



## 2014 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents

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### INTRODUCTION

The total number of anti-Semitic incidents in the United States increased by 21 percent in 2014 in a year marked by a violent anti-Semitic shooting attack targeting Jewish community buildings in Kansas and anti-Jewish expressions linked to the war in Gaza.

The Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents counted a total of 912 anti-Semitic incidents across the U.S. during the 2014 calendar year. This represents a 21 percent increase from the 751 incidents reported during the same period in 2013, and is the first time in nearly a decade of declines where the overall number of incidents has substantially risen.

Despite the increase in incidents, the total number of anti-Semitic acts still represents one of the lowest totals of anti-Semitic acts reported by ADL since it started keeping records in 1979. Still, the Audit has also identified new trends in anti-Semitic incidents, including the phenomenon of hacking attacks on

community and synagogue websites by overseas hackers, which multiplied in 2014.

The 2014 calendar year was marked by several violent episodes – most notably, the shooting attack at two Jewish institutional buildings in Overland Park, Kansas carried out by a white supremacist who admitted in a jailhouse interview that he wanted to target and kill Jews. It was the first time a Jewish institution has been singled out by a lone-wolf-style gunman since the 2009 shooting at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

The ADL Audit cited a marked increase in anti-Semitic incidents during the 50 days of conflict between Hamas and Israel beginning with air raids on July 7 and into the subsequent ground invasion in Gaza to root out Hamas rockets and tunnels. Anti-Semitism manifested on the fringe of anti-Israel movements during and after Israel's Operation Protective Edge as Jewish individuals and institutions became the targets of anti-Semitic rhetoric and acts of vandalism.

## **FINDINGS SUMMARY**

In 2014, anti-Semitic incidents were reported in a total of 38 states and the District of Columbia. Those incidents are categorized in the ADL Audit as follows:

- Assaults: 36 incidents in 2014, compared with 31 in 2013;
- Vandalism: 363 incidents in 2014, compared with 315 in 2013;
- Harassment, threats and events: 513 incidents in 2014, compared with 405 in 2013.

Continuing a consistent trend for many years, the states with the highest totals of anti-Semitic incidents were those with large Jewish populations. Once again, New York and California topped the list:

- New York State, with 231 incidents in 2014, up from 203 in 2013;
- California, with 184 incidents, up from 143;

- New Jersey, with 107 incidents, up from 78;
- Florida, with 70 incidents, up from 68;
- Pennsylvania, with 48 incidents, up from 43
- Massachusetts, with 47 incidents, up from 46.

[See State by State Totals](#)

### **Anti-Semitic Activity During the Gaza War**

Jewish individuals and institutions in the U.S. became targets of anti-Semitism during the Gaza war. There were 139 anti-Semitic incidents recorded in July, a substantial increase from the 54 incidents in July 2013. There were another 116 reported incidents in August, up from the 56 in August 2013. And there were 92 anti-Semitic incidents reported in September, up from 58 incidents in September 2013.

While the ADL Audit does not include criticism of Israel or Zionism, such reports are included when they cross the line from legitimate criticism to anti-Semitism by invoking classic anti-Jewish stereotypes or inappropriate Nazi imagery and/or analogies.

Public expressions of anti-Israel sentiments that demonize Jews or create an atmosphere of fear or intimidation by targeting Jewish individuals or institutions in the U.S. are counted. Such anti-Semitism was evident at many of the anti-Israel demonstrations held in cities throughout the U.S.

Here are some examples of incidents linked to the Gaza conflict:

- Lowell, Massachusetts: A synagogue was vandalized with the words “Free Palestine” and “God Bless Gaza” spray painted in red on white marble. (July)

- Malibu, California: Phrases such as “Jews=Killers” and “Jews are Killing Innocent Children” were found near the entrance to a Jewish summer camp. (July)
- Boca Raton, Florida: A doctor asked if his patient was Jewish. She answered yes. The doctor responded by saying that the Jews “killed Jesus” and that current events in Israel were the result of the Jews killing Jesus. (July)
- Chicago, Illinois: Anti-Semitic leaflets, which threatened violence if Israel did not pull out of Gaza, were left on cars in a predominantly Orthodox Jewish neighborhood. (July)
- North Miami Beach: A synagogue was spray painted with swastikas and the word “Hamas” on its front entrance. (July)
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin: An anti-Israel rally outside of a synagogue chanted slogans such as “Jews and Nazis are the same; only difference is the name!” and “Hey Yid, go home!” Some protesters also threw coins at the feet of people approaching the synagogue. (July)
- Potomac, Maryland: A man received a call at 3:00 AM during which the caller threatened his life if he did not remove the Israeli flag outside his business and made a number of anti-Semitic comments. The caller called again moments later and continued the anti-Semitic rant. (August)

