

# THE PSYCHOSIS OF ANTI-ISRAEL PROTESTORS

By **NACHUM KAPLAN**

Writing about the Israel-Palestine conflict is like running a psychiatry clinic. It is dealing with one delusion after another.

*Just a reminder that the most so-called pro-Palestinian protestors, more accurately called anti-Israel protestors, are moral lunatics. This piece, first published on November 4, 2024, remains pertinent. I stand fully behind its thesis.*

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**The tens of thousands of “pro-Palestinian” protestors who marched on the US embassy in London over the weekend show that much of the world remains in the grip of an anti-Israel and antisemitic mass hysteria.**

The next *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), the bible of psychiatric disorders, should include a section on Palestinian Delusional Disorder (PDD). It is a psychedelic epidemic.

Lest anyone think I am being flippant about mental health, I assure you I am not. I choose my words carefully and am not just hurling insults. I sincerely believe that many of the protestors, commentators, policymakers, and journalists are delusional and clinically obsessed.

The case for this is stronger than many realize.

It has long been recognized that antisemitism can be a symptom of a psychotic disorder. If PDD is not a psychiatric disorder, it is at least a psychological or social disorder, much like antisemitism itself.

There is no other way to describe or accurately characterize actions and beliefs that are so detached from reality.

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Its symptoms and examples include:

**A persistent belief in untrue events, actions, and claims.** The belief that Jews are not indigenous to Israel, that there was a country called Palestine, that Zionists forcibly displaced 700,000 Palestinians upon creation in 1948, that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, that Israel is targeting children and civilians, and that the Israel Defense Forces have killed more than 70,000 civilians are just a few of the provably false things that people with PDD insist on believing.

**Denialism — a refusal to accept reality.** A common denial is that the October 7 attacks even happened, or that Hamas used rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war. Holocaust denial, of course, is hardly new. Many “pro-Palestinian” supporters even refuse to accept that Hamas is a caliphate-seeking Islamist group when Hamas itself is not only explicit about it, but proud of it.

**Lack of awareness that this is a problematic delusion.** This is self-explanatory. These people have no idea they are in a delusion’s clutches. This sounds obvious, but it is not because most people with a psychosis are aware they have it, which is unsurprising given that they live with it.

**A preoccupation with Jews and Israel.** It is a peculiar obsession given that Jews make up 0.2% of the world’s population, and that Israel is a tiny country of just under 10 million people. The amount of coverage that news media devotes to this conflict, that the United Nations spends passing resolutions on it, and the number of people protesting in Western capitals are all wildly out of sync with the conflict’s scale, certainly compared to many other larger conflicts. The preoccupation comes from this being the only conflict that Jews are involved in. It is pretty damn weird.

**Hypervigilance — seeing threats from Jews everywhere.** This paranoia feeds into classical antisemitic conspiracy theories. It is easy to see threats from Jews everywhere when you think they control the media, governments, big business, and pretty much everything else. PDD sufferers also see imaginary threats from the State of Israel, such as the idea that it wants to expel all Palestinians, even though the Palestinian population is fast-growing. It is redolent of Europeans thinking Jews have poisoned the wells.

**Defensiveness in response to criticism, real or imagined.** “Pro-Palestinian” supporters get ultra-defensive the moment you point out that they are applying double standards to Israel, trading in antisemitic tropes, and calling for violence. In their looking-glass world, where wrong is right, they cannot even process the idea that they might be in the wrong.

**Antagonistic/aggressive behavior.** Setting fire to synagogues, beating up Jews, blocking Jewish students’ access to university campuses, attacking Jewish businesses, ransacking Jewish politicians’ offices, and drawing swastikas on Jewish buildings seem to fit the bill.

**Cognitive dissonance — the holding of contradictory beliefs simultaneously.** It is indeed hard to make sense of someone accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza while, in the same breath, calling for the genocidal destruction of Israel. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas manages to deny that the Holocaust happened while also suggesting that Jews deserved it.

**Poor occupational functioning directly related to the delusional belief.** A shopkeeper refusing to serve Jewish customers or staff refusing to work with Jewish co-workers because of Israeli policy — or allegations against Israel — would be examples of a PDD sufferer’s delusion making them dysfunctional in daily life.

**Grandiosity — an inflated sense of self-importance.** “Pro-Palestinian” supporters are nothing if not narcissistic. Many believe that their chants and banner-waving are changing the Middle East, if not the world. It is just not so. They display this sense of self-importance when, challenged on their beliefs, they insist that it is their right to protest. They really think it is about them.

**Persecution complex — an irrational belief that people are trying to conspire against them.** When faced with criticism, PDD sufferers immediately start making “Islamophobia” allegations and seeing themselves as persecuted. This relates to grandiosity, too, because they see themselves as important enough to be the target of conspiracies.

**Perseveration — a fixation and continued return to ideas and behaviors that do not work.** Most governments think a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict is the best option. Yet, the Palestinians have been rejecting two states since

the 1937 "Peel Commission". It is neither logical nor wise to persist with ideas and invest in approaches that have repeatedly failed.

**Lack of empathy (sociopathy).** While claiming to care about Palestinians' welfare, PDD sufferers show no empathy toward Jewish suffering, be it in Israel or in the West. Tearing down posters of Jewish hostages, targeting Jews, and carrying banners saying "By Any Means Necessary" are examples of sociopathic behavior.

**Projection — of desires or guilt onto others.** Antisemites always accuse Jews of what they are guilty of themselves, or of what they want to do to Jews. This is how to make sense of allegations such as genocide, colonialism, and apartheid that "pro-Palestinian" supporters level at Israel.

**Impaired moral reasoning.** PDD sufferers' moral debasement is so complete that some argue that Hamas' mass murder and abduction of civilians on October 7 was justifiable. False equivalence between the actions of terrorists and Israel is another example.

This explains why it is impossible to reason with so many anti-Israel supporters. They are in the grip of mass hysteria and incapable of coherence.