

THE DAFFODIL SWAIN PROJECT

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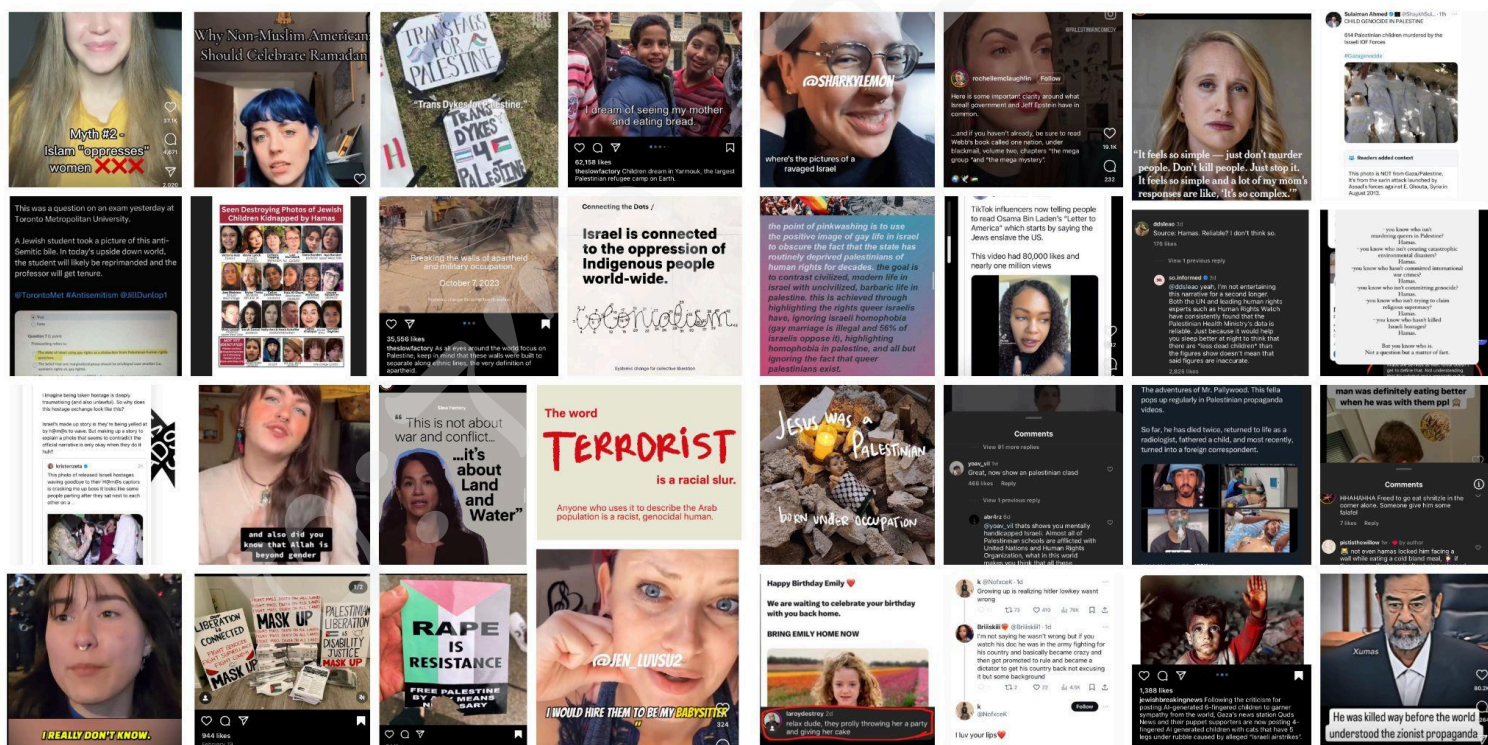
The Goal: Cut support for and increase opposition to Hamas—especially on English social media and among Gen Z Americans—by presenting the terror group as an evil independent of Israel in both content and distribution.

The Point: Push anti-Hamas messaging rather than Israel-focused *hasbara*. Some people and many young Americans (especially members of the collegiate community) display instinctive hostility toward any mention of “Israel” or “Zionism” as well as a sort of political deference to the Palestinian cause. We lose that crowd quickly when they see Israeli flags and proud Zionist labels. But they may be more willing to oppose or just divest from Hamas if Hamas’ evil is depicted independently of their attacks on Israel, in both the content and the sources of the messages. Now, Hamas is linked with Israel in the media and benefits from deflections about their crimes—our content will be primarily disguised in the opening moments and through the lack of obvious Zionism among our initial distributors. Sidelining arguments that portray Hamas as freedom fighters necessary to oppose Israel could diminish the relevance of arguments like “pinkwashing” nonsense and claims of “freedom fighters.” Centering the issue on Hamas’ evil nature may get some anti-Israel thinkers to confront Hamas’ crimes more honestly and directly.

