



# מבט מבריטניה THE VIEW FROM THE UK

## A View from here: the Rot at the Heart of Europe – including Britain

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Generally, broad brush strokes and “backgrounder” material are not academically quite specific enough in helping to explain particulars; it serves best to furnish the climate of opinion or economic backdrop against which events occurred. In the case of the hasty, rapidly delivered and ill-considered responses by the British government to the pre-planned Turkish terrorist assault on the Israeli boarding party, since detailed knowledge was not known at the time of the pronouncements, it seems valid to look at the formative features of aspects of European political culture and intellectual history which would be readily available in the corridors of power.

Examples presuppose some ideas in common and that “climates of opinion” exist.

Manfred Gerstenfeld wrote the following executive summary to an article on Norway and its attitudes to Israel, exposing its anti-Semitism.

“□ Norway, which gets little international publicity, seeks to project an image as a peace-loving country. Few people outside it are familiar with the extreme anti-Israeli expressions among the country's elites. In recent years there also have been a number of anti-Semitic incidents.

□ Anti-Israeli hate cartoons are published in leading Norwegian dailies and weeklies. Some are similar in message and venom to the worst anti-Semitic caricatures published in Nazi Germany. Israeli prime ministers are shown as Nazis or with the attributes of the Devil or animals. Also the most extreme anti-Semitic views disguised as anti-Israelism can be voiced in the mainstream media, such as those expressed by the author Jostein Gaarder in the daily *Aftenposten* in 2006.

□ The current left-wing Norwegian government has probably taken the most accommodating position in Western Europe toward the Palestinian [Hamas](#) movement, which in its charter calls for the killing of all Jews. The first Hamas minister to be given entrance to Europe met with parliamentarians in Norway. The Norwegian deputy foreign minister was the first senior European official to hold talks with Hamas prime minister Ismael Haniya.

□ Among anti-Semitic incidents in recent years were the shooting at the Oslo community's synagogue, an attack on its cantor, and the desecration of graves at its cemetery. A number of Jewish children have been harassed in schools.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Norway: Extreme Expressions of Anti-Israeli and Anti-Semitic Attitudes”, **Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs**, No. 63, 2 December 2007.

Interpreting Europe to mean more than the EU and Britain to be part of the EU even though sharing rather little of European continental history, politics and culture in a direct way, it is legitimate to postulate a widespread antipathy to Israel and, in many respects, Jewish people. Taking anti Israel sentiment as anti Jewish and as an aspect at least of anti-Semitism, then there is an even more widespread and vindictive dislike bordering on deliberately antagonistic and destructive bile directed at the Jews through criticism, unfairness and politically correct hatred. The mask is that it is all directed at Israel, thereby appearing to escape direct charges of racism and victimisation, from the liberal elites.

One Amazon reviewer of sometime British Labour Party MP and front bench member, Denis MacShane's book "Globalising hatred: the New Anti-Semitism", commented thus:

"...MacShane's book serves as an urgent warning and provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of the pandemic. He correctly identifies Islamists, including the ruling elites in countries like Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia as the most obvious threat. There are others, however, whose influence must not be underestimated: 1. Western Leftists of the multicultural, postmodernist, antiglobalist & environmentalist varieties whose lairs are primarily in academia, the mass media, non-governmental & transnational organizations. 2. Old Left ideologues still embittered by the collapse of the Marxist dream. 3. Paleoconservative and "Libertarian" judeopaths who are thrilled to find their obsession being embraced by those on the opposite side of the spectrum; these include Christian Traditionalists. 4. The Religious Left, consisting of theologians in the mainstream churches who are attempting to revive Replacement Theology, church leaders propagating divestment, the World & Middle East Council of Churches and recent 'liberal' Christian movements. 5. White supremacist groups 6. Brainwashed students, bleeding heart naifs and a bewildering array of oddball conspiracy theorists like 9/11 "Troofers". Some of the aforementioned categories overlap.

The war against the Jews is raging on many fronts: Military, primarily by Iran via Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas and other terror groups; Mass media, through dishonest reporting by influential news organizations; Academia, by the dissemination of propaganda and attempted boycotts of Israeli academics; Economic, through the disbursement of Middle Eastern oil money to individuals, think tanks and universities as well as divestment campaigns initiated by certain churches; Political, via the United Nations and its agencies as well as direct pressure by oil producers applied to governments globally; Popular culture, especially in hip hop and white supremacist rock music; the Internet, where thousands of hate groups thrive.

