

Three-quarters of American Jews say they're more concerned about antisemitism following the Israel-Gaza conflict

BY BEN SALES JUNE 14, 2021



Protesters at the Port of Oakland on June 4, 2021, where they halted a container ship owned by the Israel-based Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd. in a campaign tied to the BDS movement. (Brooke Anderson via J: Jewish News of Northern California)

(JTA) — Three-quarters of U.S. Jews said their concern over antisemitism in the country has grown following the fighting last month in Israel and Gaza, according to a survey published Monday by the Anti-Defamation League.

More than 40% of the respondents said they are now more concerned for their personal safety as well than they were before the 11 days of warring. Also, more than half said calling for companies and organizations to boycott, divest from or sanction Israel is “definitely or probably antisemitic.”

According to the recent Pew Research Center study of American Jews, 10% of respondents supported the BDS movement.

The ADL poll of 576 Jewish-American adults was taken from May 25 to June 1 by the polling firm YouGov. Its margin of error is 4%.

The ADL and other groups documented a surge in antisemitic incidents in the United States during and after the Israel-Gaza fighting. The incidents more than doubled during and after the fighting when compared to the same time last year, the ADL found. (The 2020 period was near the first wave of the pandemic and its associated social distancing restrictions.) The ADL's tally includes physical assaults, as well as antisemitic and some anti-Zionist harassment and vandalism.

The survey also found that 60% of respondents "witnessed behavior or comments they deem antisemitic either online or in-person as a result of the recent violence." More than three-quarters of respondents said they want President Joe Biden, Congress, civil rights groups and faith leaders to do more to address antisemitism.

In addition, more than half of respondents said calling Israel an "apartheid state" is definitely or probably antisemitic, a finding that comes months after B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group, called Israel an "apartheid regime." Human Rights Watch also declared in April that Israel's control over Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza qualifies as apartheid.

Majorities of respondents also said the following statements or actions are definitely or probably antisemitic: calling Zionism racist; comparing Israeli actions to those of the Nazis; saying Israel shouldn't exist as a Jewish state; and protesting Israeli actions outside an American synagogue.