



PROTESTS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Norman Olshansky, Alliance President

If you are an older adult, you may have been an antiwar protester in the sixties. As the saying goes, war is hell. When we see the carnage, loss of life, babies crying and agony among the citizens of Gaza, Ukraine, Israel and other parts of the world, it can't help but lead us to speak out and yes, for some, demonstrate.

However, the protests today on college campuses are very different from the protests of yesterday. Then, we did not support the Viet Cong. We did not support the brutality of North Vietnam. We protested the decisions of our President and Congress for what we thought was an unjust war.

Today's protesters are not just protesting how the State of Israel is conducting their war against Hamas terrorists, but they also are saying that they support Hamas. They have not protested the carnage in Israel on Oct. 7th and the loss of so many innocent lives. Some are chanting that Zionists should be killed. That is another way of saying kill the Jews. Those who support the existence of the Jewish State are Zionists. (That is the meaning of Zionism) Most protesters are using slogans that say "from the river to the sea" which means the obliteration of Israel from the map. Protesters are attacking Jews. They have physically kept Jewish students from entering their classrooms. They are attacking the police. Few, if any, of the Jews who are attacked are

representatives or even citizens of Israel. Why? It's just because they are Jewish.

Those of us who belong to the Jewish community are mostly moderate to liberal Americans who also want to end wars. The quickest way to end the war would be for the hostages to be released. We recognize that most of the protesters don't even know the history of the region, the efforts by Iran and others to destroy Israel.

Some of the leaders of the protests are antisemitic provocateurs who support terrorism and acts of violence against the US and Israel. Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran are also calling for war against the United States.

An Israeli peace activist said it best: "If you from abroad want to demand something, demand a resolution to the conflict, not the annihilation of one side."

Even though some of the protesters are naïve and are going along with the crowd, Jews are being threatened and are concerned to see so many people openly supporting antisemitism. We also recognize that the vast majority of Americans support the existence of the Jewish State and abhor hatred. However, the impact, words and deeds of these young college protesters are creating an atmosphere of hate that must be called out and addressed by our public officials and each and every one of us.

Norman Olshansky, President
Suncoast Jewish Alliance