BOOKLET SERIES | FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM

FAR-LEFT ANTISEMITISM

Understanding Bigotry Against Jews From The Far Left

StandWithUs

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Introduction

Throughout history anti-Jewish bigotry has appeared in many different eras and contexts. The October 7 massacre triggered a firestorm of antisemitism around the world and across the political spectrum. This booklet is part of a series produced by StandWithUs, covering bigotry against Jews from far-right, far-left, and Islamist extremists. The following pages examine antisemitism on the left, while recognizing that this hate does not represent the left as a whole.

While some on the left condemned the atrocities on October 7 and stood with the people of Israel, others justified or even celebrated the massacre. Extremist academics called it "exhilarating" and an act of "decolonization." As posters of Israeli hostages held by Hamas went up in cities across the West, "progressive" activists shamelessly tore them down. When evidence of rape on October 7 began to surface, prominent far-left voices refused to believe Israeli women.

Some on the left criticize the Israeli government without crossing the line into bigotry. However, others do cross that line while claiming they are merely being "antizionist," "criticizing Israel," or "supporting Palestinian rights."

In this context, definitions are crucial. Zionism represents the Jewish people's age-old desire to be free in Israel—their ancestral home. On a political level, it is a liberation movement supporting Jewish self-determination in that land. Antizionism is opposition to Israel's existence and the rights of Jews to an independent state. There is confusion because some wrongly believe that being critical of Israel is "antizionist." In fact, many people oppose Israel's policies while supporting its basic right to exist.

Antisemitic forces on the far left often describe efforts to eliminate Israel as part of a larger struggle against racism, colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism. Terrorists like Hamas are seen as "resistance" fighters, despite their plans to replace Israel with a deeply oppressive theocracy. In contrast, Jews are seen as privileged oppressors and colonizers who must give up their power in order to be "on the right side of history."

Historically, many different groups have tried to keep Jews powerless. The result was centuries of oppression, ethnic cleansing, and genocide across Europe and the Middle East. All forms of antisemitism, including those from the left, build on this legacy of hatred and violence.

Compare this antisemitic caricature (above) of a monstrous-looking, dehumanized Jew used in advertising by far-left anti-Israel student activists with a strikingly similar image from the Nazi newspaper *Der Stürmer* – July 14, 1936 (below).

Misunderstanding Antisemitism

Antisemitic thinking is defined by looking at the world's problems and concluding they are the fault of "the Jews," who are cast as the "misfortune" of a given society, group, movement, or community. Jews, individually and as a group, are falsely accused of acting as a secret cabal that controls centers of power such as governments, media, and banks. This stereotype is deeply rooted in Western and Middle Eastern culture, religion, thought, and politics.

British far-left activist Jackie Walker posted this antisemitic tweet on June 9, 2020. Its antisemitism lies in its claim that Jewish victims of Nazi genocide somehow benefited from white privilege.

Strongly held stereotypes against people of color, LGBTQ people, women, Muslims, and other communities are also deeply rooted in society. These attitudes are sometimes learned by children as they grow up. Those who join progressive movements as adults often realize how they were shaped by these oppressive attitudes and reject them.

However, too many on the left avoid examining anti-Jewish stereotypes or actively promote them.

For example, when, on July 16, 2020, Jean-Luc Melenchon, leader of the French far-left La France Insoumise party, held Jews responsible for putting Jesus on the cross,[1] he echoed an ancient antisemitic slur in Western culture.

French politician Jean-Luc Melenchon: "I don't know if Jesus was on a cross, but he was apparently put there by his own people," meaning Jews.

While many progressives do understand antisemitism and reject it when it emerges from among their ranks, there are clear patterns of antisemitism denial, minimization, and deflection that are important to recognize.

Antisemitism is often disguised as social justice. While racism punches down by viewing people of color as inferiors, antisemitism punches up at the "powerful Jews" (or "Zionists"). Jews are positioned not only as "white" but falsely accused of "controlling" powerful Western governments. Ironically, this conspiracy theory originates in white supremacism, which views Jews as being an anti-white force seeking to destroy the "white race."

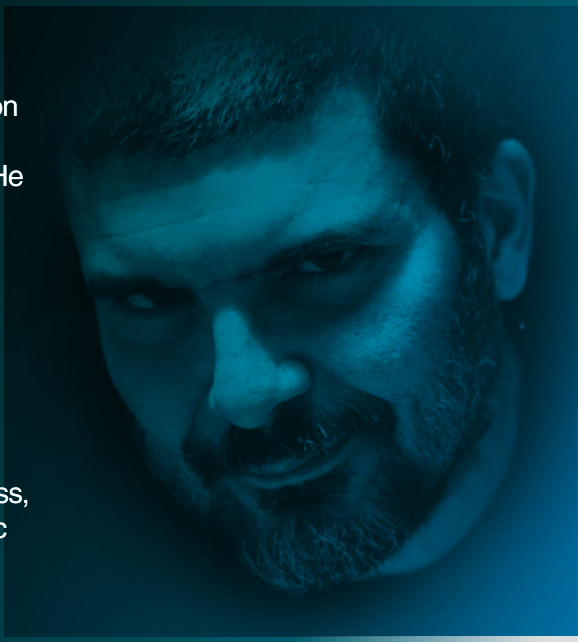
Many on the far left minimize the history of oppression against Jews. In these spaces Jews are routinely accused of slyly using the "Holocaust card" or "antisemitism card" as a way to "silence" criticism of Israeli policies. According to this line of thought, criticism of Israel can never be motivated by antisemitism, so Jews must be lying in order to censor activism for Palestinian human rights. This ignores the reality that some anti-Israel words and actions do cross the line into bigotry. As a result, Jews are often dismissed or harassed whenever they raise concerns.

