



ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

narratives that feed broader hostility toward Jews.

The challenge today is recognizing that antisemitism often wears the mask of political activism or human rights advocacy. It calls for a nuanced understanding and firm

Commentary...

Jewish Communities Face Growing Threats Masked as Anti-Zionism

By Michael J. Salamon, Louis Libin

When Jewish schools face legal challenges just for teaching their own identity, and synagogues require military-grade security to operate safely, it's clear that it's more than isolated incidents.

Across Western democracies, antisemitism is not just rising, it's being repackaged and, disturbingly, sometimes justified under the label of anti-Zionism. The real danger lies not only in the acts of violence or discrimination themselves but in the growing acceptance of the ideas that make them possible.

Recent events in the United Kingdom and Canada highlight this urgent crisis. These aren't random outbreaks but part of a troubling pattern demanding urgent attention.

So far, responses have been cautious and insufficient. The consequences reach far beyond Jewish communities, threatening the very foundations of tolerance and coexistence in democratic societies.

In the UK, The Guardian reported a significant escalation in the terrorism threat level, raised to "severe" due to a spike in attacks targeting Jewish people, institutions, and businesses. The government's response has been to hire former Royal Marines and paratroopers to protect Jewish sites. The near militarization of everyday communal life starkly reveals the scale of the threat and a broader failure to ensure basic safety for Jewish citizens.

In Canada, the situation takes a different but equally alarming form. The Canadian Antisemitism Education Foundation revealed that on April 22, 2026, a coalition of anti-Israel and antisemitic groups, including organizations with seemingly benign names like "Just Peace Advocates" and "Palestinians and Jews United", filed formal complaints against 11 Jewish day schools across the country.

These complaints, lodged with the Canada Revenue Agency, accuse these schools of breaking tax laws by promoting pro-Israel and Zionist views, arguing that supporting Israel and the Israel Defense Forces contradicts Canadian charity rules.

At first glance, this might look like a bureaucratic dispute. It's not. These complaints form a strategic, coordinated effort to undermine Jewish education and identity, cloaked in legal jargon. This is part of a larger movement that blurs the line between political disagreement and outright hostility, using anti-Zionism as a cover for antisemitism.

Opposition to Zionism, the political movement supporting the Jewish state, is often framed as a valid political stance.

But when it crosses into denying Jews the right to self-determination or holds them collectively responsible for Israel's government, it stops being a political critique and becomes discrimination.

This crossover is exactly what the Canadian complaints represent. Jewish schools serve as vital centers for cultural and religious identity. Targeting them through tax complaints isn't just an attack on Zionism; it's an attempt to restrict Jewish identity itself, echoing historical tactics that have pressured Jewish communities under the guise of neutral legal processes.

This troubling dynamic isn't confined to the UK or Canada. The rise of antisemitism cloaked as anti-Zionism is a transnational phenomenon spreading through Western democracies. The violence in the UK and legal harassment in Canada reflect a broader failure to confront these prejudices with clarity and resolve. Without a decisive response, this problem will only deepen.

In the United States, similar tensions play out. New York City's Mayor Zohran Mamdani has drawn attention for his vocal criticism of Israel, presenting it as part of representing a diverse population. But such stances often blur an important line: between legitimate policy critique and rhetoric that risks normalizing the marginalization of Jewish citizens.

When leaders disproportionately single out Israel or question the legitimacy of the Jewish state, they can inadvertently legitimize

boundaries.

Criticism of any government, including Israel's, is valid and necessary. But when it turns into demonization, delegitimization, or double standards applied only to Israel, it creates fertile ground for antisemitism to grow under the guise of activism.

Antisemitism isn't a relic of the past. It adapts, persists, and evolves. Online platforms and social media amplify conspiracies and hate speech, blurring lines between political critique and outright bigotry. This modern antisemitism targets entire communities, questioning their legitimacy and rights.

Governments, civil society, and individuals must respond clearly and consistently. Raising security levels, as in the UK, is necessary but reactive. Legal battles like those in Canada demand vigilance and sustained advocacy. Political leaders must be held accountable for rhetoric and policies that risk marginalizing Jewish citizens.

