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Is Black Lives Matter an Idea or an Organization?

By DAN MCLAUGHLIN | June 13, 2020 8:53 PM



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(Joshua S. Kelly/USA Today Sports/Reuters)

Jack Fowler's [piece](#) on the Black Lives Matter movement gets to one of the challenges for conservatives and the mainstream center-left in dealing with "Black Lives Matter": Is it primarily an idea, or primarily an organization? This is common issue in dealing with left-wing protest movements, much as we saw with the "Women's March." In classic [motte-and-bailey](#) style, the marketing is aimed at a minimally controversial, broad proposition: that the police should value

the lives of black Americans. And this is how it is understood by a great many of the people who use the movement's slogan and hashtags.

But the actual organization is something else entirely: a leftist radical group with a much wider agenda and more ambitious aims, which uses the goodwill of the slogan to **raise money** and gain platforms. As with the Women's March, those aims, and the rhetoric of people associated with the organization, include **anti-Israel** and frankly **anti-Semitic** messages and goals. Indeed, the first organizational **platform** promoted by BLM and its affiliated groups in 2016 "contained a vicious bigoted slur against the Jewish state, which the document's foreign policy section **accused** of perpetrating 'genocide' against Palestinians. (The platform also labeled Israel an 'apartheid state' and joined with the BDS movement in calling for the total academic, cultural, and economic boycott of the country — a demand made for no other state)," provoking a rebuke from the Anti-Defamation League. For Republican politicians, of course, this creates a bind: Refuse to say "Black Lives Matter," and you'll be accused of racism; repeat the slogan, and you are endorsing a sinister radical-left organization. Even Democratic Party leaders **warned their own party privately in 2015** against associating with the group, although that resolve is mostly in shambles today.

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