For example, the far-left anti-Israel website Redress Information and Analysis demonstrated this mindset with a cartoon by Carlos Latuff.[2]

Look closely. The cartoon does not depict an Israeli politician. It is a caricature of a Jew, complete with sidelocks and a skullcap. While there is a political symbol — the Israeli flag — the artist also drew a stereotyped Jew, portraying "the Jews" as dishonest. This is antisemitism.

The very same cartoon resonated with white supremacist David Duke, who also posted it on his website.

Who is Carlos Latuff?
He won second prize in the Iranian regime's 2006 International Holocaust Cartoon Competition (dedicated to promoting Holocaust denial). He shared the $8,000 prize with French far-right cartoonist Françoise Pichard, known for her racist and antisemitic cartoons. Despite Latuff's association with Holocaust denial, he is regularly featured on many far-left "antizionist" websites, including Mondoweiss, the BDS Movement, Electronic Intifada, and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (UK).



The exact same stereotype of Jews is believed and promoted on the far left and far right.

Why?

A Little History

The Far Left's Historic Hostility Toward Jews

Antisemitism on the far left has a long history. It first emerged in the late 19th century when antisemitism became a modern political force described as "the Jewish Question."

Roots: Karl Marx and his "Essay on the Jewish Question"

The roots of this hostility toward Jews and Judaism go back to the 19th century, as exemplified by Karl Marx's "Essay on the Jewish Question," written in 1844:

"Let us not look for the secret of the Jew in his religion, but let us look for the secret of his religion in the real Jew. What is the secular basis of Judaism? Practical need*, self-interest. What is the worldly religion of the Jew?* Huckstering. *What is his worldly God?* Money. *… Money is the jealous god of Israel, in face of which no other god may exist. … The god of the Jews has become secularized and has become the god of the world. … The social emancipation of the Jew is the emancipation of society from Judaism [emphasis in the original]."*

For Marx the "real Jew" is a greedy adversary of progress, symbolizing the evils of capitalism, which Marxists seek to eradicate.

Some historians argue that Marx was actually supporting equal rights for Jews and critiquing antisemitism. While that may have been his intention, Marx's writing was used by early socialists to promote anti-Jewish bigotry. Almost a half-century later, the Marxist German Social Democratic Party (SPD) wrote in its newspaper *Vorwärts*:

> *"Our solution consists in saying, that the so-called 'Jewish spirit' is the spirit of capitalism. Certainly not every Jew is a capitalist but every capitalist is a Jew."*[3]

Other progressives of the period shared these anti-Jewish stereotypes. Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin promoted ideas similar to Nazi propaganda:

"The whole Jewish world constitutes one exploiting sect, one people of leeches, one single devouring parasite closely and intimately bound together not only across national boundaries but also across all divergences of political opinion."[4]

French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon frequently used antisemitism in his writing. One example:

"Jews — Write an article against this race which poisons everything, by meddling everywhere without ever joining itself to another people — Demand their expulsion from France. … Abolish the synagogues. … It is not for nothing the Christians call them deicides. The Jew is the enemy of the human race."[5]

Ukrainian Socialist Serge Podolinsky wrote in 1876:

"In my view Yidophobia is as indispensable for every Russian socialist as is hatred of the bourgeoisie … it is not possible for the existence in Russia (not only in the Ukraine) of socialist kikes."[6]

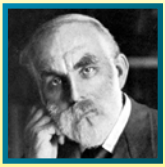
Wilhelm Hasselman, a German socialist politician and editor of various socialist newspapers, reprinted Marx's "Essay on the Jewish Question," claiming:

"[Marx and] all other clear-headed Socialists look upon the Jewish tribe as the nucleus of bourgeois society and as the enemy of the workers' causes, bound to perish when the hour has come for the emancipation of the proletariat."[7]

Keir Hardie, a founder of the British Labour party, used the party's newspaper, *The Labour Leader*, to attack Jews. In 1891 he wrote:

"Wherever there is trouble in Europe, wherever rumors of war circulate and men's minds are distraught with fear of change and calamity, you may be sure that a hooked-nosed Rothschild is at his games somewhere near the region of the disturbances."[8]

Another major British Labour leader, John Burns, blamed Jews for the Boer War in South Africa:



"Wherever we go in this matter we find the same thing. Wherever we examine, there is the financial Jew, operating, directing, inspiring the agonies that have led to this war."[9]

In 1923, Ruth Fischer, a leader of the German Communist Party, used antisemitic language in an attempt to sway pro-Nazi students to Communism:

"Those who call for a struggle against Jewish capital are already, gentlemen, class strugglers, even if they don't know it. You are against Jewish capital and want to fight the speculators. Very good. Throw down the Jewish capitalists, hang them from the lamp-post, stamp on them."[10]

These early leftist thinkers were trying to use antisemitism to bring about a popular revolution. Instead they promoted the hatred that would, in the aftermath of World War I, become the core of Nazi ideology.

This antisemitism within so many streams of early leftist thought would be spread much further in the 20th century by the Soviet Union. Today's far left has continued this hateful legacy. How did we get here?

Soviet Union (1922–1991)

The first Marxist state was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), or Soviet Union. In March 1917, Russia's corrupt and antisemitic Tsarist monarchy was toppled in a popular revolution. In its place, a democratic Provisional Government was established that began instituting democratic reforms. In October 1917 this government was toppled in a Marxist coup led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

From 1922 to 1991 the Soviet system destroyed the economy, environment, human rights, and individual freedoms in Russia, in the "republics" it forcefully occupied and annexed, and in its satellite states in Eastern Europe.

