

Inducing antisemitic evil in the soul

By Matthew Hausman

The misuse of language induces antisemitism, to paraphrase Socrates. Opinion



The philosopher Socrates once wrote that “the misuse of language induces evil in the soul” and this maxim pretty much sums up the sanctification of Hamas and vilification of Israel since October

7th. There should be no question about the atrocities perpetrated by Hamas or its goal of exterminating Jews globally. And yet, progressive voices the world over misuse language to describe the rape of Jewish women and girls, murder of Jewish civilians, decapitation of Jewish babies, and taking of Jewish hostages as “acts of resistance.”

Even liberals who identify as moderate have urged Israeli restraint, suggested that Israel’s conduct provokes terrorism, or trumpeted concern for Gazans whom Hamas, not Israel, has put in harm’s way. If their worry over civilian safety were truly sincere, however, they would be exhorting terrorists – not Israelis – to stop using human shields. Instead, public handwringing over civilian casualties has become a dog whistle for falsely accusing Israel of war crimes and genocide.

Despite suffering unspeakable horrors that violated all bounds of human decency, Israel is demeaned, and Jewish lives are devalued by the media, by university professors and students,

by mainline Christian churches, and by radical Congressional Democrats who laud Hamas and rationalize or deny its brutality. And also, by Vice President Kamala Harris, who recently complimented anti-Israel campus protestors for "showing exactly what the human emotion should be."

Really?

Not even Socrates could have imagined such linguistic nonsense. Israel is described as "colonial" although the Jews' presence in their homeland goes back thousands of years before any Arab occupation

Jews are described as "oppressors" though they were the ones who were subjugated, abused, and dispossessed after the Arab conquest.

Despite lacking any documented provenance, the Palestinian-Arabs are described as "aboriginal" when in fact Arab-Muslim culture was imposed on the region through jihadist colonialism and the Jews are indigenous to the region.

And as antisemitic crime drastically increases, Jews are portrayed as "provocateurs". One recent example was an anti-Israel demonstration outside congregation Adas Torah in Los Angeles by masked hooligans who blocked access and threatened those who came to the synagogue's defense, while police on the scene reportedly facilitated the mob's agenda by initially discouraging Jews from entering or leaving the building. Little was done to disperse the demonstrators, who continued to threaten and harass congregants and obstruct the use of private property.

Undoubtedly, the police would have flexed more muscle had the protestors been attacking an abortion clinic or a gay pride event.

Not surprisingly, mainstream press coverage of the incident indulged anti-Israel sensibilities, as illustrated by a *Los*

Angeles Times article noting the synagogue was hosting a real estate marketing event “in which at least one company [had sales listings] in the occupied West Bank,” and describing the demonstration as “the latest skirmish” in a “decades-long international battle over the expansion of Jewish settlements on land seized and occupied by Israel during its 1967 Six Day war...” The article went on to contextualize the mob’s actions by stating that building “settlements on seized Palestinian land is considered by many countries to be a violation of international law...”

Such statements are highly problematic for several reasons. First, synagogues in LA do not dictate Israeli policy. Second, it is acceptable under traditional international law for countries under attack to seize land from belligerent nations that initiate hostilities. Third, the territories liberated in 1967 were never “Palestinian land” as no such country existed at any time in history.

Israel can claim lawful ownership today because she was acting defensively when she defeated Jordan, an aggressor nation that acquired these ancestrally Jewish lands by illegal conquest in the first place. Although critics cite the Law of Belligerent Occupation and Fourth Geneva Convention to accuse Israel of unlawful occupation, these standards apply to sovereign territories captured by belligerent conquerors. They do not really apply to Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem because inter alia they were not sovereign lands when Jordan seized them in 1948 or when Israel liberated them while defending herself in 1967.

Jordan’s illegal occupation from 1948 to 1967 was illegitimate ab initio under international law; and consequently, Jordan did not possess lawful title when it conveyed its putative land rights to the Palestinian Authority at the beginning of the ill-conceived Oslo process. Thus, Palestinian-Arabs cannot rely on derivative Jordanian rights to claim an interest superior to that of Israel or the Jews. Nor can they assert

loftier ancestral claims given the 3,500-year history of indigenous Jewish habitation that long preceded Roman, Arab, and Ottoman conquests and occupations. It is Jews who are historically indigenous, not "Palestinians," who are relative latecomers to the Jewish homeland.

Mainstream coverage blaming Israel for the Gaza war, misstating the region's history, depicting antisemitism as political speech, or sympathizing with terror groups like Hamas, has helped normalize Jew-hatred. As a consequence, anti-Jewish gangs have become commonplace from Los Angeles to New York, London to Paris, and east to west – only to be rationalized or validated by progressives and their media lackeys. Or by leftist politicians and vapid celebrities as an understandable reaction to Israeli "apartheid," though Israel has never been an apartheid state. Those who claim otherwise are employing the Hitlerian "Big Lie" by repeating an outrageous mistruth so frequently that people come to believe it because of its sheer audacity.

The International Criminal Court's Rome Statute of 2002 defines apartheid as "an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime." This definition clearly does not fit Israel, where ethnic and religious minorities have equal rights under the law. But it does describe communist dictatorships like China, Islamist regimes like Iran, and genocidal terror organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, which are romanticized by progressives in Congress, on college campuses, and in the urban street.

American antisemitism has exploded by nearly four-hundred percent since October 7th, but this did not occur in a vacuum and has been brewing for decades. Indeed, it became politically acceptable under President Obama, when antisemitism among his party's leftist and identity-community bases was first ignored, then tolerated, and later weaponized

to slander Israel and justify appeasement of Iran and Hamas. Since the Obama years, Democratic politicians have often blamed antisemitism on Israeli policies, though it always existed among the progressive and minority demographics they traditionally courted and considered natural allies.

The flames of hatred are fanned today by mainstream journalists and commentators, who sanitize antisemitism from progressives, minorities, and Islamists, and who engage in secular taqiyya to discount Jewish historical claims and Israeli legitimacy. The media's pervasive anti-Israel bias is reflected by its (a) disingenuous defense of Islamic extremists as inherently peaceful and mainly reactive, (b) tendency to minimize the risk, incidence, and aims of genocidal terrorism against Jews and Israel, and (c) false assurances of Palestinian "moderation" despite the extremist goals of Hamas, Hezbollah, and the PA – and the repudiation of Jewish sovereignty by most Palestinian-Arabs.

Too much energy has been wasted by well-meaning advocates who justify Israel's existence as a beacon of western democracy, political freedoms, and social equality. And while all this may be true, Israel's *raison d'être* is that she is a sovereign Jewish nation in the Jews' ancient homeland. No other independent nation ever existed there – from the time of the Dispersion to the re-establishment of Jewish sovereignty in 1948.

Israel's existence does not depend on whether she is a democracy or republic, or whether her leaders are liberal or conservative. Israel exists as the homeland of an ancient people who maintained their religious, physical, and national connections to the land and covenantal birthright throughout the millennia. This connection is both spiritual and corporeal and remains unbroken to the present day.

Israel is first and foremost a Jewish nation regardless of governmental form. Moreover, she is not a melting pot, but

rather a patchwork where individual and minority rights are respected as long as they do not threaten her security and continuity as a Jewish state. No other country would be expected to risk national suicide by submitting to mortal enemies who oppose its very existence.

When all is said and done, Israel's Jewish character is her truth, regardless of what the world might say or think. As stated by Rambam (Maimonides) eight centuries ago: "truth does not become truer by virtue of the fact that the entire world agrees with it, nor less so even if the whole world disagrees with it." (Moreh Nevuchim, 2:15.)

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