



20 GREATEST LIES ABOUT ISRAEL

Defeat the Greatest Lies Against Israel—
Using Facts and Logic

Israel's greatest PR problem is falsehoods about the Jewish state—lies told by its enemies and misinformation spread by the ignorant. The best defense against falsehoods, of course, is the truth. Unfortunately, many good people who love Israel feel unprepared to oppose the lies they hear or read. While this brief report won't prepare you for full-scale debates, it will give you plenty of ammunition for answering the falsehoods of friends and relatives and even material for brief letters to the editor. A word of warning, however: If you're talking with a *hater*—someone who is antisemitic to the bone—rational discourse will not help. Nor will the truths you find here. Haters hate, so if you're talking to someone who is convinced Israel is evil, these rational responses will not change the attacker . . . or help you. Arguing with such people will just make you crazy. But if you're talking to someone who *cares about truth*—who believes in facts and logic—you'll find this report invaluable. We at FLAME have responded to thousands of attacks on Israel and have learned an important lesson: 98% of such attacks are based on falsehoods and when challenged to provide verifiable proof of their positions, very few enemies answer at all. Their accusations are baseless. Here are the 20 most common attacks on Israel you're likely to encounter . . . and critical facts to help you respond confidently to each one:

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Facts And Logic About the Middle East

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Falsehood #1: Israel is an apartheid state.

The Truth: Unlike apartheid South Africa, Israel has *no laws* that separate or limit the rights of its citizens by race, religion, or ethnicity. To the contrary, Israeli Arabs enjoy more freedoms and economic opportunity than their brethren in any Arab state. Arabs serve in every level of Israel's government, including the Supreme Court, and have equal access to Israel's world-class education offerings. Arabs in Israel have a higher rate of home ownership than do Jews. Arabs All Israelis use the same hospitals, ride the same buses, and visit the same parks.

Ask your opponent: *If you say Israel is an apartheid state, you must have a new definition of apartheid—what is it?*

Falsehood #2: Israel commmits genocide against the Palestinians.

The Truth: During the Holocaust and other historical genocides, which systematically murdered millions, Israel does not attack—let alone kill—any people because of their ethnicity . . . ever. No round-ups, no ghettos, no mass killings.

What's more, the populations of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs have grown massively since Israel's founding. According to the Palestinians' own statistics, the Palestinian population of Judea and Samaria (aka the West Bank) including former East Jerusalem, has more than tripled, from 900,000 in 1967 to more than 2.9 million in 2021. In Gaza, the estimated population of 400,000 in 1967 has risen to two million today. When Israel's War of Independence ended in 1949, the country was home to 150,000 Israeli Arabs. Today, there are more than 1.9 million Israeli Arabs.

Ask your opponent: *Given zero evidence of mass murder—but instead, dramatic population growth—what proof can you offer of Palestinian genocide by the Jewish state?*

Falsehood #3: Israel is preventing a Palestinian state.

The Truth: The Arabs rejected a Palestinian state when it was offered by the UN in 1948, they rejected it in 1967 after the Six-Day War, and Palestinian Arabs rejected it three more times—in 2000, 2001 and 2008—when Israel offered 90% of the West Bank, all of Gaza, and a capital in Jerusalem.

In addition, these latter offers promised to evacuate every Jew from the new Palestinian state, because the Palestinians insist on a Jew-free state. Despite all these concessions, the Palestinians still rejected all offers of statehood and today refuse peace negotiations with Israel.

Ask your opponent: *Since the Palestinians have rejected so many offers of land for a state in exchange for peace, for what reason do you say Israel is the obstacle?*

Falsehood #4: Israel is occupying Palestinian land.

The truth: Historically and legally, there's no such thing as Palestinian land. The Palestinians have never owned or controlled a square inch of territory as a sovereign entity. Jews are the indigenous people of the Holy Land, with three sovereign commonwealths over a 3000-year history. Based on international law, the Palestinians have no legal claim to any land.

In fact, Judea and Samaria are disputed territories, not occupied territories. International law dictates that an occupation exists whenever one sovereign state occupies the territory of another state. But Judea and Samaria were never legally part of any state. Jordan

annexed these territories in 1950, but that claim was not recognized by the international community. Israel subsequently signed a peace treaty with Jordan, which relinquished all rights to this land.

Ask your opponent: *Given these facts, what is your basis for stating that Israel "occupies" Palestinian land? When did the Palestinians acquire this land?*

Falsehood #5: Israel is stealing Palestinian land.