The surge in antisemitic acts and legal challenges against Jewish institutions is a call to action. It reminds us that the fight against hatred is ongoing and complacency is not an option.

Protecting Jewish communities means more than security or legal defense; it means reaffirming the democratic principle that no minority should have to justify its identity or existence.

Already, these attacks are driving tangible consequences. More Jews are choosing to make aliyah – seeking safety and belonging in Israel. This isn't just a personal choice; it's a quiet indictment of societies that fail to make their Jewish citizens feel secure.

The rise in antisemitic violence and targeting of Jewish institutions is flashing red lights. They reveal how hatred can adapt, rebrand, and gain acceptance when not confronted clearly.

Protecting Jewish communities is not just about security; it's a test of whether democratic societies will uphold their own values consistently. The real question is whether there is clarity and courage to confront this threat directly. (Jerusalem Post May 5)

The Crisis of American Jewry after October 7, the Collapse of Old Assumptions

By Daniel M. Rosen

The world has read extensively about the flawed Israeli *konceptzia* (prevailing world view), which paved the way for the October 7 surprise attack. Far less has been written about a simultaneous breakdown occurring within American Jewry.

While one relates to the horrors of kinetic warfare, the other concerns the true position and stability of the Diaspora. For decades, American Jews operated under their own flawed *konceptzia*, regarding their status in society, assumptions that have been exposed by the surge of Jew hatred since the October 7 massacre.

In both cases, this misdiagnosis of reality led to huge lapses in judgment and planning.

While the Israeli *konceptzia* led to a physical battle for survival that the state has countered with military force, the crisis facing American Jewry is of a different, less tangible nature.

Israel has largely managed to pivot from an existential threat back toward regional dominance through hard power. However, for American Jews, the dilemma is sociopolitical rather than military.

Because the issues are woven into the fabric of American cultural life, the solutions are not nearly as straightforward, leading some to argue that the Diaspora's ideological reckoning may be more difficult to navigate than Israel's tactical recovery.

At the core of the current Diaspora crisis lies the shattering of a long-held understanding: the belief that American Jewry had achieved a permanent, "insider" status that rendered it immune to the historical cycles of antisemitic blowback.

For decades, many in the American community operated under the conviction that their civic and political contributions would be received through a universalist lens – as the actions of "ordinary Americans" rather than through a specifically Jewish one.

This strategic miscalculation led to three catastrophic policy

shifts within the Jewish mainstream that have now converged to create hostility from both the mainstream Left and the extreme Right.

Firstly, Mainstream Jewish institutions spent the last few decades leaning heavily into “woke” ideologies that reordered society into a rigid hierarchy of the oppressed.

By validating a system that judges individuals based on group identity rather than character, this fueled a populist resentment on the extreme Right while providing the Left with the tools to categorize Jews as “white oppressors.”

Secondly, perhaps critically, the decision to allow – and sometimes even lead – the takeover of liberal spaces by radical anti-Zionists and genuine antisemites. Under the guise of “intersectionality,” Jewish activists often pushed for the inclusion of voices that were openly hostile to Jewish self-determination, operating under the naive assumption that other social justice goals were simply more “urgent.”

There is ample evidence that these institutions treated antisemitism as a secondary concern, a relic of the past that could be managed with enough “dialogue.”

Instead, they effectively subsidized the infrastructure that is now used to de-platform Jewish students and harass Jewish businesses. They also played an integral role in advocating for the immigration of people from Muslim countries, many of whom have very strong anti-Jewish sentiment

Thirdly, while busy fixing the world, the Jewish establishment failed in its most fundamental duty: the education of its own children. By prioritizing universalist values over Jewish particularism, a generation was raised without the historical education or the foundational pride necessary to defend themselves.

Young Jews are unprepared to counter propaganda. We are now witnessing the result: young Jews who lack the intellectual fortitude to counter vitriolic propaganda on campus, on social media, and beyond. Without a strong sense of Am Yisrael (the People of Israel), many have either retreated in fear or, worse, joined the ranks of those calling for their own community’s marginalization.

The connective tissue between these three failures was the arrogant assumption of immunity. The belief was that the American Jewish experience was fundamentally different – that we were too integrated and too successful to be scapegoated.

