

# Palestinian flag's critics overlook the people it represents

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*The Palestinian flag over the town common in North Andover last week.*  
LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

To the editor:

In the recent debate over flag-raising in our town, I was appalled by the conflation of antisemitism with the Palestinian flag ([“Palestinian flag raised at North Andover: Board gives OK after debate among residents,”](#) Metro, Nov. 15). Hamas’s brutal terrorist attacks and hostage-taking are indefensible, a scourge and attack on Jews everywhere. So many people are hurting. The Palestinian flag is a symbol of Palestinian peoplehood and desire for a country. It is not the Hamas flag. To equate the Palestinian flag with the Hamas flag is to equate all Palestinians with Hamas. This is utterly false.

Nobody should be made afraid to grieve their dead publicly, or to ask for the fair and equal application of a law.

In this time of war in Israel and Gaza and rising antisemitism worldwide, I urge my local Jewish community, especially its leaders, to exercise extra care to speak and act responsibly. It is too easy to let our trauma, grief, and fear distance us from these teachings of our Torah: that each person is made *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18). Let's protect every neighbor as we want to be protected, by showing compassion and care. Let's have each other's backs.

Cantor Vera Broekhuysen

North Andover