The Truth: Unlike most countries in the Middle East, Israel operates by rule of law. Property disputes are settled by the courts. However when the Ottomans and then the Jordanians ruled the Holy Land, they evicted many Jewish property owners. In fact, some of the communities that the media and international community call "settlements" were Jewish communities re-established after they were destroyed by the Jordanians. Today, dispossessed Jews go to civil authorities to reclaim their property, but many Palestinians, some who have squatted on these lands for generations—with no legal ownership—protest. Israel's enemies call this "stealing." All such claims are adjudicated according to property law in Israel's courts—and many decisions are made in favor of Arabs.

Ask your opponent: *Since Israel is the only Middle Eastern country that has serious legal protection for property rights, what is your basis for saying Israel steals Palestinian land?*

Falsehood #6: Israel is desecrating the Temple Mount.

The Truth: Palestinian clergy and politicians use this lie as an excuse to stir their population to violence against Israel. Some Muslims think any Jewish presence near al Aqsa Mosque is sacrilegious—yet it is the site of the first and second Jewish temples. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians ascend the Temple Mount each year. Meanwhile, Jews are forbidden from praying at the site of their former temples. In addition, the Waqf, the religious trust that is in charge of the Temple Mount, repeatedly engages in unauthorized construction and excavation at the site, potentially damaging centuries of antiquity. Israel has protected the Temple Mount status quo for 75 years, but Palestinian leaders still raise the red herring of desecration.

Ask your opponent: *Given these facts, what evidence can you provide that Israel has desecrated the Temple Mount?*

Falsehood #7: Anti-Zionism is not antisemitism.

The Truth: Many people who oppose Israel's existence claim that when they "merely criticize" Israel, they're accused of antisemitism. In fact, criticizing Israel's policies is *not* antisemitic. But anti-Zionists attempt to demonize and delegitimize Israel, and hold the Jewish state to a double standard—often using accusations based on lies. Those are antisemitic. Zionism is the belief that the Jewish people have a right to self-determination in their own homeland—and this belief is a fundamental tenet of Judaism. It's why we tell the Passover story, for example, and why we say "Next year in Jerusalem" at the end of our Passover seder (ceremony). Thus, when people say they are anti-Zionist, they are basically saying they are against Jews' right to self-determination. Almost none of these enemies of Israel ever deny the right to self-determination of other people.

Ask your opponent: *How can people say they're not antisemites when they deny the right of the Jewish people—and only the Jewish people—to self-determination?*

Falsehood #8: Israel's "settlements" are an obstacle to peace.

The Truth: Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria—the ancient homelands of historical and present-day Jewish people—do not prevent the Palestinians from having a state. In fact, there were no Jewish "settlements" in those territories before 1967, but even then the Palestinians opposed Israel, refused to make peace and didn't try to form a state.

Many people don't realize that most Jewish communities are in sections of Judea and Samaria (aka the West Bank) in which Jews are the majority population. These communities do not force Palestinians from land they legitimately own. Some of these communities actually support economies that benefit local Palestinians by providing jobs and income.

Ask your opponent: *Two million Arabs live in Israel—why should Jews not live in a future Palestinian state?*

Falsehood #9: The U.S. gives Israel billions of dollars that could be helping Americans.

The Truth: The U.S. doesn't "give" Israel money—it invests money in Israel to protect U.S. interests in the Middle East. Israel is one of the U.S.'s strongest allies: Our \$3.8 billion annual investment is 100% military—going to support regional cyber-intelligence and armed actions against mutual enemies to keep the peace. This saves the U.S. billions of dollars by reducing the need for American boots and military installations in the region. Moreover, Israel spends almost all U.S. aid to buy military equipment from U.S. companies, which in turn provides jobs and livelihoods for Americans. This investment is win-win—analysts estimate it provides the U.S. a greater return than any other foreign aid expense.

Ask your opponent: *Can you name a U.S. foreign aid investment that delivers more value than the one to the Jewish state?*

Falsehood #10: Judaism is just a religion—therefore Jews have no right to a state in Palestine.

The Truth: For millennia Jews have identified themselves not just as adherents to a religious faith, but as a people. Massive archeological and historical evidence proves the Jews have had their own language, laws, religion and governments deeply rooted in the land of Israel over thousands of years. The Jews established several kingdoms as a people in Biblical times. Both the Bible and the Koran mention the Jews as a nation. The Jewish people are often referred to by the Bible and other religious texts as "Am Yisrael"—Hebrew for *people of Israel*.

