

Forget the Two State Solution

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Larry Bernstein:

Welcome to What Happens Next. My name is Larry Bernstein. What Happens Next is a podcast which covers economics, politics, and education.

Today's topic is Forget the Two State Solution.

Our speaker is Elliott Abrams who is a senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. Elliott served as deputy assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor for George W. Bush, where he supervised U.S. policy in the Middle East for the White House, and as Special Representative for Iran and Venezuela for Donald Trump.

I want to learn from Elliott why the Biden Administration and European leaders are pursuing a two-state solution after the violence of 10/7th. The Israeli public has abandoned the idea of a Palestinian state for over a decade because of the fear of ongoing terrorism. So I wonder why this idea is still the objective for the end game.

Buckle up!

Elliott can you please begin with your opening six-minute remarks with a framework to understanding antisemitism.

Elliott Abrams:

In recent weeks, we've heard a lot about the two-state solution. Saudi Arabia demanding it. Europeans demanding it. More importantly, President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken demanding it. In fact, Blinken talked of an irreversible, time-bound path to a Palestinian state. This is very unwise.

People have been talking about a Palestinian state for 30 years since 1993, the Oslo Accords. Why hasn't it happened? First, there are intractable problems that have existed from the beginning and still do. For example, are you going to divide Jerusalem again? Is that really a smart thing to do? Where would you draw the border of this Palestinian state? What about in the West Bank? The last negotiations saw the Palestinians saying that Ariel, a town of 20,000, would have to become part of Palestine. Really?

There is a second problem that did not exist in the 90s, Iran. Iran has essentially taken over Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, and Gaza. If there was a Palestinian state created, they would try to take it over. It would be an incredibly juicy target for Iran in its efforts to destroy Israel. Who would prevent them?

People say, Palestine now would be demilitarized, it will not have an army, who is going to police that? Who is going to prevent that Palestinian state from importing weaponry? You are going to have a situation like that which existed in Germany after the Versailles Treaty, where everybody in the population was very much opposed to the demilitarization that had been forced upon them.

Why is it that nobody ever talks about democracy? People talk about how Israel must be a Jewish and a democratic state. They do not talk about Palestine being a democratic state. Why is that? Well, one reason, is that there is no democratic Arab state, not one. So, people might think that is a bit much to ask for, but I will give you another reason. The last time there was an election, a majority voted for Hamas. That was in 2006. Popular vote was 44% to 41%. Hamas over Fatah. And the public opinion polls today suggest that Hamas would have an even greater victory.

That points to a real problem with Palestinian public opinion. Maybe that voting pattern is because Palestinians want to destroy the State of Israel. That is, Palestinian nationalism is not fundamentally about building a state of their own. It is about destroying the Jewish state.

I think people who are casually saying, we want an irreversible path time bound. It does not matter what happens along that path. It does not matter what Iran does. It does not matter how much violence there is. It does not matter if it looks like that state will be a Hamas state. I can hardly believe that Secretary of State Blinken believed what he was saying. Because all previous efforts at Palestinian statehood have said that there would be significant conditionality. The way it is being talked about and the ultimate idea are dangerous to Israel, favors Iran, and therefore not in the interest of the United States.

Larry Bernstein:

You started with Oslo. You were a member of George W. Bush's administration working for the National Security Council. And you worked with both the Palestinians and the Israelis to come up with a roadmap towards a Palestinian state. And in the roadmap, the first step was to abandon terror. We've, as of October 7th, entered a new scale of terror. Wouldn't that suggest that we've diverged from the roadmap or abandoned it? Why skip the roadmap now that terror has escalated?

Elliott Abrams:

I agree with that. The official formal name was, "a performance-based roadmap." And as you say, the first step was the elimination of terror. And this is at a time when Arafat is leading the Palestinian Authority. Today, he is not. And today, you have a Palestinian Authority that does try to prevent Hamas's terrorism in the West Bank. But we are talking about a Palestinian state. And again, we have good reason to believe that majorities of Palestinians would vote for Hamas. So how can you create a state that is going to have a majority that is pro-Hamas, that may even have a Hamas government, and then say, "but of course, we're all against terrorism?" I mean, it just does not work. It is completely illogical.

Larry Bernstein:

Step three of the roadmap was Hamas rejecting the idea that Israel does not have a right to exist. Yet you just mentioned that the Palestinian people, the majority say that Israel does not have a right to exist. This is another key part of that roadmap. Why is it in Israel's interest or our interests to abandon the key planks to the roadmap.

