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Unwilling to link Israel's brutality to rising anger in the US, Chuck Schumer may be fanning the flames of anti-Semitism

Karl Polzer

The author is founder of the [Center on Capital & Social Equity](#), which explores inequality and advocates for the "bottom 50%." His father and grandparents immigrated to the US in 1941 after escaping the Holocaust.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer doesn't seem to be able, or willing, to connect the dots. His recent [speech](#) raising alarm about growing anti-Semitism fails to acknowledge the real concerns of many Americans regarding Israel's conduct of the war in Gaza.

A growing number of Americans are angry at the US government, Congress, and pro-Zionist lobbyists for giving the extremist Israeli government billions in military aid to slaughter thousands of civilians in Gaza with their tax dollars – and with no strings attached. Americans inured to decades of information flow from an Israeli-Jewish perspective are now absorbing news from a [variety of sources](#), including those sympathetic to the humanity of the indigenous Palestinian population. Americans are watching carnage and displacement of millions of people on TV and the internet. More are questioning why Israel is taking ever more [Palestinian land](#). They are rightly asking if Israel could neutralize Hamas without massive destruction and loss of civilian life.

Schumer and others in Congress conflate criticism of the Israeli regime, and US support for it, with "anti-Semitism" - and use anti-Semitism as a rallying cry to suppress political opposition and free speech. Critics point out that waving the red flag of anti-Semitism, while ignoring the brutality of the Israeli government, may be generating more anti-Semitism not only in the US, but across the globe.

By way of example, after the senator labelled a magazine article, which criticized the recent Washington March for Israel, as anti-Semitic, its author, [Dave Zirin](#), responded: "Schumer is weaponizing the incendiary charge of antisemitism against me and *The Nation* as cover to slander the left generally—specifically the movement of [a new generation of Jews](#) marching and getting arrested in the name of a permanent cease-fire. He is also obfuscating his own craven efforts to ally with actual antisemites and genocidal Israeli politicians in the name of this war on Gaza..."

"He is providing cover for people who despise our faith, because they also support unconditionally Israel's total war on Gazan civilians. Schumer, heal thyself, and stop supporting war crimes being committed in our name. By stoking even more antisemitism, it's dangerous to Jews everywhere."

Schumer, Minority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#), and others in the Senate are trying to push through [billions of dollars](#) more for arms for a Netanyahu government whose cabinet members openly advocate ethnic cleansing of the West Bank and Gaza. As one of many examples, in June, before the current conflict in Gaza, [Israel National Security Minister](#) Itamar Ben-Gvir [said this to Israeli settlers](#) encroaching on West Bank land: "I give you my full and complete backing, but I want much more from the settlement here, there needs to be a full settlement here, not only here, but in all the hills around us.

"The Land of Israel must be settled and at the same time as the settlement of the Land a military operation must be launched. [We must] demolish buildings, eliminate terrorists, not one or two, but tens and hundreds, and if necessary even thousands, because at the end of the day, this is the only way we will hold on here, strengthen control and restore security to the residents, and above all we will fulfill our great mission. The Land of Israel is for the people of Israel, we are backing you, run to the hills, settle down. We love you." (Here's another account of the speech: [Israel's Ben-Gvir calls for assassination of 'thousands' of Palestinians - TRT World](#))

A Nov. 30 Washington Post [article](#) detailing suppression of concerns by international aid agencies about "mass forced displacement" and human rights violations quotes two other senior Israeli leaders making similar comments advocating for ethnic cleansing: "Simcha Rothman, a prominent member of the Israeli parliament, [suggested](#) earlier this week that Gazans should be resettled in other parts of the world, alleging they were being held in Gaza by the United Nations 'for political reasons in order to hurt the state of Israel.'

"Earlier this month Israeli agriculture minister Avi Dichter [said](#): 'We're rolling out Nakba 2023,' using the Palestinian term, Arabic for 'catastrophe,' for the [mass expulsion](#) of Palestinians during the months before and after the 1948 war that created Israel."

While Sen. Schumer and others play the "anti-Semitism" card - which resonates deeply with many of his supporters - more Americans, and much of the world, instead see blatant hypocrisy as [right-wing](#) Israeli leaders pursue policies that increasingly echo the German push for "[lebensraum](#)" during World II. From the history of its own people, shouldn't Israel's government know what it's like to be displaced, ridiculed, and killed because of one's ethnic status or religion?

A growing number of Americans do not want to be associated with the thugs running Israel today and don't want any more military aid going to them. Instead, when the military situation stabilizes, Congress should funnel money into humanitarian aid and help to develop a peaceful settlement. The Biden Administration should do more than urge Israel's leaders to minimize civilian casualties. It should veto any further military funding from Congress unless the bills include specific, enforceable safeguards to prevent excessive violence and unnecessary loss of life.

Along with leaders of other countries opposing mass killing of civilians, Turkey's president this week referred to Netanyahu as "the butcher of Gaza." President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the

Israeli government's actions not only jeopardize the possibility of a truce, but also exacerbate anti-Semitism and threaten the lives of Jews worldwide.