

Hate has no home here – except for antisemitism

By Matthew M. Hausman

While walking to shul on a recent Shabbat morning, I passed a lawn sign that read, “Hate has no home here.” As anybody familiar with the culture wars that have divided American society in recent years knows, these signs have become a form of virtue signaling intended by some to marginalize those who deviate from a progressive worldview that, among other things, has come to promote Palestinian Arab revisionism and contempt for Israel, both masquerading as human rights advocacy. The presence on more than a few such lawns of Palestinian Arab or Hamas flags or signs falsely alleging genocide in Gaza suggests that for many a corollary to the slogan might read: “...except for antisemitism.”



Since Donald Trump's reelection, many of these signs have been taken down, perhaps by those who had displayed them to avoid cancellation by progressive neighbors – many of whom reject traditional values and denigrate Israel. Democrats have

strained to downplay such characterizations, but the failure to expel antisemites from their party suggests ignorance, acquiescence to bigotry, and moral cowardice. Though Trump's victory and the Republican sweep of Congress signaled the rejection of radical ideology by moderates and conservatives, the left has doubled down on its divisive rhetoric.

This sad state of affairs is the legacy of Barack Obama and his campaign to fundamentally reshape American society, during which antisemitism became a social and political fixture in a way reminiscent of nineteenth century Europe or the interregnum between the First and Second World Wars.

This trend is reflected today by (a) a nearly four-hundred percent increase in antisemitism since October 2023, (b) ubiquitous anti-Israel and anti-Jewish agitation on college campuses across the country, (c) the normalization of classical antisemitic tropes and stereotypes in academia, the news media, and progressive politics, and (d) institutional tolerance for antisemitic radicals within the Democratic Party.

It is also reflected by Progressives' indifference to the torture, abuse, and degradation of Israeli hostages by Hamas, including the public spectacles before some were released.

The Progressives' embrace of Hamas after October 7th demonstrated the prevalence of Jew-hatred to those who were willfully ignorant beforehand, but who could no longer overlook it as a political force on their side of the aisle. Though Progressive antisemitism was finally acknowledged by many liberals, some rationalized it as a response to alleged Israeli abuses, or justified it based on traditional conspiracy theories asserting disproportionate Jewish power and influence. Still others felt compelled to contextualize it, as if false syllogisms could explain away the world's oldest hatred.

Such views became increasingly acceptable under Barack Obama, who espoused the theory of "linkage" which holds that instability throughout the Mideast is caused by Israel's so-called "occupation" of "Palestinian" lands and "displacement" of Palestinian Arabs. Though Biden did not use the term officially, his foreign policy was influenced by the same ideologies employed under Obama, which ignored *facts* that

disproved the myth, e.g., the fact that Jews are historically indigenous to their homeland, the fact that Arab citizens in Israel have full and equal rights, and that Israeli “settlements” are neither illegal nor illegitimate under international law – notwithstanding the plethora of anti-Israel resolutions by the UN.

The discrepancy between historical fact and revisionist fiction exposes “linkage” and similar myths as permutations of age-old conspiracy theories asserting that Jews wield disproportionate global power and influence. These canards have been used for generations to blame Jews for everything from deicide, blood libel, pestilence, famine, and plague, to fascism, communism, economic depressions, and world wars – and to justify their persecution and genocide

Given the absence of evidence suggesting that Israel causes international instability, it is easy to recognize the antisemitic foundations of linkage and similar myths. Blaming Israel for conflicts that arose with the spread of Islam, for example, is conceptually similar to accusing Jews of having the power to manipulate governments, economies, and global institutions. Such myths echo the malevolent themes found in the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion,” the fraudulent antisemitic text produced in imperial Russia purporting to expose a Jewish plot for world domination.

The establishment of modern Israel did not give rise to Islamic supremacism, ethnic frictions in the Arab-Muslim world, religious conflict between Shiite and Sunni Muslims or the apocalyptic eschatology of the Iranian mullahs. Indeed, these are better explained by ancient tribal animosities, extremist tendencies within Islam, and the Quranic imperative to conquer and subjugate non-Muslims through jihad.

