

Danger Ahead: Why Antisemitism Is Likely to Grow

By Barry Brownstein / 8 July, 2014 / AIER

Let us be wary of the soothing narrative that downplays the seriousness of growing antisemitism. The belief that Jew hate will diminish once the Israel-Hamas war concludes may be misguided.

As I go about my daily life, antisemitism is still a thing of the past. Not so on college campuses and in some cities. [Like Elon Musk](#), I am shocked by the exposure of rampant Jew hatred.

Last November, when our local farmer was closing for the season, he asked about our holiday plans. The farmer's jaw dropped when my wife mentioned celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas. Curious, he asked, "Which one of you is Jewish?" We've known this farmer for thirty years, and the question never arose. Why would it? He is an honest, hard-working man engaged in commerce, paying no attention to the superficial characteristics of his customers.

The market rewards those who have genuine empathy for their customers. Empathetic entrepreneurs can put themselves in their customers' place and consider how to best serve them. The market process, backed by the rule of law, facilitates empathy and respect for others and a peaceful and prosperous society.

So why do I say antisemitism is likely to grow? The more removed we are from the bonds and affections that commerce creates, the more room for primitive hatred to occupy our minds.

Intellectuals teaching a toxic mixture of identity politics, critical race theory, and Marxism have hijacked our educational and other institutions. "Liberatory Ethnic Studies (LES)" which make use of "Marxist and Maoist-based

liberatory model[s]" are being taught in some K-12 classrooms. What Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay call the "caste system of social justice" labels Jews oppressors because of their economic success.

In his book *Marxism*, Thomas Sowell points out Marx lived as an intellectual without "responsibility" for his livelihood and the "social consequences" of his "vision." Sowell explains today's "Intellectuals enjoy a similar insulation from the consequences of being wrong, in a way that no businessman, or military leader, or engineer or even athletic coach can."

In his book *Intellectuals*, the late historian Paul Johnson describes Marx as a man with a "childish attitude" who "borrowed money heedlessly, spent it, then was invariably astounded and angry when the heavily discounted bills, plus interest, became due."

Marx was a nasty hater who "resented the smallest criticism" and was subject to "huge bursts of rage." Johnson explains, "Central to his anger and frustration, and lying perhaps at the very roots of his hatred for the capitalist system, was his grotesque incompetence in handling money." Johnson informs us that Marx's mother "is credited with the bitter wish that 'Karl would accumulate capital instead of just writing about it'."

Marx's fantasies of Jews and capitalists exploiting others over money were a projection of his own exploitation of his family over money. Projection occurs when we attempt to hurl our moral failings and psychological trash onto others.

Marx was locked into projection. Refusing to "pursue a career" Marx hounded his family for "handouts." Habituated to ransacking family, Marx saw his own behavior in others, writing there is always "a handful of Jews to ransack pockets."

In *On the Jewish Question*, Marx wrote, "What is the worldly religion of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly God?...

Money is the jealous god of Israel, in face of which no other god may exist.”

Of Marx, Johnson writes, “His entire theory of class is rooted in anti-Semitism.”

In his classic Russian novel, *Life and Fate*, Vasily Grossman observed that antisemitism was a “mirror for the failings of individuals.” He added, “Tell me what you accuse the Jews of — I’ll tell you what you’re guilty of.”

Antisemites portray Jews in the most monstrous ways because seeing Jews as vile justifies their own failings.

Marx was not merely a Jew hater. He was a hater. His antisemitism was part of a larger pattern.

In *The Road to Serfdom*, F. A. Hayek pointed out Marx expressed views about Czechs and Poles later expressed by the Nazis. [Marx wrote of the Balkans](#) that it had “the misfortune to be inhabited by a conglomerate of different races and nationalities, of which it is hard to say which is the least fit for progress and civilization.”

Hayek explored why “the enemy, whether he be internal, like the ‘Jew’ or the ‘kulak,’ or external, seems to be an indispensable requisite in the armory of a totalitarian leader.” Of Germany and Austria, Hayek wrote, “the Jew had come to be regarded as the representative of capitalism.”

[Marx wrote](#) that “we find every tyrant backed by a Jew.” Marx reversed cause and effect. Tyrants need to oppress Jews.

Hayek further observed, “It seems to be almost a law of human nature that it is easier for people to agree on a negative program — on the hatred of an enemy, on the envy of those better off — than on any positive task.” Hatred of capitalism or hatred of Jews, for those who need to hate, it’s all the same.

Hayek added, “The contrast between the ‘we’ and the ‘they,’ the common fight against those outside the group, seems to be an essential ingredient in any creed which will solidly knit together a group for common action.”

Those who do not want to take responsibility for their choices gravitate to mass movements that promise to alleviate the consequences they face for their poor decisions. Should it come as a surprise that Marxist ideas helped to fuel communism, one of the most destructive mass movements in history?

Should we be surprised that the current eruption of antisemitism is concentrated on college campuses where anti-capitalism sentiment is the norm?

Today, on college campuses, “we” and “they” thinking seems to be a major part of the current curriculum. It’s assumed, if you can’t make something of your life it’s because “they” have stopped you. Historically, Jews have tragically found the unwarranted role of “they” thrust on them.

Today, college professors and administrators spare students from being exposed to ideas other than their own. Marx never wanted to face the consequences of his low emotional and moral intelligence. How many college students, like Marx, do not want to face challenges to their low emotional and moral intelligence?

Illiberal forces always need a “they.” Even in countries without a Jewish population, Jews are still the “they.” Ayaan Hirsi Ali grew up in Somalia where there were no Jews. Regardless, as [she explained in the *Wall Street Journal*](#),

When I was a little girl, my mom often lost her temper with my brother, with the grocer or with a neighbor. She would scream or curse under her breath “Yahud!” followed by a description of the hostility, ignominy or despicable behavior of the subject of her wrath. It wasn’t just my mother; grown-ups around me exclaimed “Yahud!” the way Americans use the F-word. I was made to understand that Jews — Yahud —

were all bad. No one took any trouble to build a rational framework around the idea — hardly necessary, since there were no Jews around.

Somalia is a closed society; closed societies are doomed to failure until critical inquiry from within is welcome.

Students pass through our educational system trained to have minds closed to rigorous exploration of ideas. Failure is a certainty when ideas are not challenged, and there must be a “they” to blame for failure. For antisemites and anti-capitalists, Jews are the shared object of hatred. Jews are used to account for failed plans generated by flawed ideas. As long as illiberal curriculums dominate our educational systems, both hatreds will grow.