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TWO JEWS, THREE OPINIONS:  
**JEWISH CANADIANS' DIVERSE  
VIEWS ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE**

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*Results of a national opinion survey of  
Jewish Canadians*

*conducted June 25 and September 5, 2018*

*By Diana Ralph, Ph.D.*

*Co-sponsored by  
Independent Jewish Voices Canada  
United Jewish People's Order*

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**About the author:** Diana Ralph is a retired Associate Professor of Social Work at Carleton University.

**About the title:** “Two Jews, three opinions” refers to the old Jewish joke that whenever even two Jews get together, they will have at least three opinions. This reflects our rich cultural and religious traditions of civil debate and welcoming many opinions. The pro-Israel lobby and the Canadian government have portrayed all Jews as unconditionally supporting Israel. But this survey reveals that Jewish Canadians (like Canadians generally) have widely divergent opinions about Israel and its treatment of and policies toward Palestinians. Many of us oppose Israeli treatment of Palestinian people, think boycotts and sanctions of Israel are reasonable, oppose Parliament condemning BDS supporters, and think that accusations of antisemitism are “often” used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies.



**Independent Jewish Voices Canada (IJV)** is a grassroots organization grounded in Jewish tradition that advocates for a just peace in Israel-Palestine and social justice at home. IJV has active chapters in most major cities and on university campuses across the country



**The United Jewish People's Order (UJPO)** is an independent, secular social justice organization that works toward economic, racial, gender and environmental justice. We address issues of local, national and global concern and offer cultural and educational programming that fosters social awareness and respectful debate. We offer a welcoming and inclusive community for all who are interested.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A 2017 survey revealed that most Canadians have a negative opinion of the Israeli government and specifically of its treatment of Palestinian people. But Canada's government and its major political parties continue to show virtually uncritical support for Israel. They justify this pro-Israel stance by claiming it is necessary to support Jews and to oppose antisemitism<sup>1</sup>. This assumes that Jews constitute a monolithic Jewish community that uniformly supports the Israeli government and its actions toward Palestinians, and that they consider most criticism of Israel antisemitic.

This survey is the first to ask Jewish Canadians about their actual views of the Israeli government and its policies toward Palestinians. It reveals that a significant proportion (between 22 and 58 percent) of Jewish Canadians are critical of Israel and its policies toward Palestinians, and that almost half (48 percent) believe that accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies. Jewish Canadians are deeply divided on their opinions of the Israeli government. More than a third (37 percent) have a negative opinion of the Israeli government, while half (50 percent) view it positively.

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<sup>1</sup>Note on the use and spelling of "antisemitism": "Antisemitism" is used in the text. In quoting authors, I have retained their use of the older spelling, "anti-Semitism." The term "anti-Semitism" was popularized by German journalist Wilhelm Marr in 1879 as a pseudoscientific, racist term to describe hostility toward Jews. ("Antisemitism" History <https://www.history.com/topics/holocaust/anti-semitism>.) It has nothing to do with the term "Semitic," which refers to a language group including Arabic, Amharic, Tigrinya, and Hebrew. The term "antisemitism" is synonymous with "anti-Jewish oppression."

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On specific issues related to Israel-Palestine, Jewish Canadians are also sharply divided, with high proportions opposing Israeli policies toward Palestinians:

- Almost one in three (31 percent) oppose the military blockade of the Gaza Strip;
- Almost equal proportions oppose (45 percent) and support (42 percent) the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;
- More than half (58 percent) do not see criticism of Israel as necessarily antisemitic;
- Almost a third (30 percent) think that the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel is reasonable, and 34 percent also oppose Parliament condemning those who endorse a boycott of Israel. and
- More than one in five (22 percent) believe it is reasonable to impose sanctions on Israel.
- Political affiliation sharply predicts differing opinions of Jewish Canadians. Far higher proportions of Conservative party supporters than all other political parties hold positive views of the Israeli government and its policies.

This demonstrates that there is no monolithic “Jewish community,” and that, like Canadians generally, many Jewish Canadians do not support Canada’s uncritically pro-Israel stance.

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## INTRODUCTION:

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Under both PM Stephen Harper's Conservatives and PM Justin Trudeau's Liberals, the Canadian government has shown virtually uncritical support for the Israeli government regardless of its policies toward Palestinians.<sup>2</sup>

A 2017 EKOS poll revealed that the Canadian government's uncritical support of Israel is dramatically at odds with the values and attitudes of Canadians.<sup>3</sup> That study showed that:

- Far more Canadians view the Israeli government negatively (46 percent) than positively (28 percent);
- Three-quarters (77 percent) believe that criticism of Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other government's policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic;

- Half (51 percent) think that sanctions against Israel are a "reasonable" means of ensuring its respect for international law;
- Almost two-thirds (62 percent) consider the Palestinians' call for boycott of Israel to be reasonable; and
- A majority (53 percent) of Canadians oppose Parliamentary condemnation of those who promote the Palestinian call for Israel boycott.

Why is our government so out of step with the views of the Canadians it is elected to represent? Almost all other countries in the world, including Canada's key trading partners, have joined in condemning Israeli (along with other countries') violations of human rights and international law. Why not Canada?

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<sup>2</sup>Jennifer Tzivia Macleod (Nov. 2, 2018) "Canada's support for Israel is 'ironclad.' Foreign Minister says. *Canadian Jewish News*. <https://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/canadas-support-for-israel-is-ironclad-foreign-minister-says>; Stephen Seligman (June 13, 2018) "How far apart are Trudeau and Harper?" *Canadian Jewish News*. <https://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/how-far-apart-are-trudeau-and-harper>

<sup>3</sup>Ralph, Diana (Feb. 16, 2017): *Disconnect: Canadian views on the Israeli government vs. Canadian government policy toward Israel Palestine*. [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488331789/EKOS\\_Poll\\_Results\\_Report\\_-\\_2017-02-16-Final-v3.pdf?1488331789](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488331789/EKOS_Poll_Results_Report_-_2017-02-16-Final-v3.pdf?1488331789); Ralph, Diana & Lascaris, Dimitri (March 2, 2017): *A Survey on Canadians' views toward Israel/Palestine: Most Canadians say sanctions and boycott are reasonable measures to defend Palestinian rights .Part 2 of a Canadian National Opinion survey conducted Jan. 25 to Feb. 2, 2017. Issued by Independent Jewish Voices Canada, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East, Murray Dobbin, & Dimitri Lascaris*. [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488423127/EKOS\\_Poll\\_Results\\_Report\\_R2\\_-\\_2017-03-02-Final-v1.pdf?1488423127](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488423127/EKOS_Poll_Results_Report_R2_-_2017-03-02-Final-v1.pdf?1488423127)

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Canadian politicians appear to accept four assumptions about Jews and Judaism: (1) In the wake of the Holocaust and ongoing antisemitism, Jews need and deserve a Jewish state<sup>4</sup> for their security; (2) Because Israel constitutes “the collective Jew,” most criticism of the Israeli state and even of specific Israeli policies is antisemitic; (3) Palestinian demands for justice, and especially the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, threaten the Jewish state, and therefore all Jews; (4) all Jewish Canadians speak as one in agreeing with and supporting these assumptions.

In this context, the purported opinions of the one percent of Canadians who are Jewish assume disproportionate weight (over, for example, the views of the 3.2 percent of Canadians who are Muslim<sup>5</sup> or the 1.5 percent of Canadians who identify as Arab,<sup>6</sup>).

But to what extent do Jewish Canadians actually share these assumptions? This survey of a representative sample of Jewish Canadians begins to answer that question. It examines:

- How Jewish Canadians self-identify ethnically and religiously;

- What proportions engage with Jewish religious, secular, and cultural practices (for example, do they belong to a synagogue, and if so, how regularly do they attend, whether they celebrate Jewish holidays or participate in other Jewish cultural events);
- What their general opinion of the Israeli government is;
- Whether or not they agree with four different statements about what constitutes antisemitism;
- Their opinions on the following issues related to the Israel-Palestine conflict:
  - o The Israeli military blockade of Gaza;
  - o The US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;
  - o The Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel;
  - o The 2016 Canadian Parliament motion to condemn those who promote the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel;
  - o Canada imposing sanctions to censure countries for violations of international law or human rights;
  - o Some sort of Canadian government sanctions on Israel.

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<sup>4</sup>“Jewish state” is interpreted by Israel and its supporters as one in which Jews are in the majority. This concept has been used to justify expelling hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and refusing to allow them to return, in contravention of international law.

<sup>5</sup>“Canada: Religious affiliations in 2011,” Statista <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271212/religions-in-canada/>

<sup>6</sup>“Immigration and ethnocultural diversity highlight tables, 2016 Census.” Statistics Canada <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hltfst/imm/Table.cfm?Lang=E&T=41&Geo=00&SP=1&vismin=8&age=1&sex=1>

To allow comparisons between the opinions of Canadian Jews and Canadians in general, five of the nine questions replicate the wording used in the 2017 survey of all Canadians.<sup>7</sup>

This survey also includes questions on two current issues not covered in the 2017 Canadian survey, related to respondents' views on the Gaza blockade and the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The issue of what does and does not constitute antisemitism in relation to criticism of Israel is highly polarized between those who view most criticism of Israel as antisemitic (and worthy of prosecution as a hate crime), and those who feel they have the right and obligation to criticize Israeli policies that they view as oppressive and illegal. To assess what Jewish Canadians actually think about whether and when criticism of Israel is antisemitic, we asked respondents four statements about antisemitism, two of which equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism (drawn from the Ottawa Protocol on Combatting Antisemitism and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition on Antisemitism), and two that consider criticism

of Israel to be separate from antisemitism. (A list of the specific wording of all questions can be found in Appendix 1.)

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<sup>7</sup>Diana Ralph (Feb. 16, 2017), *Disconnect: Canadian]views on the Israeli government vs. Canadian government policy toward Israel Palestine* [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488331789/EKOS\\_Poll\\_Results\\_Report\\_-\\_2017-02-16-Final-v3.pdf?1488331789](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488331789/EKOS_Poll_Results_Report_-_2017-02-16-Final-v3.pdf?1488331789) ; Diana Ralph & Dimitri Lascaris (March 2, 2017): *Most Canadians say sanctions and boycott are reasonable measures to defend Palestinian rights. Part 2 of a Canadian National Opinion survey conducted January 25 to February 2, 2017.* IJV, CJPME, Murray Dobbin, & Dimitri Lascaris. [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488423127/EKOS\\_Poll\\_Results\\_Report\\_R2\\_-\\_2017-03-02-Final-v1.pdf?1488423127](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cjpme/pages/2537/attachments/original/1488423127/EKOS_Poll_Results_Report_R2_-_2017-03-02-Final-v1.pdf?1488423127).

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## METHODOLOGY:

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EKOS Research Associates (EKOS) conducted an online poll of Canadian Jews on June 25 and Sept. 5, 2018. A random sample of 359 Jewish Canadians from EKOS' online/telephone research panel, Probit, aged 18 and over, completed the survey. The survey was made available to all respondents in either English or French. The margin of error associated with the sample is plus or minus 5.17 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when the results are subdivided (for example, by cross-tabulating two or more variables). EKOS weighted the responses to properly reflect the actual population distributions.

EKOS is an experienced public opinion research firm, founded in 1980 that has evolved to become one of the leading suppliers of evaluation and public opinion research for the Canadian government. EKOS specializes in market research, public opinion research, strategic communications advice, program evaluation and performance measurement, and human resources and organizational research.

Results are reported by percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. Several questions allowed respondents to check more than one option. As a result, in some cases, the responses may not add up to 100 percent.

Finding a representative sample of Canadian Jews is challenging for several reasons. First of all, there is controversy over how to define a "Jew." Nazi and other anti-Semitic narratives classify "Jews" racially and target individuals for persecution if they have any Jewish "blood." This, of course, is highly offensive. Over millennia, Jews have been driven or moved around the world, where they inter-mixed with local people and now participate in many diasporic cultures. Since 1970, Israel has defined a "Jew" as "a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion," and it also extends Jewish citizenship rights to family members of eligible Jews, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation with Judaism.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Ian V. McGonigle & Lauren W. Herman (July 13, 2015): "Genetic citizenship: DNA testing and the Israeli Law of Return" *Journal of Law & the Biosciences*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, 13 July 2015, Pages 469–478, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jlb/lsv027>:

Jewish identity is also complicated because Judaism has both an ethno-cultural and a religious aspect. Many who self-identify as “Jewish” ethnically also see themselves as religiously “Jewish.” But some religiously affiliated Jews, such as converts, adoptees, and children with only one Jewish parent, do not see themselves as ethnically Jewish. And many of those who identify as ethnically Jewish are not religiously Jewish. Some are secular Jews, and some identify more with other religions, such as Buddhism or Unitarianism. It is worth noting that Israel was founded largely by secular Jews and that more than 40 percent of Israeli Jews are now secular, with all the rights and privileges accorded to Israeli Jews.<sup>9</sup>

For this study, EKOS selected all those respondents who self-identified as “Jewish” either religiously, ethnically, or culturally. For respondents to be included as “Jewish” in this survey, they had to:

- Identify that they belong to one or more of the following ethnic, cultural, or geographic groups: Jewish Ashkenazi, Jewish Mizrahi, Jewish Sephardic, or Jewish other;
- And/or choose “Jewish” in response to the question: “Which of the following best represents your religious beliefs?”

We EXCLUDED from the sample 26 respondents who fit the above criteria, but who, on another question, replied “I don’t consider myself Jewish.”

The June 25, 2018 EKOS poll resulted in very few young Jewish respondents. To correct that bias, EKOS contracted with Leger, another survey company, to recruit more young Jewish respondents, who completed the survey on Sept. 5, 2018. However, Leger identifies “Jews” only by religion, and not by ethnicity. As a result, the total sample probably under-represents “Secular” and “Other religions” young respondents, and over-represents “Religiously identified” young respondents

On most questions, between 0 and 8 percent of respondents did not reply or checked “don’t know.” For clarity, I report the results of those questions as percentages of only those respondents who expressed an opinion, since these small percentages did not substantially affect the overall results. (Appendix 1 includes the percentages of respondents who either did not answer or checked “Don’t know” for each question.) However, on the four questions related to boycotts or sanctions of Israel, between 17% and 20% did not reply or checked “Don’t know.” Their non-response is most likely explained by the fact that, unlike the wording of other questions, those questions did not offer an option to check “Neither agree nor disagree.” Therefore, the tables in the body of the report for those four questions do include percentages of those who either did not reply or checked “don’t know.”

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<sup>9</sup>“Secularism in Israel,” Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secularism\\_in\\_Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secularism_in_Israel); Yakov Rabkin (2016), *What Is Modern Israel?* London: Pluto Press.