Today, mistakes have been revealed. The Left views the Jew as the ultimate beneficiary of “whiteness,” while the radical Right views the Jew as the architect of the very progressive policies that threaten their way of life. When you combine these two extremes with the perennial human tendency for scapegoating, the result is a perfect storm of animosity.

While it is never fair to blame the victim for the malice of the perpetrator, it is essential to acknowledge the strategic blunders that contributed to the current situation.

Only through reflection can the mistakes be fixed. If there is one lesson to be drawn from the current crisis, it is the necessity of endurance.

Just as the Israeli spirit has relied on a unique brand of national tenacity to overcome existential threats, so too must the Diaspora find its own resolve.

The mistakes of the past – while difficult to unwind – do not define the end of the story. The task now is to rebuild a Jewish identity that is unapologetic, confident, and self-reliant. (Jerusalem Post May 5)

When will Britain Protect its Citizens? By Charlie Laderman

There was a time that Britain prided itself on protecting its citizens — whatever their religion — wherever they were in the world. Now the government is reluctant to defend them from foreign aggression even on its own soil.

In the past fortnight alone, terrorists have targeted British citizens and property on UK territory at least four times. Yesterday was just the latest. Two Jewish people in Golders Green, North London, were stabbed. This follows on from last week, when two synagogues and one Jewish-owned business were firebombed, thankfully with no loss of life.

The previous month, ambulances belonging to a Jewish charity were set ablaze in suburban London. Attacks against the Jewish community are clearly escalating.

A previously unknown group called Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-

Islamia (HAYI) has claimed responsibility for all these attacks, as well as several similar assaults against Jews and Jewish buildings across continental Europe.

This terrorist group emerged seemingly out of nowhere at the start of the full-scale U.S.-Israeli conflict with Iran in March. The UK police are now investigating their links to Tehran. If confirmed, these are just the latest in a campaign of terror orchestrated by the Islamic Republic across the UK against Jews and Iranian dissidents alike.

The regime is already responsible for more than “20 potentially lethal attacks on UK soil” in the last year alone, according to British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Yet Starmer has also repeatedly made clear that “this is not our war” and Britain will not be “dragged” into it.

This is all far removed from the heyday of British power. Back in 1850, Starmer’s predecessor, Lord Palmerston, delivered a famous speech on what protection British citizens could expect from their government.

“As the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity, when he could say *Civis Romanus sum*” (I am a Roman citizen),” Palmerston declared, “so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England, will protect him against injustice and wrong.”

What made Palmerston’s statement all the more remarkable is the incident that caused it. Don Pacifico, a Jewish man born in the British territory of Gibraltar, had claimed the help of Palmerston’s government after antisemitic rioters in Greece torched his property.

When the Greek government refused Pacifico’s compensation demands, Palmerston sent the Royal Navy to blockade Greek ports and demand recompense for this British subject.

Palmerston, of course, had far weightier strategic objectives in mind than simply aiding this Jewish merchant of Portuguese descent. He was eager to demonstrate British supremacy in the eastern Mediterranean. He also wanted to send a clear message to other autocratic powers across Europe that Britain would zealously defend its interests and its ideals against all comers if necessary.

This was just one of a series of high-handed interventions that Palmerston engaged in, from China during the 1839-1842 Opium War to the suppression of the international slave trade on the high seas. Foreign governments and domestic critics decried Palmerston’s gunboat diplomacy against Greece as just his latest instance of illegal warmongering.

Yet as Palmerston reminded his critics: “It rarely if ever happens that a foreign government gives up its selfish interests, its passions or prejudices to the force of argument or persuasion.” Indeed, when faced with a government that “is deaf and blind to reason and right,” diplomacy “seldom succeeds unless there is compulsion of some sort behind it.”

Today, British citizens are again assailed by a regime that seems impervious to “reason and right,” and is motivated by the most ancient of prejudices. This time, however, it is happening not abroad but here at home.

Starmer’s response to these attacks on Britain’s citizens on British soil is effectively to refuse to recognize them as acts of war. He has ruled out responding belligerently or allowing the United States to use British bases for offensive purposes against the regime. Instead, the Foreign Office simply summoned Iran’s ambassador for an explanation after two of its agents were charged with spying and planning attacks on Jewish targets across Britain.

