



# ***ISRAEL MATTERS!***

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December 2024



## **The Old College Try --- Not!**

The US House Committee on Education and the Workforce chaired by Rep. Virginia Foxx (R – NC) released a truly astounding report on October 31 of this year. The report, titled *Antisemitism on College Campuses Exposed*, was the result of the committee's extensive investigations into the pro-Hamas, anti-Israel and antisemitic protests that rocked leading US college campuses since October 2023. You can access the entire report at <https://edworkforce.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=412025>, all 325 pages of it.

We recommend that you take the time to review this extensive report based on more than 400,000 pages of documents and hours of testimony.

The report is shocking. While *Israel Matters* readers have no doubt followed the news about these protests and attendant offense and violence targeting Israelis and Jews, and some of you have witnessed this vitriol in person at Yale or other campuses (or at Hamden Town Hall for that matter), what is newly revealed in this report is the extent to which university administrators tried to deliberately appease protest groups, trading off the safety of Jewish students for public relations gains in the process with the hope that doing so would “just make the problem go away.” To quote directly from the report:

“Students who established unlawful antisemitic encampments—which violated university policies and created unsafe and hostile learning environments—were given shocking concessions. Universities’ dereliction of leadership and failure to enforce their rules put students and personnel at risk.”

Some of these concessions are almost too bizarre to be believed. For example, at Northwestern

University in Evanston, Illinois (just north of Chicago), the university assigned radical anti-Israel faculty to negotiate on behalf of the university with the encamped protestors! To see the sort of faculty we are talking about, see the *Jerusalem Post* article titled “Radicalized faculty are the greater danger lurking behind campus protests” at <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-803732>. Northwestern’s Provost even approved a proposal to boycott *Sabra*-brand hummus!

Consistent with the “trading safety for PR” theme seen throughout this report, Harvard University leadership has much to be ashamed of. On October 9, Harvard’s leadership released a statement that was ominous by its omissions – again to cite from the Committee report, this statement “...was no accident, but the result of intentional choices by Harvard’s most senior leaders to not condemn Hamas, to cut language regarding captured Israeli hostages and calling Hamas’ attack “violent,” and to include equivocal language on the impacts of war in Gaza. These choices were made despite the fact that Israeli and other Jewish Harvard students were personally impacted by the attack.”

Within Harvard’s leadership, even the use of the word “violent” to describe the Hamas atrocities was viewed as overkill. The Dean of Harvard’s Medical School e-mailed his concern that he “...would feel more comfortable eliminating the ‘violent’ qualifier from the first sentence” arguing that the statement in question “...remains factual while avoiding singling out Hamas’ violence.”

Yale University is also taken to task in this report, principally for its “kid gloves” treatment of student protestors who clearly violated campus rules

regarding time, manner and place restrictions on permissible protests. Since we are speaking of our own backyard, here is a detailed quote from the committee report regarding “checkpoints” and “litmus tests.” To cite the report: “The Cross Campus encampment was established on April 28, 2024, six days after police cleared the Beinecke Plaza encampment. Protesters established checkpoints around the green manned by protesters designated by the organizers as “marshals.” At these checkpoints, the so-called “marshals” only allowed entry for those who agreed to the “community guidelines,” which notably included “being committed to Palestinian liberation and fighting for freedom for all oppressed peoples.” As one marshal told the *Yale Daily News*, “we want to make sure...they believe in divestment, and they believe in Palestinian liberation.” As a result, numerous Jewish students were denied access to these areas of campus.”

You might think that blocking student access on the basis of such a purity test would result in serious disciplinary charges. Didn't happen. Again citing the report: “No students received discipline for involvement in the second Yale encampment on the Cross Campus green, despite encampment participants denying Jewish students access to a central part of Yale's campus and despite Yale's acknowledgment that protesters in the encampment “violated the university's policies and disrupted academic and university operations.”

There are so many more examples contained in this report regarding atrocious student behavior – and university complicity – targeting Jews and Israelis on campus. In addition to Northwestern, Harvard and Yale, the report details infraction after infraction with university inaction at Columbia University and its sister Barnard College, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California at Los Angeles, UC Berkeley, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rutgers University, and George Washington University. Dear readers, the list above includes many of the most reputable universities in the United States. And over the past year, there have been similarly egregious events at many other leading universities.

What did the committee conclude? Citing directly again: “The Committee's investigation not only revealed a systemic failure by university leaders to enforce and apply existing policies to antisemitic students, student organizations, and faculty members, but also an unwillingness to combat antisemitism in general. Instead, these institutions gave the public nothing more than lip service in claiming they cared about student safety on campuses. In many cases, these institutions attempted to hide behind the First Amendment's Free Speech protections, yet it appears that in numerous cases both hateful speech and conduct targeting Jews received shockingly favorable treatment. In the absence of congressional oversight and public pressure, schools would have done even less to meaningfully address antisemitism on campus. Our inquiry suggests that, left to their own devices, they would have treated the explosion of antisemitic harassment on campus even less seriously.”

“The Committee's findings indicate the need for a fundamental reassessment of federal support for postsecondary institutions that have failed to meet their obligations to protect Jewish students, faculty, and staff, and to maintain a safe and uninterrupted learning environment for all students.”

Heads have rolled at many offending universities. The presidents of Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, and Columbia all resigned under fire due to this campus unrest. Universities across the country have tried to tighten their time, manner and place restrictions and committed to ensure student (and faculty and staff) safety, all while supporting freedom of speech. Though the college scene has appeared calmer during the fall of 2024, perhaps in part due to student focus on the recent presidential election, a post-election anti-Israel, antisemitic storm might well be brewing on campus. Should that happen, will our universities prove more adept this time around? Stay tuned.