Elliott Abrams:

It is not. You could argue that the roadmap, that's literally 20 years ago, and times have changed. But I do not think the fundamental conditions have changed. In 2006, after Hamas won this election, there were real efforts, particularly by the Europeans and the Russians, to get them to say the magic words that Israel has a right to exist.

They had to say they were abandoning terrorism and accepted Israel's legitimacy, Israel's right to exist. They would not do it because they do not believe it. What you are suggesting, and I think is right is we need to go back to basics. You cannot promote the creation of a Palestinian state that is going to be a permanent enemy of Israel's and whose basic purpose is not even Palestinian nationalism. It's the destruction of the State of Israel.

Larry Bernstein

In your book, you discuss Ariel Sharon and his desire for peace. And when he could not find a peace partner, he decided to act unilaterally and exit Gaza. Lessons learned from October 7th was the unilateral abandonment of Gaza was a failure.

Elliott Abrams:

I do not think it was a mistake for Israel to leave Gaza. You had 7,000 settlers in the middle of what was then two million Palestinians. You were tying down a significant part of the IDF guarding them. There were mistakes in the way it was done and since then. At the time, we in the US government said to Sharon, you should coordinate this with the Palestinian Authority, partly to prevent Hamas from taking advantage. He did not want to. He said, "look, politically, I'm being killed here. I need to show I am not doing this for the Palestinians. I am doing it unilaterally. It is for me. It is for Israel. Don't talk to me about Palestinians." And there was no coordination, which led a year and a half later to the Hamas coup in Gaza. But that's 2005.

Sharon then did make one other mistake. He said, once we get out, we are not going to tolerate any rockets or missiles or attacks coming out of Gaza. But there were attacks coming out of Gaza. And Sharon had a stroke that completely immobilized him, and he was out as prime minister. But in those few months, he and the government of Israel did tolerate these attacks coming out of Gaza rather than a big response that would have taught the lesson nothing will be tolerated.

More recently, the Israeli left-wing governments, right-wing governments, the Mossad, and the Shin Bet and the IDF all thought they had a modus vivendi with Hamas.

They were going to let Hamas rule Gaza. And in exchange for that, Hamas was tamed. And while it might try to create violence in the West Bank, where it did not have to govern, it would not try to create violence or disorder coming out of Gaza into Israel. And on October 7th, we all learned that was completely wrong.

Larry Bernstein:

There was an expectation that Gaza, if it were allowed to be self-run by Hamas, that Gaza would not be militarized. We now know that Gaza was militarized, that the defense mechanisms that were put in place were insufficient. We had a podcast with Eitan Shamir, who is an Israeli military strategist. He said that we did not mow the grass. We did not enter Gaza from time to time and clean up and become aware of what was going on there. Obviously going forward, we are going to have to mow the grass more often. But this idea of a Palestinian state would not allow for mowing of the grass. It would establish more sovereignty than exists in Gaza before October 7th. How is this idea of either unilateral abandonment of Palestinian areas or allowing for increased sovereignty consistent with either mowing the grass or prevention of military buildups?

Elliott Abrams:

It is not going to work. Mowing the grass is not possible with a sovereign independent Palestine. If the Israelis cross the border, that is under international law an act of war. The idea of mowing the grass only works if you have got a territory that is not a sovereign state.

The Israelis knew that Hamas was trying to smuggle in weaponry. There were tunnels from Egypt. They knew that. They patrolled in the Mediterranean along the shores of Gaza because they knew there were big Iranian efforts to smuggle in arms. They did not know the scale of it. Nobody knew.

But what they have learned this time is that mowing the grass does not work when you are dealing with a group whose goal is to do what these people did on October 7th. The Israelis thought they had some degree of control of that border. The Egyptians were helping. We now know that a lot more got in. There is no end to the war without closing the Gaza-Egypt border in a way that it has never been closed.

Larry Bernstein:

You mentioned in your opening remarks that after the First World War, the allies demanded a demilitarized Rhineland. And the French put great comfort in it. They were they were the ones most concerned about that. But then when Hitler moved into that area, the French did not do anything. And in the postwar analysis, some historians felt that if France had invaded at that period, that would have curbed Hitler's later ambition. It is a debatable point. But it does show that even if you were to create demilitarized zones around certain specific areas, that when push comes to shove and war is the only option, it does not really work. How do you feel about demilitarized zones?

