Anti-Israel Activists Swarm Los Angeles Synagogue, Assault and Batter Jews

June 24, 2024

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The Algemeiner

<https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/06/24/anti-israel-activists-swarm-los-angeles-synagogue-assault-batter-jews/>

A violent [anti-Israel demonstration](https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/05/15/us-congress-launches-investigation-outside-funding-anti-israel-campus-demonstrations/) outside of a Los Angeles synagogue over the weekend sparked outrage by public officials and a forceful pushback by the local Jewish community.

The demonstrators descended upon the Adas Torah synagogue in the heavily-Jewish Pico-Robertson area of Los Angeles on Sunday. The Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM) and Code Pink LA, organizations with an extensive history of anti-Israel activism, said the protest was an attempt to prevent a real estate auction event at the synagogue.

‘OUR LAND IS NOT FOR SALE! This Sunday, a real estate event will be marketing homes in ‘anglo neighborhoods’ in effort to further occupy Palestine,’ PYM said on Instagram.

‘Racist settler expansionists are not welcome in Los Angeles! This blatant example of land theft is operating in our own backyard. The Nakba is ongoing and must be confronted!’ the group continued. Many Palestinians and anti-Israel activists [use the term ‘Nakba,’](https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/05/15/anti-israel-group-leading-pro-hamas-protests-under-fire-false-claim-israels-independence-day/) or ‘catastrophe,’ to refer to the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948.

On Sunday, the demonstrators waved Palestine flags and donned keffiyehs while blocking entry into the synagogue. Many of the protesters also covered their faces in an apparent attempt to avoid identification. They chanted ‘intifada revolution’ and ‘free Palestine’ in front of the building while intimidating bystanders. After catching wind of the protest, a crowd of pro-Israel counter-protesters subsequently flooded the scene in an attempt to defend the synagogue.

Videos that circulated on social media showed the demonstrations descending into complete chaos and violence. Anti-Israel activists were recorded shoving, punching, and screaming at those attempting to defend the synagogue. In one instance, according to the videos, a Jewish woman was shoved to the ground and stomped on by pro-Palestinian activists as pro-Israel counterprotesters struggled to ward the swarm off her. Another video showed two anti-Israel activists cornering a woman carrying an Israeli flag, ignoring demands to ‘get off’ her.

Police struggled to contain the raucous and violent clashes, resorting to striking some protesters with batons to assert control over the demonstrations. Some participants in the protests alleged that officers indiscriminately hit individuals in both camps out of frustration.

The skirmishes spilled out into the greater community as anti-Israel protesters targeted and in some cases vandalized Jewish-owned businesses. Surveillance video captured a man throwing a rock through the window of a Jewish-owned store.

Protesters also reportedly broke through a Jewish-owned storefront with a mezuzah — a small parchment scroll containing Hebrew verses from the Torah that members of the Jewish community fix to their doorposts. Pro-Israel supporters attempted to defend the stores, leading to further clashes. Los Angeles police subsequently started a hate crime investigation into the incidents.

‘Apparently, only me and my neighbor who have a mezuzah outside got broken into,’ a Jewish shop owner told KTLA. ‘So, we know it’s a hate crime, and oddly enough, when we came in, there was a rock that said ‘payback’ and ‘glory,’ and I don’t know what that means.’

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass denounced the protests in a statement, saying she would dispatch additional law enforcement to ensure the safety of religious worshippers.

‘Today’s violence in the Pico-Robertson neighborhood today was abhorrent, and blocking access to a place of worship is unacceptable,’ Bass said. ‘I’ve called on LAPD to provide additional patrols in the Pico-Robertson community as well as outside of houses of worship throughout the city. I’ll be meeting with [interim] Chief [Dominic] Choi tomorrow to further discuss the safety of Angelenos.’

California Gov. Gavin Newsom released a statement saying the ‘violent clashes outside the Adas Torah synagogue in Los Angeles are appalling. There is no excuse for targeting a house of worship. Such [antisemitic hatred has no place in California](https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/06/11/zionist-pedophile-rabbi-ucla-pro-hamas-rioters-continue-year-carnage/).’

US President Joe Biden also addressed the demonstrations.

‘I’m appalled by the scenes outside of Adas Torah synagogue in Los Angeles. Intimidating Jewish congregants is dangerous, unconscionable, antisemitic, and un-American,’ he said in a statement. ‘Americans have a right to peaceful protest. But blocking access to a house of worship — and engaging in violence — is never acceptable.’