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## VP Harris's faux pas: Should we really tolerate anti-Israel hate speech?

Dear Friend of FLAME:

**Imagine:** The Vice President of the United States <u>visits a college campus</u> and fields questions from the students. One student stands up and defiantly says, "I don't understand why our country is favoring Black people in so many of its policies, when we know how terribly Black people abuse the welfare system." The Vice President smiles warmly and supportively replies, "I hear you. Your experience is real. No one should stop you from telling your truth."

**Imagine further:** Within days of the incident, the Vice President is <u>censured</u> <u>unanimously</u> by the U.S. Congress for her racism and figuratively torn limb by limb for months by every news medium in the country.

**Back to reality:** What happens when Jews are maligned by a student telling outright lies, and the Vice President encourages her to spread them?

That's exactly what occurred when Vice President Kamala Harris was visiting a political science class at George Mason University to honor national voter registration day. Harris took questions from three students, including one who slandered the State of Israel in a lengthy diatribe. The student, who described herself as a Yemeni-Iranian, said what Israel is doing is "an ethnic genocide and a displacement of people—the same that happened in America."

**More reality:** Israel, the world's only Jewish state, does not and has not committed <u>any form of genocide</u>—ever. Two million Arab citizens of Israel are free, thriving and multiplying. The population of four million Palestinian Arabs outside Israel, while ruled by oppressive dictators, also continues to multiply uninhibited.

What's more, Israel has *never* intentionally targeted or killed innocent Palestinians. It defends itself <u>only against attackers</u>. This fact is not *our* truth—it is *the* truth.

**Here's another truth:** Attempts to delegitimize the Jewish state by demonizing it is anti-Semitism—<u>a form of racism</u>, no less hateful than anti-Black racism.

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## IF YOU SUPPORT PUBLISHING FLAME'S BOLD PR MESSAGES, PLEASE HELP US!!

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages Yet rather than condemning the student's libel and providing a robust defense of one of America's greatest allies, Kamala Harris demurred. The Vice President seemingly <u>congratulated and validated</u> the outrageous remarks by the student, stating "your voice, your perspective, your experience, your truth should not be suppressed and it must be heard, right?"

It's clear that Vice President Harris is <u>no anti-Semite</u> nor anti-Israel. Indeed, she has a strong record of siding with Israel, at least up until the recent election, when she moved sharply to the Left.

Last week, in a meeting with Israel's Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, Harris said the US-Israel relationship is "unwavering, a relationship that is based on shared values, shared history, and a shared concern for the <u>mutual safety and security</u> of the people of our two countries."

But it's easy to mouth flowery rhetoric about the importance of respectful relations in a friendly meeting with your ally. It's far more difficult—and <u>takes more guts</u>—to repeat that in a room full of your political supporters who are moving into more and more dangerously into anti-Semitic territory.

As commentator Gil Troy aptly noted in the *Wall Street Journal* about Vice President Harris's comments: "Her reaction is a weather vane, indicating where the Democrats' conversation might be heading . . . This is subtler anti-Semitism, teaching us to tolerate the intolerable."

This is called the "<u>paradox of tolerance</u>"—meaning that if there is a tolerance of *all* views, it will eventually be exploited by the *intolerant*.

The more frequently we allow comments like those of the student at George Mason University to stand—let alone <u>give them credence</u> as a legitimate "voice" or "perspective"—the more acceptable Jew-hatred will become.

As noted, it's unthinkable that Harris would <u>legitimize hateful comments</u> about any other people or nation. If they had been racist against people of color or Islamophobic or homophobic they would have been shot down immediately without any political posturing.

Unfortunately, as in many arenas these days, there is one rule for the Jews or the Jewish state and one for all other peoples, races, religions and communities.

Even those who criticize Israel's control over Judea and Samaria saw the <a href="hypocrisy">hypocrisy</a> inherent in Harris's reaction to the student. "A voice that is based on lies is not a legitimate voice. It is a voice that causes damage," wrote Uri Misgav, a writer for Israel's Leftist Ha'aretz newspaper.

The crux of the matter: Dangerous anti-Semitic trends on the American and global Left towards Israel must be <u>opposed</u>, <u>halted and reversed</u>. People leading these trends—like the Squad in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Corbynites in the UK—will only seek to further radicalize people against Israel and Jews.

The fight back must come from those in the center of American politics and on the moderate Left, who must be engaged in the battle and stand up to the <u>haters</u> and <u>bullies</u>, even if it costs them politically.

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FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

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Please urge your friends, family, colleagues and elected representatives to promote a <u>zero-tolerance policy</u> for anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. Every single comment that fits in to these categories—like accusing Israel of genocide or apartheid—should be condemned, argued against and defeated with *truth*.

Hateful movements—like the Nazi movement—did *not* emerge from nowhere. They first tested the waters with increasingly more radical comments and actions, especially about Jews. The Nazis understood that when the general public does not object—even though some may find it objectionable—they upped the ante. Their hate grew to the maelstrom of the Holocaust, <u>aided by complicity</u>—active and passive—of millions.

We don't compare the current climate of anti-Semitism acceptance in the U.S. to the Holocaust. But showing an extreme outcome can demonstrate a principle. It is time good people *no longer do nothing* against increasing anti-Semitism and anti-Israel libels. If we don't stop it now, evil will win.

I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME's lively <u>Facebook page</u> and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign —which exposes "Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste" and those who support boycotts of the Jewish state.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, Ben & Jerry's recently announced that it would cease its contract with its Israeli affiliate because the affiliate refused to stop selling the company's ice cream in the ancient Jewish territories of Judea and Samaria. This move, championed by the company's anti-Israel board chair, is just the latest attempt to boycott the Jewish state joining the BDS movement—which some 35 U.S. states consider illegal and anti-Semitic. To clarify this issue for the American people —including many Jews—FLAME has created a new hasbarah message called "Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste ." I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which will run soon in the Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune and other media nationwide. It spells out why Ben & Jerry's should be held to account for this attempt to delegitimize the State of Israel. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to donate now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting anti-Semitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline <u>at no charge</u> every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively tell the truth about Israel? Just go to <u>free subscription</u>.



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