Unlike the U.S. and a growing number of countries across Europe, London has still not proscribed the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), the regime’s primary projector of terror. Starmer’s government has justified this on the grounds that current terrorism laws are not “appropriate for a foreign state organization.”

At the very least, Britain should immediately outlaw the IRGC. London could also allow U.S. forces greater leeway in using British bases to combat Tehran. Downing Street might not like how the U.S.-Israel war with Iran arose. But Britain and its citizens clearly have an interest in its success.

Yet even as Tehran steps up its offenses in Britain, Starmer has continued to call for diplomacy and de-escalation, with next to no compulsion behind it.

It is certainly clear to Britain’s enemies that this is not Lord Palmerston that they are dealing with. And, sadly, British citizens will continue to pay the price.

(Foundation for the Defense of Democracies Apr 30)

These Blood Libels are Endangering Jews By Brendan O'Neill

We need to talk about the feverish pathology of Israelophobia. There is no calumny so preposterous, no rumour so unhinged, that it cannot be vomited up by those who have prostrated themselves before the maniacal hatred for the Jewish State. The latest lie is their sickest yet. It is this: that Israel has become such a hellish entity, so utterly the enemy of humanity, that it is training dogs to rape Palestinians.

None other than Francesca Albanese, the UN's special rapporteur for the Palestinian territories, has given voice to this abominable slander. This week, she decried the unholy barbarism of the Jewish nation. They have 'burned' Palestinians, she said. They have tortured them and then amputated without anesthesia their limbs that were ravaged in that torture. And they have raped them. Both the soldiers of the Jewish State and their mutts are carrying out rapes, she said. Palestinian detainees have their faces forced into a toilet as 'trained dogs' violate them from behind, she said, with wide, demented eyes.

It is being lapped up in the swirling digital cesspit of Israelophobia. Israel is a 'rapist state', cry mobs of sun-starved haters. They are 'demons' and 'animals', wail the spreaders of the dog-rape libel. And still they expect us to believe they're just 'critics of Israel' even as they brand its people a fiendish, diabolical stain on humanity, just as those mobs did 900 years ago before setting fire to a stake with a Jew on it.

There is not a scintilla of evidence for Albanese's heinous tale of Israelis shoving men's faces into toilets and then instructing dogs to rape them. She seems to have got it from Owen Jones of the Guardian, who has spent the past week mainstreaming this grotesque, evidence-free story. 'Israel is raping Palestinians with dogs', says the headline to his piece, as he invites readers to think of this bigoted canard as absolute truth.

Yet as Honest Reporting says, the dog-rape libel – 'among the vilest and most stomach-churning libels ever cooked up about Israel' – is the bastard offspring of frothing, prejudicial hearsay. It points out that Jones relies heavily on Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, a 'grotesquely anti-Israel outfit' that is responsible for various 'deranged conspiracy theories' about the Jewish homeland. Jones only quotes anonymous Palestinian detainees, meaning none of the claims can be verified. And his claim that 'Israeli soldiers' have verified reports of dog rape is a reference to the fact that an Israeli academic called Shaiel Ben-Ephraim says he spoke to IDF soldiers who had 'heard about it'. That thing you can smell is bullshit.

There is not one mainstream media outlet that would give space to such a delirious, unfounded story. Even the Guardian, the bible of bourgeois anti-Zionists, would likely say: 'Evidence, please.' Perhaps that's why Jones published his screed, with its wail about how 'there are no limits to the depravity' of the Zionist entity, on his personal website.

Isn't it amazing that when Jones viewed Hamas's self-filmed footage of its fascistic pogrom of 7 October 2023 – which included a clip of a murdered Jew with her underwear torn off – he said: 'If there was rape and sexual violence committed, we don't see this on the footage.' Yet when known haters of Israel say dogs are raping Palestinians, he repeats it verbatim. The Jewish State is never believed; its sworn enemies always are. There's a word for this: prejudice.

