Zionism, Anti-Semitism, & The Struggle For Truth: A Jewish Voice of Conscience

Introduction

The modern State of Israel, created in 1948 and championed by both Jewish and Christian Zionists, claims to speak and act on behalf of Jews worldwide. But many Jewish voices strongly disagree with that assumption. This essay explores a perspective from within the Jewish community that dissents from Zionist ideology, critiques the misuse of Jewish suffering—particularly the Holocaust—to justify human rights violations, and calls for a reevaluation of what justice and peace in Palestine could truly look like. Don't miss [videos at the end for perspective from a Jewish Journalist and What really happened on Oct. 7, 2023](#).

Zionism and Its Misguided Justifications

Zionism has long presented itself as a movement for Jewish safety and self-determination. Yet for many Jews, it has become a source of danger rather than protection. The idea that "Never Again" means only avoiding atrocities in the exact form of the Nazi Holocaust is dangerously shallow. The core moral lesson of the Holocaust is not merely to avoid repeating identical crimes but to prevent *all* forms of ethnic cleansing, systemic oppression, and dehumanization.

As one Jewish commentator stated, "Israel does not make me safer; it puts Jews in greater danger." When the Israeli state commits acts of violence against Palestinians and does so

claiming to represent Jews globally, it fuels [anti-Semitism](). The assumption that all Jews support Israel or Zionism is itself rooted in the *anti-Semitic* trope of dual loyalty—the idea that Jews cannot be loyal citizens of other nations.

Ironically, both the Israeli state and genuine anti-Semites use this same trope: one to demand allegiance, the other to question it.

Christian Zionism: Strange Bedfellows

There is a dangerous irony in the alliance between Zionists and Christian dispensationalists. Many evangelical Christians support the return of Jews to Israel not out of love, but due to eschatological beliefs that envision the destruction of all unbelieving Jews at the end of the age—except a small remnant who convert to Christianity. This is not philo-Semitism; it is theological exploitation. Yet these voices are some of Zionism's loudest cheerleaders, particularly in American politics and media.

Media Bias and the Silencing of Dissent

Criticism of Israel often results in censorship or career consequences. The labeling of Jewish critics as "self-hating" and non-Jewish critics as "anti-Semitic" is used to silence any meaningful accountability. Media coverage frequently exhibits blatant double standards: when Russia bombs a region, the headline reads "Russia bombs civilians," but when Israel attacks, the passive voice is employed—"Palestinians die in airstrikes." This manipulation of language fosters public indifference and shields Israel from scrutiny.

Terms such as "genocide" or even "Palestine" are often banned in newsroom language guides. Meanwhile, discredited narratives—such as the claim that Hamas beheaded 40 babies—receive enormous media traction, despite a lack of substantiating evidence. By contrast, documented atrocities committed against Palestinians, including violence against women and children, are underreported or dismissed entirely.

Weaponizing the Holocaust and Internal Discrimination

One of the most disturbing aspects of Zionist history is its manipulation of the Holocaust for political purposes. While the Holocaust was undeniably one of the most horrific genocides in human history, its memory is often invoked selectively—to justify ongoing violence against Palestinians.

Early Zionist leaders even expressed disdain for Holocaust victims. Survivors were viewed as weak or backward. Some were derogatorily referred to as "sabon" (soap), based on the debunked myth that Nazis rendered Jewish bodies into soap. This usage, whether literal or metaphorical, reflects a disturbing internalization of anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Additionally, Israel's early years saw ethnic discrimination not just against Palestinians but also against Jews of Middle Eastern and North African descent (Mizrahi Jews). These Jews were sometimes coerced into immigrating to Israel through acts of terrorism carried out by Zionist agents in their home countries—bombings in synagogues in Iraq and Morocco were falsely blamed on local hostility to expedite Jewish emigration. Upon arrival in Israel, many Mizrahim were placed in impoverished transit camps and faced cultural repression. Arabic and Yiddish, languages spoken by Jewish communities for centuries, were discouraged in favor of modern Hebrew—an

artificially revived language used to enforce a new national identity.

Zionism: A Racist and Anti-Semitic Ideology?

Zionism historically mirrored European colonial frameworks. The early Zionist movement openly used terms such as "colonial trusts," and its leaders acknowledged that native Palestinians would resist colonization—just as any indigenous population would. Zionism, in this view, was not a movement of liberation but of settler expansion.

It also carried a racist and anti-Semitic undertone by seeking to create a "new Jew": armed, agricultural, and secular—unlike the scholarly, religious, or diaspora Jews of old. Many Jews who opposed Zionism from the beginning warned that it would generate resentment and increased anti-Semitism. Tragically, their concerns have proven prophetic.

