



**Dealing with
contemporary antisemitism...**
...in no more than 3 sentences



The Logo on the front cover...“The Courage to Lead”

The logo is a blue and white light bulb. The light bulb is the symbol of ideas, invention and often intelligence. Two words in Hebrew are written in the middle of the light bulb meaning, “The courage to lead”.

Participants from the 2019/20 UJIA Campus Leadership Development Programme selected this logo. This scheme, for 6th formers, provided opportunities to discuss the challenges for Jewish students, and more importantly provided the tools to deal with these. This logo was chosen to represent the confidence to share their identity and opinions



Introduction

What could you say if confronted with highly offensive statements about Israel?

What if you don't want to engage in arguments over the facts or history?

What do you say when you really want to just get on with having a good time but feel the need to at least say something in response?

The purpose of this booklet is to look at ideas for dealing only briefly with some "hot topics". Many of the statements we've chosen are aggressive and offensive – they are representative of comments made on campus and/or social media. We have noted where red-lines are most definitely crossed and action to report incidents should of course be taken if similar statements are encountered.

If you just want to consider a simple response to the wider issue of contemporary antisemitism, start with the first "hot topic" on page 5 which deals with the oft heard statement: "anti-Zionism is not antisemitism".

We have provided three responses for each "hot topic". Of course, there are many more than three sentences to say on these issues but not if you want to get on with enjoying student life!

You will notice that some of the responses are not focussed on trying to convince the "other side" of an argument – this often proves difficult in just a short response. Can you use language to dispel the argument and at the same time enable you to present the other side: "That's not how I understand history, so...", "We'll clearly disagree on that but..."?

We've tried to harness the essence of the argument, empower you to say your piece and move on. You should create your own versions...your own words will always be more powerful. Often it's not the person making the statement that you'll ever be able to convince, but the others who might have heard it too, who are hopefully more open minded.

We encourage you to read more, engage with leading thinkers and commentators, study your history and your heritage, but if you want to respond briefly to any of these topics and then get on with your life – try these responses – or others like them?



Preface

In December 2019 King David High School, Manchester hosted a Pre-Campus Seminar for sixth-form students staffed by a great team from UJIA and the Jewish Agency. The objective was to introduce the students to the exciting opportunities available to them on campus both in their Jewish life and the many other extra-curricular opportunities from football to frisbee; from publishing to politics.

The seminar also focussed on the challenges of being faced with antisemitic sentiment on campus.

The feedback from the seminar was that the students were keen to have more easily accessible resources to help address these situations. With input from the participants and facilitators on the programme we decided to pull together this booklet.

Thanks must go to the students who participated and in so doing contributed to many of the responses included, thanks also to the active J-Soc representatives who gave their time to visit from their universities.

Thank you to the Campaign Against Antisemitism, and the Union of Jewish Students. For facilitating the entire programme, we thank Sahar Sazgar, UJIA's Shaliach in Manchester together with Lior Asher Diklshpan and his team of Jewish Agency shlichim – they are all highly motivated and engaging Israelis who spend time on Campus supporting the Jewish and Israel Societies and enriching Jewish life on Campus.

Thank you of course to the staff of the King David Sixth Form for enabling this Seminar from the outset.

Ben Shapiro
Chair, UJIA UK Programmes, Manchester



Contents:

Ten hot topics & three short responses for each	
“Anti-Zionism isn’t antisemitism”	5
The UN	6
Gaza & the West Bank	7
Apartheid & Colonialism	8
The Jewish Lobby	9
White Privilege	10
Refugees	11
Balfour	12
Right of Return	13
Disproportionate Military Responses	14
Further points to consider on the hot topics	15
The IHRA’s Definition & examples of antisemitism	18
Resources & support on campus	19
Relevant published resources	19



1. “Anti-Zionism isn’t antisemitism”

Response 1:

It is absolutely antisemitic. Unless you can tell me the name of any other country whose right to exist you have questioned?
Have you challenged Iran for being a Muslim country or Vatican City for being Catholic – No? Just the Jews? That’s antisemitic

Response 2:

Zionism is about recognising the Jewish people’s right to self-determination. Why do anti-Zionists think that the Jews the only nation not allowed a state? Anti-Zionism IS absolutely antisemitism. Criticise Israel all you like – I certainly do – but don’t deny its right to exist?

Response 3:

So I suggest you look at the internationally recognised definition of antisemitism – “denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination”...is one of the many examples they list as antisemitism – so too is “claiming that the existence of the State of Israel is a racist endeavour”. (See page 18 for the IRHA definition of antisemitism)



2. “Israel is an occupying, law-breaking aggressor – just look at the number of UN resolutions against Israel – you can hardly argue with the UN?”

