

# In defense of Jonathan Glazer: *The Zone of Interest* director comes under venomous attack for Academy Awards statement

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British filmmaker Jonathan Glazer has become the target of a vicious witch-hunt for his remarks at the Academy Awards ceremony last Sunday. Upon receiving the award for best international feature film for *The Zone of Interest*, about the commandant of Auschwitz, Glazer told the audience:

All our choices we made to reflect and confront us in the present, not to say “look what they did then.” Rather, “look what we do now.” Our film shows where dehumanization leads at its worst. It shaped all of our past and present.

Right now, we stand here as men who refute their Jewishness and the Holocaust being hijacked by an occupation which has led to conflict for so many innocent people. Whether the victims of October 7 in Israel or the ongoing attack on Gaza—all the victims of this dehumanization, how do we resist?

Glazer’s entirely legitimate response to the fact that he and his colleagues have had “their Jewishness and the Holocaust hijacked” by the current Israeli onslaught in Gaza struck a nerve with the professional defenders of Israel’s mass crimes. Someone letting the general public in on a dirty secret, that the Zionists routinely and cynically make use of the horrors of the Holocaust to justify their atrocities—before an international viewing audience that still numbers in the tens of millions—had to be denounced and smeared.

The result has been a stream of vitriolic, hysterical abuse.

Some of the critics were stupid or dishonest enough to misquote Glazer and report that he had simply “refuted his Jewishness.” Meghan McCain, “television personality,” daughter of the late warmonger Sen. John McCain and a reactionary in her own right, denounced a situation in which “a man gets on stage to ‘refute his Jewishness’ and half the room claps.” She was corrected by hundreds of commentators on social media, to no effect of course.

Abraham Foxman, former director of the Anti-Defamation League and a ferocious defender of Israel, also chose to distort Glazer’s statement, asserting that as “a survivor of the Holocaust I am shocked the director would slap the memory of over 1 million Jews who died because they were Jews by announcing he refutes his Jewishness. Shame on you.”

The pro-Zionist forces who managed to grasp Glazer’s comment, however, were no less hostile.

Noa Tishby, a former Israeli government official, has become a leading apologist in the US for Israel’s crimes. She denounced the entire film award event March 10, without mentioning Glazer by name, as “a subtle and overt display of Jew-hatred.”

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, another media-seeking defender of Zionism, took to X to denounce Glazer’s comments as “Absolutely disgusting!” The director, according to Boteach, had “betrayed his people and disgraced himself and trivialized the 6 million martyrs of the holocaust, when he said that Israel’s War in Gaza was hijacking the memory of the holocaust. How dare you compare the two? You fool. The whole purpose of Israel’s war in Gaza is to make sure THERE ISN’T A SECOND HOLOCAUST so we don’t need more of your films because Jews actually remain alive.

HAMAS HAS ONE INTENTION. GENOCIDE OF JEWS.”

These are fascist-minded individuals who only restrain themselves, for the moment at least, from bellowing: Kill all the Arabs!

David Schaefer, president of the Miami-based Holocaust Survivors’ Foundation USA, defensively claimed that Glazer’s comment was “factually incorrect and morally indefensible” and said that Israel “has nothing to do with the Holocaust.” He insisted Glazer was trying to “equate Hamas’ maniacal brutality against innocent Israelis with Israel’s difficult but necessary self-defense in the face of Hamas’s ongoing barbarity.”

The CEO of Combat Antisemitism Movement Sacha Roytman Dratwa claimed that Glazer had appropriated “his religious and ethnic identity to attack the national homeland of the Jewish People which is fighting a war on seven fronts against those who openly call for the genocide of Jews.”

These people can justify anything. One hundred thousand Gazans dead, wounded or missing; 2,000 pound Israeli-“Made in the USA” bombs dropped on residential neighborhoods; the destruction of hospitals, universities, mosques, libraries and schools; the assassination of political opponents, intellectuals, artists; the slaughter of thousands of women and children; the sadistic torture and summary execution of prisoners; the deliberate starvation of an entire population.

The world watches in horror as the Israeli military commits one crime after another, each more heinous than the one before. And through it all, the pack of fascists that comprise Netanyahu’s cabinet, along with the leading voices of the Israeli and global media, and the Biden administration and its European allies insist they are fighting “terrorism” and “antisemitism.”

One of the most repulsive and dishonest attacks on Glazer was posted on the *Hollywood Reporter* website, appropriately enough, as the publication played a leading role in the McCarthyite witch-hunts of the late 1940s and 1950s. The piece, by one Richard Trank, first of all, lyingly asserts that the current conflict began October 7, not 76 years ago with the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, followed by decades of destruction of villages and orchards, theft of land, persecution, murder and abuse, including almost

20 years of forcing the Gazan population to live in an open-air prison camp.

Trank presents the ongoing genocidal campaign and subsequent events in these terms:

Toward the end of October, the Israeli army attacked Hamas in Gaza, determined to wipe it out forever so that an atrocity like this [October 7] will never happen again. In the subsequent months, we have watched pro-Hamas and anti-Israel forces unleash a campaign of worldwide antisemitism the likes of which has not been seen since the Nazi era.

Trank argues that those actors and others at the awards ceremony March 10 who sported “red pins in support of a *Cease Fire Now* and Palestinian flags on their lapels” were wearing the equivalent of “swastika pins in sympathy with Hitler’s Reich.”

There is an element of derangement in this type of slanderous comment. Glazer’s observation about “dehumanization” seems entirely fitting. No crime is beyond the Israeli regime and its backers in Washington, London, Paris and Berlin. There are no military, moral or intellectual “red lines.”

Derangement, and extreme anxiety. Tens of millions have expressed their horror at the mass killings in Gaza. Great numbers of Jewish young people, in the US and elsewhere, are participating in the mass protests. Glazer’s remarks, from a filmmaker without a history of political commentary or intervention, demonstrates how far the discrediting of Zionism’s lies has reached.

The WSWS has no hesitation in wholeheartedly defending Glazer against these vile attacks.



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