Ask your opponent: *Given the long history and accomplishments of the Jewish people as a civilization, what makes you say the Jews are "just" a religious group?*

Falsehood #11: The United Nations and Great Britain gave Palestine to the Jews because of guilt over the Holocaust.

The Truth: Neither the United Nations nor Great Britain "gave" Palestine to the Jews. In fact, the Jewish people had a nation in the Holy Land three thousand years before the Holocaust, and Jews have lived there continuously throughout their 2,000-year exile. Jews began returning to the land of Israel in great numbers and buying up large tracts of land and rehabilitating swamps

and desert-land there in the 1800s, nearly 100 years before the Holocaust.

After the Holocaust, nearly 200,000 of its survivors found safe haven in the new Jewish state, affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the United Nations in 1947. Soon, 800,000 Jews fleeing persecution in Arab countries arrived. In ensuing decades, Israel absorbed a million immigrants from the Soviet Union and thousands of Ethiopian Jews. Today, far from being a vestige of European guilt, the Jews liberated the Holy Land from colonial-era Arabs, Turks and English, fulfilling the age-old dream of a people's return to their ancient homeland.

Ask your opponent: *Given the Jews' 3,000-year indigenous history in Israel and Zionists buying and restoring the land over 150 years ago, how can you say anyone "gave" it to the Jews?*

Falsehood #12: Had Israel withdrawn to the "1967 borders," we would have had peace long ago.

The Truth: After Israel's Declaration of Independence, Arab armies invaded the Jewish state. Israel defeated them, and a 1949 ceasefire line was established. This was not a border, but separated Israel from the eastern part of its capital Jerusalem and much of Judea and Samaria, which Jordan had seized illegally. After the Arabs tried again to destroy Israel in 1967, Israel defeated them again, expelled Jordan from Judea and Samaria and offered peace. The Arabs refused.

Israel later returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, and signed a peace treaty with Jordan. It offered the Palestinians most of Judea and Samaria for statehood—in 2000, 2001, and 2008—all of which the Palestinians rejected. The problem was never Israel's refusal to withdraw from territories it captured in 1967, but rather the Palestinians' refusal to accept the presence of a Jewish state anywhere in the Holy Land.

Ask your opponent: *How can anyone say there would be peace if Israel returned to the pre-1967 ceasefire lines . . . when Israel offered virtually all that land and the Palestinians still refused??*

Falsehood #13: Israel is the main stumbling block to achieving a two-state solution.

The Truth: The Palestinians themselves are the only obstacle to achieving a two-state solution. They have rejected all offers of peace. Their leaders make no statements or gestures indicating a desire for peace. They refuse negotiations. Rather, President Mahmoud Abbas and his Palestinian Authority continue to glorify terrorists, preach hate in their educational system, mosques and media, and give financial rewards to terrorists who kill Jews. Hamas, which is funded by Iran, is sworn in its charter to kill Jews and destroy Israel. Every several years they start a war to fulfill their mission.

Ask your opponent: *Explain how Israel, which has made generous offers of peace, can be a stumbling block to peace when the Palestinians have rejected peace consistently.*

Falsehood #14: Nuclear Israel, not Iran, is the world's greatest threat to peace and stability.

The Truth: Though never acknowledged by Jerusalem, it is generally assumed that Israel has nuclear weapons. In 1973, when its very survival was imperiled by the surprise Egyptian-Syrian

Yom Kippur attack, many assumed Israel would use nuclear weapons—but it didn't. Contrary to public condemnations that Israel is "hiding" its nuclear capability, many Arab leaders privately express relief that Israeli nuclear deterrence exists against Iran. Above all, remember: Israel has never threatened any nation, but Tehran's mullahs frequently threaten to "wipe Israel from the map." The U.S. and Europe have time to linger to see what the Iranian regime does with its nuclear bombs. Israel cannot afford to wait. Iran's danger to Israel is life and death. "Never again!" means taking that threat seriously.

Ask your opponent: *Since Israel's nuclear capabilities are strictly defensive, how could Israel be a danger to anyone except its sworn enemies?*

Falsehood #15: Israeli policies are the cause of worldwide antisemitism.

The Truth: From the Spanish Inquisition to centuries of pogroms in Europe to the Holocaust, history proves that Jew-hatred existed on a global scale long before the creation of the State of Israel. It would still exist even if Israel had never been created. In fact, most anti-Zionism today is simply old-fashioned antisemitism in new clothes.