The process includes ridicule of Western support for Hamas. We want content that explicitly equates support for Hamas to support for the evil they do—rape, violent homophobia, child abuse, slavery. We will illustrate how absurd and twisted so-called “progressives” sound when they defend Hamas and that behavior. [Organizations like SJP have successfully tricked](#)

college students into supporting jihad and the mass murder of Jews in the belief that such actions further causes such as feminism, LGBT acceptance, combating climate change, etc. Gil Troy wrote in *Tablet* in early February of 2024 that “multiple identity groups and astroturfed leftist political organizations have made fealty to the Palestinian cause a litmus test for belonging to the wider left.” We need to show these college students (some of whom may simply have been duped) how absurd and twisted they sound. I’ll admit—easier said than done.

We also need to spread these messages through accounts and individuals not easily linked to Israel, Zionism, right wing stances, American patriotism, or even Jews. Scores of college students across America have been manipulated into supporting antisemitism and cheering it on as justice and activism. We can’t fix that this week, so we need to work around it a little.



Gen Z's Best and Brightest,
compiled from public accounts
on social media post-Oct 7

The Method

Content

Four scripts are drafted and well into the editing process (all are attached). Those four capture the tone we're looking for. The methods of distribution will reflect the content and will be as significant as the content itself.

Distribution

For this project to be effective, we will need significant collaboration on distribution from social media accounts (Instagram, Twitter, etc.) that are not openly or obviously affiliated with Israel or Zionism. We want to spread anti-Hamas messages without creating easy chances for anti-Israel users to respond with their typical attacks ("Zionazi propaganda," "Hamas are freedom fighters," "resistance is justified," etc). To do that, we need to find ways of circulating this content outside of our virtual Zionist communities and get it into the pro-Palestinian feeds without it being instantly identifiable as foreign and Zionist content. Ideally, we would find influencers/content creators/aspiring activists who are genuinely loyal to good causes (opposing violence against women, fighting anti-LGBT discrimination, modern abolitionism) and, through them, publish our content as attacks on Hamas from those genuinely humanitarian perspectives. We will tag the posts with hashtags commonly used in anti-Israel feeds (500k or more posts, listed below) and generally popular Gen Z feeds.

By distributing the messages through popular accounts unaffiliated with Israel or Zionism and using the right tags, we should be able to get our work into feeds currently dominated by content that is anti-Israel and sympathetic to Hamas. There, our content can work more effectively on Gen Z audiences—through harsh anti-Hamas rhetoric in which Israel and Zionism

do not play a role and an understanding that “Gen Z [sees] influencers as people with whom they had a close personal connection, akin to friends or even family,” we can expose Gen Z Americans to anti-Hamas points without first having to persuade them to trust new or unpopular sources of information that provide facts instead of [fabricated garbage](#).

Useful Instagram hashtags* include....

#palestina #palestine #freepalestine #decolonize #istandwithpalestine #freegaza #gazaunderattack #savegaza #prayforpalestine #savepalestine #jerusalem #gaza #tiktok #2024 #tiktokban #college #comedy #news #education #palestin #palestinians #palestinewillbefree #palestino #palestinianlivesmatter #gazanation #gazagenocide #gay #gazagenocide #gazastrip #nakba #israhellterrorist #apartheidisrael #sheikhjarrah #alaqsa #fromtherivertothesea #alaqsamosque #alaqsaunderattack #tiktok #tiktokban #college #news #fromtherivertotheseapalestinewillbefree #palestin #palestinians #education #aoc #indigenous #blacklivesmatter #blm #taylorswift #swiftie #climatechange #feminist #feminism #humanity #reproductiverights #climatejustice #climate #justice #climateaction #saveourchildren #equity #equality #refugees #changemakers #solidarity #covid #lgbtq #protest #education #community #love #freedom #socialactivism #resist #giveback #prochoice #pride #civilrights #activism #activist #vegan #change #art #standup #equalrights #advocate #vote #revolution #nojusticenopeace #bethechange #humanrights #climateactivist #lgbtactivist #awareness #racialjustice #adhd #accessibility #therapy #empathy #girlpower #selflove #beautiful #nature #style #tbt #beauty #lifehacks #fitness #motivation #fitness #amazing #lifehack #ethicalfashion #endpoverty #mentalhealth #loveislove #zerohunger #stopbullying #mentalhealthmatters #savethebees #womeninstem #queer #disabilityawareness #nomoreplastic #stopthehate #fairtrade #gay #cleanair #saveourplanet #ecofriendly #justiceforall #erastour #carpenter

*Each of these hashtags represents a feed of at least 100k posts, many over one million

We’ll film the first round and move to a full court press on distribution with our social media partners. Influencers, comedians, activists, makeup artists, fitness gurus, lip-syncers, etc....we want all sorts of creators all over English-language social media to drop this content within a short period of time, preferably posting slightly different versions (cropped and clipped

differently, captions versus not, lower quality, post or reel, filters, also a wide range of hashtag combinations, etc). We want the content to appear already embedded and more organic than the glossy, well-crafted talking head videos put out by large organizations.

By distributing our content through influencers not visibly connected to our cause, we should be able to benefit more directly from the enormous cultural impact that influencers now have, particularly on Gen Z Americans. A [2023 Colorado State study concluded](#) that “Gen Z considers SMIs [influencers] to be highly educated friends with whom they can seek advice and opinions.” Gen Z [average nearly three hours of social media activity daily](#), and [72% report following multiple influencers](#), while 74% of Gen Z are regular Instagram users and “social networks have surpassed search engines as [their] go-to product research channel.”