A Political History of a Selective Label

Semitism applies to a wide range of peoples, yet the derivative term "antisemitism" is almost exclusively used to refer to hostility directed at Jews. This selective application isn't an accident; it's a deliberate, politically strategic choice.

The term "antisemitism" was coined in the late 19th century by German nationalist Wilhelm Marr. He specifically designed it to sound more "scientific" and modern than the older, more religiously charged term *Judenhass* (Jew-hatred). From its very inception, the term was created to describe prejudice against Jews, not all Semitic peoples.

This selective application serves a few purposes:

1. **Political Leverage:** It isolates Jewish people as a uniquely protected class, granting their grievances a specific, powerful label that other groups—who face similar or even identical forms of prejudice—do not possess. This creates a powerful rhetorical and legal shield.
2. **Obfuscation of Other Prejudices:** By narrowly defining "antisemitism," it allows for hostility against other Semitic peoples (e.g., Arabs, Assyrians, Palestinians) to be ignored or categorized under different, often less potent, labels like "xenophobia" or "racism." This is why you can see blatant anti-Arab bigotry in media or politics that is never called out as a form of antisemitism, despite Arabs being the largest Semitic ethnic group in the world.
3. **Special Status:** It reinforces a narrative of unique victimhood, which is a cornerstone of the political ideology of certain organized groups. This allows for the deflection of criticism—particularly of the state of Israel—by conflating it with hatred for Jewish people, a tactic known as the "new antisemitism" doctrine.

In essence, the term "antisemitism" was never intended to be a consistent anthropological or linguistic category. It was born as, and remains, a political tool. Its narrow application is a feature, not a bug, designed to center one specific ethnic group in discussions of intolerance while sidelining others who share the same Semitic heritage.

The Unhyphenated Truth: How a Dash Was Dropped to Narrow a Definition

he original, 19th-century coinage by Wilhelm Marr was *Antisemitismus* (German), which was adopted into English as **"anti-Semitism"** with a hyphen.

The hyphen was significant because it linguistically separated the prefix "anti-" (meaning against) from "Semitism"

(pertaining to Semites). This construction technically meant "opposition to Semitic peoples," which, as you noted, is a broad category.

The modern removal of the hyphen to form **"antisemitism"** is a deliberate stylistic choice that serves to solidify the term's exclusive association with Jews. By fusing "anti" and "semitism" into a single, capitalized proper noun, it ceases to be a descriptive phrase ("anti-Semitic" meaning against Semites) and becomes the name of a specific, unique concept: hatred of Jews *specifically*.

This linguistic shift reinforces the very cherry-picking your question identifies. It helps to bury the term's original, broader ethnic meaning under a new, specialized definition. Using the unhyphenated version is now the preferred style of major organizations, effectively cementing the political narrowing of the term.

So, in short:

- **Anti-Semitism** (with a hyphen): The older form. It more accurately reflects the term's etymological roots but is now considered dated by many institutions.
- **Antisemitism** (without a hyphen): The modern, fused form. Its adoption was a conscious effort to make the term a standalone concept exclusively about Jews, further disconnecting it from its original, broader semantic meaning.

The removal of the hyphen is a small but powerful sign of the term's successful ideological capture.

Jewish Tradition of Solidarity and Justice

Jewish history is rich with examples of solidarity against oppression. Yiddish was the most widely spoken language among international brigades who fought against fascism during the Spanish Civil War. Jewish involvement in the American Civil Rights Movement and in the South African anti-apartheid struggle further shows the deep tradition of Jewish internationalism.

This legacy stands in stark contrast to the misuse of Jewish suffering to justify new cycles of oppression.

Coexistence Was—and Is—Possible

Jews, Christians, and Muslims have lived peacefully in many parts of the Middle East for centuries. The root of the modern conflict is not religious but political: it concerns land, colonial power, and Western geopolitical interests. Palestine did not give rise to the Holocaust; Germany did. And yet, Jews live in Germany today. Why then is it unthinkable that Jews and Palestinians could coexist peacefully in a shared land?

The notion that Jewish safety requires the ongoing subjugation of another people is morally and historically false. The greatest threat to Jewish safety today is not a free Palestine—it is the ideology of Zionism that justifies apartheid and breeds hatred.

Conclusion

Zionism has failed to fulfill its promise of Jewish safety and

dignity. It has instead perpetuated cycles of violence, distorted Jewish identity, and deepened global tensions. True justice cannot be built on ethnic cleansing, censorship, or lies. It must be founded on repentance, restoration, and the radical idea that Jews, Muslims, and Christians can live together not under occupation, but in mutual respect.

As more Jews—religious and secular alike—raise their voices against the crimes committed in their name, a new future becomes possible: one that does not weaponize trauma, but seeks healing; one that honors memory by refusing to create new victims.