

# My blindness ... I shall never clap eyes on that murderer\*

by [Robert Harris](#)



*A slightly intemperate email sent to Mr. Justin Cohen, editor of the Jewish News at the end of October in response to his stance in a TV debate, when it became increasingly clear that an abiding sectarian hatred motivated the anti-Israel/pro-Hamas marches through London. Comment was invited several weeks ago but no reply has been received to-date.*

**From:** Robert Harris

**Sent:** Tuesday 31 October 2023 14:52

**To:** [editorial@jewishnews.co.uk](mailto:editorial@jewishnews.co.uk) <[editorial@jewishnews.co.uk](mailto:editorial@jewishnews.co.uk)>;  
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**Subject:** A message for the attention of Justin Cohen, editor of Jewish News

Dear Mr Cohen,

I would like to convey a message to you after listening to your debate with a rather hysterical James Schneider, former advisor of Jeremy Corbyn, on the Camilla Tominy show, 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 and would appreciate a message of acknowledgement. James Schneider claimed that 8,000 civilians died in Gaza in the current round of fighting but it is surely the case that many or most were belligerents (as we found in Operation Cast Lead, for example) and that Hamas' figures are extremely unreliable? It ought to be legitimate to criticise anyone that relies on Hamas' "Health Ministry" when Hamas' modus operandi has been to grossly exaggerate or entirely lie about civilian deaths due to Israeli actions, especially when they put such people in harm's way which is a criminal endeavour. Secondly, despite the lies of anti-Israel activists, it remains that an embargo was only applied after Hamas came to power, when they defeated the Palestinian Authority in a short war and commenced to attack Israel. Prior to that point, there was a trade and access agreement with the Palestinian Authority for the entry of Gazans into Israel. The actions of Hamas tie with the restrictions, and furthermore, Egypt is similarly reluctant to allow any transit through its borders.

Perhaps the most challenging thing you stated was that you had disagreed with other Jewish people who opined that the anti-Israel protests in Central London are in favour of violence, and Mr Schneider made out that this was an appalling libel. While it is right of you to point out that we cannot tar all of the many thousands of protestors with the same brush, there has been genuine alarm at the thrust of these protests as signifying a significant threat to Britain's Jewish community and even for the broader populace—this is a departure from prior occasions which were vociferous to say the least—the only sign of moderation being few Hamas flags since the organisation is banned. There is a perhaps understandable

desire among those of us in the West to look the other way but it can at times be shocking—a minor example perhaps but when footage was shown yesterday morning of a hoard of anti-Israel protestors in Russia on the GB News show 'Breakfast with Eamon and Isabel,' Isabel Webster went on to say what would they want to do if they found Israelis coming off a flight from Tel Aviv, with a tone of astonishment! This is in the aftermath of suppressed terrorist attack and terror threats in the UK associated with Hamas, where it has been widely reported that people have been marching up and down Central London, calling for Jihad in the territories, to remind Jews of Khaybar where Mohammad's forces famously massacred a Jewish Arabian town, holding bloodied babies redolent of the child-murderer blood libel, and for chanting "from the rivers to the sea" which has overt annihilationist connotations (excused as seeking a one-state solution when the rest of the Middle-East is Judenrein. While it is likely that many protestors did not chant these things, many did, and we see much of it coming from Muslim attendees where negative sentiment toward Jewish people is now a far more prevalent sentiment even in the aftermath of a great atrocity—or I contend more appropriately *because of*. Furthermore, many commentators have stated that the police are too afraid to intervene in a significant manner due to the risks of violence escalating. Then the ripping or defiling of the posters of kidnapped Israeli children which has become a trend on Tiktok—how often are we going to say "oh they are useful idiots, the misinformed, etc. etc. when even you would have witnessed the supposedly moderate silver-tongued MP, Khalid Mahmoud, peddling conspiracism on the Camila Tominey show just before your appearance, when repeatedly bringing up that Netanyahu/Israel is also responsible for the October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre given it took six hours for the IDF to respond.\*\* You would of course be aware that anti-Semitic violence in the Middle East did not emerge during what I prefer to call the Islamo-Jewish conflict (it is abundantly clear that the war with Israel is on religious grounds where al Quds/the Temple

Mount has always been the flashpoint for anti-Jewish violence, whilst the very ancient Jewish populaces were driven out of almost the entirety of the Middle East) and that the celebrations and protests emerged almost immediately, before Israel made sustained efforts at significant reprisals.

We call them “pro-Palestinian” protests but it might also be asked where is the criticism of Hamas even for their widely accepted record of putting Arab-Palestinians in harm’s way? Where are the notable displays of support for a somewhat more moderate Fatah/Palestinian Authority? I live in Ireland and after the IRA conducted an atrocity in 1993, a movement developed which put pressure on the IRA to [stop its violence](#) when a bomb attack killed a British child—contrast that with the significance of the bestial pogrom that transpired on October 7<sup>th</sup> and the lack of criticism of Hamas, whilst reinforcing its narratives on supposedly inhuman Israeli reprisals, can hardly be over-estimated. It also points to a deeper issue—that such anti-Israel activists are not terribly upset by the most grotesque anti-Semitic violence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It cannot be for nothing that anti-Israel activism has defended and shielded Hamas from criticism despite its dreadful record as being the most depraved terror group in the region since the 1990s when it managed to de-rail the Oslo peace process with a succession of suicide bombings, including those targeting children on buses, and was the most prolific terror group during the Second Intifada, particularly with regard to suicide bombings. The reality is that, allied with the extremely popular BDS movement which advocates for an end to Israel’s existence, Western anti-Israel activism is annihilationist in its ambitions and displays a tolerance and distinctive apologism for violence even when it is overtly anti-Semitic. It is surely of great significance such people are now so comfortable as to display the true nature of their movement where there is a greater cultural tolerance for overt anti-Semitism even if some (only some) of them still manage to

utter mealy mouthed criticism for Hamas' atrocities when challenged with some choosing to state that they "condemn all terrorism" when they would sooner describe Hamas as part of the Resistance and Israel's response as 'terrorism'. The alarm of the Jewish community is also allied with a substantial increase in anti-Semitic hate incidents and when that it allied with flagrant displays on the streets, which the police are largely tolerating. The acts of prayer at key British sites demonstrating a naked sectarianism akin to the open acts of prayer – a gesture of Islamist supremacism as seen on the streets of Muslim enclaves in Paris. These defiant displays of British law are only likely to further embolden such people. It is the case that a broader look at context demonstrates that almost all of the attendees at these protests are guilty of not just tolerating but accepting and even endorsing these indefensible acts by virtue of their very presence.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Harris

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\* Title is a quote from *Smith: The Story of a Pickpocket*, by Leon Garfield.

\*\* MP Khalid Mahmood, reputedly the longest serving Muslim Member of Parliament with a significant position and media profile in Britain, on GB News' 29 October [Camila Tominey Show](#) (see almost 35 minutes into the video), peddles October 7<sup>th</sup> conspiracy theory when twice bringing up his claim that PM Netanyahu/Israel is also responsible for the October 7th massacre, given it took a significant period for the IDF to respond. He was clearly suggesting that it is correct to place a broadly similar amount of blame on Israel as with Hamas which suggests he believed they intentionally let the massacre happen. However, Israel was [preoccupied](#) with violence in the West Bank/Judea and Samaria, and was duped by a seeming desire to cooperate economically which also convinced allies like the

US where Hamas was even mocked on Palestinian Street for not engaging in confrontations. It is with justification that such stances are seen as on the spectrum of October 7<sup>th</sup> denialism.