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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

March 21, 2023



## Media's demonization of Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria obscures Palestinian role

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

Following the cold-blooded murder of two Israeli brothers at a stop sign by a terrorist from the Palestinian Arab village of Huwara, a group of Israelis entered the village and set cars, homes and other buildings on fire, injuring dozens and reportedly killing one Palestinian man.

Israel's critics, including those in the mainstream media, have used this riot to reinforce the false narrative that Israelis living in Judea and Samaria (aka the West Bank), are violently wild, religious fanatics who terrorize Palestinians.

The *Washington Post's* headline read "Emboldened by Israel's far right, Jewish settlers fan the flames of chaos." Al Jazeera reported that "Israeli settlers destroy Palestinian homes in violent rampage."

While the riot by Jewish residents was unlawful and unconscionable, the perpetrators were responding to Palestinian violence equally unlawful, unconscionable and far more widespread—but which is rarely reported with such alarm by mainstream Western media.

Truth is, the vast majority of Israelis living in Judea and Samaria—whom the media and the international community call "settlers"—are neither religious zealots, nor do they perpetuate violence. In fact, most Israelis in Judea and Samaria don't live there for ideological or religious reasons at all.

Moreover, contrary to assertions by media and some Western politicians, Israelis living in Judea and Samaria *are not* obstructing peace. Palestinians opposed the State of Israel before Israeli citizens began resettling Judea and Samaria, and they oppose it now. Moreover, Palestinian leaders, in an apartheid gesture, insist that the disputed land they claim as a future state be "Jew-free." Why?

If anything, the response to the rioting in Huwara illustrates another lesson: Whereas Israelis largely condemn acts of violence by fellow Israelis against

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**YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...**

### Demand Justice for Jewish Students

**New report shows skyrocketing attacks on students' Jewish identity—rooted in anti-Zionism, a modern disguise for classic antisemitism. It's time to fight back.**

Despite rising campus attacks on Israel, most Jewish students and support the Jewish state. But anti-Zionism based in the classroom and public square forces many students to hide their Jewish identity. Greater enforcement of Title VI anti-discrimination laws promises a cure to this injustice.

**What are the facts?**

According to a new report by ANS-HA Institute, bullying and harassment of Jewish students on university campuses spiked in the last year, while attempts to censor Zionism increased on 444 U.S. college campuses. Jewish identity trips to Israel increased nearly 20-fold. Reinforcement of Jewish persecution in 1980s Nazi Germany, now 90% of U.S. Jewish students say they hide their Jewish identity, according to a 2021 poll by the Brandeis Center for Human Rights.

While discrimination against most ethnic minorities is strictly outlawed on campus, university administrators have generally failed to protect Jewish students from attacks against them. Furthermore, a spike of complaints recently filed with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) now demands action under Title VI anti-discrimination statutes. Campuses, ranging from Rutgers University, City University of New York, University of Vermont, University of Illinois and University of Southern California, are among schools facing OCR investigations for alleged antisemitism violations.

**Not surprisingly, the ANS-HA report registered pro-Palestinian groups, such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), for responsibility in targeting Jewish students.**

Indeed, the report found that anti-Zionist groups like SJP were the largest overall contributors to attacks on Jewish identity. Despite their pattern of making antisemitic hate, to date only a single chapter of SJP has been permanently shut down on a U.S. campus—at New York's private Fordham University. The ban was upheld in court.

ANS-HA's report also noted the contribution of non-Jewish Jewish anti-Zionist groups and individuals to the assault on Jewish identity. One such group is Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), which now requires Jewish identity as a condition for membership.

Bad enough that Jewish students are targeted for persecution by their peers, but even worse when university faculty support the persecution. No wonder, according to ANS-HA, that universities with faculty who support the BDS movement were three to seven times more likely to suffer attacks on Jewish identity. In fact, ANS-HA found that "twenty percent of threats to Jewish identity took place at events supported by academic faculty."

**Sadly, without federal intervention, there's little hope universities will stop antisemitic attacks.** Legally, Jewish students who fear their Jewish identity is threatened can address only that school's harassment policies to protect them. Their only hope is to make "the national community an obstacle."

FLAME is a non-profit, nonprofit strictly organized to pursue a free speech movement that supports movement to shut down anti-Zionism in the name "for the national community an obstacle."

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**Antisemitic attacks on campus must be prosecuted**

This approach by university administrators ignores the policies usually upheld by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which is recognized worldwide and includes discrimination and harassment based on anti-Israel bias.

**Paraphrasing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 may offer powerful recourse for Jewish students under attack.**

While violations of Title VI do not carry criminal penalties, their costs can be massive. First, recipients of federal government funding—which represents millions, even tens of millions of dollars for most universities—can be refused or reduced. Second, the OCR can require that campus of violators be remediated, or faculty for their Zionist beliefs. Third, the reputational damage caused by civil rights violations can result in financial damage to university fundraising and student recruitment efforts.

Attacks against Jewish students represent an assault on the American social fabric and our democracy. Higher education administrators should be required by law to report to the state all forms of antisemitism, especially in the form of discrimination, harassment, and hate. Schools that fail to respond face the risk of being shut down or forced to accept federal funding cuts.

