

Shockwaves as Antisemitism Committee Includes Palestinian Terrorist Supporter

While tensions in the Middle East rage, concerns are still mounting over antisemitism at U.S. universities. On Capitol Hill Thursday, collegiate leaders faced questions from House lawmakers on the issue, addressing the challenge between balancing free speech and keeping students safe.

The hearing, which was dubbed “Calling for Accountability: Stopping Antisemitic College Chaos”, included several university presidents who dealt with violent protests, including UCLA Chancellor Gene Block.

“I’m fully aware that many of our Jewish students have had to confront rhetoric and images on campus that any reasonable person would find repugnant. Trust me, I understand their pain. I’ve lived it myself as a Jewish kid growing up in the Catskill region of New York with relatives who were Holocaust survivors,” Block said.

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On Apr. 25, anti-Israel protests sprang up on the UCLA campus resulting in an encampment that grew to more than 500 people. Block admits it took too long to address the violence.

“But when more than 200 protesters refused police orders, law enforcement removed the encampment that night. With the benefit of hindsight, we should have been prepared to immediately remove the encampment if and when the safety of our community was put at risk. We have since taken decisive

action. I created a new office of campus safety that reports directly to me," he said.

Northwestern University President Michael Schill answered questions about antisemitism among his faculty.

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"You and your administration have cited the creation of this committee as proof you are working to counter antisemitism," Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) said to Schill. "The three faculty members you appointed to it had objected to the committee's very creation in a letter that downplayed antisemitism and defended the phrase 'From the river to the sea (Palestine will be free).' At least two of them have supported (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) efforts against Israel."

"Why did you believe it was appropriate to appoint faculty members who have defended and made excuses for anti-Semitism and oppressed and opposed the committee's purported mission of combating antisemitism?" Walberg asked.

Schill replied, "I will be appointing to the task force that we are going to create, faculty, staff and administrators who I believe are committed to fighting antisemitism and as committed to fighting antisemitism as I am."

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