

Trump, Zionism and Antisemitism

Von Dr. phil. Clemens Heni, 22. Februar 2017

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Several Jewish and non-Jewish NGOs, scholars, activists, bloggers and authors believe, the Trump administration will fight antisemitism and will be helpful both for Jews and Israel.

Their derealization of sexism is shocking enough. But no surprise either.

Let's have a look at Trump, antisemitism and Zionism alone.

Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME) argues that Trump might consider strong anti-BDS legislation. The Simon Wiesenthal Center prayed for Trump at the inauguration and the Louis D. Brandeis Center is hopeful that Trump will be fighting antisemitism, too.

Journalist Benjamin Weinthal (Jerusalem Post) and his colleague from SPME, Asaf Romirowsky, claim:

In late December, with just weeks left in his administration, former U.S. President Barack Obama delivered a shot in the arm to the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement, or BDS. Obama instructed the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, to abstain instead of vetoing a U.N. Security Council resolution rebuking Israeli settlement activity.

Resolution 2334 deems Israel's presence in disputed territories in the West Bank and East Jerusalem to be illicit. Combined five days later with a didactic anti-Israel speech from Secretary of State John Kerry, the resolution

administered a body blow to Israel's brand.

The Middle East Forum's (MEF) director Greg Roman attacks the resolution 2334, which is no surprise, but still lacks a scholarly analysis of the resolution. The Simon Wiesenthal Center puts the Obama Administration on place one of their "Top-Ten worst global antisemitic and anti-Israel incidents 2016":

The most stunning 2016 UN attack on Israel was facilitated by President Obama when the US abstained on a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israel for settlement construction.

What says United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 from December 2016?

Expressing grave concern that continuing Israeli settlement activities are dangerously imperilling the viability of the two-State solution based on the 1967 lines.

That is not antisemitic. On the contrary, the UNSC again reaffirms the very existence of Israel!

John Kerry's speech was even clearer and very pro-Zionist:

This is an issue which I've worked on intensely during my time as Secretary of State for one simple reason: because the two state solution is the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. It is the only way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state, living in peace and security with its neighbors.

This is exactly the position of leading Zionist scholars in the field, such as Fania Oz-Salzberger, Yedidia Z. Stern, Gadi Taub, Ruth Gavison or Anita Shapira, at least in my reading of their book "The Israeli Nation-State" from 2014, which I just

translated into German (with my colleague Dr. Michael Kreutz) and published the book (456 pages) this week.

John Kerry wanted to “ensure” that Israel is a Jewish and democratic state. Period.

However, the self-declared pro-Israel establishment in the US or Germany, runs riot against resolution 2334 and the Obama administration. Now they embrace Trump, more or less.

Even Kenneth Marcus from the Louis D. Brandeis Center, known for thoughtful analysis and scholarship in antisemitism, rejects any analysis of the very *specific* way Trump fueled antisemitism in the last 15 months or longer. Marcus rather obfuscates the very new climate in the US after the election of Trump and says:

“In today’s heated political climate Marcus said anti-Semitism is rampant in both pro-Trump supporters and anti-Trump groups, among others, and should not be attributed to one source.”

It is not news that leftists are anti-Zionist, for example, but it is news that the neo-Nazi Alt Right is now sitting in the White House (Steve Bannon, Breitbart). And the unbelievable increase of antisemitic incidents in the US has very close connection to the extrem right and not to the left. Neo-Nazis have been emboldened by Trump, no doubt about this.

Marcus concludes (this is from a report about a talk he gave) and even sees Trump as a possible ally:

“The Trump Administration could be another factor in the battle against anti-Semitism. (...) Marcus credited the Trump campaign for issuing a statement expressing concern about campus anti-Semitism, and for comments indicating that the Department of Justice would address university suppression of Jewish pro-Israel speech. Marcus doesn’t know if any of

this will translate into policy, but he's hopeful."

Crediting Trump – unbelievable.

Then, those in the pro-Israel camp who defame Kerry should listen to a single speech by Iranian President Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in order to learn how an anti-Israel speech sounds like. Then, they should listen to John Kerry's speech about resolution 2334 and rethink their unprofessional remarks that Kerry's speech was a "didactic anti-Israel speech" as Weinthal and Romirowsky frame it.

If it is anti-Israel to support the *Jewish and democratic* state of Israel and to be against religious and nationalist fanaticism and the settlements, read: to be for a two-state solution, than most Israelis and Jews in the US and worldwide are anti-Israel.

Palestinian rejectionism is a huge problem, of course, ever since 1947 and before.

But Israeli fanaticism is also a huge problem, just listen to the six Shin Bet directors between 1980 and 2011, who are interviewed in the Oscar nominated film "The Gatekeepers" by Dror Moreh in 2012, featuring Ami Ayalon, Avi Dichter, Yuval Diskin, Carmi Gillon, Yaakov Peri, Avraham Shalom. They emphasize that the Palestinians are not just terrorists. They are political subjects and need political acceptance by Israel (and of course, vice versa, but that is NOT news).

We need a political solution, not a military solution, that is their message – and these former Shin Bet directors from 1980 through 2011 might know more about the Palestinians and how to fight terrorism and how not and what is good or bad for Israel than American or European activists.

But there are also those Israeli fanatics in the 1990s, including Benjamin Netanyahu, to be sure, who agitated against

Yitzhak Rabin, as the film shows, until Rabin was killed, November 4, 1995. How does Israel look like today?

A Question to all those American and other Trump supporters: Is it a sign of a particular pro-Jewish approach to omit the mentioning of Jews as the only victims of the Shoah on Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2017? Historian Deborah Lipstadt called Trump's statement a "softcore Holocaust denial."

Finally, and most importantly, if it is pro-Israel to destroy the Jewish state and to invoke or mention (as a result of stupidity, thoughtlessness or by intention) the "one-state solution" as President Trump did during his shocking and embarrassing press conference with Netanyahu on February 15, 2017, then things are turned upside down. Trump and his folks will call it "alternative facts."

"PRESIDENT TRUMP: So I'm looking at two-state and one-state, and I like the one that both parties like. (Laughter.) I'm very happy with the one that both parties like. I can live with either one."

No problem for the Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC), Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME) or the Louis D. Brandeis Center and their allies?

David Horowitz from the Times of Israel concludes:

"And yet, by allowing Trump's talk of a possible single entity between river and sea to pass without contradiction, Netanyahu himself dealt a stinging, public blow to the Israel we are living in today. For if our prime minister is unwilling to speak up, loudly and clearly, in defense of a Jewish, democratic Israel within internationally recognized borders, who else will? Certainly not President Donald Trump."

