



ANTIZIONISM: THE NEW FACE OF ANTI-JEWISH EXTREMISM



Dr. Jeremy Havardi

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Cover photograph: View of Palestine conflict themed graffiti piece by *Greeni* on a city centre wall on Aug 23, 2013 in Bristol, UK.

'Death and life are in the power of the tongue.'

Book of Proverbs

'History is not a burden on our memory, but an illumination of our soul.'

Lord Acton

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Executive Summary

Antizionism should be understood as an extremist movement which demonises and delegitimises the movement for Jewish national self-determination. The roots of antizionism are in Nazi, Soviet and Islamist ideology and its arguments are steeped in the recognisable calumnies of those totalitarian movements.

Antizionism has become the predominant expression of today's obsessive antisemitism, especially because it denies Jews equal collective rights, reproduces racist tropes, imposes political tests on Jews and legitimises exclusion and violence. But it is harder to recognise because it is dressed in the language of human rights, justice and international law.

Zionism is a progressive liberation movement which is justified on multiple grounds. There has been a continuous Jewish presence in the land of Israel for 3,000 years, grounding claims to indigeneity, while half of Israel's current population are the descendants of Jews who lived for millennia in the Middle East. The Zionist claim to a homeland was given legal legitimacy through internationally mandated post-World War 1 agreements while the moral case for a Jewish safe haven was strengthened after the horrors of twentieth century persecution.

Antizionists have a long history of attacking Jews. Ideologues within the Arab world, inspired by Nazi propaganda, launched campaigns against the Jews of Palestine, instigating deadly riots and rebuffing any notion of a compromise peace. They rejected offers to partition Palestine multiple times. There were antizionist pogroms of Jews in Arab states while Arab governments engineered the ethnic cleansing of Jewish populations.

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union demonised Zionism using many of the tropes of traditional antisemitism and oversaw the expulsion of Jews in Poland. More than any other nation, the USSR created the tropes and iconography of antizionism and set a template for fellow travellers in later decades.

The BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement has adopted discriminatory actions that target any Jews who do not renounce their Zionist identity. This has led to the exclusion of Jewish professionals, the harassment of Jewish students and staff and a climate of intimidation in many universities. Modern 'social justice' warriors have chosen to racialise the conflict, wrongly depicting Jews as white, powerful supporters of colonialism and the enemies of a just and humane society.

Antizionism has an ideology which revolves around a set of core tropes. They are the settler colonialist libel, the genocide libel and the apartheid libel. All three are designed to delegitimise the Jewish state and soften up the world for its elimination. In addition, antizionism has borrowed from some of the core historic libels against the Jewish people, including the blood libel, dual loyalty and the 'Jewish lobby'.

Antizionism brings harm to Jewish communities whenever it is implemented. This can come in the form of murderous violence, whether against Israelis or their supporters, the denial of a safe haven, so that Jews once again feel insecure in a hostile world, incitement from activists who call for the eradication of Zionists, dehumanising rhetoric that likens Jews to colonialists, murderers and child killers and attempts at removing Jewish people from the public sphere and all its social institutions.

Antizionism also brings deep and lasting harm to Palestinians, eroding the cause of peace and co-existence in the Middle East and vilifying those Arabs and Jews who cross the divide to reach out to the other side. It fully contradicts the UK government's commitment to two states and to the Abraham Accords, which have strengthened ties between Israel and its neighbours. Antizionism also entrenches intercommunal tension in the UK by trying to import conflict rather than build bridges between Jews and other minorities.

Policy recommendations for tackling UK antizionism:

1. Antizionism must be identified as an extremist ideology which leads to the harassment, intimidation and exclusion of Jews in social spaces. Any UK political party, NGO or civil society organisation which promotes antizionism must be condemned for doing so.
2. Antisemitism training in the public sector must incorporate lessons on the nature, ideology and history of antizionism in the twentieth century. Those lessons must show how it has created real and lasting harm to Jews, both as an ideology in its own right and by incorporating pre-existing tropes of Jewish power, blood lust and control.
3. The government must ensure that all public bodies adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism without delay. Alongside this, there must be mandatory reporting of all antisemitic incidents and complaints in these bodies, as well as the responses to them.
4. The CPS must prosecute Islamist hate preachers who use religious language to call for criminal acts against Zionists or who support banned groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.
5. The government should impose strict limits on all future antizionist marches. While the principle of free speech must be respected, incitement can never be. Those who call for an intifada against Zionists, or who chant Arabic slogans that threaten Jews with violence, should face arrest and conviction for incitement. No march should be allowed next to synagogues, Jewish schools or Jewish social venues as this is a clear example of racist provocation.
6. The government should write to all music, sporting and cultural venues to remind them that unfairly banning Jewish or Israeli performers in line with demands from the BDS movement violates the Equality Act (2010).

7. University Vice Chancellors must take immediate disciplinary action against any student or staff member found to be glorifying Palestinian or Islamist terrorism. Vice-Chancellors, sabbatical officers and EDI officials must undertake full antisemitism training and universities should, where possible, appoint antisemitism officers to deliver training and support. Candidates for student union officer positions must comply with the union's equality and anti-discrimination policies, including the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
8. The Charity Commission must shut down charities that promote antizionist violence or hatred, while ensuring that safeguards are in place to protect lawful advocacy.
9. The Church of England must reject *Kairos II* for its denial of Jewish historical and legal rights. Grassroots Christians should lead on interfaith work explicitly focused on solidarity with Jews, given that they reject antizionism more than any other demographic group in the UK.¹
10. To prevent the Iranian regime from radicalising people in the UK, the government should permanently ban the annual al-Quds Day event. There must be proscription of media channels that promote and glorify the ideology of the Islamic Republic and its proxies. The UK should also expel the Iranian Ambassador.
11. The UK should ban the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organisation on national security grounds. If proscription fails the test of the Terrorist Act (2000), then the Government should follow the lead of the German Federal authorities by designating the Brotherhood as an extremist organisation. Qatar's funding of Islamism in the UK should also be carefully identified and tracked.

¹ Daniel Allington. 2026. 'Antisemitic Attitudes and Anti-Jewish Crime in the United Kingdom: Longitudinal Trends, Demographic Predictors, and Policy Implications.' *Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism* vol. 9 no. 1, pp. 1-42.

Introduction

On October 2, 2025 during the solemn holiday of Yom Kippur, Jihad al-Shamie, a 35 year old British citizen from Syria, attacked worshippers outside the Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester. There were two fatalities: Adrian Daulby, 53, and Melvin Cravitz, 66. Alan Levy, a synagogue congregant who helped to barricade the synagogue doors during the attack, said that he heard al-Shamie scream, "This is what they get for killing our children."¹ This was a clear reference to the war then taking place in Gaza, the words of a man who had not only sympathised with Islamic State but also celebrated the October 7 attacks.²

Such murderous violence had already been unleashed in the US. On May 21, 2025, the American Jewish Committee was hosting a 'Young Diplomats Reception' in the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington DC. At approximately 9.08 pm, a suspected shooter, Elias Rodriguez, pulled out his handgun and opened fire on four people who were exiting the event. Two Israeli embassy aides, Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim, who were engaged to be married, were fatally shot. The event in question had a humanitarian focus, designed to build a coalition to help Gazans who had suffered during the war, though little of that would have mattered to the alleged perpetrator. He reportedly pulled out a keffiyeh before adding "I did it. I did it for Gaza", and shouted "Free Palestine" as he was arrested.³ Just over a week later, on June 1, 2025, in Boulder, Colorado, Egyptian Mohamed Sabry Soliman, used a makeshift flamethrower and Molotov cocktails to attack a group of Jews who were participating in a solidarity walk for the Israeli hostages held in Gaza. 82 year old Karen Diamond later succumbed to her injuries from the attack.⁴ According to an FBI interview, "He stated that he wanted to kill all Zionist people and wished

¹ Judith Moritz and Tom McArthur, "I saw evil as attacker tried to barge into synagogue, rabbi tells BBC," *BBC News*, October 3, 2025.

² Danel Allington, "Antisemitic Attitudes and Anti-Jewish Crime in the United Kingdom: Longitudinal Trends, Demographic Predictors, and Policy Implications," *Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism*, Volume 9 Issue 1, (2).

³ "Man charged with first degree murder after Israeli embassy couple shot dead in Washington," *BBC News*, May 22, 2025.

⁴ Colleen Slevin and Mead Gruver, "An 82-year-old woman who was injured in a firebomb attack in Boulder, Colorado, has died," *AP News*, June 30, 2025.

they were all dead.”¹ In Australia, 15 Jews were murdered in the IS inspired Bondi Beach massacre.

A tsunami of Jew hatred

These are just three violent incidents from the global tsunami of rage that has been directed towards Jewish communities following the horrific events of October 7, 2023.² That tsunami saw 4,103 instances of anti-Jewish hate recorded across the UK in 2023, the highest annual total ever reported to the Community Security Trust (CST), a 147% rise from the 1,662 antisemitic incidents in 2022.³ In the three weeks after October 7, there were 819 recorded acts of antisemitism in France, more incidents than in the past 12 months. Among the offences were verbal abuse, racist graffiti, physical assaults and death threats.⁴ In Germany, the Federal Criminal Police Office reported that one third of the hate incidents it registered were antisemitic in nature, a vastly disproportionate number considering that Jews make up just one in four hundred of the population.⁵ The Simon Wiesenthal Centre noted that there had been a fivefold increase in antisemitic incidents in Belgium, with major crimes including vandalism and the defacement of a Holocaust memorial⁶ while Switzerland experienced a trebling of

¹ Austen Erblat, “Boulder, Colorado, suspect facing 16 counts of attempted murder, federal hate crime charges,” *CBS News*, June 2, 2025.

² On that day, Hamas carried out the worst one day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, claiming close to 1,200 victims, the vast majority Jewish.

³ “Antisemitic Incidents Report 2023 – Blog – CST – Protecting Our Jewish Community”, CST, February 15, 2024, <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2024/02/15/antisemitic-incidents-report-202>, accessed June 11, 2025.

⁴ Sonya Ciesnik, “France’s Jewish community faces a surge in anti-Semitism”, *France24.com*, November 2, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20231102-since-hamas-attack-france-s-jewish-community-faces-a-surge-in-anti-semitism>, accessed January 6, 2025.

⁵ “Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council,” 40128efc-6203-4002-b7a5-8f26882930f6_en, accessed February 16, 2025.

⁶ “SWC Highlights Alarming Rise in Anti-Semitism in Belgium Since October 7th,” *Simon Wiesenthal Centre*, July 15, 2024, <https://www.wiesenthal.com/about/news/swc-highlights-alarming-rise.html>, accessed 11th February 2025.

antisemitic incidents from the previous year.¹ According to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Australia saw a record 2,062 antisemitic incidents in the year following October 7, a huge increase from the 495 incidents recorded in the previous year.² The old assumption that antisemitism had been ‘excised by the shock of the Holocaust and immunized by post-World War II liberalism’ has proved false.³

This phenomenon is not new. As Paul Iganski, Mark McGlashan and Abe Sweiry point out in a recent study, ‘Each time there is an upsurge in the Israel-Palestine conflict there is a rise in violent and other abusive incidents against Jews around the world.’ When such conflicts emerge, Jews are ‘seemingly targeted as representatives for the State of Israel and attacked as proxies for the Israel Defence Force’.⁴ It is often stated that Jews should not be held to account for the real or perceived misdeeds of the State of Israel. This is both true and trite. To hold the citizens of any country responsible for a foreign government’s actions is clearly reprehensible. That such ‘blowback’ tends to happen primarily to Jews in the context of a Middle Eastern war is clearly worthy of comment. But a more important point is often missed. Such attacks come within the context of a pre-determined narrative of antizionist lies which actively dehumanise Israelis and Jews and render them a threat to society.

Antizionist antisemitism

But what connected the murderous attacks in Washington, Boulder and Manchester was not just their lethal antisemitism. They were all examples of *antizionist antisemitism* in which assailants chose to target Jewish people because of their real or alleged Zionist attachment. Such murderous attacks do not spring from nowhere. They emerge

¹ “Sweden: antisemitic crimes after Hamas attack October 2023,” *Statista*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1499617/sweden-antisemitic-crimes-hamas-attack-october-2023>, accessed March 10, 2025.

² Shira Li Bartov, “Australia saw antisemitic incidents quadruple after Oct. 7, Jewish group reports,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 3, 2024.

³ Kent D. Harber, Dominika Bulska, Thomas E. Malloy, and Valeria M. Vila, “Antisemitism, Conspiracy Beliefs, and Anti-Israel Attitudes,” *American Psychologist* 2026, Vol. 81, No. 4, 463–477 (464)

⁴ Paul Iganski, Mark McGlashan and Abe Sweiry, “The spectre of Nazism haunts social media,” *The ESRC Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science*, February 12, 2015.

from the bowels of a deeply intolerant and abusive campaign to demonise and delegitimise Zionism, the movement of Jewish liberation. This campaign, decades in the making, has rendered Zionism a term of abuse and demanded the ostracisation of Zionists from the public space. It has depicted Zionists as an inhuman barrier to a world of peace and harmony, as a metaphor for evil and as the most potent contemporary symbol of global corruption and moral turpitude. It has demanded purity tests of Jews, separating the good ones (who renounce Israel, Zionism and most of their cultural identity) from the bad ones who refuse. It has seen calls to 'crush Zionism', to murder Zionists and to purify the world of Zionism. The pejorative term 'Zio' originated on the far right but is now used more widely as a form of abuse, which further encourages attacks on Jews. Amid such intense dehumanisation, both of Israelis and non-Israeli Jews, it is no surprise that acts of violence ensue.

Thus, the view that such acts of violence are merely spontaneous howls of rage, albeit illegitimate, from people who suffer from grievances with Israel is deeply mistaken. One chief problem with such monocausal explanations is that it removes the component of ideological commitment which is central to understanding terrorist motivations. This is shown in a recent report by Donald Holbrook, Associate Fellow at the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, called *Sacred Violence*. Holbrook carefully analysed 6,000 individual pieces of 'mindset material' that came from 100 convicted terrorists in the UK. He concluded that ideology was 'indispensable in understanding terrorists' patterns of contention: why they fight, what they hope to achieve and what is permissible in their struggle.' Such extremist ideological material cemented a narrative in which violence was seen as 'proportionate, moral and obligatory in defence of an identified community.'¹ Antizionism too has an ideology which is laced with racist accusations and libels and which similarly offers a call to violent action. This should be no surprise at all to the government. The warning given by Dame Sara Khan, former Lead Commissioner for the Home Office's Commission for Countering Extremism, in her forward to a report on counter-extremism remains vitally important:

¹ Donald Holbrook, "Sacred Violence – The Enduring Role of Ideology in Terrorism & Radicalisation," *The Commission for Countering Extremism*, March 20, 2025, 6.

Research tells us that segments of our population justify acts of hostility against the 'other', support divisive and dangerous conspiracy theories and dehumanising extremist narratives about our fellow citizens, often on the basis of race, religion or political beliefs.¹

The red-green alliance

The attacks in Boulder, Washington and Heaton Park, like those elsewhere, illustrate the fusion today between the far left and radicalised Islamists. Rodriguez, the man arrested in connection with the Washington shootings, had associations with left wing groups and allegedly produced a radical manifesto about Gaza.² By contrast, the incidents in Boulder and Heaton Park were violent Islamist attacks in which the perpetrators reportedly cited an allegiance to Islamic State, itself a group responsible for some of the most heinous terrorist atrocities of the modern age. In recent decades, and especially after 9/11, radical leftists and Islamists have formed a 'tactical alliance' animated by a common loathing of western values and institutions, as well as a desire to destroy the State of Israel. The left has had to overlook the misogyny and homophobia of radical Islam because there was a greater advantage to be obtained, namely that the Islamists could add 'the weight of physical force, of violent drama, to the left's own anti-Westernism'.³ Both could also claim to draw upon ideological histories of antisemitism, one indigenous to the political left, the other to political Islam.⁴ The modern anti-Israel movement, a fusion of radical leftism and Islamist extremism, is therefore tinged with shades of both red and green.⁵ Naturally, the far right have entered the fray too. Thus, David Duke, leader of the Ku Klux Klan, responded to the Sandy Hook massacre in 2012 by declaring: "The real murderers are not the bullets,

¹ "Time to Act; Addressing the UK's Accelerating Extremism Threat," All Parry Parliamentary Group on Countering Extremism, November 2025, 4.

² Manifesto of Elias Rodriguez – Dearborn Blog

³ Brendan O'Neill, *After the Pogrom: 7 October, Israel and the Crisis of Civilisation*, (Spiked, 2024), 88.

⁴ For a fuller discussion of how antisemitism has become central to the Islamist worldview, see Daniel Allington, *Islamist Antisemitism: A Neglected Hate*, Counter Extremism Group, July 2025.

⁵ Tirza Shorr, "The Red-Green Alliance Poses a Dual Threat to the West and Israel," *The Jerusalem Centre for Security and Foreign Affairs*, June 9, 2025.

but the Bullies of the Zio Media.”¹ However, the term ‘Zio’ has since been appropriated by the left and is part of the cultural vocabulary of antizionists from across the political spectrum.²

Today, antizionism is arguably the modern world’s dominant vehicle for racist hatred and prejudice directed towards Jews. The figures show this all too clearly. According to the CST, of 3,700 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2025, 53% (1,977) ‘referenced, or were linked to, Israel, Palestine, the Hamas terror attack or the subsequent war’. Each case ‘evidenced anti-Jewish language, motivation or targeting’.³ Nor was this a one off case in the UK, as 52% of the incidents reported in 2024 were of the same nature. In 2025, the Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism (RIAS) in Germany recorded over 8,700 cases of antisemitic hostility in 2025. A staggering 68% of all such incidents were categorised as ‘Israel-related antisemitism’.⁴ In Italy, the independent CDEC Foundation recorded 963 antisemitic cases in 2025 and found that those which were linked to Israel were ‘the principal ideological driver behind the surge’.⁵

Antizionism causes an untold number of bad faith actors to hide behind the shield of ‘political criticism’ when carrying out physical attacks against the Jewish community, spreading calumnies and malevolent lies about Zionist Jews, ostracising Jews in the public space because of their real or perceived support for Israel and regurgitating ancient antisemitic canards to further their ideological agenda. Today, much of western academia, the NGO and human rights industry and the left wing activist class is consumed by an ideology ‘that treats Jewish peoplehood and sovereignty as an intrinsic injustice’.⁶ Ultimately, when people chant for an intifada against

¹ Steven Poole, “The Perversion of ‘Zionism’,” *The Telegraph*, August 2, 2026.

² That Zio was used as a term of abuse was noted in the Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry. She noted that the term Zio was ‘a term of abuse, pure and simple’. The Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry, 9.

³ “Antisemitic Incidents 2025,” *Community Security Trust*, 5-6.

⁴ Jens Thurau, “Germany: Reports of antisemitism in 2025 remain high,” *DW.com*, June 17, 2026.

⁵ “CDEC reports 963 antisemitic incidents in Italy in 2025,” *European Jewish Congress*, February 20, 2026.

⁶ Adam Louis-Klein, “Defeating Antizionism,” *SAPIR*, Winter 2026.

Zionists or call for 'Zios' to be eradicated, they are 'participating in a hate movement that targets Jews'.¹

Zionism as foundational to Jewish life

At the same time, the belief in a Jewish state remains a crucial component of modern Jewish identity, contrary to the claims of many left wing activists. A survey in 2026 by the Jewish Federations of North America found that 71% of respondents felt an 'emotional connection to Israel' and, more significantly, that '88% believed Israel has a right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state'.² Yet the same survey found that just 37% of respondents identified as Zionists. The UK based Institute for Jewish Policy Research conducted a 'National Jewish Identity Survey' in 2022 among nearly 5,000 people and found that 73% of respondents said that they felt 'very or somewhat attached' to Israel, though the proportion identifying as 'Zionists' had fallen from 72% to 63% over the previous decade.³ In Canada, a 2024 survey of 588 Jews found that 94 percent of Canadian Jews said they supported 'the existence of a Jewish state in Israel', though 49% did not identify as Zionist.⁴

Two conclusions follow from this. Firstly, Israel today remains 'at the heart of global Jewish life' in a multitude of ways, both religious and secular.⁵ Secondly, there is an obvious discrepancy between support for the Jewish state of Israel and the word 'Zionism' itself. This owes a great deal to 'semantic drift' and the successful strategy employed by antizionists to attach negative connotations to the word itself. By making people believe that Zionism is an instantiation of colonialism, racism and genocide, antizionists have ensured that Jews suffer reputational risk when they endorse the term, gaslighting them

¹ Andrea J Martin, "The Antizionist Movement Is a Hate Movement: It's Time to Say So," *The Times of Israel*, December 17, 2025.

² Theodore Sasson, "JFNA Survey Finds Just 37% of Jewish Americans Identify as Zionists," *The Institute for National Security Studies*, February 17, 2026.

³ David Graham and Jonathan Boyd, "Jews in the UK today: Key findings from the JPR National Jewish Identity Survey," *The Institute for Jewish Policy Research*, February 8, 2024.

⁴ Robert Brym, "What Does Zionism Mean to Canadian Jews? A Longitudinal Study of Semantic Drift," *Canadian Jewish Studies*, Volume 43, Fall 2025.

⁵ Dave Rich, *The Left's Jewish Problem*, (Biteback Publishing, 2016), xviii

in the process. That is one important reason why a clarification of Zionism is urgently needed.

This booklet will start by examining Zionism, locating it within its proper cultural and historical context. It then looks at the history of antizionism from the 1920s onwards, demonstrating that it was an anti-Jewish movement promulgated by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, disseminated by the left in international institutions and taken up with zeal by radical actors within the Muslim world. It identifies its core tropes and shows how they are manifested in today's hostile climate towards Israel. After showing how antizionism is manifested in the UK, it explores the various ways in which this movement harms Jewish communities, both physically and socially, as well as negatively impacting on Palestinians and their chances for peace and development. It ends with a set of recommendations for how UK policy makers can more effectively counter this insidious ideology.

What is Zionism?

Zionism is a movement for the self-determination, liberation and cultural renaissance of the Jewish people in their ancestral land. Though it is a modern movement which was forged at a time when nationalism and antisemitism were both on the rise throughout Europe, it has ancient roots. It was three thousand years ago that King David established a strong and united Israelite kingdom with Jerusalem as his fortress capital. Archaeological evidence has corroborated the idea that the House of David was the head of a powerful royal kingdom, some of that evidence provided by the Israelites' enemies.¹ Jerusalem was to become established as a spiritual focal point of the Jewish faith and is mentioned no fewer than 669 times in the Hebrew Bible.² The word Zion, which is a mountaintop close to the rolling hills of Jerusalem, is mentioned over 150 times in the Old Testament. In addition, there are references to Israel as the Jewish homeland in the New Testament too. One example is in Matthew 2:1-12 where Herod, after summoning the chief priests and teachers of the law, asked where the Messiah was to be born and was told "In Bethlehem in Judea... in the land of Judah."³ In Islam, Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:20-21) has also been taken as a scriptural recognition of Jewish claims to that land.⁴

Jewish historical presence in the Holy Land

Jews remained in the land, even after the Great Revolt (66-73AD) in which the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and killed, enslaved and displaced tens of thousands of Jewish inhabitants. In a spectacular act of cultural erasure, the Romans renamed the ancient kingdoms of

¹ It split into the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah after the reign of Solomon, David's son. The northern kingdom set up its capital in Samaria (for over a century) and the southern one was established in Jerusalem. The southern kingdom was Judah from which we derive the word Jew.

