

“What MLK Understood About ‘Anti-Zionism’”
When people criticize ‘Zionists,’ they mean Jews.
Wall Street Journal, 30-31 December 2023, p. A12.

Sanaa Kahloon (“Harvard Protester Responds to Sen. Sullivan,” Letters, Dec. 23) quotes Judith Butler for the specious claim that “the conflation of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism can only serve the purposes of extreme censorship.” Far better for Ms. Kahloon to embrace the teaching of the world’s best-known advocate of human freedom, Martin Luther King, Jr., who on Oct. 22, 1967, forcefully rebuked the expression of anti-Zionist remarks: “Don’t talk like that! When people criticize ‘Zionists,’ they mean Jews. You’re talking anti-semitism.”

Dr. King’s words were memorialized by the renowned Harvard scholar Seymour Martin Lipset, and the accuracy of Lipset’s verbatim quotation has been confirmed by another witness, former *New Republic* publisher Martin Peretz. A superb, indeed definitive, explication of Dr. King’s statements and views on Israel appears in Prof. Martin Kramer’s 2016 paper “In the Words of Martin Luther King,” which is publicly available on Harvard’s own website.

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