

## Antisemitism and the Campus Left

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The campus war against Israel and Jews is indicative of the devolution of higher education, where scholarship has been degraded by bias on the part of a Leftist professoriate. The professoriate's political agenda enlists Israel as the new villain in the name of social justice. University leaders have been feckless in moderating this new antisemitism. Either they 1) are unaware of fields of study that have been hijacked by academic frauds and morally incoherent scholars, or 2) sympathize and have become complicit in the production of pseudo-scholarship, academic agitprop, and disingenuous learning experiences. The result has produced a one-sided, biased approach to understanding the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

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The university's war against Israel has been pervasive and intensifying, promulgated by the active participation both of leftist faculty and radical Muslim student groups on campuses where the long-suffering Palestinians have replaced South African blacks as the left's favorite victim group—whose behavior, however violent and politically irrational, is excused as justifiable in a 63-year-old campaign to demand that Israel grant the Arabs self-determination and social justice.

The other, and related, trend of anti-Israelism on campuses—and, indeed, off campuses as well—is that derision of Zionism and the denunciation of Israel has become a convenient way for antisemites to mask their true prejudice against Jews by claiming that their problem is only with the policies of Israel, not with Jews themselves. While classic antisemitism is no longer considered acceptable in most Westernized societies, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust, Jew-haters (and some liberal, Israel-hating Jews themselves) have found a convenient and effective way to mask their true feelings: they single out the world's only Jewish state for condemnation and hold it to a standard higher than they do for any other nation, not coincidentally including those Arab states and the Palestinians themselves, against whom Israel is perpetually and unfairly compared in action, self-defense, and self-determination.

Thus, on campuses today Israel is regularly, though falsely, condemned for being created “illegally”—through the “theft” of Palestinian lands and property—and therefore has no “right to exist.” The government

is accused of a “brutal,” illegal “occupation” of Palestinian lands, especially Gaza and the West Bank, of being a “colonial settler state,” a Zionist “regime,” a land-hungry nation building an “apartheid wall” as a further land grab, a usurper of property that was lived on and owned by a Palestinian “people” “from time immemorial.” Zionism is regularly equated with Nazism, and the perceived offenses of Israel’s government and military are likened to Nazi crimes against humanity; the conceit is that Israel is creating a “Holocaust on the Holy Land” through “ethnic cleansing,” ongoing “genocide” of Arabs, and the elimination of the rights of an innocent, “indigenous people” who merely seek self-determination and the peaceful creation of a Palestinian homeland. The very existence of the country is described as being the “greatest threat to world peace,” the core cause of Muslim anger toward the West, the root of the Palestinians’ suffering; the nation has even been referred to publicly as a “shitty little country” by the French ambassador to Britain.

These beliefs permeate the vocabulary of Israel-hatred on campus, and are dangerous and troubling not merely because they vilify the Middle East’s only democracy and America’s principal ally in that region; they are also of concern because they are based on misrepresentations of history; exaggerate current conditions in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza; and, most seriously, put forward a complete inversion of truth that enables Israel-haters to load cruel and destructive invective on Zionism without apology, while in reality they are promulgating vile opprobrium that frequently shows its true face as raw antisemitism.

In *The Return of Anti-Semitism*, Gabriel Schoenfeld noted how language itself has become a form of “turnspeak”; that the “. . . language in which such accusations are leveled is extravagantly hateful, drawn from the vocabulary of World War II and the Holocaust but grotesquely inverted, with the Jews portrayed as Nazis and their Arab tormentors cast in the role of helpless Jews.”<sup>1</sup>

#### THE NEW ACADEMIC FACE OF THE WORLD’S OLDEST HATRED

The unending streams of venom regularly hurled at Israel by academics, of course, are rarely positioned as anything other than simple criticism of a particular nation for a set of particular complaints; there is never any admission or acknowledgement on the part of Israel’s many world-wide campus critics that anything other than a concern for the Palestinian cause and a dislike of Israel’s current politics are at work in their relentless criti-

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1. Gabriel Schoenfeld, *The Return of Anti-Semitism* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2004).

quing of the Middle East's only democracy. In fact, when confronted with the suggestion that their excessive and compulsive demonization of Israel—along with continual attempts to hobble, weaken, or dismantle the Jewish state on behalf of social justice for Palestinians—might sometimes be seen as antisemitic in cause or intent, the academic enemies of Israel bristle with indignation and often make wild claims that the dreaded “Israel Lobby” has attempted to silence them and stifle critical discussion about Israeli/Palestinian politics.

But, in fact, it has thankfully become more difficult for actual antisemites on campus to inoculate themselves with this defense by merely contending that they are not self-professed antisemites, but simply wish to rant against Israel's existence based on a higher moral calling to protect the self-determination of Palestinians. For many actual antisemites, as well as those who merely loathe Israel, deranged enmity toward the Jewish state has become a covert, and surrogate, form of antisemitism itself, a fact that was addressed in a 2005 “working definition of antisemitism” produced by the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), which itself had evolved from a comprehensive study of antisemitism in the EU it had completed in the previous year.

The term “working definition” was significant, not only because it affirmed the importance of guarding against the classic strains of antisemitic sentiment, language, and action, but also because it created an explicit equivalence between the hatred and demonization of Israel and Zionism and a yet another stream of Jew-hatred, what is now sometimes called the “new antisemitism.”

So while the EUMC working definition acknowledged the older manifestations of Jew-hatred such as “Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism . . . directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities,”<sup>2</sup> it also provided a more comprehensive view of antisemitic inclinations, deeply relevant to the current discussion, when it went on to suggest that “such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity,” or “[m]aking . . . allegations about . . . the power of Jews as collective—such as . . . the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions [as is often brought up in accusations of a Israel Lobby working behind the scenes, for example].”<sup>3</sup>

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2. The European Forum on Antisemitism, “Working Definition of Antisemitism,” 2008, <http://www.european-forum-on-antisemitism.org/working-definition-of-antisemitism/english/?fontsize=0>.

3. Schoenfeld, *The Return*.

Even more relevant was the EUMC language, which linked anti-Israel ideology and radicalism with antisemitism, including examples of the specific types of speech and behavior that animates the anti-Israel ideology of academia. Specifically, that would include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.<sup>4</sup>

A look at the prevailing ideologies on campuses will reveal that these precise tropes and biases against Israel and Jews currently define the academic left, and are manifested in virulent teaching, writing, activism, scholarship, and other academic activities, purportedly in pursuit of social justice for the long-suffering, perennially victimized Palestinians.

Why the animus against democratic Israel in academe as the nation defends itself from an unending campaign of aggression from Arab countries? One trend that has permeated the university—and that has had a subsequent influence on the way Israel is perceived—was the coming of two watchwords of higher education: *diversity* and *multiculturalism*. Diversity has seen administrations bending over backward to accommodate the sensitivities of minorities and perceived victims of the majority culture—usually at the expense of fairness and rationality. Multiculturalism has brought with it a type of moral relativism in which every country or victim group is equal, regardless of what vagaries, weaknesses, or fundamental evil may underpin its social structure.

Thus, the decades-old emphasis on bringing multiculturalism to campuses has meant that faculty as well as students have been seeped in an ideology that refuses to demarcate any differences between a democratic state struggling to protect itself (such as Israel) and aggressive, genocidal foes who wish to destroy it with their unending assaults (such as Hamas and Hezbollah). For the multiculturalist left, the moral strengths of the two parties are equivalent, even though the jihadist foes of Israel, for example, have

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4. Schoenfeld, *The Return*.

waged an unending struggle with the stated aim of obliterating the Jewish state through the murder of Jews.

Thus, this inclination to worship multiculturalism forces liberals to make excuses for those cultures that have obvious, often irredeemable, moral defects, such as the Islamist foes who currently threaten Israel and the West. “The believer cannot accept the truth about Islamism or much of Islam,” observed Jamie Glasov in his recent book, *United in Hate: The Left’s Romance with Tyranny and Terror*, “because he would then have to concede that not all cultures are equal, and that some cultures (e.g., America’s, with its striving for equality) are superior to others (e.g., Islam’s structure of gender apartheid). For the believer to retain his sense of purpose and to avoid the collapse of his identity and community, such thoughts must be suppressed at all cost.” One way these truths are “suppressed,” says Glasov, is in those instances when liberals make their seemingly irrational judgments about the essential worth of clearly defective cultures—the construction of a curious double standard when looking at cultures other than their own Western models.<sup>5</sup>

The visceral hatred by the left toward their favorite hobgoblins, imperialist America and its codependent oppressor, Israel, finds similar expression from other left-leaning, Israel-loathing professors, such as University of Michigan’s Juan Cole, whose regular rants in his blog, *Informed Comment*, take swipes at Israeli and American defense, while simultaneously excusing Arab complicity in violence or terror. In fact, according to Cole, it is the militancy of the West that causes the endemic problems in the Middle East, and marks America guilty for its moral and financial support of Israel. “When Ariel Sharon sends American-made helicopter gunships and F-16s to fire missiles into civilian residences or crowds in streets,” Cole wrote in 2004, “as he has done more than once, then he makes the United States complicit in his war crimes and makes the United States hated among friends of the Palestinians. And this aggression and disregard of Arab life on the part of the proto-fascist Israeli right has gotten more than one American killed, including American soldiers.”<sup>6</sup> There is, of course, no mention in Cole’s fantasies about why American or Israeli soldiers would be involved in military actions in the first place, affirming the view that it is Western imperialism and oppression that disrupt and embroil the otherwise taciturn political state of the Arab world.

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5. Jamie Glasov, *United in Hate: The Left’s Romance with Tyranny and Terror* (Los Angeles: WND Books, 2009).

6. Juan Cole, “Have Arabs or Muslims Always Hated Jews?” *Informed Comment*, December 14, 2004, <http://www.juancole.com/2004/12/have-arabs-or-muslims-always-hated.html>.