² Jewish tradition has it that Solomon's Temple was built on Mt. Moriah, the spot chosen by the patriarch Abraham to bind his son Isaac and in the Genesis account, it was the place where Jacob slept and dreamt of a ladder connecting heaven and earth.

³ Yisrael Medad, "Needed: A Little More 'Three Wise Men' Wisdom," *JNS*, December 25, 2024.

⁴ In Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:21), Moses says, "O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allah has assigned to you and do not turn back or you will be losers."

Judah and Israel 'Palestine' in 135 CE, thereby attempting to blot out any Jewish connection to the land.¹



Arch of Titus in Rome

Throughout over 1800 years of exile, there was a continuous Jewish presence in the Holy Land, including Jewish settlement in such cities and towns as Safed, Tiberias, Hebron and Jerusalem. Despite the terrible tribulations of foreign conquest, the harsh realities of foreign rule and heavy taxation, Jews were never deterred from returning to the Holy Land. Such a constant wave of movement and resettlement in the face of adversity speaks of one thing only: 'The phenomenal affinity of the Jewish people to the land of Israel'.² That affinity explains why one abiding sentiment among diaspora Jews during the period of exile was *Ahavat Tsion* (the yearning for Zion).³

The land of Israel has been central to the Jewish faith and its services and liturgy for millennia. The festival of Hanukkah celebrates how Ancient Israelites defeated their colonisers, the Hellenistic Greeks, and re-established sovereignty in the ancient Israelite Kingdom two millennia ago. At the close of the Passover Seder, Jews

¹ For a detailed and scholarly discussion of the origins of the word Palestine, read: Bernard Lewis, "Palestine: On the History and Geography of a Name," *The International History Review* (1980), Vol. 2, No. 1 (Jan 1980), 1-12.

² Samuel Katz, *Battleground: Fact and Fantasy in Palestine*, (London: W.H. Allen, 1973), 95

³ Colin Shindler, *What do Zionists Believe?* (London: Granta Books, 2007), 15.

call out 'Next year in Jerusalem', expressing a hope for the end of exile. Indeed, the Hebrew calendar and Jewish holidays are ultimately based on 'the agricultural year as experienced *specifically* in the Land of Israel.'¹ Three times a day, Jews pray for a return to the land of Israel and there is another prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem in the Grace after Meals. At Jewish weddings, a Jewish couple break a glass, in part to commemorate the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. That city's Temple Mount has always been the holiest site in the Jewish faith and one of Judaism's key symbols, the menorah, is a candelabra which was continuously lit in the Temple. It is therefore a distortion and falsehood to dissociate Judaism and Zionism when they are so strongly and profoundly interrelated. Such 'de-Zionisation' should be seen as nothing short of an attempted erasure of Jewish identity itself.

Modern Zionist movement

The modern Zionist movement emerged in the nineteenth century as the after effects of the French Revolution paved the way for a rise in nationalist movements across Europe. Nationalists celebrated their people's distinctive culture and language and demanded the right of collective self-determination, often at the expense of whichever empire was controlling them. The political current influenced Jewish leaders like Leo Pinsker who argued that Jews, 'a nation like others', had to end their long period of exile and reclaim the Land of Israel. But Zionism would only start to gain real traction in the last two decades of the nineteenth century during an era when waves of antisemitism were spreading across Europe. This was especially true throughout the Russian empire where, in the late nineteenth century, approximately half of the world's eight million Jews were living, most in conditions of tremendous poverty. Following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, a wave of chauvinistic nationalism swept the empire and led to violent pogroms against Jewish communities, as well as the imposition of severe legal restrictions.² Taken together, this Tsarist war against the Jewish population persuaded millions to seek a new life outside Russia. There was also some Jewish migration from Muslim

¹ Alice Marcu, "Passover's Reminder of Judaism's Inherent Zionism," *Times of Israel*, April 28, 2024.

² The May Laws of 1882 restricted where Jews could live and where they could buy land and prevented them from doing business on Sundays or Christian holy days.

countries in the Middle East, including communities who came from Yemen, Baghdad and Persia.¹



Theodore Herzl

Jewish thinkers such as Theodore Herzl argued that waves of European antisemitism necessitated a new approach to Jewish affairs. Jews could no longer be safe merely by calling for enhanced civil rights or petitioning the leaders of their respective countries. Herzl's eyes were focused on France, the epicentre of Enlightenment and a nation where Jews had received the explicit promise of personal liberty. This was the nation that subjected Alfred Dreyfus to a sham trial in 1894 and an outrageous injustice after the army captain was wrongly accused of betraying his country. Herzl believed that if a man of status and distinction like Dreyfus could be victim to such appalling racism, no Jew was safe. Antisemitism, he thought, could not be combated because, no matter how much they contributed, Jews would 'still be considered as aliens in the societies in which they lived'.² He warned, with deep prescience, that if the Jews stayed in Europe, they faced catastrophe. Instead, Jews needed a sovereign political state of their own in which to organise their affairs.

¹ Martin Gilbert, *In Ishmael's House*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 119-121.

² Shindler, *What do Zionists Believe?*, 39



Courtroom scene from the Dreyfus trial

Jewish emigration to Palestine increased in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. Jews came to develop the land and reclaim the soil from malaria, not to exploit it by force as colonialists. As the historian Colin Shindler wrote, they did not come with 'armies' but with 'hoes and pitchforks to cultivate the soil'.¹ Moreover, far from stealing land or swindling the local Arab landowners, the Zionists bought their land, often from absentee landlords and at vastly inflated prices.² A great deal of this land was wasteland and sand dunes, much of which had been neglected by its former owners.³ Most early Zionists also recognised that there was a significant Arab population in the territory, giving the lie to the notion that Palestine was seen as a 'land without a people for a people without a land.'⁴

¹ *ibid.* 7.

² The Peel Commission report noted the "Arab alarm at the continued Jewish purchase of land" Palestine Royal Commission, *Report of the Palestine Royal Commission*, Cmd. 5479 (London: HMSO, 1937).

³ Israel's main city and commercial hub, Tel Aviv, was founded in 1909 on sand dunes.

⁴ Among the Zionist leaders who spoke in favour of Arab rights and civil equality for all Palestine's inhabitants was Theodore Herzl, Nahum Sokolow, Yitzhak Epstein, Chaim Arlosoroff and David Ben-Gurion.

Legal case for Zionism

In the twentieth century, the strengthening Jewish connection to Palestine was recognised by the League of Nations following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War. Jews were one of a number of national groups that staked their claim for recognition, alongside Kurds, Armenians and Arab nationalists.¹ After 1918, Palestine, which had formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire, became a Class A mandate with Britain as the mandatory power. At the San Remo conference in April 1920, the principal Allied powers from World War 1² established, via the San Remo Resolution, that Britain would be responsible for establishing in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people, but in a way that would not prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews elsewhere. This latter stipulation did not confer a right of national self-determination on Palestine's Arab community, no right of sovereignty as such, but did insist on respect for their civil rights. Such rights would receive recognition in Israel's 1948 Declaration of Independence. The ultimate objective of the resolution was the reconstitution of a Jewish national home. The San Remo Resolution was subsequently inserted into the preamble to the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine (1922).³ The British mandate explicitly recognised both 'the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine' and 'the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.' The future State of Israel would come to have a firm footing in international law.

Moral case for Zionism

Within western circles, the moral case for Zionism was deeply strengthened by the wave of Jew hatred that swept through the western world in the decades following the First World War. Tens of thousands of Jews were murdered during the Russian Civil War as the White armies, the Ukrainians under Petliora and various units within the Red Army carried out devastating pogroms in Jewish areas of

¹ Many countries in the Middle East were formed in the aftermath of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, among them Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

² Britain, France, Italy, and Japan—with the United States as an observer.

³ The mandate was subsequently ratified by the League of Nations and binding on its member states. It also received the endorsement of the U.S. Congress that same year.

Ukraine. In Nazi Germany, a once thriving and highly assimilated Jewish community of some 500,000 was increasingly subjected to legal restrictions, racial discrimination and state sponsored hatred, forcing nearly 60% of the population into exile. Italy promulgated the Manifesto of Race in 1938 which stripped Jews of citizenship and banned them from holding any government position. In Hungary, Prime Minister Teleki introduced the second anti-Jewish law in 1939, banning Jews from holding office, just as the Romanian government passed laws stripping many thousands of Jews of their citizenship. Yet just as Jewish refugees needed a safe haven, one western government after another shut its doors to them.¹ At the 1938 Evian Conference², the nations represented made public declarations of sympathy for their plight before explaining why their country would offer little or no help to resettle them.³ The Zionist leader Chaim Weizman well understood what this meant for the Continent's Jews. In his testimony to the Peel Commission, he declared that for his co-religionists, the world was 'divided into places where they cannot live and places where they cannot enter'.⁴

The moral imperative of creating a safe haven was strengthened by the Holocaust and the destruction of two thirds of European Jewry. But it was not just the appalling slaughter of six million Jews that necessitated the creation of a Jewish state. It was the fact that during the Second World War, no foreign Allied government *prioritised* the plight of Jewry or offered a guarantee to open its gates to those fleeing the Nazi genocide. The lesson for the Jewish world was simple: no longer could its people entrust their future to the whims and promises of foreign leaders. They needed power and sovereignty to survive in a hostile world.

¹ To take one example: The US Emergency Immigration Act of 1921 and the Johnson-Reed Immigration Reform Act of 1924 severely limited the number of immigrants (largely Eastern European Jews) who could enter the country by the imposition of ethnic quotas.

² In July 1938, following the call of President Roosevelt some three months earlier, representatives of 32 countries and several dozen organizations, arrived at to Evian-les-Bains in France in order to discuss a co-ordinated rescue plan for German Jewish refugees.

³ One noble exception was the Dominican Republic.

⁴ Barnet Litvinoff, *Weizmann: Last of the Patriarchs* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), 240.



The main gate to Auschwitz Birkenau

Today, Zionism comes in many shapes and forms. There are socialist Zionists, capitalist Zionists, liberal Zionists, cultural Zionists and nationalistic Zionists. Zionists can be secular and religious, western and messianic, hawk and dove.¹ It embraces those who have moved to Israel, as well as those in the diaspora. All forms of Zionism recognise the centrality of a homeland for the Jewish people, the need for a safe haven in adversity and the importance of a centre for a flourishing Jewish civilisation.

Yet today's Zionist Israel is also a Jewish *and* democratic state, with laws that guarantee political, religious and economic rights for all its communities. The biggest non-Jewish community is that of the Israeli Arabs who form approximately 21% of the current population. Recent reports indicate that some Arab communities in Israel face 'de facto discrimination in education, social services, personal security, and access to housing and related permits'.² They can often encounter prejudice too, especially from far right extremists who reject co-existence. Some communities, such as the Bedouin, also lag behind their co-nationals with one third living in communities not recognised by the Israeli state. Israel is a work in progress and still has work to do

¹ The terms hawk and dove refer to the respective camps that take opposing sides on whether Israel should cede territory for a future Palestinian state. Hawks have favoured territorial retention for strategic or ideological reasons whereas doves have been open to territorial compromise. Some Israeli politicians, such as Ariel Sharon, have changed positions, becoming affectionally known as hawk-doves.

² "Israel: Freedom in the World 2025 Country Report," Freedom House.

to ensure the full integration of its Arab community. Despite this, Israeli Arabs enjoy numerous freedoms that are often absent in neighbouring countries: they can vote and stand as candidates in the country's elections; they are represented in the country's Parliament (the Knesset); they have access to the judiciary; they enjoy unprecedented levels of religious freedom; they have rights as sexual minorities and they enjoy access to a relatively free media. Though they are not forced into the country's conscript army, many Israeli Arabs do serve, often with considerable distinction. In recent years, Israel has had Arab judges, politicians, including an acting president, lawyers and sports stars. Today, Arabs constitute approximately one-quarter of Israel's physicians, 27% of its nurses and dentists and 49% of Israel's pharmacists.¹ The flourishing of every sector of this multi-ethnic society should be part of the Zionist project.

Being a Zionist has never meant endorsing any particular Israeli government. After all, Israelis are famous for assessing, debating and criticising their own country's policies and the same is true for Jews in the diaspora. There are many areas in which such criticism manifests itself, ranging from: critiques of the settlement policy and the policy towards Palestinians in the West Bank; institutional discrimination against Israel's Arabs; the disproportionate influence of religious parties in the making of national policy and the notion that Israel's leaders have not made enough effort to reach an accommodation with the Palestinians. Such criticisms, whether or not valid, do not involve demonisation of the Jewish state or an attempt to deny its existence or legitimacy. Zionism is certainly compatible with a two state solution in which Israeli and Palestinian national rights are respected and mutual recognition the norm.² The point is that if one disagrees with the policies of an Israeli government, one can do so as a Zionist, and such disagreement does not make one an antizionist. India's right to exist as a sovereign nation is not under threat because of the dispute over Kashmir nor that of Spain because of its denial of Catalan sovereignty. The same should be true for Israel. Yet it alone faces the unique and quite outrageous challenge of having its right to exist constantly questioned by its enemies.

¹ Rosen, B., Miaari, S. Arab representation in Israeli healthcare professions: achievements, challenges and opportunities. *Isr J Health Policy Res* 14, 7 (2025).

² The Israeli peace camp, including groups like Peace Now that have long opposed Israel's continuing retention of the West Bank, are proud to call themselves Zionists.

The history of antizionism

Antizionism is a movement for demonising and delegitimising the Jewish right to national self-determination. It targets Israel, Israelis and the vast majority of Jews who refuse to renounce Zionism. It ignores or downplays the history of Jewish persecution and victimhood, exploiting it to further a destructive agenda in which Jews are, once again, rendered weak and defenceless in a world of unrelenting hostility.

In the last eighty years, antizionism has come from many quarters: secular Palestinian nationalism; jihadism; Marxist radicalism; far right fascism and the modern social justice movement. Its greatest promoters were the totalitarian regimes of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union and the propaganda these regimes pumped out during the twentieth century meant that antizionist ideas 'were created by state-sponsored disinformation machines'.¹ In all its iterations, antizionism has always produced real and lasting harm to Jewish communities, including: violence and loss of life; bloody conflicts; the upending of Jewish communities; boycotts and discrimination targeting Jewish figures and the erosion of legal norms in civilised societies. That is why antizionism should be considered as more than just a form of political theorising or policy disagreement. It is an ideology which targets Jews around the world for discrimination and ill-treatment and should therefore be recognised as an extremist movement.

Prewar Jewish opposition to Zionism:

Anti-Zionism is nearly as old as Zionism itself. In the early years of the movement, there were various forms of opposition from within the Jewish community. Strict Orthodox traditionalists rejected Zionism's emphasis on secular nationalism out of fear that it would replace the set of religious obligations enjoined on Jews. Moreover, they argued that it was forbidden for Jews to re-establish a religious homeland prior to the coming of the Messiah, believing that such an act was deeply heretical. Liberal Jews, such as Lord Montagu, feared that Zionism would undermine civic rights in the various countries where Jews resided. He also feared it would be exploited by antisemites wishing to expel Jewish populations, thus calling the movement 'a mischievous political creed, untenable by any patriotic citizens of the United

¹ Jake Wallis Simons, *Israelophobia: The Newest Version of the Oldest Hatred and What To Do About It*, (London: Constable, 2024), 131.

Kingdom'.¹ This can be termed 'assimilationist anti-Zionism'. A third element of rejection came from Bundist Jews. The General Jewish Labour Bund, formed in 1897, sought to unite all Russian Jews into a united socialist party founded on secular values. Bundists wanted equal national rights for Jews, promoted Yiddish and affirmed the importance of culture – but opposed the Zionist movement. This was because they focused on the notion of *doikayt* (hereness), meaning that Jews should advance their culture in the places where they lived, rather than emigrate to a faraway land.

All three movements were largely predicated on safeguarding Jewish rights and culture, not on harming the community. The ultra-orthodox Jews never denied their people's deep and lasting ties to the land of Israel. They simply believed that the deliverance of a people from exile required messianic intervention, not secular agency. Neither the liberal assimilationists nor the religious group sought to discriminate against Jews by lowering their status in society, depriving them of social spaces or hard won political rights, nor did they spread lies or conspiracy theories about Jews. They sought to protect them from violence, not expose them to it. Even the pre-Bolshevik Bundists were concerned with empowering Jewish culture within the territories where Jews lived.

Those differences explain why it remains fundamentally disingenuous of today's antizionists to draw upon these prewar Jewish traditions. The exception was those elements of the Bund that went on to join the *Yevseksiya* (the Jewish section of the Communist Party), from where they launched attacks on Jewish cultural and social organisations. Today, there remain a small percentage of Jews, wholly outside of the mainstream, who follow this Bolshevik Bundist tradition by rejecting Israel in its entirety, either for secular or religious reasons, and who ally themselves with antizionist movements.² Fundamentally, objections to Zionism ought to have become less relevant once the Jewish state had become, to quote scholar Adam Louis-Klein, 'a legal, historical, and civilizational fact'.³ Jewish self-determination had been achieved and to argue for an antizionist position meant adopting the view of secular Arab states that sought to destroy Israel at its birth.

¹ Robert Philpot, "How a curious love triangle spurred UK's cabinet to pass the Balfour Declaration," *Times of Israel*, February 9, 2019.

² One example is the Neturei Karta (Guardians of the City) who appear frequently on anti-Israel demonstrations.

³ Louis-Klein, "Defeating Antizionism."

Antizionism in the Arab world:

Before Israel was created in 1948, Jews had lived for over two millennia in countries across the Middle East. This includes Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Aden.¹ Jews were well integrated in their societies and many became accomplished in science, music, art, medicine and business. However, it would be wrong to argue that Jews lived completely freely and securely in Arab and Muslim majority countries or that Islam introduced an 'interfaith, interracial utopia' where people 'lived side by side in a golden age of unbroken harmony'.² It is largely true that Jews were not subjected to a ghetto like existence and had defined political status and significant rights, both features largely absent from much of the medieval Jewish experience in Christian Europe.³ History nonetheless records heinous crimes perpetrated by Muslim mobs against Jews, including the massacres at Granada (1066) and pogroms in Safed (1834) and Damascus (1848). Jews, like other non-Muslim subjects, were also subject to dhimmitude, a form of state sponsored legal subordination and second-class citizenship in exchange for communal security and religious autonomy.⁴ In the Islamic hierarchy of the Middle East, Jews were most definitely not the equal of Muslims, in legal or social terms. The dual heritage of security and subordination built upon another dual heritage within Islam: that of seeing the Jews both as the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*) and as a treacherous and deceitful people who had stubbornly rejected the Muslim faith.⁵

This provides some context for why extremist Arab and Muslim antizionists came to oppose Zionism. It was not primarily out of

¹ <https://justiceforjews.com/facts-figures>, accessed July 26, 2026.

² Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 1.

³ There were eras of Muslim rule in which Jewish communities fared relatively well, especially the so-called Golden Age in Medieval Spain (*al-Andalus*) and lengthy periods of the Ottoman Empire.

⁴ Jews were prevented from owning arms and building synagogues and their houses could not be taller in elevation than those of Muslims. They also had to wear special signs on their clothing. Most importantly, dhimmis had to pay a special tax called the *jizya*, which symbolised their subordinate relationship to Muslims.

⁵ For a further discussion of the relations between Islam and the Jews, see Bernard Lewis, *Semites & Anti-Semites* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997).

principle for defending a sovereign Arab population in Palestine, a population whose allegiances and identity at this time remain a matter of historical controversy. It was because these extremists believed that the attainment of Jewish statehood was a deeply heretical change to the 'divinely ordained' pre-existing order, enabling a people under Muslim rule 'to break free of their longstanding subordinate status – an outcome which they sought to prevent'.¹ In other words, Zionism was the ultimate reversal of a theologically mandated status quo which determined that Jews would never attain sovereignty in the Muslim world. Moreover, there was a view, widely held among religious radicals, that once a piece of land had come under Muslim control, as was the case with Palestine under Ottoman rule, 'it was impermissible to relinquish that land to non-Muslims'.² Steven Beller is surely wrong then when he writes that the 'adoption of antisemitic ideas by Arabs and Muslims was mainly a response to the Zionist settlement project in Palestine'.³

From the 1920s onwards, Muslim radicals began campaigns of incitement that led to frequent attacks on the Middle East's Jewish communities, principally on the burgeoning Jewish community in British Mandate Palestine. Foremost among the radicals was the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin Al-Husseini, head of the Arab Higher Committee and the key figure in interwar Palestinian Arab politics. He seethed with hatred for international Jewry, launching endless diatribes in which he accused Jews of undermining the Muslim prophet, of being deceitful and treacherous, of corrupting the morals of Palestinian Arab society and of seeking to undermine Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. Much like today's Palestinian Authority, the Mufti used his extensive influence (newspapers, pamphlets, school system) to fulminate against alleged Jewish wrongdoing in the most venomous tones. In one diary entry he wrote: 'How can the Jews be respected for their wealth at a time when they spread wickedness and misery throughout the world?'⁴ He also distributed copies of the *Protocols of*

¹ Allington, *Islamist Antisemitism*, 6

² David Harris, "Too many Palestinian would rather be permanent victims than have their own state," *The Telegraph*, August 18, 2026.

³ Steven Beller, *Antisemitism: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 119.

⁴ Ephraim Karsh, *Palestine Betrayed*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 19

the Elders of Zion to his followers.¹ Incitement led to violence against Palestine's Jewish community throughout the 1920s and 1930s, most notably during the Arab revolt (1936-9). During that campaign of terror and intimidation, Jewish shops, farms and houses were attacked and destroyed and within six months, some 80 Jews had been killed and much property pillaged.²

For much of the interwar period, the Mufti was an ideological ally of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood, an organisation founded by Hassan al Banna in 1928, rejected western political and social models, called for *jihad* against the British authorities in Egypt and demanded the creation of a global caliphate ruled by Sharia law.³ Like the Mufti, the Brotherhood vehemently opposed a Jewish state and pushed for a Nazi style anti-Jewish boycott campaign against the Jews of Palestine.⁴ At the same time, from the 1930s, al Banna and many of the first members of the Brotherhood offered their services to Germany's Abwehr⁵, the result not just of opposition to British colonial rule but a genuine devotion to Hitler and the Nazi regime.⁶ None of this was a coincidence. The revolutionary revivalism of al-Banna, with its dreams of restoring Islam to its days of glory, paralleled the 'contemporaneous rise of the European extreme right, with its dreams of restored transnational might after recent wartime humiliations on the basis of a mythic golden age of the distant past'.⁷

In the same period, the Mufti also demonstrated his devotion to the Nazi cause. On 28 November 1941, he enjoyed an audience with Hitler in Berlin in which the two recognised their common enemy, the Jews, together with the empires allegedly under their control: Great Britain and Soviet Russia. In the meeting, Hitler promised that he would be introducing a final solution for Europe's Jews and, following this,

¹ The notorious forgery purporting to reveal an insidious Jewish conspiracy to dominate the globe.

