

Gareth Cliff, a South African TV and radio personality, just wrote this:

I am not a Jew and I'm not a citizen of Israel. I haven't even visited Israel. I don't trace my religion back to a holy site in Jerusalem and I don't have a problem with Arabs or Muslims or Christians. I've read about Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon; the Umayyads, the Abbasids and the Ottomans; I know about the British, the Balfour declaration, Ben Gurion and Golda Meir. I know a bit about the Six-Day War and the Intifada. I might not have any personal stake in the Holy Land, but humanity certainly does – and I'm a human being.

The women, men, children, elderly people and soldiers who were kidnapped, tortured, raped, humiliated and murdered on Saturday by Hamas in sovereign Israel were human beings too.

Those who did it to them are not.

Imagine what kind of rational and ethical gymnastics you have to do to justify the cold-blooded murder of teenagers at a music festival; or watching a child, perhaps 5 years old, being prodded with a stick and made to cry for his mother in Hebrew while children of a similar age laugh and mock him? We don't know that child's fate and for all we know what followed may have been much worse. It's depraved. To even enter a conversation about these disgraceful facts with a rehearsed retort about territory or Gaza being an "open-air prison" reeks of moral bankruptcy.

If you wail and scream about your land, dignity, rights, oppression and poverty but are willing to murder, rape, kidnap, torture or humiliate children; then I don't have to listen to your reasons. When the video footage, photographs and stories of Saturday's carnage come not from "Israeli propaganda" but from the Hamas terrorists themselves, then how am I to read anything else into it but that you want credit for these atrocities? You want me to know you did it. You want me to know you are proud of it. You want me to see you for who you are. Well, I do.

So, if you swarmed the Israeli Embassy in London, waving Palestinian flags and calling for genocide; if you went down to Times Square to celebrate a victory for decolonisation against "apartheid Israel"; if you sang along to "gas the Jews" chants at the Sydney Opera House or hung a "one settler, one bullet" Palestinian flag over Grayston bridge in Johannesburg then you're telling me who you are. Well, I see you – and you're my enemy.

I'm one of those people who believe civilisation is a real thing, and I've resisted the poison of moral relativists in the humanities departments of universities across the west who think that being nuanced about the idea of civilisation versus barbarism is a signal of intellectual prowess or critical self-reflection. Upon even a cursory investigation of these people or their positions, you will find every sign of pedestrian intelligence and self-absorbed navel-gazing, combined with a fetishisation of victimhood and always concomitant humourlessness. They too, are my enemies.

It is always interesting to note that only western liberal democracies tolerate and give succour to the most heinous arguments and positions in public protests. You couldn't picket on the side

of quite laudable things like education for girls in Taliban Afghanistan, gay rights in Syria, or against the death penalty in Saudi Arabia. The Ayatollahs of Iran wouldn't allow women to protest the hijab there under threats of violence. But London, New York, Sydney and even Johannesburg will embrace marches where people actively call for genocide. This is not how allies behave.

Perhaps when the dust has settled we can examine the insidious links between Anglo-American leftism and antisemitism, between Europe never reckoning with what happened in the holocaust and their growing Muslim populations, and between ignorant regimes like mine in South Africa and their determination to stand alongside the worst human rights abusers in the Middle East.

For now, it's no big mystery that this has nothing to do with the existence of the State of Israel and everything to do with Jew-hatred – that great, festering wound in the side of humanity from which all prejudice flows. It has been there for thousands of years and every time we think it has healed, some monstrous collective claws it open again.

Hamas aren't hiding the ball. Their leader, Ismail Haniyeh (safely skulking in Qatar) made this clear. He celebrated dead Jews, not territory won, nor Gazan lives saved.

I'm afraid there are only two sides in a war – your allies and your enemies. On September 11th 2001, I knew whose side I was on. I feel the same today.