Violence on the part of the oppressed is accepted by liberals because it is deemed to be the fault of the strong nations whose subjugation of those defenseless people is the cause of their violent resistance. In fact, when leftist professors, such as Columbia University's Joseph Massad, apologize for Palestinian terror, they justify it by characterizing the very existence of Israel as being morally defective, based, in their view, on its inherent racist and imperialist nature—one of EUMC's definitions of antisemitism. For Massad in particular, nations that are racist and imperialistic cannot even justify their own self-defense, while the victims of such oppressive regimes are free to "resist," based on the left's notion of universal human rights—but especially for the weak. "What the Palestinians ultimately insist on is that Israel must be taught that it does not have the right to defend its racial supremacy," Massad wrote during the 2009 Israeli defensive incursions into Gaza, "and that the Palestinians have the right to defend their universal humanity against Israel's racist oppression."<sup>7</sup>

Academics' charge of Israel as racist also enables liberals to excuse the moral transgressions of the oppressed, and, as an extension of that thinking, to single out Israel and America for particular and harsh scrutiny owing to their perceived "institutionalized" racism and greater relative power. The self-righteousness the left feels in pointing out Zionism's essential defect of being a racist ideology insulates it from having to also reflect on Arab transgressions, since, as Ruth Wisse has pointed out in *If I Am Not for Myself: The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews*, liberals can excuse their own betrayal of Israel by holding it fully responsible for the very hatreds it inspires. "Ascribing to Israel the blame for its predicament, democratic countries can pursue their self-interest free of any lingering moral scruple," Wisse said. "Israel is examined for its every moral failing to justify policies of disengagement, while the moral failings of Arab countries are considered no one's business but their own, so that their blatant abuses of human rights should not get in the way of realpolitick."<sup>8</sup>

The charge of racism against Israel, of course, has been increasingly uttered by the Jewish state's enemies, particularly after the 1975 United Nations' invidious proclamation that "Zionism is racism," thereby branding the very ideological existence of Israel as a racist act. "This issue [of Israel] boils down to racism," Julian Perez, a member of Yale University's Students for Justice in Palestine wrote in the *Yale Daily News*, one of many examples of this widely held view of Israel's essential racist ideology. "An

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7. Joseph Massad, "Israel's Right To Defend Itself," The Electronic Intifada, January 20, 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article10221.shtml>.

8. Ruth Wisse, *If I Am Not for Myself: The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).

entire indigenous population is being denied their human rights by a colonial state that is based on religion and ethnicity,” he concluded, promulgating the myth that Palestinian Arabs were indigenous to the region that became Israel, and that the existence of the Jewish state further denies Arabs rights they would otherwise be enjoying had Israel not existed.<sup>9</sup>

Of the many libels from the world community against Israel, perhaps none has gained such traction on campuses as the accusation that the Jewish state now practices apartheid, that the checkpoints, security barrier, Israeli-only roads, barricades, and other remnants of occupation are tantamount to a racist system that victimizes the indigenous Palestinians, just as South African apartheid oppressed and devalued indigenous blacks while stripping them of their civil rights. The same left-leaning activists from universities who carried the banner against the South African regime have now raised that same banner—with the same accusatory language—and superimposed on Israel that it is yet another apartheid regime oppressing Third World victims. Occasionally, the racism libel against Israel is momentarily softened, as happened when the controversial Judge Richard Goldstone (author of the *Goldstone Report on the Gaza War*, which severely rebuked Israel’s actions in Operation Cast Lead) announced in a November 2011 op-ed in *The New York Times* that “In Israel, there is no apartheid.” But the apartheid charge still resonates effectively on campuses and is used as a theme for continuing to demonize Israel and call into question the Jewish state’s moral standing in the community of nations.

This moral self-righteousness about Israeli racism from the left has trickled down to campuses where the same language is frequently heard as part of student-run protests, divestment campaigns, class for boycotts, and Israel-bashing in general. Former Bard professor Joel Kovel, the anti-Zionist who advocates dismantling Israel completely through the creation of a single, binational state, was direct in his denunciation of Israel’s existential sins, including the complicity of the United States in the oppression of the Palestinians under what he too describes as an apartheid system. “The recent efforts of activists to publicize the parallels between Israel and apartheid South Africa, then, are an essential element in the one-state strategy,” Kovel told an interviewer. “The anti-Israeli-apartheid campaign is energizing forces of opposition across the world to build a powerful political movement to oppose Zionism and its lobbyists in the major capitalist/imperialist countries. This is significant, because Israel simply cannot sustain itself without the support of the capitalist/imperialist powers, the

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9. Julian Perez, “Divest Now from a Racist Government,” *Yale Daily News*, November 15, 2002, <http://www.yaledailynews.com/news/2002/nov/15/divest-now-from-a-racist-government>.

United States in particular. Its current prosperity is entirely dependent on them.”<sup>10</sup>

This kind of language in academia helps reinforce the left’s notion that the imperialism of Western nations is once again responsible for setting up racist, oppressive caste systems in developing countries, systems that have to be dismantled through protest, resistance, and divestment campaigns. It has also formed the basis of divestment petitions that become “working documents” in the strategic vilification of Israel. A January 2003 document created by New Jersey Solidarity and the Rutgers University Campaign for Divestment from Israeli Apartheid, “Acting for Human Rights, Taking a Stand for Justice,” for instance, proclaimed that “The world, and specifically the United States, can no longer be silent about the criminal Israeli regime. Conceived by colonial powers without the consent of the indigenous Palestinian people, the State of Israel has continued to pursue its institutionalized policies of racism, discrimination and oppression.” What’s more, the petition claimed, the United States, in providing continuous financial support for Israel, was directly responsible for the social injustices taking place in the occupied territories. “Unlike other countries receiving foreign aid,” the petition continued, “Israel’s aid is unencumbered with restrictions—thus, it may be used directly to promote settlements, engage in military incursions inside the occupied territories, and other acts in violation of international law.”<sup>11</sup>

The much-reviled security barrier, which Israel began building around the West Bank in 2005 as a tactic to reduce terror attacks on its citizenry (and which has been successful in reducing the frequency of those attacks by 90 percent), is, in the eyes of Israel’s critics, not a means of defense, but what is indiscriminately termed the “apartheid wall,” a type of racial fence built merely to create Palestinian “Bantustans,” which segregates Jews from Arabs, and which is, for many, emblematic of Israel’s never-ending ambition to “steal” Arab land, disrupt Palestinian life, and expand its Zionist dream to ever-broader borders. “Today in Palestine,” Humza Chowdhry, a graduate student at San Jose State University, wrote in the school’s newspaper, the *Spartan Daily*, “an apartheid wall continues to be constructed

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10. Joel Kovel, “The One-State Solution: Zionism and the Future of Israel/Palestine,” *Briarpatch*, July 20, 2007, <http://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/the-one-state-solution-zionism-and-the-future-of-israelpalestine>.

11. New Jersey Solidarity; Rutgers University Campaign for Divestment from Israeli Apartheid. *Divestment for Israeli Apartheid: Acting for Human Rights, Taking a Stand for Justice*, 2003, <http://www.rutgersdivest.org/whydivest.html>.



around the region with land grabs at every corner cutting through college campuses and dividing families.”<sup>12</sup>

Thus, the charge of apartheid is valuable to Israel’s detractors, for it both devalues the nation by accusing it of perpetuating what is to the left the greatest crime—racism—in the form of apartheid, which Israel enforces with the complicity of the United States, while simultaneously absolving Arabs of responsibility for the onslaught of terror they continue to inflict on Israel. By pointing to the weakness of the oppressed Palestinians against the superior military and economic might of Israel, the rationale that the wall was built for as a security measure is made to look ridiculous, as if Israel has nothing to fear by being surrounded by a sea of jihadist foes bent on its destruction.

Coupled with academia’s fervent desire to make campuses socially ideal settings where racial and cultural strife cease to exist is the other newly popular impulse: to inculcate students with a longing for what is called “social justice,” a nebulous term, lifted from Marxist thought, that empowers left-leaning administrators and faculty with the false ethical security derived from feeling that they are bringing positive moral and ethical precepts to campuses.

For the left, according to conservative commentator David Horowitz, social justice is “the concept of a world divided into oppressors and oppressed.”<sup>13</sup> Those seeking social justice, therefore, do so with the intention of leveling the economic, cultural, and political playing fields; they seek to reconstruct society in a way that disadvantages the powerful and the elites, and overthrows them if necessary—in order that the weak and dispossessed can acquire equal standing. In other words, the left yearns for a utopian society that does not yet exist, and is willing to reconstruct and overturn the existing status quo—often at a terrible human cost—in the pursuit of seeking so-called “justice” for those who, in their view, have been passed over or abused by history.

In the mind of the academic left, coming out of years of seeking social justice and diversity for everyone by applying low standards to all, there are no superior national behaviors; all nations are equal in value and in the court of world opinion.

Professor Bruce Thornton of California State Fresno saw an intellectual defect on the part of left-leaning academics who serve up these apolo-

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12. Humza Chowdhry, “The Holocaust of Our Era,” *Spartan Daily*, March 18, 2008, <http://spartandaily.com/2.14808/letter-to-the-editor-the-holocaust-of-our-era-1.1935770>.

13. David Horowitz, *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2004).

gies for terror on behalf of the heroic self-determination of the Palestinians, and who see homicidal attacks on Israeli civilians at cafes and on buses as being the same rational actions as the defensive actions of the Israeli government in trying to protect its populace from attack. Leftists not only equate the acts of violence from both sides; they also give greater credibility from the nihilistic violence of terror out of what Thornton called “the sentimental Third-Worldism that idealizes the non-Western ‘other,’ ” and from another troubling trend in the politics of the left, what he observed as “the juvenile romance with revolutionary violence.”<sup>14</sup>

This rationalization that violence is an acceptable, if not welcome, component of seeking social justice—that is, that the inherent “violence” of imperialism, colonialism, or capitalism will be met by the same violence as the oppressed attempt to throw off their oppressors—is exactly the style of self-defeating rationality that has proven to be an intractable part of the age’s war on terror. This trait, in which leftists flirt with a romanticized idea of insurrection and violence, seems to confirm Jamie Glazov’s thesis that the left’s current “romance with Islamism is just a logical continuation of the long leftist tradition of worshipping America’s foes . . . , with militant Islamism now viewed as a valiant form of ‘resistance’ against American imperialism and oppression.” For Glasov, sympathy for jihadists is part of an enduring ideological legacy, and “the Left clearly continues to be inspired by its undying Marxist conviction that capitalism is evil and that forces of revolution are rising to overthrow it—and must be supported.”<sup>15</sup>

Stanford University’s Joel Beinin, for instance, a self-avowed Marxist and former president of the Middle Eastern Studies Association, specifically excused Palestinian violence during the first Intifada in a piece entitled “Was the Red Flag Flying There?” “Palestinian attacks on civilians (and even armed soldiers) were widely condemned as terrorism by international opinion and media,” Beinin wrote, but terrorism was clearly the “Palestinians’ primary weapon of resistance” given the political impediment they faced—namely, the “colonialist thrust of the Zionist project,” and the complicity of hegemonic, imperialist powers in inspiring the terror wrought against them.<sup>16</sup>

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14. Bruce Thornton, “High Anxiety: How Modernity Feeds Arab Anti-Semitism,” VictorHanson.com, December 20, 2006, <http://www.victorhanson.com/articles/thornton122006PF.html>.