² Benny Morris, *1948*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 16.

³ Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, The Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 77.

⁴ Matthias Kuntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11*, (Telos Press, 2013), 21.

⁵ Germany's military intelligence service.

⁶ Paul Gross, "Hitler's Islamist disciples," *The Times of Israel*, May 5, 2024.

⁷ Allington, *Islamist Antisemitism*, 36.

resolved that Germany would ensure 'the destruction of the Jewish element residing in the Arab sphere'.¹

For the next four years, the Mufti led the Arab Bureau of Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry, broadcasting Nazi ideology to the Muslim world. By January 1942, al-Husseini was recruiting Muslims to serve in SS killing units, especially the Handschar Division, and was in charge of supervising Axis propaganda to audiences in the Middle East.² He learned of the Holocaust from Himmler in 1943, approving of this monstrous crime and hoping that it would lead to the death of all Jews.³ To quote historian Jeffrey Herf, the Mufti became 'the key figure in an ideological and political fusion between Nazism and Islamism'.⁴ Despite the Mufti's genocidal attitude towards Jewry, and his passionate support for Nazi extermination, the charge of genocide was projected back onto the Jews. During the Nazis' shortwave radio broadcasts in Arabic, they developed the theme that 'Jews wanted to take over the Arab countries and eventually the whole world' and 'that Germany was leading the resistance to them'.⁵ A typical example of the lurid allegations made about Jews came from a Nazi Arab radio broadcast in July 1942. In a speech titled *Kill the Jews Before they Kill you*, the presenter issued his chilling exhortation:

Arabs of Syria, Iraq and Palestine, what are you fighting for? The Jews are planning to violate your women, to kill your children and to destroy you...Your sole hope of salvation lies in annihilating the Jews before they annihilate you.⁶

Arab antizionist leaders also chose to invert the victim and aggressor. Typical was a letter from Saudi King Abdul Aziz bin Rahman Al Saud in 1943 which rejected the idea of Jewish migration to Palestine. In his letter he wrote: 'We demand that the Arabs not be exterminated for the

¹ Jeffrey Herf, "Haj Amin Al-Husseini, the Nazis and the Holocaust: The Origins, Nature and Aftereffects of Collaboration." *Jewish Political Studies Review* 26, no. 3/4 (2014): 13–37 (18)

² Joseph B. Schechtman, *The Mufti and the Fuehrer*, (New York, Thomas Yoseloff, 1965), 127.

³ Simons, *Israelophobia*, 140-1.

⁴ Jeffrey Herf, "Nazi Antisemitism & Islamist Hate," *Tablet Magazine*, July 6, 2022.

⁵ Jeffrey Herf, "Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World," *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2010, Volume 17: Number 3.

⁶ Simons, *Israelophobia*, 145-6.

sake of the Jews.’¹ This would not be the last time that Jews, the victims of genocide, would be accused of perpetrating the same crime against their opponents. The Nazis and their Arab allies created the template for others to follow.

During and just after the Second World War, Arab antizionist groups instigated lethal attacks against Jewish communities in the Middle East. They included: the 1941 Farhud in Baghdad, in which thousands of local Muslims attacked their Jewish neighbours, ‘murdering men and women, children and aged people, raping women and girls and plundering property’;² the anti-Jewish riots in Egypt (November 1945), partly organised by the Muslim Brotherhood, in which five Egyptian Jews were killed and hundreds injured³; the pogrom in British occupied Tripolitania in which at least 129 Jews were massacred and hundreds more injured (November 1945); the anti-Jewish riots in Aden (December 1947) in which 87 Jews were killed⁴; anti-Jewish riots in Aleppo (December 1947) in which 75 Jews were murdered by a rampaging mob and all eighteen synagogues destroyed⁵; anti-Jewish massacres in the Moroccan towns of Oujda and Djerada (June 1948) in which 44 Jews were butchered⁶ and the Menarsha synagogue attack in the Jewish Quarter of Damascus (August 1949) that claimed 12 innocent Jewish lives. As Sir Martin Gilbert writes, in the months leading up to Jewish statehood, ‘nowhere in the Muslim world was safe for Jews’.⁷

The worst consequence of Arab antizionism for the region’s Jews was yet to come. On the eve of the UN partition vote on Palestine in November 1947, the first major postwar proposal for a two state solution in Palestine, there were approximately 1,000,000 Jews living

¹ Norman J Goda, “The Genocide Libel: How the World Has Charged Israel with Genocide,” *Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism*, February 2025, 14.

² Hayyim J. Cohen, “The Anti-Jewish ‘Farhūd’ in Baghdad, 1941,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1966, pp. 2–17.

³ Gudrun Kramer, *The Jews in Modern Egypt, 1914-1952*, (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1989), 162.

⁴ Dani Goldsmith and Sarah Ansbacher, “Murder, looting, burning: Remembering the Aden riots of 1947,” *Times of Israel*, December 6, 2017.

⁵ Sir Martin Gilbert, *In Ishmael’s House*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 211-2.

⁶ *ibid.* 223

⁷ *ibid.* 214

in the Arab world. On the eve of the vote, Egyptian delegate to the UN, Heykal Pasha, declared:

The United Nations ... should not lose sight of the fact that the proposed solution might endanger a million Jews living in the Moslem countries.¹

This ominous threat was soon to be acted upon. Over the next two decades, Arab governments engaged in state sponsored antizionism with horrific consequences for Jewish populations. In Iraq, laws were introduced in 1950 and 1951 that deprived Jews of their Iraqi nationality and their property.² In Syria, the government seized control of Jewish property on the basis of emergency legislation and gave it to Arab refugees from the Arab-Israeli war. Palestinians were settled in Damascus's Jewish ghetto and the Alliance Israélite Universelle School became a school for Palestinian children.³ After 1956, the Egyptian Nationality Law was amended to prohibit 'Zionists' from holding Egyptian nationality, while Army Order No. 4 confiscated property of 'Zionist' individuals and associations subject to imprisonment or supervision.⁴ Two years later, Egypt issued a ministerial decree which stipulated that all Jews between the ages of ten and sixty-five leaving Egypt would be unable to re-enter the country. In Algeria, the Nationality Code of 1963 discriminated against Jews by granting Algerian nationality only to those people whose fathers and paternal grandfathers had Muslim personal status in the country.⁵ Elsewhere, the riots and pogroms already mentioned hastened the departure of Jews throughout the Middle East.⁶ The vast majority of the region's one million Jews left during this period, with approximately two thirds of them arriving in Israel. This meant that not only were they uprooted but a vital part of the region's civilisation, a mosaic of language, culture and tradition, permanently vanished.

¹Alan Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 94–95.

² Zainab Saleh, "The Denationalization of Iraqi Jews: The Legal and Rhetorical Production of Otherness," *Palestine/Israel Review* (2024) 1 (2): 392–420.

³ Ya'akov Meron, "Why Jews Fled the Arab Countries," *Middle East Forum*, Fall 1995, Volume 2: Number 4.

⁴ Michael M Laskier, "Egyptian Jewry under the Nasser Regime, 1956-70." *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1995, pp. 573–619.

⁵ "Algerian Parliament Adopts New Nationality Law Detrimental to Jews," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, March 14, 1963.

⁶ Meron, *Why Jews Fled the Arab Countries*.

Jewish refugees also lost all their individual and communal property in the process, with expropriated assets estimated at \$263 billion.¹

Antizionism, the refusal to recognise the legitimacy of Jewish statehood, would have deleterious consequences for Palestinian Arabs too. The first of the partition plans or two state solutions came from the British Peel commission in 1937, one in which Palestine would have been divided into a Jewish state (on up to 20% of the land) and an Arab state with the remainder, minus a corpus separatum.² Israel's pre-state community accepted partition in principle but voted for improved borders. The Palestinian leadership rejected it firmly. The UN Partition Plan of November 1947 would have created a Jewish and Arab state in Palestine, again with Jerusalem as a corpus separatum, but while most Zionists accepted with jubilation, the Palestinian leadership and much of the Arab world offered a firm no. The Arab rejection was hardly surprising, given that the man who negotiated on behalf of the Palestinians was none other than Haj Amin Al-Husseini, the war criminal who was able to resume his position as head of the Arab Higher Executive after the war. The Mufti had already made clear that his sole aim was to annihilate the Jews of Palestine and create a purely Arab state.³ This led to a destructive civil war in the country, leading to the displacement of approximately 600,000-700,000 Palestinians in an event that is now referred to as *al-Nakba* (the catastrophe). Palestinians ended up in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip (occupied until 1967 by Egypt) and the West Bank (occupied until 1967 by Jordan).

While it is often claimed that Palestine's Arabs were deliberately expelled by Israeli troops between 1947 and 1949, the evidence shows that the displacement resulted from several factors: the departure of Palestinian civilians from a war zone, aided by the collapse of civil society and the exodus of its leadership; flight caused by lurid (and largely false) claims of rape and a number of Israeli military expulsions during the war.⁴ The key point is that had Jewish

¹ Michael Starr, "Thousands of Middle East Jewish refugees lost est. \$263 billion in assets, researchers show UNHRC," *The Jerusalem Post*, September 8, 2025.

² The corpus separatum (separated body) referred to Jerusalem as a city that would be under international control due to its importance to multiple faiths.

³ Simons, *Israelophobia*, 152.

⁴ Benny Morris offers an exhaustive, balanced and highly authoritative account of the 1948 war in his book *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

sovereignty been recognised in either 1937 or 1947, a Palestinian state would have been created alongside Israel, sparing the Arab population from decades of needless hardship and statelessness. Instead, the Palestinian leadership, along with much of the Arab world, launched a war against Israel, which historian Benny Morris has characterised as both 'a jihad...as well as a territorial and political war'.¹ The antizionist ideology of Palestinian leaders would continue into the twenty first century, with Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas rejecting formulas for two states in 2000, 2001, 2008 and 2013-4.

The war of 1948 produced not one but two refugee crises. Jewish refugees from the Arab world were resettled by the Israeli state but for Palestinians, it was a different matter. In effect, a population exchange occurred, in some ways, mirrored by those that occurred during other contemporary civil wars, such as the one between India and Pakistan following the partition of 1947. The Arab governments of Egypt, Syria and Lebanon refused to concede Israel's existence, the basic consequence of their public policy commitment to antizionism. As a result, many of the Palestinians were kept in refugee camps, where they had few legal or employment rights and were denied citizenship. This was a deliberate policy by Arab leaders who were intent on using the refugees as pawns to advance their war against the Jewish state. Such behaviour contradicted the hopes expressed by then UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie. In 1950, he said that the refugees ought to live 'an independent life in the countries which have given them shelter' and where they would be 'integrated in the economic system of the countries of asylum'.²

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was set up to administer to the refugees' medical and educational needs, but morphed into a behemoth which simply perpetuated the Palestinians' refugee status. It did this in two ways. In 1982, it declared that all descendants of Palestine refugee males, including legally adopted children, regardless of whether they had been granted citizenship elsewhere, were classed

¹ Benny Morris: "The 1948 War Was an Islamic Holy War," *Middle East Forum*, Summer 2010, Volume 17: Number 3.

² Adi Schwartz and Einat Wilf, *The War of Return: How Western Indulgence of the Palestinian Dream has Obstructed the Path to Peace*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 2020), 80.

as Palestinian refugees, at odds with international legal practice.¹ In addition, it demanded an unrealistic right of return, the idea that all those classified as Palestinian refugees, which today numbers some six million people, had the right under international law to return to their original homes in Israel.² The belief in an inalienable right of return is symbolised by the giant key (below) placed outside the Aida refugee camp near Bethlehem, a permanent reminder that Palestinians cannot move forward unless they first move into an imagined past. All this did was ensure the continuation of a conflict, exacerbate Palestinian rejection of Israel and feed a toxic narrative that made future wars more likely. Both Israelis and Palestinians deserved so much better than the outcomes that were delivered to them by twentieth century antizionism.



The key symbolising return, outside the Aida refugee camp.

The Soviet antizionist campaign:

What gave rocket fuel to this hateful ideology in the West was the state sponsored campaign of antizionism promulgated by the Soviet Union from 1967 onwards. Soviet antizionism offered an example of what the

¹ Article I (c) (3) of the 1951 U.N. Convention states explicitly that a person is no longer a refugee if he or she has acquired a new nationality and enjoys the protection of the country of his new nationality.

² The legal basis of this claim is often taken to be UN resolution 194. Yet this non-binding GA resolution called for negotiations between countries to reach a final settlement between them (paragraph 6) while another clause (paragraph 10) calls for regional governments to facilitate the economic development of the former Mandate territory. It was designed to call for peace between countries rather than establish an unconditional and inalienable right of return.

Anti-Defamation League has called 'impregnational propaganda', namely a form of propaganda that is designed to 'take on a momentum of its own independent of the propaganda apparatus that launches it'.¹ If one thing explains why the left, which used to have a natural sympathy for the Zionist cause², turned so sharply against Israel, it is the Soviet demonisation campaign during the Cold War.

Soviet opposition to Zionism did not start in 1967 but in the 1920s. Lenin, an opponent of traditional antisemitism, saw Zionism as a form of bourgeois nationalism that would only exacerbate class divisions among Jews. He argued that Jews had to see themselves as part of the universal proletariat or risk being framed as an enemy of the working class. This explains the formation of the *Yevseksiya*, the official Jewish section of the Communist party, which helped to dismantle Jewish communal institutions in the Soviet Union.³ As zealous revolutionaries became determined to imprint Bolshevik ideology on their 'benighted' co-religionists, the *Yevseksiya* believed it was their task to attack and destroy traditional Judaism, Hebrew, and Zionism, which were regarded as manifestations of 'bourgeois' Jewish culture.⁴ Antisemitism would emerge with venom in the latter years of Stalin's rule, culminating in the infamous Doctors' Plot of 1951-3,⁵ as well as the purges that were carried out in satellite states such as Czechoslovakia.

But it was Israel's defeat of Soviet armed and backed Arab states in the 1967 Six Day War that spurred Moscow to begin an international campaign to demonise Zionism.⁶ The Soviet propaganda campaign helped to propel certain antizionist calumnies into the political mainstream, both within the West and within the institutions of the post-colonial Third World. Central to the Soviet campaign was that Zionism was a tool of western imperialism and capitalism whose

¹ "Contemporary Anti-Zionism's Connections to Soviet Propaganda," *Anti-Defamation League*, February 22, 2023.

² To take one example, Aneurin Bevan, the founder of Britain's NHS, was an ardent Zionist. See: Colin Shindler, "The NHS's founder was an ardent Zionist," *The Jewish Chronicle*, April 11, 2011.

³ Dara Horn, "The Cool Kids," *Tablet Magazine*, September 6, 2019.

⁴ Colin Shindler, "Like Corbyn, Lenin had his own team of anti-Zionist Jews," *The Jewish Chronicle*, April 4, 2019.

⁵ Walter Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 174-5.

⁶ Joshua Muravchik, *Making David into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel*, (New York: Encounter Books, 2014), 17.

tentacles extended into world politics, finance, law, religion and culture. Zionists were accused of manipulating global finance, controlling the western media and subverting western governments for their own nefarious purposes. The Soviets posited that the Zionists' ultimate aim was some form of world domination, an idea that borrowed from the Nazi playbook and whose ideas presented the *Protocols* as if it were a Marxist text for understanding the machinations of global Jewry.

Soviet writers also claimed that Zionism was a form of Jewish supremacism that privileged Jews over native Arabs. A key teaching was that this ugly supremacism stemmed from the Jews' own faith, namely that 'the teachings of Judaism inspired inhuman deeds' and 'provided the chauvinistic idea of the Jews as the chosen people'.¹ Thus, in his book *Judaism and Zionism* (1968), Trofim Kichko denounced the 'chauvinistic idea of the God-chosenness of the Jewish people' and their 'propaganda of messianism'.²

The charge of Israel being an 'apartheid' state followed from the charge of chosenness. During this campaign, Soviet official publications repeatedly compared Israel with apartheid South Africa while Israel was cast as a 'colonial settler state' that lacked any form of legitimacy in the Arab world. By this conceit, the entire Arab-Israeli conflict could be reconceptualised as the struggle of an 'indigenous' oppressed people against an 'expansionist aggressor'.³ Indeed, Arafat chose the Vietnam war as his template for the PLO's ideological rebranding in the late 1960s, with his terrorists being seen as a Middle Eastern Vietcong. In the seven point programme adopted by Fatah's Central Committee in 1969, the Palestinian struggle is explicitly linked to 'that of the Vietnamese people and other peoples of Asia'.⁴ He could thus wallow in the moral immunity conferred by postcolonial western guilt by posing as a victim of imperial injustice.

The Nazi comparisons were particularly insidious. Soviet cartoons depicted Israeli soldiers wearing swastikas and dreaming of Hitler while the German jackboot was inextricably linked to Israeli military actions. Key words from the Nazi era, such as *Blitzkrieg* and *Herrenvolk*, were 'mobilized on a massive scale' for the various

¹ Walter Lacquer, *The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism*, (Oxford University Press, 2008), 178.

² Robert Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, (New York: Random House, 2010), 141.

³ Shlomo Pereira, "A long-lasting poisonous legacy: On the Soviet origins of modern anti-Zionism," *Times of Israel*. November 1, 2025.

⁴ Muravchik, *Making David Into Goliath*, 29.

audiences that the regime was trying to attract, including a domestic one.¹ This was accompanied by the erasure of Jews from Holocaust memory. The Babi Yar massacre, a mass shooting in 1941 of over 33,000 Jews by Nazi Germany, was reconceived as an attack on all Soviet citizens rather than as a barbaric attack on a national minority.² Jews were therefore being viewed as the new Nazis while the Palestinians were the victims of a second Holocaust, an outrageous affront to Jewish collective memory.

Of course, the Soviets were keen to distance this campaign from Tsarist era antisemitism, claiming that the 'good Jews' were those who rejected Zionism and religious parochialism in favour of Marxist ideology. But the unmistakable connection between the two hatreds was clear to see. The high point of this insidious and racist campaign was a Soviet backed 1975 UN General Assembly Resolution 3379, which condemned Zionism as 'a form of racism and racial discrimination'.³

Moscow pushed this extreme antizionist agenda on to Third World revolutionaries, radical left wing activists, NGOs and charities, anti-war rallies, nuclear disarmament congresses and solidarity forums. Across the world, antizionist activists and speakers, ranging from Angela Davis and Stokely Carmichael to Lula da Silva and Mahmoud Abbas, grew up to the sounds of this Soviet ideological ecosystem.⁴ Britain's far left luminaries were also coming of age at a time when Soviet antizionist indoctrination was at its height and some well-known figures in this regard include Ken Livingstone, George Galloway, Seumas Milne and Jeremy Corbyn. These people have spearheaded antizionism in their own time, using many of the tropes already discussed.

Today's far left ideologues seek to recruit Jews to their cause, anxious to deflect charges of antisemitism. Indeed, as Adam Louis-Klein observes, 'Antizionism depends on figures within the Jewish community who can naturalize its libels, giving the appearance of internal dissent while laundering an external ideology.'⁵ But this tokenising tactic is hardly original. The Soviets broke the mold by

¹ Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, 139.

² Naya Lekht, "The Shadow of Babi Yar: How the Soviets Taught the West to Erase the Jews," *Jewish Journal*, July 31, 2025.

³ Neuer, B. (2025). *Resolution 3379: "Zionism is Racism," Fifty Years Later*. Institute for National Security Studies. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep73376>

⁴ Izabella Tabarovsky, "Zombie Anti-Zionism," *Tablet Magazine*, July 31, 2024.

⁵ Louis-Klein, "Defeating Antizionism."

forming the Jewish dominated Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public in 1983.¹ Today, figures like Naomi Klein to Norman Finkelstein continue the malodorous practice of koshering an ideology which is deeply harmful to Jews.

As in the Arab world, the Soviet campaign against Zionism had negative effects for Jewish communities in both the USSR and its satellite states. Jews who sought to leave the Soviet Union were frequently denied exit visas, becoming known as refuseniks, and many were then fired from their jobs and harassed by the KGB. Synagogues and Jewish cultural centres were closed as part of a militant anti-religious drive, and those that functioned were subject to coercion.



Natan Sharansky, a famous Jewish refusenik.

In Poland, the antizionist campaign of 1968 saw a repressive crackdown by the authorities on the entire Jewish community. It was spearheaded by Władysław Gomułka, the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party, who declared that many Polish Jews constituted a 'fifth column' because of their Zionist attachment. Jews were divided into 'loyal Poles' and 'cosmopolitans' with the latter made the scapegoats for the regime's problems. Jews were removed from positions in public service, including in academia, and thousands were expelled from the Communist party. Nearly half of the Jewish population of 30,000 was forced to leave and they could only do so by renouncing their Polish citizenship.² This disgraceful campaign demonstrated the endurance of 'the myth of the Zionist/Jew as an

¹ Serge Schmemmann, "8 Soviet Jews seek to Combat Zionism," *The New York Times*, April 2, 1983.

² Simon Gansinger, "Communists Against Jews: the Anti-Zionist Campaign in Poland in 1968," *Fathom*, Autumn/2016.

enemy of Poland, a threat to the party, and polluter of the national culture'.¹

As Isabella Tabarovsky has written, what is interesting about this Soviet propaganda is 'how precisely it mirrors the language emanating from the anti-Israel left since Oct. 7' and how the narrative of today's antizionists, far from representing spontaneous outrage at Israeli wrongdoing (real or imagined), is instead a 'zombielike repetition of the state-sponsored propaganda of a dead empire'.² Antizionist tropes today are 'carbon copies' of the ideas promoted by the KGB in the Cold War era.³

Antizionism in the Islamic Republic of Iran:

Most Middle Eastern antizionism thus far had come from a hotbed of Sunni radicals. But from 1979, it emerged with a distinctly Shia flavour after Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution toppled the Shah and created the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is no exaggeration to say that opposition to Zionism became foundational to the ideology of the Republic, with much of this hostility deriving from Khomeini's theological worldview. Khomeini linked Zionism and the purported scheming of Jews with the onset of secularisation and modernisation, processes that he blamed for the decline of the Islamic world in the twentieth century. He conceived of Zionism as a spearhead of a western world that was intent on undermining Islam, arguing that Israel was a prime barrier to the fulfilment of spiritual needs among Muslims.⁴ For Khomeini, this hostility reflected the perennial essence of Jews as a 'perfidious' and 'treacherous' people. In his work *Islamic Government* (1970), Khomeini described the Jews as 'enemies of Islam' whose allotted role in history was to harm and weaken Islam, undermine its expansion and lie to the world about the Qur'an. Thus, he said of the Jews that 'it was they who first established anti-Islamic propaganda and engaged in various stratagems, and as you can see, this activity continues down to the present'.⁵ In the book, he offered a conspiracy-driven narrative right out of the *Protocols* and Nazi propaganda:

¹ Robert Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, 137.

