

Barbara Kay: Sorry, Jews (especially ladies). The progressives just aren't into you

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Half the population of the United States was disgusted when Donald Trump became America's president, and half of that half — women — were beyond disgusted.

Before you could say Grab Them By the Pussy Hat, the largest single day protest in American history had been organized, with about one per cent of the entire U.S. population participating in demonstrations around America (and elsewhere). Over 400,000 women marched in Washington, far more people than attended Trump's inauguration.

The magnitude of the march's success led to its formalization into a movement, with Women's March Inc. as the principal player. Two years later, the pussy hats are gone (insulting to transwomen without vaginas), and credible accusations of anti-Semitism at the top are throwing a spanner into the works. There is speculation it may implode altogether.

As reporters Leah McSweeney and Jacob Siegel wrote in a long investigative piece last month in Tablet Magazine[1], two Women's March co-chairs, Tamika Mallory and Carmen Perez, allegedly "asserted that Jewish people bore a special collective responsibility as exploiters of black and brown people." Mallory was already under suspicion for her attendance at a February rally with Nation of Islam standard-bearer Louis Farrakhan, whose many publicly stated, crude anti-Semitic conspiracy theories (not to mention homophobia and transphobia) are well-documented. She refuses to disavow Farrakhan or the NOI, which has been designated a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Centre (especially damning, as the SPLC is tough on conservative groups and soft on progressive ones).

Another of the March leaders, Linda Sarsour, is a controversial figure in her own right as an Islamist sympathizer and a BDS supporter who has accused American Jews of dual loyalties[2] (an old anti-Semitic canard) and called Israelis "white supremacists." All three — Mallory (black), Perez (Latina) and Sarsour (Palestinian) were accorded visibility and power to de-whiten the March's original brand and provide an "intersectional" lamination to the movement, without any thought given to the personal biases they might be bringing to the table.

It should be obvious to progressive Jewish women by now that the Women's March, an allegedly feminist movement, which allegedly supports the rights of all women, just isn't into Jewish women. To progressive ideologues, Jews are burdened by the original sin of Zionism, whether they are pro-Israel or not.

This was made very clear in June 2017, at the Chicago Dyke March, when three Jewish LGBT Pride marchers carrying flags adorned with a Star of David (similar to, but not the flag of Israel) were ousted from the parade. This was an act of pure anti-Semitism by radical feminists. There was another clash in August between Jewish progressive women who resist demonization for supporting Israel — now calling themselves Zionesses — at the Chicago Slutwalk. Then at a Brooklyn racial-justice march on Oct. 1 (Yom Kippur, make of that what you will), one of many nationwide, the Zionesses were back in force, some carrying placards, "Zionists 4 Racial Justice." The Zioness movement is small, but determined, and members will march in every planned demonstration this month.[3]

By contrast, three Jewish women's organizations chose appeasement. Two of them, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action and Jews for Economic and Racial Justice are small, very left-wing organizations and of no special consequence.

But the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) an international philanthropic organization with about 90,000 members in the U.S. rates critical attention when they take a political position. Their CEO Nancy Kaufman stated[4] to The Forward that the NCJW agenda "is in complete alignment with the national policy agenda of the Women's March and the Women's March movement." She noted that any concerns she had were "not with the Women's March per se, it's (with statements by) individuals within the Women's March. And that gets complicated." [5]

Honestly, Nancy, it really isn't all that complicated. The leaders of the Women's March are tainted by their own words and associations with bigotry. They refuse to distance themselves from an organization whose founder spews hate speech against white people, gays and Jews. Any truly inclusive movement would have demanded their resignations. Why are you giving this failure to act a pass? Let me hazard a guess: You don't want to make Jewish waves in the progressive pool. You don't want to exercise your "white privilege" by demanding three minority women leave the scene. In order to retain your good standing as a progressive, you'll set aside your Jewish self-respect. Well, good luck with that, Nancy. That's a strategy that's been tried before, and really, do I have to remind you how it worked out?

The Zionesses are taking the right tack by going on offence rather than staying home nursing hurt feelings or validating anti-Semitism by marching and keeping shtumm. The NCJW should join them. Self-respect is a good thing.

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