The Soviets under Joseph Stalin committed genocides and massive ethnic cleansing against numerous national groups. One of the most notorious was the deliberate starvation of millions of Ukrainians in 1932–33. Millions of other groups were "transferred" by the regime, including Azerbaijanis, Chechens, Crimean Tartars, Greeks, Estonians, and many more. Millions died in these ethnic purges.[11]

"Map of the Iron Curtain in Europe" by Sémhur / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA-3.0, or Free Art License

Tens of millions of innocent people perished in a network of Soviet labor/concentration camps. These "gulags" were known for savagely cruel conditions. Throughout its entire history, the Soviet regime sought to silence every dissenting voice by physical, psychological, and economic means.

The Soviet Union became a brutally repressive totalitarian regime governing more than 90 nationalities and ethnic minorities, most of which lived in their own territories now ruled by Moscow.

One of these minorities, the Yiddish-speaking Jews, were systemically discriminated against by the Soviet authorities. Long and deeply held anti-Jewish stereotypes in Russian culture contributed to this oppression.

The Soviet's "Jewish Section": Using Jews to Undermine Jewish Identity

Lenin, a non-Jew, determined he could define Jewish identity for Jews.

He denied that Jews are a living nation and believed the answer to the "Jewish Question" in Russia was erasing the unique identity of Jews. "The idea of a separate Jewish people is politically reactionary and scientifically untenable," he wrote.[12]

If Jews sought a national culture, this had to be opposed. "Whoever, directly or indirectly, puts forward the slogan of Jewish 'national culture' is … an enemy of the proletariat, a supporter of all that is outmoded and connected with caste among the Jewish people; he is an accomplice of the rabbis and the bourgeoisie."[13]

Millions of Soviet Jews spoke Yiddish (a combination of German and Hebrew), maintained their own institutions, and were mostly religious. To force them to assimilate, Lenin created a special section within the Communist Party designed to suppress Jewish culture.

This "Jewish section", called Yevsektsiya in Russian, was made up of communists of Jewish origin. With the backing of the Soviet state, they became the harshest opponents of Jewish identity. Their stated purpose was the "destruction of traditional Jewish life, the Zionist movement, and Hebrew culture."[14] The Yevsektsiya seized synagogues and Jewish schools and outlawed Hebrew literature. Only Yiddish, they decreed, could be the language of the Jewish working class, with the intent of eventually replacing Yiddish with Russian.

The Yevsektsiya attacked Zionism, eventually banning it and forcing many Zionists into exile.

The Yevsektsiya also served another purpose: deflecting charges of antisemitism away from the Soviet government. Its members willingly served as token Jewish shields against outside criticism of the Soviet regime's systemic oppression against the Jewish community.

In 1929 Lenin's successor, Josef Stalin, disbanded the Yevsektsiya. Stalin's secret police murdered many of its leaders in the Great Purges of the 1930s.

In 1939 Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler's Germany. The two dictators agreed to divide up Poland. Germany took western Poland, and the Soviets took eastern Poland. The result was to deliver millions of Jews into Nazi hands, most of whom were murdered.

Throughout its history, the Soviet Union's treatment of Jews was oppressive. The Soviets subjected Jews to discrimination at work, in education, and in housing. The regime fueled the fires of everyday antisemitism while officially discouraging it to avoid international criticism. The average Soviet citizen was indoctrinated to see Jews as the ultimate other: sinister, greedy, and cowardly.

Stalin enacted antisemitic policies, such as the 1952 Slansky Show Trial in Soviet-controlled Czechoslovakia, which involved the purge and execution of Jewish-born Communists.

The "Doctors Plot" of 1952–53 was another purge Stalin ordered against a group of doctors he accused of plotting to assassinate him, almost all of whom were Jews. The purge was to include a major show trial and execution of the alleged plotters. The state-owned media launched a vicious antisemitic campaign that spoke of the "Zionist threat" to the USSR. The campaign's planned second phase was to round up the Soviet Jewish population for mass deportation to concentration camps. The genocide was avoided because of Stalin's death in 1953.[15]

Stalin's main accusation against Jews was they were both "Zionists" and "rootless cosmopolitans." That is, they were at the same time too tribal and too universalistic.

The Cold War: Soviet Antisemitism Goes Global

Anti-Jewish propaganda served the Soviet Union's aggressive foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East.

The Soviets had been supporting various Arab regimes (specifically Egypt and Syria) with military and economic aid since the early 1950s. These Arab states used their state-of-the-art Soviet arms to attack Israel from the Egyptian-occupied Gaza Strip and the Syrian-controlled Golan Heights, killing hundreds of Israeli civilians. The intensity of these attacks contributed to Israel's decision to join Britain and France in the 1956 Suez war against Egypt.

In the cartoon above, "Tentacles of the Octopus" from the Soviet journal *Krokodil*, an octopus with a Star of David reaches out its arms to control the world. It is strikingly similar to a 1938 cartoon (below) by Josef Plank, one of Nazi Germany's leading cartoonists.

Soviet meddling fueled the Arab–Israeli conflict for decades. Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War (which the Soviet Union helped provoke by giving Egypt and Syria false intelligence about Israeli troop movements) was unexpected and went against Soviet regional interests. As such, Moscow was determined to destroy Israel's positive image in the West and the Third World, where Israel had established extensive diplomatic relations.

