

The Age of Political Expediency

Political expediency incites antisemitism on campus and beyond
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President Joe Biden

REUTERS/Evelyn Hockstei

When recently discussing rising antisemitism with a liberal friend of mine, I was shocked when he stated that Jews should support Joe Biden because he and the Democrats stand against all forms of prejudice and are the only true friends of Israel in American government.

I stared at him in disbelief before stating the obvious – that it is the progressive left, working in conjunction with Islamists and terror advocates, which is primarily responsible for the violent antisemitic riots currently sweeping the nation, polluting college campuses, and threatening Jews where they work and live. When he argued that campus violence stems from a small, vocal minority and that conservatives pose a greater threat, I cited reliable surveys, headlines, and law enforcement statistics showing the ridiculousness of his claims.

And Mr. Biden's speech condemning antisemitism on Yom HaShoah last month did little to assuage American Jewish fears because he conspicuously avoided identifying the instigators of the current wave of anti-Jewish violence, who are predominantly from his party's progressive and identity-based constituencies.

My friend refused to accept the obvious because many Jews remain loyal Democrats despite the party's abandonment of Israel. He opined that progressivism must truly reflect Jewish values because so many Jews continue to support liberal candidates, programs, and policies. As a Christian gentile, he certainly does not know what constitutes Jewish values; but then again, neither do secular Jews who enable progressive antisemitism through silence, acquiescence, ignorance, or self-abnegation.

Though quick to denounce Republicans as racists, my friend and his fellow travelers ignore their party's embrace of anti-Israel and antisemitic zealots. Sure, Biden finally condemned anti-Jewish protests on college campuses, but he failed to mention that the provocateurs are mainly progressives and identity community activists (and that the "protests" are actually riots), because doing so would alienate his party's anti-Israel voting bloc.

Biden and the brownshirts

Biden was forced to speak out because Jew-hatred is finally making headlines in the mainstream media and because Congressional Republicans have spearheaded hearings on antisemitism – despite misdirection and ridicule from radical Democrats.

Biden's delayed acknowledgment of campus antisemitism was consistent with his ongoing failure to identify the woke brownshirts who are attacking Jews with Nazi-like fervor. He has also failed to rebuke fellow Democrats, including the

“Squad” and other radicals, for (a) validating Hamas, contextualizing terrorism, or downplaying Israel’s right to self-defense, (b) mischaracterizing anti-Israel campus riots as peaceful demonstrations, or (c) promoting the canard that the war against Hamas constitutes genocide.

In seeking to project righteous indignation about antisemitism without identifying its perpetrators, Mr. Biden attempted to strike an untenable balance between his moral obligation as president to oppose bigotry and his party’s fear of alienating constituents who despise Israel, hate Jews, and call for the destruction of both.

Follow the money

What would the mainstream media say if Republicans were obsequiously courting white supremacist voters or welcoming Klansmen into their party?

The tale of campus Jew-hatred mirrors the descent of many Democrats into radicalism insofar as antisemitism has been accepted for so long that it now impacts campus culture the same way it has influenced party policy and doctrine. If progressive politicians can be analogized to Dr. Frankenstein, then campus antisemites are “the Monster” they created with a toxic blend of identity politics and revisionist Palestinian Arab mythology. Together with a concomitant validation of antisemitic radicals who espouse classical stereotypes and conspiracy theories, they created a perfect storm for the Jew-hatred that has become a common feature of the American college experience.

Indeed, there seems to be a nexus between political radicalism and academic antisemitism, particularly in light of recent reports that some of Biden’s largest campaign donors are also funding anti-Israel riots on college campuses. Biden’s acceptance of moneys from contributors who simultaneously fund campus extremists – who in turn support Hamas, endorse

terrorism, and call for the Jews' extermination – is inconsistent with his facile denunciation of Jew-hatred.