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# RESULTS

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## WHO ARE JEWISH CANADIANS? A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

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Jewish Canadians are heavily concentrated in Ontario (68%), British Columbia (17%), and Quebec (7%), with far smaller proportions in Alberta, Manitoba, and the Maritimes. Less than one per cent reside in any other provinces or territories. This is relatively consistent with the 2011 Statistics Canada data on Jewish Canadian geographical distribution.<sup>10</sup>

*Table 1: Geographical distribution of respondents this survey compared to 2011 Statistics Canada Census data*

	<b>This survey</b>	<b>2011 Census</b>
Ontario	68%	58%
BC	17%	24%
Quebec	7%	9%
Alberta	3%	4%
Manitoba & Sask.	3%	4%
Atlantic provinces	<i>under 1%</i>	<i>under 1%</i>

## EDUCATION

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Jewish Canadians tend to be more highly educated than most Canadians.

Almost three-quarters of respondents have a university or postgraduate degree, compared to fewer than one-quarter of the Canadian public. Here is a comparison of educational levels of Jewish Canadian respondents and all Canadians (based on the 2017 survey results):

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<sup>10</sup>"Basic demographics of the Canadian Jewish community," (no date) Centre for Jewish and Israeli Affairs <https://cija.ca/resource/canadian-jewry/basic-demographics-of-the-canadian-jewish-community/>

<sup>11</sup>History of Jews in Canada" Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_the\\_Jews\\_in\\_Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Canada)

Table 2: Educational levels of Jewish Canadians vs. All Canadians

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>Jewish Canadians</b>	<b>All Canadians</b>
High school diploma or less	8%	42%
College, CEGEP, apprenticeship	13%	28%
University certificate, not a BA	6%	7%
Bachelor's degree	35%	15%
Post-graduate degree	38%	8%

## ETHNIC/CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION OF CANADIAN JEWS

Respondents identify with the following Jewish ethnic/cultural identities:

Table 3: Jewish ethnic/cultural identities

<b>Ethnic/cultural identities</b>	
Ashkenazi (Eastern European heritage) Jews	83%
Sephardic (Mediterranean heritage) Jews	8%
Mizrachi ("Oriental" or Middle Eastern <sup>12</sup> ) Jews	2%
Other Jews	7%

It is noteworthy that 17% are not Ashkenazi, because non-Ashkenazi voices are often neglected and undervalued among Jewish Canadians.

Fifty-six percent of Jewish respondents indicate that they also belong to other ethnic, cultural, or geographic groups.<sup>13</sup> Table 4 summarizes the ethnic, cultural, or geographical groups with which they identify, demonstrating the rich diversity of cultural identities among Diaspora Jews.

<sup>12</sup>Rabbi Rachel M. Solimin, "Sephardic, Ashkenazic, Mizrahi and Ethiopian Jews," *My Jewish Learning*. "Mizrahi (in Hebrew, "Eastern" or "Oriental") Jews come from Middle Eastern ancestry. Their earliest communities date from Late Antiquity, and the oldest and largest of these communities were in modern Iraq (Babylonia), Iran (Persia), and Yemen." <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/sephardic-ashkenazic-mizrahi-jews-jewish-ethnic-diversity/>

<sup>13</sup>Government of Canada (Oct. 25, 2017) "Ethnic and cultural origins of Canadians: Portrait of a rich heritage." 2016 Census <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016016/98-200-x2016016-eng.cf>

*Table 4: Other ethnic, cultural and geographical identities of Jewish Canadians*

<b>Ethnic/cultural identities</b>	
British Isles (English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, etc.)	21%
Eastern European (Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Hungarian, etc.)	20%
Other Western European (German, Dutch, Austrian, Belgian, etc.)	12%
French (French Canadian, Quebecois, Acadian, etc.)	6%
American	6%
Other Northern European (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, etc.)	3%
Southern European (Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Greek, Yugoslavian, etc.)	3%
Indigenous (First Nations, Inuk, Métis)	2%
Black African (Somalian, Ethiopian, Nigerian [Black, Nova Scotia], etc.)	2%
Latin American (Mexican, Colombian, Salvadoran, etc.)	1%
Caribbean (Jamaican, Haitian, etc.)	1%

## **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS OF CANADIAN JEWS**

Respondents were asked to identify the religion with which they most identify. Only about two-thirds (67 percent) identify “Jewish” as the religion with which they most identify. About one quarter (23%) check “no religious affiliation.” And the remaining 10 percent identify most with other religions, while still considering themselves “Jewish.”

*Table 5: Religious affiliations of Jewish Canadians*

<b>Religious affiliations</b>	
Jewish	67%
No religious affiliation	23%
Other religions	5%
Christian	3%
Unitarian	1%
Buddhist	1%

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Based on these results, we sorted respondents into three broad types:

- Those who identify their religion as “Jewish” (67 percent) were classified as “Religiously Jewish”
- Those who choose a Jewish ethnicity and who replied that they have “no religious affiliation” (23 percent) were classified as “Secular.”
- Those who consider themselves ethnically Jewish but who identify most with another religion (10 percent) were classified as “Other religion.”

These types tend to respond differently to the survey’s Israel-Palestine questions (see below).

Respondents were invited to check all the ways in which they do or do not practice Jewishly. About two-thirds of Jewish Canadians (67 percent) consider their primary religious affiliation to be Jewish, but half of Jewish Canadians (50 percent) do not “relate much to organized Judaism.” Almost half (46 percent) do not belong to a synagogue. Only 16 percent say they regularly attend a synagogue and 13 percent say that they rarely attend. The responses do not give us information about the 21 percent who did not check options around synagogue membership. They may or may not attend synagogue. Most respondents (59 percent) celebrate Jewish holidays and traditions, and more than a quarter (26 percent) participate in secular Jewish events and organizations or (27 percent) attend Jewish community events.

*Table 6: Jewish practice of Jewish Canadians<sup>14</sup>*

<b>Religious affiliations</b>	
Celebrates Jewish holidays and traditions	59%
Jewish but doesn't relate much to organized Judaism	50%
Not a member of a synagogue	46%
Attends Jewish community events	27%
Participates in secular Jewish events and orgs	26%
Member of a synagogue and attends regularly	16%
Member of a synagogue, rarely attends	13%

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<sup>14</sup>Because they could check more than one option, the percentages add up to more than 100%.

## POLITICAL AFFILIATION

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Historically, Jewish Canadians have tended to support the Liberal and NDP parties.<sup>15</sup>

But Stephen Harper’s Conservative government went out of its way to win Jewish (and evangelical Christian) voters by pledging complete loyalty to Israel. It worked. In 2011, 52 per cent of Jewish Canadian voters voted Conservative, according to an Ipsos Reed exit poll.<sup>16</sup> However, the Trudeau government has been equally supportive of Israel.

This survey shows a significant drop in Conservative party support among Jewish Canadians, from 52 percent in 2011 to 26 percent in 2018. (Ipsos Reed may have used a different methodology to identify “Jews,” so comparisons between its results and those of this survey would be only approximate.)

*Table 7: Political party Jewish Canadians most support*

<b>Political party</b>	
Liberal	39%
Conservative	26%
New Democratic	24%
Green	8%
Other	3%

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<sup>15</sup>Paul Lungen (Jan. 13, 2016), “Can Tories hold onto Jewish voters?” *Canadian Jewish News*. <http://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/can-tories-hold-on-to-jewish-voters>.

<sup>16</sup>Jeffrey Simpson (Sept. 28, 2011), “How the political shift among Jewish voters plays in Canada,” *Globe [and] Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/how-the-political-shift-among-jewish-voters-plays-in-canada/article4199522/>

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## OVERVIEW OF JEWISH CANADIANS' OPINIONS ABOUT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AND **POLICY ISSUES RELATED TO THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT**

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Like Canadians generally,<sup>17</sup> Jewish Canadians are deeply divided in their views of the Israeli government and on key policy issues related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Only half of Jewish Canadians have a positive opinion of the Israeli government. Between about one-quarter and two-thirds oppose pro-Israel positions, depending on the issue (see below).

As with Canadians generally, political affiliation most strongly predicts whether or not Jewish Canadians support or oppose the Israeli government and its positions. On all the policy questions, Conservative Party supporters tend to share a pro-Israeli government position. NDP and Green Party supporters tend to oppose it. And Liberal Party supporters are divided between these stances.

Respondents' religious beliefs are also strongly correlated with their opinions on these issues. Religiously Jewish respondents tend to choose a pro-Israel government position, and Secular Jews and Jews with other religious affiliations tend to oppose those positions.

Gender and age do not significantly affect the views of respondents. The absence of an interaction with the age variable is surprising, because other studies have shown that younger Jews have less attachment to Israel and tend to be more sympathetic to Palestinian rights.<sup>18</sup> This result may be an artefact of how this sample was selected (see methodology section).

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<sup>17</sup>Based on their replies in the 2017 survey.

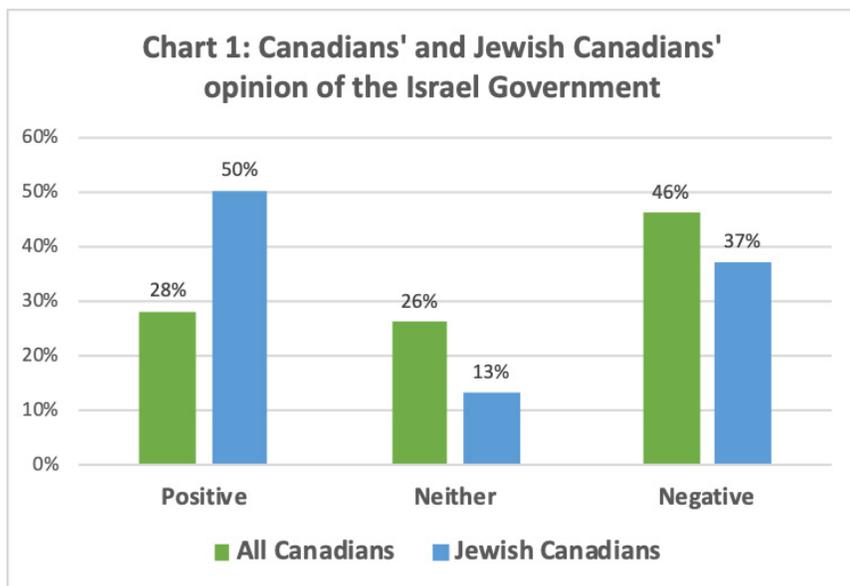
<sup>18</sup>Dov Waxman (2016), *Trouble in the Tribe: The American Jewish Conflict over Israel*. (NJ: Princeton Univ. Press). *American and Israeli Jews: Twin Portraits from Pew Research Center Surveys*. (Jan. 24, 2017), Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewforum.org/essay/american-and-israeli-jews-twin-portraits-from-pew-research-center-surveys/>

## DO JEWISH CANADIANS GENERALLY HAVE A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE OPINION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL?

The survey asks whether respondents “have a positive or negative opinion of the government of Israel.” It is unclear whether each respondent replied in terms of their opinion of the Israeli government generally or of the current Likkud Israeli government.

The 2017 survey found that almost half (46 percent) of Canadians have a negative opinion of Israel's government, while only 28 percent have a positive opinion of the government of Israel, about the same percentage who would not express an opinion (26 percent)

Jewish Canadians are also deeply divided in their view of the Israeli government. More than one-third (37 percent) view the Israeli government negatively, while 50 percent have a positive opinion of the Israeli government. It is interesting that Jewish Canadians are only nine percent less likely than all Canadians to hold a negative opinion of the Israeli government. The main difference between Jewish and all Canadians is that far fewer (13 percent vs. 26 percent) are undecided.

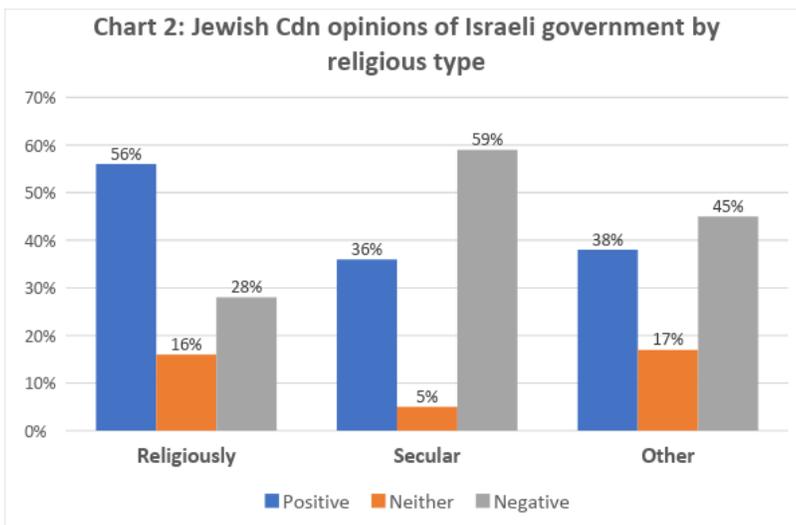


Secular Jews (59 percent) and Jews with other religious affiliations (51 percent) are even more likely to view the Israeli government negatively than all Canadians do (46 percent).<sup>19</sup> But only 28 percent of religiously identified Jews view the Israeli government negatively.

<sup>19</sup> Note: The margin of error on “Other Religious affiliation” on this question is high (+/- 18.9), making inferences unreliable

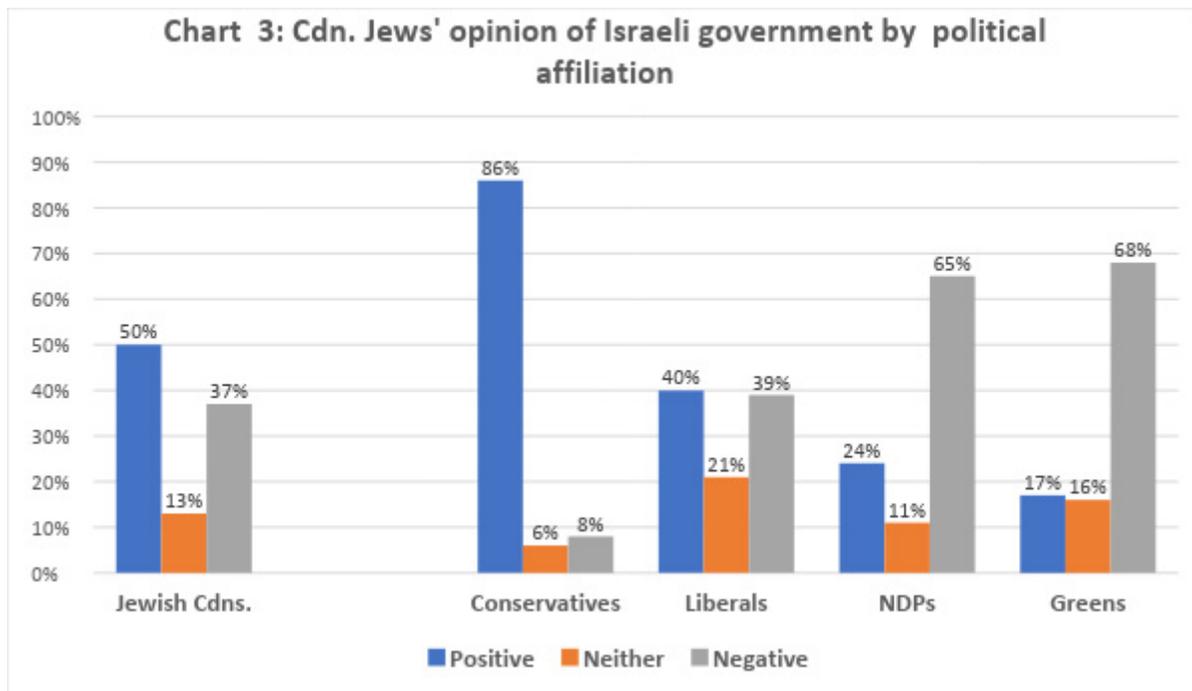
Table 8: Generally speaking, do you have a positive or negative opinion of the government of Israel?