According to Lt. Gen. Ion Pacepa, one of the highest-ranking Soviet officials to defect to the West, "By 1972, [the KGB] disinformation machinery was working around the clock to persuade the Islamic world that Israel and the United States intended to transform the rest of the world into a Zionist fiefdom."[16] This included distributing Arabic copies of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in the Arab world. The Soviet secret police, the KGB, deployed antisemitic "antizionist" propaganda throughout the Middle East, the West, and the developing world. References in Soviet propaganda accusing Zionism and Israel of racism, imperialism, colonialism, genocide, and apartheid were adopted and amplified in the Western New Left in the 1960s and 1970s.

1975: The U.N. "Zionism is Racism" Resolution — Made in Moscow

In 1975, during the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union and its eastern European client states pushed through a shameful resolution at the United Nations equating Zionism with racism.
Not a single democratic state voted for this resolution, but an automatic majority of Soviet bloc, Arab and Islamic states, and Soviet-leaning "non-aligned" states railroaded it through the General Assembly. In 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the UN reversed it.

An example of how the American New Left of that era parroted Soviet ideology was when the New York-based Socialist Workers Party (SWP) attacked United Farm Workers icon César Chávez for his support of Israel.

In March 1974, Chávez wrote:

"As individuals committed to the cause of freedom, concerned with the fate of victims of racial, ethnic and religious prejudice and discrimination we feel a particular sense of solidarity with Israel's struggle to survive as a democracy in peace … [and] as persons of minority backgrounds, we share Israel's aspirations to integrate people from vastly different backgrounds and to provide them all, including Jew and Arab alike, with the benefits of an advanced social system."[17]

1968: Communist Poland Purges Jews

In 1968 the ruling Communist Party in Warsaw began targeting "Zionist agents" in its ranks. This quickly morphed into overt antisemitism when the Polish government declared thousands of Jews to be "enemies of the state." Some 20,000 Jews fled. Only two decades earlier, the Nazis murdered three million Polish Jews, leaving only 50,000 alive. The Communists pushed most of the survivors out.

"We Demand the Party be purged of Zionist filth!" This was part of the large-scale 1968 antisemitic purge of Jews from the Polish Communist Party that resulted in half of the surviving remnant of Polish Jews to flee.

Repeating Soviet propaganda, the SWP assailed Chávez, attacked Israel as a "settler-colonialist state," declared "Zionists" to be "the pawns of the American ruling class — the very people who are now trying to crush the Farm Workers Union," and called for "the dismantling of the present State of Israel."[18] After the UN passed the Soviet-sponsored "Zionism is racism" resolution, an undeterred Chávez wrote a second letter condemning the vote.

Zionism, Antizionism, and Antisemitism

Since most of European society, including workers, historically held antisemitic views, some Socialists saw antisemitism as a "mass revolutionary anti-bourgeois consciousness" that was anti-capitalist. Similarly, in the 21st century, many anti-Israel leftists see Islamist extremists, who are anti-Israel and anti-Western (but also patriarchal, homophobic, and antisemitic), as potential allies.

One example is how feminist philosopher Judith Butler, during an anti-Israel "teach-in," replied to a question about the left's relationship with Islamist terror groups Hamas and Hezbollah. She said:

I think: Yes, understanding Hamas, Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important.[19]

Today's antizionist left presents Israel, the Jewish state, as a symbol of all that is wrong in today's world. This "singles out Israel and turns Zionism into 'the universal equivalent of the deficiencies of all nationalism' in order to reproduce old stereotypes about the 'tribalism' of the Jews."[20]

A stark example of this was when former leader of the UK Labour Party Jeremy Corbyn and his supporters defended an antisemitic mural (on the right) that portrayed hooked-nosed men, depicted as "the enemy of humanity," playing Monopoly on a table supported by the bent backs of people of color.

The artist Kalen Ockerman acknowledged his target was Jews: "Some of the older white Jewish folk in the local community had an issue with me portraying their beloved #Rothschild or #Warburg etc as the demons they are."[21] This literal demonizing of prominent Jews was a central theme in Nazi antisemitic propaganda.[22]
In speaking of the UK Labour Party, Alan Johnson could easily be describing the whole of the antizionist left, which

"*does not have a neo-Nazi problem. It does, however, have a problem with a modern anti-Zionism of a particularly excessive, obsessive, and demonizing kind, which has co-mingled with an older set of classical antisemitic tropes, images and assumptions to create antisemitic anti-Zionism. … In short, that which the demonized Jew once was in older forms of antisemitism, demonized Israel now is in contemporary antisemitic anti-Zionism: all-controlling, the hidden hand, tricksy* [sic], *always acting in bad faith, the obstacle to a better, purer, more spiritual world, uniquely malevolent, full of blood lust, uniquely deserving of punishment, and so on."*[23]

Is Criticizing Israel Antisemitic?

The relationship between Jews and Israel often complicates efforts to identify and oppose antisemitism on the left.

To be clear: criticism of Israel is not necessarily antisemitic. However, when such criticism is made using anti-Jewish stereotypes or is used to deny Israel's very right to exist as a Jewish state, then it becomes antisemitic.

On the right is an example of how antisemitism is adaptable to many different political uses.