Just as classical conspiracy theories accuse Jews of exercising power beyond their numbers, so too the theory of linkage blames Israel for situations well beyond her control

(and beyond all logic). And yet, the myth persists – particularly among those who demand the creation of a Palestinian Arab state through a second partition of the Jewish homeland – as if creating a state that never existed on land that is historically Jewish could somehow temper radical Islam, bring peace to Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon, or mollify apocalyptic mullahs intent on perpetrating another Holocaust as part of their end of days scenario.

The reason the myth continues despite its inherent illogic is its foundation on the same detestable imagery that has fueled antisemitism through the ages, whether based on religious, ethnic, racial, or political grounds. And since the beginning of the current war with Hamas, the Progressive Left has harnessed that imagery to foment Jew-hatred at levels not seen since the Holocaust.

The linkage myth today informs antisemitism by implicitly portraying Israel and by extension all Jews as instigators of global unrest and holding them responsible for arousing hatred against themselves, just as it blames Israel for regional conflicts she has nothing to do with. Promoters of the doctrine seem to accept antisemitism as a natural response to putative Jewish power and influence – often rebranding it “anti-Zionism” to depict it as political commentary instead of bigotry and deflecting accusations of bias by embracing progressive Jews who also reject Israel and Jewish tradition.

But endorsing leftist, pro-Palestinian Jewish groups or wealthy elites who fund anti-Israel candidates and organizations neither negates antisemitism nor legitimizes hatred of Israel as political speech, particularly when ancient stereotypes are applied to Israel and blood libels are repackaged as false claims of genocide by Jew against Arab. Indeed, some of the worst antagonists throughout Jewish history have been apostates who repudiated their own people in favor of their oppressors.

History is full of Jews who turned against their own, including the Hellenizers of the Hannukah story; Catholic converts like Johannes Pfefferkorn, Nicholas Donin, and Pablo Christiani, who assisted the Church in persecuting Jews in medieval Europe; Karl Marx, who portrayed Jews as vile worshippers of money; kapos who brutalized their own people in concentration camps; and radical progressives who demonize Israel and denigrate Jewish tradition today.

Those who claim they are not antisemitic because they associate with Jews who disparage Israel and Jewish tradition are no different from racists who claim they are not prejudiced because they have personal relationships with Black Americans they condescendingly treat as inferior. Such bigots are merely pursuing relationships that confirm their own innate biases.

Leftists are not absolved of their antisemitism by embracing Jewish progressives who deny the historical legitimacy of their people or falsely portray Israel as colonial and Jews as strangers to their homeland. Neither are those who post banal lawn signs purporting to condemn all forms of hatred – while simultaneously celebrating Hamas, accusing Israel of blood libel, or espousing the same malignant views used to justify anti-Jewish persecution since time immemorial.

If the last presidential election showed anything, it's that voters were tired of the extremism and hypocrisy that have pervaded politics, government, and common culture since the Obama years. Essentially, the establishment was rebuked for tolerating extremist policies dismissed by the electoral majority, such as divesting parents of authority over their children's education, promoting "gender care" that includes irreversible surgical procedures on minors, championing militant enemies of western society, and throwing moral support to terrorists who seek to destroy Israel and exterminate her people.

Voters are free to disagree about Trump's character, but his unprecedented political comeback was a feat reflecting not only his base's adoration, but the general electorate's repudiation of radical policies they have come to associate with the Democrats. One does not have to like him to understand that for many he represented an alternative to cultural extremism, the promise of a return to traditional values, and the repudiation of leftist hatred of Israel.

Though many American Jews voted for Kamala Harris, in contrast, most Israelis perceived Trump as a corrective to Obama, Biden, and Harris, whose policies appeased Islamist regimes, enabled terrorism, and undermined Israel's safety and security. This view was expressed without political slant during a recent trip to Israel with my wife, when a Ben Gurion Airport employee examined our US passports and said, "thank you America for President Trump."

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