

A group of “Hollywood professionals” smears filmmaker Jonathan Glazer and defends Israeli genocide in Gaza

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The witch-hunt continues against British film director Jonathan Glazer for his remarks at the Academy Awards ceremony March 10. The latest attack comes in the form of a statement—promoted widely in the media—by hundreds of self-described “Jewish Hollywood professionals” denouncing Glazer and offering their support to the mass murder in Gaza.

At the Academy Awards, Glazer received the prize for best international feature film for *The Zone of Interest*, which treats the commandant of the Auschwitz death camp and his family. In his comments, the filmmaker made clear that the work’s representation of “dehumanization ... at its worst” was not merely directed at the past, but also the present.

Glazer went on to explain that he and his colleagues on stage rejected the attempt to have their Jewishness and the Holocaust itself “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?” He then praised Polish resistance member Alexandria Bystro?-Ko?odziejczyk, who smuggled in food to Auschwitz prisoners, adding, “[She] glows in the film as she did in life. I dedicate this to her memory and her resistance.”

Glazer’s comments were interrupted twice by strong applause, and further applause greeted him when he finished his brief speech.

The filmmaker’s statement and the support it received at the March 10 ceremony have a genuine significance. The episode reflects the fact that a growing percentage of artists, including Jewish artists, refuse to be bludgeoned and blackmailed into silence by invocations of the Holocaust uttered by those committing unspeakable, Nazi-like crimes themselves.

Precisely because of this increased immunity to pro-Israel demagoguery, and the general horror felt by wide layers of the population at the Israeli army’s atrocities, Glazer has been subjected to a relentless torrent of abuse by pro-Zionist elements, in Israel, the US and worldwide. *Variety*, *Deadline* and the *Hollywood Reporter*, the official voices of the Hollywood establishment, along with Fox News and the *New York Post*, in other words, the right-wing gutter press, have led the media charge.

The reprehensible letter of “Hollywood professionals” is part of that propaganda campaign.

It is a pack of lies from beginning to end, worthy of a Goebbels.

The letter writers declare, attempting to parody Glazer, that they “refute our Jewishness being hijacked for the purpose of drawing a moral equivalence between a Nazi regime that sought to exterminate a race of people, and an Israeli nation that seeks to avert its own extermination.” How *their* Jewishness has been hijacked *for any purpose* by Glazer’s comments remains entirely obscure, but the brief appeal is short on logical or convincing argument.

In any event, the plans for a full-scale invasion of Gaza were obviously made long in advance of October 7, as documents have revealed. The

Hamas-organized raid was the pretext for setting into motion the Israeli-US “final solution” of the Palestinian question. The catastrophic, homicidal results are unfolding under the entire world’s gaze.

The historical resonance of the pro-Zionist rationale with the claims of the Hitler regime is unmistakable. As the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* explains, Nazi

propagandists universally justified the use of military violence by portraying it as morally defensible and necessary. ... Nazi propagandists disguised military aggression aimed at territorial conquest as righteous and necessary acts of self-defense. They cast Germany as a victim or potential victim of foreign aggressors, as a peace-loving nation forced to take up arms to protect its populace or defend European civilization against Communism.

The Hollywood open letter continues, with breathtaking hypocrisy, “Every civilian death in Gaza is tragic. Israel is not targeting civilians. It is targeting Hamas. The moment Hamas releases the hostages and surrenders is the moment this heartbreaking war ends. This has been true since the Hamas attacks of October 7th.” The Israeli military has indiscriminately bombed schools, libraries, hospitals and residential neighborhoods. It has massacred those standing in line for food. It has initiated a conscious, planned-out campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide, aimed at annihilating or driving out the Palestinian population of Gaza. This is recognized by aid agencies, human rights organizations and even news media throughout the world. The gangster-fascists in the Netanyahu cabinet have hardly made a secret of it.

The “professionals” letter takes umbrage at Glazer’s use of the word “occupation,” in regard to Israeli operations, which, again, is a fact almost universally recognized by international public opinion. The reference to “an indigenous Jewish people” is factually fanciful and provides a glimpse of the ultra-right character of these people.

As *World Socialist Web Site* International Editorial Board Chairman David North noted in a speech at Berlin’s Humboldt University in mid-December, such ideological concoctions are

based not on history, but on biblical mythology. Indeed, the legitimacy of the Zionist project proceeds from the claim that the creation of Israel just 75 years ago marked the so-called ‘return’ of the Jewish people after 2,000 years of exile to their ancestral home ‘promised’ to them by God.

Like the Nazis, who traded on the supposed global persecution of the Germans, the “Hollywood professionals” take refuge in the supposed existence of “the modern blood libel that fuels a growing anti-Jewish hatred around the world, in the United States, and in Hollywood,” helping to create the “current climate of growing antisemitism.”