² Izabella Tabarovsky, "Zombie Anti-Zionism."

³ Steven Poole, "The perversion of 'Zionism,'" *The Telegraph*, August 2, 2026.

⁴ Colonel Udi Evental, "Why the Islamic Regime in Tehran calls for the Destruction of Israel?" *Institute for Policy and Strategy*, February 10-17, 2019.

⁵ Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islamic Government*. Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyah, English. Translated by Joint Publications Research Service. Manor Books, 27-8.

"[T]he Jews and their foreign backers are opposed to the very foundations of Islam and wish to establish Jewish domination throughout the world. Since they are a cunning and resourceful group of people, I fear that – God Forbid – they may one day achieve their goal.¹

Such classical antisemitism has also manifested in quite blatant Holocaust denial. Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, former president of Iran and alleged moderate, claimed on an Al-Quds Day rally in 1998 that only 200,000 Jews were murdered in the Holocaust. Worse would come in 2007 when President Ahmadinejad stated that the Holocaust was a 'myth' and that western governments were 'in the grips of the claws of Zionism'.²



In recent years, Iran has become a magnet for Holocaust deniers with figures such as Michele Renouf and Robert Faurisson attending its Holocaust Denial Conference.³

¹ Matthias Küntzel, "Broadcasting as a weapon: The Persian-language Nazi propaganda and its consequences," June 4, 2023.

² Dave Rich, "Holocaust Denial as an Anti-Zionist and Anti-Imperialist Tool for the European Far Left," *Jerusalem Centre for Security and Foreign Affairs*, January 8, 2008.

³ Robert Tait, "Holocaust deniers gather in Iran for 'scientific' conference," *The Guardian*, December 12, 2006.

With the ideological roots of this hatred so firmly established, it has been routine for Iranian leaders to call for the annihilation of Israel and to demonise the Jewish state in the eyes of its people, often using zoomorphic imagery. Ali Khamenei has described Israel as a 'cancerous tumour' that must be removed from the world and his refrain 'Death to Israel' is repeated endlessly.¹ Former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has long been a fan of these animalistic analogies, calling Israel a 'filthy bacteria' which was 'lashing out at the nations in the region like a wild beast'.²

The point of this incendiary language is to persuade Iranians that it is a national imperative to destroy the Jewish state. In 2020, a poster on the supreme leader's website referenced the words 'final solution' in calling for Israel's destruction, a clear reference to the genocide of six million Jews during World War II.³ Former President Akbar Rafsanjani once extolled the advantages of an Islamic nuclear attack on Israel. He said: 'Application of an atomic bomb would not leave anything in Israel but the same thing would just produce damages in the Muslim world.'⁴ It is little wonder that the vast majority of Iranian Jews fled the Islamic Republic after 1979, fearing the consequences of the new theocratic dictatorship. Antisemitism and hatred of Israel form a powerful glue that has connected the seemingly irreconcilable denominational strains in Islam: Shia and Sunni.

As part of its 'ring of fire' strategy to surround Israel with lethal enemies committed to the Jewish state's destruction, Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars annually to terrorist proxies such as Hamas and Hezbollah. It is often wrongly assumed that Hezbollah's aim is to resist Israeli encroachment on Lebanese territory and that it is 'progressive'. Judith Butler has said of both Hezbollah and Hamas that they are 'social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left.'⁵ Yet Hezbollah's aim is not just to 'liberate' Palestine but also to destroy world Jewry and the State of Israel. Their former leader, Hassan Nasrallah, stated this brazenly

¹ Amir Vahdat and Jon Gambrell, "Iran leader says Israel a 'cancerous tumour' to be destroyed," *AP News*, May 22, 2020.

² Michael Lando, "Ahmadinejad: Israel filthy bacteria," *The Jerusalem Post*, February 20, 2008.

³ Benjamin Weinthal, "Iran's supreme leader releases anti-Israel 'final solution' poster," *The Jerusalem Post*, May 20, 2020.

⁴ "How MAD can they be," *The Economist*, February 8, 2007.

⁵ Alan Johnson, "'Little Short of Lunatics': Post-Trotsky Trotskyism and the Radical Left's Degenerate Response to 7 October," *Fathom*, June 2024.

enough when he said of Jews that 'if they all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.'¹ Nasrallah was quoted as saying:

If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice, I do not say the Israeli.²



Flag of Hezbollah

Hamas, the acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (Islamic Resistance Movement), was established in 1987 and is the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Its suicide bombing campaign in the 1990s and early 2000s cemented its position as the most popular of all Palestinian Islamist groups. As with the Islamic Republic, antisemitism, and specifically antisemitic antizionism, is foundational to its worldview. Its founding charter (1988) is unyielding in its desire to obliterate the Jewish state and borrows from the Nazis a visceral hatred of Jews. In article 6, Hamas 'strives to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine'. Palestine is regarded, as per article 11, as a part of the *dar al Islam*, a *waqf* (charitable endowment) which has been 'consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgement Day' and therefore a land that can never remain under permanent non-Muslim rule. Borrowing from the Nazi annihilationist vernacular, Hamas promises that 'Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will

¹ Kenneth S Stern, "Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism, and the Fallacy of Bright Lines," *The Institute for National Security Studies*, June 14, 2021.

² Benjamin Weinthal, "Analysis: Hezbollah's Lethal Anti-Semitism," *Foundation for the Defence of Democracies*, November 13, 2012.

obliterate it.’ The very presence of Jews on the land of Palestine is seen as a form of contagion requiring elimination. It also quotes from a hadith which states that: ‘[t]he Day of Judgement will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews.’ Not surprisingly, article 13 of the Hamas charter denounces ‘the so- called peaceful solutions’ to the Palestinian problem’. Article 22 states that with their money, the Jews ‘took control of the world media, news agencies, the press, publishing houses, broadcasting stations, and others’.¹ This is the conspiratorial language of the *Protocols*, which it quotes approvingly, regurgitated for the Muslim masses. It is perverse to see Hamas as a ‘progressive’ movement when it is really an Islamist death cult with a genocidal and Judeophobic ideology.

The October 7 attacks, which precipitated a series of brutal and destructive wars in Gaza and Lebanon, were primarily carried out by Hamas, but they also bore the imprint of Iran. Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps was funding Hamas to the tune of \$350 million a year by 2023 and in the week leading up to the October 7 attacks, about 500 Hamas terrorists ‘received specialized combat training’ in Iran, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The same report stated that IRGC representatives and minister Abdollahian had meetings with the terror group in order to ‘set up’ the operation and give it the green light only five days before the attack.² As Matthew Levitt has said:

Hamas would not have been able to plan and conduct such an operation without years of Iranian training, Iranian weapons, and hundreds of millions of dollars in Iranian funding.³

Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS):

Twenty first century antizionism has centred on the post 9/11 BDS movement and the rise of identity politics. In 2001, thousands gathered at the UN’s Durban ‘World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance’. This purportedly

¹All quotes from: Hamas Covenant 1988, The Avalon Project, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp, accessed July 5, 2026.

² Summer Said, Benoit Faucon and Stephen Kalin, “Iran Helped Plot Attack on Israel Over Several Weeks,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 8, 2023.

³ Matthew Levitt, “The Hamas-Iran Relationship,” *The Washington Institute*, November 2023.

anti-racist gathering turned into a carnival of prejudice directed against Zionists and Jews. Jewish delegates at Durban were 'hounded, harassed, intimidated, threatened, and isolated'. They saw copies of the *Protocols* of the Elders of Zion being distributed, as well as posters and T-shirts emblazoned with the words "What if Hitler had won?" The answer: "Israel would not exist." Irwin Cotler, former Canadian Minister of Justice, described the gathering as 'a festival of hate'.¹ The organisers at Durban put forward an action plan to promote the 'complete isolation of Israel as an apartheid state'. This followed the decision to brand Israel a 'racist apartheid state' guilty of 'war crimes, acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing'.²



A BDS march in Toronto, Canada, October 2023

Durban was the genesis of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, which was founded in 2005 in Ramallah.³ BDS advocates say that they are upholding the simple principle that 'Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity'. They call for boycotts that involve withdrawing support from Israel and from

¹ David Harris, "How the UN's 2001 'anti-racism' conference in Durban helped shape today's hatred of Israel," *The Jewish Chronicle*, August 31, 2026.

² "Israel branded 'racist' by rights forum," *CNN*, September 2, 2001

³ It has its roots in the Arab boycott that was implemented after 1948, one which not only boycotted Israeli goods but also boycotted any company that was doing business with Israel.

'complicit' Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions across the world. They call for divestment campaigns, urging banks, local councils, churches, pension funds and universities to withdraw investments from the State of Israel. They demand that the international community engages in sanctions against Israel, ends military and trade agreements and suspends Israel's membership in international forums, such as UN bodies and also FIFA.¹

BDS leaders claim that Zionism was founded in the racist ideology of late 19th century European colonialism. This means that they view Israel as a regime of settler colonialism, apartheid and occupation, and argue that it has adopted laws and policies designed especially to facilitate the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. In short, they dismiss the claim for Jewish national self-determination in their ancestral land.

The founders of the BDS movement have made it clear that their ultimate aim remains the destruction of Israel. Omar Barghouti, when asked if there can be a Jewish state, has bluntly responded: 'Not in Palestine'.² Ahmed Moor, another activist, says that BDS 'does mean the end of the Jewish state'.³ The veteran anti-apartheid campaigner Ronnie Kasrils said: 'BDS represents three words that will help bring about the defeat of Zionist Israel and victory for Palestine'.⁴ This eliminationist position is the mainstay of today's antizionist or Free Palestine movement across the globe. While BDS leaders deny that their movement is antisemitic, the activities of this movement have led to the harassment and intimidation of both Israeli and non-Israeli Jews, as well as wholly outrageous attempts at discrimination.

BDS activities have certainly led to clear examples of discrimination. In May 2025, a Bristol based venue called Strange Brew cancelled a performance by Oi Va Voi, a popular Jewish Klezmer band which includes Israeli members, following protests by campaigners who made false claims about their work. Strange Brew later accepted

¹ "What is BDS," <https://bdsmovement.net/what-is-bds>, accessed September 1, 2026.

² David M Halbfinger, Michael Wines and Steven Erlanger, "Is B.D.S Anti-Semitic? A Closer Look at the Boycott Israel Campaign," *The New York Times*, July 27, 2019.

³ Ahmed Moor, "BDS is a long-term project with radically transformative potential," *Mondoweiss*, April 22, 2010.

⁴ "Ronnie Kasrils Speech at Israeli Apartheid Week 2009," BDS Movement, <https://bdsmovement.net/news/ronnie-kasrils-speech-israeli-apartheid-week-2009>, accessed 16 August 2026.

that it was a mistaken decision and that the complaints had come about "because they are a Jewish band performing with an Israeli singer".¹ Other Jewish comedians have also had their shows cancelled despite the lack of any overt political content. Philip Simon was scheduled to perform his solo show, *Shall I Compere Thee in a Funny Way*, at the Banshee Labyrinth during the 2025 Edinburgh Fringe. The venue cancelled his act, claiming that the performer's previous statements 'align with the rhetoric and symbology of groups associated with humanitarian violations'. They later admitted unlawfully discriminating against a Jewish comedian.²

Indirectly, non-Jews can also suffer from association with a Jewish or Israeli artist. One such case affected Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, part of a duo with Israeli musician Dudu Tassa. In 2025, the pair issued a statement saying that venues in London and Bristol had cancelled performances after receiving a number of credible threats. Greenwood has stated that they 'dread the weaponisation of this cancellation by reactionary figures as much as we lament its celebration by some progressives'.³ Ed Sheeran has been another non-Jewish target for BDS campaigners, following his decision to drop support artist Macklemore from his US stadium tour, following vitriolic comments made by the rapper. Despite Sheeran's statement empathising with the suffering of both sides in the conflict, he was trounced by critics and all support acts for his tour pulled out of their scheduled performances.⁴

These cases are merely the highest profile examples of a sustained, global boycott of Jewish artists, performers and cultural figures who have found themselves quietly de-platformed since October 7. A report by *Freedom in the Arts*, drawing on surveys and interviews with artists, agents, managers and promoters, speaks of a major crisis facing artists in Britain. They speak of:

An interconnected web of coercive practices -
cancellation, deplatforming, institutional exclusion,

¹ Ian Youngs, "Music venue says it was a 'mistake' to cancel Jewish band gig," *BBC News*, November 19, 2025.

² Nick Forbes, "Edinburgh Fringe venue admits unlawful discrimination against Jewish comedian after cancelling show," *The Independent*, August 17, 2026.

³ Laura Snapes, "Jonny Greenwood and Israeli musician Dudu Tassa condemn 'silencing' after UK concerts pulled," *The Guardian*, May 6, 2025.

⁴ Jamie Shapiro, "Ed Sheeran support acts boycott tour after Macklemore dropped due to pressure from 'Zionist lobby,'" *The Jewish Chronicle*, September 16, 2026.

professional ostracism, workplace bullying, funding compromises, compelled political declarations, harassment and reputational destruction – that collectively polices the boundaries of acceptable thought, association, expression and programming within the arts.

The report finds that ‘antisemitism is the dominant form of identity-based exclusion documented across the data’.¹

When examining the impact of BDS in this context, one must bear in mind the obligations set forth under the UK’s Equality Act 2010. The Act clearly lists ‘religion or belief’ as protected characteristics, along with race, which includes ‘colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins’. Section 29, dealing with the provision of services, says that a service provider ‘must not discriminate against a person requiring the service by not providing the person with the service’, ‘harass a person requiring the service’ or ‘victimise the person’ by not providing the service. There is a strong argument that the BDS movement is in breach of the Act in many ways. Boycotts against Israeli academics or cultural figures with no connection to the conflict or Israeli government discriminate against both Israeli and Jewish staff and students on the grounds of their nationality, ethnicity and religion. Further, a boycott that chooses to focus on a single country, which believes that that country’s products and services alone should be shunned by the rest of society, discriminates on the basis of national origin.

There is also strong evidence that BDS campaigns on campus, which often single out Jewish societies, harass and victimise Jewish and Israeli students and staff. One sobering piece of evidence from the US shows that on campuses with a ‘Faculty for Justice in Palestine’ chapter, there has been ‘a significant increase of physical assaults and threats of violence targeting Jewish students’ and a ‘7.3-fold increase in the likelihood of physical assaults on Jewish students’.² Given that there has been a significant rise in campus based antisemitism, according to CST figures, due regard must be given to whether BDS is having a similar impact in the UK.³ When local authorities pass motions

¹ “The New Boycott Crisis,” *Freedom in the Arts*, 5.

² “How a Faculty Network Fuels Campus Unrest & Antisemitic Violence,” Amchain, September 2024, 3-4.

³<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2024/12/09/117-increase-in-campus-antisemitic-incidents>, December 9, 2024, accessed September 10, 2026.

that call on financial institutions to divest from companies linked to Israel, that is arguably a breach of the Public Sector Equality Duty in Section 149, one which obliges public authorities to have due regard to the need to 'eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act' and 'foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.'¹

Modern identity politics

It is *de rigueur* among antizionists to depict the Israel/Palestine conflict as a prime embodiment of modern identity politics. Postmodern identity politics, also known as the social justice movement, is an ideology which views ethnic, racial and gender identity as the all-encompassing hallmark of virtue and which sacralises opposition to colonialism above all else. It came about because of a shift within the left about how to achieve radical social change. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was no longer tenable to change the existing order through the old model of economic class struggle. Following the lead of Antonio Gramsci, a philosopher who argued that political power is secured through controlling the cultural norms and institutions of a society (cultural hegemony), leftist thinkers came to see culture as the means by which a dominant class secured power and dominance in society. This meant that critiquing unfair social structures necessitated a focus on marginalised groups (racial, gender or sexual), especially within the context of decolonisation. From the work of New Marxists like Herbert Marcuse, a whole world of new ideologies and concepts was born, including critical race theory (CRT) and queer theory. Social justice theorists posited that western societies were permeated by 'white privilege', a set of social practices, systems and power structures that perpetuated the dominance of white people over minorities yet which also blinded white people to the nature of their advantage. How do Jews fit in?

Whereas the far right have tended to see Jews as non-white yet adjacent to whiteness, a people who use their 'nefarious' powers to undermine white society by purportedly encouraging mass immigration, paedophilia and sexual liberalism, the far left take an opposite view. Jews are seen as hyper-white, a group of privileged, powerful and economically exploitative people who sit at the apex of

¹ Equality Act 2010.

western establishments and who suppress the rights and status of non-white minorities, among them black people, Muslims and Arabs. The diametrically opposed views are perfect evidence for how illogical antisemitism really is, hence David Baddiel's quip about Jews being 'Schrodinger whites'.¹

These social justice theorists believe that Israel's alleged transgressions of international law stem, not from the perceived wickedness of her leaders, but from its identity as a 'white supremacist' state. Essentialised in this way, Israel merely reproduces the battle lines of contemporary western politics whereby powerful white elites (Zionists) are accused of suppressing and demonising people of colour (Palestinians). It is another example of how an anti-Zionist narrative reflects the deepest anxieties and preoccupations of contemporary society, as well as offering a safety valve for western guilt. Typical of those who accuse Jews of white supremacy are black activist Tamika Mallory, one of the co-founders and leaders of the Women's March movement² and the Palestinian-American activist Linda Sarsour.³ Both have ties to the Nation of Islam leader, Louis Farrakhan, a man who has long traded in antisemitic slurs.

In the twenty first century, antizionist social justice warriors have launched this accusation at Israel and Zionists with deep venom. One writer has written of 'the disturbing alliance between Zionists and white nationalists in the White House', something that was no coincidence because, in her view, both sides had 'a shared bedrock of anxiety about demographics and racist and Islamophobic fear of "Arabs"'.⁴ For the antizionist group *Jewish Voice for Peace*, 'settler colonialism' and 'white supremacy' are the 'right, holistic frame with which to understand Israel and Palestine, as well as the U.S'. In its view, Zionism transformed the Jew from 'small, dark, hunched over, religious, an embarrassment' to being 'blond, blue eyed, healthy and muscular'.⁵

¹ David Baddiel, *Jews Don't Count*, (London: TLS Books, 2021), 51.

² "Women's March leader says white Jews 'uphold white supremacy'," *Times of Israel*, December 23, 2018.

³ Miri Shalem, "Oh, Linda Sarsour! Impossible to be a Zionist and a feminist?" *The Jerusalem Post*, December 13, 2019.

⁴ Richard Kuper, "Richard Spencer and his white supremacist love of Israel," *Jewish Voice for Liberation*, August 25, 2017.

⁵ Cecilie Surasky, "Settler colonialism, white supremacy, and the 'special relationship' between the U.S. and Israel," *Jewish Voice for Peace*, February 24, 2015.

The poison has affected discourse in Britain. The former NUS President, Malia Bouattia, wrote an opinion piece in 2014 in which she lamented how 'Zionist-led' media outlets had presented resistance as an act of terrorism'. She went on to say: 'But instead of us remembering that this has always been the case throughout struggles against white supremacy, it's become an accepted discourse among too many.'¹ Not only was this justifying violence as a form of anti-colonial struggle, it was explicitly linking Zionism with white supremacist colonialism. Sometimes, antizionist critics link 'white supremacist' Zionism directly to attacks on Muslims. In 2025, Dr. Kawtar Najib, Lecturer in Human Geography, Social & Spatial Inequalities at the University of Liverpool, wrote a piece in the *Geographical Journal* entitled 'The United Kingdom's first anti-Muslim pogroms in a context of genocidal Islamophobia in Gaza.' In the article, she writes that 'white supremacist ideology is at the heart of the Zionist project' and refers to a supposed 'transnational Zionist movement that reproduces exclusionary ideas against Muslims'.² The irony that white supremacist leaders continue to see Jews as the enemies of white people is lost on these activists.³

¹ Marissa Newman, "New head of UK students backed Palestinian violence, wouldn't condemn IS," *Times of Israel*, April 20, 2016.

² Najib, K. (2026) The United Kingdom's first anti-Muslim pogroms in a context of genocidal Islamophobia in Gaza. *The Geographical Journal*, 192, e70046. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.70046>

³ "White Supremacist Leaders Applaud Hamas and Violence Against Israelis," *Anti-Defamation League*, October 10, 2023.

The Core Tropes of Antizionism

Underlying antizionist ideology are three core tropes: Israel as a settler colonial state, Israel as a genocidal state and Israel as an apartheid state. Taken together, they have created a pseudo-discipline about Jewish statehood and a false narrative about Jewish history, one which pretends to be about justice and human rights while recoding Jews as 'racialized oppressors through the language of indigeneity, whiteness, and decolonization'.¹ Buzzwords like genocide, apartheid and colonialism are not designed to elicit a debate, nor are they responsive to factual refutation. Those who issue them are engaged, not in trying to modify Israeli government behaviour or support Israeli opposition figures, but in 'vilifying, delegitimizing, and dehumanizing a modern Jewish collective.'² Antizionism, like any religious creed, demands intellectual fealty and submission.

Settler colonialism: Antizionists allege that Zionism is a settler colonialist movement and that Israel is a settler colonialist state. The earliest exposition of this view can be found in the texts of Fayeze Sayegh (1922-1980), a Syrian academic and delegate of Kuwait's Mission to the UN in the mid-1970s. His 1965 essay, *Zionist Colonialism in Palestine*, the inaugural publication of the PLO Research Centre, was 'the first intellectual articulation of Zionism as a settler colonial enterprise.' He posits that we must understand Zionism as a form of western colonialism, likening Israel's presence to the US in Vietnam and the French in Algeria. He also attacks the Zionists for their purported 'quest for racial exclusivity', as well as their 'refusal to assimilate or coexist, and relentless territorial expansion.'³

Another recent statement of this view comes from Rashid Khalidi's *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (2020). Khalidi interprets the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as 'a colonial war waged against the indigenous population, by a variety of parties, to force them to

¹ Louis-Klein, "Defeating Antizionism."

² Ohad Merlin, "Blood Libels of today's generation – analysis," *The Jerusalem Post*, May 16, 2024.

³ Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, "The Man Who Made Zionism Into Settler Colonialism," *Middle East Forum*, November 13, 2025.

relinquish their homeland to another people against their will'.¹ He says that the Zionists could not have accomplished such deeds on their own; they needed great powers to act in their support. Initially, Khalidi argues that Britain provided an indispensable level of financial, military and political backing but, after 1948, the United States became Israel's great patron. Khalidi then examines a century of conflict from 1917 to 2017 which represents six stages in a continuous, western backed 'colonialist' war against Palestine's Arabs. The six stages in that war were the Balfour declaration of 1917; the 1947 UN partition plan; the 1967 UN Security Council resolution 242; the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon; the 1993 Oslo peace accords and Israeli leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount in 2000. He explicitly rejects the notion that this was a war 'between two national movements contesting equally over the same land'.²

Khalidi shares the view of Patrick Wolfe that settler colonies are 'premised on the elimination of native societies... The colonizers come to stay: *invasion is a structure not an event*.' In his canonical essay *Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native*, Wolfe argues that settler colonialism is premised on the 'logic of elimination', which has both a negative and positive connotation. Negatively, it 'strives for the dissolution of native societies' while positively, it 'erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base'. In his words, 'settler colonialism destroys to replace'.³ Khalidi applies this logic to Israel, arguing that Israel erased the idea of an Arab presence on the land, producing a massive demographic transformation and land appropriation to achieve a form of ethnic cleansing.

Zionism as settler colonialism is a guiding idea in *Kairos II (A Moment of Truth: Faith in a Time of Genocide)*, a theological and political manifesto issued by Palestinian Christian leaders in November 2025. It states that the Zionist project is designed 'to seize all of Palestine, emptied of its Palestinian people' (1.3). It says that Israel is a 'colonial, settler, and exclusionary entity built upon the displacement of the indigenous population and its replacement with new settlers'

¹ Rubner, Michael (June 2020). "The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017". Middle East Policy. 27 (2). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell: 173–177.

² Matthew Hughes, "The Hundred Years' War on Palestine by Rashid Khalidi review – conquest and resistance," *The Guardian*, May 7, 2020.

³ Patrick Wolfe, *Journal of Genocide Research* (2006), 8(4), December, 387–409, (388).

(1.22) and that Israel is a 'continuation of that same colonial enterprise built on racism and the ideology of ethnic or religious superiority' (3.3).¹

The belief that violence is a necessary remedy to remove colonialist powers has been influenced by the writings of French intellectual Frantz Fanon (1925-1961). In his most famous work, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon argued that violent resistance against the settler was an essential step towards the process of emancipation, something that was 'necessary for oppressed peoples to assert their humanity and demand their liberation'.² Fanon thought that this would lead to psychological liberation and create conditions for a post-colonial society based on freedom and equality for all.

Viewing Israelis as colonialists has a decidedly dehumanising effect. It portrays them as alien interlopers on foreign soil and replaces the idea that they returned home with the accusation that they have plundered and seized the land belonging to others. Israel is seen as a 'structurally violent state from its inception based on Zionism as a racist, Jewish supremacist ideology'.³ It is also an easily contested trope.⁴

Genocide: Genocide is the crime of crimes and represents the 'gravest offense known to humankind'.⁵ Since October 7, it has become the single most resonant charge against the Jewish state, endorsed by the United Nations in one of its reports and backed by NGOs such as Amnesty International.⁶ It has also been a staple of antizionist marches and demonstrations in western cities, with placards that accuse Israel of mass murder and condemn western leaders for facilitating a new Holocaust, one perpetrated by the Jewish state. Needless to say, there

¹ "Kairos Palestine – The Palestinian Christian Initiative," November 14, 2025.

² Edo Konrad, "Who was Frantz Fanon, the freedom fighter Palestine supporters love to quote?," *The Guardian*, March 21, 2024.

³ "The 'New Antisemitism' and Settler Colonial Studies," Rutgers Law School: Center for Security, Race and Rights, 2025.

⁴ Jews fled countries like Russia, Romania and Poland because of antisemitism, not because they hoped to return 'home' with their ill gained 'booty'.

⁵ Ochab, E.U., Alton, D. (2022). Genocide as the Crime Above All Crimes. In: State Responses to Crimes of Genocide. Rethinking Political Violence. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99162-3_2

⁶ For the UN report, see: "Israel has committed genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission finds," *OHCHR*, September 16, 2025. For Amnesty, see: "Amnesty concludes Israel is committing genocide in Gaza," Amnesty, December 5, 2024.

are numerous reports and scholarly pieces which comprehensively demolish the idea that Israel launched a genocidal war in Gaza.¹

Yet none of this is new. The charge of genocide against Israel has been part of the antizionist *zeitgeist* for well over half a century, ready to emerge in every modern iteration of the conflict with the Palestinians.² For decades, activists have framed Zionism as the embodiment of cruelty, bestiality, illegality and criminality on a truly psychotic scale, a permanent marker of its foundational illegitimacy as a state. The charge of genocide was a key staple of the Soviet antizionist campaign, one which compared Israel with Nazi Germany and its treatment of the Palestinians to the Holocaust. Together with the associated charges that the Jewish state was an embodiment of racism, colonialism and apartheid, the labelling of Israel as genocidal was disseminated at the UN, and among significant sections of western academia, the NGO community and 'progressive' activist groups.

The genocide libel works on a number of levels. Firstly, by accusing Israel of such a heinous crime, it signifies that the Jewish state is a pariah among the nations and an outlier among civilised states, justifying its exclusion from institutions, its economic isolation and its eventual destruction. Secondly, antizionists frequently claim some linkage between the Hebrew Bible and Israel's purportedly genocidal nature. A classic example was penned by the Norwegian author Jostein Gaardner in his article *God's Chosen People*. In 2006, he wrote:

To act as God's chosen people is not only foolish and arrogant, it is a crime against humanity. [...] We laugh with embarrassment at those who still believe that the god of the flora, fauna and galaxies has chosen one particular people as his favorite, and given them amusing stone tablets, burning bushes and a *license to kill*.³

¹ For one refutation, read: Bret Stephens, "No, Israel is not committing genocide in Gaza," *The New York Times*, July 22, 2025.

² Thus, we find that charges of genocide were levelled at Israel repeatedly during the 1982 war with Lebanon, both at UN debates and at the privately funded International Commission of Inquiry, during the Second Intifada when Israel was battling Palestinian terror in the West Bank and in various wars between Israel and Hamas from 2008 onwards.

³ Ben Cohen, "Attacking the 'Chosen', *JNS*, August 12, 2019.

Similar echoes appear in Kairos II where Christian Zionism¹ is said to call on a 'tribal, racist god of war and ethnic cleansing' (3.7).² In each case, these antizionist critics allege that the problems of modern Israel must be understood, not by reference to political decisions made in the here and now, but to an allegedly irrational and immoral Jewish faith presided over by a 'genocidal' deity. This directly implies that the origin of the genocidal impulse lies within Jewishness itself, a truly appalling act of racist essentialising. For others, the Biblical narrative is holy, but it is Zionists whose genocidal impulses have made it profane. Typical is a piece by Naomi Klein in *The Guardian* from 2024. Analysing the Passover festival, she claims that its 'transcendent idea of the promised land' is 'a metaphor for human liberation' and thus condemns Zionists who have 'dared to turn it into a deed of sale for a militaristic ethnostate'.³ One can be sure that the interpretation of a Zionist festival like Pesach as a story of universal, rather than Jewish, liberation is quite deliberate.

Thirdly, the accusation of genocide is then turned back on the Jews themselves, as Israel's primary supporters, with the idea that by allegedly creating a genocidal state, they failed to 'learn the lessons' of the Holocaust. In 2013, Lee Jasper, a race relations activist and former candidate for the Respect party, made political capital from Holocaust Remembrance Day by launching a spiteful attack on the Jewish state. Israel, he wrote, had 'failed to learn the lessons of its own tragic history having evolved into a racist oppressor'. He added:

Israel has...allowed itself to turn into the very thing that it despises the most, a political ideology that seeks to oppress people on the basis of race or religion.⁴

For Jasper, the West's response to the Holocaust was mistaken. Instead of commemorating the genocide, standing with the survivors and renewing a commitment to eradicating all forms of antisemitism, he argued that we ought to focus on the purported infamy of the Jewish state and its 'Nazi like' behaviour. The attempt to recast Israel

¹ Christian Zionism is a political and theological movement that advocates the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land.

² Kairos II.

³ Naomi Klein, "We need an exodus from Zionism," *The Guardian*, April 24, 2024.

⁴ "Lee Jasper: Israel is racist oppressor," *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 22, 2013

as the 'new Nazis' with the victims now the perpetrators is also known as 'Holocaust inversion'.¹ Using the Holocaust to attack Jews is part of a deliberate strategy to insult and wound a community which still suffers from the aftermath of the worst genocide in history. It can be seen as an egregious form of Jew baiting, scratching at wounds that linger decades after mass murder, as well as a quite blatant attempt to deny Jewish victimhood. Above all, it is a call to arms against the Jewish national project. For if Nazism remains, in the words of Robert Wistrich, 'the defining metaphor of absolute evil'², then not only does Israel embody the worst sins of mankind, but there is a moral obligation to defeat it.

Given that Israel's adversaries have never hidden their desire to destroy Israel in an outright war of annihilation, the genocide accusation also serves as a rhetorical device to falsely accuse Israel of crimes that its opponents themselves intend to commit. In other words, those adversaries impute to Israel their own transgressions, crimes and murderous misdeeds or, in the words of Kenneth Marcus, 'a false anticipatory *tu quoque*'. Marcus calls it an 'accusation in a mirror' and suggests that it can constitute an incitement to genocide, given that such accusations are often the prelude to mass murder.³

Apartheid libel: Antizionist activists frequently liken Israel to apartheid South Africa. They argue that the Jewish state acts in a constitutionally racist manner towards its non-Jewish inhabitants with formal systems of discrimination, exclusion and prejudice. They liken Israel's security barrier in the West, designed to protect against suicide bombings, to an 'apartheid wall' that racially segregates different communities in the territory. They condemn Israel's use of military checkpoints and permit systems as a form of racial control and choose to see Palestinian villages and cities as 'bantustans' in a greater Israel.⁴ Their aim is to isolate and delegitimise Israel and turn it into an international pariah, in an attempt to persuade the world that it is an illegitimate nation with no

¹ Lesley Klaff, "Holocaust Inversion and contemporary antisemitism," *Fathom*, Winter 2014.

² Robert Wistrich, "Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 16, Nos. 3–4 (Fall 2004): 29.

³ Kenneth L. Marcus, "Accusation in a Mirror," *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal*, 2012, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 357 - 393, 2012, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2020327>

⁴ "Israel's apartheid against Palestinians - Amnesty International" *Amnesty International*, February 1, 2022.

right to exist among civilised peoples. As Canadian attorney Irwin Cotler put it:

Let there be no mistake about it: to indict Israel as an apartheid state is prologue and justification for the dismantling of the Jewish State, for the criminalization of its supporters, and for the consequential silencing of their speech.¹

Advocates of this comparison actively engage in a sustained campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions. They call for boycotts of Israeli academics, journalists, musicians, actors and sporting figures, as well as companies that do business with Israel. They lend their voice to 'Israel apartheid week', which is now a commonplace in leading Western universities and where speakers are invited to demonise the country with incendiary rhetoric. They are not interested in debating or criticising Israeli policies. They are engaging in a reputational onslaught against the nation state of the Jewish people.

A related notion is that Israel is an 'ethnstate' built around 'Jewish supremacy', a state for one people at the exclusion of all others. Antizionists point to the fact that Israel defines itself as a Jewish state and that it has flags, symbols, holidays and laws with an unmistakable Jewish connection. They never point out that there are also dozens of countries around the world, including more than 50 Muslim ones, which put either a Christian or Islamic identity at the core of their constitution and national culture. The double standard in those cases is therefore glaring. Of course, the most legitimate rebuttal is to point out that Israel is both a Jewish *and* democratic state with one quarter of its citizens being non-Jews.

Crossover libels

At least three antizionist libels represent a crossover from what we might call traditional or classical antisemitism. These traditional tropes and cyphers of anti-Jewish hatred have been regurgitated in the antizionist narrative, colouring it with a malodorous form of prejudice and bigotry.

¹ Gerald M. Steinberg, "Slandering the Jewish State," *Ynetnews*, March 12, 2012.

Blood libel: The blood libel was a European calumny alleging that the Jews had ritually murdered Christian children so that they could use their blood for religious purposes, especially the baking of Passover matzah (unleavened bread). The accusation, which was a regular feature of medieval demonological Jew-hate, led to Jews being arrested, tortured and then executed after false confessions were extracted from them.¹ It has been given a new lease of life within an antizionist context. The antizionist blood libel is framed around the accusation that Zionists are 'baby killers' who revel in taking innocent life, as if the lust for innocent blood was part of the national *raison d'être*.

The Second Intifada (2000-5) brought a vast tidal wave of antisemitic images and commentary that directly reproduced the ancient idea of the blood libel. Egyptian paper *Al Ahram* produced a cartoon showing two Israeli soldiers wantonly killing children in a meat grinder while another Jewish figure held out a cup to catch the blood of those being killed. The toast was: 'Here's to peace'.² More recently, a Moroccan cartoon in *Hespress* from December 2023 showed Benjamin Netanyahu drinking blood from a vessel shaped like the State of Israel with the caption 'Gaza'. During the Gaza war (2023-5), numerous cartoons in Arabic papers portrayed the Jewish state as a wild beast or subhuman creature, often with bloodied weapons at its disposal, suggesting that modern Jews shared the same devilish fetish for innocent life as their ancestors.³

Another example of the modern antizionist blood libel is the ritual accusation that Israel is harvesting the organs of either Palestinians or other people. The accusation appears to stem from an article in 2009 ('Our sons are being plundered for their organs') written by Donald Boström in the Swedish tabloid *Aftonbladet* in which the author implied that Israeli troops killed Palestinians to provide organs for Israeli hospitals. One doctor from Israel's Abu Kabir Forensic Institute admitted that he had removed organs from a number of already dead bodies without seeking formal permission, as required by law. He was later dismissed. But this was clearly not the same as

¹ Matthew Wills, "On the Origins of the Blood Libel" *JSTOR*, October 8, 2021.

² "Cartoons: Israel and the Jews in Arab and western media," *The Guardian*, December 19, 2008.

³ "Antisemitism in Arab Cartoons during the Israel-Hamas War: A Chronology of Dehumanization of Jews and Demonization of Zionism and Israel," *Anti-Defamation League*, December 21, 2023.

deliberately killing Palestinians for their organs, as some news agencies would later claim.¹

Nonetheless, the article spawned a potent conspiracy theory about allegedly nefarious Israeli conduct. Among those who helped promote it was Baroness Jenny Tonge, formerly of the Liberal Democrats. In an article from 2010 in *The Palestine Telegraph*, Tonge called on Israel to set up an inquiry to disprove allegations that its medical teams in Haiti had 'harvested' the organs of earthquake victims for use in transplants. As Matthew Harris, the then Lib Dem parliamentary candidate for Hendon, said, it was 'perverse in the extreme to suggest that there needs to be an investigation of allegations to which she gives no credence'.²

One can see evidence that antizionist killers have been motivated by the idea of Zionism as a child killing ideology. Typical was Jihad Al-Shamie who, during the attack on Heaton Park, screamed: "This is what they get for killing our children." In another example, 48 year old Shafiq Rahman threatened to break the jaw of an orthodox man in Slough after accusing him of "killing babies in Palestine."³ Rahman was later jailed for racially aggravated common assault. Of course, the accusation is not that children are being killed in Gaza, which is obviously (and tragically) the case. It is that they are being deliberately killed or targeted by the Israeli state, moreover, that this policy is somehow intrinsic to the entire Zionist enterprise.

The Zionist lobby libel: Traditional antisemitism revolves around conspiracy theories of Jewish global control and domination. The most infamous document to make this accusation was *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a notorious Russian forgery which alleged that a small, sinister group of Jews was plotting to take over the world for financial and political gain.⁴ In the aftermath of the First World War, it would come to have a seductive influence on a generation of Germans who

¹ Mikael Tossavainen, "The Aftonbladet Organ-Trafficking Accusations against Israel: A Case Study," *The Jerusalem Centre for Security and Foreign Affairs*, December 20, 2010.

² Simon Rocker, "Tonge: Investigate IDF stealing organs in Haiti," *The Jewish Chronicle*, February 11, 2010.

³ "Thug who threatened to 'break jaw' of Orthodox Jew for 'killing babies in Palestine' is jailed," *The Jewish Chronicle*, July 13, 2026.

⁴ The best analysis can be found in: Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

were at pains to understand their country's defeat in 1918. The conspiracy theory was simple enough: Germany, instead of being defeated by mistakes from its high command or by Allied brilliance, had been betrayed by a cabal of internal enemies. According to the legend of the 'stab in the back' (*Dolkschosslegende*), these 'November criminals' had conspired to end the war, bring down Wilhemine Germany and instigate a new regime based on liberal democracy. Foremost among these 'criminals' was German Jewry.

In twentieth century antizionism, the myth of the world Jewish lobby has been transformed into the myth of the global Zionist lobby. Antizionists have depicted the Jewish state as a conspiratorial, deceitful and malign entity, exercising its devious tentacles to manipulate the region and the wider world in its own interests. It allegedly does this through groups like AIPAC (in America), CRIF (France) and the Conservative Friends of Israel/Labour Friends of Israel (in the UK), as well as various networks linked in some way to the Jewish state.

For its critics, there is no end to the Israeli lobby's machinations. It is accused of undermining world governments with false accusations of antisemitism and using Holocaust guilt to win support for 'immoral' policies. It purportedly invents spurious reasons why countries should declare war in the Middle East and manipulates nations into defending its own 'nefarious' behaviour. It is alleged to carry out false flag attacks in western countries, many of which are linked to al-Qaeda and ISIS, and support or create terrorist groups to do its bidding. Given the alleged power and reach of this nefarious lobby, antizionist activists often speak as if the war against Israel is a mere first stage in the battle against Zionism. They speak of 'de-Zionising' their own countries, effectively cleansing their governments, their media and their public institutions of 'corrupting' Zionist influence. But the most critical point is that Israel is believed to be a predominant influence on western foreign policy making, often to the exclusion of any other factor.

That the Israeli lobby was trying to influence the British political landscape was alleged by the Labour MP Martin Linton during the 2010 General Election. He said that there were 'long tentacles of Israel in this country who are funding election campaigns and putting money into the British political system for their own ends'.¹

¹ Martin Bright and Robyn Rosen, "MP: Israel's tentacles will steal the election," *The Jewish Chronicle*, March 29, 2010.

Other antizionists have alleged that Israel has used students to further its 'nefarious' agenda. David Miller, the disgraced academic sacked by Bristol University, once described Jewish students at British universities as "political pawns by a violent, racist foreign regime engaged in ethnic cleansing."¹ After Bristol University's Jewish society complained about comments of his, including one in which he called to "end Zionism as an ideology" and branded it "the enemy", Miller doubled down, alleging that there was a "campaign of censorship" which was being "directed by the state of Israel". Miller had also claimed that government funding of the CST was a "straightforward story of influence-peddling by a foreign state."²

In 2026, the BBC caused controversy when it interviewed right wing radio host Tucker Carlson, formerly of Fox News. Carlson suggested that there was a 'mechanism of control' that allowed Israel to control American foreign policy, adding that 'All American presidents since 1965 have done substantially what Israel wanted us to do.' Turning to the UK, Carlson stated that *Palestine Action* had been "banned because the Israeli government wanted it banned."

Dual loyalty: Traditional antisemites have long accused Jews of disloyalty, of being unpatriotic citizens who care more about loyalty to each other than to the 'host' societies where they reside. Classic examples include the Dreyfus Trial (1894), in which the innocent Captain Alfred Dreyfus was wrongly tried and convicted for alleged espionage; the Doctors' Plot (1951-3) in which Stalin depicted Soviet Jewish doctors as disloyal citizens who were plotting against the state and allegations by Charles Lindbergh and others that Jews drove America's decision to enter the Second World War for their own interests, not those of America. Jews were presented as a dangerous fifth column that threatened the stability and security of society. Several recent examples show that this trope has enjoyed a new lease of life within an antizionist context.

One example came in 2019 from Democrat Congresswoman Ilhan Omar when she made a statement slamming AIPAC. In what amounted to a direct attack on the alleged foreign loyalties of Jewish Americans, she said:

¹ Cnaan Lipshotz, "Nearly 200 scholars back UK lecturer who called Jewish students Israel 'pawns'," *Times of Israel*, February 27, 2021.

² Jack Mandel, "Board president: 'Bristol prof's rants would not be out of place in Der Stürmer'," *The Jewish News*, February 19, 2021.

I want to talk about the political influence in this country that says it is OK for people to push for allegiance to a foreign country.¹

More recently, in 2026, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro revealed in his memoir that Kamala Harris' vice-presidential vetting team had asked him whether he had ever been a 'double agent' for Israel, echoing an ancient charge that Jews could never be loyal citizens of their own country. In the words of Deborah Lipstadt on X, "These questions were classic antisemitism."²

Figures from across the British political spectrum have been accused of promoting the dual loyalty trope against Jewish figures. In 2011, Paul Flynn MP caused outrage when he argued that Matthew Gould, then UK Ambassador to Israel, was 'serving the interests of the Israeli government', given that he had 'proclaimed himself to be a Zionist'. For good measure, he added that the Ambassador to Israel had to be 'someone with roots in the U.K. [who] can't be accused of having Jewish loyalty'.³ Gould very much did have roots in the UK, having been born and raised in the country, but his belief in Zionism triggered Flynn's contemptible charge of disloyalty. Flynn later apologised for his remarks. Sir Alan Duncan, the Conservative Party's former Foreign Office Minister, was investigated in 2024 by his party after calling for Lord Polak and Lord Pickles to be removed from the House of Lords. He specifically accused Lord Polak of 'exercising the interest of another country not that of the Parliament in which he sits'.⁴ Duncan was later cleared of wrongdoing following an internal investigation, and there is no suggestion that he, or Flynn, was an antizionist. Nonetheless, these cases show that extreme criticism of Israel can lead to needlessly sinister accusations.

Thus, antizionism has both produced its own unique tropes for demonising Israel and Jewish collective rights, while incorporating those from a much older era.

¹ "Ilhan Omar attacks pro-Israel lobby and critics again call remarks antisemitic," *The Guardian*, March 2, 2019.

² Andrew Sillow-Carroll, "From Alfred Dreyfus to Josh Shapiro: How the 'dual loyalty' charge shadows Jewish public life," *The Jerusalem Post*, January 23, 2026.

³ Ben Harris, "British lawmaker questions Jewish ambassador's 'loyalty'," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 2, 2011.

⁴ Kate Whannel, "Tories investigate ex-minister Alan Duncan over Israel comments," *BBC News*, April 5, 2024.

Antizionist organisations in the UK

What does antizionism look like in the UK today? In 2026, a majority of British people 'support the right of Jewish people to have a nation in Israel' and could thus be called Zionist.¹ Nonetheless, the UK plays host to a number of antizionist organisations, parties, media outlets and charities.

Political parties: Antizionism has been rejected by all mainstream parties in the UK. The Conservative party, the Labour party, the Liberal Democrats, Reform and the SNP² have all committed to a two state solution that embraces sovereign Israeli and Palestinian states. This has also been a consistent position of all UK governments for decades.