15. Glasov, *United in Hate*.

16. David Horowitz, “Joel Beinin: Apologist for Terrorism,” FrontPage Magazine.com, May 19, 2006, <http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=4357>.

When he did admit to Palestinian terrorism, Beinín wove a fabulous tale about relatively innocent stone-throwing on the part of restless Arab teenagers that escalated into violence and the death of civilians on both sides only after Israel's disproportionate and unreasonable response to protect its citizens from being murdered. "The typical pattern for the first several weeks of the intifada was that Palestinian civilians engaged in peaceful protest marches," Beinín wrote, attempting to make the jihadists seem Gandhi-like in their non-violent approach to social change. Beinín admits, however, that "toward the end of the protests, youths taunted and threw stones at Israeli troops . . .," causing the "soldiers [to fire] on stone-throwers and non-stone-throwers alike, rapidly escalating their responses . . ."<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Joel Kovel has seen terrorism as the logical, and excusable, end result of occupation—something for which, in his view, not only Israelis but all Jews must share in the blame. "Why have a substantial majority of Jews," he wrote in *Tikkun* magazine, "chosen to flaunt world opinion in order to rally about a state that essentially has turned its occupied lands into a huge concentration camp and driven its occupied peoples to such gruesome expedients as suicide bombing?"

Most curious has been the betrayal of Israel by some liberal Jewish academics, who, poisoned by a pathology that enables them to deflect the hatred of others by absorbing it themselves, have reacted by attacking the Jewish state, the hatred of which is unavoidably tarring them as Jews, in a prejudice they are unwilling to have directed at them. As one example, Professor Jennifer Lowenstein, director of Middle Eastern studies at the University of Wisconsin, glorified Palestinian resistance and the yearning for Arab self-determination while describing Israel as a nation that "speaks with a viper's tongue over the multiple amputee of Palestine whose head shall soon be severed from its body in the name of justice, peace and security." Then there was the late Tony Judt, of New York University, who claimed that Israel is "an oddity among nations," which no one wants to have in existence "because it is a Jewish state in which one community—Jews—is set above others, in an age when that sort of state has no place," ultimately meaning that as a Jew, Judt will have to suffer the moral scolding of the world's antisemites on behalf of Israel's sin of merely existing—something he is disinclined to do.<sup>18</sup> Echoing one of Israel-haters' current favorite slanders is Richard Falk, professor emeritus of international law and policy at Princeton University and the UN's preposterously titled "Special *rapporteur* on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories

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17. Horowitz, "Joel Beinín."

18. Tony Judt, "Israel: The Alternative," *The New York Review of Books*, October 23, 2003.

occupied since 1967,” who wondered if it was “an irresponsible overstatement to associate the treatment of Palestinians with this criminalized Nazi record of collective atrocity?” on the part of Israel, and then quickly answered his own question by saying, “I think not.”<sup>19</sup>

#### SAIDISM AND THE ACADEMIC ROOTS OF PALESTINIANISM

Were it not for Edward W. Said, the Palestinian cause may have echoed through the halls of the United Nations, and influenced diplomacy and statecraft in the Middle East and in the West, but never have captured the imagination of academe. Said, a professor of comparative literature at Columbia University, published in 1978 a provocative and highly influential book, *Orientalism*, that not only had a profound effect on the direction of Middle East studies here and abroad, but eventually provided a foundation for the intellectual aspect of Palestinianism, and inspired reverence from the left and the intellectual elite.

*Orientalism* gave expression to Said’s belief that the West’s perception of the Middle East—indeed, the way the East was understood—was the product of cultural imperialism, the tendency, in his view, of Western scholars, artists, writers, sociologists, archeologists, and others to define the East based on its presumed cultural, racial, intellectual, and political inferiority. Not only was this practice endemic in the West’s relations with the East, but it represented an insidious aspect in the study and understanding of the Orient by the Occident—that is, Orientalism was, in Said’s words, “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.” More pointedly, Said announced that no European was even capable of studying the East without superimposing his or her own cultural biases and “intellectual imperialism,” leading Said to the breathtaking thesis that “every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was . . . a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric.”<sup>20</sup>

Here, Zionism is the “construct” superimposed on the East (and the hapless Palestinians) by the imperialistic West, another form of aggressive Orientalism. The act of dispossession is itself a violent, racist act, Said asserted, based on the assumption that Western colonial settlers can create a narrative that empowers them and deprives the Eastern “other” of his property and history. Orientalism empowered non-Westerners to believe in the inherent racism and imperialism of Western scholarship and politics, and, according to Martin Kramer in his insightful book, *Ivory Towers on Sand*:

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19. Richard Falk, “Slouching Toward a Palestinian Holocaust.” *Middle East*, June 29, 2007.

20. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

*The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America*, is one of Said's lasting contributions to the intellectual climate on campuses when scholars took sides on issues affecting the Middle East. Orientalism, according to Kramer, "also enshrined an acceptable hierarchy of political commitments, with Palestine at the top, followed by the Arab nation and the Islamic world. They were the long-suffering victims of Western racism, American imperialism, and Israeli Zionism—the three legs of the orientalist [*sic*] stool."<sup>21</sup>

Once the Saidian post-colonialists could neutralize the impact of the West in its assessment of the Orient (which for Said and his disciples had come to mean specifically the Middle East), they initiated an entire intellectual enterprise that devalued any scholarship conducted by Westerners, called into question the justice of the imposition of Western culture on non-Western nations, and, in the case of Israel, denounced the creation of this European, colonial settler-state, a cultural "construct" in the midst of the passive, less powerful Muslim world. M. Shahid Alam, for instance, a professor of history at Northeastern University, regularly rants in the virulent online journal *Counterpunch* about the perfidy of Israel, echoing Said's delineation of the hegemonic, racist West imposing its cultural will on the East. "This is the language of racial superiority[,] the doctrine that believes in a hierarchy of races," Alam wrote about Israel, "where the higher races have rights and inferior races are destined for extinction or a marginal existence under the tutelage of higher races. Under the Zionist doctrine, the Jews are a higher race . . . This superiority is also empirically established: the Zionists wanted to take Palestine from the Palestinians and they made it a fact."<sup>22</sup>

Said's charge of Orientalism also stripped Western scholars of their standing in Middle Eastern studies, discrediting them and their potential contribution to scholarly inquiry because of their innate biases and Orientalist orientation. If Western academics were no longer able to conduct scholarship about the Orient that was authentic and valid, who, then, could? The answer, of course, was clear: Middle Easterners and Arab-Americans, who, after the publication of *Orientalism*, began to fill the academic slots in departments of Middle Eastern studies in increasing numbers in a type of academic affirmative action program.

The language of the "scholarship" of these post-colonial academics is often harsh, and, when involving Israel, sometimes borders on the kind of

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21. Martin Kramer, *Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2001).

22. M. Shahid Alam, "How to Be a Good Victim," *Counterpunch*, August 27-28, 2005, <http://www.counterpunch.org/2005/08/27/how-to-be-a-good-victim>.

raw, antisemitic ranting that is constant in the state-controlled media of the Arab world. As an example, Hamid Dabashi, Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia, ensconced in the same department where Said himself once sat, wrote a psychobabble-filled narrative during a visit to Israel. Published in *Al-Ahram Weekly*, it dehumanizes the entire Jewish state in language that drips with repulsive images and hatred:

What they call “Israel” is no mere military state. A subsumed militarism, a systemic mendacity with an ingrained violence constitutional to the very fusion of its fabric, has penetrated the deepest corners of what these people have to call their “soul” . . . Half a century of systematic maiming and murdering of another people has left its deep marks on the faces of these people . . . There is . . . a vulgarity of character that is bone-deep and structural to the skeletal vertebrae of its culture. No people can perpetrate what these people and their parents and grandparents have perpetrated on Palestinians and remain immune to the cruelty of their own deeds.<sup>23</sup>

This lurid, hateful language used in the critiquing of Israel, given academic respectability by an Ivy League professor, has also begun to show itself in the attitudes and language of students—who themselves regularly engage in half-truths, counter-historical appraisals of Middle Eastern history, and emotional outbursts bordering on what, in a different context, might well be considered antisemitic hate speech.

