

Is it too late to clear the antisemitism swamp?

Jewish pioneers cleared the swamps of the Galilee a hundred years ago, hoping naively to be left in peace in their own homeland. But how are we going to clear the swamp of antisemitism that has engulfed the world?

by Phyllis Chesler



Daily, Jews are being cursed, defamed, beaten, knifed, shot down, and bombed, both in Israel and around the world. Everywhere, weary scholars are publishing long lists of one incident after another—cemetery vandalisms, swastikas, Holocaust monuments defaced, Jewish students heckled and tormented on campuses, pro-Israel speakers dis-invited or shut down, “Jews to the Gas” chanted at sports events, boycotts of Israeli products and of Israeli professors, pro-Palestine/anti-Zionist marches and resolutions in almost every country on earth.

The world media has failed to connect the dots. Each incident

is news without precedent, without context. No one notes that these incidents were inevitable given the massive number of Blood Libels that have infected the world—like a virus, a madness, for the last ninety years, a campaign which was accelerated the day after Israel won its war of self-defense in 1967.

Worthy colleagues write letters, draft petitions, bring lawsuits (which they sometimes win), pen passionate polemics, as Diane Weber Bederman has just done in [FBI and the No one stopped them](#).

In 2019, elderly Orthodox Jewish men are being assaulted in “beat downs” in Brooklyn (my hometown), mainly by young black men, and I wonder if these visibly Jewish men will also be blamed as were the murdered Jews in Jersey City for daring to move in as a group to an all-black neighborhood, as if doing so was so provocative and aggressive an act that it deserved death. Jews Out! Jews Go Home! Ah, but when Jews *are* home in Israel, the entire world castigates us for taking over someone else’s land.

Back to Brooklyn, still in 2019. What did that [In France](#), a Muslim Jew hater can torture-murder his elderly Jewish neighbor and get away with it as long as he’s smoked some marijuana first. So much for La Belle France. It is far easier to betray the Jews of Europe once again than to genuinely wrestle with one’s own history of colonialism and anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism.

Thus far, Jews in Europe have been advised to remove their Jewish stars and kippahs, and make sure their synagogues are well guarded by armed men. Tell the truth about what’s happening (as Oriana Fallaci, Bat Ye’or, and Elisabeth Sabadisch-Wolf did in terms of Islam in Europe) and you risk being defamed and sued. Our own great truth-teller, Melanie Phillips ([about Jew hating in the UK](#)).

Increasingly, my eyes begin to glaze over, my blood pressure soars, and I often stop reading. Full Stop. This madness must end. We must end it. We must pre-empt the "narrative." We must, like Ya'akov/Yisrael "come from behind" because that is where we are in terms of the cognitive war against the Jews.

I've been covering this War for fifty years, first as a speaker and as an activist and, for the last twenty years, as a writer driven by a force beyond my control.

I've grown weary and older and find myself still fighting back—and still barefoot, without having been issued a gun, ammunition, boots, a uniform, food—or a common strategy. I am exhausted by having been disbelieved, mocked, censored, and ostracized. And, I am not alone. There is a hardy band of us in this exact position.

Now, twenty years into this, some Jews see that we have a problem. Millions are being promised (\$25 million to be exact, offered by Ronald Lauder and by Robert Kraft) to "combat anti-Semitism." Revered Gentlemen: It is very late in the day and we will need far more in order to fund the various efforts of our best teams, and such teams do exist.

There is no end to what must be done, beginning with funding, distributing, and doing whatever it takes to compose new textbooks on racism that include Jew hatred and that make them mandatory reading; new courses in anti-Semitism and Israel, new courses in the history of Islam and then doing whatever it takes to make sure that they, too, are mandatory; forging anti-indoctrination curriculums that will take 50-100 years before they can begin to exert some influence over the media, human rights organizations, government leaders, leftists, and the Muslim world, etc.

This is trench warfare. This is clearing the swamps, inch by inch. There is no one quick fix.

What about our Jewish leadership? Where have they been? Most

have spent the last twenty years focused on white, right-wing Nazi Jew haters, have been too politically correct, and overly sensitive to the sorrows of recent immigrants, to note from whence the danger cometh. How do we re-educate our leaders? Failing that, how do we replace them, and in time to make a difference? How do we insure that this time round, we do not give up our religious brethren or our Israeli brethren? And that we do not surrender ourselves?

Finally—finally, even some left-wing American Jews are a bit frightened, on edge, and are asking the kinds of questions that we all should have been asking fifteen or twenty years ago—maybe seventy years ago if we hadn't been living in such a “goldene medina” at such a golden time in history.

Now, a few more of us can hear the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse at full gallop.

This just in from a very liberal friend who was born in hiding in Europe and grew up in a DP camp. “Now I'm really getting frightened. My kids and grandkids all look very Jewish. Black hats. Payes. Sheitels. The works.”

This, from another non-religious friend. “This is wild. How can we stop this?”

This, from a former shul mate: “How did you know this would be happening? Are you some kind of psychic, a prophet, maybe a witch?”

Ah, you don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing...

Hannukah Sameach—our holiday which celebrates both military might and divine intervention. We need both.

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