

community view

Leftist Anti-Semitism Is The Real Problem

When anti-Semitism is the topic of conversation in Jewish circles, it typically focuses on the Nazis, skinheads and others of the far right while ignoring the growing and now dominant anti-Semitism of the left. The coverage in the *Jewish News* of the Charlottesville incident shows that in spades. Other than the second half of the article by Allan Dershowitz in the Aug. 31 *JN*, one would never know there was a threat to the Jewish community from other than the KKK and the Nazis.

Nowhere does the Jewish community ask why the Charlottesville police did not provide security for the town synagogue or ask why the police stood down and let the Antifa anarchists attack the despised Nazis with spray can flame-throwers and baseball bats.

Dershowitz noted that “Antifa and its radical allies pose real danger to the future of our nation because of their increasing influence on university campuses (and) our future leaders ... The recent events ... have made them heroes among some mainstream liberals, who are willing to excuse their anti-liberal bigotry because they supposedly are on the barricades against fascism.”

In his recent *Atlantic* article on Antifa, Peter Bienart, a Jewish leftist, said “Many of its activists oppose the very notion of a centralized state. But in the name of protecting the vulnerable, anti-fascists have granted themselves the authority to decide which Americans may publicly assemble and which may not ... (using violence and intimidation). Unlike the politicians they revile, the men and women of Antifa cannot be voted out of office.”

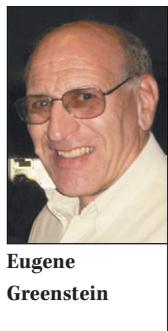
In reality, as we saw three weeks ago at Berkeley, Antifa dressed in black with masks behave the same as fascist Nazi Brown Shirts and, as in Germany, the police stood down.

Today, anti-Semitism from the right is small compared to the anti-Semitism coming from the left and from political Islam. One of the leading authorities on anti-Semitism, Dr. Charles Asher Small, in his 2017 State of Anti-Semitism Address “New Trends in the USA and Around the World,” points out the threats from the left and political Islam are more significant than from the right.

Professor Dershowitz in recent articles has made the same observation. A new study, “Anti-Semitic Violence

in Europe, 2005-2015” — written by Johannes Due Enstad of the Oslo-based Center for Studies of the Holocaust — concludes that European anti-Semitism is now dominated by the political left, not the right, and that political Islam is a major cause of the uptick.

Growing left wing anti-Semitism should not be a surprise. Professor Kenneth Waltzer, retired director of Jewish Studies at Michigan State, in his late-2009 paper “The Contemporary Anti-Semite and The Radical Anti-Zionist,” pointed out the rising anti-Semitism on campus and in society is masquerading as anti-Zionism from the political left.



Eugene Greenstein

One of the (January 2017) Women’s March key organizers, Linda Sarsour, is for BDS and the application of Sharia law. Sharia law calls for the death

of gays, women being valued at half compared to a man, non-believers being given the choice of convert or death, etc.

Sarsour, in an interview with *The Nation*, said, “It just doesn’t make any sense for someone to say, ‘Is there room for people who support the state of Israel and do not criticize it in the movement?’ There can’t be in feminism. You either stand up for the rights of all women, including Palestinians, or none.”

She has nothing to say about how women are treated as second-class citizens in Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia. Also, Black Lives Matter (BLM) sees fit in its platform to call out Israel for abuse of Palestinians while ignoring black slavery in the Muslim world.

In the recent Chicago Gay Pride parade, a Jewish gay group was not allowed to participate as it had a Star of David on its flag. The gays are in solidarity with the Palestinians; however, Palestinian society will murder gays for being gay while Israel has an annual gay parade.