Elliott Abrams:

The Israelis are creating a buffer zone. And the goal there is just to give them more early warning if Hamas is going to try to come across the border. If you want Israelis to move back to those kibbutzim near the border, they must have a greater feeling of security.

Then there is the broader question, which is raised by the Rhineland example of demilitarization and the enforcement of it. Because the question back in the 30s when Hitler took power was,

who is going to enforce this? And the French did not, partly because they had no support. Was the U.S. going to help? Were the British at that point going to say, yes, let us take on Germany?

I think that is analogous because if you imagine that there is an independent sovereign Palestinian state and the Israelis are saying they are arming and we are going to cross that international border, would they really have support from the EU, from Washington? Probably what would happen is people would say, do not do it, let us negotiate, let us have a UN Security Council session.

Let us send a special envoy. Do not start a war. That is exactly what happened in the 30s, and it led to the Second World War. We see even right now, when the Israelis are trying to recover from October 7th and defeat Hamas, you had a few days ago the foreign minister of the EU suggesting that the United States and other countries should stop giving military aid to Israel to force them to end their war against Hamas. That is the world we live in, and that is why this idea of demilitarization is not going to work in practice.

Larry Bernstein:

You suggested that US support for Israel is waning. The EU is now a substantial Muslim population in England and France. In every democracy, parties just get to the majority to govern. The United States is no different. I have read that Michigan could be the key state and Arab Americans living there would not support the Biden administration and Biden may be caving for that reason. How will domestic Arab support for governments change the calculus?

Elliott Abrams:

All these countries are democracies, and therefore people who are elected to Congress or to Parliament reflect the voters who sent them there. The Arab population in the United States is quite small, and a substantial portion of it is Christian, not Muslim. Europe has a different situation where there are several countries that are 10% or 20% Muslim Arab and they feel very strongly about the Palestinian question, and they are extremely hostile to Israel.

I remember when I was in the Bush White House going over with then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to London and we met with Jack Straw, who was the Labor Party Foreign Secretary at that time, increasingly critical of Israel as the years went by. Why? Pure demography in his constituency. A greater and greater and greater percentage of the voters there were Muslim.

You see this all over Europe and in the United States we have just begun to see a small amount of it in Michigan. They have a right to vote any way they want, including to pressure their senators, their representatives, their president, to take an anti-Israel position. Whether there will be more of that depends on immigration patterns in the United States.

Larry Bernstein

In Israel itself, the country had been split between hawks and doves, between those who were seeking peace with the Palestinians and those that were seeking peace through strength. Starting with the Intifada, the Peace Now movements in Israel declined.

With October 7th, those peace movements are dead in the water. Yet, the expectation of the Western diplomats who suggest the two-state solution are assuming that there is Israeli domestic support. It seems to me that there is now no domestic support for a two-state solution in Israel. Do you agree?

Elliott Abrams:

If there is, it is very, very thin. Those kibbutzim on the border of Gaza were in fact left-wing Peacenik kibbutzim. I visited those kibbutzim. And the woman who guided me around had lived there. And her husband used their family car twice a month to ferry Gazan children from the border to Israeli hospitals for treatment for things like cancer. And she said to me, this is almost an exact quote.

“We tried to save their children and in exchange, they tried to kill our children.” That is why there is no support for the two-state solution. That is why the Israeli left has been cut probably by 95%. This is a mistake on the part of Secretary Blinken. They seem to think they have a Netanyahu problem. They don't. The question of a Palestinian state, there would not be a different policy if Benny Gantz replaced Netanyahu.

And voters see the Palestinian state today as a real danger. It would be a reward for terrorism now. Hamas attacks in October and murders 1,200 people and the result is everyone says, “better create a Palestinian state.” What better argument for terrorism would you have than that?

Larry Bernstein:

My friend Peter Gatof shared with me an Audio tape from his recent visit to Israel with the Miami Beach United Jewish Appeal where they met with local Israelis. I am now going to play you that clip from a discussion with a woman who lives at a Kibbutz near the Gaza Strip.