## **SELECTED INCIDENTS: ASSAULTS**

ADL reported 36 anti-Semitic assaults on Jewish individuals (or individuals perceived as Jewish) in 2014, up from 31 in 2013. Incidents involved the use of physical force and/or violence, spitting and thrown objects.

The following is a list of selected anti-Semitic assaults in 2014:

- Overland Park, Kansas: Shootings of three non-Jewish victims outside Jewish Community Center and Village Shalom in Overland Park, Greater

Kansas City community. Shooter was identified as Frazier Glenn Miller, a known anti-Semite. (April)

- Montgomery County, Pennsylvania: While paying at a grocery store, a Jewish woman was yelled at by the customer behind her in line for taking too long. The customer then hit her with her shopping cart and said, "You dirty Jews with your coupons." (May)
- Manhattan, New York: A man, who was wearing a yarmulke, and his wife had a water bottle thrown at them. The water bottle hit the woman and an argument ensued. One man started attacking the husband, who suffered a laceration to his ear. (August)
- Los Angeles, California: A man asked the victim if the victim was Jewish or Muslim. The victim replied "Jewish" and the man then elbowed the victim in the face. (August)
- Baltimore, Maryland: A man fired a BB gun and shouted "Jews, Jews, Jews" at three Jewish teenagers leaving a synagogue. (September)

## **SELECTED INCIDENTS: VANDALISM**

The ADL Audit recorded 363 cases of anti-Semitic vandalism in 2014, up from 315 in 2013. Vandalism incidents are individually evaluated by ADL and are categorized as anti-Semitic based on the presence of anti-Semitic symbols or language; the identity of the perpetrator(s), if known; and the target of the vandalism and its proximity to Jewish homes, communities and institutions.

The 2014 Audit includes in its totals swastikas that targeted Jewish property or communal institutions. Swastikas targeting other minorities or those used out of context simply for shock value were not counted. In 2014, a total of 224 incidents were reported across the country involving the use of swastikas targeting Jews.

The following is a list of selected instances of anti-Semitic vandalism in 2014:

- Van Nuys, California: A swastika and the words "KILL JEWS" were spray painted on a private building. (January)
- Crawford County, Wisconsin: On consecutive days, a Jewish teacher reported three incidents of swastikas drawn on classroom items. (February)
- North Hempstead, New York: A Star of David was painted on the vehicle of a Jewish man. The following day, another car nearby had another Star of David painted on it. (April)
- Brooklyn, New York: Swastika and the words "Jews Suck" were written in black marker on the wall of a train overpass (May)
- Deltona, Florida: A teenager's car had a bumper sticker with Israeli and American flags scratched off. The word "JEW" was carved into the side of the car and two tires were slashed. (June)
- San Francisco, California: The words "F--- JEW" were spray painted onto a sign for Golden Gate Park. (August)
- Lakewood, New Jersey: Swastikas were spray painted on playground equipment in a common area frequented by Orthodox Jewish residents. (September)
- Spokane, Washington: At the conclusion of the Yom Kippur service, worshippers noticed that a swastika had been painted in the synagogue's enclosed courtyard. (October)
- Houston, Texas: A woman's mezuzah was defaced with a swastika. (November)
- Washington, DC: Two bricks were thrown through the front window of a Chabad overnight. Staff found broken glass and the bricks when they arrived for work in the morning. (December)

## **SELECTED INCIDENTS: HARASSMENT, THREATS & EVENTS**

The ADL Audit recorded 513 cases of anti-Semitic harassment in 2014, up from 405 in 2013. Incidents included verbal attacks and slurs against Jewish individuals (or individuals perceived to be Jewish); anti-Semitism conveyed in written or electronic communications, including anti-Semitic cyberbullying; and anti-Semitic speeches, picketing or events.

