

‘The Zionists are our Misfortune’: On the (not so) new Antisemitism

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Since 2000 there has been a global surge of anti-Semitism that has taken the form of a rise in the number of physical attacks upon Jews and a growth in anti-Semitic discourse. These phenomena depend upon hostile constructs of ‘Zionism’ and ‘Zionists’ that are not necessarily motivated by conscious Jew hatred, but resurrect anti-Semitic motifs and popular hostility to Jews per se.

Introduction

For the overwhelming majority of Jews, Zionism is quite simply the belief that there should be a Jewish state, now realised in Israel. For them, a Zionist is someone who supports that idea. Both emotively and analytically they regard Israel as a blindingly obvious necessity given the destruction of European Jewish communities in the Holocaust. This is why so many Jews recoil in horror when they are told that they must reject Zionism and condemn Israel, or suffer the consequences.

These Jews are Zionists in the root sense of the word, but their self-definitions of Zionism have been overwhelmed by elaborate hostile depictions of ‘Zionists’ and ‘Zionism’ as being synonymous with all that is evil in the modern, American-led unipolar world, including imperialism, racism, capitalism, globalism, militarism and war. More: Israel, the fruit of Zionism, is the root cause of Muslim anger and Islamist terrorism. Worse: Zionists have manipulated American foreign policy to create a ‘Clash of Civilisations’ and war between the West and Islam. As in so many previous times of instability and conflict, Jews (now the demonic ‘Zionists’) are allegedly stalking the shadows of power, manipulating non-Jews to fight and die for their physical benefit and financial profit.

This anti-Zionism is not mere criticism of Israel as a nation state, or of the nationalist ideology that inspired its creation. It is an adaptive group libel that in its range of rhetorical charges and physical targets reveals itself to be a fundamentally anti-Semitic creation in anti-racist guise. It has flourished in our supposedly post-anti-Semitic age, until mainstream Jewish communities (and their sympathisers) are condemned as reactionaries and apologists for oppression.

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The anti-Zionist project to destroy Zionism and wrench Jews apart from it, challenges the centrality of the Holocaust to contemporary mainstream Jewish identity and its resultant responses to Israel and Zionism. Ironically, the contrary Jewish attitude is perhaps best summarised by the renowned Marxist thinker Isaac Deutscher, who in 1954 bitterly reflected that, 'If instead of arguing against Zionism in the 1920s and 1930s I had urged European Jews to go to Palestine, I might have helped save some of the lives that were later extinguished in Hitler's gas chambers.' [1]

Today's anti-Zionist attitude to the Holocaust is a denial of the obvious truth of Deutscher's statement. Indeed, the Holocaust is often airbrushed out of anti-Zionist histories of the creation of Israel, or is given no weight whatsoever in comparison with the importance of Zionism's alleged pact with devilish imperialism. Where the Holocaust is explicitly addressed, it is often presented as if the Zionists licked their lips at the mountains of Jewish ashes, and then cunningly tricked the world into accepting the idea that Israel's creation was a viable and natural reaction to the near successful genocide of European Jewry. This may not constitute Holocaust denial per se, but it is certainly a bitter and twisted perversion of Zionism's relation with the Holocaust. This is the same rationale that causes plays such as 'Perdition' – alleging Zionist collaboration in the Nazi slaughter of Hungarian Jewry – to be performed on Holocaust Memorial Day by the Scottish branch of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign [2]. Again, contrast this to Deutscher: 'I have, of course, long since abandoned my anti-Zionism, which was based on a confidence in the European labour movement, or, more broadly, in European society and civilization, which that society and civilization have not justified.' [3]

In 1945, Theodor Adorno summarised anti-Semitism as 'the rumour about the Jews.' [4] The rumour predates Christianity and is dependent upon the psychological drivers of the antisemite rather than the real actions of Jews. It provides a scapegoat to explain away the ills of the world. Antisemitism – unlike other forms of racism – alleges power, not weakness. Jews are not victims, they are victimisers. Jews are not ignorant savages, they are cunning manipulators. Jews do not sponge off society, they leech it dry. Jews do not die for others, they send others to die for them instead.