	Positive	Neither	Negative
All Canadians	28%	26%	46%
Jewish Canadians	50%	13%	37%
Religiously Jewish	56%	16%	28%
Secular Jews	36%	5%	59%
Other religious affiliation	38%	11%	51%
Conservative party supporters	86%	6%	8%
Liberal party supporters	40%	21%	39%
NDP party supporters	24%	11%	65%
Green party supporters	17%	16%	68%



The differences among Jewish Canadians' views of the Israeli government are even more striking when sorted by their political affiliations. Almost 90 percent of Conservative Jews have a positive opinion of the Israeli government. The Liberals are almost evenly split between those who hold positive and negative opinions of the Israeli government, and about two-thirds of NDP and Green Party Jews<sup>20</sup> hold a negative opinion of the Israeli government.

<sup>21</sup>The margin of error for Greens is likely too high (+/- 22.5) to comment on.



### JEWISH CANADIANS' OPINION ABOUT ISRAEL'S BLOCKADE OF GAZA

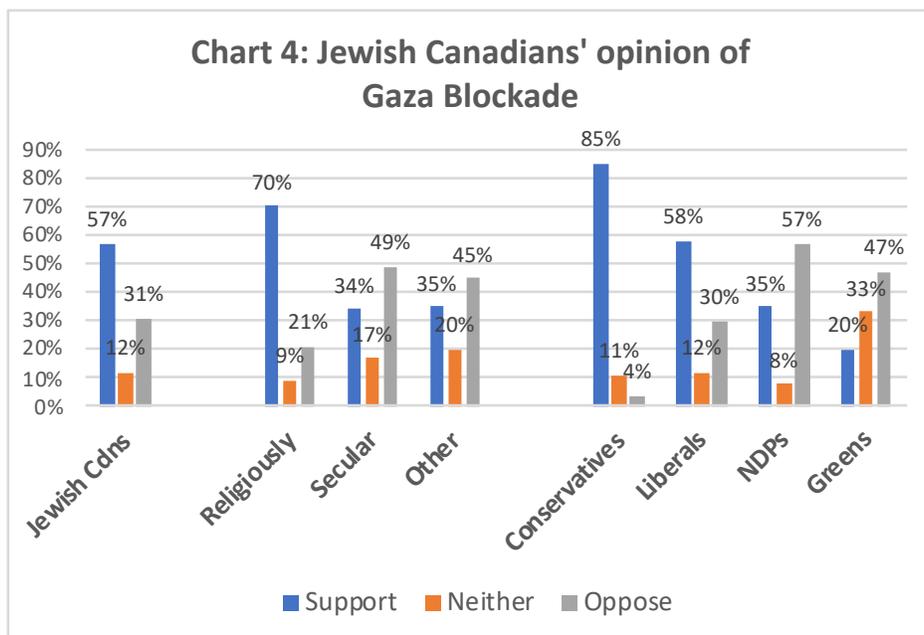
The Canadian government implicitly supports Israel's blockade of Gaza. Its official policy characterizes Hamas as a "terrorist organization" and "recognizes Israel's right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks, including through the restriction of access to its territory, and by building a barrier on its own territory for security purposes." The policy also "recognizes Israel's right to assure its own security, as witnessed by...our ongoing support for Israel's fight against terror. Israel has a right under international law to take the necessary measures, in accordance with human rights and international humanitarian law, to protect the security of its citizens from attacks by terrorist groups."<sup>21</sup> For a brief review of the background to this issue, see Appendix 2.

Jewish Canadians are sharply divided on whether they support or oppose Israel's blockade of Gaza. A little over half (57 percent) of respondents support the Gaza blockade, 31 percent oppose it, and 12 percent neither support nor oppose it.

<sup>21</sup>"Canadian policy on key issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." Government of Canada. [http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international\\_relations-relations\\_internationales/mena-moan/israeli-palistinian\\_policy-politique\\_israelo-palestinien.aspx?lang=eng](http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/mena-moan/israeli-palistinian_policy-politique_israelo-palestinien.aspx?lang=eng)

Table 9: Jewish Canadians' opinion of Israel's blockade of Gaza

	Support	Neither	Oppose
Jewish Canadians	57%	12%	31%
Religiously Jewish	70%	9%	21%
Secular Jews	34%	17%	49%
Other religious affiliation	35%	20%	45%
Conservative party supporters	85%	11%	4%
Liberal party supporters	58%	12%	30%
NDP party supporters	35%	8%	57%
Green party supporters	20%	33%	47%



Far more NDP and Green Party supporters oppose the blockade (57 percent and 47 percent respectively) than support it (35 percent and 20 percent respectively). Almost half of secular Jews (49 percent) and Jews who had other religious affiliations (45 percent) oppose the Gaza blockade, and only about one third support it (34 and 35 percent respectively). Religious Jews and those who support the Conservative party (85 percent) are far more likely to support the blockade than all other Jewish Canadians.

## DO JEWISH CANADIANS SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE U.S. DECISION TO RECOGNIZE JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL?

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On December 6, 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and it recently moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> This unilateral decision contradicted the U.N.'s 1947 partition decision to designate Jerusalem as an international city and dashed hopes for a Palestinian state.<sup>23</sup> The decision was celebrated by Israel as well as by the Evangelical Right and pro-Israel American Jews.<sup>24</sup>

The move sparked massive international protests.<sup>25</sup> The United Nations passed a resolution condemning this decision on December 21 by a vote of 128 for (including key US allies: Britain, France, Germany and Japan) and 9 against (the US, Israel, and 7 small countries, Guatemala, Honduras, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, and Togo). Canada, along with 34 other countries abstained.<sup>26</sup>

Since March 30, 2018, Palestinians have been protesting along the Israel-Gaza barrier. They are demanding the right of return for millions of Palestinian refugees to their villages and towns in what are now part of Israel, and calling for an end to Israel's 11-year blockade. Israel responded (and continues to respond) brutally with IDF snipers killing more than 180 unarmed protesters, including at least 30 children, and wounding more than 18,000.<sup>27</sup> On May 14, 2018, the US formally moved its embassy to Jerusalem, amid overwhelming international condemnation.

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<sup>22</sup>Mark Landler (Dec. 6, 2017) "Trump recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's Capital and orders U.S. Embassy to move," *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/06/world/middleeast/trump-jerusalem-israel-capital.html>

<sup>23</sup>"What does US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital mean?" (Dec. 6, 2017) *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/06/us-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-israel-capital-what-it-means>

<sup>24</sup>Ralph Ahren (Jan. 18, 2017) "Netanyahu, Pence laud recognition of Jerusalem as capital." *Times of Israel*. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-lauds-pence-for-us-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-capital/>

<sup>25</sup>"Jerusalem: Trump move prompts negative world reaction," *BBC News*. (Dec. 7, 2017) <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42250340>

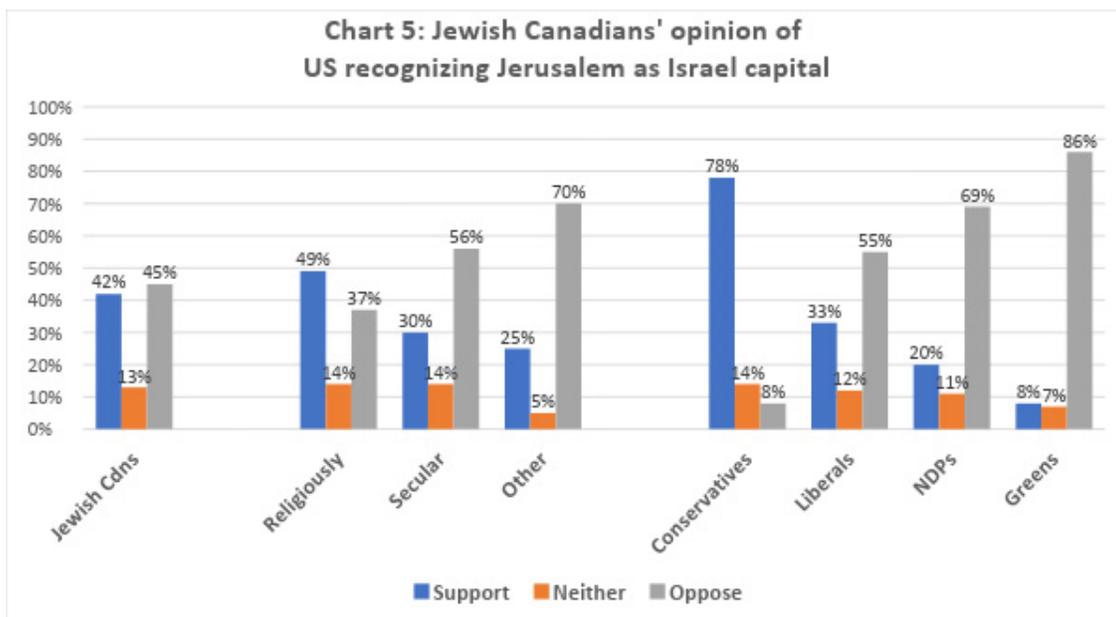
<sup>26</sup>"UN votes 128-9 to reject US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel capital (Dec. 21, 2017) *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/un-votes-reject-us-jerusalem-recognition-capital/28931789.html>

<sup>27</sup>"Gaza protests: all the latest updated" (Oct. 19, 2018) *Al Jazeera* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/04/gaza-protest-latest-updates-180406092506561.html>; "Tell Israel to lift the 11-year blockade on Gaza" *Amnesty International* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/lift-the-blockade-on-gaza/>

Far more NDP and Green Party supporters oppose the blockade (57 percent and 47 percent respectively) than support it (35 percent and 20 percent respectively). Almost half of secular Jews (49 percent) and Jews who had other religious affiliations (45 percent) oppose the Gaza blockade, and only about one third support it (34 and 35 percent respectively). Religious Jews and those who support the Conservative party (85 percent) are far more likely to support the blockade than all other Jewish Canadians.

Table 10: Do you support or oppose the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel?

	Support	Neither	Oppose
Jewish Canadians	42%	13%	45%
Religiously Jewish	49%	14%	37%
Secular Jews	30%	14%	56%
Other religious affiliation	25%	5%	70%
Conservative party supporters	78%	14%	8%
Liberal party supporters	33%	12%	55%
NDP party supporters	20%	11%	69%
Green party supporters	8%	7%	86%



## DO CANADIAN JEWS CONSIDER THE 2005 PALESTINIAN CALL TO BOYCOTT ISRAEL TO BE REASONABLE?

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In 2004, the International Court of Justice ruled unanimously that the wall which the Israeli government built on Palestinian territory violates international law. When Israel rejected this ruling, a year later, more than 170 Palestinian citizens' organizations called for an international campaign of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) to pressure Israel to abide by international law and meet these three demands:

1. End Israel's occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantle the Wall
2. Recognize the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
3. Respect, protect and promote the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.<sup>28</sup>

Over the last 13 years, the BDS movement has grown dramatically. Estimates of its economic impact vary widely from a Brookings Institute study claiming it has had little impact, to other studies which claim it is severely affecting Israel's economy and legitimacy, including a Rand Corporation estimate that BDS could cost Israel more than \$47 billion over 10 years. Even more important than its financial impact is the movement's impact on legitimizing the Palestinian narrative that its rights have been violated and challenging Israel's formerly hegemonic narrative.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Palestine Civil Society (July 9, 2005) "Palestine civil society calls for BDS" <https://bdsmovement.net/call>

<sup>29</sup>Dany Bahar & Natan Sachs (January 26, 2018) "How much does BDS threaten Israel's economy?" Brookings Institution. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/01/26/how-much-does-bds-threaten-israels-economy/>

<sup>30</sup>James North (June 14, 2015) "BDS could cost Israel \$4.7 billion a year" Mondoweiss <https://mondoweiss.net/2015/06/could-israel-billion/>; Ben White (Nov. 4, 2018) "Has the BDS Campaign really achieved so little?" Middle East Monitor <https://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/has-bds-movement-failed-1406514629>

<sup>31</sup>Nathan Thrall (Aug. 14, 2018) "BDS boycott, divestment, sanctions movement transformed Israeli-Palestinian debate" The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/14/bds-boycott-divestment-sanctions-movement-transformed-israeli-palestinian-debate>

<sup>32</sup>JTA (Dec. 30, 2017) "Israel approves \$72 million anti-BDS project" Jerusalem Post. <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Israel-approves-72-million-anti-BDS-project-521388>

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Israel and Israel lobby organizations consider the BDS movement such a threat that it has declared virtual war on any person or group that endorses BDS. In December, 2017, the Israeli government approved a \$71 million anti-BDS campaign.<sup>32</sup> And in 2018, it has been lobbying European, US, and Canadian political parties to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, and to “exclude from government any politicians or parties that breach it”.<sup>33</sup> The IHRA definition of antisemitism could be used to treat any attempts to “target” Israel (such as BDS campaigns) as antisemitic.<sup>34</sup> This would open the door to silencing or even criminally charging anyone who publicly criticizes Israel and/or engages in activism for Palestinian rights.

We wanted to know to what extent Jewish Canadians share this negative view of the Palestinian call to boycott Israel. They were asked:

In 2004, the International Court of Justice ruled unanimously that the wall built by the Israeli government on Palestinian territory violates international law. In response, one year later, over 170 Palestinian citizens' organizations called for a boycott to pressure Israel to abide by international law. Do you consider the Palestinians' call for such a boycott to be reasonable?