The leftist outlet Novara Media has also run with the dog-rape tale. It quotes a source saying IDF soliders brutishly rape Palestinians 'with a dog or with a stick' in order to make sure they will never again be able to 'live their lives normally'. These beastly assaults by the trained canines of the Jewish nation are yet another brutish venting of Israel's 'genocidal intentions', apparently.

Let us be clear: this is not journalism, it's atrocity propaganda. It is not a search for the truth, but a wide-eyed embrace of lies that flatter one's pre-existing view of Israel as a uniquely demonic entity. It is not reportage, it is slander. Journalism entails finding facts, checking facts, assessing the reliability of sources, and then exhaustively verifying the claims made by those sources. None of that has happened here. The dog-rape tale is nothing more than the repetition of bizarre rumours for the titillation of a global audience convinced that Israel is the wickedest state to ever exist.

Truth is not the intention here – demonisation is. You can tell this from the frenzied podcast Jones made to accompany his batshit article. Reading and writing about the 'indescrivably horrific' crime of Israeli dog-rape was like 'opening a door to the darkest recesses of Hell', he says. 'You will rightly ask yourself', he says to listeners waiting with lolling tongues for yet further confirmation of Israel's wickedness,

'how any human being could possibly imagine these crimes, let alone actually perpetrate them'.

This isn't journalism. It's certainly not anti-imperialism. It is nothing I would recognise as 'progressive' commentary. It is a medieval morality play, where the mob is invited to marvel and gag over the fathomless depravity of the Jewish State. It is of a piece with Jones's religious mania over Israel, a nation he says is 'uniquely murderous' and in the grip of a 'genocidal mania'. As for its 'cheerleaders', who have succumbed to 'depravity', he hopes they will be 'haunted by the souls of the slaughtered Palestinians... until the end of time'. These are the ramblings of a mind rendered unstable by obsessive, one-eyed loathing for Israel.

The dog-rape tale leaves no doubt – ancient blood libels are being reshaped in the phoney language of 'criticism of Israel'. The Jewish people were once accused of lusting after the blood of Christian children – now the Jewish State is accused of intentionally murdering Palestinian children. The Jews were once said to be the secret puppetmasters of politics – now the Jewish nation is said to have the mighty West eating from the palm of its hand. Jews were once branded as agents of Satan, doing his diabolical work on Earth – now they are said to deploy dogs in their genocidal crimes and in the process are 'opening a door to the darkest recesses of Hell'. Are we seriously expected to believe it is wholly coincidental that all the dangerous shit that was once said about Jews is now said about the Jewish State? Yeah, I'm not buying it. To me, it feels like medieval calumnies are being reanimated on the altar of a deranged loathing for the world's only Jewish nation.

That Francesca Albanese is spreading the dog-rape story takes the blood-libel crisis to a whole new level. This is a UN official. These are dangerous times. There was a stabbing in Golders Green just today. History tells us that blood libels beget violence. Burnings and pogroms followed the medieval myths about Jews being child-killers and well-poisoners. In the past year, we've seen Jews in England be violently attacked and stabbed by people calling them baby-killers. How long before the knife is wielded by monsters calling them rapist dogs, too? (Spiked Apr 29)

Anti-Zionists who Condemn Anti-Semitic Crimes are Gaslighting Us By Jonathan S. Tobin

Last week's stabbing attack against two Jews in London's Golders Green neighborhood was just the latest instance of what even local police agreed was an "epidemic" of antisemitic crimes. It was just one of many such incidents in the United Kingdom, the United States, continental Europe and Australia over the course of the last 31 months in which Jews were subjected to violence merely for being conspicuously Jewish.

Since the Hamas-led Palestinian Arab attacks on Israeli communities on Oct. 7, 2023, such incidents have become commonplace. The connection between the two is not a coincidence. That's because the Oct. 7 attacks were the spark for a global surge of Jew-hatred. It's rooted in the idea that the war to destroy Israel—for which the atrocities of Oct. 7 were just a trailer for what would happen to the rest of the Jewish state should Hamas and its allies triumph—was a righteous cause that enlightened progressives should support.

And in the name of this supposedly righteous cause of ending the one state on the planet that is Jewish, where half of the world's Jews just happen to live, a lot of harm is being done to Jews elsewhere.