Despite its relative brevity and disturbing subject matter, Globalising Hatred is a compelling read on account of its scope and the convincing urgency of the author. The French philosopher Andre Glucksmann has claimed that the concept of a contagion of hatred must be taken literally as a mental disorder that invades minds, bodies and society. Such an outbreak inoculates itself against opposing ideas and is immune to reason. All the more reason to read this book by Denis MacShane."<sup>2</sup>

The present author cites it here not because every interpretation is to be agreed with as reliable or obviously evenly and thoroughly researched, but because it is perceptive and wide-ranging and highlights the extent of a recognisable and well delineated phenomenon. What is made plain is the seriousness and all-but ubiquity of the phenomenon. The relevance is important: the off the cuff comments by current British Prime Minister David Cameron in the immediate aftermath, accompanied by those of Foreign Minister William Hague have to be explained for their visceral quality unqualified by rational analysis and knowledge. Caution has been noticed in the phrasing and timing of the coalition Conservatives – but not on this occasion.

Normally regarded as a tolerant, liberal and somewhat permissive society, the Netherlands has become increasingly anti-Semitic, partly as a result of its growing Muslim population, although not exclusively as a result of that. A recent Jerusalem Post article has explored this widespread prejudice.<sup>3</sup>

"...The leading daily newspaper NRC Handelsblad published an article in June stating that anti-Semitism in areas of Amsterdam has become the norm rather than the exception. It identified areas in Amsterdam in which Jews with skullcaps or distinctive garb cannot walk in the streets without being affronted, spat at or even attacked.

In May, an outdoor commemoration ceremony for the last transport of 3,000 Jewish children deported during the Holocaust was disrupted by bikers shrieking "Heil Hitler" during the recitation of Kaddish.

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<sup>2</sup> At <[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Globalising-Hatred-Anti-Semitism-Denis-MacShane/dp/0753823098/ref=sr\\_1\\_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1282498462&sr=1-5](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Globalising-Hatred-Anti-Semitism-Denis-MacShane/dp/0753823098/ref=sr_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1282498462&sr=1-5)>.

<sup>3</sup> Isi Leibler, "Anti-Semitism soars in Holland", at <<http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Columnists/Article.aspx?id=185195>>.

Anti-Semitism also manifests itself in anti-Israel demonstrations where cries of " Hamas Hamas - Jews to the gas" "Jew cancer"; and "Hitler let one get away!" are frequently heard. Football stadiums have become notorious arenas for anti-Israel and anti-Semitic chants. About half of the registered criminal utterances reported on the internet throughout Holland in 2009 were against Jews. It is believed that if full records were accessible, the proportion would be much higher.....

In a recent letter to members of Parliament, the Jewish community stated that anti-Semitism was rampant, noting that the Jewish community is obliged to provide its own security at schools and all public functions, the costs for which have become unbearable.

Surveys among teachers in the major cities indicate that one out of five teachers have difficulties in relating to the Holocaust because of the hostile response from Muslim students....”

The Jewish Mayor of Amsterdam 2001-2010, Marius Job Cohen, now leader of the Dutch Labor Party, having little allegiance to his Jewish family background, has excoriated Israel from his political platform. It is clear that there is a link between political stances and permission to adopt unprincipled negative attitudes to a friendly state, founded on ignorance and bile at best and Anti-Semitism at worst.

Daniel Pipes has used research by a think-tank, the Centre for Social Cohesion, to ask important questions about British policies towards Islamists, its Muslim population and the role of Britain as a base for global Islamist terror.

“...In all, 28 countries have come under assault from British-based Islamist terrorists, giving some idea of their global menace. Other than India, the target countries divide into two distinct types, Western and majority-Muslim. An odd trio of the United States, Afghanistan, and Yemen have suffered the most British-linked terrorists.

This documentation prompts several questions: One, how much longer will it take for the British authorities to realize that their current policies – trying to improve Muslims' material circumstances while appeasing Islamists – misses the ideological imperative? Two, evidence thus far tends to point to IROs [Islam related offences] on balance strengthening the Islamist cause in Great Britain; will this remain the pattern even as violence persists or will IROs eventually incur a backlash?

Finally, what will it take in terms of destruction for non-U.K. governments to focus their immigration procedures on that percentage or two of Britons from whom the perpetrators exclusively derive – the Muslim population? Unpleasant as this prospect is, it beats getting blown up.”<sup>4</sup>

It also adds to a picture emerging, all too tragically clearly, of something rotten in the heart of Europe and of Britain.

In relation to Israel, this clash of values and understanding has been well exposed and explored by Robin Shepherd in his “A State Beyond the Pale Europe’s Problem with Israel”, a book described as “...the best book to appear on the Middle East conflict in years” by the (London) Jewish Chronicle. Among Shepherd’s conclusions is this “...Europe is putting *itself* beyond the pale...”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Daniel Pipes, “Britain’s New Export: Islamist Carnage”, **National Review Online**, August 3, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Robin Shepherd, “A State Beyond the Pale Europe’s Problem with Israel”, Paperback edition, 2010, p. 265.