When we asked a representative sample of all Canadians this question in 2017, more than three-quarters (78 percent) of them agreed that the Palestinian call to boycott Israel is “reasonable.”

Jewish Canadians are far more split than Canadians generally on their opinions about the reasonableness of boycotting Israel. More than half (53 percent) think boycotting Israel is not reasonable. But 30 percent think a boycott of Israel is reasonable, and a further 17 percent do not express an opinion. Again a far higher proportion of Liberals (32 percent), NDPs (51 percent), and Greens (44 percent) than Conservatives (10 percent) think the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel is reasonable.

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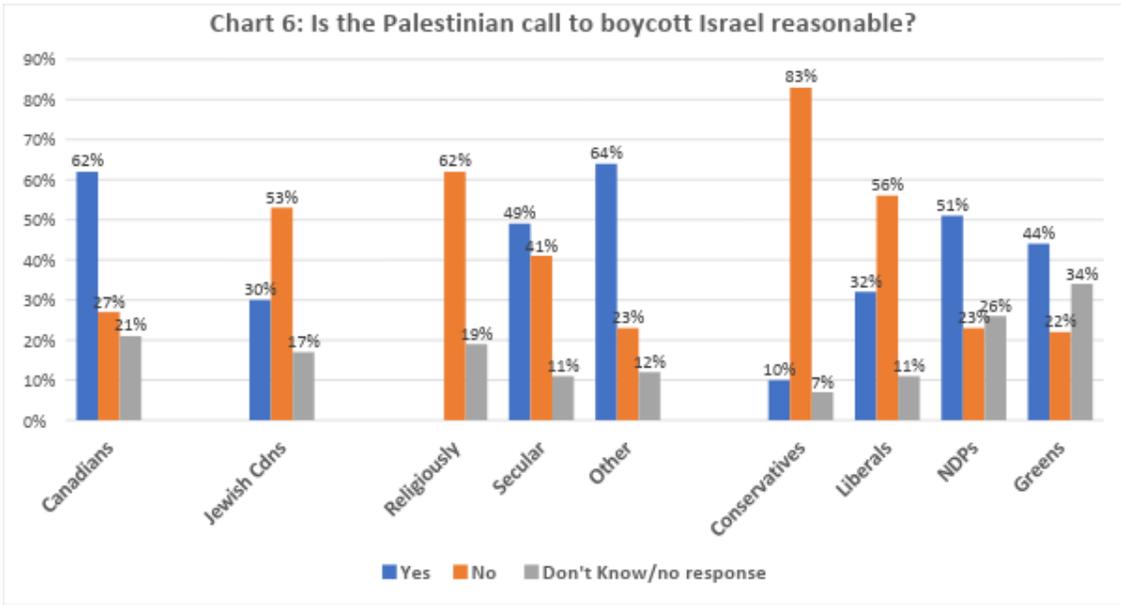
<sup>33</sup>Arthur Nelson (Oct. 24, 2018) “European parties urged to agree Israel Boycotts are antisemitic” *The Guardian*. [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/24/european-parties-urged-agree-israel-boycott-bds-antisemitic-mep?CMP=Share\\_AndroidApp\\_Gmail](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/24/european-parties-urged-agree-israel-boycott-bds-antisemitic-mep?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Gmail); “How should antisemitism be defined?” (July 27, 2018) *The Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jul/27/antisemitism-ihra-definition-jewish-writers>. “How the IHRA’s definition of antisemitism is a threat to British democracy” *Middle East Eye*. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/how-campaign-redefine-anti-semitism-sabotages-legitimate-criticism-israel-1657596820>

<sup>34</sup>Working definition of Antisemitism International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. (May 26, 2016) <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>; Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi (March 29, 2017) “Legal opinion blasts holes in pro-Israel definition of antisemitism,” *FreeSpeechIsrael* <https://freespeechonisrael.org.uk/legal-opinion-blasts-holes-pro-israel-definition-antisemitism/#sthash.n0GBxYtb.dpbs>.

We expected that a lower proportion of Jewish Canadians than all Canadians would consider boycotts of Israel reasonable. It is significant that in spite of all the anti-BDS rhetoric, more than one in five Jewish Canadians would consider boycotting Israel reasonable.

Table 11: Do you consider the Palestinians’ call for a boycott of Israel to be reasonable?

	Yes	No	Don't know/no reply
Canadians generally	62%	17%	21%
Jewish Canadians	30%	53%	17%
Religiously Jewish	19%	62%	19%
Secular Jews	49%	41%	11%
Other religious affiliation	64%	23%	12%
Conservative party supporters	10%	83%	7%
Liberal party supporters	32%	56%	11%
NDP party supporters	51%	23%	26%
Green party supporters	44%	22%	34%



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## **DO JEWISH CANADIANS THINK THAT PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN CALL FOR A BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL SHOULD BE CONDEMNED BY PARLIAMENT?**

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Regardless of whether or not respondents believe the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel is reasonable, we were interested in knowing how they feel about the decision by Canada's Parliament in February 2016 to pass a motion condemning Canadian individuals and organizations which promote the Palestinian call for BDS.

The motion called for Parliament "to reject the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which promotes the demonization and delegitimation of the State of Israel, and call upon the government to condemn any and all attempts by Canadian organizations, groups or individuals to promote the BDS movement, both here at home and abroad."<sup>35</sup>

In 2017, we had asked a representative sample of all Canadians if they think that people who support the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel should be condemned. More than half (58 percent) said "no" and only 21 percent said "yes."

Jewish Canadians are almost evenly divided on this issue. Only 42 percent think that boycott advocates should be condemned, 36 percent say they shouldn't, and 22 percent don't express an opinion. This shows that less than half of Jewish Canadians and only one-quarter of all Canadians agree with the Parliamentary condemnation of boycott advocates.

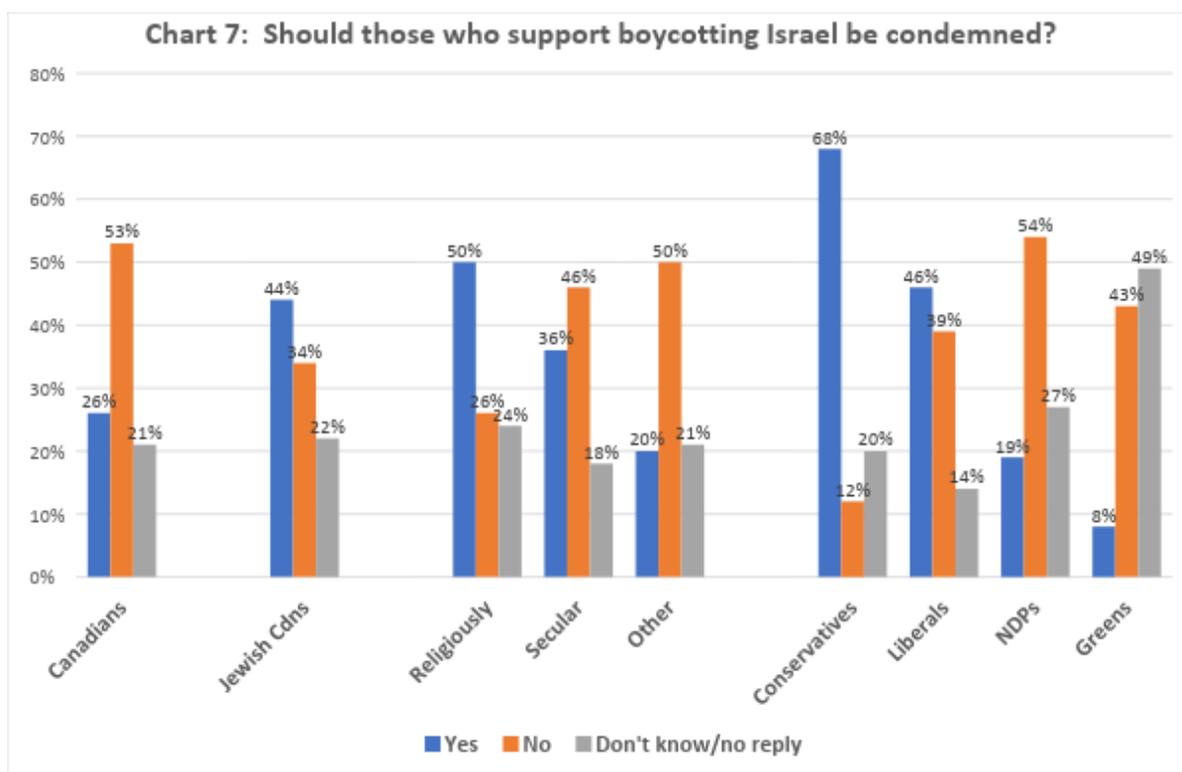
As on all the other questions, higher proportions of Conservative party supporters and religious Jews endorse the Parliamentary condemnation. Among Green Party and NDP supporters, secular Jews, and Jews of other religious affiliations, far more oppose than support the Parliamentary condemnation of BDS supporters. Liberal Party supporters are more evenly divided (46 percent yes, 39 percent no).

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<sup>35</sup>Vote #4 House of Parliament Canada (Feb.22, 2016) 42nd Parliament, 1st Session Sitting no. 22.

Table 12: Do you think that people who support the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel should be condemned [by Parliament]?

	Yes	No	Don't know/no reply
Canadians generally	26%	53%	21%
Jewish Canadians	44%	34%	22%
Religiously Jewish	50%	26%	24%
Secular Jews	36%	46%	18%
Other religious affiliation	29%	59%	21%
Conservative party supporters	68%	12%	20%
Liberal party supporters	46%	39%	14%
NDP party supporters	19%	54%	27%
Green party supporters	8%	43%	4%



**HOW DO CANADIAN JEWS FEEL ABOUT THE USE OF CANADIAN GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATING COUNTRIES GENERALLY AND SANCTIONS SPECIFICALLY AGAINST ISRAEL'S HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS?**

Canada currently imposes economic sanctions on 20 countries, including three Middle Eastern countries; Syria, Lebanon, and Iran. In the 2017 survey, we asked Canadians whether they believe it would be reasonable for the Canadian government to impose sanctions to censure countries for violations of international law or human rights. Over three-quarters of Canadians (79 percent) agree that it is reasonable for the Canadian government to impose sanctions on countries that commit serious human rights violations.

On this survey, we asked Jewish Canadians the same question. A slightly higher percentage of Jews (82 percent) than Canadians in general think sanctions are a reasonable way for Canada to censure countries for violations of human rights or international law. And across all religious beliefs and political affiliations, more than three-quarters of Jewish Canadians believe it is reasonable for Canada to impose sanctions.

*Table 13: Do you believe sanctions are a reasonable way for Canada to censure countries for violations of international law or human rights?*

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know/no reply</b>
Canadians generally	79%	8%	14%
Jewish Canadians	82%	7%	11%
Religiously Jewish	81%	4%	14%
Secular Jews	82%	15%	4%
Other religious affiliation	87%	8%	5%
Conservative party supporters	78%	9%	13%
Liberal party supporters	87%	3%	10%
NDP party supporters	86%	7%	7%
Green party supporters	100%	0%	0%

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We also asked Canadians (on the 2017 survey) and Jewish Canadians (on this survey) whether they think imposing sanctions specifically on Israel would be reasonable, given the 2016 UN Security Council's unanimous vote to declare that Israeli settlements on Palestinian territory are a "flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of ...peace" between Israel and Palestine.

About half (51 percent) of Canadians generally think this would be reasonable. Although this is a drop from the 79 percent who support sanctions generally, it is significant that over half of Canadians agree that sanctions on Israel would be reasonable. Only 8 percent think it would not be reasonable.

Only about one-quarter (22 percent) of Jewish Canadians think that it would be reasonable for Canada to impose sanctions on Israel, compared to 58 percent who think it would not be reasonable. However, it is remarkable that almost one in four Jewish Canadians would view sanctions on Israel as reasonable.

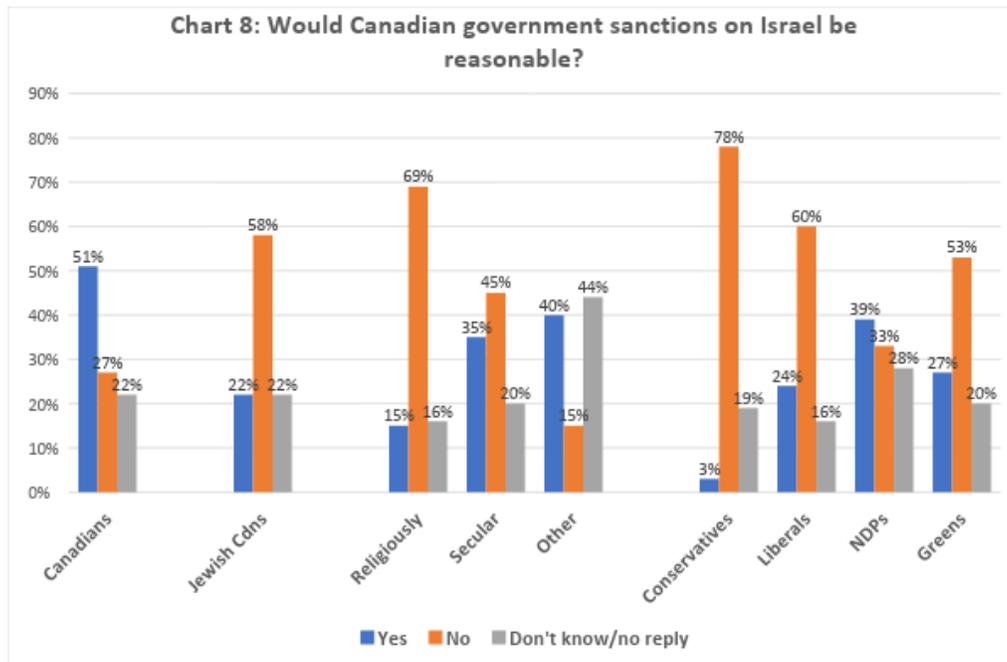
Religiously affiliated Jews are most likely to consider imposing sanctions on Israel not reasonable (69 percent). Secular Jews are almost evenly divided on the issue (35 percent yes, 45 percent no), and among Jews with other religious affiliations, 40 percent agree that it would be reasonable to impose sanctions on Israel and only 15 percent think it would not be reasonable.

Almost four-fifths (78 percent) of Jewish Conservative Party supporters think sanctions on Israel are not reasonable. A majority of Jewish Liberal Party (60 percent) and Green Party (53 percent) supporters share this view. But about a quarter (24 percent Liberals, 27 percent Greens) think it would be reasonable. Jewish NDP supporters are almost evenly divided, with slightly more agreeing (39 percent) than disagreeing (33 percent) that sanctions on Israel are reasonable.