After the Holocaust, this blatant anti-Jewish language was deemed unacceptable, but the motifs are resurfacing and the devilish 'Zionist' has replaced the devilish Jew but is no less 'our misfortune' for that. A concealed all-powerful alien gang

still runs the world via their control of finance, global media and American and European Governments. Antisemitism, it seems, is always 'new,' yet always 'old.'

Part 1: From 'old' Antisemitism to 'new' Anti-Zionism

The 'old' anti-Semitism is generally agreed to include two millennia of Christian religious Jew-hatred; the socio-economic exclusion of Jews from the rest of society; nationalist and xenophobic Jew-hatred; and, transcending (indeed, often excluding) all of these in the popular imagination, the biological racism of the Nazis that culminated in the Holocaust.

Where once anti-Semitism came in distinct ideological packages, the 'new' 'Anti-Zionism' is an increasingly globalised discourse that is *at once Jew-free and packed full of age-old anti-Semitic charges and motifs*. The link has been forged by two 'old' – but poorly understood and largely unacknowledged – forms of anti-Semitism: Islamist and left wing anti-Jewish prejudice and practice. [5]

Self proclaimed anti-Zionists from both the left and Islamist camps angrily insist (and sincerely believe) that their ideologies cannot possibly be anti-Semitic. But both ideologies tolerate Jews only so long as they behave in the manner demanded of them. They say that they hate Israel and Zionists for what they do, and not for their Jewishness. But they assert the world-shaping power of 'the Zionist lobby' as a fact, deny Zionism to Jews, parade a small number of highly politicised Jewish anti-Zionists as 'good' Jews, depict Jews as the primary victim of Zionism, and often blame anti-Semitic attacks (including terrorism) upon the failure of Jewish communities to sufficiently condemn the Jewish state.

The anti-Zionist discourse blithely assumes that it is moral to attack and destroy Jewish communities' links to Zionism and Israel, and that this assault on the contemporary pillars of Jewish self-identity cannot be construed as anti-Semitic. Indeed, the UCU academic union incorporated this denial into its anti-Israel boycott resolution. [6]

The claim that anti-Semitism has no connection to anti-Zionist and anti-Israel hatred is repeated within mainstream media, as demonstrated by the headline to the Guardian coverage of the 2006 UK All Party Parliamentary Inquiry Into Antisemitism: 'Accusations of anti-Semitic chic are poisonous intellectual thuggery.'

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Attempts to brand the left as anti-Jewish because of its support of Palestinian rights only make it harder to tackle genuine racism.' [7]

The Guardian headline is typical in two senses: it grossly misrepresents Jewish concerns about anti-Semitism as they have been expressed by communal representatives, and it embraces an allegation that has now become a comprehensive, self-serving mantra for anti-Israel media commentators and political activists alike: Jews cry wolf to guard Israel. These attitudes pervade much of what passes for today's anti-racism movement.

In fact, Jewish representative bodies and community leaders have repeatedly stated that it is entirely legitimate to criticise Israel. When Jewish representative bodies complain of anti-Semitism it is because they are concerned about anti-Semitism, not about 'criticism' of Israel.

But there is criticism and criticism. It is not merely 'criticism' of Israel to scapegoat it for the world's ills; to allege a Zionist plot to control the world; to claim that Zionism is a uniquely evil ideology directed against the rest of the planet with its 'primary base station' in Israel [8]; to broadcast television programmes that show Jews murdering non-Jews to use their blood for religious purposes; to deny the Holocaust; and to hold Israel as the only country in the world deserving of boycott, isolation, hatred and destruction. It is not mere 'criticism' of Israel to blow up Turkish synagogues with truck bombs, just as it is not 'criticism' of Israel when Jews and Jewish property around the world are physically attacked every time there is an escalation in Middle East tensions involving Israel, and even after events that do not involve Israel, such as the 9/11 terror attacks or the US-led invasion of Iraq.

'Anti-Zionism' and the evasion of Anti-Semitism

The liberal left's denial of what Jewish communities actually mean when they discuss anti-Semitism is central to its widespread suspicion and rejection of mainstream Jewish perspectives – a phenomenon that is completely at odds with how other minority groups are treated. This denial only reinforces prejudicial allegations that Jews cry persecution and are powerful and malicious conspirators, set against the rest of society and not to be trusted. Like so many other aspects of contemporary anti-Semitism, the nature of its denial reinforces the very prejudice whose existence is denied.