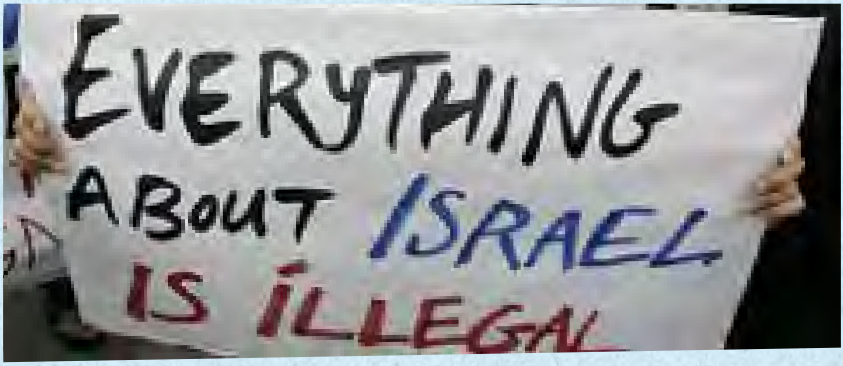
This sign was displayed at an anti-war march in San Francisco on February 16, 2003, organized by the International A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, a Marxist group.

This cartoon is from the Nazi newspaper *Der Stürmer.* Note the striking similarity between this and the image from the far-left rally in San Francisco. Both examples literally demonize Jews.

How the Antizionist Left Promotes Antisemitism

- **The core of modern left antisemitism** is the idea that Israel should not exist. The right of all peoples to self-determination is a basic principle of international law. Israel represents the Jewish people's right to self-determination. Antizionism calls for stripping away the rights of a people who suffered 1,900 of oppression across Europe and the Middle East before regaining freedom in their ancestral home. This perpetuates anti-Jewish oppression and is antisemitic in effect, if not intent.

- **The antizionist left paints Zionism as a demonic force.** It denies or ignores that Zionism was conceived by Jews to liberate themselves from antisemitism and regain freedom in their ancestral home. Echoing Lenin, some leftist voices demand that Jews must lose some or all of their Jewish identity and seek liberation only within a general movement of solidarity for all oppressed peoples. They ignore how such efforts utterly failed the Jews of Europe and the Middle East in the 20th century. Today's antizionist left refuses to acknowledge that Zionism is not a minority viewpoint among Jews. Nearly half the world's Jews are Israelis. Of the other half, the vast majority support and identify with Israel. The antizionist left denies the right of Jews to define their own identity, which would rightly be seen as racist if applied to other historically oppressed communities. This double standard is antisemitic.



- **The antizionist left claims that only Israel is responsible for the Arab–Israeli conflict.** There is no accountability for Palestinian and Arab leaders. These distortions of fact are frequently used to justify antisemitism, including efforts to strip away the Jewish people's right to self-determination.

- **The antizionist left promotes Holocaust** *minimization* and *inversion*. This occurs when Israel is falsely compared with Nazi Germany. It is precisely because Israel is a Jewish state that this specific insult was created by the Soviet Union. Holocaust inversion exploits Jewish pain, distorts history, and fuels misunderstanding of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. It diminishes and mocks the still powerful consequences of the Holocaust on Jews in both Israel and the Diaspora. Insulting the memory of the historical suffering of Africans at the hands of European empires would be racist. Yet, mocking and exploiting Jewish oppression is given a pass and even encouraged. That is antisemitic.

- **Demonizing language evoking "global Zionism" or "Zionist cabals" is heard in many leftist quarters.** It echoes *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the antisemitic forgery that white supremacists frequently cite as proof of a global Jewish conspiracy. Leftist antisemitism includes accusations of "Zionist" control of governments, the media, cultural institutions, and economies. This, too, is a direct reflection of the antisemitic *Protocols* and even Hitler's paranoid manifesto, *Mein Kampf*.

- **Far-leftist opposition to Zionism is sometimes framed as part of a general opposition to nationalism.**
  A century ago much of the left did oppose all forms of nationalism. But today's antizionist left actively supports many nationalisms (including Palestinian) while uniquely opposing Zionism. The typical justification is these nation-states represent people achieving liberation from colonialism. Israel was established in the Jewish ancestral home by a grassroots Jewish liberation movement, ending 1,900 years of oppression by numerous empires. Yet, the antizionist left dismisses and seeks to eliminate Israel as a haven for the historically oppressed Jewish people. This is a double standard and is antisemitic.

Top: Soviet-era cartoon using Jewish stereotypes comparing Israel to Nazi Germany. Below: placard at a 21st century rally in San Francisco.

- **The antizionist left accuses Israel of being "racist" because it represents Jewish national self-determination.**
  This echoes Soviet propaganda, which called Zionism a "racist ideology" springing from the "theory of the chosen people."[24] This is an attack on Judaism, not Zionism, and is heard repeatedly today on the antizionist left. As with many other democratic states, Israel has minority groups with equal rights under the law. Many Arab nation-states discriminate against large non-Arab minorities, yet the left never advocates for dismantling those states. The antizionist left gives Palestinian nationalism a pass, though the Palestinian Authority's constitutional Basic Laws explicitly describe Palestinian identity as being exclusively Arab, its official religion as Islam, and Arabic as the sole official language. Hamas, the Islamist terrorist group ruling Gaza, calls for an exclusively Islamic state to replace Israel. Yet, the antizionist left is often uncritically supportive of these Palestinian nationalists while opposing Israel's existence. This is a double standard and is antisemitic.

An echo of the *Protocols:* a Star of David sitting atop a Union Jack in the *New Statesman*, a British "progressive political and cultural magazine."

An "antizionist" poster at a 2015 rally in Amsterdam uses classic anti-Jewish stereotypes in the name of anti-racism.[25] This image was also shared by a University of California professor in 2020.

