit, which would definitely incinerate the population of Israel. I consider that to be the endorsement of genocide from Spencer Wells. Do you disagree?

*In the same Twitter thread, which has since been removed, Spencer Wells – who describes himself as a “scientist,” “author” and “entrepreneur” – said, “I despise the Israelis. If you want to see the post-apocalyptic vision of what Apartheid in South Africa would have looked like in 2020, visit Israel.”*

When Spencer Wells says he “despises the Israelis” – all of them, that is all of the Jewish Israelis – his hatred is palpable. Does that amount to antisemitism? If challenged to defend himself against that charge, would he explain that his homicidal hatred extends “only” to all Israelis, or perhaps “only” to “Israelis and all those who support Israel” be enough to get him off the hook? Not in my book. What about yours?

And his statement about Israel resembling what South Africa “would have looked like in 2020” if it had not done away with Apartheid, but continued to impose it even more completely and brutally – which is what I take his hard-to-parse phrase about a “post-apocalyptic vision” to mean – is preposterous.

Let’s see just how preposterous. Is Israel right now an Apartheid state? Aren’t there Arabs serving in the Knesset, sitting on the Supreme Court, representing the country as diplomats at the ambassadorial level, even serving in the IDF if they so choose? Don’t Jews and Arabs study in the same

universities, work in the same companies, play on the same sports teams, act in the same films and television series, perform in the same orchestras, serve in the same police forces (there is even a Muslim Major-General in the Police), live in the same communities? Did any of that happen in South Africa between whites and blacks during Apartheid? What can Spencer Wells possibly mean? I'd hazard a guess that perhaps he once visited Israel, and didn't like the checkpoints in the West Bank, or the noticeable police presence in Jerusalem and other cities? Doesn't he have any idea why those checkpoints, and that police presence, have been made necessary by the thousands of terrorist attacks targeting Israelis over the years?

*After the thread came to light, the University of Texas at Austin distanced itself from Wells, stating, "Spencer Wells is no longer a faculty or advisory council member at UT. He previously had a courtesy, unpaid appointment as a part-time adjunct that did not involve teaching. That ended in May and was not renewed. We do not have any association with the views held by Mr. Wells."*

It's good that the University of Texas ended any association, no matter how tenuous – he was a non-paid adjunct – with Spencer Wells. But there is more that could be done to express one's disgust with Spencer Wells.

Here's what I'd suggest. Wells is a co-owner of Antone's, described as an "iconic blues venue" in downtown Austin. Do just this: Don't go yourself to Antone's, should you ever be in Austin, and discourage others – everyone you know, in fact – from doing so. And ask them to tell others, who will tell still others. Keep up this campaign, in an ever-widening gyre of this blues-bar boycott. Use social media, quoting Wells's wish that Israel be bombed until its "sand turns into glass" – i.e., those bombs incinerate its population – and his remarks about how "I despise Israelis" and how, in its practice of

Apartheid, Israel outdoes South Africa at its worst.

If enough people take their custom elsewhere, this won't lead to any change in Spencer Wells's opinions, or endow him with moral sense, for he has none, but at least such a boycott could make life not quite as easeful for him – I believe he's sitting out the coronavirus in luxurious surroundings, somewhere in Indonesia – as he assumed it would be.

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