

## PEACE FIRST

The claim by Allan of Bondi Junction (SSO 916) that Zionism and Nazism are based on similar doctrines is both ludicrous and obscene.

Nazism was committed to the destruction of the Jewish people while Zionism, or Israel, is committed to living in peace alongside a state of Palestine.

As for Allan's allegation that Gaza is a concentration camp, Israel withdrew every last soldier and settler from Gaza in 2005 in the expectation that a responsible Palestinian administration would be set up. Instead, Hamas has seized control of the place and has waged war against the civilians of Israel ever since.

Finally, let's examine the statistics. In 1948, when the state of Israel was declared, its population included 1.2 million Arabs; today that number is 1.5 million. In addition, there were 544,000 Arabs in the territories in 1948 (462,000 in the West Bank and 82,000 in Gaza); today there are 4 million Arabs in the territories (2.5 million in the West Bank and 1.5 million in Gaza).

If Israel was pursuing a policy of genocide, how could such numbers be possible?

There are rights and wrongs on both sides. Wild accusations do nothing to lower the tension and promote peace.

— Vic Alhadeff, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies

## POOR FORM

Comparing Zionism to Nazism is equating the deliberate extermination of six million Jews (not to mention the millions of other innocent civilians including homosexuals) to the actions

of a less-than perfect state of Israel which has faced existential threats since its creation 60 years ago.

I am not defending Israel or its actions, but rather speaking out against blatant anti-Semitism and the promotion of hate and incitement.

As a regular reader of SSO and an active (and equally proud) member of the Sydney gay and Jewish communities, I expect a much higher standard from SSO in publishing/reviewing material.

We as gay people know the destructive and painful effects of people who promote their intolerant and hateful agendas. As such, we should ensure that the hate-speech that we fight so hard to defeat is not taking aim at other minority groups.

— Adam, Darlinghurst

## NOT SO SIMPLE

I would like to respond to Allan of Bondi Junction and his anti-Israel diatribe. It's so nice to hear that the anti-Semitic "Zionism equals racism" line is still being thrown about. Zionism is nothing more than the political movement to establish a homeland for the Jews. Jews are not a race. There is no claim of a unique genetic source. Jews are as diverse as the GLBT community itself. Therefore, how can Zionism be based upon a racist precept?

According to Allan, Israel is an "expansionist Jewish State" making a "massive real estate claim" in the Middle East. Have you even looked at a map of the Middle East? Have you seen how miniscule Israel is in comparison to Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq to name but a few?

You refer to Israel as "artificial", but are you aware that the country now known as Jordan was created purely from Palestinian land back in 1922? Other Middle Eastern countries were created out of the spoils of the first World War.

You compare Gaza and the West Bank with Nazi concentration camps. Are you aware that Lebanon keeps its own Palestinian population in *far* worse conditions in camps and has done so for the last 60 years?

Israel is also one of the most liberal democracies on the planet. Same-

gender marriages that are performed overseas are recognised under Israeli law. Same-gender partners are recognised as adoptive parents. Same-gender couples have the right to adopt.

I suggest that Allan read up on the situation in the Middle East and maybe his opinion would be a little less one-sided. It's a complicated situation. No single side is completely right or wrong. As gays and lesbians, we all have to challenge the narrow-mindedness and the prejudices with which we were brought up. It seems that some, such as Allan, are quite happy to accept this ignorant hatred. Open your mind a little and there may be a chance for peace and a better future.

— Roy, Bondi

## ONE OPINION

In reply to the post by Allan from Bondi Junction, I'm afraid I cannot disregard such an ignorant perspective published in an Australian paper.

Allan believes that crimes against humanity and collective punishment are acted by Israel.

I really wonder had Allan been around (or wise enough) to learn about the peace negotiations of Israel and Palestinians since the early 90s. Had there been agreements that *both* sides had signed on (such as Oslo)?

Did Allan ask himself, "Are there any actions that Palestinians can do in order to help themselves?" Well, yes, there are. They include stopping the terror and returning kidnapped soldiers.

Gaza is not a concentration camp and cannot be compared to [one]. Gaza was taken over by a terrorist group and it's Hamas's own way to govern and set their priorities. Hamas still prefer to fire rockets onto kindergartens and kill the drivers who deliver supplies!

Such terror is not considered acceptable by any country. It's only Allan from Bondi Junction who chooses to ignore it all.

There is a lot more to add, but it is obvious that Allan presented an ignorant perspective that can be supported only by very narrow-minded people. In all honesty such opinions should be well-considered before printing in an Australian paper.

I wish Allan happy 60th to Israel.

— Tomer, Double Bay