CHOMSKY, FINKELSTEIN, AND SOME OF ISRAEL’S OTHER  
ACADEMIC DETRACTORS

In the morally incoherent pantheon of the academic defamers of Israel, perhaps no single individual has emerged as the paradigmatic libeler, the most vitriolic and widely followed character in an inglorious retinue as Norman Finkelstein, late of DePaul University. Finkelstein has loudly and notoriously pronounced his extreme views on the Middle East, not to mention his loathing of what he has called the Holocaust “industry,” something he has called an “outright extortion racket”; in fact, he blames Jews themselves for antisemitism. Writing in *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*, his off-handed, sardonic response to Harvard professor Alan Dershowitz’s book, *Chutzpah*, Finkelstein accused Jewish leadership, a group he defines as a “repellent gang of plutocrats, hoodlums,

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23. Hamid Dabashi, “For a Fistful of Dust: A Passage to Palestine,” *Al-Ahram Weekly*, September 23-29, 2004, <http://weekly.ahram.org/2004/709/cu12.htm>.

and hucksters,” of creating a “combination of economic and political power” from which “has sprung, unsurprisingly, a mindset of Jewish superiority.” He has called Nobel Prize winner Eli Wiesel, Holocaust survivor and author of *Night*, a “clown.” What is more, he continued, echoing the familiar refrain that it Jews themselves who inspire antisemitism, “from this lethal brew of formidable power, chauvinistic arrogance, feigned (or imagined) victimhood, and Holocaust-immunity to criticism has sprung a terrifying recklessness and ruthlessness on the part of American Jewish elites. Alongside Israel, they are the main fomenters of antisemitism in the world today.”<sup>24</sup>

Finkelstein, who was denied tenure at DePaul, has now also adopted the position that this professional setback is the direct result of being bold enough to speak up against Zionism and Israel, and he has been punished into silence accordingly. Despite this analysis of why his professional academic career has stalled, Finkelstein has now become what Washington University professor Edward Alexander called “the dream-Jew of the world’s anti-Semites,”<sup>25</sup> and regularly visits college campuses nationwide to speak at rallies, anti-Israel events, and symposia and conferences where anti-Israel, anti-American biases infect scholarship and undermine the credibility of the events. In fact, suggested StandWithUs’s Roz Rothstein, Finkelstein’s “true occupation is as a member of a traveling circus, a freak show of anti-Semites who promote anti-Israel propaganda from campus to campus.”<sup>26</sup>

While Finkelstein was busy demonizing Israel and America at his many campus appearances as a lecturer, he coddled homicidal Palestinians and defended terrorists. In 2009, when Israel was pounding Hamas strongholds to weaken the terrorist underbelly and minimize the likelihood of continuing rocket attacks into southern Israeli towns, Finkelstein, with apologetics matching those of Harvard University’s Sara Roy, wildly proclaimed it was Hamas, not Israel, who had kept the truce and was softening its rhetoric, and it was Hamas, not Israel, who actually wanted peace. Hamas has pure political intentions and passively yearns for truces and safe borders, according to Mr. Finkelstein, while the invidious state of Israel, fearing moderate Arab foes who would force it into peace, is obdurate, con-

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24. Norman Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 85.

25. Edward Alexander, “Academics Against Israel: Martin Jay Explains How Jews Cause Anti-Semitism,” *Ariel Center for Policy Research.org*, December 23, 2009, <http://www.acpr.org.il/ENGLISH-NATIV/issue1/alexander-1.htm>.

26. Roz Rothstein, “Beware the Finkelstein Syndrome.” *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, June 8, 2006: [http://www.jewishjournal.com/opinion/article/beware\\_the\\_finkelstein\\_syndrome\\_20060609/](http://www.jewishjournal.com/opinion/article/beware_the_finkelstein_syndrome_20060609/).

niving, and bellicose. In fact, Finkelstein suggested, Israel was collectively going mad, while everyone else in the rational world yearned for Middle Eastern peace:

I think Israel, as a number of commentators pointed out, is becoming an insane state. And we have to be honest about that. While the rest of the world wants peace, Europe wants peace, the US wants peace, but this state wants war, war and war. In the first week of the massacres, there were reports in the Israeli press that Israel did not want to put all its ground forces in Gaza because it was preparing attacks on Iran. Then there were reports it was planning attacks on Lebanon. It is a lunatic state.<sup>27</sup>

If Finkelstein lives in an academic netherworld of political fantasies, conspiracies, and intellectually imbecilic distortions of history and fact, his spiritual mentor, MIT professor emeritus of linguistics Noam Chomsky, has inhabited a similar ideological sphere, but has become an even more widely known, eagerly followed creature of the Israel-hating, America-hating, antisemitic left. Chomsky's vituperation against America has been a defining theme in his intellectual jihad, but an obsessive, apoplectic hatred for Israel has more completely dominated his screeds and spurious scholarship. In all of his work, suggested Paul Bogdanor, an essayist who has extensively examined Chomsky's "scholarly" output, "one theme is constant: his portrayal of Israel as the devil state in the Middle East, a malevolent institutional psychopath whose only redeeming feature is the readiness of its own left-wing intelligentsia to expose its uniquely horrifying depravity."<sup>28</sup>

And Israeli Jews are not solely responsible for the crimes of the Jewish state; American Jews, too, in Chomsky's opinion, share culpability. "In the American Jewish community," he stated, "there is little willingness to face the fact that the Palestinian Arabs have suffered a monstrous historical injustice, whatever one may think of the competing claims. Until this is recognized, discussion of the Middle East crisis cannot even begin."<sup>29</sup> Indicting American Jews for the offenses he perceives as having been perpetrated by Israel is another way in which Chomsky allows his rabid anti-Zionism to engulf Diaspora Jews as well, making them morally responsible

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27. Selcuk Gultasli, "Norman Finkelstein: Israel Is Committing a Holocaust in Gaza," *Today's Zaman*, January 19, 2009, <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=164483>.

28. Paul Bogdanor, "The Devil State: Chomsky's War Against Israel," PaulBogdanor.com, December 17, 2009, <http://www.paulbogdanor.com/chomsky/bogdanor.pdf>.

29. Noam Chomsky, *Peace in the Middle East? Reflections on Justice and Nationhood* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974).



for the crimes of the Jewish state—with which they may, or may not, share any affinity. What is more, Jews' support of Israel, and their abrasive and powerful presence in the world, are factors contributing to the increase in world-wide antisemitism—not, of course, the malevolent impulses and psychological defects of Jew-hating antisemites themselves.

“Jews in the US are the most privileged and influential part of the population,” Chomsky claimed. Not only that, but with the same sentiment articulated in such spurious “histories” as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, or even the Israel Lobby, he asserted that Jews strove for even more omnipotence, and that “privileged people want to make sure they have total control, not just 98% control”—the basis of “why antisemitism is becoming an issue. Not because of the threat of antisemitism; they want to make sure there’s no critical look at the policies the US (and they themselves) support in the Middle East.”<sup>30</sup>

Jewish power is a repellent notion for Chomsky, just as the hegemonic might he ascribes to the terror states of Israel and America—not the destabilizing barbarism of Islamism—is the scourge of peace. The existence of Israel not only subjugates the long-suffering Arabs, but also is driving the entire globe toward annihilation, Chomsky suggested, using the same image used by Finkelstein of Israel’s having succumbed into a kind of moral madness. Its very psychosis had become a source of power, and the exercise of that power would bring about global genocide. “Israel’s ‘secret weapon . . .,’ ” Chomsky wrote, evoking an apocalyptic vision, “is that it may behave in the manner of what have sometimes been called ‘crazy states’ in the international affairs literature . . . eventuating in a final solution from which few will escape.”<sup>31</sup>

#### ACADEMIC FREE SPEECH AS A COVER FOR CAMPUS ANTISEMITISM

While academics fulminate regularly against Israel and America, give tacit support to these countries’ enemies, and heap vitriol on the Jewish state and its supporters—much of it approaching or exceeding what would be considered reasonable or rational criticism of a democratic state—they regularly cloak themselves with the protective shield of “academic free speech,” that sacrosanct philosophy that has come to mean that liberal academics can express themselves, even loathsomely, and expect no one to question their poisonous rhetoric or answer back with a vigorous defense

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30. Noam Chomsky, “Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Palestinians,” Variant.org.uk, October 11, 2002, <http://www.variant.org.uk/16texts/Chomsky.html>.

31. Noam Chomsky, *Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), 468-69.

from the other side. When the left derides Israel and promotes false, biased, or hateful ideas about Zionism, provoking the Israel government, or military policies, and defenders to speak back (as they did, for instance, when Walt and Mearsheimer published their controversial study of the “Israel Lobby”) and commentators to call them on their defective views, the common claim is that the outspoken critics of Israel have been “silenced” by the accusation of antisemitism and that their free speech is being “suppressed.”

It is, of course, perfectly acceptable for academics to question the status quo and challenge prevailing ideas as they help students to find some truth amid many ideological options; indeed, that is one of the chief roles of the university, and should be. What is not acceptable, and in fact is damaging the very core of higher education in its one-sided, doctrinaire approach to learning, is the pattern of lies, contortions, and mistaken assumptions endemic to discussions about the politics, military actions, and very existence of Israel.

Moreover, while leftist and radical professors profess to be guarding the tradition of academic freedom and free speech on their campuses, universities as a lot have been subsumed by a rank hypocrisy when it comes to actually balancing competing views from different sides of academic debates. What has been dubbed “political correctness” is actually the subversion of the stated goal of promoting the free expression of all views within the university community. What it has come to mean, unfortunately, is that only those views conforming to prevailing political orthodoxies are considered to be “acceptable” by the guardians of what may be said and who may say it.

Unfortunately, concern for Jewish students’ well-being and emotional safety do not seem to be viewed with any great alarm by college administrations. This has meant that Jewish students at UC Irvine, San Francisco State University, and York University in Toronto, to name a few schools, have had to endure being assaulted by waves of anti-Israel propaganda, vitriolic speeches, hate-fests, and lengthy campaigns of anti-Zionist vilification, including physical intimidation and assaults. University officials have been slow to address these incidents, and have not regularly taken strong public moral stands against the professors and students groups who have conjured up this odious brew against Israel and Jews.

That does not mean that university administrations are unaware of certain groups’ concerns when their rights or “feelings” are trampled on; it *does* mean that Jewish students—like Caucasians, heterosexuals, Christians, conservatives, or Republicans—are not perceived as being a group needing protection. So, in the greatest moral fraud perpetrated by universities claiming to be diverse and all-inclusive, diversity on most campuses today encompasses diversity of thought, as Professor Thornton put it, on “a con-

tinuum that starts at liberal and ends at radical leftist.”<sup>32</sup> In their mission to protect the sensibilities and emotional well-being of identified campus victim groups, universities, often violating their own written guidelines and codes of behavior, have instituted speech codes to prevent what is generally called “hate speech” now, but that has become a tactic to marginalize, and exclude, the speech and ideology of those with whom liberals and leftists do not agree. These tactics are evident as Muslim students’ sensibilities become offended when critics of Islamism come to speak on campuses; administrators now deem offensive behavior and speech to be “harassing” and “intimidating when it is directed at Muslims or Islam,” not merely expressive. On college campuses, to paraphrase George Orwell, all views are equal, but some are more equal than others.