The [righteous ignorance displayed at some well-attended anti-Israel gatherings](#) suggests that social influence drives a lot of anti-Israel activity (as opposed to, ya know, actually research). Now we want American college and high school students to get anti-Hamas messages from familiar and trusted sources—social media influencers, [described as “opinion leaders”](#) who get [significant engagement from Gen Z](#). Maybe that bizarre trust can work for us instead.

To reiterate: Through harsh anti-Hamas rhetoric in which Israel and Zionism do not play a role and with an understanding that “Gen Z [see] influencers as people with whom they had a close personal connection, akin to friends or even family...”* we can expose Gen Z Americans to anti-Hamas points without first having to persuade them to trust new or unpopular sources of information.

*Singer et al, 2023

We want people to bounce around accounts and tags as they wonder where these videos are coming from and whether they were made by Zionist sources or just sincerely feminist and pro-LGBT content creators. We want them riled up from guessing that the videos have some Zionist origins that they can't quite track and also seeing pro-Hamas talking points ridiculed but not from the Zionist perspective so easily refuted in their community; we want to break the intersectional blackout about the self-contradictory nature of their movement (feminists supporting Hamas, queer liberation linked to Hamas). If we highlight the contradictions in their faulty thinking (without rooting our criticisms in Zionist or Jewish perspectives), then some bandwagon supporters may become disillusioned or simply confused by their own movement. We may eventually push more casual members of the anti-Israel crowd to reject the self-contradictory nonsense and move on to sincere pro-women or pro-LGBT activism.

Platforms

We'll start with Instagram. We should address Twitter and TikTok once we're launched. If TikTok is going to disappear in the US, then it doesn't matter quite as much, but if it's hanging around for a while, then we should look into distribution until it goes away; we should research where to put our content so it's seen by TikTok users as they seek new platforms—[Instagram and YouTube are clear options](#). It's going to be a years-long and uphill battle.

Putting this content in Gen Z Instagram feeds makes this an away game for us. We should learn more about optimal posting times (7–9pm ET?), recruit users in advance to engage with our first wave of influencers (to grow our audience but also as an incentive for them), and generally be willing to improvise and make points in ways that are not Zionist *hasbara*'s bread and butter.

Background & Data

An ocean of bad thought has corrupted the conversation about Israel. It may start to boil if we simply hold up a mirror.

[Pew Report published on 3/21/24 on data collected 2/13-25 from 12,693 American adults](#)

- 58% of all respondents said Israel's reasons for fighting are valid and 73% said Hamas' conduct in the October 7 attacks was unacceptable but only 38% approve of Israel's current conduct in war (30% of all respondents said both Israel and Hamas are fighting in an unacceptable way, while 35% of all respondents find Israel's response acceptable and Hamas' October 7 attack unacceptable)
- Among 18-29 year old respondents, 60% favorably viewed Palestinians but only 14% for Hamas, while 46% favorably viewed Israelis but only 24% for the Israeli government
- 84% of all respondents had unfavorable views of Hamas (and 68% had similar views of the PA), but only 41% had outright favorable views of the Israeli government
- Among 18-29 year old respondents, 27% said Israel's reasons for fighting are not valid and 46% of the same group said Israel's response to the attacks is unacceptable, though 58% of the 18-29 group said the manner of Hamas' October 7 attacks was unacceptable and 38% said Israel has valid reasons for fighting Hamas
- Among 18-29 year old respondents who are Dem/Lean Dem:
 - 44% say Hamas has valid reasons for fighting/35% say Israel has valid reasons
 - 10% say the way Hamas is fighting is acceptable/12% say the same of Israel
- Among all respondents, 8% view Hamas favorably, 23% do the PA, 41% the Israeli gov't

- 28% of Jewish respondents entirely sympathize with the Israeli people, while 45% of Muslim respondents sympathize entirely with the Palestinian people (17 point gap)
- 56% of Black Protestants “have a favorable view of the Israeli people”
- 42% of Jewish respondents “express[ed] a favorable view of the Palestinian people”
- 59% of Muslim respondents expressed favorable views of the Palestinian Authority
- 37% of Muslim respondents expressed favorable views of Hamas
- 58% of Muslim respondents expressed unfavorable views of Hamas (compared to the 84% average, including 77% of Black Protestants and 85% of religiously unaffiliated)

Key Excerpts

- *“Indeed, six-in-ten Americans express very unfavorable views of Hamas. Views of the Israeli government have become more negative since 2022. Today, 41% of U.S. adults express a favorable view of the Israeli government, down from 47%”*
- *“Very few Americans (5%) say that the way Hamas carried out its Oct. 7 attack against Israel was acceptable, but a somewhat larger share (22%) view Hamas’ reasons for fighting Israel as valid”*
- *“A majority of U.S. adults (57%) say they sympathize at least to some extent (or equally) with both Israelis and Palestinians Americans express more positive views of the Israeli people than of the Israeli government. Similarly, more Americans express favorable attitudes toward the Palestinian people than Hamas”*
- *“Adults under 30 are the least likely age group to say Israel’s response is acceptable: 46% of Americans ages 18 to 29 say the way Israel is carrying out the war is unacceptable, including 32% who call it completely unacceptable”*

