**[Intertwined struggles](https://www.dawn.com/news/1785468/intertwined-struggles)**

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A LOT of things about the current conflict between the state of Israel and the occupied territories of Palestine reflect past positions. Just like it always does, the US has thrown its support behind the Israeli state.

And as has been typical of it, the US stood with Israel by voting against the UN resolution calling for a humanitarian truce this past weekend. President Joe Biden has reiterated his support numerous times and has also shown scepticism about the number of Palestinians killed in Israeli attacks.

Many other US lawmakers, both Democrat and Republicans, have fallen in line behind him; echoing their support in accordance with the sums of money they draw from the Israeli lobby. The exception to this rule has been a group of progressive Congresswomen, including Palestinian-American Rashida Tlaib and Somali-American Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, but there are very few politicians who have agreed with their point of view.

However, at the same time, there is something remarkably different about the way this particular Palestinian-Israeli conflict is being perceived in the US. It is an important factor because if anyone at all can defeat the powerful pro-Israel lobbyists who have done everything they can to shore up support, it would be a swing in opinion in the American voting public. Of late, there has been evidence of just that.

Over the past several weeks, demonstrations in support of Gaza have been taking place non-stop all over America. In larger cities such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Detroit, these demonstrations have drawn many thousands of participants.

[One of them](https://www.dawn.com/news/1782100/hundreds-arrested-at-israel-gaza-protest-near-us-capitol), organised by the Jewish group Jewish Voices for Peace, that was demanding a ceasefire, occupied all of Grand Central Station this past weekend, forcing police to shut down the rail terminal. “Not in our name,” the protesters chanted, underscoring how the ceaseless bombardment of the Gaza Strip was not something that they, as Jewish people themselves, supported.

Crucial to the new protests has been a translation of the Palestinian cause and the occupation of Muslim lands into a language that Americans understand. In recent years, or at least as far back as 2021, pro-Palestinian activists began collaborating with organisers from the Black Lives Matter movement.

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Reporting on pro-Palestinian protests that were held in 2021 — another time clashes between Hamas and the Israeli state were taking place — [*National Public Radio*](https://www.npr.org/2021/06/07/1003872848/the-complicated-history-behind-blms-solidarity-with-the-pro-palestinian-movement) reported on how collaboration between pro-Palestine supporters and African-American civil rights activists happened in two phases.

Prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, African-Americans many of them evangelical Christians, had supported Christian Zionism and along with that the establishment of the Israeli state. Following the 1967 war, and Israel’s military takeover of Palestinian land this perspective began to change.

Today, the actions of the Israeli state are being seen as acts of settler-colonialism in which white people largely from Europe took over the land of the Palestinians using the power of the British Empire.

Another way to put it would be that Europeans still unwilling to deal with sizeable population of Jews in Europe decided to settle them on land owned, loved and tended by non-Europeans and Muslim people. In the first few decades following 1967, such a perspective was being described as anti-Semitic.

That accusation, where any criticism of the state of Israel is termed ‘anti-Semitic’, is still being levelled by many Jewish-Americans who are aghast at the sudden support for the Palestinian cause.

However, the work done by the [BDS](https://bdsmovement.net/) (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement on American campuses has been successful in highlighting how the support US lawmakers have given to Israel is akin to providing the state with a moral carte blanche to kill and occupy with impunity.

BDS is still coming under tremendous fire, its supporters or really any pro-Palestinian college students at Ivy League colleges in the US have faced threats and intimidation this time as well.

Other student groups, such as those involved with Black Lives Matter, have seen for themselves how powerful Jewish interests, who want to deflect attention away from anything Israel decides to do, come after BDS supporters.

Over the years, the Israel-Palestine conflict has been seen from the perspective of the oppressive politics of white supremacy. Black Lives Matter activists see many similarities between the victimisation of Palestinian men by Israeli authorities and the victimisation of young African-American men by the police in the US.

TikTok, particularly TikTokLive, has provided a platform for some of these conversations. In one recent one, African-American civil rights activists and Zionist Jews attempted a dialogue. The former were quick to question the entitlement of the latter along with their use of phrases similar to the ones racist whites have long used against them.

One of these, ‘I have Palestinian friends’, came under scrutiny in its suggestion that everyday interactions somehow take away the reality of Jewish Israelis being the oppressors or at least complicit in oppression and the Palestinian Arabs being largely defenceless.

It is not just African-Americans. One poll taken after Hamas’s Oct 7 attacks revealed that 25 per cent of Americans in their early 30s have positive views about the Palestinian struggle against occupation. The volume of people at protests and at other such online forums suggests that the percentage is an accurate reflection of changing views.

If the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is translated via the lens of the American civil rights movement, it is very likely that support for it will continue to increase. If this is the case, closer to the US presidential election, it may change calculations about support for Israel.

That would be a very tall order for a country that sends billions to Israel every year as even a small shift can lead to a very different vision of the future.

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