The Persistence of Jew-Hatred Across Ideological Lines

Much of the antizionist left publicly rejects *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an antisemitic Tsarist forgery alleging a Jewish conspiracy to control world finance, media, and governments.

Yet, the major themes of *The Protocols* are all too often employed by many on the far left when they paint Israel as a "major symbol of the evils of world imperialism" and "the product of a diabolical criminal conspiracy whose dimensions are global."[26]

2014 antisemitic tweet from the Socialist Voice saying the BBC and then British Prime Minister David Cameron are controlled by Jews

Both the far right and far left dehumanize Jews, such as through the "Jewish Spider" imagery used for over a century.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (France, 1910s)

Nazi Germany (1930s)

Soviet Union (1972)

Left: "Zionism is a weapon of Imperialism": Antisemitic float at a May Day parade in Moscow, 1972. Note the spider with the face of a stereotyped hooked-nosed Jew.

Image posted by British Labour activist Kayla Bibby on Facebook (2018)

Antizionism and Antisemitism in Everyday Life

Accusing Jews of being deceitful when they talk about antisemitism

Left-wing British politician Jenny Tonge said, "The pro-Israeli lobby has got its grips on the Western World, its financial grips. I think they've probably got a certain grip on our party."[27]

When she was criticized for using language echoing the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, she responded indignantly, "I am sick of being accused of antisemitism when what I am doing is criticizing Israel and the state of Israel."[28]

David Hirsh, a British Labour Party activist and author of the book *Contemporary Left Antisemitism*, writes, "Antisemites always pose as victims of the Jews, or of 'Zionism' or of the 'Israel lobby.' And the claim that Jews try to silence criticism of Israel by mobilizing a dishonest accusation against them is now recognizable as one of the defining tropes of contemporary antisemitism" — accusing Jews of deviously playing the "antisemitism card."

Hirsh calls this the "Livingstone Formulation," named for the former mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, who said in 2006, "For far too long the accusation of antisemitism has been used against anyone who is critical of the policies of the Israeli government, as I have been."

The key elements of the Livingstone Formulation are:

1. It is a response to a charge of antisemitism.
2. It is a rhetorical device used to avoid accountability.
3. It pressures the accuser to prove they are not part of a dishonest Jewish (or "Zionist") conspiracy.
4. It accuses people who raise the issue of antisemitism of not only being wrong, but being wrong *on purpose*.

A variation of the Livingstone Formulation is the "Holocaust card." Hirsh describes this as the notion that the source of "Zionist power" today is Zionism's "ability to mobilize Jewish victimhood and their ownership of the Holocaust. This, again, is an old libel, that the Jews are so clever and so morally lacking, that they are able to benefit from their own persecution."

On College Campuses

Far-Left Antisemitism on College Campuses:

For years before the October 7 massacre, antisemitism had been rising on college campuses. After October 7, 2023, this trend became an onslaught of hate, with Jewish students facing harassment, exclusion, calls for genocide, direct physical threats, and acts of violence.

A study conducted by the ADL and Hillel International found that **83 percent of Jewish students** reported experiencing or witnessing antisemitism on campus since the October 7 Hamas massacre. Another study by Brandeis University found that over **90 percent of Jewish students** believe that denying Israel's right to exist is "definitely" or "probably" antisemitic.

Prior to October 7, 2023, antisemitic incidents on campuses included harassment of Jewish student government leaders and efforts to exclude Jewish organizations like Hillel, based on their connection to Israel.

After the October 7 massacre, **National Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)** publicly celebrated the attacks as "a historic win." Protesters claiming to be "anti-war" chanted for Hamas, including at Columbia, where they encouraged the terrorists to "burn Tel Aviv to the ground." Jewish spaces like Hillel have been vandalized at multiple campuses, along with the homes of Jewish university leaders. Reports of physical assault increased around the world, targeting both Jewish students and campus personnel.

As anti-Israel "encampments" began in the spring of 2024, Jewish students and many others were prevented from going to class, studying at libraries, or accessing other educational resources. They were also subjected to many violent antisemitic symbols and slogans in support of Hamas and other terrorist groups. The purpose of this chaos was to pressure universities to boycott Israel as part of a global campaign to eliminate the Jewish state. Disturbingly, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and Iran's regime all praised the university encampments, and in some cases boasted about coordination with anti-Israel groups in the West.

Instead of fighting back against campus antisemitism, many university faculty members actively promote this hate and try to help the perpetrators. For example, the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies program at San Francisco State University (SFSU) glorified the October 7 massacre as "liberation." Instead of condemning this, faculty leaders of the SFSU College of Ethnic Studies demanded that all schools in the California State University system establish programs similar to AMED.

The Failure of University Leadership

Many university administrators have either failed to act or have actively enabled antisemitism. They refused to intervene as Jewish students faced harassment and intimidation, arguing that chanting for Israel's destruction is protected speech. University leaders ignored the fact that they have their own free speech right to condemn hate and organize educational programs to fight against it. These failures have led to numerous lawsuits and civil rights complaints, resulting in universities being forced to take stronger actions to protect Jewish students from discrimination.

Intersectionality and Antisemitism

Intersectionality, developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, describes how Black women experience oppression at the intersection of racism and patriarchy, distinct from White women and Black men.

In recent years, antizionists have weaponized intersectionality to exclude Jews and Israelis from social justice movements, falsely blaming them for racial injustices in the U.S. and beyond.

Jewish activists seeking involvement in these spaces are often pressured to choose between their progressive values and their connection to Israel, leaving many feeling unwelcome.

