

Maybe it's time to boycott the boycotters

By Matthew M. Hausman

As a professor of legal studies in the community college system, I periodically receive calls and inquiries regarding the academic employees' union. Though I usually relegate such calls to voicemail oblivion, I finally answered because I actually felt the need to engage. When asked about joining the union, I declined; and when asked why, I said that I was disturbed by the stance of most academic unions regarding Israel. In this case, I could not support an organization that shortly after October 7th endorsed calls for an immediate ceasefire that seemed to imply moral equivalence between terrorists and their victims.



The anti-Qatar protest

Nathan Miller

It was not the expected response.

But I felt compelled to say something. Too many in academia

and politics draw such moral equivalence or support odious boycotts against Israel, while still others remain silent to avoid incurring the wrath of anti-Israel activists they otherwise consider political allies. Some would just rather say nothing to get along.

Not me.

Progressives who conflate terrorism with self-defense, preach divestment, or favor boycotts against Israel, Israeli universities, or Jewish businesses in Judea and Samaria are either grossly ignorant or morally adrift. Often the latter. Indeed, they often legitimize Hamas, contextualize antisemitic terrorism as a response to “occupation,” or blame Israel for the destruction that Gazans brought on themselves by electing and supporting Hamas and endorsing or participating in the murder, torture, and imprisonment of Israeli hostages. Despite shedding facile tears for Gaza, western progressives rarely mention the Israeli civilians murdered, raped, and kidnapped on October 7th or show compassion for Jewish children subjected to unspeakable horrors.

Where was their outrage when the Bibas children were choked and pummeled to death by their barbaric captors and their broken bodies returned to the mocking jeers of Gazan citizens? We should not ascribe an ounce of humanity to terrorist savages who aspire to exterminate the Jewish people – in this case, two babies at a time – or sympathize with civilians who cheer them on. The Hamas charter is clear that its goal is genocide, not peaceful coexistence, and it cites Islamic sources as doctrinal justification for murdering Jews.

Western apologists continue to call on Israel to negotiate – or to look for “moderate” alternatives with whom to dialogue. However, there are no moderate alternatives. Though considered the default interlocutor by many, the Palestinian Authority continues to incite terror, teach antisemitism, and provide “pay-for-slay” stipends to the families of terrorists who

murder Jews (partially subsidized in the past with US funding under the Obama and Biden administrations); and its charter denies Jewish history, nationhood, and humanity. Clearly, the PA is not moderate. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine that the recent uptick in terrorist activity from Judea and Samaria could occur without the PA's knowledge, complicity, or blessing.

All one need do is read their words to know that both Hamas and the PA seek the destruction of Israel and her people. They only differ in strategy, with Hamas favoring immediate, cataclysmic annihilation over the PA's phased approach using dissimulative dialogue.

Progressives categorically imbue Palestinian Arabs with historical integrity, presuming they represent the original indigenous population going back hundreds of generations and thousands of years in the Jewish homeland. They do not; and in fact, many (most?) are descended from Arab tribes that came from Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere throughout the Arab-Muslim world (and others from around the Ottoman Empire), with a large influx coming between the nineteenth century and 1940s, drawn by economic prosperity created by the Jews.

False assumptions about Palestinian Arab historicity obscure the true nature of the conflict, which is not really a dispute between Israelis and Palestinian Arabs over land, but an existential battle to delegitimize Israel and erase Jewish history. The establishment of a state of 'Palestine' that never existed will not facilitate peace because the Arab goal was never harmonious coexistence with Jews, but instead the destruction of Israel – whether by Hamas's genocidal means or the PA's more nuanced, phased strategy.

The UN's belated condemnation of the "abhorrent and appalling treatment of hostages" after the broken bodies of the Bibas family were returned was out of character; it usually revels in bashing Israel with classical antisemitic stereotypes.

