



# The West's complicity

The war on Jews is back

## COMMENT

• By AMICHAI CHIKLI

In 1882 Warsaw, 36 years before the Petliura pogroms – in which more than 100,000 Ukrainian Jews were massacred in over 1,500 attacks; 57 years before the Holocaust; and 138 years before these words were written – a concerned Jewish journalist, Nahum Sokolow, published an essay titled “Eternal Hatred for the Eternal People.”

It opened with the following lines:

“Thousands of years ago, one family – the family of Abraham the Hebrew – set itself apart from the nations. It believed in God and walked in His ways, and ever since, this nation has not known peace... Jew-hatred is like a tree: in autumn its leaves fall, but its trunk and roots remain...”

“The nations have attributed every crime in the world to the Jews. They accused us of qualities stamped with the seal of falsehood. Not once were we blamed for two opposite things at once – unified only by a hatred both ancient and born of profound ignorance... Today, that old hatred has a new name: antisemitism.”

Indeed, just a few years before Sokolow penned those words, the term “antisemitism” was coined by German thinker Wilhelm Marr in his 1879 pamphlet *The Way to Victory of Germanism over Judaism*. The virus of Jew-hatred had mutated – from religious xenophobia into racial hatred.

The theological rationales gave way to pseudo-scientific ones. The new twist was that this hatred offered no escape – not through conversion, not even through assimilation.

Fifteen years after publishing his seminal essay, Sokolow was present at the First Zionist Congress in August 1897. He met Theodor Herzl, translated his utopian novel *Altneuland* (“The Old New Land”) into Hebrew, and eventually became president of the World Zionist Organization.

Herzl believed that Zionism would end antisemitism:

“The Jewish question is not a social or religious question... It is a national question. And it will be solved only if it is recognized as such... We are a people, one people! In good faith, we have tried to merge with the peoples in whose midst we live, trying to retain only the faith of our fathers. They rejected us. In vain are our efforts to be loyal citizens... In vain do we strive to advance their nations through science and trade...”

Herzl, chillingly, foresaw the coming catastrophe:

“If I had to summarize the condition of European Jewry in two words,” he wrote in *The Jewish State*, “I would use the familiar Berlin slogan: *Juden raus* (out with the Jews).”

Herzl understood that assimilation would never suffice. He echoed earlier Zionist forerunners such as Kalischer, Hess, and Alkalai, who argued that Jews must return not only to their land but also to their Jewish identity.

As Herzl declared at that first Zionist Congress:

“Zionism is a return to Judaism even before it is a return to the land of the Jews.”

But in one critical prediction, Herzl was wrong: the idea that antisemitism would vanish once Jews had a state.

It didn’t. The tree of hatred that Sokolow described may have shed its leaves after the Holocaust, but in time the leaves regrew. The old hatred once again raised its head.

In 2004, French-Jewish philosopher Alain Finkielkraut warned in his essay “In the Name of the Other”:

“For fifty years, Nazism served as a shield for Western Jews. Hitler had discredited antisemitism. Some believed that discredit was final – but it turns out it was only temporary...”

“And now, in France – the European country with the largest Jewish population – the reprieve is ending in the most brutal fashion: synagogues are torched, rabbis assaulted, cemeteries and community institutions defaced... Intellectuals who denounce Zionism as a criminal movement are growing in number, and Holocaust education is increasingly impossible...”

He continued, “For the first time since the war, Jews are afraid. That fear combines two seemingly contradictory feelings: shock and recognition. The past lay dormant within dominant opinions, pretending to be dead – waiting for an opportunity. That opportunity has arrived.”

Though 20 years have passed since Finkielkraut wrote those lines, his description fits France in 2024. A recent survey found that 64% of French citizens believe Jews have valid reasons to fear living in France – double the percentage who answered the same in 2014. This, despite Jews comprising only 0.7% of the population.

Finkielkraut wrote about France, but his analysis could now apply to Britain, the US, Canada, and Australia. For many Jews in the West, life increasingly feels like a siege.

Before the founding of the State of Israel, Jews were targeted for virtually every reason imaginable – religious, racial, economic, or political. Too pious or too secular, too rich or too poor, too socialist or too capitalist, too conservative or too progressive.