Jews do not fit the far left's usual understanding of groups facing oppression. They are often portrayed as powerful and privileged, making them targets rather than allies. This erases their challenges and allows antisemitism to grow in intersectional movements, under the guise of social justice.

Blaming Israel and American Jews for U.S. police shootings of African Americans

Palestinian American activist Linda Sarsour has deployed intersectionality in her attacks on Israel. In one instance, she crossed the line into antisemitism when she told the 2018 national convention of the Islamic Society of North America that a major American Jewish organization, the Anti-Defamation League, was responsible for the spate of killings by police of young Black men:

"If you believe in the idea of ending police brutality and the misconduct of law enforcement officers across the country, then you do not support an organization [ADL] that takes police officers from America, funds their trips, takes them to Israel so they can be trained by the Israeli police and military, and then they come back here and do what?
Stop and frisk, killing unarmed Black people across the country."[29]

Why is this antisemitic?

First, she is wrong on the facts. The ADL program is a counterterrorism project that "provides a select number of American law enforcement officials with advanced education to prevent, prepare for and respond to terrorist threats and violence." It was created after the September 11, 2001, attacks "to protect all people and communities."[30]

Despite Sarsour's overcharged allegations, the program does not provide training for daily policing methods. The Israeli police do not train American police to "stop and frisk" and "kill unarmed Black people across the country."

So it is a lie.

Nor has Sarsour, or anyone else, ever produced any evidence showing that the ADL (and other) law enforcement exchange programs with Israel cause police killings of Black people in America.

Sarsour also ignores the dozens of other exchange programs between U.S. police departments and those of other countries, choosing to focus solely on Israel.[31] International police training exchanges are the norm in today's world, and the U.S. is no exception. Sarsour did not criticize, for instance, the China–U.S. Joint Liaison Group on Law Enforcement Cooperation organized by the official Chinese International Law Enforcement Training Programme of the Criminal Investigation Police University of China. Sarsour is silent on the role China's highly militarized police play in incarcerating an estimated one million Uyghur Muslims in concentration camps. She says nothing about how this may supposedly influence U.S. police treatment of minorities.

Sarsour implies that: if not for American Jews, their institutions, and the Jewish state, the police would not be killing Black people. This plays heavily on the stereotype of Jews being powerful and hidden puppeteers who are behind all major social ills. It creates the image of "the Jews" as essentially evil.

This is fundamentally antisemitic.

Jews as "white"/Israeli Jews as "white supremacists"

Many leftist antizionists promote the theme that Israel, Zionism, and American Jewish organizations are "white supremacists." Meanwhile, white supremacists believe Jews are *non-Whites* plotting to destroy "white" civilization.

Getting it from both sides

A far-left antizionist poster equates Zionism with white supremacy.

A 21st-century white supremacist leaflet views Jews as non-White enemies of the "White race."

This antizionist left accusation inverts the neo-Nazi message by combining the supposed whiteness of Jews and their liberation movement, Zionism, with the fear of "Jewish power." Together the antizionist and neo-Nazi messages are two sides of the same antisemitic coin.

The stereotype of Jews as a force of evil is rooted in white supremacy. This creates a dangerous situation that divides white supremacy's primary victims: people of color and Jews.

Erasing Jewish Diversity

The misuse of intersectional theory to attack Israeli and American Jews often erases the diversity of Jewish identity, experience, history, and culture. It deprives Jews of their own narrative, including their long history of facing oppression and genocide. It ignores the millions of non-White Jews who are the majority in Israel. In all cases, it further marginalizes Jews across the board.

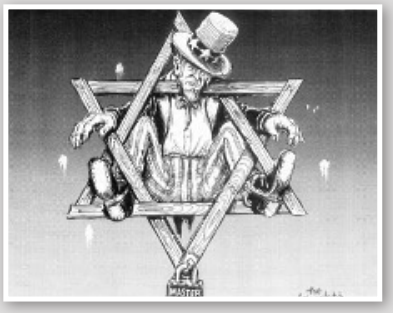
This is antisemitism.

The majority of Israeli Jews are people of color.

Fear of "Jewish Power," Then and Now

Conspiracy theories about Jewish power are antisemitic. This theme has been used for centuries to rationalize anti-Jewish violence. Nazi Germany used this stereotype to justify its anti-Jewish genocide.

Today, the antizionist left often mirrors this antisemitism. One example is the cartoon by John Kloss (below left) that appeared in the progressive *Sacramento News & Review* in 2006. It portrayed Uncle Sam held captive in a Star of David stockade. It is strikingly similar to a 1943 cartoon called "Nailed Down" in the Nazi weekly *Lustige Blätter* (below right) that portrayed world powers (including Uncle Sam) held captive to Jewish power.



Sacramento, California, 2006

Nazi Germany, 1943

This antisemitic message gained mainstream credibility when the *New York Times* published a cartoon in 2019 of a blind U.S. president being led on a leash by an Israeli prime minister. This, too, has its precedent in Nazi Germany when the *Lustige Blätter* published a cartoon with a caricatured Jew leading British Prime Minister Winston Churchill by the hand.

Coincidentally, the *New York Times* cartoon was published on the same day a white supremacist attacked a San Diego synagogue killing one person and wounding several others. After receiving massive criticism, the *New York Times* issued an apology.

New York Times, *April 27, 2019*

Lustige Blätter, *October 25, 1940*
Nazi Germany

Banning Jewish Symbols: The Chicago Dyke March

In 2017 the Chicago Dyke March expelled three Jewish women carrying rainbow Star of David flags to express their identities as Jews and lesbians. Some other marchers complained to leaders of the Chicago Dyke March Collective, who then demanded that the Jewish women leave.

