

Young Americans endorse end of Israel: Poll

Your sons, your daughters are beyond your command



Two Columbia University student groups recently banned from campus for their support of Palestine march through New York, US.
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EXCLUSIVE

The months-long brutal war that rages in Gaza has been expanding for some time now, not to new battlefronts in the region but to the public spheres of almost every society around the world, and it should not be overlooked. The topic of Israel, once a subject that demanded uniformity in response, now pits children against their parents. Every Western, especially American parent, expects a bit of a rebellious phase in their adolescent children, but no one expected the strongest Western conviction, that there should be a state of Israel, to be shaken. However, this is actually what is happening.

A survey, conducted this week by Harvard-Harris polling, found 51% of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 said they believed in a two-state solution, and just 17% said other Arab states should be asked to absorb Palestinian populations, the New York Post reported. The figure was in stark contrast to other age groups, which all dramatically preferred a two-state

solution. Just four percent of Americans 65 and over said they felt Israel should be ended. While they are a minority in this case, decades of living on this planet have reinforced a belief in them that was summed up perfectly by a 78-year-old Iranian, "If a land is occupied, there can be no peace unless the occupier leaves the land."

What has divided American youths from their older fellow citizens? What has led them to call for an end to an occupying regime, the supporting of which has been a cornerstone of US policies for decades? Democrats and Republicans have come and gone, but no US president, however powerful and popular, has dared to even raise his voice against Israel over the years lest he meet a much harsher and definitely non-partisan backlash from his people.

The most obvious and easily substantiated answer is that Israel has shown its true colors in recent weeks. A previous poll conducted soon after the Hamas attack on October 7 found that only 26% of those asked held the view that Israel as a political entity should be eradicated. What has changed since then? Israel launched the most vicious attack on civilian lives that American youths have most likely ever seen, documented in heart-wrenching photos and videos. This was followed by a series of bigoted, supremacist talks

from Israeli political figures that raised doubts about the morality of letting such an entity be free from oversight, above international laws, and unconditionally backed by the most powerful countries in the world.

These have all been laid bare to be seen and judged by all. Long gone are the times when the masses could only see what statesmen wanted them to see in the mainstream media. This is arguably the age when the masses are becoming more aware that they have the power to force their statesmen to rally behind them, and it doesn't have to be the other way around.

It should be noted that American youths are in an advantageous position that is not shared with many, especially if we search around the world. They have greater access to news as everything gets translated into English — even though some social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram have chosen to crack down hard on pro-Palestinian content since October 7. In addition, their freedom of speech is supposed to be protected, and it is in many cases, but there have been countless cases where even liking a pro-Palestinian post on a platform has ended a career.

More importantly, despite not having the same ethnicity or religion as Palestinians, many young Americans

side with the oppressed Palestinians because they do not feel they owe anything to the side they clearly see as the oppressor in the Gaza war — a full 67% of 18- to 24-year-olds said they believed Jews "should be treated as oppressors". When asked if "Israel is committing genocide against those in Gaza, or is it just trying to defend itself and eliminate Hamas," 60% of Americans aged 18-24 said Israel was committing genocide — a view held by just 37% of Americans overall.

Many senior citizens of Europe and the US feel that they owe the Jews the state of Israel on account of the Holocaust, and that this is the reason why they stand by Israel through all of its atrocities. Mark Penn, the chairman of the Harris Poll that was mentioned here, is one such senior. He says, "Young people are far removed from the horrors of the Holocaust and even 9/11. They don't understand Israel's history and its creation by a United Nations vote of two-thirds of members nearly 75 years ago, and so they parrot empty catchphrases about decolonization." To him, the necessity of supporting Israel because of the Holocaust is one of "the most basic facts" that American "high schools and universities have failed to teach our young people".

These are bold claims. Let's see how they stand against what we know of

Mark Penn. This will be a short case study of senior Americans, who, according to the recent poll by Penn's company, side overwhelmingly with Israel.

Mark Penn was born to a Lithuanian immigrant father in New York in 1954, some 10 years after the latest date that is associated with the Holocaust and six years after the infamous creation story that he told. He used to poll classmates about sex and drugs. "I'm the only person that almost got thrown out of school for a poll," he told Adage website with a chuckle. Once a prominent adviser to both Bill and Hillary Clinton, he has changed tune, defended Donald Trump, and now backs the controversial Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis.

So, he himself remembers neither the Holocaust nor the UN vote that partitioned Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state. It can be deduced that those who "parrot empty catchphrases" are Penn and others of his generation who criticize the open-mindedness of the pro-Palestinian youths. They are too tied down to their upbringing to stand on the right side of history.

On his last statement on the Israel-Palestine war on January 31, 1970, philosopher Bertrand Russell aptly observed, "To invoke the horrors of the past to justify those of the present is gross hypocrisy."