Neutrality is complicity

written by David M. Weinberg | 20.10.2023

After the Nazi-era-like rape, mutilation, and pillaging of 1,400 Israeli Jews in one day by Hamas, two weeks ago, this is what Cambridge University had to say: Breathe easy, we're "always available to provide emotional support."

Professor Kamal Munir, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for University Community and Engagement of that venerated, celebrated, beacon of integrity and intellectual status – the University of Cambridge! – wrote to "all staff" that "Our thoughts are with everyone affected by the recent events in Israel, Gaza and the Middle East."

"We understand this is a hugely difficult and distressing time, particularly for students and colleagues with connections to the region. If you need support or someone to talk to, we urge you to speak to your line manager. The Staff Counselling Centre is always available to provide emotional support.…"

Not a word about the mass slaughter of Jews by Palestinian Islamic extremists. Not one murmur of discomfort. Just "thoughts" of emotional cuddling for "everyone affected" by the unnamed "recent events" in the Middle East.

At the no-less-famous bastion of highbrow thinking in America, Harvard University, President Claudine Gay along with 17 Harvard administrators called themselves "heartbroken by the death and destruction." Oy vey. Their poor hearts took such a beating. But death and destruction perpetrated by whom, and why?

Even *The New York Times* (which played an ugly role this week in pumping Hamas lies about the explosion near that Gaza hospital) found the statement tepid. Only infuriated Harvard alumni triggered a second try, eventually forcing the university's leaders to condemn "the terrorist atrocities perpetrated by Hamas."

Even then Gay felt compelled, by her oversize intellect no doubt, to add that: "Such inhumanity is abhorrent, whatever one's individual views of the origins of longstanding conflicts in the region." Why add that last conniving clause? Because Prof. Gay wouldn't want anybody to think, G-d forbid, that she placed any responsibility on her holy Palestinians for 100 years of genocidal conflict against Israel.

There has been no further reflection by the scholarly giants of Harvard, that academic powerhouse fueled by billions of dollars in Jewish philanthropy, about the implications of the Iranian-backed Hamas massacres for Western society and civilization, never mind any additional words of support for – say it! – the State of Israel.

McGill University's flabby first response also took refuge in therapeutic gobbledygook. "Yesterday's news of violent conflict in Israel and Gaza has caused many of us to feel shaken. We care deeply about your wellness and recognize that the tumultuous times in which we live can at times feel overwhelming. Below, you will find resources available to you for support."

I am so sorry that McGill profs and students are shaken! Might they also be stirred to support Israel, or even to condemn by name – yes, by name – Palestinians who beheaded babies in front of their mothers before dragging the women into slavery in Gaza and have held them incommunicado ever since?

But no, all these academics are too deeply embedded in toxic ideologies like critical race theory and woke paradigms about oppressors and dispossessors to rouse themselves against the evils of Hamas. They long have mainstreamed anti-Israel attitudes that posit moral equivalence between those whose cheerily slaughter Jews and those bad Jews who fight back.

Their neutral and anodyne sentiments about broken hearts, heartfelt feelings, sympathy for "all victims" of conflict, and other such mushy musings – even as Israeli Jews are being brutalized by heartless barbarians (– Islamist hordes that are next coming for them in the West) – is but cover for profound moral failure; grand collapse of Western spine and principle.

Prof. Gil Troy has called this the "silence of the tenured lambs." That is too soft an accusation. It's more like the "roaring rank antisemitism of the intellectuals."

These elevated minds can never sympathize with Israelis, no matter what abominations Israelis endure. After all, Jews/Israelis have brought this all down upon themselves by "occupying" their ancient homeland – which really, according to the corrupted academics, is indigenous Palestinian land (sic.). And those darn Jews are too powerful anyway.

In other situations of recent global and national conflict, say the Russian invasion

of Ukraine, or the demonstrations led by Black Lives Matter following the murder of George Floyd, or a US Supreme Court decision against abortion-on-demand, these same academics had no hesitations about issuing thunderous statements of support or condemnation. No compunctions whatsoever of speaking out decisively.