The *Windy City Times*, a Chicago-based LGBTQ newspaper, reported, “One Dyke March collective member … said the women

were told to leave because the flags 'made people feel unsafe,' that the march was 'antizionist' and 'pro-Palestinian.'"[32]

One of the women ejected from the march said, "It was a flag from my congregation, which celebrates my queer, Jewish identity which I have done for over a decade, marching in the Dyke March with the same flag."

Gretchen Rachel Hammond

Gretchen Rachel Hammond, the award-winning reporter for the *Windy City Times* who broke the story, faced widespread antisemitic harassment. "Hammond, who is Jewish, told JTA that in the wake of her article, she received dozens of threatening anonymous phone calls. She said one caller called her a 'kike,' while others told her she should lose her job or said she 'betrayed' the LGBT community."[33]

One person threatened, "I'm going to get your bitch ass fired." That is exactly what happened when the *Windy City Times* terminated her employment.

The Dyke March then tweeted, "Zio tears replenish my electrolytes!" using a term, "Zio," invented by white supremacist David Duke as a slur for Jews. The Dyke March also released a statement calling Zionism "an inherently white-supremacist ideology."[34]

David Duke took notice of the Dyke March's use of his antisemitic "Zio" meme and boasted about it on his website, using it as a springboard for an antisemitic attack on "Jewish racists."

Antisemitism:
Where far left and far right reflect each other

Antizionist Left	David Duke

Rebel Voice: *far-left online journal (Ireland).*

"Ask them this, how can you be against white supremacy in America and the idea of being in a state based on race and class, but then you support a state like Israel that is based on supremacy, that is built on the idea that Jews are supreme to everyone else."

– Linda Sarsour, November 29, 2019

Website of the far-left Basque political party, Herritar Batasuna

KAOSENLARED

"Today, March 14, we emphatically declare that the coronavirus is an instrument of the Third World War that has unleashed Yankee Zionist imperialism. The Anglo-Saxon capitalist and Zionist elite that is the enemy of all Humanity has taken a further step in its criminal and genocidal offensive."

Conclusion

Over the centuries, antisemitism has adapted to new cultures and political ideologies, including the left. Professor Alan Johnson, a British Labour party activist and lifelong Socialist, likens antisemitism to a piano and "each historic form of antisemitism is the specific tune played on that piano. There have been many 'pianists' — i.e. many ideologies, religions, movements and leaders — that have adapted the core demonology about the Jews to suit their own world views and their own political agendas." [35]

Johnson points out:

> *"There is a new form of antisemitism which has been the consequence of the development of a Jewish State — Israel — and the demonization of it. 'Zionism,' properly understood as a movement of national liberation for the Jewish people, is demonized through the antisemitic ideas of the 'The Zios,' 'The Zionists,' 'Global Zionism' and 'the all-powerful Jewish Lobby'. In tandem with earlier forms of antisemitism, these conceptions of Zionism see the Zionists as still malign, still controlling the world for Jewish purposes, and still string-pulling. … Not a lot has changed, except in post-Holocaust times, the antisemite tries to remember to say 'Zionist' not 'Jew.' This is antisemitism 'dressed up' as anti-Zionism."*

Take Action!

Whether on campus, in the community, at work, in school, or on social media, you are not helpless in the face of antisemitism. Here is a list of some actions you may wish to consider:

1. Call out antisemitism, whether on social media, at the "water cooler," or wherever. That said, don't assume everyone is a malicious antisemite. Many people are simply ignorant and can change if you engage them constructively about antisemitism and educate them.

2. Antisemitism exists not only among our political rivals but also in our own political circles. It comes from all sides. If someone in your "camp" promotes antisemitism, use your shared values as a starting point to educate about why that's wrong.

3. Report incidents of antisemitism to the proper agencies and institutions (law enforcement, campus administration, StandWithUs, etc.).

4. If it is clear you are confronting a malicious antisemite, arguing is a waste of time. They are baiting you, claiming a right to interrogate you. Don't fall into that trap. If someone calls you a pig, don't waste your time arguing that you are not a pig. But DO educate yourself on all forms of antisemitism, so you can educate others.

5. We are not alone. We have allies in all faith and ethnic communities. Develop relationships with members of these communities.

6. A rising tide floats all boats. All forms of bigotry should be of deep concern to us. Just as we expect our fellow citizens to stand with us against antisemitism, we need to stand with them when they are threatened.

7. Support Israel. Did you know that Israel's 6.7 million Jews make up almost half of the world's Jewish population? Supporting Israel can mean many things.

- Support it when it is in danger, particularly if there is a war.
- Support its people even if you disagree with some of its government's policies.
- Visit Israel; meet its diverse population of Jews, Muslims, Christians, Druze, and Baha'is.
- Read Israeli online newspapers in English. Learn about its politics, dilemmas, challenges, and achievements.
- **Support groups like StandWithUs so we can continue telling Israel's amazing story** and **fighting antisemitism.**

Final Note

This booklet is part of a series produced by StandWithUs, covering bigotry against Jews from far-right, far-left, and Islamist extremists.

For an in-depth study of these topics, please visit the following.

- **StandWithUs.com/booklets-footnotes**
  Access accompanying bibliographies and footnotes for this and other volumes in the series.
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"We live in an age in which millions of people are exposed daily to some variant of the argument that the challenges of the world they live in are best explained in terms of 'Israel.'"

Prof. David Nirenberg
Anti-Judaism: The History of a Way of Thinking

Suggested Reading:

Books:

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