The curious thing about the people who support these awful ideas is that they don't wish to be considered antisemitic.

Listen to those like leftist podcaster Hasan Piker and former MSNBC host Mehdi Hasan, who openly support Hamas, and they'll tell you that while they support the destruction of Israel, they want to assure Jews in the Diaspora that they have nothing to fear from them. Or, at least, not as long as they don't support Israel.

They are adamant in asserting that anti-Zionism—a movement that denies rights to Jews that no one would think to deny to any other group or people—is not the same thing as antisemitism. Indeed, like New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, they are proud of their public advocacy against the Jewish state and their nonstop floating of lies about it committing horrible fictional crimes while denying or rationalizing the actual crimes committed against it and its people.

At the same time, they deny that this has anything to do with the unprecedented worldwide increase in acts of Jew-hatred. Piker was at

pains to make this argument in, of all places, JTA, which was once the respected primary source of news about the Jewish world. He claims that he's trying to fight antisemitism while leading the charge in favor of demonizing the Jews of Israel and their supporters abroad.

Making common cause with right-wing Jew-haters, like former Fox News host and current podcaster Tucker Carlson—their moral equivalent at the other end of the political spectrum—says the same thing. That was exhibited this past weekend, when he attempted to explain himself in a largely friendly interview with The New York Times.

What it boils down to is the claim that the war on the Jewish state is not a war on the Jewish people or Judaism.

That is why college students and their professors chanting for Jewish genocide (“From the river to the sea”) and terrorism against Jews everywhere (“Globalize the intifada”), or demonstrators on the streets of American cities, could believe that they were not behaving indecently—that they were simply doing the right thing. If you’ve been indoctrinated by toxic leftist ideologies to believe that Israelis and Jews are “white” oppressors of Palestinians who are victimized “people of color,” then anything, even a genocidal war, done to them can be rationalized.

This mindset, in which Israel and Zionism are demonized and delegitimized, is the reason why so many left-wing activists and ideologues, especially those who masquerade as mainstream journalists, have spread Hamas propaganda that amounts to blood libels about Israelis committing “genocide” against Palestinian Arabs in Gaza.

Those smears are the core content of what Israeli journalist Matti Friedman dubbed “Gazology,” or what legal scholar and author Alan Dershowitz calls “Palestinianism.” They are both ways of describing an international movement aimed not at uplifting this populace, but of singling out Israel and the Jews as a malevolent global force that is symbolic of all the world’s ills. It’s a long-told sinister fantasy: Their eradication will magically liberate the oppressed people and causes in the world.

That is why Jews are being assaulted and murdered in the name of “Free Palestine” in the streets of England, Australia, and, yes, the United States.

The people who are most prominent in publicizing the ideas that help to incite such crimes, however, are indignant at the claim that what they are doing is antisemitic.

Their problem is that their advocacy—not to mention the name-calling they indulge in—falls directly into the category of behavior cited in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism. And, of course, that’s why antisemites and their enablers and apologists consistently oppose the IHRA.

Carlson’s platforming of Holocaust denial is an example of Jew-hatred labeled in the definition. But so do his claims, similar to his left-wing equivalents like Piker, that Israelis are the new Nazis. More than that, their repudiation of the right of self-determination to Jews in their own homeland is inherently antisemitic, judging it by double standards not applied to any other nation. Another classic antisemitic trope is their claims that American Jews who support Israel are guilty of “dual loyalty.”

Let’s also be clear that what Carlson on the right, along with what Piker and Jewish apologist writer Peter Beinart are doing on the left, is not “criticism” of the State of Israel and its government. Like all Americans, Israelis publicly criticize their governments for one reason or another all the time. Criticism of the actions of Jerusalem or of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his cabinet is not antisemitic. But claiming that Zionism—the national movement of the Jewish people aimed at securing their rights to live in peace, security and sovereignty in their ancient homeland—is not only racist but uniquely illegitimate when compared to the rights of any other people is indeed an expression of Jew-hatred.

How can they justify this?