White supremacy does not exist on campuses

There can be no denying that antisemitism has increased dramatically as academia has turned ever leftward, and that Jewish students have been left unprotected and vulnerable. The fact is that right-wing extremism and white supremacism have no presence on American college campuses. Not even those university presidents who refused to say under oath that calling for the Jews' genocide violates their institutions' anti-harassment policies had the gall to blame college antisemitism on right-wing extremists. The takeaway from their Congressional testimony was that Jewish kids are being attacked by progressive students, faculty, and outside agitators who support terrorism and falsely portray Jews as colonial villains and foreign oppressors.

During the second round of Congressional hearings on campus antisemitism, the president of Columbia University, Minouche Shafik, appeared better prepared than her counterparts from Harvard, UPenn, and MIT had been in the initial hearings; but she seemed no more credible – particularly when testifying that she had seen no anti-Jewish protests at Columbia. This claim was effectively repudiated by Rep. Elise Stefanick (R.NY), who cited video evidence of antisemitic slogans and epithets being chanted by campus rioters.

There can be no doubt that if faculty members and campus mobs were threatening black, gay, or trans students, they would be disciplined, suspended, or expelled without due process.

The failure to confront antisemitism flows from the top down, and Mr. Biden bears responsibility as President for its proliferation among his constituents and its diffusion to college campuses and beyond.

Democratic leaders have refused to expel antisemitic

progressives from their party for fear losing the anti-Israel vote in November.

How twisted is this? How cynical?

The mainstream media would excoriate Republicans if they were to welcome white supremacists into their ranks – and rightly so. Yet, Democrats have courted, coddled, and elected racist Jew-haters with only minimal pushback from their media enablers. Though moderate Democrats finally started speaking up – many of them did so only after viral videos evidenced the similarity between campus riots and Kristallnacht and after Congressional Republicans took the reins to assess institutional accountability.

And as an antisemitic riot outside a Manhattan exhibit honoring the terror victims of the Nova Music Festival and as vandalism at the homes of Jewish officials of the Brooklyn Museum recently attested, public hatred of Jews is not limited to exclusive universities. It is condoned and glorified in the common culture; and though Biden tweeted out condemnations, he again failed to identify the culprits.

When I presented these facts to my friend, he drew the last polemical arrow from his quiver, stating that making Israel a partisan campaign issue would sow disharmony and exacerbate antisemitism. I stared at him in disbelief for the second time during our conversation before again stating the obvious. It is Democrats who have made Israel a partisan issue and inflamed antisemitic passions by failing to expel hateful bigots from their party, demanding that Israel refrain from doing what she must to defend herself, and enabling Jew-hatred on and off campus in the name of “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.”

Political conservatives are not the ones peddling divisive identity politics and agendas that are playing out malevolently in universities and cities across North America,

where violent mobs cheer Hamas, denounce Israel, and attack Jews with near impunity.

After tacitly conceding these points, my friend argued nonetheless that anti-Jewish animus cannot be imputed to moderates in his party because they may simply have a different perspective or be ill-informed. But what constitutes differences in perspective? Liberals who criticize Israel's military action in Gaza also blame her for civilian deaths that are falsely inflated by Hamas through its "Gaza Health Ministry"; and those who demand Palestinian Arab statehood nonsensically insist that its absence is the crux of the conflict. It is not.

I retorted by inquiring why liberal Democrats rarely question the veracity of anti-Israel propaganda and usually blame Israel without first checking facts or researching history. By way of analogy, when I asked him how many people have been killed by the regime in Syria, the Houthis in Yemen, or in the ongoing Darfur conflict, his answer was a blank stare.

To accuse Israel of "disproportionality" while ignoring conflicts where genocide really does occur bespeaks ignorance or animus. But intelligent people only get one free pass to claim ignorance when they have access to accurate information. If they fail to perform due diligence before pontificating, their ignorance becomes willful; and when they take cues from loathsome propaganda and ancient stereotypes, they expose their preconceived biases.

Even the ignorant have an intellectual obligation to reevaluate core beliefs when confronted with facts contradicting their predicate assumptions. The refusal to do so suggests malicious intent, whether in smokey political backrooms or on elite college campuses where antisemitism has become mundane.

And yes, it is antisemitism.

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