The moral relativism that imbues academic free speech was clearly at work on one campus during the tenure of Lawrence Summers as Harvard’s president between 2001 and 2006. Summers’ ignoble loss of his presidency confirmed the reality that, despite its claims to the contrary, academia, even at hallowed Harvard, was no longer the certain intellectual marketplace for open discourse and free speech, even on matters of controversy where vigorous debate and alternate views would be productive.

One of Summers’ defining moral decisions was embodied in his controversial 2002 speech, in which he rejected a divestment petition to withdraw funds from Israel signed by, among others, seventy-four Harvard professors, many from the College of Arts and Sciences. He observed that antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes, once the invidious products of fringe groups and right-wing cranks, had begun to appear on college campuses, that “profoundly anti-Israel views are increasingly finding support in progressive intellectual communities. Serious and thoughtful people,” he said in the most pointed section of his comments, “are advocating and taking actions that are antisemitic in their effect if not their intent.”

But even as he was cautioning divestment proponents to examine the true nature of their attitudes and the ramifications of their actions, Summers, unlike his critics, was willing to let even foolish views be heard. “We should always respect the academic freedom of everyone to take any position,” he said. But, he added, those who take provocative positions have to assume that their views can and will be challenged; “that academic freedom does not include freedom from criticism.”<sup>33</sup>

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32. Bruce Thornton, “Ideology Trumps Truth on Campus,” *City Journal*, November 25, 2007, <http://www.city-journal.org/html/eon2007-11-21bt.html>.

33. Lawrence Summers, “Address at Morning Prayers,” Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 17, 2002, [http://www.harvard.edu/president/speeches/summers\\_2002/morningprayers.php](http://www.harvard.edu/president/speeches/summers_2002/morningprayers.php).

One thing those on the left despise is being questioned about their integrity, and so it was with the indignant petition-signers and their fellow travelers, who accused Summers of being intellectually oppressive and “stifling debate” by questioning the morality of their actions and raising a point about the true intent of the divestment effort: singling out Israel specifically among all nations for economic sanctions. The offended faculty never forgave Summers for expressing his opinion, engaging in intellectual inquiry, and naming them for what they were.

That same sensitivity to language about Israel and antisemitism did not seem to faze faculty members and liberals, however, when Harvard’s English department in 2002 invited poet Tom Paulin to speak as a prestigious Morris Gray Lecturer, and did so, according to English Department chair Lawrence Buell, to affirm a “belief in the importance of free speech as a principle and practice in the academy.” That of course is a noble and purposeful role for universities, save for the fact that Paulin, poet and lecturer at Oxford University, had been quoted articulating the appalling sentiment that “Brooklyn-born” Jewish settlers [in Israel] should be “shot dead.” He told Egypt’s *al-Ahram Weekly*, “I think they are Nazis, racists, I feel nothing but hatred for them. I can understand how suicide bombers feel . . . I think attacks on civilians in fact boost morale.”<sup>34</sup>

In those instances when controversy arises because Israel-hating or antisemitic professors have publicly expressed radical views, not only is there general silence from most faculty and administrators about how these views may have harmed the collegiality of academic community, but many will reflexively defend the speech, regardless of how outrageous the content or potentially “hurtful” the message. In January of 2009, for example, a tenured sociology professor, William I. Robinson, of the University of California Santa Barbara, sent an odious e-mail to the 80 students in his Sociology 130SG: The Sociology of Globalization course. Under the heading “Parallel Images of Nazis and Israelis,” the e-mail displayed a photo-collage of 42 side-by-side, grisly photographs meant to suggest a historical equivalence between Israel’s treatment of Palestinians in its occupation of Gaza and the Third Reich’s subjugation of the Warsaw Ghetto and its treatment of Jews during the Holocaust. Robinson sent the e-mail without supplying any context for it, nor did it seemingly have any specific relevance to or connection with the course’s content.

Robinson’s e-mail contained the following commentary:

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34. Robert F. Worth, “Poet Who Spoke Against Israel Is Reinvited to Talk at Harvard,” *The New York Times*, November 21, 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/11/21/education/21POET.html>.

I am forwarding some horrific, parallel images of Nazi atrocities against the Jews and Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians. Perhaps the most frightening are not those providing a graphic depiction of the carnage but that which shows Israeli children writing “with love” on a bomb that will tear apart Palestinian children.

Gaza is Israel’s Warsaw—a vast concentration camp that confined and blockaded Palestinians, subjecting them to the slow death of malnutrition, disease and despair, nearly two years before their subjection to the quick death of Israeli bombs. We are witness to a slow-motion process of genocide . . . , a process whose objective is not so much to physically eliminate each and every Palestinian than to eliminate the Palestinians as a people in any meaningful sense of the notion of people-hood.<sup>35</sup>

In response to the inflammatory e-mail, two students dropped the course and immediately filed a complaint with the university’s Academic Senate’s Charges Committee, and also went to two off-campus advocacy groups, the Anti-Defamation League and StandWithUs. Not surprisingly, charges of “antisemitism” came from some of Robinson’s critics, as well as from those who believed, like StandWithUs’s Roz Rothstein, that professors “should [not] be using their class roster to sell their own political opinions . . . . Our concern,” she said, “is that he abused his position and that it was unrelated with his class.”<sup>36</sup>

But many students and professorial colleagues at UCSB immediately came to Robinson’s defense, forming an ad hoc group called the Committee to Defend Academic Freedom (CDAF) at UCSB, “dedicated to organizing students on campus against nationwide campaigns against political repression,” and also resisting what they ominously referred to as a “silencing campaign” waged against Robinson by outside forces who had undertaken a “flagrant and baseless affronts to academic freedom on this campus and to Professor Robinson in particular.” In June, five months after the university had initiated its investigation into Robinson’s conduct, officials dismissed all charges and terminated the case without any negative findings against the sociology professor, and the CDAF smugly asserted that “the charge of anti-Semitism [was] made in bad faith,” and that “its real purpose is to vilify and stifle any honest critiques of the state of Israel’s policies and practices.”<sup>37</sup>

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35. Maane Khatchaturian and Jenna Ryan, “Officials Investigate Questionable Email,” *Daily Nexus*, May 21, 2009, <http://www.dailynexus.com/article.php?a=19071>.

36. Elliott Rosenfeld, “Investigation of Professor Forges Ahead,” *Daily Nexus*, June 4, 2009, <http://www.dailynexus.com/article.php?a=19161>.

37. Committee to Defend Academic Freedom at UCSB, “About Us,” 2009, <http://sb4af.wordpress.com/about-us/>.

Apparently, Professor Robinson shared the committee's belief that sinister, outside "thought policemen" had instigated a campaign of suppression against him. Like professors Matory and Walt at Harvard, Robinson knew exactly where to assign blame for the scrutiny he had undergone as a result of his provocative e-mail. "The Israel lobby is possibly the most powerful lobby in the United States," he told the *Daily Nexus*, UCSB's student newspaper, repeating the same accusation that is common to those who have actually acted in an antisemitic way, "and what they do is label any criticism of anti-Israeli conduct and practices as anti-Semitic. . . . This campaign is not just an attempt to punish me. The Israel lobby is stepping up its vicious attacks on anyone who would speak out against Israeli policies."<sup>38</sup> So in Professor Robinson's morally incoherent mind, depicting Israeli Jews as the new Nazis who are committing genocide against the Palestinians is merely instructive content for a sociology course, but when those who believe that the comparison between Nazis and Jews is a perverse and libelous reading of historical fact answer back, it is a "vicious attack," a tactic of pro-Israel forces to deflect criticism and obscure the malignancy of their deeds.

THE ANTI-ISRAEL 'HECKLER'S VETO':  
SHOUTING DOWN CONSERVATIVE SPEECH

When campus radical and leftist professors are not moaning about how the dreaded Israel Lobby is attempting to suppress all criticism of Israel, or complaining about how any scrutiny of radical Islam, Palestinian terror, or Arab intransigency constitutes "hate speech" that will intimidate or harass Muslims, they have found other means to ensure that countervailing opinions about Israel and the Palestinians are shut out. With greater frequency, Muslim student groups, radical, anti-Israel professors, and even college officials have taken it upon themselves to either restrict the ability of conservative or pro-Israel speakers to appear on campuses, or to deny them access to a campus altogether.

In October 2009, for example, St. Louis University's College Republicans and Young America's Foundation had invited conservative author David Horowitz to deliver a talk entitled "An Evening with David Horowitz: Islamo-Fascism Awareness and Civil Rights"—but university administrators, once again choosing to avoid a close examination of radical Islam, cancelled Horowitz's planned appearance.

What St. Louis University's administration had done in this instance was essentially to exercise the "heckler's veto," shutting down speech with

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38. Rosenfeld, "Investigation."

which it did not agree or that is felt was too controversial for certain protected minorities on campus. Ominously, however, and in seeming contradiction to the school's own stated policy "to promote the free and open exchange of ideas and viewpoints, even if that exchange proves to be offensive, distasteful, disturbing or denigrating to some," this particular speech was suppressed *in advance* of the event, based on a belief that the speaker's words would possibly insult Muslim students and inflame their sensibilities.

The school officials' decision seemed to belie the university's own contention, in its "Policy Statement on Demonstrations & Disruption," that it "encourages students, faculty and staff to be bold, independent, and creative thinkers," and that "fundamental to this process is the creation of an environment that respects the rights of all members of the University community to explore and to discuss questions which interest them, to express opinions and debate issues energetically and publicly, and to demonstrate their concern by orderly means."

There were troubling issues here, putting aside the basic question of fairness of denying certain students, with certain political beliefs, the opportunity to invite speakers to campus to share their views. Horowitz's speech was canceled (and he had appeared, by his own account, on more than 400 campuses in the past), not because it might contain speech that was demonstrably false or even incendiary, but because some individuals might be "offended" or "intimidated" by speech that they were perfectly free never to hear.