They do so by attempting to redefine Jewish identity in a way that strips it of one of its essential elements. It is not merely a set of theological concepts. It is composed of the Torah and the Hebrew bible, combined with the age-old set of works that interpret the scriptures in the oral law that has been handed down in the Mishna and Gemara, known as the Talmud. But it is also composed of Jewish peoplehood and the connection of that people to the land of Israel. To claim that the land is not integral to Judaism and Jewish identity is to demonstrate illiteracy about the faith and history of the Jews.

Yet that is exactly what a generation of anti-Zionists, who repeat talking points written by Soviet propagandists in the 1960s and 1970s, is doing. So brazen are they that those like Max Strasser, the anti-Zionist Jew who is the “Ideas” editor of The New York Times, are actually prepared to mock the idea that the role of Israel in Judaism is nearly as integral to it as circumcision, as he did in a recent book review.

Strasser’s point (like that of Beinart, Piker and Carlson) is essentially to claim that the only way to be a “good” Jew is to pretend that the Jewish connection to their homeland is a modern invention of racist fascists. They ignore the fact that it is noted throughout the Torah, as well as part of the liturgy that religious Jews have invoked three times a day when they prayed for millennia.

Still, to justify this rewriting of history and Judaism to suit their politics and ideologies, they must do more than that. To defend this shameless set of lies, they must also accuse Israelis of being, in Strasser’s formulations, “monsters” that moral people—Jewish and non-Jewish alike—abhor.

That is why Israel’s moral and legal war of defense against genuine genocidal monsters, like the Palestinian Arab supporters of Hamas and the other terrorist groups that comprise their national movement, must be falsely portrayed as “genocide.” That is why the sole democracy in the Middle East must be libeled as a form of “apartheid,” and its American supporters smeared as conspiracists who are determined to drag America into wars against its interests.

Stripped of their disingenuous moral preening about human rights, anti-Zionists and their claim to be concerned about antisemitism can be seen for what it is: a disingenuous smokescreen whose purpose is to conceal backing for a cause that has one purpose. And that is the destruction of Israel and the mass murder of half of the world’s Jews.

The debate about Zionism inside the Jewish world before the creation of the modern-day State of Israel was different from what is now asserted by the anti-Zionists. As Jonathan Brent, the head of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research—the home of the archives of the pre-Holocaust European Jewish world—told me in a podcast interview, the debate among Jews prior to 1939 was not about an Israel that didn’t yet exist.

At that time, the arguments between the socialist Bund (extolled by anti-Zionists like Strasser), which wanted the largely Yiddish-speaking Jewish population to have autonomous rights in Eastern Europe, and Zionists were about how best to preserve Jewish life. Jews faced existential threats from Nazis and Communists, as well as traditional forms of Jew-hatred rooted in the Christian religion and its institutions. As it turned out, the hopes of the Bundists for Jewish survival in Europe died in the Nazi death camps and the Soviet gulags. Zionism provided the only viable path for Jewish survival, even though its triumph came too late to save European Jewry.

To oppose Israel’s existence now, whether in the name of an extinct Jewish movement or fashionable leftist ideologies rooted in toxic ideas about race, is not merely to ignore this basic history. It involves the contemplation of, if not actually cheering for, a new Holocaust in which more than 7 million Jewish lives would be snuffed out to accommodate the Arab and Islamist intolerance for any non-Muslim sovereign entity in the Middle East, coupled with Marxist opposition to Jewish nationalism.

Seen clearly, it’s easy to understand why the mainstreaming of anti-Zionism in liberal outlets like the Times, as well as left and right-wing podcasts hosted by Piker and Carlson, has been accompanied by an increase in the targeting of Jews for violence. Anti-Zionism is not distinct from antisemitism; it is just a variant of it.

The denial of the connection between the two—and the resulting violence that is its inevitable corollary—is not any more of an intellectually coherent argument than the efforts of the likes of Strasser, Piker or Carlson to define Judaism or antisemitism in a way that exonerates their hateful advocacy. It is nothing more than gaslighting and should be treated as such. News outlets like The Times that attempt to portray this compendium of hoaxes and conspiracy theories as an enlightened cause or a well-meaning difference of opinion that deserves a hearing aren’t just wrong. They are as intellectually and morally bankrupt as those who are actually carrying out the antisemitic assaults and murders that they self-righteously claim to deplore. (JNS May 4)