Twice as high a proportion of respondents check "don't know" or don't reply to the question of sanctions on Israel as they do to the question on sanctions generally. This suggests that specifically sanctioning Israel is far more difficult for both Canadians in general and Jewish Canadians to consider.

Table 14: Views of whether or not it is reasonable for Canada to impose sanctions on Israel

	Yes	No	Don't know/no reply
Canadians generally	51%	27%	22%
Jewish Canadians	22%	58%	20%
Religiously Jewish	15%	69%	16%
Secular Jews	35%	45%	20%
Other religious affiliation	40%	15%	44%
Conservative party supporters	3%	78%	19%
Liberal party supporters	24%	60%	16%
NDP party supporters	39%	33%	28%
Green party supporters	27%	53%	20%



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## CANADIAN JEWS' DEFINITIONS OF ANTISEMITISM AS IT RELATES TO THE ISRAELI STATE: **"THE NEW ANTISEMITISM" VS. "LEGITIMATE CRITICISM OF ISRAEL"**

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The question of when criticism of Israel is antisemitic is highly contentious and polarized. On one side are those who believe that Israel is the "collective Jew," and that only in a Jewish state, or at least in a world with a Jewish state where Diaspora Jews can find safe haven, can Jews be safe from antisemitism and another Holocaust. They argue that most criticism of Israel constitutes a "new antisemitism," that such criticism of Israel must be silenced, and that those who criticize Israel should be condemned or even criminalized as committing an antisemitic hate crime.<sup>36</sup>

Israel and Israel advocacy organizations argue that the BDS movement threatens to destroy Israel as a Jewish state, because implementing its demands (especially allowing five million Palestinian refugees to return, ending the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and giving those Palestinians citizenship) would end Israel's Jewish majority. They therefore characterize the BDS movement as antisemitic.

On the other side are those who stand in solidarity with Palestinians and/or who believe that it is legitimate to pressure Israel, like any other state, to comply with international and humanitarian law. They see many parallels between the Palestinian BDS call and the international BDS campaign against South African Apartheid. And many of them argue that Israel's oppression of Palestinians itself inflames antisemitic attacks on Jews.<sup>37</sup> Palestine solidarity activists (including many Jews) believe that labelling their work as antisemitic is a cynical maneuver to discredit and silence legitimate criticism of Israel.

We were interested in finding out to what extent Canadian Jews agree that criticism of Israel is antisemitic. We asked respondents to indicate whether they agree or disagree with two statements about antisemitism which equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism.

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<sup>36</sup>*Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies*(November 1, 2017) "Confronting the anti-Israel BDS movement: Summary of successful legislative initiatives in Canada and the U.S.A." <https://www.dropbox.com/s/8hzk4i1jdf4e45v/Anti%20BDS%20Legislation.pdf?dl=0>; *B'nai Brith Canada* (2016) "B'nai Bith Insider: Understanding the House of Commons Vote on BDS." [https://www.bnaibrith.ca/b\\_nai\\_brith\\_insider\\_understanding\\_the\\_house\\_of\\_commons\\_vote\\_on\\_boycott\\_sanctions](https://www.bnaibrith.ca/b_nai_brith_insider_understanding_the_house_of_commons_vote_on_boycott_sanctions)

<sup>37</sup>Tyler Levitan ( May 3, 2017) "Israel Lobby's war on BDS movement distracts from reality." *Huffington Post*. [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/tyler-levitan/israel-lobby-anti-boycott\\_b\\_9813750.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=ca-bds-movement](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/tyler-levitan/israel-lobby-anti-boycott_b_9813750.html?utm_hp_ref=ca-bds-movement)

- 
1. Criticism of Israeli government policy which specifically singles out Israel is antisemitic.<sup>38</sup>
  2. Those who criticize an Israeli government policy are being antisemitic unless they also equally criticize other countries' human rights violations.<sup>39</sup>

And conversely, we asked respondents to indicate whether they agree or disagree with two other statements about antisemitism, which differentiate criticism of Israel from antisemitism.

3. Criticism of Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily anti-Semitic.
4. Accusations of anti-Semitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies.

Here are respondents' opinions about each of these statements:

### **1. CRITICISM OF ISRAELI GOVERNMENT POLICY WHICH SPECIFICALLY SINGLES OUT ISRAEL IS ANTISEMITIC.**

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Jewish Canadians are almost evenly split on whether they view criticism singling out Israel as antisemitic (42 percent agree, 38 percent disagree). One fifth (20 percent) neither agree nor disagree.

Those most likely to agree are Conservatives (51 percent), Liberals (46 percent) and Religious Jews (40 percent). Jews with other religious affiliations are evenly split between those who agree and those disagree (46 percent) and a higher percentage of secular Jews agree (44 percent) than disagree (38 percent). Those most opposed include NDPs (56 percent) and Greens (50 percent). Liberals are almost evenly split (46 percent agree, and 39 percent disagree).

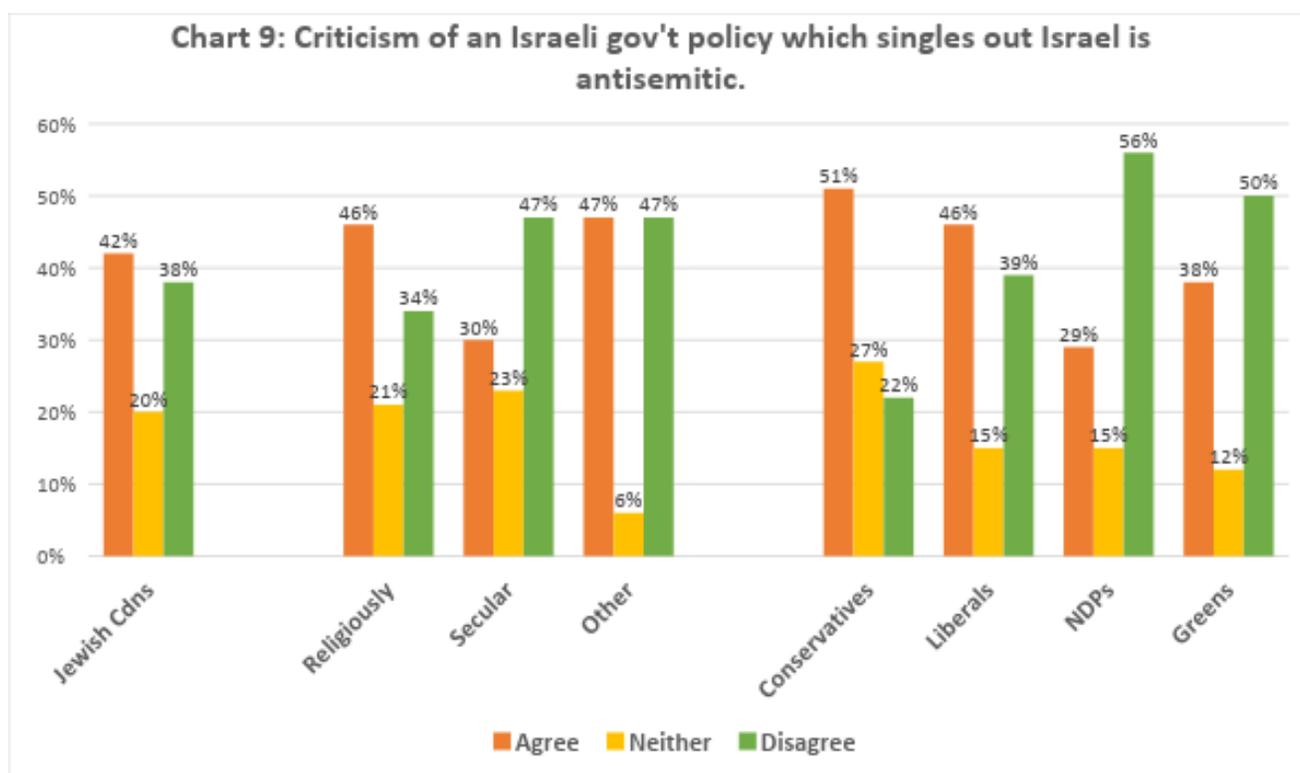
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<sup>38</sup>This statement is drawn from the Ottawa Protocol definition

<sup>39</sup>This statement is drawn from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition that considers it antisemitic to hold Israel to "double standards."

Table 15: Criticism of Israeli government policy which specifically singles out Israel is antisemitic.

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Jewish Canadians	42%	20%	38%
Religiously Jewish	46%	21%	34%
Secular Jews	30%	23%	47%
Other religious affiliation	47%	6%	47%
Conservative party supporters	51%	27%	22%
Liberal party supporters	46%	15%	39%
NDP party supporters	29%	15%	56%
Green party supporters	38%	12%	50%

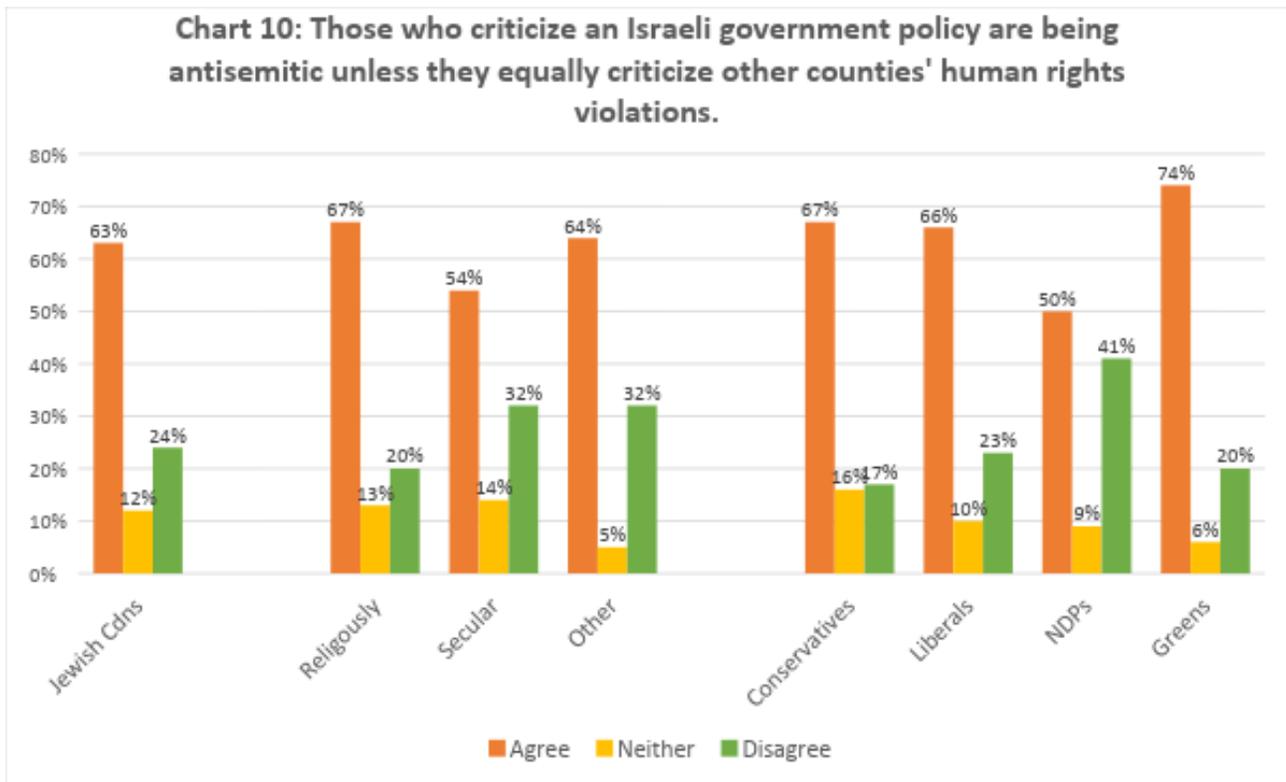


**2. THOSE WHO CRITICIZE AN ISRAELI GOVERNMENT POLICY ARE BEING ANTISEMITIC UNLESS THEY ALSO EQUALLY CRITICIZE OTHER COUNTRIES' HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.**

Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of respondents agree that “those who criticize an Israeli government policy are being antisemitic unless they also equally criticize other countries’ human rights violations.” There is broad support for this statement across the political and religious spectrum of respondents. Almost one-quarter (24 percent) disagree, and a further 12 percent have no opinion.

*Table 16: Those who criticize an Israeli government policy are being anti-Semitic unless they also equally criticize other countries’ human rights violations.*

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Jewish Canadians	63%	12%	24%
Religiously Jewish	67%	13%	20%
Secular Jews	54%	14%	32%
Other religious affiliation	64%	5%	32%
Conservative party supporters	67%	16%	17%
Liberal party supporters	66%	10%	23%
NDP party supporters	50%	9%	41%
Green party supporters	74%	6%	20%



**3. CRITICISM OF AN ISRAELI GOVERNMENT POLICY IS LIKE CRITICISM OF ANY OTHER COUNTRIES' POLICIES, AND IS NOT NECESSARILY ANTISEMITIC.**

In contradiction to the first two statements, this one treats criticism of specific Israeli government policies the same as criticism of other countries' policies, and as not necessarily antisemitic. This is the position of the United Nations General Assembly and of most of the world's countries, as well as most civil society organizations, and especially of those active in the Palestine solidarity movements.

