When anti-Semitism pretends to be just anti-Israel

February 7, 2019

By [Danny Danon](https://nypost.com/author/danny-danon/)

The New York Post

<https://nypost.com/2019/02/07/when-anti-semitism-pretends-to-be-just-anti-israel/>

Last week, I led 40 United Nations ambassadors on a trip to Poland to become witnesses to the Holocaust, and then to Israel to experience the miracle of the reborn nation-state of the Jewish people.

As the Holocaust recedes into the past, the world is witnessing a ­resurgence of anti-Semitism. Most Western leaders condemn this bigotry when it targets diaspora Jews. But too often they disregard, dismiss or even justify Jew-hatred when it targets Jews in their national homeland, Israel.

This willful neglect of anti-Semitism against Israeli Jews poses the greatest danger to diaspora Jews, since it legitimizes anti-Semitism everywhere.

The Jewish diaspora feels besieged, more so than it has in a long time. In Europe, attitudes toward Jews not expressed since the 1930s have become commonplace, with over 80 percent of European Jews identifying anti-Semitism as the primary threat to their safety, according to recent surveys.

In 2014, relentless attacks compelled more than 1,000 French Jews to immigrate to Israel. This, even though Israel was fighting a military operation against Hamas at the time. In Britain, meanwhile, Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the opposition ­Labour party has described Hamas and Hezbollah as “our friends” and laid wreaths at the graves of Palestinian terrorists.

Of course, the rise of anti-Semitism isn’t just a European problem. It also threatens the American Jewish community.

Here in America, there are those, like the leaders of the Women’s March, who are outspoken anti-Semites and steadfastly endorse national figures such as Louis Farrakhan, who refers to Jews as “termites” and considers Hitler a “great man.” And there are others whose bigotry manifests itself violently, such as the neo-Nazis who chanted “Jews will not replace us” in Charlottesville, Va., or the gunman who slaughtered 11 Jews while they were praying at a synagogue in Pittsburgh in October.

Jews in Israel aren’t immune to violent anti-Semitism.

Hamas in the Gaza Strip is one of the world’s most virulently anti-Semitic organizations. Its charter calls for genocide against the Jewish people, and it doesn’t recognize Israel’s right to exist. And President Mahmoud Abbas has allocated 7 percent, or $355 million, of the Palestinian Authority’s budget to bankroll the families of terrorists who attack Jews. He has stated publicly that any future Palestinian state would be free of Jews.

Instead of viewing anti-Semitism against Israelis as the irrational bigotry that it is, the world often attributes it to rational motives, part of a legitimate national struggle.

Western apologists justify violent rioters shouting “Jews, we’re coming to slaughter you!” at the Gaza border, claiming such hateful outbursts are an understandable reaction to the “occupation.” Ditto for the 17-year-old Palestinian who last year murdered Ari Fuld, an Israeli-American Jew, in cold blood.

People who would rightly condemn violence against Jews for ­being Jews as anti-Semitism lose their moral bearings when it comes to Israel, where political, territorial or economic reasons are offered as alibis for what is, at the core, anti-Semitism.

And when Israel is forced to defend itself, world leaders often draw a false moral equivalence ­between a Jewish democracy and its terrorist enemies. Naturally, they blame Israel for any resulting casualties. The inability or unwillingness to unequivocally condemn the anti-Semitic perpetrator is uniquely applied to Israel — the “Jew” among the nations.

Such biased attitudes allow the boycott, divest and sanctions movement to conceal its true goal of destroying the Jewish state. They also enable the likes of Corbyn to normalize overt hostility against Israel, something that was once considered beyond the pale in the West. Finally, elite tolerance for Israel-focused anti-Semitism has led to Jews being ostracized from supposedly “progressive” rallies in the West. You can claim that you find Zionism “creepy” when really you detest Jews.

This new form of anti-Semitism is especially pernicious, as it will bide its time until an ever-changing political climate allows it to ­reveal its true nature and turn on its ultimate target: the Jewish people everywhere.

It is imperative for the world to recognize that, to paraphrase the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., anti-Semitism anywhere is a threat to Jews everywhere. An ­attack against a Jew for being a Jew must be condemned for what it is — bigotry — regardless of whether it occurs in New York, Paris or ­Jerusalem.