

Haaretz | Opinion

Opinion | 'You're a Nazi': Getting Attacked for Speaking Out Against Israel's War Crimes in Gaza

Sunday 5 January 2025, by [LEVY Gideon](#) (Date first published: 5 January 2025).

A man gestures as smoke rises from an Israeli strike as the Israeli military conducts operations inside the Gaza Strip as seen from southern Israel, Thursday. Credit: Kai Pfaffenbach/Reuters

Etsel Haturki (At the Turk's) is a well-known shawarma place in the central Israeli city of Or Yehuda, and there is nothing Turkish about it: It looks simple, though the prices are not so cheap, with a host at the entrance and long lines of customers who've come from near and far to partake in their food. My son's army service brought him to the restaurant at the time, and since then he loves eating there.

On Friday afternoon we went again, when a commotion quickly flared. It began with loud curses and ended with a horrifying group encircling our table. "If only you would choke on the food and die," it began, "why are you giving him food here," it continued, and "if there weren't cameras here, I would break your face," for the finish.

"Look who's eating here," the man called out to the passersby, as they stood in a circle, looking at the devil who'd come to town. The man came closer to the table, his fury rising, and violence was very close. We left to the sounds of curses that accompanied us to the car, "fuck the mother of anyone who eats with the Nazi," they shouted at my son, too.

Not for the first time, and not for the last, it's nothing new. But one phrase was thrown out there, more than once, that I'd never heard before: "You're a Nazi because you care about the children in Gaza."

In Or Yehuda, Nazism received a new definition: A Nazi is someone who cares about the children of Gaza. At the time that the starvation, siege, shortages, destruction, ethnic cleansing and [genocide in the Gaza Strip](#) are defined around the world as having Nazi characteristics, things in Or Yehuda are the exact opposite.

A Nazi is someone who worries about the victim. Whoever cares about the children in Gaza won't eat in Or Yehuda and will not dare come close to Or Yehuda - a city with a street named after Yoni Netanyahu, a restaurant named Mifgash Entebbe, and a street which was once named after the mayor's lover.

Throughout this war I have run into violence and threats less than usual. The arena has moved to "[Netanyahu, Yes or No](#)" and the battle to free the hostages. Television, even on the supposedly most enlightened programs, never brings any alternative opinion or voice that opposes the war crimes, and in doing so actually makes it easier of those shocked by Israel's actions - a handful of opponents who this time are safer from the fury of the masses, because their voice is silenced and excluded

from the debate. But this [silencing is dangerous](#).

We have never had a war here that did not have opposition, at least in its most advanced and criminal stages. These wars always started with wall-to-wall support, and even enthusiasm within the Jewish community, until the cracks opened up and the questions arose.

The First Lebanon War is the best of all examples, but also operations Cast Lead and Protective Edge in Gaza (in 2008 and 2014) aroused opposition at some stage, and their voices were heard.

But not this time. This war, the longest the State of Israel has ever known, is also the war with the greatest agreement over – at least in the public debate about it.

The protesters want a hostage deal, the opponents want a cease-fire, even the end of the war, but only for the good of the hostages and the soldiers being killed.

[The victims of Gaza](#) are not in the discourse at all, and anyone who tries to mention them is a Nazi, at least in Or Yehuda.

Palestinian children sit in front of a line of laundry hanging along a damaged building in Gaza City, on Saturday. Credit: AFP/Omar Al-Quataa

The brainwashing and blindness have reached record-high levels we've never known before. The "sobering up" of our many and finest – who are really so few, if any of them have sobered up at all – has created an illusion according to which the dispute is deep and society is more divided than ever.

But it's not at all split, Israel is united in its absolute support for the IDF, even as the war crimes pile up, and Israel's unlimited right after [October 7](#) to do whatever it pleases in Gaza.

In practice, Israel has never been so united as at the beginning of 2025, in spite of all the background noise and fake lamentations over the "polarization of the people." We must never, ever upset this wonderful new order. Anyone who tries to do so is a Nazi.

When we finally reached the car, my son and I, a friendly young man came up to me and asked for a blessing. He said that someone who doesn't respond to cursing and threats is considered to be someone with exceptional qualities. He asked me to give him a blessing that he would soon find a good wife, and I did. I was happy to help.

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P.S.

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