However, its moment of moral clarity was short-lived as the president of its Human Rights Council censored a video statement referencing the Bibas family by Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust Director Anne Bayefsky. Moreover, although the UN's initial condemnation might have suggested some compassion for Jewish victims, it could not erase the institution's history of demonizing Israel with baseless resolutions, falsely accusing Israel of human rights violations, attempting through UNESCO and UNWRA to erase the Jews' history from their homeland, and fostering global antisemitism.

And now, blaming Israel for breaching a ceasefire that was over and that Hamas never truly honored when it was in place.

Similar criticisms could have been leveled against the Biden administration for imposing boycotts on Jews living in Judea and Samaria while providing Gaza with humanitarian aid it knew was going to Hamas. Though that administration's intent may have been to aid those it deemed blameless in the conflict, it ignored the undeniable evidence of civilian support for Hamas. Indeed, as shown by Arabic speaking Israelis posing as Arab journalists, some Gazans who repudiated Hamas when questioned in English responded differently when they believed they were being interviewed by Arab media.

Civilians who support terror and advocate the Jews' extermination should be neither excused nor pitied. Moreover, if they truly reject Hamas and desire peace, they bear the burden to prove sincerity – particularly considering the complicity of many Gazans who worked in Israel, boasted friendships with Jews, and used their access and relationships to draw maps showing terrorists where they would find Jews to rape, murder, and kidnap on October 7th.

In light of the complicity of "civilians" in facilitating Hamas's attack and assisting in the imprisonment of hostages, Israel cannot afford to simply believe Gazans who reject Hamas

when asked in English, but who approve its atrocities when speaking in Arabic to those they believe are Arab journalists.

After years of engaging in *taqiyya* (dissimulation) when speaking about their desire for peace or willingness to concede Israel's existence (while simultaneously enabling terrorism), they should be regarded skeptically when claiming to renounce Hamas. Western progressives never seem to learn, however, as they continue to tolerate antisemitism masquerading as political discourse or human rights advocacy, either out of naivete or their own antisemitic impulses. There can be no other reason for validating or tolerating anti-Israel boycotts, violence against Jews on college campuses, or antisemitic propaganda spewed by progressive Hollywood elites.

Rather than accept this status quo, Jews should respond by ostracizing the boycotters – and also politicians, academics, and entertainers who disparage Israel, embrace antisemites, or support genocidal terrorists. If woke celebrities condemn Israel and endorse Hamas out of ignorance, they should be called out for stupidity; and if out of malice, they should be recognized as antisemitic. Decent people should stop watching their movies, reading their books, and listening to their music; and when they appear in public wearing keffiyehs around their necks or bloody red “ceasefire” pins that actually commemorate the murder and dismemberment of Jews in PA police custody, they should be shamed as ignoramuses or hatemongers.

They are the ones promoting genocide, not Israel; and there is nothing impolitic about boycotting the boycotters or chastising vacuous public figures who use celebrity advocacy to empower enemies who seek to destroy Israel and exterminate her people.

Spurning the ideological, intellectual, or artistic output of anti-Israel progressives is not about putting them out of business but rather branding their work-product as tainted with the stench of bigotry.

This is the reason my parents' generation would not buy German automobiles after World War II, Wagner's operas were not performed in Israel, and Jews refused to watch movies by propagandist filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl. And it is the reason why Jews today should (a) avoid the films and music of artists who boycott Israel, champion terrorists, and defend antisemitic hate-speech, and (b) stop sending their children to those universities (sixty at last count) now under investigation by the US Department of Education for enabling campus antisemitism and failing to protect Jewish students.

My refusal to join the union didn't influence the organization in any way; but I could not support the apparent endorsement of moral equivalence regarding Israel's war with Hamas any more than my parents could buy a Volkswagen. It's about choosing right over wrong to assure Jewish continuity. As the Torah says in Sefer Devarim (30:15-19): "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil...You shall choose life, so that you and your offspring will live."

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