- *“Among adults under 30, the share expressing a favorable view of the Israeli people has fallen 17 percentage points since 2019, while their views of the Palestinian people have not shifted over this timespan”*
- *“About three-in-ten Jewish Americans (28%) and one-quarter of White evangelical Protestants say they entirely sympathize with the Israeli people Muslim Americans are more likely to say they sympathize entirely with the Palestinian people (45%)”*
- *“Younger people in both partisan camps are less likely than their older counterparts to hold a favorable view of the Israeli people But young Republicans are more likely than young Democrats to have a favorable view of the Israeli people (60% vs. 42% among those ages 18 to 29)”*
- *“Fully 84% of Muslims say they have a favorable view of the Palestinian people, as do 60% of religiously unaffiliated Americans. Atheists (71%) and agnostics (69%) have especially positive views”*
- *“Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, a 45% plurality favored providing only humanitarian aid to Gaza”*
- *“Among Jewish Americans, 45% favored providing both military aid to Israel and humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza about a third supported only military aid for Israel Muslim Americans overwhelmingly favor providing only humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza: 63% expressed this view in the February survey, while just 6% supported sending both kinds of aid”*

Further Results from the General Population

- Support for Israel's reasons for fighting is 20 points higher than support for methods
- 30% say both Israel's and Hamas' conduct is not acceptable
- There has been a decrease in favorable views of the Israel government
- Only 5% approved of the manner of the October 7 attacks, though more than 20% said Hamas has valid reasons for fighting
- There was significantly more support for the civilian populations than their governments

Further Results from 18–29 year olds

- More than a quarter said Israel does not have valid reasons for fighting
- Nearly half said Israel's specific conduct is unacceptable
- Share of views favorable to the Israeli government only 10 points higher than to Hamas
- Majority called October 7 unacceptable; nearly half said Israel's response is unacceptable
- Nearly one third called Israel's conduct in war "completely unacceptable"
- Left-leaning respondents were more likely to consider Hamas' reasons for fighting valid (nearly one half of the age group) than Israel's reasons (by 9 points)
- Left-leaning respondents were only slightly more approving of Israel's conduct in the war than of Hamas' conduct (by 2 points)
- Overwhelmingly unfavorable views of Palestinian leadership; favorable views of Israeli government were the minority as well
- Palestinians were viewed significantly more favorably than Israelis

Election Note: In the 2020 presidential election, an estimated 50% of 18–29 year olds voted, up from 39% in 2016.* This included turnout of at least 49% in eleven (11) key battleground states—Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, Nevada, and Arizona. Of these states....

- ☒ Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, and Iowa were carried by the Republican ticket for a total of 68 electoral college points....
- ☒ The remaining seven (7) states were carried by the Democratic ticket for a total of 91 electoral college points—including projected 2024 swing states Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Arizona, and Nevada, which together hold 67 electoral college points....

18–29 year olds could tip the scales in the 2024 election season. They should not be dismissed as impotent campus campers no matter how addicted they are to TikTok.

Scripts on following pages

"Identifying the Zionist"

1950s old-timey animation. Black-and-white. Simple and shaky graphics. Letters swoop in and a tinny, crackling, old-timey voice with an old Hollywood accent reads aloud, very overdramatically:

NARRATOR

Identifying the Zionist!

We see a 1950s-style office. Middle age white man, smartly dressed, would fit right in with any 1950s blueblood corporation. Sits at his desk while studying important-looking documents. Maybe there's cash on his desk to really rub it in. He's aggressively white, wealthy, male, and powerful. He is, quite clearly, everything progressives hate...or so they think.

NARRATOR

In a tinny, carnival caller-esque voice

The Zionist is everywhere! Know how to spot one!

Rich White Dude gets up and perches on desk, perhaps lighting a cigar for maximum obnoxiousness. He's really rubbing in the Mad Men aesthetic, it's almost nauseating to the point that it's so obviously a parody. But then....

RICH WHITE DUDE (RWD)

The Zionist is easily spotted by three characteristics

Pipe tap

2

The Zionist will attempt to persuade you that sexual assault is always wrong. Good people know that no such actions occurred on the 7th of October, but, had it occurred, it would have required context to discuss and would surely have been justified. But it never happened. Don't let those pesky Zionists fool you!
RWD perhaps does something with a pocket square or handkerchief. Maybe it's silk or monogrammed or just obviously ridiculous in some way.

RICH WHITE DUDE

A telltale sign that gives away a Zionist is an ugly commitment to the protection of women, LGBT individuals, and all religious and ethnic groups. Decent folk know that Hamas' attractive brand of civil repression, legalized spousal rape, and brutal execution of all gay people and those with different religious beliefs is the only civilized way to run a society, take it from me. Hamas keeps all those Zionists' pride parade nonsense away. Don't let those wily Zionists deceive you!

RWD admires himself in mirror or adjusts his insanely luxurious attire in some annoyingly miniscule way. He loves himself, not going to stop.