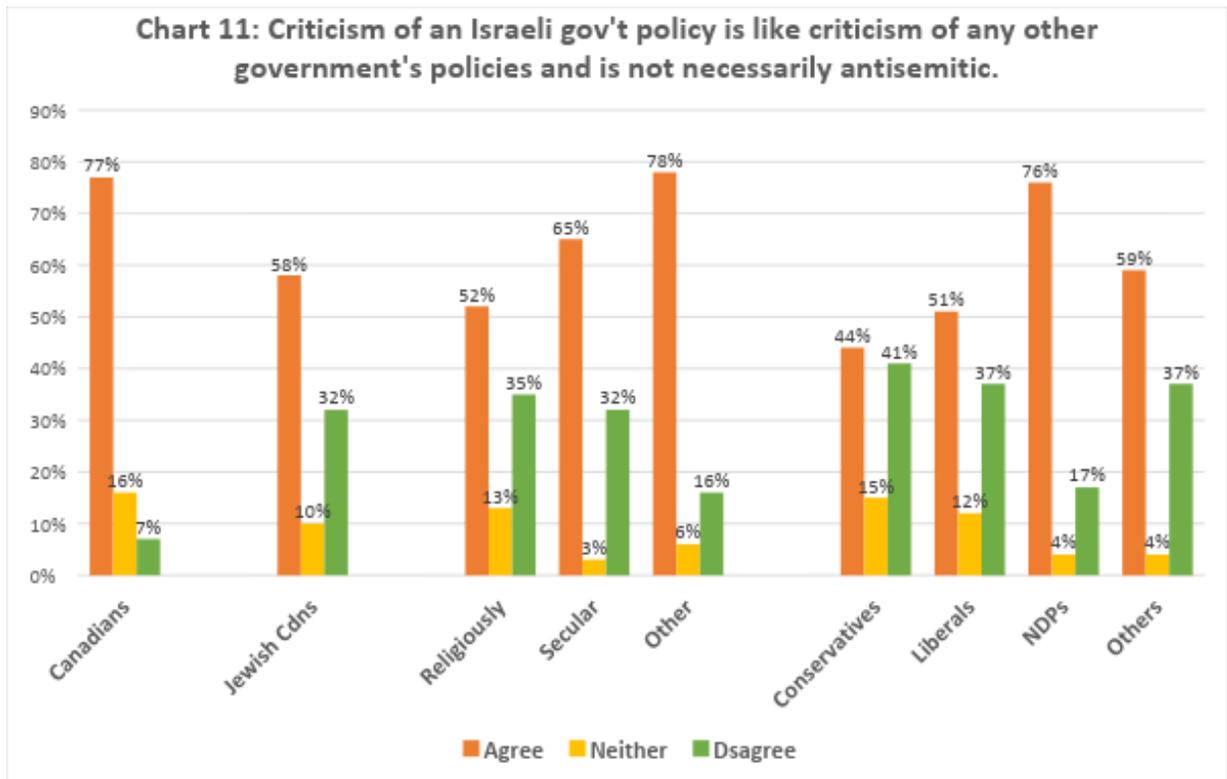
On the 2017 survey, more than three-quarters (77 percent) of Canadians agree that "Criticism of an Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic."

We asked Jewish Canadians the same question. While a lower proportion agree, more than half (58 percent) of all Jews agree and fewer than a third (32 percent) disagree with this statement. Even among Conservative Party supporters and religiously Jewish respondents, a higher proportion agree than disagree with the statement. More than half (between 51 percent and 70 percent) of all other political and religious categories agree with this statement.

It is noteworthy that agreeing with this statement would seem to contradict the opinion that states that criticism of Israel requires equal criticism of other countries' policies, in order to escape the charge of antisemitism. Yet, a majority of Jewish Canadians agree with both statements.

*Table 17: Criticism of an Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic.*

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Canadians generally	77%	16%	7%
Jewish Canadians	58%	10%	32%
Religiously Jewish	52%	13%	35%
Secular Jews	65%	3%	32%
Other religious affiliation	78%	6%	16%
Conservative party supporters	44%	15%	41%
Liberal party supporters	51%	12%	37%
NDP party supporters	79%	4%	17%
Green party supporters	59%	4%	37%



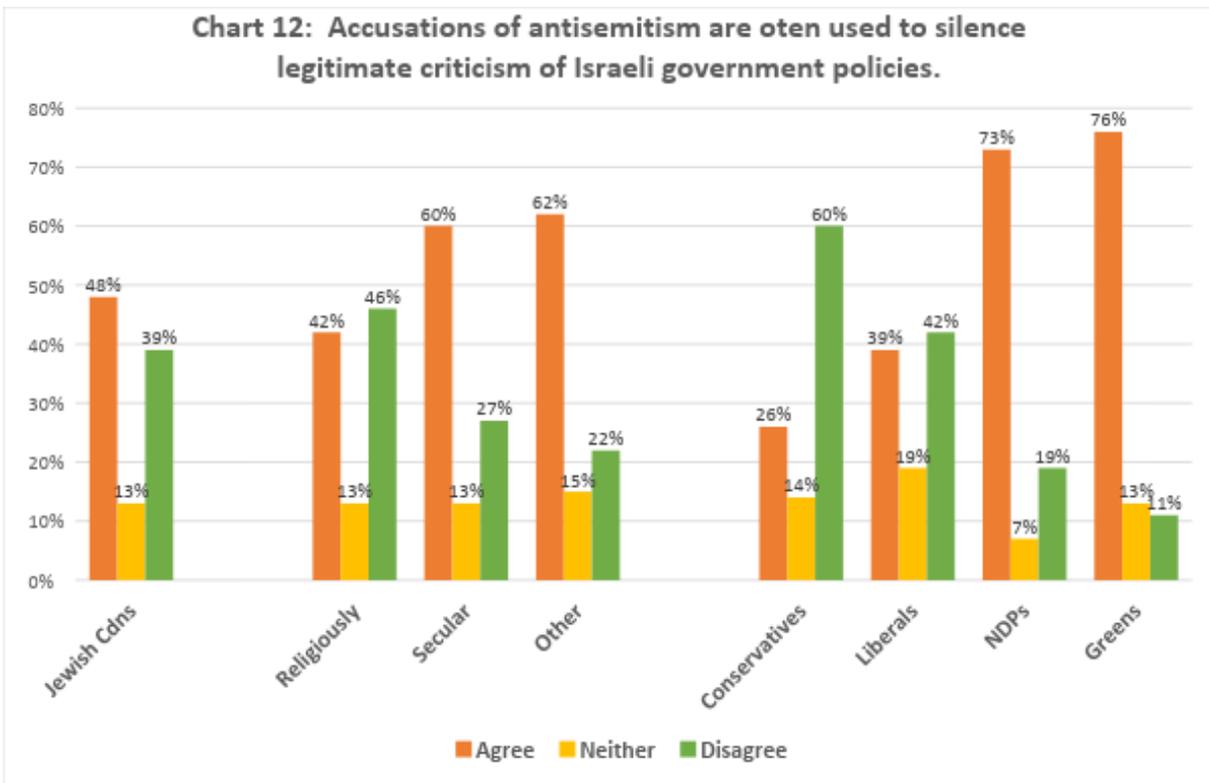
#### 4. ACCUSATIONS OF ANTISEMITISM ARE OFTEN USED TO SILENCE LEGITIMATE CRITICISM OF ISRAELI GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

The fourth statement goes even further, saying that “accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies.” To agree with this statement respondents would have to both acknowledge that there are legitimate criticisms of Israeli government policies and that those who accuse critics of those policies of being antisemitic are purposely intending to silence them.

Almost half of Jewish Canadians agree with this statement (48 percent), while 39 percent disagree. Even higher percentages of NDP (73 percent), Green Party (76 percent), Secular (59 percent), and Other religiously affiliated Jews (51 percent) agree. And over one-quarter (26 percent) of Conservative Party supporters and over a third (39 percent) of religiously Jewish respondents also agree with this statement. This indicates that a clear plurality of Jewish Canadians do not agree with treating virtually all criticism of Israel as antisemitic.

*Table 18: Accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies.*

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Jewish Canadians	48%	13%	39%
Religiously Jewish	42%	13%	46%
Secular Jews	60%	13%	27%
Other religious affiliation	62%	15%	22%
Conservative party supporters	26%	14%	60%
Liberal party supporters	39%	19%	42%
NDP party supporters	73%	7%	19%
Green party supporters	76%	13%	11%



Comparing results of all four statements reveals that what Jewish Canadians consider antisemitic is affected by the use of highly charged words or phrases. The first statement includes the phrase “singles out Israel” and the second accuses those who criticize an Israeli government policy of being antisemitic unless they “equally criticize” other countries’ human rights violations. These phrases evoke images of unfairly targeting Israel, the Jewish state, and therefore Jews in general. Understandably, more Jewish Canadians view these as antisemitic than do not.

It is useful to unpack how these statements are used and the illogical implications of these phrases. The phrases “singles out” and “equally criticize” have been used by Israel and its supporters to characterize as antisemitic critics who mainly blame Israel and not Hamas or the Palestinian Authority. This ignores the enormous power differential between Israel and either Palestinian government and the question of who is oppressing whom. (This argument is reminiscent of U.S. whites claiming “reverse discrimination.”)

And these phrases have also been used to attack the United Nations and Palestine solidarity groups by claiming they are “singling out” Israel for blame, while not “equally” blaming other countries with as bad or worse human rights records. In fact, the UN does regularly condemn violations of other countries. There are so many UN resolutions against Israel largely because it continues to ignore UN rulings and to violate international law.

These are deliberate strategies to deflect attention from the content of the criticism, to portray Israel as the victim, and to demonize and delegitimize the critics. Examples include attacks on the Goldstone report on Israel's 2008-9 Operation Cast Lead assault on Gaza<sup>40</sup> and on the Kairos Palestine document.<sup>41</sup> Of course, some actual antisemites do criticize Israel. But there is nothing inherently antisemitic about criticizing Israeli war crimes and violations of international law. Almost by definition, criticizing any country's government policies "singles out" that country. It is as legitimate to condemn Israel's escalating attacks on the people of Gaza, as it is to criticize the Myanmar government's attacks on the Rohingya people. The Canadian government has acknowledged the historic and ongoing injustice of its treatment of indigenous peoples, and would not claim that criticizing Canada for these crimes is "anti-Canadian." In fact, unlike international condemnation and sanctions against other major human rights violators (such as Myanmar, Syria, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia), Israel is particularly shielded from effective sanctions by the United States' veto on the Security Council, and by threats to label Israel's critics antisemitic.

So, it is particularly significant that such a high proportion of Jewish Canadians agree that criticizing Israel is like criticism of any other country, and that they believe that allegations of antisemitism are "often" used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel.

*Table 18: Comparing responses to all four statements about antisemitism*

	<b>Antisemitic</b>	<b>Not antisemitic</b>
"Singling out Israel"	42%	38%
"Don't equally criticize others"	63%	24%
"Like criticism of other countries"	30%	58%
"Used to silence legitimate criticism"	39%	48%

<sup>40</sup>UN General Assembly Human Rights Council (Sept. 25, 2009) *Human Rights in Palestine and in other occupied Arab territories: Report of the United Nation Fact-finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict*. <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>; "Finance minister: UN Backing of Goldstone Report Is anti-Semitic." (Oct. 18, 2009) *Ha'aretz* <https://www.haaretz.com/1.5248506>.

<sup>41</sup>*Kairos*. (2009) *A time to speak out: A word of faith, hope, and love in the heart of Palestinian suffering*. Kairos Palestine 2009. <http://www.kairopalestine.ps/sites/default/Documents/English.pdf>

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# **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION**

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## SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESULTS

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This survey shows that Jewish Canadians are diverse in their ethnicities, religious affiliation and practices, and especially in their views on Israeli government policies.

Jewish Canadians are primarily of Ashkenazi (Eastern European) heritage, but about 17 percent are Mizrahi, Sephardic, or other ethnicities. In addition to their Jewish identities, many also identify with a broad range of other geographical and cultural identities.

About two-thirds consider themselves religiously Jewish. But only 16 percent belong to a synagogue and attend regularly, and 13 percent say that although they belong to a synagogue, they rarely attend. Twenty-three percent say they have no religious affiliation, and 50 percent say they don't relate much to organized Judaism. Ten percent identify most with another religion, while still considering themselves Jewish.

A higher proportion of Jewish Canadians have a positive opinion of the government of Israel than Canadians generally (59 percent vs. 28 percent). They are less likely than Canadians generally to think that boycotts and sanctions of Israel are reasonable. And they also are less likely to agree that "criticism of an Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic."

However, remarkably, between a quarter and half of Jewish Canadians:

- have a negative opinion of the Israeli government (29 percent)
- oppose the Israeli blockade of Gaza (31 percent)
- oppose the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (42 percent)
- believe that boycotts (36 percent) and sanctions (28 percent) of Israel are reasonable,
- agree that criticism of Israeli government policies is not necessarily antisemitic (58 percent), and
- agree that accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies (48 percent).

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The opinions of Jewish Canadians are deeply divided by their political affiliation. Conservative Party supporters are most likely to hold pro-Israel views. And NDP and Green Party supporters are most likely to view Israel negatively and to hold views critical of Israeli government policies. Liberal Party supporters are more evenly divided on these issues. This replicates the opinions of Canadians generally on the 2017 survey. Do people support Israel, and therefore support the Tories? Or are they Tories who go along with the party's support for Israel? The survey alone does not answer this question. It suggests, however, that those on the right of the political spectrum tend to hold pro-Israel opinions, and those on the left tend to oppose those views.

The views of Jewish Canadians are also significantly divided between those who identify as religiously Jewish and those who either identify as secular or supporting another religion. Religiously identified Jews tend to hold views more supportive of Israel and its policies, while secular and otherwise affiliated Jews tend to hold views more critical of Israel and its policies.

## DISCUSSION

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Why should the views of Jewish Canadians on Israel-Palestine matter? After all, Jews only constitute about one percent of the population. Muslims represent 3.2 percent of Canadians. Four percent claim Aboriginal origin, and 16 percent belong to a non-Aboriginal visible minority.<sup>42</sup>

Jews' opinions matter, primarily because Israel portrays itself as "the Jewish state" and much of Canada's support for Israel has been couched in terms of supporting Jews and opposing antisemitism. For example, in his 2014 speech to the Knesset (Israel's Parliament), then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper pledged "Through fire and water, Canada will stand with you." He continued:

*People who would never say they hate and blame the Jews for their own failings or the problems of the world instead declare their hatred of Israel and blame the only Jewish state for the problems of the Middle East.... Some civil-society leaders today call for a boycott of Israel.... Most disgracefully of all, some openly call Israel an apartheid state. Think about that. Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that. A state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish as*

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<sup>42</sup>World Population Review <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/canada-population/>; "Ethnic and cultural origins of Canadians: Portrait of a rich heritage." (Oct. 25, 2017) Statistics Canada. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016016/98-200-x2016016-eng.cfm>.

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*Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in history.”<sup>43</sup>*

And as Globe and Mail columnist, Konrad Yakabuski asserted, Justin Trudeau “is our most unequivocally pro-Israel prime minister since, well, Stephen Harper.”<sup>44</sup> The Canadian government has consistently supported Israel, especially since 2006, when Stephen Harper took office. PM Trudeau has shown at least as much support for the Israeli government. A recent Canadian Jewish News article recently claimed: “The (current) Trudeau government’s record is by far the best. We [the Canadian government] have voted against 87% of the resolutions singling out Israel for condemnation at the General Assembly versus 61% for the Harper government, 19% for the Martin and Mulroney governments and 3% for the Chrétien government.”<sup>45</sup> The Canadian government’s uncritically pro-Israel stance isolates Canada as one of only a few nations (usually Micronesia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, and the US) voting against U.N. resolutions condemning Israel’s escalating oppression of Palestinian people<sup>46</sup> which are supported by over 100 nations.

In that context, the opinions of the one percent of the Canadian population who are Jewish assume disproportionate importance. Therefore, it is relevant to assess to what extent Jewish Canadians actually do uncritically support the Israeli government and its policies.