"For me, it was . . . the content," explained the university's dean of students, Scott Smith, in rationalizing the decision to rescind Horowitz's invitation to speak—"particularly, the blanketed use of the term Islamofascism."<sup>39</sup> The school was also concerned that the speech would be seen as "attacking another faith and seeking to cause derision on campus." But where does a college administration, whose own institution claims to value speech that is even "offensive, distasteful, disturbing or denigrating to some," decide that this particular topic—radical Islam—cannot and should not be spoken about? Is this not a relevant discussion in a world where, since 9/11, over 15,000 acts of terror have been committed by murderous radicals in Islam's name? Does not an ideology that has as its aim the subjugation of other faiths and a world-wide caliphate under sharia law, and is fueled by billions in petro dollars, deserve, and in fact require, some critique and evaluation?

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39. Kelly Dunn, "Horowitz Speech Rejected by SLU," *The University News*, October 1, 2009, <http://media.www.unewsonline.com/media/storage/paper953/news/2009/10/01/News/Horowitz.Speech.Rejected.By.Slu-3790132.shtml>.

Most disingenuous is how institutions of higher education like St. Louis University, while horrified by the prospect of a David Horowitz visit, use their claims of academic free speech as a cover for regularly bringing outrageous, out-of-the-mainstream views to campuses—either in student-run organizations, in course materials and teaching philosophies, in the sponsorship of festivals and cultural events, or in the person of controversial speakers and artists. For example, the concern over offending certain student groups suddenly did not have the same sense of urgency when speakers, with views certainly as controversial as Horowitz's, were enthusiastically invited to the Washington University campus, notable among them Norman Finkelstein, who spoke in 2007 as part of "Palestine Awareness Week," sponsored by the on-campus group Saint Louis University Solidarity with Palestine.

Horowitz had been prevented from speaking and shouted down by ideological bullies before. In 2007 at Emory University, as a guest of Emory's College Republicans, Horowitz was scheduled to speak to an audience of some 300 people as part of that year's Islamo-Fascism Awareness Week. While boos, catcalls, and shouts of "Heil Hitler" filled the room, and protestors stood, backs turned to the stage, Horowitz attempted to deliver his speech. Finally, the hecklers, raucous members of radical groups such as Amnesty International, Veterans for Peace, Students for Justice in Palestine, and the Muslim Student Association (MSA) were sufficiently intrusive and belligerent enough to prevent Horowitz from speaking any further, and the speech was cancelled as police, finally unable to calm the angry crowd, escorted Horowitz off stage to safety.

Ideological thugs were also present at the University of Chicago in October 2009 to greet Israel's former prime minister Ehud Olmert, who was invited to speak at Mandel Hall as part of the King Abdullah II Leadership Lecture series organized by the Harris School of Public Policy. Dozens of protestors inside the hall and some 100 outside, from Chicago's Muslim Students Association, Students for Justice in Palestine, as well as groups from the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) and Northwestern, were intent on disrupting the speech with catcalls, jeers, and outrageous threats and condemnation, and were so effective in their incivility that the planned 20-minute presentation ran nearly an hour and a half. Police had to forcibly drag a vociferous protestor out the door as others hurled invectives, condemnation, and epithets at Olmert, calling him a "murderer," "war criminal," and "racist."

One student who had attended the speech, Frank Pucci, a political science and history major, wrote in the university's student newspaper, *The Chicago Maroon*, his view that "Ehud Olmert is not an academic who happens to have a difference of opinion that must be respected; he is responsi-



ble for the deaths of thousands. As the first protester who stood cried out, 'War crimes are not free expression.' " Not only that, Pucci claimed, but the mere fact that Olmert was invited to speak was insulting and hurtful to the campus community. In light of the grave moral injustice engendered by Olmert's presence, "the only responsible course of action is for the University of Chicago to apologize to the members of the Arab, Muslim, and pro-Palestinian community for allowing such a blatant display of bias and insolence against them."<sup>40</sup>

Apparently, no groups of students were hurt and offended by "blatant display[s] of bias and insolence against them" at Yale University, for example, when a former Taliban member matriculated on campus, or in 2003, when Yale's Afro-American Cultural Center and the Black Student Alliance invited Amiri Baraka, former Black Panther and the soon-thereafter-dismissed, and embattled, poet laureate of New Jersey, to speak. It surprised and annoyed some in the Yale community that Baraka—a virulent anti-white, antisemitic, anti-Establishment leftist—was invited to the university in the first place, but not Pamela George, assistant dean of Yale College and director of the Cultural Center; she drew a comparison between Baraka's hate-filled visit to that of Yoni Figchel, a former Israeli general and soldier who had come to Yale earlier that semester to engage in apolitical discussions on Middle East security and Israel.

Perhaps the comparison was made precisely because Mr. Baraka had been under assault by many who were shocked by the conspiracy-laden antisemitism of his poem "Somebody Blew Up America," in which he referred, among other wild claims, to Israel's foreknowledge of and complicity in the bombing of the World Trade towers. But the poem also had words to denigrate American culture, imperialism, the white race, Zionism, and other sinister powers in Baraka's cynical imagination.

But more revealing than the fact that such a seemingly antisemitic speaker was invited, and then celebrated, at Yale was the reaction of one student whose theory was that the only reason that there was controversy about Baraka's poetry and slurs of Jews was because, incredibly, that Jews control the press. Writing one of his regular columns in the *Yale Daily News*, Sahn Adrangi decided that, in this case—where, after all, it was only Israel, Jews, and America being slurred—"student groups who invite controversial speakers ought to be congratulated, not condemned. Contrarian thinkers and conspiracy theorists," he mused, "expose us to vantage points we rarely encounter in fellow Yalies. Their arguments are often more

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40. Frank Pucci, "War crimes Are Not Free Expression," *Chicago Maroon*, October 20, 2009, <http://www.chicagomaroon.com/2009/10/20/war-crimes-are-not-free-expression#>.

sophisticated than we'd expect and in debating them, we gain a deeper understanding of our own opinions."<sup>41</sup>

That aside, however, the real lesson to be gleaned from incendiary anti-Israel speakers like Baraka "isn't really about free speech," Adrangi cautioned; "it's about how special interests manipulate the public discourse to advance their agendas." And who were those special interests attempting to make much ado about Baraka's poetic ravings? The Jewish press, of course. "Jews tend to sympathize with Israel more so than non-Jews. And in my three years at the *Yale Daily News*, Jewish students have comprised a majority of management positions . . ." Adrangi was quick to point out, however, that he was not suggesting there was a conspiracy among Jewish journalists to tilt the argument in Israel's favor. "But," he asked rhetorically, and apparently knowingly, "does the prevalence of Jews in American media, business and politics help explain America's steadfast support for Israel, whose 35-year occupation of Palestinian lands is an affront to human decency? Of course."<sup>42</sup>

#### THE MUSLIM STUDENT ASSOCIATION AND ANTISEMITIC RADICALISM ON CALIFORNIA CAMPUSES

If any area of the United States can be identified as the epicenter of anti-Israelism on campus, California, the nation's most populous state, can certainly be said to have earned that dubious distinction. In fact, observers of out-of-control anti-Zionist and antisemitic activity on campuses consider California's universities to be the veritable ground zero of such vitriol, with particularly troubling and persistent problems of radical student groups, venom-spewing guest speakers, annual hate-fests targeting Israel and Jewish students, and a pervasive mood on campus in which Jewish students and other pro-Israel faculty and students experienced visceral and real "harassment, intimidation and discrimination," as a 2004 Zionist Organization of America's complaint to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights described the situation on one campus, the University of California Irvine.

In fact, even after the U.S. Office of Civil Rights had initiated their 2004 inquiry into rampant antisemitism on campus—including at UC Irvine, a focus of their study—a second similar effort, the "Task Force on Anti-Semitism at the University of California, Irvine," was launched in

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41. Sahm Adrangi, "Not Just Another Conspiracy Theory: Manipulating Anger," *Yale Daily News*, February 26, 2003, <http://www.yaledailynews.com/news/2003/feb/26/not-just-another-conspiracy-theory-manipulating>.

42. Adrangi, "Not Just Another Conspiracy."

December 2006 by the Hillel Foundation of Orange County and staffed by local professionals, religious leaders, and academics. Feeling that the federal inquiry had uncovered some troubling trends on the Irvine campus, but delivering a somewhat soft response to the university's administration, the Orange County task force decided to revisit some of the incidents in an attempt to show a pattern of anti-Israelism and antisemitism as endemic to the Irvine campus. Its stated goal was "to study, investigate and issue a report on alleged incidents of racism and anti-Semitism at the University of California Irvine (UCI). We are not singling out any specific group. We are looking at all instances of alleged anti-Semitic and racist activity." The U.S. Office of Civil Rights, as the task force report noted, had focused more specifically on issues of discrimination based on students' national origin, and the "investigation applied narrow legally technical analysis about whether UCI violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations." The task force came to the following conclusions, based on their own extensive interviews with students, faculty, and UCI administrators (at least those who agreed to respond to inquiries):

- Jewish students have been subject to physical and verbal harassment because they are Jewish and support Israel.
- Hate speech, both direct and symbolic, is directed at Jews by speakers and demonstrators.
- An annual week-long event sponsored by the Muslim Student Union is an antisemitic hate fest targeting Israel and Jews using lies and propaganda dating back to the antisemitism of the Middle Ages.
- Speakers who are pro-Israel and/or those who condemn speakers who espouse anti-American and anti-Israeli views are subject to disruptive behavior by Muslim students and their supporters.
- Jewish students state that they are subject to a hostile class environment by faculty members who adopt an anti-Israel bias.
- Materials contained in certain Middle-East studies courses are biased and indicative of a "leftist" orthodoxy that characterizes this area of study.
- The UCI administration is not responsive to complaints by Jewish students.
- Jewish students complain of a "double standard" when the administration enforces campus rules and regulations.<sup>43</sup>

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43. Orange County Task Force, "Report on Anti-Semitism at UCI," February 12, 2008, <http://octaskforce.files.wordpress.com/2008/02/orange-county-task-force-report-on-anti-semitism-at-uci.pdf>.

These are troubling assessments, but not at all uncommon on campuses across the country, and in Canada and Great Britain, as well. Yet, despite the two protracted investigations into antisemitic activities at UCI, the incidence of hate-fests, protests, and incendiary speakers has not subsided.

