



Cancel culture or good business? Rapper Macklemore performed as a hairy, huge-nosed Jew caricature, supporting his antisemitic and anti-Israel messages onstage. Such hateful diatribes caused his firing from Ed Sheeran's U.S. tour. (Credit:Flickr/Drew of The Come Up Show)

Kraft dumps Macklemore from Sheeran tour: Cancel culture or good business?

Word count: 873; estimated reading time: 3.3 minutes

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

The decision last week to boot pop rapper Macklemore off the bill as opener for superstar Ed Sheeran's U.S. tour was made primarily by Robert Kraft, owner of Boston's Gillette stadium where the tour was soon scheduled to appear. While defenders of Macklemore disingenuously claim he was canceled because he shouted "Free Palestine" during his performance, the truth is Macklemore has

also ranted libels about Israeli genocide in Gaza, called the Jewish state illegitimate and paraded on stage dressed as a hairy, big-nosed caricature Jew out of the pages of the Nazi publication *Der Stürmer*.

Macklemore is not truthfully a critic of Israel, but rather he's a hateful antisemite who despises and slanders both the Jewish state and the United States.

Dumping Macklemore from the tour raises three critical social and political questions: 1) If the American right (and pro-Zionists) object to the "cancel culture" of the left, then how can they justify Macklemore's banning? 2) Do Macklemore's political statements qualify as valid criticism of Israel or as malicious slander? And 3) How does Macklemore's hostility toward Israel translate to a political position—what does he want for the Palestinians, what does he really want Israel to do?

First, how can Robert Kraft and Israel supporters justify dumping Macklemore? What's the difference between the progressive left's "cancel culture"—which bars pro-Israel speakers from political rallies and university podiums—and barring an outspoken rapper from performing?

One difference is the audience's freedom to choose. Those who attend a speech or rally on campus opt specifically to attend that event and can leave any time at no cost. Those who pay an average of \$150 – \$250 to attend a mellow, apolitical Ed Sheeran concert are not expecting to first be hostilely harangued, as were Jewish and Israeli attendees at Sheeran's first concert in New Jersey.

Another difference is business. The U.S. Constitution forbids governments and public institutions from limiting speech, but it doesn't hold that a private business, even a newspaper, must allow all manner of speech, especially messages the business owner finds anathema. Robert Kraft is not only one of America's foremost foes of antisemitism, but he is also a businessman who judged Macklemore to be bad for his business. Clearly, the Sheeran tour's promoters reached the same business decision when they concurred that Macklemore should be excised from the show.

Second, Macklemore's songs, speeches and skits are not criticism, but hate speech. When the rapper chants slogans, sings slanders and performs racist skits, he delivers an emotional outpouring of disjointed opinions. His accusations of genocide, apartheid and starving children are not backed by fact-based arguments against Israel's actions. True criticism—such as "occupation," "denying Palestinians the right to exist" and killing Palestinian kids is "fucked up"—all require support by rational thought. Macklemore's assertions are not only irrational and malicious, they also offer no factual proof and are almost universally false.

Third, Macklemore's "political positions" are mostly incoherent—signifying nothing. While "Free, Free Palestine" has a nice cadence, it has no clear meaning. What is "Palestine" exactly? Not a state, not a sovereign territory, not really a defined people. If we think about it—which we can be sure 95% of Macklemore's audience *do not*—we can assume that because "Free Palestine" is usually chanted with "from the river to the sea," it means expel all Jews from the land of Israel. In other words, a bloodbath. We know Macklemore opposes ethnic cleansing, apartheid and starvation in Gaza—as surely all good people do. Problem is, those things factually are not occurring anywhere in "Palestine"—unless, of course, Macklemore's demand to "Free Palestine" comes to pass. Thus, while Macklemore's political analysis is worthless—his onstage message is genocidal.

Should celebrities mouth off on important topics about which they are functionally ignorant? Many of us dedicated supporters of Israel would love to entice Macklemore (or actors Mark Ruffalo or Hannah Einbinder) into a debate for the opportunity to destroy their lies about genocide in Gaza, apartheid in Israel and stealing “Palestinian land.” But clearly these “stars” prefer platforms that allow them to deliver their libels in sound bites that permit no factual rebuttal.

We should note that when celebrity millionaires like Macklemore intersperse their performances with political diatribes about Israel, they often couple their messages with a greater anti-American hostility. Macklemore screams, “Fuck the police” and ridiculously associates America’s “white supremacist” society with U.S. support for Israel. In 2009, he conspiratorially tweeted “911...bush knocked down the towers.” Einbinder laced her Emmy acceptance speech with “Free Palestine” and “Fuck ICE.” In short, while some fans of Macklemore and other celebrities may welcome the performers’ empty opinions, rational lovers of Israel and America are obligated to oppose them with facts and logic ... and market choices.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that Macklemore has every right to create “art” that twists reality to serve his political opinions, but as American citizens, we have every right to expose his hate speech and call him a fool. We also have the right *not to do business with him*—to be spared his anti-Israel and anti-American propagandizing when we pay to attend a friendly concert.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,

James Sinkinsonb, President

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, we at FLAME are constantly fighting to defeat our enemies’ slanders against Israel. But I hope you agree that it’s *just as important* for us lovers of Israel to spread the word about the amazing triumphs of Zionism. I believe that in addition to defending Israel from media and politicians’ lies, we need also to help the world understand Israel’s righteous cause and its power for good—we need as well to trumpet Israel’s miraculous achievements. God knows, Americans will never learn about Israel’s good deeds in mainstream media, like the *New York Times*, CNN or NPR! I believe we need to stand tall because of who the Jewish people are ... be proud of what Israel does for the world. For this reason, I hope you’ll approve of FLAME’s new *hasbarah*—our explanatory message called “**How Zionism’s Miracle Benefits Us All**.” With your agreement and support, FLAME will soon begin running this message as a paid editorial ad in major mainstream newspapers nationwide. This ad tells the truth about Zionism’s unmatched power to create economic prosperity, global security, world health and democratic freedoms. It also explains why the enemies of Zionism are not just foes of Israel, they are also the enemies of human progress. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME is about to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel’s behalf is critical, I urge you to **support us** with a donation.



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