“My name is Zoar. I am a member of Kibbutz Reim. I am a social worker by profession, and I think one of the saddest things that happened on October 7th is that we realized that even though our area is mainly people who are pro-coexistence and pro-Palestinian rights who went to demonstrations and drove Palestinians from the border crossing to hospitals in Israel, this was the area that was most hurt. The people who go to demonstrations and speak out for the Palestinian rights, these were the people who were burned alive, mutilated, butchered, and kidnapped.

We always ached for the Palestinian people under the Hamas regime. Every time there was an escalation, we were thinking about them that they do not have secure rooms. They do not have the IDF. We even thought about building a school together our children and the children of Gaza.

But I do not know how to rebuild this. I do not know how to remain their neighbor. We do not have the illusion or desire to erase them. We must rethink this neighborhood, this relationship, and being a social worker, losing this empathy, losing this ability to see the other side is painful. It is painful, and it took such a terrible, terrible, terrible situation to happen. We needed to bring in archeologists to sift through the ashes to find the remains. These were people that fought for the Palestinians. I have no words to even try to understand it.“

Larry Bernstein:

We all want to have good neighbors so that we can invest in each other's kids' education, build a hospital, provide goods and services for each other. But if you are going to kill my family, then we cannot be neighbors. We need to separate and prevent ongoing violence. The slaughter of 10/7 is incompatible with a future Palestinian state.

Elliott Abrams:

I think that is right and it goes back to this question of what do Palestinians want? Palestinians did not want to permit the formation of a Jewish state. Once it was formed, there has been 76 years of effort to destroy it. It has not been about building a beautiful, democratic, prosperous Palestine. It's been about killing the Jewish state.

Larry Bernstein

October 7th, the Israelis taped phone calls between terrorists and their parents. The most striking one was one son calling his parents, "Dad, Ma, I just killed seven Israelis. All right son, that's enough, come home." How could that have happened?

Elliott Abrams:

It is the product of a generation of Hamas control of Gaza. The young man who did that has been educated and raised in a Gaza controlled by Hamas. What has he been taught? He has been taught that the Qur'an tells you to kill Jews. He's been taught that those who kill Jews are heroes.

In the West Bank, they name schools and parks and plazas after terrorists who murdered Jews and are honored for doing it. He is the product of a society and an education that has promoted treating Jews as not fellow human beings, but as objects that need to be gotten out of the way and killed.

Larry Bernstein:

Before 1967, Gaza was under the control of Egypt. During that 1967 war, the decision was made to take Gaza away from the Egyptians along with the Sinai. The Egyptians controlled Gaza before. We have a humanitarian crisis. There was some expectation that the Egyptians would help in this crisis, but they have done everything in their power to prevent Palestinians from crossing into Sinai. They said that if Israel continues that they will abrogate their Camp David peace treaty. Why is Egypt behaving this way? Are they going to be a good partner in this?

Elliott Abrams:

Egyptian popular opinion, they are not in love with the Palestinians. The government of Egypt, which is a dictatorship, does have to worry about public opinion, which is very hostile to Israel. They do not want Palestinians, Gazans coming into Egypt. First, because it's a burden. Who is going to feed them? Who is going to educate them? Secondly, they fear that they would be people who support Hamas, maybe even terrorists. Remember that Hamas is part of the broader Muslim Brotherhood movement that the government overthrew. So, the last thing they want is Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers coming into Egypt. They do worry about terrorism as well.

The Egyptians set up a tent city for about 10,000 people on the Gaza side of the border, not the Egypt side. They do not want Palestinians coming into Sinai. And they are not lying when they say they are very worried about an Israeli military move in Rafah because what they are afraid of is that 150,000 Palestinians will just rush the border and they'll be in Egypt.

Where I do think Israel and Egypt have a common interest is they do oppose Hamas, they do oppose Iran, and they will be able to cooperate better on closing the border.

Larry Bernstein:

The Jordanians controlled the West Bank until 67. There is a substantial Palestinian population that lives in Jordan. A Palestinian terrorist tried to assassinate a king in Jordan, so they are very concerned about local political violence there.

Do Jordanians support a two-state solution?

Elliott Abrams:

I've been very unhappy with the posturing of the government of Jordan during this war, which has been terrible, inciting against Israel and using words like genocide. Now I understand that part of it is politics. It's not a democracy, but the king does have to worry about public opinion. And the population is more than half Palestinian in origin. But he should be more responsible in his language.

