





There is a consensus among all Jews that antisemitism is on the rise and most measurement tools, most specifically the number of antisemitic incidents and recent murders, reinforce that perception. Incidents of antisemitism *are* on the rise – all this was true before October 7<sup>th</sup>. Now after the October 7<sup>th</sup> pogroms and the War, it is even more true.

We learn from history that antisemitism varies according to *source*. It can be racial, religious, nationalist, social, or economic, political, and racial—as in Nazi antisemitism.

Antisemitism varies according to *level of preoccupation*, how high a priority is it to the antisemites? Is it the first hatred, or merely one of many? How obsessed are they with the Jews? Does another obsession rank higher? For the Nazis, Jews were the primary targets of their animus. Traditionally in the United States, Jews have been one of the hated groups, but other groups were hated more—sometimes much more. It is of dubious consolation, but in this case, it is better not to win that competition. Hitler had a seamless record of antisemitism from his early speeches to his last will and testament. There are great perils in coming in winning this contest.

Antisemitism varies according to *goal*. For religiously motivated antisemitism, the goal is conversion. For political antisemitism, the diminishment of Jewish power can be the goal— "Jews will not replace us" was chanted in Charlottesville and in Warsaw. Historically, in the more extreme cases, the goal of political antisemitism was expulsion. For social antisemitism, isolation or marginalization can be the goal. For Nazi racial antisemitism, annihilation—what the Nazis termed extermination—became the ultimate goal of the Final Solution. To use Daniel Goldhagen's terms, *eliminationist* antisemitism gave way to *exterminationist* antisemitism.

Antisemitism varies according to how *endangered* a society feels. And America feels deeply endangered. Jews throughout the world feel even more endangered.

There is a general rule: the more stable a society, the more secure its Jews are.

And Jews are a canary in the mine: the canary feels the deprivation of oxygen *before* the miners are endangered and cannot breathe. So if the Jews are in trouble, the society is in trouble.

Let us add three additional factors to this combustible mix. First: Today, the expression of *all* hatred is permissible, including Jew-hatred/antisemitism. If you feel hate, you feel empowered to express it and take pride in the authenticity of its expression. For a period after the Holocaust, antisemites were less willing to voice their hatred lest they be associated with the image of the camps and the symbols of Nazism. Now they flaunt it. Racists, too, spoke in muted tones. Now they hate more openly, more conspicuously, more proudly. Dog whistles do not



suffice, only open racism will do. It is not only the presence of hatred that is important, but also the volume at which it is expressed.

Secondly, the Internet empowers an avalanche of vitriol and provides the opportunity for anonymous expression, giving it a megaphone to spread hatred of ethnic minorities and classes. The voices of all haters are reinforced in their views by the communities they form, which are multiplied by a Malthusian-like progression. This has particularly affected journalists and other writers who, immediately after publishing their work, are subjected to hatred and death threats online and in their emails, giving individuals as much power as "institutions." Their offices have also been targeted by bomb threats and actual violence.

Furthermore, the hater or the loner is no longer isolated but a member of a community. Social media creates community out of hitherto isolated individuals, reenforces and supports their hatred. They no longer feel alone but are joined in a mutually supportive global community. The tirade of a lone killer in New Zealand reverberates around the world.

And conspiracy theories abound, alternate truths in a fact-free universe. Today some deny what happened on October 7<sup>th</sup>; other accuse the Israelis of killing their own.

Once perceived as the cure for antisemitism or at least the Jews' insurance policy, we know now that Israel can add fuel to the flames of hatred. *On the Moslem front, there is some good news, if the strategic alliance between Israel and Sunni Muslims endures over time, it will diminish Muslim antisemitism.* As Arab nations establish diplomatic relations with Israel, it will be more difficult to portray Israel and the Jews as the source of all evil. That may be the very reason that Hamas attacked Israel on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

We must recall also that these nations are entering into relations with Israel not because they love Jews or have great affection for Israel but because it is their self-interest to have a powerful ally when they face up to the Shiites and also because of Israel's technological prowess. Self-interest is likely to be more enduring than affection.

In Western Europe, the issue of antisemitism varies country by country. In Germany, under Angela Merkel, whose 16 years as Chancellor just came to an end and her successor, German leadership has been strongly against antisemitism and most particularly against the Nazi forces. (It is not quite accurate to call the German right *neo-Nazis*.) Merkel tried to protect and defend German Jews against violence, even as antisemitic violence increased from the right *and* the left. When the President of the German Jewish community suggested that Jews not appear in