The following is a list of selected instances of anti-Semitic harassment in 2014:

- Manchester, New Hampshire: Messages were posted on the Facebook page of a Jewish institution: "Nice to see so many Jews doing charity work, considering they helped to ruin our economy" and "I do not condone the slaughtering of innocent Palestinians by Zionist pig Jews." (January)
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: A Jewish woman on a dating site received anti-Semitic messages from a user that included "arrogant jew" and "adolf was right." (February)
- Chicago, Illinois: A real-estate broker reported that his colleague walked into the office and yelled "F--- the Jews! I know why Hitler hated them!" (February)
- Albuquerque, New Mexico: Mailing labels with anti-Semitic slurs such as "To: THE KIKES WHO SHOULD DIE" were stuck on a Jewish deli. (February)
- Cleveland, Ohio: A mural painted on a gas station wall titled "Talmudic-Priests In Church: \$ex With Minors Permitted. [sic]" supposedly depicts a Jew performing the controversial metzitzah b'peh ritual. (June)
- Denver, Colorado: A rabbi received a voice mail on his personal cell phone in which a man said in a sing-song voice "Killing all the Jews. Killing Jews in twos. Rounding them up and gassing in the gas chambers. Killing all the Jews." (June)
- Palm Desert, California: Tenants were called "hooknose," "kike," and "nothing but a Jew" by their landlord. (July)

- Windham, Connecticut: A Jewish man quit his job after being routinely called “stupid Jew” or “Jew.” (August)
- Oakland County, Michigan: An executive of a Jewish organization received a voice mail that stated, “I wanted to say that Hitler was right and that the Holocaust was f---ing hilarious.” (December)

## **SELECTED INCIDENTS: ON CAMPUS**

ADL’s Audit reported an increase in anti-Semitic incidents on campus in 2014. A total of 47 incidents were reported on college campuses, compared with 37 such incidents in 2013.

The following is a list of selected anti-Jewish incidents that took place on campuses in 2014:

- Evanston, Illinois: A swastika was scratched into a Jewish student’s car at Northwestern University. (January)
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Swastikas were spray painted on an academic building on Temple University’s campus. (February)
- Ithaca, New York: An unknown person drew swastikas on a bulletin board in an Ithaca College dorm. (April)
- Queens, New York: A Queens College student returned to her car parked on campus to discover that someone etched the word “Jew” twice into the hood of her car. (April)
- Santa Barbara, California: Anti-Semitic fliers alleging that “9/11 was an outside job” and that “9/11 was Mossad” were posted on the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara. (September)
- Atlanta, Georgia: The night after Yom Kippur, two backwards swastikas were painted on the columns of the Alpha Epsilon Pi House, a Jewish fraternity, at Emory University. (October)

## RISE IN HACKINGS OF JEWISH INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITES

The ADL Audit reported an uptick in the number of online attacks by foreign hackers targeting the websites of synagogues and other Jewish organizations.

The following is a list of selected incidents in 2014 where Jewish institutions in the U.S. were targeted by hackers or other institutions were targeted with anti-Semitic messaging:

- Albany, New York: A Jewish high school had its homepage hacked to display threatening anti-Israel messaging along with a Palestinian flag. (February)
- Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia: The Moroccan Ghosts, a politically motivated hacker group that targets the websites of Jewish institutions in the United States, defaced the websites of four Jewish institutions belonging to the Union for Reform Judaism. The hackers defaced the websites with an image of an individual wrapped in a Palestinian flag and a statement saying, "When injustice becomes law ... Resistance becomes a duty." A statement boasting about this latest cyber-attack on the Moroccan Ghosts Facebook page read: "Hacking 4 formal Zionist temples in America or in more accurate words...dirty places to conspire and plot against Palestine." (May)
- Plantation, Florida: As Jews were celebrating the holiday of Sukkot, a hacker group calling itself "Team System Dz" attacked a temple website, redirecting visitors to a page with messages expressing support for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.
- California, Oregon, Utah, Missouri, Massachusetts: The hacker group AnonGhost claimed responsibility for the hacking of several American universities' websites. The hackings redirected website visitors either to pages playing a recording of the Quran and featuring a message in English that starts with the statement, "Death to All Jews... Viva Hamas, Qassam" or to a page featuring anti-Israel images and playing a song with the lyrics, "Teach

the son of the Jewish woman how many times we will conquer him.”

(December)

General anti-Jewish expressions on the Internet, while possibly playing a role in fomenting real-world anti-Semitism, are not counted for the purposes of the Audit unless they target a specific individual or institution.