Response 1:

The idea of the UN is great – really it is – but it is so bias against Israel. Despite being the only democracy in the Middle East, Israel faces more criticism and condemnation at the United Nations than any other country.

Response 2:

That comment is typical of the massive anti-Israel bias across the UN. So yes you can argue with the UN. On retiring in 2016 Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary General of the UN himself criticised the UN’s bias against Israel. Look it up!...hear it from him, not me! (see page 15 for quotes)

Response 3:

Do you know that the UN has a separate Agenda item (7) under which any country can criticise only Israel. There is no separate agenda item for Iran, North Korea, China, Russia – just Israel. So yes, I think we should argue with the UN.



3. “Israel has essentially set up an illegal siege of Gaza and continues illegal settlement in the West Bank – which is probably the biggest barrier to creating a two-state solution.”

Response 1

Israel actually withdrew from Gaza in 2005 – I think we all expected that to contribute towards peace. But Hamas now governs there – they are a racist, terrorist organisation which in its own constitution literally calls for Israel to be “obliterated”. So whilst there’s a long way to go for peace – you can’t put all the blame on Israel.

Response 2

We needn’t get into an argument over how you justify calling it a siege – but we can agree its certainly not a normal border – how can it be? How would England deal with the Welsh border if border towns and villages were being bombed, exposed to underground tunnels? When the Gaza government is no longer at war with Israel – surely then there can be normalised borders.

Response 3

The question of settlements is a thorny one – but it’s certainly not the biggest barrier to peace. Israel pulled families out of settlements in Gaza in 2005 in the hope it would result in peace – doesn’t seem to have worked.



4. “Israelis are the new Nazis, running a racist & apartheid state – the new colonialists – basically carrying out a genocide on the Palestinians.” *

Response 1:

I find that unbelievably offensive – the Nazi’s carried out an unprecedented genocide systematically killing 6 million Jews and millions of others including political prisoners, disabled and gay. Anyway, there are now millions of Palestinians in the Middle East, far more than the hundreds of thousands there were in 1948 – that hardly points to a genocide does it?

Response 2:

That’s offensive and antisemitic, but I’ll deal with that later – picking up on the Colonial point – I think you’re confusing this idea with the fact that Jews have their history rooted in the Land of Israel – thousands of Jews flooding back to their homeland – that isn’t colonialism.

Response 3:

So you’ve got a real issue with Israel clearly – lets deal with the Apartheid point – have you actually ever been there? There are Arab Muslims and Christians in the Israeli Parliament, in top jobs, serving in the army, enjoying the same shops, beaches etc – that’s not Apartheid. There might be all sorts of issues between Muslims and Jews in Israel but there’s certainly no Apartheid.

**This is an antisemitic statement. See IHRA definition of Antisemitism (Page 18). Whilst anti-semitism itself is not always illegal if this statement were used it would likely violate diversity and tolerance policies on campus / in the workplace and could cross the criminal threshold in certain instances.*



5. “It’s only us socialists who dare to speak the truth about Israel, we’re not controlled by the Jewish lobby – you’re all so paranoid and call people anti-Semites if they criticise Israel.” *

Response 1:

You talk of the Jewish lobby controlling things – are you into all the conspiracy theories about Jewish power and influence in the media and politics? Sounds pretty antisemitic to me.

Response 2:

This is not just a little bit of Jewish paranoia – the Equalities and Human Rights Commission opened a full investigation into the Labour Party in March ‘19 on the basis that it had discriminated against people because they were Jewish. That was under Jeremy Corbyn’s version of Socialism – not the kind of politics the Jewish community wanted any part of.

Response 3:

I smell antisemitism when I hear people talk about powerful Jewish lobbies, or when I hear non-Jewish people tell Jews what is or isn’t antisemitic.

**This is an antisemitic statement making use of antisemitic tropes around Jewish power. See IHRA definition of Antisemitism (page 18). Whilst antisemitism itself is not always illegal if this statement were used it would likely violate diversity and tolerance policies on campus / in the workplace and could cross the criminal threshold in certain instances.*



6. “Jews are the epitome of white privilege – call yourself the chosen people so don’t tell us you are truly victims of racism.” *

Response 1:

So you think because we’re white means we can’t talk about Racism? That’s messed up. There are right wing extremists shooting at Synagogues, there are left wing radicals denying Israel’s right to exist – I think these are examples of racism. Anyway, since when should there be a competition for victimhood.

Response 2:

I am white-passing, I’m educated – I’m seen as white middle-class – that makes it even easier for people to peddle crazy racist conspiracy stories about me – feels like that’s why antisemitism is such a hard racism to combat – it can be hidden amongst all sorts of other prejudices and labels – like anti-Zionism or anti-capitalism.