This survey and the 2017 survey of Canadians shows that both most Canadians and many Jewish Canadians hold opinions at odds with those espoused by the Canadian government. (See Table 19 below.) Many also distinguish clearly between criticism of Israel and antisemitism.

Calling Israel’s critics antisemitic is a powerful weapon, which pro-Israel groups regularly use to attack progressive movements, individuals, and politicians. They have attacked churches, unions, academics, students, and even Jews who dare to speak in defense of Palestinian people. But this study reveals that about half of Jewish Canadians recognize that criticism of Israel is not necessarily antisemitic and agree that accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel.

Pro-Israel groups also label the Palestinian call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions as antisemitic.

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<sup>43</sup>“Stephen Harper vows loyalty to Israel” (Jan. 20, 2014) CBC news. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/stephen-harper-vows-loyalty-to-israel-in-speech-to-knesset-1.2503393>

<sup>44</sup>Konrad Yakabuski (May 11, 2018) “On Israel, Trudeau is Harper’s pupil.”Globe and Mail. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-on-israel-trudeau-is-harpers-pupil/>

<sup>45</sup>Anthony Housefather (Aug. 28, 2018) “Liberal MP defends his party’s record on Israel and Jewish Community” Canadian Jewish News. <http://www.cjnews.com/perspectives/opinions/liberal-mp-defends-his-partys-record-on-israel-and-jewish-community/>; See also Konrad Yakabuski (May 11, 2018) “On Israel, Trudeau is Harper’s pupil.”. The Globe and Mail. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-on-israel-trudeau-is-harpers-pupil/>

<sup>46</sup>Debbie Gild Hayo (Oct. 2018) “Overview of Anti-democratic Legislation advanced by the 20th Knesset” The Association for Civil Rights in Israel. <https://campaigns.acri.org.il/democracy/>

However, many people, both Canadians generally and specifically Jewish Canadians see boycotts and sanctions of Israel as “reasonable.” Among Canadians generally 62 percent view boycotts of Israel as reasonable, and 51 percent think it is reasonable to impose sanctions on Israel. Among Jewish Canadians, the proportions while lower, are still significant (30 percent and 22 percent respectively). Among Jewish Liberal, NDP, and Green party supporters, these percentages are even higher.

More than half of Canadians generally (53 percent) and more than a third of Jewish Canadians (34 percent) also oppose the Parliamentary condemnation of those who endorse the BDS campaign. This shows that many Jewish Canadians join the majority of Canadians generally who consider the it reasonable and not antisemitic to support the BDS movement.

*Table 19: Canadians’ and Jewish Canadians’ opinions compared to Canadian Government policy*

<b>Issues re Israel-Palestine</b>	<b>Canadian government policy</b>	<b>Canadians’ opinions</b>	<b>Jewish Canadians’ opinions</b>
Opinion of Government of Israel	<i>Loyally supports Israel</i>	<b>46% negative</b> 28% positive 26% neither	<b>37% negative</b> 50% positive 13% neither
Opinion of blockade of Gaza	<i>Supports Israel blockade, condemns Hamas</i>		<b>31% opposes</b> 57% supports 12% neither
Opinion of US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israeli capital	<i>Abstained on UN vote, but issued a separate statement opposing this move</i>		<b>45% opposes</b> 42% supports 13% neither
Is Palestinian boycott call reasonable?	<i>Condemns boycott call</i>	<b>62% reasonable</b> 21% not reasonable 17% neither	<b>30% reasonable</b> 53% not reasonable 17% don't know
Should people who support the Palestinian boycott call be condemned?	<i>2016 Parliamentary vote to condemn supporters of the Palestinian boycott call; Nov. 7, 2018 PM Trudeau criticizes BDS supporters.<sup>47</sup></i>	<b>53% no</b> 26% yes 21% don't know	<b>34% no</b> 44% yes 22% don't know
Is it reasonable for Canada to impose sanctions on countries generally?	<i>Sanctions against 20 countries</i>	<b>74% yes</b> 8% no 14% don't know	<b>82% yes</b> 7% no 11% don't know
Is it reasonable for Canada to impose sanctions on Israel?	<i>No Canadian sanctions of Israel</i>	<b>51% yes</b> 27% no 22% don't know	<b>22% yes</b> 58% no 20% don't know

<sup>47</sup>CJN Staff (Nov. 7,2018) “Full text of Justin Trudeau’s St. Louis apology” Canadian Jewish News. <https://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/full-text-of-justin-trudeaus-st-louis-apology>

*Jewish Canadians' opinions on different definitions of antisemitism*

<p>Criticism of an Israeli government policy which specifically singles out Israel is antisemitic.</p>	<p><b>38% disagree</b> 42% agree 20% neither agree nor disagree</p>
<p>Those who criticize an Israeli government policy are being antisemitic unless they also equally criticize other countries' human rights violations.</p>	<p><b>24% disagree</b> 63% agree 12% neither agree nor disagree</p>
<p>Criticism of an Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic.</p>	<p><b>58% agree</b> 32% disagree 10% neither agree nor disagree</p>
<p>Accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies</p>	<p><b>48% agree</b> 39% disagree 13% neither agree nor disagree</p>

The study reveals a consistently strong correlation between respondents' religious affiliations and their views about the Israeli government and its policies. On all variables, religiously affiliated Jews feel more positive about the Israeli government and its policies than secular Jews and those affiliated with other religions. The survey found that 50 percent of recipients "don't relate much to organized Judaism," 46 percent are not members of a synagogue, and 33 percent said they either have no religious affiliation or are affiliated with another religion. Other studies have shown that younger Jews are both more critical of Israel and less attached to Judaism.

Even Religiously affiliated Jews are divided on their views. Over a quarter (28 percent) have a negative opinion of the Israeli government. About a third oppose the Gaza blockade (31 percent) and the U.S. decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital (37 percent). Almost one in five (19 percent) think boycotts of Israel are reasonable, and over a quarter (26 percent) oppose Parliamentary condemnation of those who endorse the BDS movement. Over half (52 percent) view criticism of Israel as like criticism of any other country, and not necessarily antisemitic. And 42 percent agree that accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel.

*Table 20: Opinions of Religiously affiliated Jewish Canadians*

Negative opinion of Israeli government	28%
Oppose Gaza blockade	31%
Oppose US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital	37%
Think boycotts of Israel are reasonable	19%
Oppose condemning BDS supporters	26%
Think sanctions of Israel are reasonable	15%
Agree criticism of an Israeli government policy is not necessarily antisemitic	52%
Agree accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel	42%

This raises questions of causality. Both secular and otherwise affiliated Jews' opinions approximate those of Canadians in general. Are these Jewish Canadians who don't practice Judaism religiously abandoning Judaism as a religion, in part, because of their negative opinions of the Israeli government? Or are they less influenced by the strongly pro-Israel stance of mainstream Jewish institutions? Or both?

The survey found an even stronger correlation between the respondents' political affiliations and their opinions about the Israeli government and its policies.

*Table 21: Summary of opinions of Jewish Canadians by political affiliation*

	<b>Conservatives</b>	<b>Liberals</b>	<b>NDPs</b>	<b>Greens</b>
Negative opinion of Israeli government	8%	39%	65%	68%
Oppose Gaza blockade	4%	30%	57%	47%
Oppose US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital	8%	55%	69%	86%
Think boycotts of Israel are reasonable	10%	37%	51%	44%
Oppose condemning BDS supporters	12%	39%	54%	43%
Think sanctions of Israel are reasonable	3%	24%	39%	27%
Agree criticism of an Israeli government policy is not necessarily antisemitic	44%	51%	79%	59%
Agree accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel	26%	39%	73%	76%

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As in the 2017 survey of Canadian attitudes, this survey also found that a far higher percentage of Conservative party supporters have a positive opinion of the Israeli government and its policies than any other party's supporters. Liberal Party supporters tend to be somewhat (and sometimes far) less supportive of Israel and its policies. And NDP and Green Party supporters are far more likely to hold a negative view of the Israeli government and its policies. In fact, the proportion of Jewish Liberal party supporters who hold negative views of the Israeli government is similar to Canadians in general. And NDP and Green party supporters hold even more negative views of the Israeli government than Canadians in general.

In spite of (or perhaps even because of) the heavy-handed attempts by Israel and its advocates to attack and muzzle critics of Israel and the BDS movement, this study suggests that the legitimacy of the Israeli government is waning, not only among Canadians in general, but even among Canada's Jews.

Most of all, this survey reveals that Jewish Canadian are very diverse both in their composition and in their opinions around Israel-Palestine. And many of them view the Israeli government negatively and oppose its policies toward Palestinians. There is no monolithic "Jewish community." Israel lobby groups, such as the Council on Jewish and Israel Affairs and B'nai Brith cannot legitimately claim to speak on behalf of all Jewish Canadians.

The views of Jewish Canadian groups that stand in solidarity with Palestinian rights, such as Independent Jewish Voices (IJV), Palestinians and Jews United (PAJU), If Not Now (INN) and the United Jewish People's Order (UJPO) represent a large and growing segment of Canada's Jews. They can no longer be dismissed as marginal.

This study refutes the claims by the Canadian government and political parties that they are defending Canadian Jews against antisemitism by uncritically supporting Israel. Most Canadians and a large proportion of Jewish Canadians stand on the side of justice for Palestinians. It is time for our government and politicians to join both our own citizens and the vast majority of the world's countries in opposing the Israeli government's oppression of Palestinian people.

# APPENDIX

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## APPENDIX 1: TEXT OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

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### QGENDR

#### What is your gender?

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 1  | Male                     |
| 2  | Female                   |
| 3  | Other -- Please specify: |
| 99 | No response (0%)         |

### QAGE

#### What is your age?

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 1  | 18-34            |
| 2  | 35-44            |
| 3  | 45-54            |
| 4  | 55-64            |
| 5  | 65 or greater    |
| 99 | No response (0%) |

### QETHN

#### To which of these ethnic, cultural or geographic groups do you belong?

*Please select all that apply*

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit, Métis)                                 |
| 2  | British Isles (English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, etc.)                    |
| 3  | Canadian   |
| 4  | French (French Canadian, Québécois, Acadian, etc.)                       |
| 5  | Other Western European (German, Dutch, Austrian, Belgian, Swiss, etc.)   |
| 6  | Other Northern European (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, etc.)      |
| 7  | Eastern European (Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, etc.) |
| 8  | Southern European (Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Greek, Yugoslav, etc.)  |
| 9  | Jewish – Ashkenazi   |
| 10 | Jewish – Mizrahi   |
| 11 | Jewish – Sephardic   |
| 12 | Jewish – Other, Please specify:  |

- 
- 13 Caribbean (Jamaican, Haitian, etc.)
  - 14 Latin American (Mexican, Colombian, Salvadorean, etc.)
  - 15 Black African (Somali, Ethiopian, Nigerian, Black Nova Scotian, etc.)
  - 16 Arab (Lebanese, Egyptian, Moroccan, etc.)
  - 17 West Asian (Iranian, Turk, Afghan, etc.)
  - 18 South Asian (East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
  - 19 East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, etc.)
  - 20 Southeast Asian (Filipino, Vietnamese, etc.)
  - 21 American
  - 22 Oceanian (Australian, New Zealander, Pacific Islander, etc.)
  - 77 Other (please specify) -> AQETHN; C60 L1 C60
  - 99 Don't know/No response

## **QRELIGION**

### **Which of the following best represents your religious beliefs?**

Christian

Unitarian

Jewish

Buddhist

Hindu

Sikh

Other religion

No religious affiliation

Don't know/no response (0%)

## **Q1**

### **Which of the following reflect your Jewish practice?**

## ASK ONLY IF SELECTED JEWISH AT QETHN OR QRELIGION

*Please select all that apply*

I am a member of a synagogue and attend regularly

I am a member of a synagogue, but rarely attend

I am not a member of a synagogue

I celebrate Jewish holidays and traditions.

I attend Jewish community events (e.g. film festivals, lectures, adult education)

I participate in secular Jewish events and organizations.

I consider myself Jewish, but don't relate much to organized Judaism.

I don't consider myself Jewish.

No response (1%)

## Q2

Canada currently imposes economic and political sanctions on 21 countries due to their serious violations of international law and/or human rights abuses. Do you think sanctions are a reasonable way for Canada to censure countries for violations of international law or human rights?"

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Yes

No

DK/no response (11%)

## Q3

**Generally speaking, do you have a positive or negative opinion of the government of Israel?**

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Very negative

Somewhat negative

Neither positive nor negative

Somewhat positive

Very positive

Don't know/no response (3%)

## Q4

Since 2007, the Israeli and Egyptian governments have maintained a blockade of Gaza's land, sea, and air space, restricting the flow of people, goods, and resources to that Palestinian territory. Do you support or oppose this blockade?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Strongly oppose

Somewhat oppose

Neither support nor oppose

Somewhat support

Strongly support

Don't know/no response (8%)

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**Q5**

In 2004, the International Court of Justice ruled unanimously that the wall built by the Israeli government on Palestinian territory violates international law. In response, one year later, over 170 Palestinian citizens' organizations called for a boycott to pressure Israel to abide by international law. Do you consider the Palestinians' call for such a boycott to be reasonable?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Yes

No

Don't know / No response (17%)

**Q6**

In February 2016, Canada's Parliament adopted a motion (by a vote of 229-51) to condemn Canadian individuals and organizations who promote the Palestinian call for a boycott. Do you think that people who support the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israel should be condemned?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Yes

No

Don't know / No response (22%)

**Q7**

Last December, 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and recently moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Do you support or oppose the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Strongly oppose

Somewhat oppose

Neither support nor oppose

Somewhat support

Strongly support

Don't Know/no response (5%)

**Q8**

Check all that you agree with:

- Criticism of Israeli government policy which specifically singles out Israel is anti-Semitic. (DK/no response 7%)
- Those who criticize an Israeli government policy are being anti-Semitic unless they also equally criticize other countries' human rights violations. (DK/ no response 4%)

- Criticism of an Israeli government policy is like criticism of any other countries' policies, and is not necessarily antisemitic. (DK/no response 3%)
- Accusations of antisemitism are often used to silence legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies. (DK/no response 5%)

**Q9**

*(This report does not comment on results of this question. They will be discussed in a forthcoming report.)*

Each year, many Members of Parliament and their family members accept free trips to Israel, making Israel one of the most frequent destinations for sponsored MP travel (along with Taiwan). Canada's Conflict of Interest Act specifies that "No public office holder or member of his or her family shall accept any gift or other advantage... that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence the public office holder in the exercise of an official power, duty or function."

