



A Jew remains a Jew—even if he distances himself from Israel

Whether in the U.S., Germany, or Switzerland: Everywhere there are Jews who distance themselves from Zionism and stand up to protect those who want to destroy Israel. But this will not save them. History teaches us that.

By Sacha Wigdorovits

Max Naumann, born in 1875, was a Jewish attorney in Berlin. During World War I, he served as a captain in the German army and was awarded the Iron Cross. In 1921, he founded the “Association of National German Jews,” which began publishing a magazine of the same name a year later.

Support for Adolf Hitler – The Struggle Against Zionism

After Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists seized power in 1933, Naumann said: “We, as National German Jews, would have considered it a national tragedy for Germany [...] if Hitler had not taken the fate of the German people into his own hands.”

Naumann distinguished between “German Jews” and “foreign Jews.” For him, the “foreign Jews” included, in particular, the Zionists, who sought to establish their own Jewish state. “Zionists and Jewish nationalists are strangers to us, just as they are to every other German,” Naumann declared in 1921. He went on to write that, admittedly, there were “many truly honest and sincere people” among the Zionists. “But this realization does not relieve us of the duty to fight them if they seek to disrupt our German circles.”

Naumann’s “heirs” are celebrating their resurgence

A little more than 100 years later, Max Naumann has found “worthy” successors. Unlike him, the vast majority of them are on the political left. But, just as he did in his day, they distance themselves from Zionism and, by extension, from the right of the Jewish state of Israel to exist.

For example, the Swiss branch of the “Jewish Voice for Democracy and Justice in Israel/Palestine” (JVJP) recently accused Israel in its newsletter of waging “total war” in Gaza. In doing so, this Jewish organization used a term closely associated with the 1943 speech “Do You Want Total War?” by German Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels. Whether the authors, Rochelle Allebes and Guy Bollag, were unaware of this or whether they knowingly aligned themselves with



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one of the greatest Nazi war criminals is irrelevant. The fact remains: it is abhorrent.

The criticism leveled a year earlier by Gescher—another Jewish organization—against the government of the Canton of Zurich was not much better. The government had refused to take in children from Gaza, each accompanied by three to four chaperones, because it considered this a security risk to the Jewish population of the Canton of Zurich. Gescher told the Zurich government that this demonstrated an “attitude rife with racist undertones.” In other words: Wanting to protect Jews is racist!

From New York to Zurich to Berlin, Jews are fraternizing with anti-Semites

Although attitudes like those of JVJP and Gescher are not very widespread among Jews, they are present throughout the West. For example, Zohran Mamdani, the New York City mayor known for his anti-Semitism and hostility toward Israel, was elected in November 2025 with the support of many Jewish voters. And individual Jewish groups have repeatedly joined the ranks of supporters of radical pro-Palestinian activists on American college campuses.

This has also happened in Switzerland. For example, at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), where the Jewish collective “Doykait” sided with pro-Palestinian activists. Unchallenged by the school administration, they have been allowed to spread their anti-Israel and anti-Semitic propaganda and harass their Jewish fellow students ever since the Hamas massacre on October 7, 2023.

There are Jews in Germany, too, who fraternize with anti-Zionists and anti-Semites. When the party “Die Linke” won the elections in Berlin a few weeks ago, it was subsequently defended in a letter by 150 “Jews from various backgrounds” against accusations of anti-Semitism. This occurred even though sympathizers of Palestinian terrorist organizations were spotted at the election party, there is ample evidence of anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic statements by party leaders, and the party itself still maintains the long-disproved accusation that Israel committed genocide in Gaza.

Ignorance, naivety, conformity, politics, self-hatred

There are various reasons why a minority of Jews publicly distance themselves from Israel and defend anti-Semites—or even support them. For some, ignorance and naivety may play a role; that is, they have no understanding of history or current



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events, or they interpret them naively. For others, an excessive desire for assimilation may be the deciding factor—namely, to avoid causing offense in their current environment, which is largely hostile toward Jews and Israel. Still others distance themselves from Zionism and Israel for political reasons—just as Max Naumann did in his day. And a fourth group of Jews distances itself from Israel—the very embodiment of Jewishness—out of self-hatred.

Different reasons, but the same result

Whatever the reasons may be, the result will be the same: if they can, Islamists and other anti-Semites will persecute these “good Jews” just as they do everyone else. Max Naumann also had to learn this the hard way—he was arrested by the Gestapo in 1935 and was subsequently barred from practicing law until his death in 1939. The Spanish Jews had suffered a similar fate 450 years earlier: Their (largely forced) conversion to Catholicism did not save most of them from persecution by the Inquisition.

My unpleasant message to all Jewish “anti-Zionists” who denounce Israel is therefore: “In the end, your solidarity with our opponents will do you no good.”

So take my advice to heart and do some reading!

A good place to start, for example, would be the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 20:1–4): “When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and a people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them.”

Sacha Wigdorovits is President of the Fokus Israel und Nahost association, which runs the website fokusisrael.ch. He studied history, German and social psychology at the University of Zurich and has worked as a US correspondent for the *SonntagsZeitung*, was editor-in-chief of *BLICK* and co-founder of the commuter newspaper *20minuten*.