In fact, in May 2009, the Muslim Student Union continued its tradition of sponsorship of vile, hate-spewing events to further demonize Israel, this time an 18-day extravaganza offensively named “Israel: The Politics of Genocide,” which preposterously proclaimed on their posters announcing the event that Israel has resulted in “61 years of illegal occupation. 61 years of statelessness. 61 years of systematic ethnic cleansing. The Palestinians have lost thousands of lives and millions of have been displaced from their homes. Despite all of this, their resolve remains steadfast, their resistance enduring, their fire unflinching. However, though Israel continues to violate international law and inflict these injustices, Palestinian blood stains our hands, too.” If the astounding claim is made here that the existence of Israel represents “61 years of illegal occupation,” then that either exposes a sore lack of historical insight on the part of the sponsors, or, more likely, it reflects the notion held in much of the Arab world that all of Israel—not just the “occupied territories” gained in 1967—is “occupied” Muslim land and that Israel is therefore “illegal” and not a nation at all.

The “Politics of Genocide” event included speeches by such notorious figures as the vitriolic Amir-Abdel Malik-Ali, a black Imam associated with the Masjid Al Islam mosque in Oakland and the frequent guest of the Irvine MSU. Malik-Ali, former Nation of Islam member, convert to Islam, and cheerleader for Hamas and Hezbollah, has been a ubiquitous, poisonous presence on the Irvine campus who never hesitates to castigate Israel, Zionists, Jewish power, and Jews themselves as he weaves incoherent, hallucinatory conspiracies about the Middle East and the West. As an example, UCI’s student newspaper, *The New University*, reported that Malik-Ali, in a February 2004 speech, “America under Siege: The Zionist Hidden Agenda,” “implied that Zionism is a mixture of ‘chosen people-ness [*sic*] and white supremacy’; that the Iraqi war is in the process of ‘Israelization’; that the Zionists had the ‘Congress, the media and the FBI in their back pocket’; that the downfall of former Democratic [presidential] front-runner Howard Dean was due to the Zionists; and that the Mossad [Israel’s intelligence agency] would have assassinated Al Gore if he had been elected [in 2000] just to bring Joe Lieberman (his Jewish vice president) to power.”<sup>44</sup>

Malik-Ali used a February 2005 MSU-organized event to proclaim that “Zionism is a mixture, a fusion of the concept of white supremacy and

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44. Discover the Networks, “Amir-Abdel Malik-Ali,” DiscoverTheNetworks.org, <http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=2102>.

the chosen people.” He complained about Zionist control of the American media, Zionist complicity in the war in Iraq, and Zionists’ ability to deflect justified criticism. “You will have to hear more about the Holocaust when you accuse them of their Nazi behavior,” he warned, after railing against Zionist control of the press, the media, and the political decisions of the American government. And what was his vision for Israel and the Palestinians? “One state. Majority rule. Check that out. Us. The Muslims.”<sup>45</sup>

In May 2006, speaking from a podium under a banner reading “Israel, the 4th Reich,” Malik-Ali referred to Jews as “new Nazis” and “a bunch of straight-up punks.” “The truth of the matter is your days are numbered,” he admonished Jews everywhere. “We will fight you. We will fight you until we are either martyred or until we are victorious.”<sup>46</sup>

Another guest speaker who regularly makes appearances on the MSA hate-fest circuit is Muhammad al-Asi, an antisemitic, anti-America Muslim activist from Washington, D.C., who has written, among other notorious ideas, that “The Israeli Zionist are [*sic*] the true and legitimate object of liquidation.”

At an MSU-sponsored event in February 2008, “From Auschwitz to Gaza: The Politics of Genocide,” which tried to draw parallels between the Holocaust and Hamas-controlled Gaza, al-Asi was a featured speaker. In his remarks, he repeated the canard of Jewish control of world politics, suggesting that “Zionists or what some people call the Jewish lobby” had reduced the United States to playing “second fiddle to the Israeli government.” This situation had to end, he warned, before the perfidious Zionists draw America into yet another war for their own benefit. “How long are we going to take the Israeli dog wagging the American tail?” he asked. “Now the pro-Zionist, Israeli crowd in the United States says the United States should go to war against Iran.”<sup>47</sup>

Just months after 9/11, al-Asi had similar invective to utter toward Jews, in the context of Israeli oppression of Palestinians. Using his favorite image of the ghetto when describing Jews, he observed that, “We have a psychosis in the Jewish community that is unable to co-exist equally and brotherly with other human beings. You can take a Jew out of the ghetto, but you can’t take the ghetto out of the Jew, and this has been demonstrated

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45. Terrorism Awareness Project, “The Muslim Student Union at the University of California Irvine,” <http://www.terrorismawareness.org/muslim-groups-on-campus/128/the-muslim-student-union-at-the-university-of-california-irvine/>.

46. Terrorism Awareness Project, “The Muslim.”

47. Anti-Defamation League, “Backgrounder: “Mohammad al-Asi, ADL.org, [http://www.adl.org/main\\_Anti\\_Israel/al\\_asi.htm](http://www.adl.org/main_Anti_Israel/al_asi.htm).

time and time again in Occupied Palestine.” What is worse, he continued, this behavior on the part of the malicious Jews would likely continue, since “now they have American diplomats and politicians and decision makers and strategists in their pocket.”<sup>48</sup>

San Francisco State University is not far behind UC Irvine in the way it has enabled its Muslim students’ organizations to create a veritable reign of terror on campus against Jewish and pro-Israel students. Most notorious was the Muslim student-sponsored, pro-Palestinian April 2002 demonstration at SFSU that included grotesque flyers and posters depicting a dead Palestinian baby on a soup-can label imprinted with the words “Palestinian children meat, slaughtered according to Jewish rites under American license,” echoing the centuries-old blood libel of European antisemitism that accused Jews of murdering Gentile children and using their blood to bake matzos—a slander that has, not surprisingly, currently gained credence in the Arab world.

Not content just to mount their own vile protests against Zionism, Jews, and Israel, the following month the pro-Palestinian student groups disrupted a vigil for Holocaust Remembrance Day, where some 30 Jewish students who were reciting the Mourners’ Kaddish—the Jewish prayer for the dead—were shouted down by protesters, who countered with grisly prayers in memory of Palestinian suicide bombers. The pro-Palestinian counter-demonstrators, armed with whistles and bull horns, physically assaulted the Jewish students, spat on them, and screamed such epithets as “Too bad Hitler didn’t finish the job,” “Get out or we will kill you,” “F\*\*k the Jews,” “Die racist pigs,” and “Go back to Russia, Jews.” The violence escalated to the extent that San Francisco police officers finally had to usher the Jewish students to safety off campus.

Laurie Zoloth, SFSU’s director of the program in Jewish studies at the time of the incident, described the event in an open letter: “The police could do nothing more than surround the Jewish students and community members who were now trapped in a corner of the plaza, grouped under the flags of Israel, while an angry, out of control mob, literally chanting for our deaths, surrounded us . . . There was no safe way out of the Plaza. We had to be marched back to the Hillel House under armed S.F. police guard, and we had to have a police guard remain outside Hillel.”<sup>49</sup>

In July 2006, SFSU’s General Union of Palestinian Students co-sponsored with Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, yet another

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48. Anti-Defamation League, “Backgrounder.”

49. Melissa Radler, “Anti-Semitic Riot at San Francisco State University,” Free Republic.com, May 16, 2002, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/684040/posts>.

hate-fest against Israel, this time the Fourth International Al-Awda Convention, the overarching ambition of which is to enforce the right of all Palestinian refugees to return to their former homes in what is current-day Israel, with the express purpose of demographically eliminating Israel's Jewish identity and continued existence. "Racism, tribalism, all the 'isms' we're fighting, you cannot exclude Zionism from," proclaimed Michel Shehadeh, the host of the tellingly named *Radio Intifada*, a KPFK-FM Los Angeles radio program, and one of the convention's featured guest speakers. "If struggling against Zionism isn't at the core of defining yourself as a progressive, then you're not. You cannot be progressive if you're not fighting fascism and Nazism. It's a package. You can't be selective in this."<sup>50</sup>

Al-Awda's intransigency regarding the mere existence of Israel, and its radical stance with respect to terrorism and a desire to totally replace the current state of Israel with an Islamic Palestine, are so breathtakingly extreme that it is difficult to see how any university could look at the tone and content of this conference and pretend that it created productive dialogue or inspired positive academic debate. It is one-sided and biased in the extreme, and barely disguises the overt antisemitism amid its calls to dismantle what it describes as an illegal Zionist regime.

Another of the conference's speakers, Lamis Jamal Deek, an attorney and a member of Al-Awda New York, summed up the overriding sentiment of the movement: "There can never be a place for Zionism in the Arab world . . . Zionism will never be allowed to exist peacefully among the people. Today we again demand the end of the Zionist presence in the Arab world." At San Francisco State University, such sentiments seem to have found a welcoming home.

#### ISRAEL APARTHEID WEEK: AN ANNUAL ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONIZE ISRAEL AND JEWS

Initiated in 2004 at the University of Toronto, Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) was held in 40 locations worldwide by 2008, with the stated purpose of educating "people about the nature of Israel as an apartheid system and to build Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns as part of a growing global BDS movement."<sup>51</sup> IAW uses as its primary tactic what has been referred to the "Durban strategy," referring to the 2001 anti-Israel

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50. Joe Eskenazi, "Vitriolic Anti-Israel Gathering Held at SFSU, *Jweekly*, July 21, 2006, <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/29842/vitriolic-anti-israel-gathering-held-at-sfsu>.

51. Israel Apartheid Week, Israel Apartheid Week.org, November 9, 2009, <http://apartheidweek.org/en/about>.

hate-fest in South Africa, where the representatives of member countries perversely defined Zionism as racism. Events were held on the campuses of academic institutions that included Berkeley, Toronto, Boston College, Yale, Michigan, and Columbia.