RICH WHITE DUDE

Perhaps the most despicable quality of the Zionist is an aversion to the proper storage of arms and ammunition. The best people understand that machine guns, rocket launchers, and grenades ought to be kept securely in schools, mosques, and hospitals, preferably ones affiliated with the United Nations to ensure maximum oversight and caretaking.

RWD approaches camera and looks somber but reassuring—he is here to instruct us on the ways of life, and he is determined to impart his wisdom. He insists that we are grateful for his lessons and expects us to express that anticipated gratitude. He is used to being thanked for his wisdom and condescension, and he relishes in it.

RICH WHITE DUDE

Keep your wits about you. Evil-doers want you to believe that rape is wrong, gay people shouldn't be thrown off buildings, and kindergarteners should be kept separate from machine guns. We must not let this twisted Zionist logic prevail!

More old-timey music, then SUDDEN BLACK in the middle of a sound

Normal modern type says:

Sound crazy? We think so too.

Which side are you on?

The “you” tints then fills to blood red. It’s accusatory. We’re throwing their cherished beliefs right back in their faces.

Finally, views are asked to help

#FreeGazaFromHamas

If we want to go further, let’s color “Hamas” the way we did “you,” make it bloody and draw what should be a very uncomfortable parallel.

Jonah M Aronson I

4/30/24

“Dammit, Kenzie! Part I”

College common room. Nice, reasonably well-furnished, and there is plenty of evidence of “college-y-ness” on the boards in the background....we see offers for tutoring, an advertisement of the coming Big Game, a flier about Awareness of Title IX (with contacts and resources), one about identifying signs of abuse and where to call, and, of course, an impeccably-crafted and color-printed flier announcing that “From the River to the Sea, Palestine Will Be Free”

Three female college students sit on the furniture—CHLOE, SOPHIA, and KENZIE. The second we see them, we should think “Swifties.” We should take one look at them and imagine they have been following the Eras Tour minute by minute. We’re playing into stereotypes here—they’re in a sorority, they post a lot on Instagram, and they definitely spend a lot of time on TikTok. And they have got the Middle East all figured out.

CHLOE

Scrolling through phone, only glancing up intermittently
Omigod you guys! I heard there was that really bad attack in the Middle East, like....

Next in an exaggerated but perspective-less whisper
sexual violence!

SOPHIA

Anxious to protest
Well ok yeah but, like, they’re, like, Israeli or Zionist or whatever

CHLOE

Suddenly defensive

Oh yeah, well, actually, I heard that it, like, didn't even happen

SOPHIA

Nonchalantly

Well yeah, it didn't happen. But even if it did, like, it would still be ok or different or whatever becauuuuuse....

CHLOE

Capitalizing on momentum

Because they're Israeli, right? I mean it's not 'cause they're Jew-ish....?

SOPHIA

No, totally not! I mean my roommate has a class with someone who's friends with a guy whose roommate is friends with a Jew-ish person?

Definitely not that

CHLOE

....but they're Israeli, but anyways—it didn't happen, but if it did, then it still wouldn't be....that bad, because, like....

SOPHIA

Wait now I'm confused, because, like, this Hamas freedom fighter said the sexual stuff didn't happen but this other freedom fighter guy said it happened and that they, like, had to do it to Free Palestine

CHLOE

Wait so this freedom fighter says obviously the IDF did it, so, like, if Israel did it, then obviously it's wrong, but, like, it didn't happen in the first place, but if it did happen and Hamas did it then it had to happen and it was okay 'cause they're freedom fighters....

SOPHIA

....right but, like, obviously if Israelis did it, then it was bad.

KENZIE

Absolutely bewildered

Ok but then, like, what do we believe, like....

CHLOE

Suddenly very unsure

I guess, like, just agree with, like, whatever post you're looking at right now? As long as it's, like, a Hamas freedom fighter post, then just, like, listen to it?

KENZIE

So lost, so bewildered

Wait, huh, but, like....

SOPHIA

With suddenly restored superiority

Well yeah because, like, the Hamas guys are all freedom fighters so all their different viewpoints are valid, so we need to listen to all of them

KENZIE

Our hope for the future

Ok but, like, isn't sexual assault, like, always wrong?

CHLOE & SOPHIA

Exhausted with Kenzie's moral backbone

Dammit, Kenzie, they're Zionists!!!

Normal modern type says:

Sound ridiculous? We think so too.

Which side are you on?

The "you" tints then fills to blood red. It's accusatory. We're throwing their twisted, cherished beliefs right back in their faces.

Finally, views are asked to help

#FreeGazaFromHamas

If we want to go further, let's color "Hamas" the way we did "you," make it bloody and draw what should be a very uncomfortable parallel.

Jonah M Aronson I

4/30/24

"Dammit, Kenzie! Part II"

College common room. Nice, reasonably well-furnished, and there is plenty of evidence of "college-y-ness" on the boards in the background....we see offers for tutoring, an advertisement of the coming Big Game, a flier about Awareness of Title IX (with contacts and resources), one about identifying signs of abuse and where to call, and, of course, an impeccably-crafted and color-printed flier announcing that "From the River to the Sea, Palestine Will be Free"

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CHLOE

Scrolling through phone, only glancing up intermittently

Omigod you guys! Israel bombed that hospital like three months ago and no one is talking about it anymore, that's so awful! Like thousands of people were killed, like all women and children and doctors.