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innocent Palestinians, Palestinians praise, celebrate and promote acts of violence and terrorism by their brethren against innocent Israelis.

No surprise that Israelis living in Judea and Samaria suffer ten times more attacks by their Palestinian neighbors than the other way around.

Today's Israeli residents of Judea and Samaria are by no means the first Jews to live there. The first Jewish communities there following the 1967 Six Day War were actually former Jewish settlements that had been destroyed by Arabs.

Two of these Jewish communities were Kfar Etzion and Hebron. The former, located southwest of Jerusalem, was re-established by surviving members of the original community, many of whom were massacred by the Jordanians in the 1948 War of Independence.

A Jewish community was also re-established in Hebron shortly after the 1967 war. The city had a vibrant Jewish community for centuries, until its members were massacred by Palestinian Arabs in 1929.

Today, some 500,000 Israelis live in Judea and Samaria. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds—and most are *not* religious nationalists. In fact, only 170,000 declare themselves members of Israel's religious Zionist community.

The remainder are secular and Haredi (ultra-orthodox) residents, most of whom choose to live in Judea and Samaria for economic reasons. The cost of living in Israel is extremely high, especially in major cities like Tel Aviv, which in 2021 was rated the most expensive city in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Housing is much cheaper in Judea and Samaria, and communities offer a comfortable quality of life. Most Israelis move there for the same reason Americans move to the suburbs—they can get larger homes for less and live a lifestyle that is unaffordable and unattainable in large metropolitan areas.

Furthermore, far from misery and hardship, Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria have brought jobs and improved economic conditions for Palestinians. Jewish residents spend millions of Israeli shekels for goods and services in Palestinian communities.

Thousands of Palestinians are employed by Israeli enterprises in Judea and Samaria. As of 2019, Israeli businesses employed 28,300 such workers, of which 18,000 were residents of Palestinian Authority (PA) territory. A Palestinian working for an Israeli company earns more than double the wage of a Palestinian who works for a Palestinian employer.

More than 100,000 Palestinians, including family members, living in PA-controlled Judea and Samaria are estimated to be dependent on Israeli industry and agriculture.

Palestinians working for Israeli companies in Judea and Samaria work alongside Israelis, helping build cultural bridges between the two peoples. This was the case in a factory owned by the Israeli company SodaStream, located in an

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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industrial zone east of Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, in 2015 SodaStream closed this factory. Although the company denied it, many believe the company closed the factory due to strong pressure from the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. Hundreds of Palestinians lost their jobs.

U.S. media, of course, rarely cover stories of Israelis in Judea and Samaria benefiting Palestinians. That picture doesn't fit the false narrative of Israelis making Palestinians' lives miserable.

Many media focus rather on isolated incidents of Israeli violence, such as the riot in Huwara—a riot that was widely criticized by Israeli media and politicians.

Indeed, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the riot. One observant Israeli Jew even raised \$465,000 in a crowdfunding campaign to assist the Palestinian victims of the Huwara riot.

In contrast, when Palestinians commit acts of terrorism against Israelis citizens, Palestinians pass out sweets to celebrate. The terrorists are regarded as heroes, and receive lifetime salaries from the PA, whose leaders often praise them for their murderous deeds.

No surprise, then, that a recent poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) found 71% support among Palestinians for the terrorist attack that preceded the Huwara riot.

No wonder attacks by Israelis in Judea and Samaria on Palestinians pale in number and severity to terrorist attacks by Palestinians against Israelis. Each year, Palestinians experience an average of 300 attacks on their property and 100 attacks on individuals.

By comparison, Israelis experience a yearly average of 5,000 Palestinian terrorist attacks designed to kill them. And whereas the United Nations claims that attacks by Israelis in Judea and Samaria on Palestinians resulted in at least 22 fatalities between 2010 and 2019, the number of Israelis killed by Palestinian terrorists during that same period was more than 300.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that what happened in Huwara was, though deplorable, also a highly-isolated incident, unlike Palestinian terrorist attacks. Note, too, that the vast majority of Israelis living in Judea and Samaria are law-abiding citizens whose presence, in many cases, provides gainful employment and other economic benefits to Palestinians.

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 [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign —“Demand Justice for Jewish Students”—which exposes rising attacks on Jewish college students' identity and how these acts of antisemitism can be defeated.

Best regards,

Jason Shvili, Contributing Editor

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. You've surely seen headlines describing increasing attacks on Jewish students—in the classroom and in the public square—by radical anti-Zionist students, as well as faculty members. So far, university administrators have failed to prevent this kind of antisemitism on campus. At the heart of this discrimination, Israel's enemies outrageously claim that Zionism is not part of being Jewish. No wonder more and more Jewish students are hiding their Jewish identities on campus. I think you'll agree that we supporters of Israel need to speak out. FLAME's new hasbarah---explanatory message—“[Demand Justice for Jewish Students](#)” —tells how recent law suits based on Title VI anti-discrimination laws are putting pressure on college administrators to protect Jewish students from such attacks. I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME intends to publish in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Star Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Newsmax*. 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](#).

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