Now, there was a point at which Prime Minister Begin wanted to give Gaza back to Egypt and the Egyptians would not take it. A lot of Israelis would love to give most of the West Bank to Jordan.

At least for now the Jordanians will not take it because the king is being incredibly careful not to rile up his population. And he does not want to have to rule another couple of million Palestinians. The idea would be if you took them into Jordan, then a majority of Jordanians would be Palestinian in origin. Jordanians would not want that at all.

Larry Bernstein:

The essence of your opening remarks is the diplomatic bromide, a two-state solution. And this is not the first time that diplomats have simplified a global problem with three words and just said this is the answer without any real thought. American administrations had encouraged and diplomatically asserted to its allies that this was the path. These ideas became commonplace among domestic politicians, academics, Middle East professional thought makers in Europe and the United States. And any centrist would say, of course, the result would be a two-state solution. Yet, the facts on the ground drifted away from the two-state solution more than a decade ago with no change in the diplomatic bromides. Why is that? Why have not those people who are advocates for the two-state solution done some self-reflection once the domestic Jewish population in Israel decided this no longer made any sense. Why the failure to recognize that a two-state solution is not the solution?

Elliott Abrams:

That is a very good question. There was a point back at Oslo, say 30 years ago, many Israelis thought it would work. So why has there not been a change? Partly because of the left-right split in Israel. That is, for a long time, there was a substantial peace camp in Israel. People in the West, in Europe and the U.S., got used to thinking enlightened progressive Israelis are for the two-state solution, bad right-wing Israelis are not. That has changed in Israel, starting with the end of intifada and now particularly after October 7th. Very few Israelis still believe in the two-state solution. But in the West, people have not adjusted, not even now.

For Israelis, it is life and death. For Israelis, it is whether people are going to come across the border and kill my parents, kill me, kill my children. For politicians in the West, it is “I have to make a speech, two-state solution.” Nobody yells at you. In Europe, it does not matter what you think. It matters what the Americans say.

The failure to look more deeply at this and realize that it is not a workable solution, on the part of U.S. officials since October 7th, really is irresponsible. What is happening here is the State Department is continuing to spew out the same analyses that it has been using for 76 years. And that is what is influencing the Secretary of State, unfortunately.

Larry Bernstein:

Going back to the bromide by Blinken that we wanted to see a solution time bound. This was not made by an irrelevant EU diplomat. It was made by our secretary of state who has spent the last four months shuttling back and forth between the United States and Israel. He is not ignorant. He has had talks with the most senior members of Israeli leadership from every conceivable party. How and why is he misreading the Israeli government and public?

Elliott Abrams:

Those were prepared remarks. He was not in a press conference where he made a little mistake with language, overshot the mark a little. He read that. That was in a prepared speech. So, the question then becomes, well, who prepared it? And I think that is the answer to your question. That is, this is the voice of the Near East Bureau. This is the voice of the permanent State Department speaking as it has spoken year after year after year. My criticism of Secretary Blinken would be stop listening to them. Take some other advice.

Larry Bernstein:

What is the end game? If you reject a two-state solution, then what is the solution?

Elliott Abrams:

I am going to give you two answers to your question. The first answer is that is a very American question. Americans want to fix things. If there is a problem, there needs to be a solution.

The idea of partition was correct. That is, it is not going to be a one-state solution. That is ludicrous. It was ludicrous before October 7. Now Israelis, will think you are insane if you propose that they be in the same country with Arabs, Palestinians who are trying to kill them.

If partition is right, then you are going to have a Palestinian entity. My view is that the only safe way to do this Palestinian entity, I am thinking about the West Bank, would be in confederation with another country.

There are two candidates: Israel and Jordan. Why does it make sense for it to be in a confederation with a Hebrew-speaking Jewish country rather than a Muslim, Arabic-speaking, half-Palestinian country? Makes more sense. As I would see it, you would have one king, maybe two prime ministers, two parliaments.

Now, is that going to happen now? No. Is it going to happen 10 years from now? 20 years from now? Maybe, because the logic for it is extraordinarily strong. An independent Palestinian state is too dangerous. But there is going to be separation. There is going to be a Palestinian entity. Sooner or later, I think it will be affiliated with Jordan.

Larry Bernstein:

In preparation for this discussion, I read a book about the peace in Northern Ireland. And in the end, the agreement said that Northern Ireland would be currently managed by the United Kingdom. But if a majority changed their mind, it would be ruled by the Republic of Ireland. And that the Irish state agreed with that, the British government agreed with that, and that the people of Northern Ireland would accept that as a principle. Is that what you're talking about?