SOPHIA

Visibly uncomfortable

Nonononono, that's who hit it. The other freedom fighter group for Palestine like accidentally hit it with like a missile or something

CHLOE

Frantically trying to cover up a mistake

Oh, yeah, well like they have to defend themselves against the Occupation that was, like, oppressing the people in the hospital and because their land got stolen, and so I guess people make mistakes,

SOPHIA

Picking up the thread

Oh yeah like, even the Palestine freedom fighters make mistakes because they're, like, so committed to freeing Palestine so if they blew up that hospital it's, like, not really their fault

KENZIE

Confused. The best of the bunch

But wait, what, like...those people still, like, died, and that's bad, like those people still matter and....

SOPHIA

Agitated and scrambling, looking around with concern

No, yeah, but, like, it's different, those people, like

CHLOE

Agitated and scrambling, slight whisper, fear of being overheard

It's just a little, like, I just don't think it's so important to highlight those women and children, and besides I really don't think it was that many, I think it was only like 50 people died, maybe just like 20 actually. Like that number I said before was wrong, I think

KENZIE

So lost, so bewildered

Wait, huh, but, like....

SOPHIA

With suddenly restored superiority

And I guess it's just like war or whatever, and, like, the Zionists started it anyway but occupying the river, so we don't really know so we just have to, like, wait and see who bombed, and then we'll know whether it was good or bad.

CHLOE

With newfound relief and momentum

Yeah, 'cause like obviously if Israel bombs something they kill a lot of people 'cause they're committing genocide

SOPHIA

Relieved that they're back on track

Right, but obviously if, like, Palestinians or the freedom fighters accidentally blow something up it won't be that many people that died because they're, like, really careful and they're just trying to help free Palestine.

KENZIE

Still so lost, still so bewildered

Wait, but, like, like...

SOPHIA

No, really, Kenzie, just trust me, if Palestinians or freedom fighters accidentally blew up the place, there were probably, like,

barely any people there, they don't want to kill people like that,
like they just want to free the Euphrates River I think?

KENZIE

Ok, but like....

CHLOE & SOPHIA

Kenzie!

CHLOE

The freedom fighters are the good guys! If **they** hit the hospital
then....

CHLOE & SOPHIA

....it wasn't that bad!

Normal modern type says:

Sound ridiculous? We think so too.

Which side are you on?

*The "you" tints then fills to blood red. It's accusatory. We're throwing
their twisted, cherished beliefs right back in their faces.*

Finally, views are asked to help

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*If we want to go further, let's color "Hamas" the way we did "you," make
it bloody and draw what should be a very uncomfortable parallel.*

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4/30/24

"Don't Mention It"

A boring, conventional office. A woman walks by carrying all sorts
of things, very awkwardly. ENTER a man. Non-threatening, innocent
looking. Totally banal. He snags a particularly unwieldy item from
the women's collection and sets it down gently on her desk.

CARRYING WOMAN

Thanks, Ed!

ED

Don't mention it!

ED proceeds to a door, another man trailing behind him. ED reaches
for the door handle and, excessively politely, swings it open and
beckons his coworker through.

TRAILING MAN

Thanks, Ed!

ED

Don't mention it.

ED continues through the office. We see a woman rummaging through
some cabinets above a coffee set up. Ed, gallantly, reaches into a
bizarrely inconvenient corner and kindly pulls out a coffee pod.

COFFEE WOMAN

Thanks, Ed!

ED

Don't mention it!

We follow Ed back into a conference room. A group of important, executive-looking types are seated. Ed proceeds to the front of the room where an active projector and a slideshow are waiting for him.

ED

Alright, folks. We were discussing strategies for presenting evil rapists and violent homophobes as lovable freedom fighters. Ideas?

EXECUTIVE AUDIENCE MEMBER

Wait, but...what about all the raping and kidnapping and mutilating and human shields and....

ED waves his hand, cuts it off. Looks more sinister, less innocent.

ED

Don't mention it....

Normal type says:

You should mention it.

"You should" fades, "mention it" centers as the "it" turns blood red.

Below appears

#FreeGazaFrom Hamas

And "Hamas" turns red the same way "it" did

Wildly Aspirational Plans

A Quixotic *Hasbara* Agenda

I've had this crazy idea for months. I think it could work if we could ever make it happen. But it requires a rather lofty first step: access to Taylor Swift and her team.

Taylor Swift is the biggest star in the world. Her boyfriend, Travis Kelce, is the most productive and famous teammate of Patrick Mahomes, himself the best active athlete on the planet. Taylor Swift and Patrick Mahomes together hold significant influence over two communities where *hasbara* has failed over the past several years—Gen Z and black Americans. If Swift and Mahomes were to condemn Hamas very publicly and very explicitly—without mentioning Israel in the condemnation—they could spring huge amounts of anti-Hamas sentiment out of the various communities that follow those two celebrities.

