

The Pro-Hamas Demonstrations

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We the undersigned write in anger and disappointment to express our disgust with the rash of pro-Hamas demonstrations on campuses across the United States. Purporting to stand for the well-being of Palestinians, these demonstrators denounce Israel and embrace Hamas, and in many cases Hezbollah as well, both among the most evil organizations on the planet. In deference to the first amendment we are not calling for the authorities to silence the protests, but demand instead that they draw the line at preventing and punishing violence and harassment. The protesters have, on various occasions, directed offensive racial epithets at Jewish students, even as they claim to be “anti-Israeli but not anti-Semitic”. Shame on them! In some cases the protesters have also physically attacked Jews, and this is not only to the disgrace of the protesters, but also to the university administrators that have hesitated vigorously to pursue the perpetrators.

Among the protesters one finds a hard core of people dedicated to hatred as well as a significantly larger group of deeply confused fellow travelers seeking to be part of a campus protest as a means to make themselves popular. Many of them are not cognizant of the facts and need to think through the consequences of their actions. If their call to eliminate the state of Israel was heeded, the result would be the death and displacement of millions of people for whom Israel, the country of their birth, is home. The demonstrators’ embrace of Hamas makes them complicit in the ongoing atrocities committed by that organization. On October 7 Hamas murdered over 1200 people on Israeli soil, people of many nationalities and of various religions: they raped, they tortured, they killed, and they kidnapped.

The kidnappings are in fact a continuing part of the October 7 atrocities. Though a few have been liberated, as part of the psychological war pursued by Hamas, the remaining hostages are at the heart of the post October 7 drama. Any solution to the ongoing tragedy in Gaza starts with the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages.

Hamas's wicked actions of October 7 were designed to force the Israelis to choose among difficult, unpalatable, alternatives. Reasonable people disagree about which among these courses of action is the lesser evil, but it is plainly obvious that responsibility for the subsequent tragedy in Gaza lies with Hamas and its apologists. Not only did Hamas take 250 hostages on October 7, they also hold over a million Palestinians in thrall to their repressive government, one which uses them as human shields and treats any expressions of sympathy or conciliation toward Israel as criminal, and potentially capital, offenses. We call on the demonstrators to desist in their ugly display of hatred and on the administrators of our universities to take seriously their own regulations against harassment and violence.

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