



**NONE SHALL  
BE AFRAID**

FIGHTING ANTI-SEMITISM

# Anti-Semitism and Political Extremist Ideologies

While combating anti-Semitism has traditionally been and must remain a bipartisan issue, extremist ideologies on the left and right of the political spectrum threaten that support. Social media has enabled the dissemination of anti-Semitic beliefs, policies and caricatures and has emboldened anti-Semites as these beliefs become increasingly visible in mainstream politics. Around the world, increased anti-globalist sentiment and economic anxiety have once again drawn people to extremist groups that target and discriminate against Jews, scapegoat Jews and characterize them as disloyal citizens and a national security threat.

While anti-Semitic tropes and rhetoric oftentimes blur ideological lines, manifestations of anti-Semitism deriving from political extremism can best be grouped along a spectrum of political belief.

## Anti-Semitic Political Groups and Ideologies

Right-wing anti-Semitism borrows traditional anti-Semitic tropes that have been used for centuries, most notably about Jewish power, greed and disloyalty. These lead in turn to conspiracy theories about Jewish control over political and economic society, as well as Holocaust denial. With the growing prominence of nationalist and anti-globalist political parties and affinity groups, the spread of this rhetoric has become more prevalent, and the behaviors of previously fringe right-wing activists have grown increasingly aggressive and hostile toward Jewish communities. Beginning in 2018, the world witnessed the rise in desecration of Jewish cemeteries in France coinciding with the populist yellow vest protests, where the Fondation Jean Jaures found that 50 percent of protestors for economic justice believed in a global Zionist conspiracy.

Openly anti-Semitic political parties are growing competitive around the world. Officials of the nationalist Jobbik party in Hungary openly describe Jewish and minority populations as a national security threat. Another example is found in Greece's nationalist Golden Dawn party, which regularly promotes Greek supremacy, racism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. National leaders provide cover to otherwise fringe actors and movements, which frequently incite violence against Jewish communities, employing anti-Semitic slogans and rallying cries. The effects of the rise of this far-right anti-Semitism can be seen in places like Germany, where police records indicate anti-Semitic attacks on Jews have increased by as much as 13 percent annually, with over 93 percent of those acts carried out by far-right perpetrators.

Left-wing anti-Semitism has grown globally, as well. It often features unwarranted criticism of the Israeli government that applies a standard of conduct not invoked for any other democratic nation, often falsely labeling Israel an apartheid state. Political discourse and the increasingly extreme rhetoric of the left often



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becomes anti-Semitic when it denies Jewish people the right to self-determination and accuses Zionist Jews of having dual loyalties, among other criticisms that ultimately blend into traditional right-wing anti-Semitic tropes. Unfortunately, the anti-Semitism from the left is becoming more accepted by the mainstream.

This form of anti-Semitism has been prominent within the U.K. Labour Party, where an investigation confirmed members of the party harassed or victimized people because they were Jewish. In addition to being widespread on social media, left-wing anti-Semitism manifests within groups affiliated with the discriminatory Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement (BDS). This has been seen in the European Union labeling of Israeli settlement products, as well as the endorsement of BDS by Green and socialist parties across the globe. Increasingly, students affiliated with BDS espouse these anti-Semitic ideas and corresponding rhetoric on college campuses worldwide.



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