

The Thing About Israel

by **Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Tuesday, June 15, 2010**

<https://politicsrespun.org/2010/06/the-thing-about-israel/>

OK, here's the thing about Israel, OK, one thing: there is no greater concentration of political spin in all of human history than around the issues relating to Israel. And the spin has the [likely intended] consequence of creating a chill factor to keep people from trying to reasonably discuss issues on any side of Israel issues. This chill is bad for humanity.

By the way, while I'm not commenting on this news release, I would like to mention here that the International Committee of the Red Cross [has just released a very important statement on ending the closure of Gaza](#). People will of course support or condemn this ICRC position for good, bad, non-rational or compelling reasons. But I'm not writing about that today.

Committed activists and ideologues on all sides of Israel issues contribute to this intense level of spin expertise. Within the discourse, there are, among other things: facts, disinformation, misinformation, irrational attacks, flagrantly hyperbolic analogies, opinions, rhetoric, invective, anger, racism, Polyannaism, political agendas, global conflict paradigms that in part revolve around middle eastern land, and the governments and lobby groups of dozens of countries. It's a classic imbroglgio flambe.

I will take but one example of a variety of things I have to say about Israel. Let's start with an analogy, knowing full well that it can be creatively re-interpreted by anyone with an agenda to accuse me of pretty much anything. I can handle that.

[Note: just for fun, let me state clearly that I make no comments in this entire piece about whether "the state of Israel ought to exist or not" ...just so that if anyone accuses me of being on either side of it, I'm just not talking about that issue in this piece. Later, though. Oh, and preemptive disclaimers are a feature of a society of discourse living under a chill.]

Here's my question. Can anyone criticize policy decisions or actions of Israel's government?

Can Canadians criticize the government of Canada for supporting tar sands development, or even spending tax money on child care subsidies? Typically, yes. And in doing so, few seem to be accused of being racist, anti-Canadian, or harbouring hatred for Canadians.

Can Canadians criticize the US government for its support of a free trade agenda with despotic regimes, or even spending tax money on food stamp programs? Typically, yes. And in doing so, few seem to be accused of being racist, or harbouring hatred for the American people, though to be honest, many are accused of being anti-American for criticizing or supporting something someone else either agrees with or disagrees with. That's too bad. Chills suck.

If France begins above ground nuclear testing on a "French" island in the Pacific Ocean or embraces a Tobin Tax, do I necessarily hate/love the French people for decisions of the government, regardless of

who voted for what and by how much? I wouldn't think so. I think I'd still appreciate their cinema and fries.

So a while back I wrote [in a poem] about the difference between a people and a government's policies [see below]. Are there any differences? What should be the significance of the differences? And if you are interested in testing your attitudes toward this issue, take this test: [read this article](#) and see if you can de/re-spin everyone's perspective. It's pretty complicated, but a worthwhile exercise. Maybe I'll get around to doing that in here one day.

via [22 Impolite Questions: a Response to Rhetoric Crimes « Politics, Re-Spun.](#)

are Noam Chomsky and Phyllis Bennis anti-American if they criticize their imperial government?

and what about Israel?

am i anti-Semitic if i disagree with the domestic or foreign policy decisions of the de facto fundamentalist Jewish theocracy in Israel?

do i wish all Jews in the world dead because i don't agree with any given decision of the Israeli government?

are Noam Chomsky and Phyllis Bennis [self-hating Jews](#) if they oppose any given decision or set of decisions of the Israeli government or decisions of the US government that support Israeli policy they disagree with?