

Political Exploitation of the Pittsburgh Synagogue Massacre

by Matthew M. Hausman



On Shabbat Vayeira, an anti-Semitic madman attacked a synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, killing eleven people and injuring several others. Those who turned on their televisions and computers that Saturday night were greeted with shock and horror. The killer had railed online about Jewish influence in the White House before stating he was “going in.” President Trump swiftly condemned the shooting and denounced the scourge of anti-Semitism, and his remarks sounded cogent and sincere. Nevertheless, Democratic politicians within hours began to heap blame on Trump, despite the killer’s posted statements of disdain for him because he “is surrounded by k*kes...” In somewhat cryptic fashion, Joe Biden seemed to impute responsibility to Trump by stating that “words matter” and “silence is complicity,” while Barack Obama and others swiftly usurped the tragedy to blame “gun violence” and implicitly

smear Republicans before the midterm elections.

The result since then has been a slanted discussion of anti-Semitism that ignores progressive complicity in the rising tide.

There is plenty of blame to go around for the recent upsurge in anti-Semitism, but singling out Trump, Republicans, and conservatives is revisionist and absurd. Yes, there has been an increase in American anti-Semitism over the last ten years, but that surge began under former President Obama and has continued unabated. As noted in these pages and elsewhere, Obama's White House years were marked by more than seven-thousand anti-Semitic incidents and hate-crimes, including violent threats, vandalism, and physical assaults from 2009 to 2015. Did Obama cause these incidents? No, but he failed to forcefully condemn the anti-Semitism – often expressed as anti-Zionism or BDS activism – within his progressive base. Moreover, he did nothing about the epidemic of leftist Jew-hatred on American college campuses, and was evasive about past relationships with Jeremiah Wright and Louis Farrakhan. His failure to censure anti-Jewish bigotry on the left, and his propensity for disparaging Israel and minimizing the Jews' ancestral connection to their ancient homeland, created an environment where political anti-Semitism flourished for eight years...

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