While the unsettled Israel-Palestinian conflict aggravates Muslim-Jewish tensions, it is not the root cause. Israel controls a land mass only 2% of the Arab world's. Yet the Koran contains virulent antisemitic stereotypes that are widely invoked by Islamist extremists to justify murdering Jews worldwide. The disappearance of Israel would only further embolden violent Jew-haters and endanger Jews everywhere.

Ask your opponent: *How can anyone say Israel is the cause of global antisemitism when antisemitism existed for centuries before the Jewish state was founded?*

Falsehood #16: Israel is responsible for the "humanitarian crisis" in the Gaza Strip.

The Truth: Billions of dollars and tons of aid have flowed into the Gaza Strip since Hamas seized the territory from the Palestinian Authority in 2007. Tragically, Hamas has spent the lion's share of these funds for terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians. For example, instead of using the cement that comes into its territory to rebuild homes damaged in the wars Hamas started with Israel, the group uses it to build tunnels to smuggle arms and attack the Jewish state.

While Israel maintains a blockade to prevent war materiel from entering Gaza, so does Egypt, Hamas's Arab neighbor. In fact, the greatest cause of suffering to the people in Gaza is the militant Hamas dictatorship.

Ask your opponent: *How can Israel be responsible for the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza when it is Hamas who wages aggressive war and steals humanitarian intended for its citizens?*

Falsehood #17: The only hope for peace is a single state—for all Arabs and Jews in Palestine—eliminating the Jewish State of Israel.

The Truth: According to the latest polls, neither Israelis nor Palestinians support a one-state solution. Such a consolidation would deprive the Jewish people the right to self-determination in their own land—one of the world's most successful democracies. Jews would quickly become a minority, unable to control their

own destiny. Since polls show that Arab-Palestinians to be one of the world's most antisemitic populations, Jews would face a threat of epic persecution—perhaps even Holocaust 2.0.

Ask your opponent: *Why should Jews give up their right to self-determination in their ancient homeland only to live as a minority with people who admit hating them?*

Falsehood #18: The Jews currently in Israel are not related to Hebrews of the past but rather are fakes—"white" converts from European Khazars of centuries past.

The Truth: This debunked "Khazar conversion" theory is based on no proof whatsoever. Jewish ancestors of today's Ashkenazi Jews were in Europe centuries before the Khazar Empire took shape. Moreover, the only record of Jews in the former territory of Khazaria dates 400 years after the destruction of the Khazar empire.

In fact, more than half of Israel's Jewish population is Sephardi/Mizrachi—Jews from southern Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and other parts of Asia—whose ancestral link to the Jewish people of ancient times is not questioned. Even DNA evidence has proven the strong genetic links between Sephardim/Mizrachim, Ashkenazim and the people of the present-day Middle East. By contrast, there is no DNA evidence to suggest a link between Ashkenazi Jews and the people of the former Khazar territory.

Ask your opponent: *What verifiable scientific facts prove that Israel's Ashkenazi Jews are descendants of the Khazars?*

Falsehood #19: Israel viciously attacked the USS Liberty in 1967 and killed American servicemen in cold blood.

The Truth: The Israeli attack on the USS Liberty was a tragic error, largely attributed to the fact that it occurred during the confusion of the Israel's Six-Day War against Arab invaders in 1967. Ten official US investigations and three official Israeli investigations all conclusively established that the attack was a terrible, regrettable mistake. Israel immediately apologized, which the U.S. long ago accepted. Israel remains one of the strongest, most consistent military and political allies of the United States, collaborating round the clock to protect mutual interests worldwide.

Ask your opponent: *What evidence can you show that Israel purposely attacked the Liberty, knowing it was an American ship?*

Falsehood #20: Israel "slaughters" Palestinian children.

The Truth: Israel values the lives of innocent civilians—those of its own people and those of its enemies. No nation does more to protect civilians under threat of retaliatory bombing than Israel, with its "knock-knock" warnings on the roofs of civilian buildings near Hamas missile-launch pads. Likewise, Israel avoids attacks on terrorists if it perceives a danger to civilians of any age.

Unfortunately, the Palestinians consistently launch attacks from or hide in densely populated civilian areas. They also send children into life-threatening situations, such as violent protest marches against Israeli borders. As former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once said, "Peace will come when the Arabs love their children more than they hate us."

Ask your opponent: *What evidence can you show that Israelis have ever harmed an innocent Palestinian child on purpose?*