Yes, this idea is more than a little out there. However, I strongly believe that the Zionist community should go on the offensive and strive for huge blows while simultaneously chipping away at the mass of antisemitism that has infected American society—deep balls and a consistent run game at the same time.

The Goldmine of Sports

Patrick Mahomes' social media following is not quite as gargantuan: 6.8 million followers on IG, 2.6m on X. However, what we want from Mahomes ([one of 2024's TIME 100](#)) is pioneering opposition to Hamas among athletes, black celebrities, and the wider black American community. [Mahomes is considered a significant and influential figure in all three groups and has been lauded for his innovative and championship-winning on-field play as well as his devotion to the black community.](#) A strong anti-Hamas statement (free of references to Israel and Jews) and an ongoing anti-Hamas stance from Mahomes could both temper some anti-Israel sentiment in the black community and also encourage other significant black athletes, Christians especially, to voice opposition to Hamas.

Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa, who is a Samoan evangelical Christian, [expressed support for Israel](#) in the weeks following the October 7 attacks. Quarterbacks Jalen Hurts, Dak Prescott, Lamar Jackson, and CJ Stroud are other notable young black quarterbacks who have openly shared their Christian faith. Mahomes' publicly denouncing Hamas and Hamas supporters on Christian grounds could inspire younger black quarterbacks to make similar statements and relate them to their own faith. As *de facto* on- and off-field leaders who are constantly in the spotlight—frequent and numerous interviews, press conferences, ads with sponsors—NFL quarterbacks possess a unique ability to influence league-wide behavior and promote their views from NFL-sponsored platforms. [Mahomes is now the revered face of the NFL, of the quarterback community, and especially of black quarterbacks.](#) Mahomes could inspire a wave of support among his Christian counterparts around America's most popular and profitable sports league. Open opposition to Hamas among young NFL stars could then be amplified by team owners like [Patriots honcho Bob Kraft, a respected Zionist and accomplished](#)

team owner who is popular in the player community. Other potential partners among the Jewish team owners are Jeffrey Lurie (Philadelphia Eagles; team issued anti-Hamas statement in October), Arthur Blank (Atlanta Falcons; Blank has donated money to recovery efforts), and Steve Tisch (New York Giants; family is wealthy and strongly pro-Israel). Owners and quarterbacks working together for the good of Israel could be a goldmine of ideological support and infrastructure. A united front that includes notable quarterbacks and owners could turn America's premiere sports league into an anti-Hamas outpost both on the field and in front offices. With the annual Super Bowl audience hovering around 90–100 million viewers, strong anti-Hamas sentiment among the league's most visible figures could provide consistent support for Israel's cause for years in front of wide American audiences.

While the NFL remains king of ratings and revenue, the NBA also holds intriguing potential: Steph Curry should be another primary target partner. Curry, a future first ballot Hall of Famer, is one of the most accomplished, famous, and significant athletes in the history of American sports. He is also a devoted Christian with a Hebrew tattoo who has been linked to Judaism and Israel in multiple ways, including financially and through his and his family's shared faith. Curry has 56.6 followers on Instagram and 17.4 million more on Twitter; Curry has also influenced the game of basketball more dramatically than arguably any single NBA player not named Michael Jordan and has significant influence over his personal community as well. As the legend whose style of play sparked the NBA's current era, Curry is likely to be in the spotlight after his retirement, and his support could pay ideological dividends for years to come.

Christian forward Giannis Antetokounmpo—extremely popular, wildly talented, and often considered a particularly wholesome NBA superstar—currently plays for the Milwaukee Bucks (though many commentators and analysts believe a move to a larger market like New

York or Golden State could be in his near future). Already a living legend with a ring and a case full of trophies in his name, Giannis has also distinguished himself with [investment in and an ambassador role for Israeli startup Antidote Health](#). Giannis is a Greek-Nigerian phenom with a rags-to-riches story and a down to earth, family-focused image that could make him a wholesome and credible spokesman against Hamas and their crimes.

While Major League Baseball does not have the professional sports spotlight as much as it once did, MLB does feature an impressive collection of highlight reel-worthy young talent, including several notable Christian ballplayers. These include Yankees slugger Aaron Judge (New York athletes always have an incentive to appeal to Jewish fans) and Toronto slugger Vladimir Guerrero Jr. Both will likely play key roles in baseball for the next decade or so. Having one or both of these stars firmly and publicly opposed to Hamas could be beneficial to Israel's standing in the North American sports world for years to come.

While younger stars are ideal sources of support on social media, several notable older or retired athletes have track records that suggest they may be willing to voice consistent criticism of Hamas and its supporters in the West. Amar'e Stoudemire is an obvious name, though his conversion to Judaism and increasingly passionate Zionist rhetoric could make his positions easy for the other side to dismiss. Beyond Stoudemire, consensus [NFL GOAT Tom Brady](#) and all-time NBA points leader and [four time Finals MVP LeBron James](#) each issued a condemnation of Hamas' crimes on October 7 within several weeks of the attack (though both have been mostly quiet on the topic since). Both legends have had PR issues related to politics in the past, though each maintains a vast and committed following. Among longer-retired athletes, NBA legends and award-winning commentators [Shaquille O'Neal and Charles Barkley \(Shaq and Chuck\)](#) have [taken strong stances—sometimes together—against antisemitism within the NBA](#) community.