However, at least two populist left wing parties have embraced the cause of antizionism. Zarah Sultana, co-leader of Your Party, stated at a party conference in 2025: "I am an antizionist and, if we fight for it, Your Party will be an anti-Zionist party."³ Leaked messages from a Your Party online group chat have seen vituperative attacks on pro-Israel politicians, with one Labour councillor, Lloyd Duddridge, branded 'Zionist trash'.⁴ Amazingly, Jeremy Corbyn, the other co-chair of Your Party, was accused of being too soft on Zionism, leading to this riposte.

I'm fed up with being painted into a corner of being seen as a pro-Zionist...What do you think I've been doing with my life?⁵

The Green Party too has been consumed by antizionist ideology. In its October 2026 conference, the party passed a motion that equated Zionism with racism, replicating the Soviet sponsored UN vote from 1975. It called for a 'single democratic Palestinian state in all of historic Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital' and backed the right of the Palestinians to 'resistance and liberation from Israeli occupation,

¹ Daniel Sugarman, "Poll: Majority of British adults are Zionists - but don't seem to know it," *The Jewish News*, November 20, 2025.

² The First Minister's Gaza statement — Scottish National Party

³ Lee Harpin, "Sultana and Corbyn clash over Zionism at rift-ridden Your Party conference," *The Jewish News*, December 1, 2025.

⁴ Jane Prinsley, "Jewish councillor branded 'Zionist trash' by Your Party activist," *The Jewish Chronicle*, February 13, 2026.

⁵ Harpin, "Sultana and Corbyn clash over Zionism at rift-ridden Your Party conference."

domination and subjugation', asserting that 'the struggle to achieve that liberation by all available means under international law is legitimate'. The motion was proposed by Lubna Speitan, a woman who was listed in 2015 as a close friend of Minh Quang Pham, a convicted Al Qaeda terrorist.¹ It thus became the first modern UK political party to endorse antizionism. It branded any Jews who chose to define themselves as Zionist (the vast majority) as racist and traduced the very idea that they could have national rights. By calling for Israel's destruction, it formally broke ranks with nearly major country on earth and nearly every other major political party, effectively endorsing the position of Hamas. One should be in no doubt about what this motion entails. The Green Party has adopted a platform which is antisemitic to the core and which could entail severe discrimination, exclusion, harassment and harm for all its Jewish members. Such fears are entirely justified given that an amendment put forward saying that the motion should not be used to 'pressure, proscribe or discipline members based on affiliation with Jewish community institutions' was voted down. Thus, Jewish Green members attending a synagogue could find themselves in the party's crosshairs merely for attending a synagogue. This is the sign of how a once progressive party has suffered ideological capture by extremists and can now be described as institutionally racist towards Jews.

That antizionism can have real world consequences was shown in July 2026 when the Green run Hackney council began the formal process of de-twinning the town from the city of Haifa.² Haifa is a place where Jews and Arabs mix in hospitals, shops, restaurants and businesses. It is a city which exemplifies, perhaps more than any other place in Israel, the positive interactions between people of diverse faiths and backgrounds, a place on the map which nurtures peace, harmony and co-existence. Yet the Green's manifesto spoke of Haifa's Arabs living 'under occupation and apartheid by the Israeli state'. In classic antizionist fashion, the whole of Israel, and not just the disputed West Bank, was seen as an illegitimate settler colony which was traducing the rights of 'indigenous' people. To add insult to injury, Mayor Zoë Garbett gave Haifa an initial deadline of October 7 (later rescinded with an apology) to reply to this plan to cut ties with Hackney.

¹ Jane Prinsley, "Exclusive: Greens investigate author of 'Zionism is racism' motion after JC reveals 'friendship' with al-Qaeda terrorist," *The Jewish Chronicle*, October 7, 2026.

² Haifa and Hackney have been linked since 1968, with the relationship centred on the links between Hackney's Homerton University Hospital and Haifa's Rambam Medical Centre.



A view of Haifa

Evidence of prejudice and anti-Jewish feeling is also in abundance within the Green movement. The youth section of the party has redefined antisemitism by voting to drop the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition. Its new guidance legitimises 'drawing comparisons between Israeli policies and historical examples of oppression', paving the way for activists to liken Israel to Nazi Germany. Meanwhile in August 2026, Eleanora Ní Chualáin was elected to the party's governing council which has responsibility for party wellbeing and strategy. She had earlier claimed that the 'antisemitism crisis' was 'an entirely constructed moral panic, invented by the Zionist lobby and their servile allies in Downing Street and the rabid dogs of the press'.¹

The Greens for Palestine group has demanded that the 'Jewish Greens' within the party 'apologise' for the actions of the Israeli embassy, ignoring the fact that forcing Jews to apologise for Israeli actions is a blatant trope of Jew hatred. It has also demanded that Jewish members liberate their minds from the 'supremacist grip of Zionism' and refused to engage with them until they do so.² The totality of this evidence suggests that the party is in the grip of a paralysing and toxic antizionist ideology and requires investigation by the equalities watchdog.

¹ Jacob Jaffa, "Election expert who claimed 'antisemitism crisis' was 'invented by Zionist lobby' elected to Green Party council responsible for 'party wellbeing and strategy' ," *The Jewish Chronicle*, August 19, 2026.

² "The 'Greens for Palestine' Papers make an inquiry unavoidable," *The Jewish Chronicle*, June 17, 2026.

Organisations/NGOS:

A number of British organisations, lobby groups and religious bodies have also adopted stridently antizionist viewpoints and have come to play a major role in disseminating its ideology. Among them are some secular organisations.

Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) claims it is campaigning for ‘the right of return of the Palestinian people’ and ‘the Palestinian struggle to end the systems of settler colonialism, apartheid and military occupations, motivated by Zionism’.¹ The PSC has played a major role in organising anti-Israel demonstrations in London and other cities, and it sought and then obtained approval for the first one within hours of the October 7 attack being perpetrated against Israel.²

Stop the War, which was founded in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, has become a key component of the national Palestine coalition of organisations which has organised marches against Israel since October 7. On October 10, 2023, a mere three days after the Hamas invasion that slaughtered some 1,200 people in Israel, *Counterfire* reposted an article that John Rees, founder of *Stop the War*, wrote in 2014. In that article, Rees described Hamas as ‘a legitimate resistance movement’, said that Israel was ‘in its essence an expansionist state’ and called for a ‘a single, democratic, multi-faith state running from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea’.³ Tariq Ali, a Patron of *Stop the War*, has a long history of demonising the Jewish state. On 30 October, 2023, he wrote an article likening October 7 to an act of resistance for subjugated people and compared Hamas’s terrorists to ‘anti-colonial fighters’.⁴ The tone throughout was an unapologetic celebration of Hamas’s crimes.

Palestine Action is a direct action group now proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000. On its website, *Palestine Action* says it is committed to ‘ending global participation in Israel’s genocidal and apartheid regime’ and that it targets ‘corporate enablers of the Israeli military-industrial complex’. Its main target is Elbit Systems, Israel’s biggest weapons producer, whose business model ‘relies on the

¹ <https://palestinecampaign.org/about/aims>, accessed September 1, 2026.

² “Hours after Hamas invaded on Oct. 7, UK anti-Israel group began planning mass protest,” *The Times of Israel*,” Times of Israel, February 7, 2025.

³ John Rees, “Palestine: the only solution is now the one-state solution,” *Counterfire*, October 10, 2023.

⁴ Tariq Ali, “Do Palestinians have the right to resist? The unequivocal answer is yes,” *Frontline*, October 30, 2023.

destruction of Palestine and the genocide of its population'.¹ In recent years, the group's activists have committed, or have been charged with committing, a significant number of criminal acts with the aim of advancing their political cause, including an alleged attack at Instro Precision in Kent and one at Elbit Systems UK in Filton (2024). Following the attack in Filton, three members of *Palestine Action* were convicted and jailed for criminal damage while one was jailed for criminal damage and inflicting grievous bodily harm on a police sergeant.² In June 2025, six Palestine Action activists allegedly broke into RAF Brize Norton, an air base in Oxfordshire, and spray painted two planes. They have been charged with criminal damage and entering a prohibited place for a purpose prejudicial to the United Kingdom.³ As a result, the government has concluded that *Palestine Action* has 'crossed the threshold from direct criminal action, into terrorism'.⁴

There are also bodies from within the Muslim world which actively promote and campaign against antizionism. *The Islamic Human Rights Commission* (IHRC), founded in 2001, was described in the Shawcross report as an 'Islamist group ideologically aligned with the Iranian regime, that has a history of "extremist links and terrorist sympathies"'.⁵ The IHRC has been a major supporter of the al-Quds Day marches in London and its activities have seen the launch of an investigation by the Charity Commission.⁶ *The Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK* (MPAC UK) describes itself as a 'grass roots civil liberties pressure group' which is designed to 'pro-actively campaign against Islamophobia wherever it exists in the UK'.⁷ Its view of Zionism is unsparing, describing it as a 'racist political ideology that created and upholds the colonial state of Israel, whose existence depends on the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Palestinian people and the

¹ <https://global.palestineaction.org/about>, accessed August 10, 2026.

² Chloe Harcombe and Dominic Casciani, "Palestine Action activists jailed over Bristol Elbit factory raid," *BBC News*, June 12, 2026.

³ Ethan Gudge, "Sixth person charged over RAF base break-in," *BBC News*, May 15, 2026.

⁴ "Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations," Home Office, updated July 7, 2026.

⁵ William Shawcross, *Independent Review of Prevent*, February 2023, 6.304.

⁶ Charles Hyams, "Charity behind pro-Iran 'hate march' received £450k taxpayer funding," *The Telegraph*, March 13, 2026.

⁷ <https://mpacuk.org/about-us-4/>, accessed September 6, 2026.

propagation of global Islamophobia'.¹ In one of its posts from November 3, 2025, called 'Now the Zionists are Targetting (sic) Doctors in the UK,' MPAC UK came to the defence of Dr Rahmeh Aladwan, a British doctor alleged to have been 'viciously targeted by UK Zionists' and 'smeared by the press'. The post said that 'she dared to condemn the Zionist State' and added that her social media posts had 'never incited violence or anti-Semitism'.² The truth is simpler: she stands charged with four counts of inviting support for a banned group and is accused of stirring up racial hatred by using threatening or abusive insulting words at a protest.³ *The Muslim Council of Britain* (MCB), which describes itself as the 'largest and most diverse representative body for the British Muslim community in the UK' has also consistently opposed Zionism and traded in antizionist tropes.

The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), one of whose founders was Muhammad Sawalha, a former member of Hamas' Political Bureau, is a grassroots organisation that has been described by one former government minister as a 'British affiliate' of the Muslim Brotherhood. One of the current directors of MAB, Anas Altikriti, called reports of Hamas rapes on October 7 a 'lie' and said: 'The taking of hostages is a very important part of any strategic sort of military action or act of resistance or the such because for every hostage you can then negotiate'.⁴

Friends of al Aqsa (FOA) is a 'UK-based NGO demanding political change for Palestine' and describes itself as 'the most-followed anti-apartheid organisation in the UK'.⁵ They are unapologetic supporters of BDS and in promoting every antizionist trope in their campaigns and literature. The NGO states unequivocally: 'Israel has been stealing Palestinian land for 74 years. Israel illegally occupies Palestine and is imposing apartheid on Palestinians'.⁶ Sharaiz Chaudhry, Communications and Policy Officer for FOA, wrote on X following the death of Yahya Sinwar:

¹ <https://mpacuk.org>, accessed August 1, 2026.

² <https://mpacuk.org/2025/11/03/now-the-zionists-are-targetting-doctors-in-the-uk/>, accessed August 1, 2026.

³ "NHS doctor accused of inviting support for Hamas appears in court - as details of alleged messages heard | UK News," *Sky News*, April 24, 2026.

⁴ Will Hazell, "Activist on Palestine march calls Hamas hostage-taking 'an important act of resistance'," *The Telegraph*, December 30, 2023.

⁵ <https://www.foa.org.uk/whoweaare>, accessed August 1, 2026.

⁶ <https://www.foa.org.uk/about-palestine/misconceptions>, accessed August 9, 2026.

Usually when a resistance leader is killed I feel a sense of sadness that I can rationalise by knowing that they have fulfilled their desire for martyrdom. In the case of Yahya Sinwar and seeing his last moments, there's no sadness, just absolute pride.¹

FOA's founder, Ismail Patel, has long had links with Hamas figures, including its former political leader, Ismail Haniyeh.² It is little wonder that FOA has been called a 'pro-Hamas British organisation'.³

The National Association of Muslim Police (NAMP)⁴ produced a policy paper in 2025, written by then vice-president Khaldoun Kabbani, which described Zionism as 'one of the manifestations of anti-Muslim hatred', called the IDF a 'Zionist terrorist group' and defended Hamas against 'unverified stories about acts of violence'.⁵ There was a severe backlash and the paper was later deleted from the NAMP's website. But what was critical was that this was a faith based association openly lobbying for a change in public policy in what amounted to 'institutional entryism'.⁶

Other Anglo-Muslim groups that are heavily involved in anti-Israel and antizionist activity include *The British Palestinian Committee*, an organisation which engages in political advocacy, parliamentary outreach and public campaigning, *Islamic Relief UK*, the British branch of the international network *Islamic Relief Worldwide* and *Palestinian Youth Movement (Britain)*.

Some fringe Jewish groups are also responsible for disseminating antizionist viewpoints. They include *Vashti*, an online magazine which challenges 'homogenising visions of Jewish life reinforced by Zionism and the British Jewish mainstream'⁷; *Jewdas*, a radical left wing Jewish group that espouses anti-establishment

¹ https://x.com/sharaiz_710/status/1847355302796214574, 8:13 PM · Oct 18, 2024

² "Imported Influence: Foreign Funding, Regulatory Black Holes, and Extremist Connections of the post October 7 UK Protest Infrastructure," *NGO Monitor*, July 2026, 37-8.

³ <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/17858>, accessed September 5, 2026.

⁴ The NAMP is recognised by the National Police Chiefs' Council as a "staff association" and has a stated mission - to support Muslim police officers.

⁵ Charles Hyams and Gabriella Swirling, "Muslim police association defended Hamas against 'unverified' claims of violence," *The Telegraph*, June 6, 2026.

⁶ Khaldoun Kabbani, "When Islamism enters the British police," *cerif.eu*, accessed September 4, 2026.

⁷ <https://www.vashtimedia.com/about>, accessed September 4, 2026.

positions including antizionism and *Jews for Justice for Palestinians*, an activist group that calls on Israel to ‘become a genuinely multicultural multi-faith state’ rather than a Jewish one.¹ There are also ultra-orthodox groups such as the *Neturei Karta* (Guardians of the City) that oppose Zionism on theological grounds and who call for Israel's dismantling.



A demonstration of rabbis from Neturei Karta

Foreign influence operations:

The Islamic Republic of Iran should be recognised as an enemy state that directly threatens British interests. During an update given in October 2025, MI5 Director Ken McCallum said that his agency had ‘tracked more than twenty potentially lethal Iran-backed plots’ in the previous year.² In July 2025, Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee published a report on the harm posed to UK interests by the Iranian state, concluding that Iran posed a ‘wide-ranging, persistent and unpredictable threat’, including ‘physical threats posed to dissidents and other opponents’.³ Opponents included journalists⁴,

¹ <https://jfjfp.com/what-we-believe>, accessed September 4, 2026.

² “Director General Sir Ken McCallum gives threat update,” MI5, October 16, 2025, <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/director-general-sir-ken-mccallum-gives-threat-update>, accessed August 12, 2026.

³ “Iranian state threat activities in the UK,” House of Commons Library, June 16, 2026.

⁴ Iran International reports that Iranian authorities have threatened dozens of journalists in London, as well as their relatives in an effort to get them to resign.

regime opponents, Israelis and Jews. In addition, hackers close to the Iranian regime reportedly shut down a British power plant for four days following an unprecedented cyber-attack.¹

Iranian linked groups have also carried out attacks against Jews in the UK. In March and April 2026, the shadowy Iran linked group *Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya* (*The Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right*) claimed responsibility for a number of attacks across Europe that targeted 'Jewish communities, Israeli diplomatic missions, financial institutions and Iranian dissident journalists'.² This included an attempted arson attack on a synagogue in North London and the bombing of four ambulances belonging to the volunteer-led ambulance service, Hatzola.³ The fact that the *Companions* are decentralised and lack any defined leadership suggests that it is a 'ghost proxy', one that uses young, financially motivated individuals, recruited by local individuals, to carry out attacks. Such hybrid warfare has been used extensively by Russia following the invasion of Ukraine.⁴

But these threats manifest themselves in less violent ways too. Iran, along with autocratic allies like Russia and China, sees information warfare as essential to its goal of destabilising the West. Aware that conventional might cannot defeat its adversaries and that it needs plausible deniability to distance itself from the consequences of its propaganda, Iran uses subversion and disinformation as a 'crucial element of its strategy' with 'social media as the ideal platform for waging this kind of war'.⁵ Heidar Moslehi, a former Iranian intelligence chief, sums this up well: "We do not have a physical war with the enemy, but we are engaged in heavy information warfare with the enemy."⁶ This strategy is particularly effective within democracies where the aim is to change perceptions among those who believe the

¹ Tony Diver, Rozina Sabur and Matt Oliver, "Iranian hackers shut down UK power plant," *The Telegraph*, August 22, 2026.

² Guy Fiennes, "Islamic movement of the Companions of the Right: The 'gig-economy' proxy group attacking Europe," *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*, April 30, 2026.

³ Dan Sabbagh, "Golders Green attack claim highlights rise of shadowy Iran-linked group," *The Guardian*, April 29, 2026.

⁴ Krysia Sikora, Louis Savola and Bret Schafer, "Europe's Other Battlefields: Foreign Hybrid Threats in the EU," *Institute for Strategic Dialogue* (2026).

⁵ Eliana Aiken, "Anti-Semitism as Information Warfare," *Tikvah*, August 2026.

⁶ Seth G. Jones and Danika Newlee, "The United States' Soft War with Iran," centre for Strategic & International Studies, June 11, 2019.

government has failed them and who need a simple explanation for its failure. Antisemitism is the classic conspiracy theory that feeds that need, given that it has longevity, is adaptable to multiple situations and is capable of arousing the strongest emotions.

The Islamic Republic has used its soft power media apparatus to spread support for terrorist groups that call for Israel's destruction, and to disseminate antisemitic content.¹ *The Islamic Radio and Television Union* (IRTVU) is a membership group for media entities whose messaging is aligned with the Iranian regime and its regional proxies, including Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis. According to its website, IRTVU was set up in 2007 'to create a strong and cohesive Islamic media bloc based on the teachings of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and for the purpose of confronting false and malicious propaganda of enemies of Islam and dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information'.² Several of its member organisations are registered in Britain. These include the Manchester-based *Hidayat TV*, *Ahlul Bayt TV* and *Al Masirah TV*, the main Houthi media channel. Another IRTVU member is *LuaLua TV*, which uses its online broadcasts and social media channels to heap praise on senior Hamas and Hezbollah commanders, whom it describes as martyrs and heroes. *LuaLua TV*, which has offices in Wembley, hailed Qassim Soleimani as a martyr.³ He is the former commander of the Iranian Quds Force, an IRGC division responsible for clandestine operations. There is also extensive evidence of how dozens of charities set up in the UK have 'ideological alignment, structural linkage and interaction with institutions and individuals' linked to the Iranian regime.⁴ Together, these vehicles of 'soft power' are used to spread 'Khomeinist ideology, foster antisemitism, and conduct transnational repression'.⁵

Moreover, the Iranian government has provided enthusiastic support for the anti-Israel protests that have erupted in western capitals since the October 7 attacks. In the words of President Biden's former director of national intelligence, Avril Haines:

¹ Rory Tingle, "London TV station is operating as propaganda arm of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard and must be shut down to stop spread of Tehran misinformation, ministers warned," *The Daily Mail*, January 26, 2026.

² <https://irtvu.co/article.php?id=375796>, accessed September 27, 2026.

³ Camilla Turner, "Iranian network linked to Revolutionary Guard openly operating in the UK," *The Telegraph*, May 2, 2026.

⁴ Undue Influence, 1.

⁵ Mathilda Heller, "Report reveals Iranian soft-power infrastructure in the United Kingdom through charity sector," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 12, 2026.

Iranian government actors have sought to opportunistically take advantage of ongoing protests regarding the war in Gaza. . . . We have observed actors tied to Iran's government posing as activists online, seeking to encourage protests, and even providing financial support to protesters.¹

Moreover, its attempts to shift opinions about October 7 also bore fruit. It has been estimated that after October 7, a quarter of all accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X that posted about the Hamas attack were fake, which was 'part of a coordinated bot campaign to portray Hamas favorably'. The majority of accounts within this 'bot army' were 'sponsored by Iran or other Hamas allies'² and many will have influenced people in Britain.

Qatar: The other nation state that has used its vast media empire to disseminate tropes of vicious antizionism and classical antisemitism is Qatar.³ Despite its multibillion dollar investment in western economies, Qatar remains, after Iran, the Middle East's leading sponsor of global Islamist terror. It hosts and funds the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as its Palestinian branch, Hamas. It has hosted Hamas's political office and given refuge to its leaders including Ismail Haniyeh, as well as providing billions of dollars in funding to the terror movement. It has given financial support to Salafist jihadi groups in Syria, including the Nusra Front, and given money to Islamist groups in Libya.⁴ In the past, Qatar also provided a safe haven for future 9/11 mastermind Khaled Sheikh Mohammed, giving him advance warning that the US were trying to trap him and helping him escape. It also hosts *Al Jazeera*, a leading 'purveyor of Islamist extremism, jihadism, and Salafism' in the region.⁵ By providing such large sums to 'an assertive Islamist milieu in the West', it is clear that Qatar has often pursued 'a route in conflict

¹ "Anti-Semitism as Information Warfare," Tikvah.

² *ibid.*

³ Suzan Quitaz, "How Qatari media fuelled global antisemitism after October 7," *The Jerusalem Post*, May 23, 2026.

⁴ Al-Masry Al-Youm, "Qatar's support to terrorist groups in Libya 'will not pass without charge': Haftar," *egyptindependent.com*, June 1, 2017.

⁵ Emad Elhady, 'The Western Media Misguided Narrative about Al Jazeera,' *The Washington Institute*, May 22, 2018.

with British interests'.¹ Qatar's media empire, connected directly to the country's centres of power, is run according to certain rules: 'no criticism of Qatar's rulers and domestic politics', 'amplifying Muslim Brotherhood and affiliated Islamist movements across the region' and amplifying the campaign 'to libel, to boycott, to vilify and de-legitimize Israel'.²



Let us turn to the anti-Israel protests which have convulsed the streets of Britain and other countries for three years and produced a deep level of polarisation. There is an assumption that these are 'spontaneous, grassroots expressions of public opinion', defended as a direct response to the events in Gaza. One major study into the financing of such protests explodes this myth, showing instead that the groups responsible for these protests are 'part of a sophisticated, internationally connected and funded ecosystem' which 'launders extremist narratives into UK mainstream politics, media, academia and public life'.³ A number of the organisations already mentioned are part of this ecosystem, and include the Muslim Association of Britain, Stop the War and Friends of Al-Aqsa. The report discovered that at least 11 of the 40 major organisations that are part of this anti-Israel ecosystem have links to extremist organisations such as Hamas, Hezbollah and

¹ Sir John Jenkins, Dr Damon L Perry and Dr Paul Stott, "Qatar: Friend or Frenemy?" *Policy Exchange*, 6.