The left's rejection of mainstream Jewish community concerns regarding anti-Semitism was exemplified by the late Paul Foot, in his *Guardian* column of 6 March 2002: 'Especially pathetic on the part of our apologists for Israeli oppression is their bleating about anti-semitism. For the sort of oppression they favour is the seed from which all racialism, including anti-semitism, grows.' [9] British Jews are reduced to the status of local agents of a malevolent foreign power, and are then blamed for their own persecution. It is inconceivable that Foot would ever have written about Blacks or Muslims as apologists for overseas governments, or would have accused them of 'bleating' about racism.

When the Labour MP Tam Dalyell infamously accused 'a *cabal of Jewish advisors*' of influencing Tony Blair, Paul Foot was quick to defend him, writing in his *Guardian* column: [10]

Obviously he [Dalyell] is wrong to complain about Jewish pressure on Blair and Bush when he means Zionist pressure. But that's a mistake that is constantly encouraged by the Zionists. The most honourable and principled Jews, here, in Israel and everywhere else, are those who oppose the imperialist and racist policies of successive Israeli governments.

Foot's defence displayed many prominent features of contemporary anti-Semitism: clearly anti-Semitic connotations and accusations are made legitimate by swapping the word '*Zionist*' for the word '*Jewish*'; the idea that Zionists deliberately encourage anti-Semitism for their own nefarious purposes is embraced; and British Jews are categorised depending upon their opposition to Israel.

Antisemitism is a warning sign of fractures within society. Hatreds that begin against the Jews do not end with them. The anti-Zionist stops us seeing this warning sign because he redefines anti-Semitism as something that has no relevance to the wider society, classifying it as Zionist manipulation of Jewish paranoia and non Jewish guilt.

Some left wing intellectuals who accept that something must be done about anti-Semitism will argue that action is needed to deny the utility of anti-Semitism to 'the Zionists.' A *Guardian* article by anti-globalisation author Naomi Klein was headlined, [11] 'Sharon's best weapon. Anti-semitism sustains Israel's brutal leader – the fight against it must be reclaimed.' This typifies the anti-Zionist prism through which all Jewish issues are now filtered.

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The cover of the left-wing *New Statesman* magazine of 14 January 2002 featured a golden Star of David piercing a Union Jack. A similar image of the golden Star of David piercing a map of the world is on the cover of at least one English-language Muslim version of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* that has been available in the UK in recent years. [12] The then editor of the *New Statesman*, Peter Wilby, subsequently apologised for having unwittingly used anti-Semitic imagery, but the episode demonstrated the collapse of the understanding of what constitutes anti-Semitism. Wilby's apology exhibited why the left furiously condemns Nazi-like expressions of anti-Semitism whilst brushing aside non-Nazi anti-Semitism from Islamist, Arab and Black Power groups. He wrote:

To call somebody a 'white bastard' is just not the same as calling somebody a 'black bastard,' with all its connotations of humiliation and enslavement. Given the distribution of power in our world, discrimination by blacks or Asians against whites will almost always be trivial. Jews are a different case. They no longer routinely suffer gross or violent discrimination: indeed, in the US and Europe at least, Jews today are probably safer than most minorities. But the Holocaust remains within living memory, as do the language and iconography used by the Nazis to prepare the way for it. We have a special duty of care not to revive them. [13]

Wilby's 'hierarchy of oppression' approach is not intentionally anti-Semitic but it shows how the left is poorly equipped to deal with forms of racism that do not fit the 'oppressor-victim' paradigm, and signals that left opposition to anti-Semitism will diminish as the Holocaust recedes from public memory and significance. Indeed, the left's natural response is of course to line up with the oppressed against oppressors, and the closer Jews are identified with oppressors (as Israelis, as bankers and capitalists, as 'Zionists' controlling the White House etc), the less sympathy the left displays: as shown by the 'we are all Hizbollah' chants that resonated on last summer's anti-Israel demonstrations.

