

“The Children of Gaza”. Free Speech in American Universities - The Heroism and Idealism of Youth in Full and Glorious Display

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Free speech only comes into its own when you freely consent to hear what you hate to hear.

When everyone is singing from the same songbook, it sure may sound mighty sweet – but it is not free speech. It then becomes a type of cackle of congregating geese or perhaps even the synchronized song of several robins of early spring, singing the same song together.

Except for the robins themselves (or perhaps even for them!), this would become insufferably boring after the first full flush of amorous feeling.

It is the multitudinous, different tones and timbres and pitches of birdsong that has been the stuff of the poet's longing and the spurned lover's consolation when he walks in the woods alone. In comparing the song of the skylark to that of the nightingale and several other choristers of the skies and choosing one (Shelley, the skylark) or the other (Keats, the nightingale), we may join the poet in the exercise of free choice that follows the exercise of free speech.

For those of us who have resolved to fight the good fight of freedom, for those of us who believe in the right to protest and the right to free speech, **we must support free speech anywhere, everywhere, even in our universities. Especially in our universities.**

We don't have to agree with those who protest. We may even detest their views with all our hearts. But we of all people must uphold their right to protest. To [protest in peace](#) is a fundamental right. It follows from the right to [free speech](#) and it is deeply indebted to our [Christian civilization](#) and the bequeathing to us of the ability to choose life or death, blessing or curse, for ourselves.

The present, widespread turmoil in American universities is not new.

It follows a glorious tradition of civil disobedience and protest which has inspired generations of Americans.

Quintessentially, Americans have seen themselves as blessed among the nations in their ability to protest in the hallowed grounds of their institutions of higher education and exercise their "first amendment rights."

That ancient incubator of new ideas which is the university, has nowhere seen as much of the ever present tension between free speech and tyranny, as in America.

The people of the Western world are coming round to the idea at last, that [children in Gaza](#) must be protected from [harm](#) -

- **from having their limbs and faces blown off,**
- **from being burned and incinerated by bombs dropped from the skies;**
- **from undergoing amputations without anesthesia;**
- **from being orphaned and seeing adults dying slow, painful deaths all around them;**
- **from dying of hunger and thirst;**
- **and from being shot and bombed to death themselves -with 15,000 of them killed so far, in the space of just six months.**

Normal people, who have not lost their common humanity cry out in despair and shake their fists with anger at the powers that have allowed this demonic travesty to happen.

And most people, upon witnessing what is happening to the trapped [children](#) in the besieged, bombed and battered city of Gaza are, (in the words of Roger Waters, the Pink Floyd frontman), *"on the edge of tears."*

But the cowardly powers behind the throne seem to think they can literally get away with murder.

The [chicken hawk Speaker](#) of the American House has lately put his satanic stamp upon sending 61 billion dollars to the killing fields of Ukraine (where 300+ billion dollars to Ukraine so far has not stopped the Russian advance) and several billion dollars to Israel, which will be used to kill more children in Gaza with American bombs.

The world was treated to the [curious spectacle](#) in the august hall of Jeffersonian democracy a week ago, when, after unleashing the dogs of war, members of congress started waving little Ukrainian flags no less! Mr. Blinken, America's secretary of state is acting like a

blinking, blundering, but dangerous fool - and there is no coherence or common sense at all that comes out of the mouths of our “leaders” - Trudeau, Biden, Sunak, Macron, Scholz, all seem to be under an evil spell.

Students in numerous American universities have now decided that enough is indeed enough - and for the last week, have been protesting peacefully in Yale, Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Brown, Berkeley, Emory and numerous other universities.

Tyrannies feel particularly threatened by peaceful student protests, since they know that nothing short of brute and crude force will be able to suppress them (temporarily). They also know from recent history that American student protests spread with an organic intensity and fervour from university to university - and then to the public at large.

And when American students have spoken their free speech with just cause, the tyranny knows that a whole generation of people have been inspired to stand up for liberty, for freedom, for peace over war and for love over prejudice and hate. The tyranny trembles at the sounds of students marching or camping in protest.

Predictably therefore, the Biden tyranny, together with kindred powers acting in the shadows, have unleashed the full might of the state against peaceful students protesting on behalf of helpless children being killed, maimed and orphaned in Gaza.

Heavily armed police have been [terrorizing](#) peaceful students and their faculty on numerous campuses around America. Hundreds of students have been violently arrested. Once again, there is a disconnect between the Presidents, Deans and overpaid, elite university heads - and the students and faculty of these universities. Yesterday, the faculty of Yale wrote a [poignant, powerful letter](#) in support of first amendment rights, free speech, academic freedom and peaceful, student protests.

Opponents of free speech love zero-sum games, which help to simplify for themselves, the process of demonizing those they do not agree with.

The present zero-sum game they play is that the student protests in America are “anti-semitic” (while children are actually being killed in Gaza). In fact, [Jewish students constitute a sizeable part of the student body protesting the killing of children in Gaza](#) - this of course, destroys the zero-sum narrative that the protesting students are “terrorists” or “muslims” or “left wing, anti-semitic nuts.” The Yale faculty letter for example, points out that the Jewish group, “Yale Jews for Ceasefire” are a prominent part of the student protests at Yale. And yesterday, an 88 year old Jewish, holocaust survivor gave a [moving, inspiring speech](#) to protesting Columbia students.



In Columbia University, which is turning into the epicentre of the student protests, **Jewish students have joined their non-Jewish peers in protest and have been arrested along with them, for peacefully protesting the slaughter in Gaza.**

The zero-sum game of the charlatans who oppose campus free speech and protest and seek to demonize their opponents, is falling apart.

As in past American campus protest movements, those who are now protesting for humanity and the children of Gaza, bear watching – many of them will be tomorrow's leaders, many of them will be hailed as heroes who stood and wept with those who weep and tenaciously defied the tyranny on behalf of those who had no voice of their own (the children of Gaza).

We, who love freedom and free speech, must be on guard – lest we fall victim ourselves to the same intolerant and dictatorial attitudes that have always characterized opponents of free speech, from the [Bolsheviks](#) in the Soviet Union, to Trudeau's [police tyranny](#) that was unleashed on the Truckers Freedom Convoy.

The quote wrongly attributed to Voltaire (and which was actually first uttered by the English author Evelyn Beatrice Hall) should be the rallying cry of those who oppose the views of the protesting students (but still value free speech and freedom of conscience): *"I may disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it"*

Much better, those of us on the side of freedom and humanity should join the students in solidarity, admiration and prayer. Their idealism speaks to us of the better way, a better

world that beckons beyond the noise and strife of war and slaughter.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

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