After Israel’s founding, antisemitism took on new forms. Racial antisemitism was somewhat muted by Holocaust trauma – though it has gradually resurged. But the main target now became the Jewish state.

Israel, born out of war for survival against local Arabs and five invading armies, was accused of ethnic cleansing. In 1975, a Soviet- and PLO-backed initiative resulted in a UN General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism. In 2001, the infamous Durban Conference accused Israel of apartheid.

And today, following the October 7 massacre perpetrated by Hamas, Israel is being



UN SECRETARY-GENERAL António Guterres and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez attend the EU summit in Brussels on March 20. In the West, jihadist allies are members of the radical Left, the writer points out. (Olivier Hoslet/Reuters)

accused – absurdly – of genocide.

There is no crime against humanity that the world has not pinned on the Jewish state. These are the modern blood libels.

Three ideological forces – fused in an unholy alliance – now promote this libelous hatred:

- Radical Islam
- Palestinian nationalism (shaped by the PLO)
- Progressive left-wing ideology, which despises nationalism – except for one: Palestinian nationalism.

Most violent antisemitic incidents in Europe today are committed by Islamists. The attack on Maccabi Tel Aviv fans in Amsterdam wasn’t carried out by Dutchmen – it was perpetrated by pro-Palestinian Islamist immigrants.

The 2012 Toulouse school shooting and the 2015 Hyper Cacher supermarket massacre in Paris weren’t committed by native Frenchmen either – but by jihadist extremists.

Their allies in the West are members of the radical Left: Jean-Luc Mélenchon in France, Jeremy Corbyn in the UK, and Pedro Sánchez in Spain. Together, this alliance is sometimes referred to as the red-green pact (red for socialism, green for Islamism).

This alliance leads the assault on Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish nation-state. I emphasize “Jewish” because that’s what they reject. Many in the progressive camp could accept a secular state of “Israel” – as long as it sheds its Jewish identity. But a Jewish nation-state? That, they cannot abide.

The nemesis of Zionism is not just antisemitism – it is Palestinian nationalism, whose very essence is the negation of Zionism. Its identity is built not on positive foundations but on rejection. Not a “narrative,” but a negative: The slogan “From the river to the sea” is not about coexistence – it is about elimination.

The events of October 7 and the grotesque global response that followed elevated this hatred to new heights. The glorification of rape, the celebration of slaughtered families, the demonization of IDF soldiers, the Holocaust distortions, the grotesque double standards – all reserved for one state.

ONCE AGAIN, the streets of Europe are unsafe for Jews. And once again, many of the

EU’s leaders have chosen cowardice over courage. Rather than side with truth, they align themselves with Palestinian propaganda. Instead of backing those under attack, they excuse the attackers.

Moral decay in Europe might buy short-term quiet, but it fuels Hamas-style barbarism – even in European capitals. Just look at what’s happening in “Londonistan.” The country that gave the world the Magna Carta now guards Churchill’s statue with police. As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once said: “What begins with the Jews never ends with the Jews.”

Whoever turns their back on our people in our fight against evil will soon find that evil at their own doorstep. Denying the Jewish people’s right to their ancestral homeland – in Mount Ebal, Shiloh, or Jerusalem – is not just historical blindness; it weakens the moral fabric of those who do it.

Deny us the right to self-determination, and you may soon struggle to recognize your own nation in the mirror.

To fight antisemitism, we need bold leadership and decisive action.

Revoking visas for Hamas and Hezbollah sympathizers behind violent protests in the US? That’s decisive action.

Defunding and investigating universities that failed to protect Jewish students? Also decisive.

What we are seeing now from the Trump administration and Leo Terrell’s task force at the Department of Justice – that is real leadership. That is a real war on antisemitism.

The Diaspora Affairs Ministry will continue to seek cooperation with leaders and organizations willing to face reality, roll up their sleeves, and fight – not with polite condemnation but with moral clarity and unapologetic force.

I’ll end where Sokolow began. In his “Eternal Hatred for the Eternal People,” he wrote:

“It is truth that will fortify the people of Israel on its eternal path.

“Through truth, we will stand against the fierce assault of our enemies.

“Through truth, we will find strength and hope.”

The eternity of Israel will not lie.

The writer is *Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism* minister and member of the Likud Party.