Response 3:

Do you know most Jews are not actually white? In Israel for example over half the population are dark skinned Sefardi Jews – mostly descendants of refugees expelled from Arab Countries. If I were you, I’d try not to focus too much on people’s skin colour...it is a bit racist.

**This is an example of antisemitism denial and would likely violate diversity and tolerance policies on campus / in the workplace. Worth reporting such an incident.*



7. “Israel is just born out of the Holocaust and the Jews just turfed out a whole people into refugee camps – the Palestinians are the true victims of Hitler – they commemorate 1948 as a Nakba – a catastrophe.”

Response 1:

I think you'll find there were some issues between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East well before the Holocaust. There were actually more Jews who fled Arab countries, than there were Palestinians who fled from Israel. Any conversation must surely consider both sides, and it certainly doesn't help anyone to be so offensive.

Response 2:

Israel didn't turf out Palestinians – its just a lie – many Palestinians left because it was a war zone in 1947/48 – Arab Countries and the local Arab populations fighting Jews, Jews fighting Arabs. But even if we disagree on the facts – the real issues is how offensive you're being – I think your prejudices are colouring your reading of history.

Response 3:

Calling Israel's creation “Nakba” is offensive and competing for victimhood doesn't achieve anything. Look what was actually created in 1948 – Israel is the only democracy in the region – a country where there are Jewish Israelis and Arab Israelis – it might not be happy families all the time but this doesn't look like a catastrophe.



8. “The British should apologise for Balfour – gifting Palestine to the Jews.”

Response 1:

Jews have called the Land of Israel “home” since since bible days and have had a continual presence there since – I think the Rabbis and the Imams would say it was our ancient religions that are the roots of the issues here – not the British.

Response 2:

Jews have called the Land of Israel “home” since bible days, as a Jew I’m basically part of an indigenous tribe rooted in Israel. But modern day Zionism actually has its roots with Theodor Hertzl a non-religious Jewish leader in the 1890s – he kicked it all off well before the Balfour Declaration.

Response 3:

I’m not great on the details of British History at the time – perhaps Britain was busy colonising the world, dividing things up as they pleased, perhaps not – but it’s not as if Britain was just randomly gifting the Jewish nation a land – they weren’t even in control of the area at the time. They were just stating Britain’s support for the establishment of a national homeland for the Jewish People.



9. “How can you deny the Palestinian right of return if you’re happy to promote your own Jewish right of return?”

Response 1:

These are two separate issues. The Palestinians claim a right of return for all the refugees from the conflict this is in the hundreds of thousands, but they also claim this for all their descendants. This is completely inconsistent with international law and the treatments of refugees in the rest of the world. The Jewish right of return is about the Jews rights to live in the State of Israel. Israel has a right to set its own laws about who it welcomes to the country – just as the UK and all other countries.

Response 2:

If you believe in Israel’s right to be a Jewish country, you can support a law they have to allow all Jews to emigrate there. The issue for Palestinian Refugees is a question of who is a refugee and what their rights are – they’re different issues.

Response 3:

To deal with the issue of Palestinian refugees from Israel, we need to also deal with the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries – the problems were created at the same time. The question of the Jewish right of return is completely different.



10. “How can you back an Israeli regime that uses disproportionate military responses to Gaza killing thousands of innocent children?”

Response 1:

The media never seems to highlight the nightmare of Israelis living under the bombardment of rockets & kids having to run to bomb shelters the whole time. So Israel's reactions often look disproportionate from someone sitting here in the UK. How would England react if Welsh border towns and villages were being bombed, exposed to underground tunnels controlled by terrorists?

Response 2:

From what I know, most innocent deaths in Gaza are the result of innocent people being used as human shields – rockets are literally launched from schools and hospitals. And the only reason there are fewer Israeli's killed is because they've had to build the Iron Dome – technology which knocks rockets out of the sky before they can cause any damage.

Response 3:

I'd never support a country that would do that – you're presenting a very aggressive view from one side of the conflict – happy to talk about it but only if you'll listen.



Further points to consider...

...on anti-Zionism as antisemitism

Apply Natan Sharansky's 3D test to distinguish legitimate criticism of Israel from antisemitism. According to the test each indicates antisemitism:

- Delegitimisation of Israel
- Demonisation of Israel
- Subjecting Israel to Double Standards

See IHRA Definition of Antisemitism on the following pages.

Setting up a country founded on certain principles of a nation or religion should not be denied or criticised – England itself is a Christian country. However, this doesn't mean the country's government or leaders cannot be criticised – a country's government is likely to be dominated by those from the majority religion or nation – and they should be held to account and judged on their treatment of minorities. Israel should be judged in the same way as all other countries. In fact, Israel has an outstanding record of protecting minority rights – whether its Muslims, or Christians or the LGBT community for example. This is not the case in Gaza, and not so in plenty of other countries throughout the Middle East.