Elliott Abrams:

I would draw a different analogy first than that is no agreement was possible until the IRA terrorism was defeated. And the way it was defeated was by cutting it off. That is the British fought against it, but it was important that the Republic of Ireland and outside supporters like Tip O'Neill and people in the US cut off entirely the IRA and the flow of arms.

One of the problems here is Iran. We have got to cut off the supply of arms or Hamas will regenerate and will be able to do it again. Northern Ireland, it is not going to be a country. It is going to be part of England, or it is going to be part of Ireland. And I am saying that this Palestinian entity in the West Bank, ultimately is going to be in a confederation with another country. And the logical country is Jordan.

Larry Bernstein

Looking forward 19 years, are we fighting the same battles? A couple of weeks ago, Eitan Shamir made a comment like yours about how Americans are looking for solutions for an end of the warfare. He says, from an Israeli perspective, there are only two scenarios. There's low intensity violence and high intensity violence. And we hope for low intensity violence.

Elliott Abrams:

I want to be an optimist here. The critical change that has taken place between 2005 and now is a terrible one. It is the massive Iranian support for Hamas. The critical change that might take place between now and 19 years from now would be the fall of the Iranian regime. That will happen someday. The question is, is it five years, or is it 25 years? If you think of a Middle East

without the Islamic Republic, with a democratic Iran that is trying to be a decent country, Iraq changes, Yemen changes, Syria changes, Lebanon certainly changes, they're not supporting Hezbollah. The Palestinians change. This massive outside support for Palestinian terrorism is gone. If the outside support for Palestinian terrorism ended, it might be possible to persuade Palestinians to build their own society rather than trying to kill Israeli society.

Larry Bernstein:

To paraphrase Clausewitz, war is a means towards a diplomatic endgame. What happened on October 7th? There must have been an idea if we invade, butcher, kill thousands of Israelis and take hundreds of them kidnapped, there is going to be a response. And the response was, if we are not going to release these hostages, the Israelis are going to pummel us day after day after day. Why does that make sense for Hamas to have Gaza destroyed without exchanging the hostages?

Elliott Abrams

There is a theory that it was what you might call a catastrophic success. That is that they figured they'd take 10 hostages and then negotiate as they have in the past and get hundreds of prisoners out. But take it for what it is today. They may get a prisoner exchange. They're asking for one in which they get 1,000, 1,500 prisoners, including murderers. That would be an achievement for Hamas.

They also, it is argued, wanted to put the Palestinian issue back at the center of world attention and they have, and they wanted to hold up or destroy the idea of a rapprochement between Israel and Saudi Arabia. They wanted to block or delay that, and they seem to have done that. This works as an explanation. If you assume that they do not care at all how many Palestinians die, how many Palestinians are wounded, how much of Gaza is destroyed. If they cared, they would not use Palestinians as human shields. Palestinians are expendable. They are to die to protect Hamas. So, they do not care about that.

Larry Bernstein:

I will end this episode on a note of optimism. What are you optimistic about?

Elliott Abrams:

I am optimistic about the strength of Israeli society, the way in the face of this horrible devastation on October 7th, people have drawn together. The society has drawn together, the political system is working, and they will have an election at the end of the year. Israel has shown remarkable strength. The way the IDF is functioning in Gaza is extraordinary. American experts have noted that, for example, the percentage of civilians versus terrorists killed is much, much better than the United States attained in Iraq. Israelis are trying hard though they get no credit for it. The IDF has performed extremely well in Gaza. I am optimistic about Israel.

Larry Bernstein:

Thanks to Elliott for joining us today.

If you missed our previous podcast the topic was Increasing Anti-Semitism on College Campuses. Our speaker was Gary Saul Morson who is the Lawrence B. Dumas Professor of the Arts and Humanities and Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Northwestern University. Saul's work ranges from literary theory, the history of ideas, and the relation between literature and philosophy in the works of Chekhov, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy.

Saul explained what is driving the current wave of antisemitism and why it is so universal? Sadly, intersectionality been interpreted to mean that Jews are the oppressors. Saul also discussed why organizations like Queers for Palestine are mobilizing people even though Hamas condemns homosexuality.

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Thank you for joining us today, good-bye.