Islamism and Anti-Zionism

Many who speak of 'new' anti-Semitic perpetrators really mean Muslims. 'New' has become a code for alleging that it is Muslims who are now largely responsible for anti-Semitism. But is this true? In Britain, the statistics of actual anti-Semitic incidents – hate crimes displaying anti-Semitic intent – show that while Muslims are over-represented as perpetrators per head of population, they are not the

majority perpetrators. In 2006 the (Jewish) Community Security Trust knew of 205 incidents where a perpetrator had been identified. [14] In those cases, 49 percent of the perpetrators appeared to be white; 29 percent appeared to be Pakistani, Indian or Bangladeshi; 8 percent appeared to be Arab; and 14 percent appeared to be Black. This suggests Muslims are approximately 10 times over-represented as perpetrators (based on the fact that Muslims comprise 3.1 percent of the UK population.)

Closer analysis reveals that Muslims are less over-represented than first appears. Most anti-Semitic incidents occur in ethnically mixed urban neighbourhoods. For example, the highest number of anti-Semitic incidents occurs in the London local authority area of Barnet, where 14.8 percent of the population is Jewish, and 6.2 percent of the population is Muslim. Additionally, the Muslim population is younger than most other ethnic groups, and younger age cohorts are most likely to perpetrate anti-Semitic incidents, as they are more likely to be on the streets. Perpetrator profiles reflect the nature of the event that triggers a surge in anti-Semitic incidents. If Israel is the trigger, then Muslims will be over-represented as perpetrators. Alternatively, when Jewish organisations received hate mail in the aftermath of a press furore about Prince Harry wearing a Nazi uniform, it appeared to have been written by various white British Army veterans from World War Two. [15]

Muslim attitudes to Jews and anti-Semitism are of great concern to diaspora Jewish communities who fear the impact of overseas wars upon domestic relations. One 2005 survey [16] (by Populus for The Times) revealed that 46 percent of British Muslims polled agreed with the statement that Jews 'are in league with the Freemasons to control the media' (22 percent against); 53 percent agreed that Jews 'have too much influence over the direction of UK foreign policy' (19 percent against); and 37 percent agreed that Jews 'are legitimate targets as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East.' (35 percent against).

Part 2: The Rise of 'Anti-Zionism'

1967: The Six-Day War and the rise of 'anti-Zionism'

The story of the rise of 'anti-Zionism' is largely that of how the post-1967 Soviet and Arab onslaught against 'Zionism' came to eclipse all other modes of anti-

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Jewish hostility. 1967 was by no means the first time that 'Zionist' was employed as a supposedly non-anti-Semitic metaphor for 'Jew,' but Israel's shattering success in the Six Day War triggered a propaganda drive that after four decades has permeated much of the Muslim world, and many minds within left-liberal elites; and has ensured that a reflexive anti-Jewish bias is no longer the exclusive preserve of right wing reactionary forces within society.

Many would immediately charge that Israel's post-1967 behaviour has invited these anti-Zionist allegations and facilitated their spread, and there is certainly some truth in this. For committed anti-Zionists, however, the occupation and Israeli violence against Palestinian and Lebanese civilians are more than tragic products of a cycle of conflict, rather they embody the essence of Zionism, including the original sin of Israel's very creation and its conspiratorial role within Western imperialism. There is a vast divide between this demonising perspective and that of the mainstream Jewish Diaspora for whom Zionism remains a basic emotive and spiritual attachment to Israel – and not some crypto-fascist conspiracy that was always predestined for racist oppression as now allegedly epitomised by the slums of Gaza and the graves of Sabra and Shatilla.

The post-Six Day War distortion of Jewish nationhood into a demonised abstract was predicted with remarkable accuracy eight days after the ceasefire by Colin MacInnes in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 18th June 1967:

Myths, by essence, have nothing to do with reason. A myth can only be defeated by another more potent myth which destroys the old one in the collective subconscious mind. And the question now is, will the Jewish victories of the past weeks destroy the element in English anti-Semitic myth that arises from an irrational belief in Jewish cowardice...

If the anti-Semitic myth of Jewish passivity will now vanish, might it not be replaced by another fear? For in the past few weeks we have witnessed an extraordinary transformation of the English Gentile towards Jews. Before the battle started most Englishmen thought of Jews only as the oppressed, the victims, 'Little Israel'; surrounded by foes dedicated to its destruction. After their swift victory, the Jews seemed transformed into the conquerors, even oppressors. And Arabs, who were thought of as arrogant attackers, seemed to have become overnight the victims, the wronged, the weak.'

MacInnes thought it 'likely that many who rejected anti-Semitism will nevertheless now regard Israel as the new imperialism, the danger, and whilst not becoming anti-Semites, will become vociferously anti-Israel...much of the anti-imperialist Left is already hostile to Israel, while much of the ex-imperialist Right is sympathetic.'