They were quick to virtue-signal their politically correct stance on the side of "truth and justice." They festooned the august halls and headquarters of universities with the colors of Ukraine or the BLM logo. They railed against the dark backwardness of conservative justices.

None of these academics took cover under an analgesic blanket of "heartfelt concern."

The disappointing and infuriating surrender to Hamas of the intellectuals is mirrored in diplomacy too. For decades, the rotten standard statement of UN and EU leaders in response to every Palestinian-Israeli conflagration has been to condemn the "continuing cycle of violence." As if Israel and the Palestinians each were cavalierly engaging in murder just for fun or out of comparable burning hatred; as if "both sides," alas, were "suffering casualties" and equally responsible for the "cycle" of violence.

What is missing from the above comments, and the usual glib reporting of international media too, is any reference to the political and moral implications of Palestinian terrorism. Nobody has the guts to remark upon the death-glorifying political culture of Palestinians that repeatedly chooses violence over negotiations.

Few are prepared to recognize the distinction between kid-killing Palestinian terrorists and Israeli soldiers conducting anti-terrorist operations who must arrest or eliminate Palestinian combatants and occasionally hit a bystander too.

Few have the rectitude to acknowledge that Palestinian society celebrates the kidnapping and mass murder of Israeli men, women, and children, while the IDF does its utmost to avoid civilian casualties.

Instead, too many Western diplomats who should know better, and Western journalists who pretend not to know better, outrageously plug symmetry, and in doing so, present the public with a horrifyingly distorted snapshot of the

Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This keeps the storyline in a neat and supposedly non-judgmental comfort zone. Except that ultimately it is very, very judgmental – against Israel.

Apparently, it is necessary to re-state the obvious: There is no moral equivalence between Israelis and Palestinians in the current struggle. Especially after the recent Hamas massacres, it should be clear that neutrality is complicity.

Reticence to condemn Hamas and to act resolutely against its monster-master Iran amounts to collusion against Israel. Hesitancy to express explicit support for Israel at this time, which also will mean unequivocally backing Israel in the many months ahead of tough fighting to crush Hamas, is tantamount to siding with the enemy.

For Israeli society, moral standards are clear. Israelis value life, not death. Israel seeks peace with all its Arab neighbors. Israel desires conflict resolution, not annihilation, of Palestinians.

By my count, Israel has put eight far-reaching compromise proposals for peace on the diplomatic table over the past 20 years – all spurned by the Palestinians. It also has fed for decades the Palestinians of Gaza with tens of thousands of tons of fuel, electricity, water, and food; and allowed tens of thousands of Gazans to work in Israel. The Palestinian response: slaughter.

The rejectionism of Palestinian leadership is clear, repeatedly laid bare by atrocious terrorism, the glorification of terrorists by the Palestinian leadership, and the financial support for terrorism of Palestinian governments including that of Palestinian Authority dictator Mahmoud Abbas, and by repeated rejection of all peace compromise proposals.

This is the time for friends of Israel around the world to speak out loudly and unambiguously in support of Israel. To demonstrate moral backbone and address good and evil, not emote limp feelings of concern. To show understanding of the grand strategic challenges posed to Israel and the entire democratic world by this latest genocidal Islamist onslaught. Just as US President Joe Biden magnificently did this week.

Now is the time for all those congressmen and global parliamentarians who have visited Israel, and all those academics and artists who have worked with their

Israeli counterparts, to rally to Israel's side.

In this regard, it is wonderful to see the initiative of a bipartisan group of 69 former US senators and representatives, forming "Former Members of Congress for Israel," meant to build and maintain support for Israel during its long war with Hamas. Such steadfast support for Israel projects must be replicated in other sister democracies.

Published in The Jerusalem Post, October 20, 2023; and Israel Hayom, October 22, 2023.