

Hamas -The Flavor of the Day

They are nothing new. We have always had detractors, from biblical times all the way up to the present. In our life times in Israel there have been a variety of different radical groups that were hell bent on making our lives miserable – or worse. You remember the PLF, PLFP, and the DFLP. How about the PLO and Arafat – where is he and his movement? Abbas too has been marginalized and is propped up by Israel and the US without which he would be no better than a Raggedy Ann doll. So today the flavor is Hamas.

Every time I say the word Hamas I'm reminded of Ham (second son of Noah) and the Curse of Ham as the midrash would have it, although today perhaps it ought to be revised to be the Curse of Hamas. They are a curse because - bottom line – they want us out of the neighborhood, permanently. That however is nothing new and I'm sort of used to it. The reason they really have become insufferable and a curse is because they have become masters in the manipulation of the press. But it takes two to tango. The media has to be willing to buy into their game, to become complicit in the means by which truth becomes manipulated and self serving. Sort of like the way ambulance chasers and PI lawyers operate. For them truth is only a function of what it can be used for. It has no intrinsic value. When this last eruption of violence began a few weeks ago it seemed like a no-brainer. How long can we tolerate being rocketed by Hamas? How long can our children be traumatized by explosions in and near their schools, kindergartens and pre-schools. Once again I was caught in my own naivete. Silly boy, I said to myself, after listening to the left wing media ad nauseum. I should have known better!

It's our fault. Of course it is! The Israelis once again are to blame for the latest wave of violence and the breakdown of the cease fire. Hamas tried, they really tried hard to

maintain the cease fire in spite of the serious infractions of the IDF. This is the message I was getting from not only the left wing media, but from nice Jewish people in my own home town, what I refer to as the “yefe nefesh”. I am still in shock that these yefe nefesh believe either that the breakdown of the cease fire is the fault of the Israelis or that the Israelis over reacted.

Would the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto be described by anyone as an overreaction? Hard to believe that Mordechai Anelevich was overreacting when he and the other ghetto freedom fighters decided that they wouldn't go down quietly. Yet I believe, as hard as it may be, that given the type of self hating Jews out there today, if they had been around in 1943, they would have judged Anelevich and Co. as overreacting. It is actually too painful to write about because it has always been convenient to live side by side with these otherwise totally reasonable people.

If I had my choice whether to associate with the yefe nefesh or with the members of Neturei Karta, or some other radical anti-zionist fringe hassidic group, hands down I would prefer the yefe nefesh. I prefer them because they are similar to me in the way they dress, speak and present themselves to the world. Until recently I would have even said that they are similar to me in the way they think and that we share many of the same values. I can no longer say that categorically, because while we may dress alike and share many of the same western values the divide is great. While my loyalty has always been with my people their loyalty is with whatever flavor is popular today. Although they present themselves as principled, they aren't. Their corrupted sense of situational ethics has blinded them to the needs of their people.

Hamas is the flavor of the day. They are the underdog and they know how to exploit that amongst the yefe nefesh as well as manipulate the media. They have beat Israel in the media wars in the past and they are beating us again. We haven't had good press since the six day war. That's because the press loves dead Jews. In fact they love anyone

dead, but most of all the Jews. That's also the reason why holocaust movies do so well. I don't think there has ever been a holocaust flick that wasn't a box office success. Ever since we lost our victim status we lost our popularity with the trend setters. Now it's the turn of Hamas. Today they are the poor victims and have the sympathy of the world.

I'm not comparing Jews to Hamas – God forbid. It's wrong to compare Hamas to Jews – and for several reasons. They are cunning butchers whose waking hours are focused primarily on killing and destruction. Their main drive is to devise different ways of inflicting pain on those who don't buy into their politics. Their weltanschauung is predicated on the culture of hate, exploitation and entitlement. Jews of course are the complete opposite. We spend our waking hours as productive and creative citizens of whatever country we choose to live, and predicate our existence on love of God and all of his creations. Unfortunately there are times when we have to defend ourselves. Yes, and some times there is collateral damage. When that happens we are told by the press and other liberal media outlets whom the yefe nefesh buy into that we are overreacting. I rather overreact and remain alive to hear my critics "go off" on me than under react and have them praise me at my funeral.

I think that most Jews would agree with me. However there is a significant number of these yefe nefesh who just don't see it the way I do. I can't silence them, nor would I even if I could, for to do so would make me no better than the Hamas. I can't forgive them either, for their lack of solidarity with Israel and the preponderance of the Jewish people, while not weakening us, somehow is diminishing. And that makes me feel bad.

I'm sure that there will be a time when Hamas no longer exists and some other factious, Palestinian offshoot will emerge as the new underdog and they will become the new flavor of the day for the yefe nefesh to lick. But while they come and go Israel will be a constant, ever vigilant, a beacon of hope, in a world desperately in need of its light.