...on the UN

Ban Ki-Moon former UN Secretary General, said on retirement in 2016:

"Decades of political manoeuvring have created a disproportionate number of resolutions, reports and committees against Israel. In many cases, instead of helping the Palestinian issue, this reality has foiled the ability of the UN to fulfil its role effectively"

In the same session of the UN, the following was pointed out by Danny Danon, Israel's representative of the UN:

"Over the past decade, the UN passed 223 resolutions condemning Israel, while only eight resolutions condemning the Syrian regime as it has massacred its citizens over the past six years. This is absurd."



Further points to consider....

...on refugees

Over the 1940s hundreds of thousands of Jews (est. at 850,000) were expelled from Arab countries. Their children and grandchildren cannot and do not claim refugee status. It is estimated that the war of 1948 resulted in c. 250,000 Palestinian refugees, UNRWA now calculates there are 5 million Palestinian refugees as a result of counting the subsequent generations.

This compares to huge transfers between India and Pakistan in 1947 in which millions of people became refugees. In post-WWII Europe, millions of Germans were expelled from Eastern Europe, over 1 million Poles left Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese fled China after the Communists came to power in 1949, and over 1 million fled North Vietnam to South Vietnam in the early 1950s. None of these gave rise to a refugee status being carried forward for generations. None of them expect them and their children and grandchildren to reclaim their previous homes, nor do they still demand international recognition. They were rehabilitated in the countries in which they found refuge.

...on discrimination in Israel

Some in the BDS movement argue that there are specifically discriminatory laws against Arabs in Israel. Many of these are actually about national language, religion, national holidays – more to do with Israel being a Jewish state – much like the UK is a Christian state. But they are NOT discriminatory. Others are security related laws about dealing with terrorists, not about how the Muslim or Arab population are treated as would be expected in an Apartheid regime.



Further points to consider...

...on Balfour

It was actually only in 1919 (after the Balfour Declaration) that the Treaty of Versailles entrusted temporary administration of the area to the British – followed by the British Mandate over Palestine which was established by the League of Nations (the precursor to the UN) in 1920.

The Balfour Declaration stated that “Her Majesty’s Government... (would do nothing) to prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine...”. So, through the Balfour declaration, the British were acknowledging all communities and interests in the area – this is something to be proud of, not apologise for.

...on Jews as indigenous to Israel

Consider the words of Ryan Belrose, an indigenous activist – a Métis from the Paddle Prairie Metis settlement in Alberta, Canada:

“Each time I hear the words, ‘Are Jews the indigenous people of Israel?’ I’m inclined to answer not only with my heart but with the brutal, honest truth, backed by indisputable, thousands-year-old historical and archaeological fact: yes

“To understand indigeneity, one must also understand indigenous people, how we see ourselves, and how we see the world. At its simplest, indigenous status stems from the genesis of a culture, language, and traditions in conjunction with its connections to an ancestral land, most commonly derived from ties to pre-colonial peoples. Once a people have such a cultural, linguistic, and spiritual genesis as well as a coalescence as a people, they are generally acknowledged as an indigenous people.”

“In essence, Jews fit the five point test of indigeneity: All Jews have in common their language (of prayer), their ancestry, their traditions, their spirituality (however religious or otherwise), and of course their home land – makes them an indigenous people in my book.”



International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance – Definition of Antisemitism

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.



Resources & Support on campus:

UJS

Find out about local Jewish Societies (J-Soc) on campus
Tel: 020 7424 3288; www.ujs.org.uk

Jewish Agency:

Emissaries from Israel on campus
Tel: 020 8371 5250; gci-en@jafi.org

Jewish Chaplaincy

Find out about local chaplaincy programming on campus.
020 8343 5678, office@mychaplaincy.co.uk, www.mychaplaincy.co.uk

Chabad on Campus

Find out which campuses have permanent Chabad families.
www.chabad.org.uk.

Aish on Campus

Find out which campuses have active programming.
www.aish.org.uk/campus

Stand with Us

Run pro-Israel education and advocacy programming
Tel: 020 8349 7203, campus@standwithus.com

Campaign Against Antisemitism

Works to expose and counter antisemitism through education and zero-tolerance enforcement of the law.
Tel: 0330 822 0321 ; info@antisemitism.org ; antisemitism.org

If you encounter antisemitism on campus or elsewhere – report it to your Jewish Agency Shaliach or UJS and they will engage with the teams at the CST and the Campaign against Antisemitism to support you further.

Relevant Published Resources:

Telling our Story by Einat Wilf

Industry of Lies by Ben-dror Yemini

Refuting the Anti-Israel Narrative by Jeremy Harvardi











July 2020

