

## Is it any wonder I loathe Starmer?

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According to Keir Starmer's government this morning, the UK cannot recognise Palestine as a state until Hamas releases all its hostages.

Think about what that means for a moment. Apart from the fact that the demand is not reciprocal, which means it is obviously pro-Israeli, what they are saying is that Hamas is not just the elected government of Gaza (but not Palestine as a whole), but that the two are synonymous. In other words, Hamas (which was initially a Netanyahu-sponsored organisation intended to overturn the Palestine Liberation Organisation) is apparently the only possible government in Palestine. By implication, they are saying Hamas and Palestine are the same, but they clearly are not.

Again, think about the implications of this, and why it so suits them to say it. Applying the same logic to Israel, that country and Netanyahu's government are obviously one and the same in Starmer's opinion. That, very conveniently in their warped way of thinking, means that criticising Netanyahu is by their definition (but not, of course, in reality) anti-Semitic, because he, apparently (and very obviously incorrectly), provides the only possible government in Israel, and they also think Israel is necessarily a Jewish state, which ignores the significant minorities living within it.

And then there is another implication. If to be Palestinian does, by definition, mean you are a part of Hamas, as seems to be the UK government position, then there has been no genocide, but only a war against Hamas, as Israel would have it, and everyone who is Palestinian, even the dying children, are enemies of Israel and so legitimate targets, as Israel often claim.

In other words, the deliberate conflation of these issues by the UK government has four consequences.

It denies the reality of Palestine as a people and their land as a country.

It denies the autonomy and agency of the Palestinian people and their future right to choose their own government.

It explicitly supports the Israeli line that every Palestinian of any age and whatever their political affiliations, including the absence of any, is a legitimate Israeli target for attack.

And, in that case, the UK government is, by implication, supporting the line that there is also no genocide, but just a war.

All of those claims are incorrect, and profoundly so, both legally and ethically. But Starmer and his Cabinet poodles trot them out.

Is it any wonder I loathe them?