And so it has come to pass, and to grow more ferocious after forty years of war, violence and bloodshed.

1975: 'Zionism is Racism'

While the 'old' anti-Semitism involved a commitment to racism, the 'new' variant takes the opposite approach, claiming that anti-Zionism exemplifies a commitment to anti-racism.

This stems from the 'Zionism is Racism' resolution passed by the United Nations in 1975 (since rescinded in 1991). In hindsight, this resolution now looms as the Soviet Union's legacy to the 'new' anti-Semitism, in much the same way as *The Protocols of The Elders of Zion* were Tsarist Russia's legacy of codifying the 'old' anti-Semitism. (Both Russian systems would collapse less than twenty years after their propaganda coups.)

University graduates from the 1970s and 1980s are now assuming power in government, media, business and throughout the NGO world. They condemn Nazi-style 'old' anti-Semitism and are shocked by anti-Semitic violence, but many accept the notion that 'Zionism is racism' and its corollary that Zionists are therefore racists. This charge demands, in the name of morality, suspicion and hatred of all (real and imagined) supporters of Israel as well as cultural, economic and academic boycotts of Israel, which can only be enforced by the continual scrutiny and hostile suspicion of Israel's actual and potential supporters (i.e., Jews). It may also lead some to the natural conclusion that Israel's supporters (like any fascists and racists) deserve a good kicking every now and then.

Diaspora Jews retain their emotional and spiritual attachment to Israel, and so are punished as local representatives of the alleged political and military depredations of Israel/Zionism. This is the anti-Semitic version of the creeping acceptance of al-Qaeda's 'logic' whereby every member of a democracy holds responsibility for the actions of their Government; only in the case of Jews, it is enough that they (or most of them) may be Zionists.

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Part 3: The New Contexts of 'Anti-Zionism'

The last significant wave of anti-Semitic violence in Europe in the early 1990s was essentially 'old' anti-Semitism, fed by xenophobia and nationalism after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, occurring in the context of a rise in far right inspired attacks against minority groups. The post-Millennial wave of anti-Semitism is distinguished by new contexts.

New Politics: the rise of a new alliance

'Anti-Zionism' forms part of an ideological (and often would-be revolutionary) struggle against the state itself, but which proclaims alliance with minorities and the defence of civil and human rights. Much of this is packaged as opposition to the so called 'War on Terror' and is played out on the streets in demonstrations that unite large portions of the campaigning left with Islamist groups, and have attracted millions of participants across the globe.

This international green-red alliance, with the public involvement of Hamas and Hizbollah, is the highly visible 'new' motor of much anti-Semitism. It has the potential to achieve mass movement status, led by demagogues pushing revolutionary slogans to a vulnerable, alienated and confused generation.

New Media: Anti-semitism goes into cyberspace

On 30 April 2003, two British Muslims travelled to Tel Aviv and then blew up a bar, murdering two people. [17] Hamas released their martyrdom video one year after the attack, in which one of the bombers declared that it was 'a great honour to kill these people. A great honour.' This case exemplifies the interaction of 'new anti-Semitism' with international terrorism and the new media. The propaganda value of their deed was in many ways the most important aspect of the entire attack. And the global transmission of the video, one year after it occurred, showed the power of the new media.

Consider how quickly the allegation spread that Jews had not turned up for work in the Twin Towers on 9/11 (and how widely this craziness is now believed). Imagine how complex it would have been 20 years ago to communicate and explain the claim that Zionist provocateurs are responsible for the Darfur crisis and attendant allegations of genocide against its perpetrators. Spreading in the viral networks of cyberspace, hatred and myth develop through unrestricted groupthink and then infiltrate supposedly respectable spaces such as the *Guardian's* Comment is Free

blog, leading to comments such as this being posted [18]: ‘Zionists, like Nazis in the past will be brought to their knees. Zionist sympathisers are nothing more than devil worshipers, they like to suck your blood dry.’

The Guardian would not have published this in its print edition, but the profusion of new communications technology allows such hatred to repeatedly appear within mainstream media. The fact that such postings will eventually be removed if intelligently framed complaints are received by the moderator is very small comfort indeed. Hate speech is being normalised in new media and the onus for policing the limits is now transferred from the publisher to the victim.