² Suzan Quitaz, "How Qatari media fueled global antisemitism after October 7," *The Jerusalem Post*.

³ Imported Influence, 7.

the Iranian regime, or have officials who have met extremist actors.¹ Yet hostile state actors, such as Iran, China, Russia and Qatar, as well as anti-western radicals like the Muslim Brotherhood, sit at the apex of this ecosystem, giving 'a top-down, orchestrated order' to the marches.² There is also disturbing evidence that the IRGC Intelligence Organisation and Iran's Ministry of Intelligence has blackmailed Iranians into attending anti-Israeli marches by threatening their family members back home.³

Critically, a significant part of UK antizionist activity does not exist separate from a web of homegrown and foreign funded organisations that mobilise their networks at every opportunity. Tackling this embedded network is essential for national security.

¹ Nineteen receive UK government money, via the FCDO or via Gift Aid.

² Imported Influence, 8.

³ Ali Hamedani and Lorin Bell-Cross, "Iran blackmails expats in UK to go to pro-Palestine protests," *The Jewish Chronicle*, August 12, 2026.

How antizionism harms Jews

The preceding discussion has hopefully made it abundantly clear that while antizionism is a threat to the State of Israel and its citizens, it is equally a threat to Jews outside of Israel. Antizionists fundamentally conceive of their enemy as a domestic threat. They believe that Zionists control the levers of power in their own countries, including their governments, the media, the banking system, the universities, the courts and any other institution which has refused to genuflect before an antizionist agenda. They charge the Zionists with encouraging Islamophobia and anti-black racism because they believe that Zionism is a white supremacist ideology that suppresses the rights of people of colour. They believe that Zionism is a strategic threat to the West because it is purportedly responsible for the growing rise of militant Islamist violence. They accuse Zionists of buying western politicians' silence over Israeli behaviour, turning Parliament into a foreign colony. Defeating Zionism is seen as a western project, not just a Middle Eastern one, and it means confronting the centre of support among Jews themselves. There are nine central ways in which antizionist ideologies, narratives and tropes harm Jews.

1. Denies Jewish indigeneity

Antizionists deny that Jews are indigenous to Israel, despite their three millennia presence in that land. This is partly done by reinterpreting Judaism as a non-Zionist belief system, effectively arguing that it is a faith with theological commitments but no project of national self-determination. Yet Jews do possess a longstanding connection to Israel, spiritually, culturally and historically. They are not an alien settler population living as interlopers in Israel but an indigenous people whose 'sacred territory anchors their identity, history, and culture'.¹ Thus, antizionists distort Jewish history and the Jewish faith to suit their twisted political agenda, an act of unprecedented cultural vandalism.

2. Attacks the international legal rights of the Jewish people

An indigenous people has the right to national self-determination in line with international law. In article 1 of the UN Charter, it is clearly stated

¹ Yehudis Litvak, "The Anthropologist Deconstructing Antizionism," *Aish*, June 28, 2026.

that the development of 'friendly relations among nations' is based on 'respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples'. The 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also calls on all states to promote the realisation of the right of self-determination by which people can 'freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development'.¹ Antizionism is a blatant attack on the Jewish collective right to self-determination and thus an attack on the legal institutions that granted those legal rights in the first place. It seeks to render the world, not *Judenfrei* like Nazism, but 'Judenstaatrein, free of a Jewish state'.²

3. Denies the Jewish people's right to a safe haven

As well as being the central focus for Jewish life in the world, Israel is also the world's only guaranteed safe haven for Jews, the one country to which Jews can turn if conditions elsewhere become intolerable. A glance at modern history in the years prior to Israel's creation reveals a world where Jews were continually subject to massacres, pogroms, restrictions and forced migration. They lived at the whim of fascist dictators, communist reactionaries, religious radicals and populist politicians. The demonic, systematic and scientifically organised mass extermination of European Jewry in the Holocaust reflected what Menachem Begin referred to as the age old problem of 'Jewish powerlessness'. The creation of a Jewish homeland was the necessary corrective.

When hundreds of thousands of Jews were forced to leave the Arab world after 1948, many were welcomed as citizens of the new Israeli state. Israel was a place of refuge for vast numbers of Russian Jews who faced appalling restrictions, discrimination and prejudice during the Soviet era. Similarly, when Ethiopian Jews were caught up in the country's civil war in the 1980s with their lives at risk, it was Israel that rescued them with a series of intrepid military operations. No other country would have carried out those operations, certainly not with the consummate preparation and skill of the Israeli forces.

¹ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI).

² Alan Johnson, "Antisemitic anti-Zionism is on the rise and is a threat to UK Jewry: Written evidence submitted by the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre," 3.

Antizionists would ensure that Israel could no longer prioritise the rescue of Jews from around the world because it would no longer be a 'Jewish state', merely a state of all its citizens. This would at a stroke destroy the protective status that it holds for the world's Jewish populations. This is why a one state solution in which all the inhabitants of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza (in total, over 15 million people) would live in one state, neither Israeli nor Palestinian, can never be viable. In such an arrangement, the Arab population could grow to outnumber the country's Jews and, with a demographic majority on their side, seek a 'democratic' change in the political status quo whereby the country would become another Muslim majority state. The treatment of religious minorities in the recent history of the Middle East is hardly an unalloyed story of tolerance and equality. All too frequently, Christian populations in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as non-Christian minorities such as the Ahmadis, Baha'i and the Druze, have found themselves at the mercy of authoritarian religious bodies and Islamist courts. In this baleful situation, those minorities have been progressively stripped of their lives, liberties and prosperity. The same could happen to the Jewish inhabitants of another Arab state. Quite simply, antizionists seek a future in which Israeli Jews are potentially subject to dhimmitude once again. Israelis are determined to avoid any such future.

4. Requires eliminationist attitude towards Israelis

Just as the final logic of classical antisemitism was the elimination of the Jews¹, the final logic of antizionism is eliminationist too. For as Alan Johnson has put it, antizionism is above all 'a programme to abolish Israel'.² Yet many antizionists, especially from the BDS movement, claim that their vision of a 'Zionfrei' world can be accomplished peacefully i.e. by demographic change or economic pressure.³ Naturally this runs up against the obvious fact that the Israeli population

¹ Elimination historically was accomplished either through mass conversion, which removed the Jews' religious identity, the removal of Jews through expulsion or the physical murder of Jews.

² Johnson, "Antisemitic anti-Zionism is on the rise and is a threat to UK Jewry."

³ Of course, antizionism can be carried out in non-violent means. But it is hardly surprising that a movement which wishes to eliminate a nation state and which dehumanises that state's population would inspire acts of violence, both against people and property.

will never relent on wanting to live safely and securely in a Jewish homeland. Israelis will never consent to a programme of national suicide, especially knowing that the fate of Jews living under Muslim rule was marked by periods of intense bloodletting and violence. That is why the ultimate logic of Middle Eastern antizionism involves murderous violence against Israelis, both inside and outside of Israel.

Israelis have certainly suffered decades of terror, whether in the form of suicide bombings, stabbings, shootings and rocket attacks. The mass pogrom of October 7 represented the largest loss of Jewish life on any one day since the Holocaust. Hamas and its allies murdered nearly 1,200 people, over two thirds of whom were civilians, and more than 250 people were taken hostage in Gaza. Within days, the terror group promised to carry out these attacks again and again until Israel had been destroyed.¹ Their patron, Iran, has continued to cleave to an annihilationist agenda predicated on destroying the Jewish state. In Tehran's Palestine Square, a clock counts down to the date when the state predicts that Israel will be destroyed, following a prediction by Ali Khamenei that nothing would remain of Israel by 2040.² There have also been terror attacks committed against Jews around the world, such as the 1994 bombing of the AMIA building in Buenos Aires which killed 85 people.³ This violence has been feted by antizionists as a form of 'resistance' to colonial aggression; what Susie Linfield has labelled 'the progressive atrocity'.⁴ Violence is not incidental to the cause of antizionism. It expresses its most inescapable logic.

5. Incites violence against Jewish community

Incitement against Jews has been a regular feature of the marches and demonstrations held against Israel since October 7. Part of that incitement comes from the many chants that are repeated, zombie like, on those marches. The most ubiquitous chant of all, 'From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free', is often taken by western apologists as a simple bid for freedom and self-determination, with Palestinians likened to a modern version of the ANC. But it can more plausibly be

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJNccvNJtGk>, accessed July 3, 2026.

² "Unveiling clock showing 8,411 days left for Israel, Iranians rage against Jewish state," *The Times of Israel*, June 23, 2017.

³ The bomb struck the Jewish community centre known as the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA) building.

⁴ Susie Linfield, "The Return of the Progressive Atrocity," *Quillette*, November 18, 2023.

viewed as a call for the elimination of the Jewish state as a sovereign entity. It is a maximalist position that sees all of present-day Israel as occupied land and is ideologically akin to the antisemitic Hamas charter which calls for Israel's destruction.¹ Moreover, political context matters. As Robin Simcox has put it: 'If you are chanting "from the river to the sea" in the context of the largest slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust, you have forfeited your right to the benefit of the doubt about what your intent is and the message you are trying to convey.'²

Another chant heard regularly on anti-Israel marches is to 'globalise the intifada'. As with the term *jihad*, which means 'struggle', apologists like to argue that this is a peaceful call to support Palestinian resistance to occupation. But while the term *intifada* means 'shaking off' and can reference civil disobedience, it is far more commonly linked to the mass violence of the Second Intifada (2000-5), a traumatic period of Palestinian violence which led to over 1,000 Israeli deaths through suicide bombings and murders, as well as the Hamas assault on southern Israel.³ As such, it can be seen as a clear incitement to violence against the Jewish community. It is no coincidence that 95% of British Jews consider the chant to be a call to violence against them.⁴

At anti-Israel rallies, one often hears: *Khaybar, Khaybar, ya yahud! Jaish Muhammad soufa ya 'oud* (Khaybar, Khaybar, oh Jews, the army of Mohammed will return)⁵. This references a series of actions taken in 628 CE by Mohammed's forces against local Jewish tribes in Khaybar. Those actions, far from being peaceful, involved intense bloodletting, resulting in the slaughter and subjugation of Jews. That phrase literally invokes the mass killing of Jews and reminds present day observers of Islam's alleged superiority over its enemies. It suits those who depict the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians as part of a cosmic struggle between the Muslim and the infidel.

¹ The same argument can apply to those on the far right of the Israeli political spectrum who demand an Israel (and disputed territories) shorn of an Arab population.

² Robin Simcox, "Countering Extremist Threats in the UK: An Address by Robin Simcox," *Royal United Services Institute*, October 19, 2023.

³ In the author's meetings with senior figures from the Metropolitan Police, the refrain most often given was that whether such calls were incitement depended on context.

⁴ "New polling: Majority of British Jews see no future in UK," *Campaign Against Antisemitism*, December 21, 2025.

⁵ David Rose, "Two men charged with hate crime for 'Khaybar' chant at anti-Israel demo," *The Jewish Chronicle*, April 20, 2023.

Other chants have featured calls for extreme violence against the population of the Jewish state. During his appearance at Glastonbury in 2025, the rapper Pascal Robinson-Foster, one half of the duo known as Bob Vylan, screamed 'Death, Death to the IDF' to a huge audience. There was widespread condemnation of the chants, as well as of the BBC for not cutting transmission during Pascal-Foster's verbal onslaught, and a police investigation was duly opened. Before this, the same singer, during a performance at Alexandra Palace, shouted to crowds: "Death to every single IDF soldier out there as an agent of terror for Israel. Death to the IDF."¹ Few should have been shocked by the incendiary nature of these comments, given that such incitement is a common theme within the antizionist movement. Taken together, Lord Walney is surely right to say that British Jews have faced 'a sustained climate of intimidation, exclusion and violence on our streets'.² There is no suggestion that incitement to violence is endorsed by every antizionist or every protestor on an anti-Israel march. But the key figures in this movement appear to embrace it with gusto.

6. Subjects Jews to a discriminatory purity test

Militant antizionists subject Jews to a purity or loyalty test as a condition of entering polite society. They insist that Jews, unlike any other ethnic or religious minority, answer questions and clarify positions in regard to Israel and Zionism, so as to determine that they are not 'contaminated' by racism, colonialism and genocide. If there is even the merest hint that the person has had a tenuous connection to the Jewish state, they are all too frequently shunned, ostracised, doxxed³ and demonised by their peers. There is no room for nuance here. Jews must declare their fealty to the Free Palestine movement or be cast into the devil's lair.

To take just one example from many, it was reported that a number of American Jewish writers had been 'harassed on social media, review-bombed on Goodreads, and subjected to online calls not to be read, platformed, or engaged with if they had ever shown

¹ "UK police investigate Bob Vylan pre-Glastonbury concert," RTE, July 3, 2025.

² Imported Influence, 5.

³ When an individual is doxxed, their personal information, including their phone number, address and employment details, is made public, often with the intent to harass and threaten that person.

support for Israel or Zionism'.¹ These were not writers connected to the Israeli state and they had no association with wrongdoing or criminality. The mere fact of their Jewishness was enough to arouse suspicion.

More recently, in 2026, London Rabbi Yoni Birnbaum was refused a holiday rental in France after he refused to answer a question about whether his movement condemned 'the violent actions of the Israeli army, on orders from the Israeli government, in Gaza, the occupied West Bank, and recently in Lebanon?' As the rabbi put it, "I can't imagine anyone else in society receiving an email like that."²

These and other cases show the extent to which the antizionist movement unfairly and illegally discriminates against Jews. If a Jew anywhere fails the ideological purity test of denouncing Israel, Zionism and their own community, they face instant cancellation. Books do not get published, shows are cancelled, performers are de-platformed and individuals are ostracised. Worse, the fear of contamination leads to a chilling effect on Jewish cultural life. Books go unwritten, shows are not produced and artists are never enlisted because publishers and producers quake under fear of retribution from the BDS movement.

7. Creates a hostile environment for Jews in public services

When they arrive on campuses, many Jews will join a Jewish society which provides them with a sense of identity, community and belonging. Such societies usually endorse the basic principle of Zionism and make connections with events that take place in Israel. For antizionists, this is anathema and demands radical action which happens to be deeply discriminatory towards Jews. In 1980s Britain, antizionist activists from the Socialist Workers Party and other factions sought to close down Jewish societies on campus, arguing that their connection to Israel was racist and illegitimate. The groups that sought to close down these societies saw no irony in being the anti-racists who banned Jews.³

Today, campus expressions of support for Israel also run afoul of the BDS movement whose aim is to suppress any program or event that promotes 'the normalization of Israel in the global academy' and

¹ Lisa Tolin, Geraldine Baum, Malka Margolies, "A Silent Moratorium," PEN America, July 9, 2026.

² Emily Smith, "Rabbi forced to condemn Israel before booking French holiday villa," *The Telegraph*, June 26, 2026.

³ For a fuller discussion, see Dave Rich, *The Left's Jewish Problem* chapter 4.

which demands the singing out of any individual who is deemed to be 'complicit with or supportive of Israel's alleged crimes'. As the authors of one report write, such campaigning cannot help but 'inflict direct and substantive harm on Israel's on-campus supporters, particularly Jewish and pro-Israel students'. This is because the actions demanded by supporters of BDS include attempting to 'cancel, shut down or disrupt events' which feature Israelis leaders or scholars or anyone perceived to be 'normalising' Israel, refusing to write letters of recommendation for students wanting to study in Israel and 'boycotting academic programs or projects' on campus that aim to bring Israelis and Palestinians together.¹



A student encampment at the University of Toronto

It is also true that BDS campaigns create a hostile environment for Jews to live in. A resolution from the U.S. House of Representatives noted that the BDS movement 'leads to the intimidation and harassment of Jewish students and others who support Israel' on American campuses.² In Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau observed that there was a link between BDS and Jewish students

¹ "The Harassment of Jewish Students on U.S. Campuses How Eliminationist Anti-Zionism and Academic BDS Incite Campus Antisemitism," AMCHA Initiative, September 2019, 7.

² H.Res.246 - Opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel, <https://bit.ly/2JNhTQW>

feeling “unsafe on campus because of their religion.”¹ A study from Brandeis University stated that ‘one of the strongest predictors of perceiving a hostile climate toward Israel and Jews was the presence of an active Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) group on campus.’² The climate of hostility has also been a marked feature of life for Jews on UK campuses. A recent report by the Union of Jewish Students, titled *Time for Change*, highlights ‘the cult of antisemitism’ within universities. Among its key findings are that:

One in four students (23%) have seen behaviour that targets Jewish students for their religion/ethnicity.

49% of students have heard slogans or chants glorifying Hamas, Hezbollah or other proscribed groups on campus.

47% have witnessed justification of the October 7th attacks, rising to 77% among those who encounter Israel-Palestine protests regularly.

Universities where protests are more frequent have seen higher levels of antisemitism, and four in ten (39%) of students who witness regular Israel-Palestine protests have seen Jewish students harassed often.

One in six (16%) students believe that glorifying the October 7th attacks, including the murder of civilians and children, should be protected as free speech.

Half of students (50%) feel socially pressured to hold certain views on Israel Palestine, and a third (33%) say they feel unsafe engaging in political debates.³

Taken together, Robin Simcox is right to say that BDS ‘contributes to a toxic and permissive environment for antisemitic, and at times extremist, narratives on university campuses’.⁴

¹ Town hall at Brock University, January 15, 2019 <https://bit.ly/2LaAgyx>

² Brandeis University, Hotspots of Antisemitism on U.S. Campuses, <https://bit.ly/2ZlqwLE>

³ “Time for Change: A Landmark Report on UK Campus Antisemitism,” *Union of Jewish Students*, March 2026, 5, 12, 14.

⁴ Simcox, “Countering Extremist Threats in the UK.”

BDS also discriminates against Israelis within academia, the overwhelming majority being Jewish academics. One example came in 2002 when Mona Baker, Professor at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), removed two Israeli academics from the editorial boards of a publication she was editing. Baker had made clear that it was their Israeli identity, rather than anything they had said and done, that led to their sacking. Blocking people because of their nationality is an egregious form of discrimination. It is especially reprehensible, not just because it violates the cardinal principle of academic freedom on which all research and scholarship depends, but because it targets people from that very sector of society that is most likely to question government narratives and stand for truth. In the words of Jonathan Freeland: 'Sacking two translators because they are Israeli is not just morally wrong, it is tactically absurd. We've had smart sanctions; now make way for dumb boycotts.'¹

The same hostile environment has been created in other public services, including health. Within four months of the October 7 attacks, 60 medical professionals were reported for 'alleged antisemitic conduct or remarks against their colleagues across the UK.'² One NHS neurologist with twenty years' experience took to social media to praise Yahya Sinwar, deny Hamas atrocities and celebrate Israeli deaths. Another doctor, dubbed 'Jihad GP,' was temporarily suspended but then reinstated despite being a 'long-standing executive committee member of the (banned) Hizb ut-Tahrir Islamist group.'³ One Jewish patient found 'Boycott Israel Apartheid' stickers above his bed.⁴ At the annual meeting of the British Medical Association, one in ten motions had to be removed because they 'risked being perceived as discriminatory, more specifically, anti-Semitic.' Regional divisions called for the BMA to boycott Israeli medical journals, conferences and academic exchanges and to lobby the government to stop supplying arms to Israel. According to Prof David Katz, Chairman of the Jewish Medical Association (JMA), Jewish doctors at the conference could 'expect to encounter a mix of overt anti-Semitism, bullying, harassment

¹ Jonathan Freedland, "Firing on our friends," *The Guardian*, July 10, 2002.

² Guy Lynn and Stephen Menon, "Antisemitism complaints to GMC surge after Hamas attacks," *BBC News*, May 8, 2024.

³ George Chesterton, "The NHS neurologist freely spouting anti-Semitic hate online," *The Daily Telegraph*, November 19, 2024.

⁴ "Antisemitic abuse rises within NHS and staff are the 'worst culprits'," *The Times*, March 6, 2025.

and flag-waving activism.¹ Worse, the GMC has effectively swept antisemitism complaints under the carpet while no work is underway to adopt the IHRA definition.² Studies show that Jewish medical staff and patients have experienced a similar upsurge in antisemitism in other western countries.

8. Spreads dehumanising lies that reproduce tropes of classical antisemitism

Classical antisemitism has always depicted the Jew as a grand conspirator, a demonic figure responsible for the most hideous, inhuman and world-historical crimes. Among its central calumnies are that Jews killed the son of God, brought the plague upon mankind, betrayed Mohammed, ritually murdered Christian children throughout the Middle Ages, defiled the white race, caused the Second World War, unleashed communism on the world and poisoned millions by spreading Covid. Amid a torrent of dehumanising lies, Jews have been depicted as ‘the Devil’s agents on earth’ and ‘a preternaturally powerful elite that enslaves and destroys humankind’³. In the eyes of their enemies Jews are, to quote Naya Lekht, not just ‘the other’ but the ‘megavillain’, standing in the way of global progress and order.⁴

Antizionists continue the theme but focus obsessively on Israel, which is imagined, not as a nation state, but as a uniquely malign, corrupt and bloodthirsty blot on humankind. With Israel depicted in this way, there is no shortage of world-historical crimes and misdemeanours for which it can be blamed. Among the chief anti-Israel conspiracy theories are the following: Israel caused 9/11⁵; Israel created ISIS and that its founder, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, was a Mossad agent⁶; Congress and Parliament are ‘owned’ by Zionists and

¹ Michael Searles, “Doctors claim BMA conference is a ‘vehicle for Jew hatred’,” *The Daily Telegraph*, June 24, 2024.

² “General Medical Council proud to sweep antisemitism claims under the carpet,” *Campaign Against Antisemitism*, September 30, 2026.

³ John-Paul Pagano, “Blood Libel: The Conspiracy Theory That Jews Are ‘Anti-Human’,” *National Review*, September 23, 2019.

⁴ Naya Lekht, “The Shadow of Babi Yar: How the Soviets Taught the West to Erase the Jews,” *Jewish Journal*, July 31, 2025.

⁵ Jeremy Stahl, “The Rise of ‘Truth’,” *Slate*, September 6, 2011.

