

The Weaponisation of “Antisemitism” to Silence Support for the Liberation of Palestine

News:

In recent days, there has been much discussion in Britain suggesting a link between pro-Palestine demonstrations and the rise of antisemitism and attacks against Jews in the country. Prior to the 2nd anniversary of the October 7th Hamas attack on the Zionist entity, British prime minister Keir Starmer, urged students not to join pro-Palestine protests on the day, warning of *“rising antisemitism on our streets”*, and that it was *“un-British to have little respect for others”* by staging demonstrations on the anniversary, adding that protests had been used by some as a *“despicable excuse to attack British Jews”*. The prime minister’s official spokesperson stated that protestors *“should demonstrate humanity”* and remember the attack on ‘Israel’ on October 7, while the Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson also appealed to people not to protest on the anniversary, commenting, *“Two years on from October 7, I would just ask people to reflect and try and think about shared humanity and our responsibility to one another.”* The attack on a Manchester synagogue on the 2nd October that led to the death of two Jewish men, has also been blamed by some on pro-Palestine marches in the country.

Comment:

It is clear that the British government and various other politicians and ‘pro-Israel’ media commentators are exploiting the ‘antisemitism’ card to try and silence the call for the liberation of Palestine from the Zionist occupation. Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, also announced plans to grant police broader powers to restrict repeated protests, in the wake of the many pro-Palestine demonstrations that have taken place, while Health Secretary, Wes Streeting is to update legislation banning what he terms “Antisemitic” doctors and other health care workers from treating patients. Antisemitism is viewed by many in western political and media circles as calling for the complete removal of the Zionist occupation in Palestine. Therefore, health workers who express support for the complete liberation of Palestine now face losing their jobs under the banner of being ‘antisemitic.’

The well-trodden narrative that associates antisemitism with calling for an end to the brutal Zionist occupation and support of the right of Palestinians to regain their lands and homes brutally stolen by Jewish settlers, is utterly absurd, as is conflating the actions of individuals who attack Jews in Britain with pro-Palestine protests. It’s on par with blaming pro-Ukraine demonstrations with attacks on Russian individuals in the UK. It is a narrative that is clearly being employed to intimidate and silence those calling for an end to this brutal occupation and the full liberation of Palestine.

Furthermore, the idea that it is insensitive, disrespectful or showed a lack of shared humanity to protest on the 2nd anniversary of 7th October against the Gaza genocide, while the occupation continued to rain down bombs on innocent Palestinians, reflects the double standards that western politicians have towards the value of Palestinian lives as opposed to Jews living within the Zionist entity.

It is not calling for the complete liberation of Palestine that drives antisemitism in the west but rather this genocide by the Zionist entity, whose politicians and forces espouse the Zionist concept of Jewish supremacy and exploit Judaism to justify their brutal actions and the occupation of the Blessed Land. Furthermore, it is not Islam that carries a history of systemic antisemitism and the persecution of Jews – but rather secular European states. Indeed, the very creation of the Zionist entity is a result of the Jewish pogroms in Europe, and the antisemitic sentiments within Britain who tried to prevent the influx of European Jews into the country through its 1905 Aliens Act.

In contrast, Jews flourished under the Islamic rule of the Khilafah state in the past. For example, the British Jewish historian, Cecil Roth, mentions that the good treatment of the Jews at the hands of the Ottoman Caliphate (Uthmani Khilafah) State, attracted Jews from all over Western Europe, and that the land of Islam became the land of opportunity for them, where they flourished economically. Under the Islamic system of the Khilafah, Jews were even rescued and given sanctuary when persecuted in other lands. For example, in 1492, under the Uthmani Khilafah, Sultan Bayezid II sent his entire naval fleet to rescue 150,000 European Jews who were being persecuted by the Christian rulers of Spain and settled them in the lands of the Khilafah. Furthermore, the Jewish historian, Avi Shlaim has stated that antisemitism was imported into the Arab world from Europe, arguing that indigenous antisemitism was virtually non-existent in the Arab region before the 20th century, and that European antisemitic literature had to be translated into Arabic to be introduced to the region. Shlaim also emphasized that Jews were well integrated into Arab societies for centuries under Islamic rule and that the modern form of antisemitism is a “European disease” that was exported to the Middle East.

Therefore, Muslims in the West need to keep strong in the face of such false narratives and intimidatory government policies aimed at silencing them from calling for the complete liberation of Palestine. We need to continue to call for the uprooting of this brutal, murderous occupation from the Blessed Land in its entirety, for this is what Allah (swt) demands, and is the only means to end the ongoing slaughter and subjugation of our Ummah there. We need to take inspiration from the actions of our dear brothers and sisters in Palestine who have demonstrated to us the courage and steadfastness against oppression that comes from our Iman as Muslims. Indeed, Allah (swt) says: **﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ﴾** ***Surely, those who say, “Our Lord is Allah,” and they remain steadfast, the angels descend upon them, saying, “Do not fear, nor grieve. Rather, rejoice in the good news of Paradise, which you have been promised...”*** [Fussilat: 30]. And we need to explain to those around us that it is only the Islamic system, implemented by the Khilafah state based upon the method of the Prophethood that can create peace, security, justice, prosperity, and secure the rights of all faiths under its rule in Palestine and across the Muslim lands – as it did historically.

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