Outside of Dershowitz, no other notable liberal has of late stood up and spoken out against the violence from Antifa and the hypocritical use of intersectionality by gays, BLM, the feminist movement, etc., to promote anti-Zionism/anti-Semitism. When will the Jewish community realize they can’t be blind to the anti-Semitism of the left and political Islam? When will we as Jews and our leadership stand up to all fascists regardless of whether from the left or the right as they all hate us? ➔

Eugene Greenstein is a community activist.

letters

Larger Story On Suicide Prevention

First, thanks for your coverage on suicide prevention in the Aug. 31 *DJN* article, “You Can Save a Life.” It’s such an overwhelming and sad problem, and it’s good for your readers to read about it and understand communal resources.

Next, as a guy who runs a Jewish agency and works on a regular basis with lots of others in this space, it was disappointing and confusing to see that the coverage was just on a piece of what’s going on in the Jewish community. Friendship Circle and Rabbi Yarden are doing amazing work. So are Kadima and BBYO and the Jewish Fund Teen Board and Frankel Jewish Academy and Jewish Family Service and ... We are all involved in a Teen Mental Health Work Group, convened by Federation, because we are deeply concerned about the problem, acknowledge that to “end users” where to turn for help is confusing, and want to coordinate, remove barriers and save lives as a unified community.

More comprehensive coverage about all that all of us are doing, including SafeTALK and ASIST and Mental Health First Aid and A Single Soul, etc., would have served your readership better. Posting suicide prevention resources as part of this article was an important thing to do. Having Rabbi Yarden’s contact information as the *only* number in the Jewish community is, again, only part of the picture.

Again, thanks for your attention to this, but there’s a larger story out there.

Perry Ohren,
CEO, Jewish Family Service of Metropolitan Detroit

Opposition To Israel Anti-Boycott Act

We write to urge members of the Greater Detroit Jewish community to join us in opposing the proposed Congressional legislation known as the “Israel Anti-Boycott Act.”

This bill, currently making its way through both houses of Congress, seeks to amend the Export Administration Act (EAA) of 1979, which prohibited participation by American corporations in the Arab boycott of Israel. The corporations that participated in that boycott did so as a result of coercion by the governments of Arab nations. Thus, the EAA provided what many deemed to be important and necessary relief from such foreign coercion in matters of trade.

The current bill extends the law in problematic ways that should be

of equal concern to all of us, without regard to the merits of arguments for and against BDS. These provisions of the new law — as currently proposed — constitute nothing less than a violation of our First Amendment rights to political speech.

According to experts from the American Civil Liberties Union, the current language of the proposed act infringes upon the right of individual American citizens and groups to even advocate participation in boycotts of Israel or the disputed territories under its control. This goes well beyond anything that the original EAA was created to regulate. The ACLU suggests that, if passed into law as worded, an individual on Facebook who might be seeking information about companies doing business with Israel may very well be in violation of the law.

As Humanistic Jews, we are committed to the values of open discourse and absolute freedom of political speech. Unlike the law that it is amending, this bill does not protect anyone from coercion; it fosters it by attempting to control the political speech of American citizens. Furthermore, it does so in ways that have already failed to stand the test of constitutionality. As recently as 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously (*NAACP v. Claiborne Hardware Co.*) that notwithstanding the broad powers of the government to regulate commerce, peaceful advocacy of politically motivated boycotts is protected.

The First Amendment was not established to protect popular speech. There is no need for such safeguards. It was created to protect unpopular, even odious speech. For this reason, we strongly believe that — whatever one’s position might be — the rightness or wrongness of BDS must be judged in the court of public opinion, not by silencing its advocates. For this reason, we stand with the ACLU in urging members of our Jewish community on all sides of this issue to oppose the Israel Anti-Boycott Act in its current form on the grounds that it is a clearly unconstitutional regulation of political speech.

We ask that those who vigorously oppose BDS recognize the constitutional rights of its proponents. Not because they agree with them. But because they support fundamental American values.

Jeffrey L. Falick, Secular Humanistic Rabbi
Professor Ronald Aronson
Professor Fran Shor
Ann-Marie Fisher
Charles Paul
Steven Blum
Susan Warrow
Melanie Ben-Gal
Paul Caradonna