From Sacha Wigdorovits

Is it okay to criticize the Swiss government? Of course, and there are always good reasons to do so. Is it permissible to criticize the German government? Just as clearly: yes. Especially as there are currently even better and more frequent reasons to do so than with the Federal Council. Is it permissible to criticize the American government? But of course, especially now, because President Donald Trump had a stranglehold on the Islamofascist mullah regime in Tehran, but shied away from a decisive clampdown.

Is it permissible to criticize the Israeli government? Absolutely, because there are also legitimate reasons for doing so, such as:

- did not prevent the massacre of October 7, 2023;
- the unfair preferential treatment of ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are still exempt from compulsory military service but are supported with multimillions in subsidies;
- the new, stricter death penalty law, which only applies to Palestinian terrorists in the West Bank, but not to those from the ranks of the radical right-wing settlers.

But who is questioning our country’s right to exist because of their criticism of the Swiss government? Who is calling for Germany to be wiped off the map because of their dissatisfaction with Chancellor Friedrich Merz? And who dislikes President Donald Trump so much that he is calling for the USA to be abolished?

Nobody! But in the case of Israel, this demand is constantly being made. Not just in Gaza and Iran. Also on European streets and in European and American universities.

This call “from the river to the sea” for the destruction of Israel has nothing to do with the policy of the current right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu. It has only one reason: they don’t want Israel! The Palestinians don’t want it because they claim the land for themselves. The radical Islamists want the destruction of the Jews themselves. Today’s European and American leftists see Israel as a post-colonial construct that must be undone.

That makes these opponents of Israel all anti-Semites. Because Israel has been a Jewish state since it was founded in 1948 – and the only one in the world. This was its destiny from the very beginning. So anyone who denies Israel the right to exist, as the “anti-Israel” propagandists from the left, Palestinian and Islamist camps do, is denying the Jews the right to self-determination. That is anti-Semitic.

The same applies to another category of critics: those who measure Israel with much tougher standards than all other (democratic) countries. This double standard is particularly evident in the UN. There, the unjust regimes in North Korea, Iran, Myanmar or Syria are hardly ever the subject of condemnation, let alone the governments in Russia or China. Yet Israel is constantly condemned in resolutions – usually with the benevolent support of Switzerland. And in the UN Human Rights Council, which does not even begin to deserve its name, Israel is the only state to which a permanent session agenda item is dedicated.

The label “anti-Semitic” is also justified for those critics who demonize the Jewish state, as is now common practice in Europe in particular, most notably in Spain.

The Gaza war was a perfect example of this. The terrorist organization Hamas caused this war and was also responsible for the numerous civilian casualties. It used the civilian population as a shield and hid its command centers in schools and under hospitals. Israel, on the other hand, called on the civilian population in Gaza to leave the area in question before every attack by means of text messages, leaflets or loudspeaker announcements in order to avoid civilian casualties as far as possible.

Nevertheless, Israel was accused of genocide in Gaza by many, mostly left-wing politicians – which international law experts deny. This has demonized the Jewish state as cruel and inhumane. According to the definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance IHRA, which is also recognized as a guideline in Switzerland, this is considered anti-Semitism.

The bottom line is this: Criticism of the Israeli government is perfectly legitimate. But anyone who is fundamentally “anti-Israel” and therefore measures the Jewish state with different yardsticks than everyone else, demonizes it or outright denies its right to exist, is an anti-Semite! Without ifs and buts.

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