

Guide to Identifying Antisemitism in Debates about Israel

- › *Mistaking political disagreements about Israel for antisemitism is counterproductive.*
- › *It diverts the debate away from the substance to whether something is - or is not – antisemitic.*
- › *It hinders policy debate about Israel.*
- › *It distracts from addressing real instances of antisemitism and bigotry.*
- › *Making your case on its merits is the most effective way to refute unfair criticism of Israel.*

Be on the lookout for antisemitism. Here are some examples:

- › When criticism of Israel or Zionism **uses an antisemitic trope** that has historically been directed at Jews – it's antisemitic.
- › When Israel is used as a **surrogate term for Jews** – it's antisemitic.
- › When criticism **depicts Israel as having hidden power or control** – it's antisemitic.
- › When Israel is **criticized because of its Jewish character** – it's antisemitic.
- › When Jews are **denied the same individual or national rights as others** – based on their Jewish identity – it's antisemitic.
- › When Jews are **held collectively responsible** for Israel's policies or actions – it's antisemitic.
- › When criticism **insinuates that Jews are more loyal to Israel** than to the country in which they live/are citizens – it's antisemitic.

But don't confuse criticism of Israel with antisemitism.

- › **Criticism or disagreement with Israeli government policies are not antisemitic.**
- › Harsh characterizations of Israel that may be unfair are not necessarily antisemitic.
- › Even Yitzhak Rabin once warned that maintaining an occupation would lead to apartheid. He certainly wasn't an antisemite.
- › **Non-violent actions that press for changes in Israeli policies are not generally antisemitic.**
- › Boycotting goods made in the West Bank and/or Israel is not antisemitic unless it specifically singles out Israel because of its *Jewish* character.
- › **Anti-Zionism can be antisemitic if it specifically denies the *Jewish* right to self-determination** or it employs an antisemitic trope.
- › **But opposition to Zionism in and of itself is not necessarily antisemitic.**
- › **Devoting special attention to Israel is not generally antisemitic.** Israel attracts special attention for many reasons: e.g., because it is at the crossroads of the three major Western religions or because the U.S. is Israel's closest ally and provides \$3.8 billion annually in aid to Israel.
- › **Advocating for equal rights and justice for all peoples is not antisemitic.**