In addition to the racism charge, IAW events continue debate on the other thorny issues of the Palestinian question: the “right of return” of all Palestinians to their old homes in what is now present-day Israel, dismantling the security wall, and forming a binational state in which Jews, then a minority, would be but one class of citizens into whatever type of political structure that state evolved—in short, a world without Israel. Since the motive of the sponsors in producing these events seems pure—ending racism—the stridency of the message and the vitriol of the speakers and marketing materials of the IAW has ramped up as supporters have become emboldened by their mission. In some instances, such as at the University of Manitoba in the weeks after the 2009 Gaza incursion by Israel, when sentiments ran high, posters for the event created by the Muslim Students Association were so extreme that school officials reigned in the incendiary marketing efforts. “One of them depicted a Jewish fighter plane targeting a baby stroller,” reported a *National Post* article. “Another featured a caricature of a hooked-nosed Hasidic Jew with a star of David, pointing a bazooka at the nose of an Arab carrying a slingshot; a third one showed an Israeli helicopter with a swastika on top, dropping a bomb on a baby bottle.” Even on university campuses, where the right to speak offensively and often seems to be one of the bulwarks of higher education, the grisly and explicitly antisemitic tone of the posters was all a little too much, the *Post* reported, and “the school forced their removal the same day.”<sup>52</sup>

In a statement in which he defended the university’s decision to permit the event, Deputy Provost and Vice-Provost of Students David Farrar said that despite numerous requests from opponents of the IAW to have the event canceled, “We will not. To do so would violate the university’s commitment to freedom of speech . . . As an academic community, we have a fundamental commitment to the principles of freedom of inquiry, freedom of speech and freedom of association . . . [T]he university has no reason to believe that the activities will exceed the boundaries for free speech. . . .”<sup>53</sup>

But that spirit of “freedom of inquiry and freedom of speech” seemed to be absent from the actual goings-on during the event, according to at

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52. Craig Offman, “Campuses Awash in Tension over Israel Apartheid Week,” *National Post*, March 2, 2009, <http://www.nationalpost.com/story.html?id=1343206>.

53. Graham F. Scott, “Apartheid: Is This the Israel You Know?,” *The Varsity*, February 3, 2005, <http://thevarsity.ca/articles/15158>.



least one attendee, Ilan Nachim. “I think it’s one of the most racist presentations I’ve ever seen,” he told the school’s newspaper. “I was not allowed to express myself at any point during this evening, from beginning to end. We had our hands up, we did not open our mouths. We were not allowed to express ourselves. This is what the university calls free speech?”<sup>54</sup>

More ominously, by 2009 the annual event had so degenerated into a racist, rabid rally that proceedings were closed to cameras and reporters, and individuals who actually attempted to participate in a dialogue about the issues being raised by the event in the first place were confronted with physical intimidation and threats, encountering the dark side of pro-Palestinianism.

One of these individuals, Isaac Apter, a Jewish alumnus of the University of Toronto, recounted how he and others in the audience of one evening’s events quizzed a speaker about why Hamas had persistently refused to recognize the legitimacy of Israel—“did Israel have the right to exist?”—and when the speaker repeatedly sidestepped the questioning, some audience members shouted out, “Answer the questions!” Apter found himself approached from behind by a member of a private guard retained by Students Against Israel Apartheid, slapped in the head, yanked from his seat, and yelled at with the warning, “You shut the fuck up!” A second Jewish attendee was similarly assaulted that night by one of the hired security team and given a far more chilling warning, particularly in light of the practice of beheadings in the Middle East: “Shut the fuck up or I’ll saw your head off.”<sup>55</sup>

In fact, the IAW event, by singling out Israel and attacking it for its alleged racism, might well be a violation of Canadian and international laws. In a paper published in the *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Avi Weinryb suggested that by allowing the IAW events to be held, the University of Toronto’s decisions “conflicts with the 2004 European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)’s working definition of anti-Semitism . . . which includes such examples of anti-Semitism as: denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination (e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor), [and] applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.”<sup>56</sup>

The University of Toronto is not the only Canadian institution of higher education to become a breeding ground for anti-Israel radicalism.

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54. Scott, “Apartheid.”

55. Offman, “Campuses Awash.”

56. Avi Weinryb, “The University of Toronto: The Institution Where Israel Apartheid Week Was Born,” *Jewish Political Studies Review*, December 2008.

There was, notably, the infamous riots at Montreal's Concordia University in September 2002, where mobs of marauding students smashed windows and destroyed furniture and fixtures to express their displeasure at the invitation to Benjamin Netanyahu to speak there. Toronto's York University has also recently defined itself as having a rabid antisemitic leaning when, in February 2009, some 100 pro-Palestinian students initiated a near-riot, and police had to be called to usher Jewish students to safety after they had been barricaded inside the Hillel offices and were "isolated and threatened," according to Hillel itself, by the physically and verbally aggressive demonstrators.

Parroting the morally incoherent and factually incorrect exhortations of Israel-haters elsewhere of "Zionism equals racism!" and "Racists off campus!," the York mob, members of both the York Federation of Students and Students Against Israeli Apartheid, demonstrated once again that what is positioned as "intellectual debate" on campuses about the Israeli/Palestinian issue has changed into something that is not really a conversation at all; instead, it is more akin to an ideologically driven shout-fest with a new version of pro-Palestinian brown shirts. York's supporters of the cult of Palestinianism apparently no longer felt even a bit uncomfortable voicing what was actually on their minds when the subject of Israel comes up: when the York Hillel students were trapped inside locked offices, surrounded by an increasingly violent and aggressive mob, the intellectual "debate" that day included such raw slurs as "Die Jew—get the hell off campus."<sup>57</sup>

That thuggery by anti-apartheid Jew-haters had already become something of a tradition on the York campus. A year earlier, in April 2008, Barbara Kay of Canada's *National Post* reported that York's Hillel had invited then-Knesset member Natan Sharansky to deliver an address. Not content with allowing anyone with a pro-Israel viewpoint to share his or her views on campus, the Palestinian Students Association and Students Against Israeli Apartheid@York (SAIA) used the common tactic of intellectual bullies: they jeered at and shouted Sharansky down, spoke loudly among themselves during his talk, and generally prevented anyone in the audience from listening to the content of the speech—but not before they had articulated their own vitriol with such comments as "Get off our campus, you genocidal racist" and "You are bringing a second Holocaust upon yourselves."<sup>58</sup>

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57. Ron Csillag, "Cops Quell Anti-Israel Attack at Toronto College," JTA.org, February 13, 2009, <http://www.jta.org/news/article/2009/02/13/1002990/cops-quell-anti-israel-attack-at-york-u>.

58. Barbara Kay, "York University Must Get Serious about Taking Back Their Campus from Anti-Zionist Radicals," *National Post*, April 16, 2008, <http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/fullcomment/archive/2008/04/16/165656.aspx>.

## ISRAEL: THE CANARY IN THE MINESHAFT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

The university's jihad against Israel and Jews is a grim reminder that the world's oldest hatred has not yet vanished; in fact, either because of the widespread negative attitudes toward Israel, or simply due to a lingering, poisonous Jew-hatred in the Arab world and increasingly in the West as well, Jews once again are targets of libels, denunciation, demonization, and slurs against Judaism, against Zionism, and against Israel itself, the Jew of nations.

This hatred metastasized on campus, when it was promulgated by leftist professors with a reverence for Palestinian victimization and by Muslim student groups with a theologically based hatred of the Jewish state. It spread though being enabled by administrators who allowed their campuses to be hijacked by radicals with the purported objective of elevating the Palestinian cause, but whose actual purpose was promoting their own agenda for vilifying and eventually eliminating Israel.

The manifestations of these on-campus hatreds have been obvious and ugly: ripped Israeli flags drizzled with blood; Stars of David juxtaposed with swastikas; charges of apartheid, racism, and genocide leveled against Israelis and also assigned to their proxies, American Jews; accusations of dual loyalties, with American Jews accused of undermining American interests with the covert purpose of assisting Israel; physical threats against Jewish students; and blood libels that transform Israelis into murderous, subhuman monsters who almost gleefully shed Arab blood in their insatiable quest for land—land that, their critics say, they neither deserve nor for which they have any legitimate claim.

The campus war against Israel and Jews is also indicative of the compromised purpose of higher education, where scholarship has been degraded by bias and extremism on the part of a leftist professoriate with a clear political agenda that cites Israel as the new villain in a world yearning for social justice. University leaders and other stakeholders have been noticeably negligent in moderating this radicalism, either because they are unaware of how whole fields of study have been hijacked by academic frauds and morally incoherent scholars, or because they sympathize with the intellectual approach of their faculties and have become complicit in the production of pseudo-scholarship, academic agitprop, and disingenuous “learning experiences” that have a one-sided, biased approach to understanding the Middle East, and particularly the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

That all this is taking place in the rarified air of college campuses, where civil discourse is the expected norm and scholarly inquiry is the anticipated intellectual product, makes the seething hatreds and bias against Israel and the Jews all the more unexpected and morally dangerous. Only

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65 years after one of the most horrific crimes against humanity that saw the murder of some six million souls, the same unsettling tropes against Jews are being restated, this time often targeting the Jewish state that arose, in part, from the ashes of the Holocaust. One would hope this battle would not have to be waged again, that college students, Jews and non-Jews alike, would not have to be confronted with “the longest hatred” once again, this time conflated with the very survival of a democratic Jewish state, precariously coexisting amid a sea of jihadist foes who seek its very elimination.

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Antisemitism on the Campus: Past & Present, edited by Eunice G. Pollack, is the first book of a multidisciplinary series on Antisemitism in America to be published by Academic Studies Press. Topics such as antisemitism and anti-Zionism on individual campuses, in black militant groups, on the Far Left, and in academic organizations; students exposure to antisemitism and anti-Zionism through popular culture and the internet; discrimination against Jewish faculty, students and organizations; the anti- Israel boycott/divestment movement, among others, are covered. Anti-Semitism on the Campus book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. 'Antisemitism on the Campus: Past & Present', edited by Eunice... Topics such as antisemitism and anti-Zionism on individual campuses, in black militant groups, on the Far Left, and in academic organizations; students' exposure to antisemitism and anti-Zionism through popular culture and the internet; discrimination against Jewish faculty, students and organizations; the anti- Israel boycott/divestment movement, among others, are covered. Eunice G. Pollack (PhD Columbia University) is a professor of History and Jewish Studies at the University of North Texas. She is a member of the Academic Council of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.