⁶ Bruce Riedel, “Saudi Grand Mufti calls ISIS “part of the Israeli army,” *Brookings*, December 28, 2015.

western foreign policy is dictated by the Zionist lobby¹; COVID was a Zionist bioweapon²; Zionist leaders faked the Holocaust to engineer western sympathy for their cause; Israel's actions have exacerbated climate change³ and, most recently, that Israel, along with the US, engineered 80,000 migrants illegally breaching the border from Morocco to CEUTA in Spain.⁴ That obsessive and lethal hatred explains why antizionism is more than a political disagreement with Israel. It has morphed into an all-encompassing worldview, an Israelophobic, conspiracy-driven meta-narrative that builds upon both classical antisemitism and deeply anti-western agendas. To quote Alan Johnson:

In short, that which the demonological Jew once was in older forms of antisemitism, demonological Israel now is in contemporary antisemitic anti-Zionism: uniquely malevolent, full of blood lust, all-controlling, the hidden hand, tricky, always acting in bad faith, the obstacle to a better, purer, more spiritual world, uniquely deserving of punishment, and so on.⁵

Many of these dehumanising libels incorporate traditional antisemitic tropes. Placards at anti-Israel and antizionist marches claim Israel has committed a Holocaust against Palestinians. They have compared the war in Gaza to the Nazi extermination of European Jewry⁶, then claimed that Israel has exploited the Holocaust to justify its actions in Gaza.⁷ Accusations of dual loyalty are evident, ones which claim that Jews' real allegiances are not to the countries in which they live but to

¹ Mathilda Heller, "ZOG conspiracy posts spiked over threefold online during 2026 Iran war, study finds," *The Jerusalem Post*, July 22, 2026.

² Erica Hellerstein, "The fevered world of antisemitic vaccine conspiracies," *codastory.com*, March 15, 2021, accessed September 4, 2026.

³ "How Israel Is Fueling The Climate Crisis," *US Campaign for Palestinian Rights*, January 13, 2025.

⁴ Dudi Kogan "Spain blames Israel, US for Ceuta crisis," *Israel Hayom*, July 31, 2026.

⁵ Johnson, "Evidence on Antisemitism."

⁶ "Man pleads guilty to displaying Nazi symbol during pro-Palestinian rally in Sydney," *The Independent*, October 24, 2024.

⁷ Raz Segal, "Israel must stop weaponising the Holocaust," *The Guardian*, October 24, 2023.

the Jewish state, imagined as an evil intrusion in western civilisation.¹ Other placards are replete with blood libels against present day Jews, with lurid allegations that Zionists are baby killers who revel in Arab or Muslim blood.² Equally ugly is the charge of Jewish deicide, the ancient calumny according to which the Jews killed Jesus. This was manifested politically in a keffiyeh clad 'baby Jesus' being placed in an incubator outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.³ Jewish leaders are also accused of controlling global politics and orchestrating policies that are nominally being carried out by western politicians. Typical was one poster at a rally which read: 'We know who is pulling the strings but Biden, you have blood on your hands.'⁴ Placards and images like these, which incorporate tropes of Jew hatred, are all examples of what Naya Lekht calls 'recurring monikers of demonization'.⁵



From a London demonstration (2021)

9. Denies or minimises Jewish victimhood

Antizionists often attack the notion of Jewish victimhood, both that of the past and the present. They claim that Jews have 'weaponised' the

¹ Morgan Lowrie, "Université de Montréal suspends lecturer filmed at Israel-Hamas protest," *Montreal Gazette*, November 10, 2023.

² "Warwick University student apologises for brandishing poster depicting Benjamin Netanyahu drinking blood from jar labelled 'Gaza'," *Campaign Against Antisemitism*, <https://antisemitism.org/warwick-university-student-apologises-for-brandishing-poster-depicting-benjamin-netanyahu-drinking-blood-from-jar-labelled-gaza>, accessed April 17, 2025.

³ <https://x.com/ajplus/status/1739397852671934944>, 9:28 PM · Dec 25, 2023.

⁴ "At Anti-Israel March in D.C., Explicit Expressions of Support for Terror and Antisemitism," Anti-Defamation *League*, November 4, 2023.

⁵ Naya Lekht, "Plots, libels, accusations: Fingers pointed at Jews go back centuries," *JNS*, September 3, 2025.

Holocaust into allowing them to commit crimes against Palestinians. They attack sites that memorialise dead Jews and exploit them for their own purposes. They deny or minimise Israeli suffering in an attempt to focus the world on the real (read: sole) victims: the Palestinians. They typically regard Jews who claim to have been attacked, raped and disfigured by Palestinians as liars who manipulate others into disbelieving their own crimes. Since October 7, there are so many examples of this phenomenon that it cannot be considered a mere coincidence.

The desecration of Holocaust memory has been a major feature of the post October 7 landscape. In 2024, the Monument to the Righteous of Belgium was defaced by anti-Israel graffiti calling for violence against Jews.¹ In Poland, a memorial to Jews who faced deportation to the Warsaw Ghetto was vandalized by graffiti that compared the suffering of Jews in the ghetto to Gazan Palestinians in 2025.² In May 2024, a Parisian memorial (Wall of the Righteous) dedicated to honouring those who rescued Jews during the Second World War was defaced by painted blood red hands.³ In Germany, a number of *stolpersteine* (small cubes with a brass plate that memorialise a victim of Nazi extermination) were defaced with antisemitic graffiti such as 'Jews are perpetrators'.⁴ So common were these attacks that in the UK, authorities were forced to cover the Holocaust memorial in Hyde Park so as to prevent vandalism.⁵ Some have chosen to desecrate past Jewish victimhood on Holocaust Memorial Day with Holocaust inversion, using the meme 'Never Again for Anyone' to suggest that the victims have become perpetrators. Elsewhere, some chose to sacralise Hind Rajab, a six-year Palestinian girl who was tragically killed by Israeli forces in her car, with references

¹ Michael Starr, "Escalate for Palestine: Belgian Holocaust memorial defaced," *The Jerusalem Post*, June 23, 2024.

² Ben Sales, "Warsaw Ghetto memorial defaced with anti-Israel graffiti," *The Jerusalem Post*, January 8, 2025.

³ The bloodied hands related to the ambush and lynching of two Israeli reservists, Yossi Avrahami and Vadim Nurzhitz, on October 12, 2000 after they had made a wrong turn in PA controlled territory. The two soldiers were killed by a mob of Palestinians, after which, a young Palestinian killer, Aziz Salha, waved his bloodied hands to a frenzied crowd below. The bloodied hands really symbolise the desire for Jewish blood.

⁴ Jacob Frankel, "Holocaust Memorials Defaced in Belgium, Germany as Antisemitism Continues to Spike in Europe," *Algemeiner.com*, June 20, 2024.

⁵ Canaan Lidor, "Authorities cover Holocaust memorial at London park favored by anti-Israel protesters," *The Times of Israel*, April 28, 2024.

to Jewish Holocaust victims. One news outlet, which understandably lamented her death, nonetheless described her as 'the Anne Frank of Gaza'.¹ Perhaps the worst story was that of an anti-Zionist group in Germany which announced plans for a protest at a memorial at Buchenwald, which would have been held on April 11, the anniversary of the camp's liberation, in response to a ban on pro-Palestinian symbols at the site. The group called *Kufiyas in Buchenwald* described the memorial as a place of 'historical revisionism and genocide denial'.² For some of these activists, the Holocaust is not a story of Jewish persecution but another opportunity to attack Jews in the present.

As well as desecrating the memory of past Jewish victims, there were attempts to blot out present day Jewish ones. After October 7, posters of Israeli hostage victims were put up in public places such as telephone boxes, shop shutters, lampposts and street signs, both raising awareness of their plight but also reminding the public that there were two humanitarian crises in Gaza, not one. But the idea that there were two sets of victims in Gaza was too much for hard core anti-Israel protestors. Many tore down these posters as soon as they had been put up. In London, it was estimated that up to half the posters were removed within 48 hours³ and there were other cases of posters, even of young children, being defaced.⁴ In the US, there was a similar phenomenon of poster ripping and desecration⁵ while a former French foreign ministry employee was filmed tearing down posters of children and shouting "Israel assassin."⁶

Of course, the ultimate form of Jewish victimhood denial was claiming that the October 7 atrocities had not happened, or that Israel was responsible for them. The Telegram group 'Uncensored Truths' has spread anti-Israel material since October 7, including denialist

¹ Yvonne Ridley, "Hind Rajab: The Anne Frank of Gaza's genocide," *Middle East Monitor*, February 3, 2025.

² Grace Gilson, "Anti-Zionist group's planned protest of keffiyeh ban at Buchenwald memorial sparks outrage," *The Times of Israel*, February 24, 2026.

³ Katie Grant, "Israeli hostages: 50% of posters in London ripped down within 48 hours," *The Jewish Chronicle*, November 2, 2023.

⁴ Daniel Ben-David, "Man filmed writing 'colonisers' on posters of Israeli hostages," *The Jewish Chronicle*, October 18, 2023.

⁵ Deon J Hampton, "As people across the U.S. hang posters of Hamas hostages, others tear them down," *NBC News*, November 10, 2023.

⁶ Carl Deconinck, "Former French foreign ministry official caught tearing down posters of children kidnapped by Hamas," *Brussels Signal*, November 8, 2023.

narratives from people like David Icke.¹ In one of his videos, Icke argued that the attacks on that day were no surprise to Israel's establishment and that Hamas terrorists were allowed to cross into Israeli territory to carry them out.² Then there were the ubiquitous claims, including from social media influencer Syrian Girl, that Israel had fired on its own citizens, both at the Nova festival and elsewhere, absolving Hamas of any responsibility for innocent deaths. Some claimed that images of October 7 atrocities were fabricated. Piers Corbyn, the brother of former UK Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, claimed that the children seized by Hamas as hostages were 'actors'. He went on: "It was a lie. There was no killing of children. It was a lie, a lie, a lie." He went on: "Israel let these so-called troops in. They allowed the hostages to be taken, the whole thing is a game to justify the flattening and genocide of Gaza."³ Even elected officials have not been immune to 7/10 denial. A meeting of Oakland City Council in November 2023 called for a ceasefire in Gaza but not before a number of speakers denied that the October 7 atrocities had taken place at all.⁴

If anything symbolised the pitiless attempt to deny Jewish victimhood on Oct 7, it was the deafening silence from progressive feminists following the well documented rape, and mutilation of Israeli women on that heinous day. There was no mass mobilisation on social media, no "I Stand With Israeli Women" hashtags to flood social media.⁵ A group of 150 scholars in feminist, queer and trans studies wrote just three weeks after the Hamas attacks to demand a ceasefire in Gaza. They wrote that they refused to be silent 'while a genocide is ongoing in Gaza and a brutal war was unleashed to ethnically cleanse Palestine once again'. They concluded: 'Our feminism compels us to say: Free Palestine!'⁶ There was nothing about Hamas's sadistic

¹ Material on this Telegram site, which is freely accessible, offers a mixture of anti-Israel agitprop, anti-Covid conspiracy theories and an assortment of other fads.

² "David Icke - what's REALLY happening in Israel," <https://player.fm/series/ohio-exopolitics/david-icke-whats-really-happening-in-israel>, accessed April 10, 2024.

³ Danielle Greyman-Kennard, "Israeli kids killed on October 7 were actors, claims Jeremy Corbyn's brother," *The Jerusalem Post*, November 2, 2023.

⁴ "Oakland city council's reaction to a motion calling to condemn Hamas," YouTube, https://youtu.be/SEBiJDdDhu0?si=NATxS6yO_DLIDIS.

⁵ Karen Ayoumal, "Feminists ignore pain of Jewish women in a post-October 7 world – opinion," *The Jerusalem Post*, October 23, 2024.

⁶ Sharon Zhang, "Over 140 Prominent Feminist Scholars Demand Ceasefire, End to Occupation in Gaza," *Truthout*, October 30, 2023.

sexual crimes or any sympathy with Israeli female captives. Other groups also chose to ignore Jewish suffering, among them *Sisters Uncut*, *Black Women Radicals* and *Global Fund for Women*.

There was also quite blatant denialism. Typical were the comments from journalist Max Blumenthal who wrote that Israel was 'projecting its own sick rape culture onto Palestinians to justify its criminal post-10/7 rampage. Its lurid allegations are shameful confessions'.¹ The *Electronic Intifada* claimed that Israel had been "falsifying" Palestinian rapes to further Gaza genocide² and went on to accuse the UN of amplifying 'Israel's 7 October rape hoax'.³ Some held out an impossibly high standard for believing claims of rape. For veteran anti-Israel activist Norman Finkelstein, there was 'not one single frame of Hamas committing rape or sexual violence....'⁴ UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, an official with a history of incendiary antisemitic comments, agreed with him. She tweeted: "There is no evidence of rape."⁵ The poison of denial stretched even to those who had been tasked with dealing with sexual assaults. Thus, the director of a sexual assault centre at Canada's University of Alberta condemned the 'unverified accusation that Palestinians were guilty of sexual violence'.⁶ She was later fired. 'Believe women' had long been the mantra of feminist groups and the *Me Too* movement. Yet for some, believing Israeli women was a stretch too far. The effect of these narratives has been to tarnish Jewish victims, rub salt in their wounds and whitewash fanatical misogynists. One commentator has described October 7 conspiracy theories as the 'bastard progeny of Holocaust denial'⁷ while

¹ <https://x.com/MaxBlumenthal/status/1732637484184441343>, 5:45 AM · Dec 7, 2023.

² Asa Winstanley, "Israel 'falsifying' Palestinian rapes to further Gaza genocide," *The Electronic Intifada*, September 19, 2025.

³ "How UN officials amplified Israel's 7 October rape hoax, with Ali Abunimah," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCnajsND8pl>, accessed August 1, 2026.

⁴ Alex Carson, "It never happened": Norman Finkelstein challenges Oct. 7 sexual violence on Hasan Piker's podcast," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 2, 2026.

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zau-NMcQY8Y>, accessed August 4, 2026.

⁶ Rob Drinkwater, "U of A replaces sexual assault centre director over letter questioning alleged Hamas sexual violence," *CBC*, November 18, 2023.

⁷ Charles Moore, "The cancer of October 7 denial is spreading. Its antidote is this forensic account of Hamas's crimes," *The Telegraph*, March 21, 2025.

Lord Roberts has said that denial of October 7 is ‘a perversion of reason and rejection of human decency’.¹

Some may question the rationale of violating Holocaust memorials, tearing down posters of Jewish victims and denying the October 7 atrocities. Part of the answer lies in the assumption that sympathy for Holocaust victims, or Jews anywhere, comes at the expense of Palestinians, almost as if it was a zero-sum game. To remind the world that Jews, living and dead, have suffered, is seen as an affront to the Palestinian cause and a rebuke to those who speak for them. Their supporters prefer a narrative of unvarnished Palestinian martyrdom and unbounded Israeli criminality. By destroying posters and vandalising memorials, these ideologues obliterate the memory of Jews who have experienced horrific prejudice, itself a form of vicarious pleasure, and reduce the scope for the world to have a balanced understanding of the conflict. The more nuanced position is that civilians on both sides have experienced anguish, distress and pain, regardless of where the ultimate responsibility for that lies.

In sum, antizionism causes grave harm to the Jewish community in many ways. It therefore contradicts the UK government's noble commitment to defending its Jewish population and to confronting antisemitism in all its forms. Antizionists respond by saying that they are targeting ‘all’ Zionists and because so many are non-Jews, there is nothing antisemitic in their targeted actions. Yet, we rarely hear of Christian, Hindu or Sikh Zionists being assaulted by antizionists. It is Jews who are targeted, vilified, threatened, doxxed and attacked in civil society. The antizionists prove by their actions that they know the inextricable links between Zionism and Jewish civilisation. Antizionism is a real form of bigotry and racism that stalks Jews – and it must be recognised as such.

¹ Lord Roberts, The October 7 Parliamentary Commission Report, 8.

How antizionism harms Palestinians - and peace

In the long term, a viable political settlement in the Middle East requires a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israelis and Palestinians both deserve security, prosperity, dignity and the hope of a better future after decades of war and bloodshed. The only viable path by which Palestinians can achieve statehood and self-determination is by a political process that first recognises the legitimacy and permanency of a Jewish state. Quite simply, it will be impossible to build a Palestinian state by destroying its Jewish neighbour. This self-evident truth ought to have galvanised all attempts at creating an equitable peace agreement between the two sides, whether it was the 1937 Peel plan, the 1947 UN partition proposal or the offers of statehood at Camp David (2000) and Taba (2001).

Yet the refusal of antizionist Palestinian leaders like Hajj Amin al-Husseini, Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas to accept offers of Palestinian statehood from 1937 onwards, exacerbated by their willingness to engage in acts of terrorism for so long, has quite simply condemned the Palestinian people to decades of war, insecurity, poverty and statelessness. In the 1990s and early 2000s, this was illustrated by the way in which Hamas and other radical Palestinian groups used the tactic of suicide bombings to try and derail the peace talks then taking place as part of the Oslo accords. These murderous attacks were designed to stall any resolution of the conflict and keep Palestinians trapped in a never ending cycle of war and despair. The October 7 massacres were planned and carried out in full knowledge that Israel would exact an incredibly heavy price in order to restore its security and regional deterrence. The deaths, injuries and forced migration suffered by Palestinian civilians in Gaza, itself a deep tragedy, are the clearest testament to the destructive power of antizionism. Naturally, Israel will face calls for accountability and scrutiny for possible violations of the laws of armed conflict, as would any belligerent power in a conflict. But it was also a just war forced on Israel by the lethal attacks of its enemies.

The movement known as BDS is also a disaster for the Palestinian people. By calling for Israel's destruction and replacement with a 'one state solution', its advocates signal to the Palestinians that they should abandon all attempts at bridge building and co-existence with their Israeli neighbours. It tells them that they will not need to make painful concessions and compromises on the issues of land, borders and security because the state they are negotiating with will soon disappear. It offers a one sided narrative of the conflict in which Israel

alone is responsible for their immiseration and in which Palestinians are never forced to take account of their own mistakes and immoral acts. Quite simply, it fuels impossible dreams among Palestinians. Instead of encouraging them to build a viable economy and create lasting social and political institutions in preparation for a better future, they are told to prepare for Israel's disappearance from the world stage. Naturally, Israel's refusal to bend in the face of such rejectionism will only further embitter Palestinians committed to the BDS strategy. Moreover, BDS also weakens the hand of the millions of Israelis who yearn for a better future for both themselves and the Palestinians, and who use initiatives to try and create that future. As the activist Bassem Eid puts it so eloquently, 'in its determination to oppose Israel,' the BDS movement 'is prepared to fight to the last drop of Palestinian blood.'¹

When Israel's security is impacted by the scarring effects of war and terrorism, Palestinian lives suffer in other ways too. Prior to October 7, some 115,000 Palestinians were working inside Israel and some 48,000 were working in Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Working inside Israel was certainly favourable from the economic point of view. A report by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) from 2022 noted that income from work in Israel and the settlements constituted about 20 percent of the Palestinian GDP. Palestinian workers brought four billion dollars into the Palestinian economy that year, compared with the PA's total annual budget of about six billion dollars. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 22.5 percent of employed West Bank residents worked in Israel or the settlements as of 2022. After the Hamas pogrom, Israel suspended all permits to work but then reinstated approximately 8,000, mainly in manufacturing and industrial jobs. As an Israeli report indicates, more than 100,000 jobs have been lost and 'large extended families' who 'relied on the salaries of those who could access work in Israel' have been 'propelled into financial crisis'.² Antizionism, whether violent or not, is a full frontal assault on the livelihoods of Palestinians in the region.

Antizionists care little for the real world impact of their advocacy. They take the grievances and interests of Palestinians and Israelis, which are 'real, localized and specific', and replace them with narratives that are 'appropriated, blandly simplified and woven into

¹ Bassem Eid, "The Palestinian Case Against BDS," *The Washington Institute*, June 25, 2015.

² "Back to Work The Implications of the Ban on Access by Palestinian Residents of the West Bank to Work in Israel," *Gisha*, April 2025.

worldviews which serve people and purposes far away'.¹ Those narratives also have the effect of reducing Palestinians to being the helpless victims of other powers rather than people imbued with agency. That trend must be reversed. Palestinians, like Israelis, must be held responsible for their actions and not sacralised as innocents.

Antizionism is also a direct attack on the UK government's belief in peace, co-existence and conflict resolution. Successive governments have restated their commitment to a two state solution and the resumption of good faith talks between the two sides. Indeed, this is the position of nearly every western government around the world. If antizionists had their way, no UK government could possibly work to ameliorate the tensions in the Middle East or seek ways to improve Israeli and Palestinian lives. Antizionism also represents a sustained assault on the 2020 Abraham Accords, and the very idea that regional tension should be ameliorated through regional agreements.² It is therefore in conflict with those key Arab allies that are working to improve the livelihoods of their own populations. The Accords are proof that there need be no religious war between Jews and Muslims in that deeply troubled region. Antizionism suggests the opposite.



A visible symbol of the Abraham Accords. Two shipping containers with flags of the UAE and Israel

¹ David Hirsh, *Contemporary Left Antisemitism*, (London: Routledge, 2018), 1.

² The Abraham Accords are a series of agreements that have normalised relations between Israel and Arab states, including Morocco, Sudan, Bahrain and the UAE.

Conclusion

This main emphasis of this document has been on exploring the toxic effects that antizionism has on Jewish communities, with a special focus on the UK. But what starts with the Jews never ends with them. If one examines the history of antisemitism, one sees that this insidious prejudice is a sign of how a society's health and moral legitimacy have started to unravel. When people embrace extremist viewpoints and conspiratorial narratives, they undermine the norms, values and standards of a humane society. Reason, fairness and logic are replaced by harmful ideologies while insidious agendas, many of them linked to hostile regimes, shift towards the mainstream. Social cohesion itself breaks down with baleful consequences for all.

Antizionism is no different. It is strongly promoted by harmful regimes and radical groups with every interest in undermining the social fabric of Britain (and other western countries). Those forces know that the spread of toxic information has the potential to radicalise individuals and undermine the belief in democratic institutions and the rule of law. Antizionism has been a recruiting sergeant for jihadist groups whose twisted ideology brings harm to every member of society. This ideology has also undermined community cohesion and the fostering of better interfaith relations between British Jews and Muslims. At a time when extremist narratives create deep insecurity for vulnerable minorities, antizionist ideologues polarise those faith groups by seeking to import conflict. They depict British Jews as would-be combatants on a battlefield, rather than the neighbours, friends and colleagues one encounters in British society. Of course, right wing extremists depict British Muslims in the same way and the effect of such characterisation makes attacks on those minorities more likely. Indeed, such sectarianism has already been playing out in UK politics since 2023 with baleful consequences.¹ At its heart, antizionism is an assault on British traditions and on the values of decency, goodwill and fair play that have underpinned community relations in this country.

Let us follow the late Lord Sacks in declaring that, instead of importing conflict, we should strive to export peace. Let us also make the case for Zionism within modern Britain, not only to safeguard Jewish rights but to uphold dignity and human rights in the process.

¹ "Why Britain should be worried about the rise of sectarian politics in the UK," *Insight UK*, March 1, 2026.

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