It could hardly be more appalling that the defenders of mass murder in Gaza refer to their opponents as “antisemites.” Nothing could be more helpful to genuine antisemites around the globe. In fact, for their own reasons, the politically organized antisemites, in the fascist Republican Party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the fascist-led Meloni government in Italy, Marine Le Pen’s neo-fascist National Rally (NR) in France and the rest have unanimously lined up behind Netanyahu and genocide.

There are perhaps a dozen recognizable names among the open letter signatories. They include actors Debra Messing, Tovah Feldshuh, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Julianna Margulies, Josie Davis, Michael Rapaport, and Brett Gelman. Tellingly, Eli Roth is one of two filmmakers of any note, along with Rod Lurie, who signed on. Roth is responsible for the porno-sadistic *Hostel* franchise. Also adding their names, if not much luster, are Sony Pictures executive Amy Pascal and former Paramount Pictures CEO Sherry Lansing.

This is a group of right-wing scoundrels whose views are increasingly rejected by the Jewish population in the US, by Jewish young people in particular and by the filmmaking community generally. There is not a single significant artistic figure among them. These are primarily individuals in studio management, the talent agencies and the like, along with a layer of second-rate actors and writers, who are attempting to suppress and censor opposition to historic crimes.

The level of mediocrity and insignificance of the signers is not accidental. It is difficult to conceive of a genuinely artistic personality who would endorse the degree of suffering and misery being deliberately inflicted on the Gazan population by its Israeli and imperialist tormentors. The individual who comes forward as an open supporter of bombings of civilians, lethal attacks on the hungry, mass starvation and extermination is not capable of fulfilling the first requirement of the artist: the ability to put oneself in another’s place, elementary compassion.

An ultra-chauvinist, deeply reactionary Zionist element exists in Hollywood, which has a media presence out of proportion to its support among actors, writers and directors. The signers of the present open letter overlap in more than 100 cases with the individuals who signed the misnamed “Creative Community for Peace” (CCFP) open letter in October. That letter declared its solidarity with the Israeli war crimes as they were only getting started. As we suggested, the letter was

a right-wing provocation, organized by mouthpieces for the Tel Aviv regime, which is in the midst of carrying out mass murder in Gaza. The appeal has nothing to do with “peace,” nor does it reflect the view of those genuinely torn and confused by events. This is something different.

That letter included the signatures of Michael Douglas, Helen Mirren, Liev Schreiber, Stephen Fry and a few other well-known figures.

In addition, in a less publicized event in January, a group of Jewish celebrities and entertainers, including Messing, Margulies, Rapaport and other signers of the present letter, organized by the “Jewish Institute for Television & Cinema (JITC) Hollywood Bureau,” sent off a public complaint to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) accusing the latter of antisemitism for not listing Jews as a specified underrepresented group in its “diversity efforts,” i.e., its racial and gender quotas.

The group wrote:

While we applaud the Academy’s efforts to increase diverse and authentic storytelling, an inclusion effort that excludes Jews is both steeped in and misunderstands antisemitism. ... Jews are an indigenous people to the Middle East with a continuous presence there for over 3000 years. ... Jewish people being excluded from the Motion Picture Academy’s Representation and Inclusion Standards is discriminating against a protected class by invalidating their historic and genetic identity. This must be addressed immediately by including Jews in these standards.

The extreme right-wing, racist-nationalist and delusional character of this grouping and its thinking should be clear.

Variety, in one of its recent articles advertising the attack on Glazer, cited television producer Ilana Wernick, who asserted that the British filmmaker’s words “sounded eerily similar to Vanessa Redgrave’s infamous ‘Zionist hoodlum’ speech ... Sadly, Jew hatred won the day [on March 10]. That’s why so many of us in the industry reached out to each other. It was a very sad, very scary night. Writing the letter wasn’t just cathartic for us. It’s something we had to do.”

Slander and falsehood are heaped upon slander and falsehood. Redgrave was accepting the best supporting actress award in April 1978 for her performance in *Julia*, directed by Fred Zinnemann and co-starring Jane Fonda. Redgrave played an anti-fascist fighter eventually killed by the Nazis. She came under attack for featuring in a documentary, *The Palestinian*, produced by the Workers Revolutionary Party, then the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International and to which she belonged at the time.

The fascist Jewish Defense League (JDL), led by notorious right-winger Meir Kahane, organized protests against Redgrave and showings of *The Palestinian* in Los Angeles, and set off a pipe bomb at the theater where the documentary was scheduled to be shown.

In her acceptance speech, addressing the Academy members, Redgrave spoke of the lead characters in *Julia*

who gave their lives and were prepared to sacrifice everything in the fight against fascist and racist Nazi Germany. ... I think you should be very proud that in the last few weeks you’ve stood firm and you have refused to be intimidated by the threats of a small bunch of Zionist hoodlums whose behavior is an insult to the stature of Jews all over the world and to their great and heroic record of struggle against fascism and oppression.

Today, one would have to make reference not to a “small bunch of Zionist hoodlums,” but to a powerful state led by Zionist mass murderers.



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