As annual residents in the NBA postseason spotlight, Shaq and Chuck could provide younger NBA fans with Hall of Fame-caliber wisdom to shield them from hateful propaganda.

Other notable Christian athletes who could provide similar support through their faith and platforms include: running back Austin Ekeler; Super Bowl LII MVP quarterback Nick Foles (free agent); Orlando Magic forward Jonathan Isaac; Super Bowl XLVIII champion QB Russell Wilson (may no longer be a starter but has a significant social media following along with his wife, Ciara); and American sports power couple Zach and Julie Ertz (Super Bowl LII champion and former women's national soccer team superstar).

Of course, Deni Avdija, a steadily improving Israeli forward, should play an increasingly public and central role in *hasbara* efforts, including beyond the NBA and the American sports community. However, Avdija currently plays for a weak team, has yet to establish himself as a consistent NBA star, and has (thankfully) been extremely vocal on Israel's behalf during this war. His current lack of NBA playoff presence combined with his known pro-Israel stance make Avdija an imperfect fit in this particular project right now. Still, Avdija remains a prime candidate to lead Israel's American-focused *hasbara* in the near future, and if he establishes himself as a top-billed NBA superstar in the near future then he could do wonders for the Jewish community, Israel, and overall views of Zionism and Jews among a wide range of Americans.

I believe wholeheartedly that social media (particularly in the entertainment and sports industries), if influenced properly, could weaken the hold that anti-Israel sentiment and pro-Hamas sympathy have over so many young Americans, particularly ones attending elite universities. Many decent Americans—perhaps most—are disgusted by and staunchly opposed to Hamas and their actions, particularly on October 7. A [recent Harvard Harris poll](#) indicates that

unfavorable opinions of Hamas outweigh favorable ones by 50 points (64% to 14%); the poll held that favorable views of Israel outweighed unfavorable ones by 24 points (52% to 28%). Furthermore, while 70% of respondents said they supported a permanent ceasefire in the current war, 68% of respondents said they would oppose a ceasefire that allowed Hamas to remain in power with the hostages still in their possession. Demonstrating that such opposition exists among non-Jews and groups that are not obvious Zionists—young female pop stars, black Christian athletes, etc—may convince some young progressives to question the propaganda they’ve been spoon-fed by dishonest and malicious anti-Israel figures.

Down the Rabbit Hole of Extended Swiftian Influence

Let’s assume—just for fun—that we can get in touch with Taylor Swift. I think we need 90 minutes in person with her: first, 47 minutes to show her the video compiled by the Israeli government that graphically depicts the horrors of the October 7 massacres; and the remaining 43 minutes to convince Swift that publicly leading the charge against Hamas’ brand of pure evil and violence against women and children would establish her as a legendary civil rights figure, a great feminist leader, a champion of the oppressed, a future heroine of the Palestinian people, and—more selfishly—a logical choice for millions of Jewish and Zionist consumers all around the world (including around [100 million Evangelical Christians living in America](#)) to support in her artistic and business endeavors.

The Swift plan is simple: she makes one post across platforms and then goes silent on social media for a while to allow her minions to absorb the message. If this works, many of her millions of fans will show fealty by openly opposing Hamas' barbaric practices under the blessing of their idol.

Our post:

Hamas is evil.

Rape is always wrong.

Supporting Hamas is evil against women.

The hostages must come home now.

#FreeGazaFromHamas

(I'm very open to suggestions and criticisms on the post, but I'm adamant that it be short, not mention Israel, and be something easily read, reposted, screenshotted, sent around, etc.)

23 words (four of them in a hashtag) could mobilize the Swiftian legion on our behalf. 283 million followers on Instagram and 95.2 mil on X (Twitter) are only Swift's mobile base. [Swifties have their own dedicated Wikipedia page](#) (and lore and lingo). Some estimates suggest there are upwards of 77 million self-identified "Swifties" just in the United States; a Business Insider analysis of a 2023 Morning Consult Report indicates [north of 135 million adults in the United States](#) are Taylor Swift fans. It's hard to find that many people who agree on anything these days ([it's an opportunity that we could never, ever, ever otherwise get together](#)). And imagine the damage that even one "Free Palestine" tweet from Swift's platform could do. Scary.

It will be a tall task to get some of these young Americans to give up their steady diet of antisemitic rhetoric wrapped up in a gentle case of social justice and excuses for terrorism. [Roughly 70 million Americans belong to Gen Z](#). This is a population that is worth working on. And again....

Through harsh anti-Hamas rhetoric in which Israel and Zionism do not play a role and with an understanding that “Gen Z [see] influencers as people with whom they had a close personal connection, akin to friends or even family...” we can expose Gen Z Americans to anti-Hamas points without first having to persuade them to trust new or unpopular sources of information.

Some of this is far-fetched. But we're Zionists—we're only strange if we don't
believe in miracles

JONAH M ARONSON



5/17/24