Do you think that sponsored MP travel could influence our public office holders in the exercise of their power, duty or function?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Yes

No

Unsure

Don't know/No response (6%)

**Q10**

In December 2016, the United Nations Security Council voted 14-0 (with the United States abstaining) to declare that Israeli settlements on Palestinian territory were a "...flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of [...] peace" between Israel and Palestine. Since that time, Israel has expanded existing settlements and started new ones. Given this statement by the U.N. Security Council, do you believe that some sort of Canadian government sanctions on Israel would be reasonable?

[REVERSE OPTION ORDER FOR HALF]

Yes

No

Don't know / No response (20%)

The following questions will be used for statistical purposes only.

**QEDUC**

**What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed?**

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Grade 8 or less  |
| 2 | Some high school   |
| 3 | High School diploma or equivalent                                |
| 4 | Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma |
| 5 | College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma    |
| 6 | University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level         |
| 7 | Bachelor's degree  |
| 8 | Post graduate degree above bachelor's level                      |
| 9 | No response (1%)   |

### **QPOL**

#### **Which federal political party do you support the most?**

- |    |                              |
|----|------------------------------|
| 1  | Liberal Party of Canada      |
| 2  | Conservative Party of Canada |
| 3  | New Democratic Party         |
| 4  | Green Party of Canada        |
| 5  | [QUEBEC ONLY] Bloc Québécois |
| 6  | Other                        |
| 99 | Don't know/No response (14%) |

### **QPOSTC**

What are the first three characters of your postal code?

—

Don't know/No response

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## APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND ON THE GAZA BLOCKADE

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The Gaza Strip is a narrow band of land about 13 percent the size of Ottawa with almost twice its population, making it one of the most densely populated areas of the world.<sup>48</sup> Sixty-eight percent of its 1.8 million residents are refugees or descendants of refugees, who fled from the 1948 war (known to Palestinians as the Nakba), the 1968 war, and other Israeli expulsions of Palestinians.<sup>49</sup> The Israeli government withdrew its settlements from Gaza in 2005, but maintained strict control over its borders, airspace, and coast.

In 2006, after many years of delay by the Fatah government, the Palestinian Legislative Assembly was allowed to hold an election. "The conduct of the election was widely considered to be free and fair."<sup>50</sup> The Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza voted for the Hamas Party (74 seats) over the Fatah Party (45 seats). Immediately the Israeli government and the Bush U.S. administration in cooperation with Fatah launched an operation to depose Hamas, setting off a civil war with Fatah. The war ended in 2007 with Hamas controlling the Gaza Strip and Fatah controlling the West Bank.

Since 2007, Israel has imposed a strict blockade around Gaza. It has repeatedly launched military assaults on Gaza, especially in 2009-10 and in 2014, which killed thousands of civilians and destroyed much of Gaza's infrastructure, including schools, factories, housing, and the water treatment plant. Hamas and unofficial Gaza-based armed resistance groups have launched many rockets into Israel, which have nevertheless caused little damage and few casualties. Israel and Egypt bar most people from leaving Gaza and strictly limit what goods can enter or leave. Currently 96 percent of Gaza's water is unfit to drink, and Israel allows entry to few items needed to rebuild its water treatment infrastructure. Electric service has been cut to sporadic service. Many Gazan people, and especially the children suffer from hunger and emotional trauma.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>"Ottawa" [https://www.google.com/search?ei=kbLTW8H4E8PujwTU5p3lDw&q=gaza+size&oq=Gaza+size&gs\\_l=psy-ab.1.0.35i39k1j0i7i30k1l6j0l3.260815.261463.1.262713.4.4.0.0.0.105.392.3j1.4.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.4.392...0.-AqAaz4lF2U](https://www.google.com/search?ei=kbLTW8H4E8PujwTU5p3lDw&q=gaza+size&oq=Gaza+size&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.35i39k1j0i7i30k1l6j0l3.260815.261463.1.262713.4.4.0.0.0.105.392.3j1.4.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.4.392...0.-AqAaz4lF2U)

<sup>49</sup>"Where we work" (Oct. 31, 2016) UNRWA <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip>. *The World Factbook Central Intelligence Agency*. July 2018. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

<sup>50</sup>Aaron D. Pina (2006). "Palestinian Elections - February 9, 2006" (PDF). *Congressional Research Service - The Library of Congress*

<sup>51</sup>"Timeline: The humanitarian impact of the Gaza blockade" *Oxfam international*. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/occupied-palestinian-territory-and-israel/timeline-humanitarian-impact-gaza-blockade>

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Years of conflict and blockade have left 80 per cent of the population dependent on international assistance. The economy and its capacity to create jobs have been devastated, resulting in the impoverishment and de-development of a skilled and well-educated society. The average unemployment rate is well over 41 per cent – one of the highest in the world, according to the World Bank. The number of Palestine refugees relying on UNRWA for food aid has increased from fewer than 80,000 in 2000 to almost one million today.<sup>52</sup>

Several UN fact-finding missions have ruled that Israel's blockade of Gaza and its military assaults on the people of Gaza violate many international laws.<sup>53</sup> But the Israeli government characterizes the Hamas party as a terrorist entity and insists that it must maintain the blockade to protect Israel's security.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> "Where we work" (Oct. 31, 2016) UNRWA <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip>

<sup>53</sup> "Israel & International law: The Siege and Blockade of Gaza. (April 10, 2015) Institute for Middle East Understanding. <https://imeu.org/article/israel-international-law-the-siege-blockade-of-gaza>; "Israel's blockade of Gaza: Is it legal?" Institute for Middle East Understanding. (June 14, 2012) <https://imeu.org/article/israels-blockade-of-gaza-is-it-legal>

<sup>54</sup> "Fact sheets: Israel's "Blockade" of Gaza. Jewish Virtual Library. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/israel-s-quot-blockade-quot-of-gaza>

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## APPENDIX 3: **BACKGROUND ON “THE NEW ANTISEMITISM”**

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The term “the new antisemitism” was coined in 1974, to counter rising criticism of Israel after the 1967 Six Day War.<sup>55</sup> Since then, Israel and its advocates have “weaponized” the term “the new antisemitism,” to divert criticism onto those who criticize it. Israeli Professor of Politics and Government Neve Gordon explains:

Historically, the fight against anti-Semitism has sought to advance the equal rights and emancipation of Jews. Those who denounce the ‘new anti-Semitism’ seek to legitimate the discrimination against and subjugation of Palestinians. In the first case, someone who wishes to oppress, dominate and exterminate Jews is branded an anti-Semite; in the second, someone who wishes to take part in the struggle for liberation from colonial rule is branded an anti-Semite. In this way, Judith Butler has observed, ‘a passion for justice’ is ‘renamed as anti-Semitism’.

The Israeli government needs the ‘new anti-Semitism’ to justify its actions and to protect it from international and domestic condemnation. Anti-Semitism is effectively weaponised, not only to stifle speech – ‘It does not matter if the accusation is true,’ Butler writes; its purpose is ‘to cause pain, to produce shame, and to reduce the accused to silence’ – but also to suppress a politics of liberation. The non-violent BDS campaign against Israel’s colonial project and rights abuses is labelled anti-Semitic not because the proponents of BDS hate Jews, but because it denounces the subjugation of the Palestinian people. This highlights a further disturbing aspect of the ‘new anti-Semitism’. Conventionally, to call someone ‘anti-Semitic’ is to expose and condemn their racism; in the new case, the charge ‘anti-Semite’ is used to defend racism, and to sustain a regime that implements racist policies.<sup>56</sup>

Samiiian and Rofel, co-coordinators of California Scholars for Academic Freedom elaborate:

This kind of attack tricks the mind by extending the discrediting label of antisemitism to any line of

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<sup>55</sup> Arnold Foster & Benjamin R. Epstein, (1974) *The New Anti-Semitism*. (New York); Norman G. Finkelstein (2005) *Beyond Chutzpah: On the misuse of Anti-Semitism and the abuse of history*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press) p. 71

<sup>56</sup> Neve Gordon (Jan. 4, 2018) “The ‘New Antisemitism’” *London Review of Books*. <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v40/n01/neve-gordon/the-new-anti-semitism>

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thought or action that is seen as critical of Israel. The old antisemitism was about the hatred of Jews; the new charge of antisemitism is about criticism of Israel, although it seeks to conflate criticism of Israel with hatred of Jews. Ironically, it also identifies all Jews with the state of Israel, an unheard-of and potentially racist denial to Jews of the right to criticize the state that pretends to represent them.<sup>57</sup>

As Mark Tseng-Putterman points out, “the new antisemitism” targets mainly critics of Israel, while at the same time Israel and Jewish Federations in North America ally with real antisemites:

We have watched the Jewish Federations of North America, representing over 300 Jewish organizations, refuse to denounce Trump’s appointment of Steve Bannon, under whose leadership Breitbart flourished as the news source of choice for racists, Islamophobes, and anti-Semites... And we have seen a political push for a federal “anti-Semitism” bill designed not to fight the rise of neo-Nazism, but to curtail critique of Israel.<sup>58</sup>

Natan Sharansky, then an Israeli Knesset member, coined the catchy “the three D” test of antisemitism in 2004.

Whereas classical anti-Semitism is aimed at the Jewish people or the Jewish religion, “new anti-Semitism” is aimed at the Jewish state. Since this anti-Semitism can hide behind the veneer of legitimate criticism of Israel, it is more difficult to expose. Making the task even harder is that this hatred is advanced in the name of values most of us would consider unimpeachable, such as human rights.

Nevertheless, we must be clear and outspoken in exposing the new anti-Semitism. I believe that we can apply a simple test - I call it the “3D” test - to help us distinguish legitimate criticism of Israel from anti-Semitism.

The first “D” is the test of demonization. When the Jewish state is being demonized; when Israel’s actions are blown out of all sensible proportion; when comparisons are made between Israelis and Nazis and between Palestinian refugee camps and Auschwitz - this is anti-Semitism, not legitimate

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<sup>57</sup>Vida Samiiian & Lisa Rofel (Sept. 20, 2018) “Weaponizing the ‘New Antisemitism’” *Abolition*. <https://abolitionjournal.org/weaponizing-the-new-antisemitism/>

<sup>58</sup>Mark Tseng-Putterman (Feb. 25, 2017) “More than a feeling: Jews and whiteness in Trump’s America” *Jews of Colour, Sephardic, Mizrahi (JOCMS)* <http://jocsm.org/more-than-a-feeling-jews-and-whiteness-in-trumps-america/>.

criticism of Israel.

The second "D" is the test of double standards. When criticism of Israel is applied selectively; when Israel is singled out by the United Nations for human rights abuses while the behavior of known and major abusers, such as China, Iran, Cuba, and Syria, is ignored; when Israel's Magen David Adom, alone among the world's ambulance services, is denied admission to the International Red Cross - this is anti-Semitism.

The third "D" is the test of delegitimization: when Israel's fundamental right to exist is denied - alone among all peoples in the world - this too is anti-Semitism.<sup>59</sup>

In February, 2009, eleven Canadian Members of Parliament participated in the founding conference of the Inter-parliamentary Committee for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA), held in London, England. Soon after that, former Justice Minister, Irwin Cotler and Jason Kenney, former Conservative Party Member of Parliament, took the lead in forming the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (CPCCA), an ad-hoc group of MPs, to "help create a climate of opinion—in Parliament, the judiciary, and the police, as well as among the public at large—within which criticism of the state of Israel's violations of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law, and its ongoing illegal appropriations of Palestinian land, water, and natural gas resources, can be re-defined as antisemitism, stigmatized as incitements of hatred, and perhaps even prosecuted."<sup>60</sup> In November, 2010, the CPCCA hosted the second ICCA gathering in Ottawa, and which formulated and advocated for Canada to adopt "the Ottawa Protocol" definition of antisemitism.

The Ottawa Protocol defines "antisemitism" in part, as "singling Israel out for selective condemnation and opprobrium."<sup>61</sup> And the second "D" in Natan Sharansky's "3D" test of antisemitism also defines as antisemitic "when Israel is singled out by the United Nations for human rights abuses while the behavior of known and major abusers, such as China, Iran, Cuba, and Syria, is ignored."

In 2011, in spite of opposition from many Palestine solidarity organizations, Canada's Parliament became the first country in the world to adopt the Ottawa Protocol definition of antisemitism.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Natan Sharansky (Fall, 2004) "3D test of antisemitism: Demonization, Double standards, Delegitimation" *Jewish Political Studies Review* (16:3-4) Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. <http://www.jcpa.org/phas/phas-sharansky-f04.htm>

<sup>60</sup>Michael Keefer (2010) *Antisemitism Real and Imagined: Responses to the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism*. Waterloo, Ontario: *The Charger*. p.7

<sup>61</sup>Kady O'Malley (Nov. 10, 2010) "For the Record: The full text of the Ottawa Protocol" *Inside Politics Blog*. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/newsblogs/politics/inside-politics-blog/2010/11/for-the-record-the-full-text-of-the-ottawa-protocol.html>.

<sup>62</sup>"Canada becomes first country to sign the Ottawa Protocol" (Sept. 19, 2011) *Government of Canada*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2011/09/canada-becomes-first-country-sign-ottawa-protocol.html>

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Recently, Israel and pro-Israel groups have been lobbying for Canada, along with other countries to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.<sup>63</sup>

Anti-Semitism cannot be fought effectively without a clear definition. This is why we are urging governments at all levels – as well as police and relevant agencies – to endorse and use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism. The IHRA definition offers a clear, common sense framework for separating legitimate political discourse from anti-Semitic commentary, recognizing that anti-Semitism today is often expressed in hatred toward Israelis and Israel’s existence.<sup>64</sup>

The IHRA definition includes several clauses which can and have been interpreted to label criticism of Israel, Palestine solidarity activists, and in particular, the BDS movement as antisemitic. The definition has been challenged by many, including Jewish people.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>“Working definition of antisemitism” (2016) International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>

<sup>64</sup>Steve MacDonald “CIJA’s packed policy agenda for the New Year” (Sept. 3, 2018) Ottawa Jewish News. [https://issuu.com/ottawajewishbulletin/docs/ojb\\_web\\_180903](https://issuu.com/ottawajewishbulletin/docs/ojb_web_180903).

<sup>65</sup>“Working definition of antisemitism”, adopted May 26, 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance [https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press\\_release\\_document\\_antisemitism.pdf](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press_release_document_antisemitism.pdf); NGO Monitor (no date) “BDS (Boycotts, divestment, sanctions)” <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/key-issues/bds/bds-and-antisemitism/>; Brian Klug (July 17, 2018) “The code of conduct for antisemitism: A tale of two texts” Open Democracy UK <https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/brian-klug/code-of-conduct-for-antisemitism-tale-of-two-texts>