The profusion of new electronic and satellite media is making news and comment a matter of choice. Consumers watch and read media that confirm and intensify their views and prejudices, without the moderating influences found in traditional media outlets. The growing impact of diffused media choice will only serve to deepen current divisions and attitudes. If, for example, British Muslims chose Hizbollah’s Al-Manar TV as their news feed, then it would certainly put concerns about alleged liberal left BBC bias into a new perspective.

**New Geopolitics: Anti-Zionism and the resurgence of Anti-Americanism after
the fall of the Wall and the Twin Towers**

In previous decades, the Cold War was the global security framework through which political debate was filtered. American support for Israel was demonstrably similar to that for any number of ‘front line’ countries around the world. Hatred of America, and anti-imperialist championing of third world causes, initially focussed upon opposition to the Vietnam War. In time, South African apartheid became the universal cause célèbre symbolising the struggle of good versus evil. Today, Israel has assumed the Vietnam and South Africa mantle, greatly to the detriment of the image of Israel’s real and imagined supporters. (i.e. Jews).

The disappearance of the USSR as the USA’s visible enemy encourages the idea that American support for Israel *can only be explained by a supposed Zionist stranglehold over Capitol Hill*. There is debate within the left as to whether or not the Israeli tail actually wags the American dog, but the very question shows how much power and malice is now commonly ascribed to ‘Global Zionism.’ [19]

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Rising anti-American hatred is being displaced onto Israel and Jews and (in Iranian Revolutionary parlance) the 'Great Satan' and the 'Little Satan' are being yoked together. US support for Israel is seen as paradigmatic of America's role as the global bully, dedicated to securing oil and power by expanding its commercial and military domination at the expense of authentic, local, humanistic and ecological interests. This anti-American hostility is a major component in encouraging contemporary anti-Israel rage, and it resurrects historical anti-Jewish capitalist themes.

It is plainly unrealistic for anyone to advocate a boycott of the Great Satan. Israel, ('The Little Satan') is a more convenient, more isolated, and more easily demonised target. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) depicts Israel as 'America's Attack Dog in the Middle East,' but it is the 'dog' that its activists raise boycotts against, not the 'master.' Is this political expedience or political cowardice? And what else does it tell us about why Israel's actions excite so much passion from those in the West with no direct link to either it or the Palestinians?

New Guilt: Anti-Zionism and European self-loathing

There are many anti-Zionists who insist on portraying Jews as essentially 'one of us' – perhaps even (drawing upon figures such as Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Marx, Trotsky and Freud) an idealised example of 'what is best about us.' Paradoxically, this can actively intensify the hatred of Israel and her supporters, making them ideal targets for displaced self-loathing. European post-colonial guilt is heaped upon Jews for backing Zionist colonialism; guilt for centuries of anti-Semitism is assuaged by equating Zionism with racism; and post-Holocaust guilt is eased by ascribing Israel as the inheritor to Nazi Germany. The 'Zionism equals Nazism' slur is an obscenity that very few respectable commentators would ever make directly, but Jews are still confronted with the routine utilisation by the media and politicians of Nazi metaphors for Israel's actions: Gaza becomes the Warsaw Ghetto, Jenin becomes Stalingrad, Israeli settlements are a drive for *lebensraum*, Israeli army actions are blitzkriegs, Palestinian terrorists are the inheritors of resistance against the Nazis, and, as former PLO London head, Afif Safieh, used to put it, Palestinians become 'the Jews of the Israelis.'

All of these new factors infuse the self-described 'anti-Zionists' with a revolutionary urgency that compulsively derides and opposes mainstream Jewish narratives on anti-Semitism, self-identity, self-expression and links with Israel. The hateful rhetoric that results can fuel violent acts and other hate crimes against all Jews. This

is an obvious consequence of contemporary 'anti-Zionist' rage and hysteria that is denied, ignored, or excused by the 'anti-Zionist' camp which adamantly portrays itself as philo-Semitic.

However, when anti-Zionists attack leading non-Jewish world figures such as George Bush and Tony Blair as 'Zionist,' and when Islamists label as 'Zionist' any person or institution deemed hostile to their interpretation of Islam, we can see that a new anti-Semitic consciousness is emerging, perhaps best summed up as the view that 'The Zionists Are Our Misfortune.'

Conclusion

In 2003 a European Union survey of people in 15 EU countries showed that 59 percent believed Israel to be the greatest threat to world peace. European Commission President Romano Prodi said that the results 'point to the continued existence of a bias that must be condemned out of hand. To the extent that this may indicate a deeper, more general prejudice against the Jewish world, our repugnance is even more radical.' [20] Prodi seemed aware that blaming Jews for wars and revolutions has been a staple anti-Semitic charge for centuries. It underpinned Hitler's 30 January 1939 'warning' of the coming Holocaust: 'If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will not be the Bolshevisation of the earth, and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe!'

Today, anti-Semitism's packaging is 'new,' the branding and salesmen are utterly contemporary, and the transmitters are wholly modern; but the motivation and content are depressingly familiar. 21st Century anti-Semitism retains many of the central characteristics of previous forms of anti-Semitism: it reflects the condition of Jewish and non-Jewish society; it is transmitted by modern means and ideas; it depicts Jews (especially 'Big' and 'Organised' ones) as powerful, alien and conspiratorial; it impacts against any random Jew or Jewish community, regardless of their politics and actions; and it acts as a glue to unite otherwise disparate ideological and political factions. And, as ever, it is an early warning to the rest of society about the rise of irrationalism and extremism. But will we heed it?

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Notes

- [1]Deutscher 1968.
- [2]http://www.scottishpsc.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1718&Itemid=87. Also see Levine and Maitles 2007.
- [3]Deutscher 1968.
- [4]Adorno 1996 [1951] p. 110.
- [5]Cohen's 2005 [1980] book is an astonishing indictment of left-wing anti-semitism. Among the statements he assembles are the following: '[The Jews of Poznan are] the dirtiest of all races' (Engels). 'I do not like Jews at all. I detest them in general' (Lassalle). 'The whole Jewish world constitutes one exploiting sect, one people of leeches, one single devouring parasite' (Bakunin). 'Anti-Semitism must necessarily and contrary to its own will transform itself into a revolutionary movement' (Babel). 'Jew moneylenders control every Foreign Office in Europe' (Justice, paper of the Social Democratic Federation). 'Wherever there is trouble in Europe, wherever rumours of war circulate and men's minds are distraught with fear of changes and calamity, you may be sure that a hook-nosed Rothschild is at his games somewhere near the region of the disturbance' (*Labour Leader*, paper of the Independent Labour Party). 'Whoever fights against Jewish capital ... is already a class fighter, even if he does not know it ... Strike down the Jewish capitalists, hang them from the lamp-posts, crush them!' (Ruth Fischer, leading figure in the German Communist Party in the early 1920s). 'A powerful Zionist connection runs from the so-called left of the Labour Party right into the centre of Thatcher's government in Downing Street. There is no difficulty whatever in proving this' (Newline, paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party).

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'Such is the Zionist influence in Britain – particularly in the media ('Lord' Lew Grade, 'Lord' Bernstein) that this film (Death of a Princess) was bound to be shown and used to stir up anti-Arab feeling' (Letter from Tameside National Front organiser Anthony Jones published in Socialist Worker).

- [6] <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2555>
- [7] Clark 2006.
- [8] Shaykh Dr. Abdalqadir as-Sufi 2005.
- [9] Foot 2002.
- [10] Foot 2003.
- [11] Klein 2002.
- [12] Faruqi 1991.
- [13] Wilby 2002.
- [14] Community Security Trust 2006.
- [15] Community Security Trust 2005.
- [16] <http://www.populuslimited.com/the-times-muslim-poll-191205.html>
- [17] Only one of the bombers succeeded in blowing himself up. The other fled and was later found dead on the Tel Aviv seafront.
- [18] Comment is Free website, 14 March 2006.
- [19] John Le Carre described his novel *Absolute Friends* as '...a piece of political science fiction [aimed at showing] what could happen if we allow present trends to continue to the point of absurdity where corporate media are absolutely at the beck and call in the United States of a neo-conservative group which is commanding the political high ground, calling the shots and appointing the state of Israel as the purpose of all Middle Eastern and practically all global policy' (Le Carre is quoted in Jeffries 2005.)
- [20] BBC, 'Israeli anger of EU 'threat' poll, 3 November 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3237277.stm