

# UJPO News



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The United Jewish People's Order is a national, nonpartisan, socialist-oriented, secular organization, serving Canada's progressive Jews in individual organizations since 1926 and collectively as the UJPO since 1945.

**Volume #42, Issue #1**

Banner graphic by Avrom Yanovsky, 1911-1979

## A Warm Welcome

We welcome Sarena Sairan, our new Executive Director. Sarena, however, is not new to the United Jewish People's Order. She has a long association with UJPO and the Morris Winchevsky School, having taught both Grade 3 and Kinder Kapers.



Beyond that, Sarena is dedicated and highly committed to social justice and the values of community. She comes to us with over 25 years of experience in the service sector. Sarena puts an emphasis on an ethics of integrity, transparency, and an anti-oppressive practice both in the development of policies and in the day-to-day operations of an organization. She has a Master of Arts degree from the Metropolitan University of Toronto and brings a wealth of musical talent. Driven to bring the best out in people and to keep a calm demeanor, we are honoured and happy to welcome Sarena. ♦

## Mazl Tov to Harriet Zaidman! Geoffrey Bilson Award Winner!



*Second Chances*, UJPO Winnipeg's secretary Harriet Zaidman's young adult novel, has won the Geoffrey Bilson Award! It was announced at the Canadian Children's Book Awards on September 29 in Toronto, and came with a \$5000 prize.

The story is set in the polio epidemics of the 1950s and addresses issues of anti-vaccination at the time, as well as racism toward residents of the Metis community of Rooster Town in Winnipeg. ♦

## NATIONAL UJPO NEWS

### FROM WINNIPEG

*By Harriet Zaidman*

Our new season is being planned now, as is a new website to advertise our activities.

In the coming months we will be hosting another lecture series led by Dr. Itay Zutra, whose knowledge of Yiddish writers and literature keeps us coming back for more.

The North End Jewish Folk Choir is finally getting together again, now with a new manager, Bonnie Hoffer-Steiman. Our deepest appreciation is extended to Dora Rosenbaum, who initiated the choir's formation in 2006, organizing rehearsals, performances and special events. Mostly, she created a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere that has made singing Yiddish songs a joy. Thank you, Dora.

Best wishes to UJPO Winnipeg member Fagie Fainman, who is recovering from a fall this summer. She is now back home, and we hope she's getting back to her vibrant self. ♦

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## FROM TORONTO

By Sarena Sairan, ED UJPO/MWS

◆Shana Tova to all. We concluded and experienced some wonderful observances this year for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Our attendance was robust, and our programming was poignant. Thank you planning committee! We will be celebrating Sukkot on October 16th at 11 am. Meet us at the South Eastern Fire Pit and bring warm clothes! Help us decorate the sukkah, learn about the symbols of the holiday, sing and listen to stories together, play games and much more!

We dedicated our UJPO/MWS observances this year to the theme of refugees. We focused on the refugees' journey to Canada and experiences upon arrival. Following our Sukkot celebration at 2 pm we will host an information session about our community and individual private sponsorship, so please stick around for this at 1:30 pm by the fire pit. For more information, consult our website. For more information, click here:

<https://www.winchevskycentre.org/sukkes>

All are welcome!



◆Thank you sue! sue goldstein has recently parted ways with UJPO as Administrative Coordinator and Shule Assistant in Toronto. sue gave our centre many years of service, activism and support, and we wish sue all the best in their future endeavors. We hope sue will remain a member of our community.

◆September 30, 2022 was National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. UJPO/MWS has (re)committed to decolonization and solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Please read our Statement of Solidarity found in the link below.

<https://www.winchevskycentre.org/post/ujpo-statement-of-solidarity-with-the-wet-suwet-en-december-2021>

◆Join our Toronto UJPO/MWS Board of Directors! We are stronger together! Please consider running for a two year term at our next AGM. For more info, please contact Sarena, at [ed@winchevskycentre.org](mailto:ed@winchevskycentre.org).

◆Join us in welcoming Shayle Kilroy as Interim Office Manager. (See *Getting to Know our UJPO Members!*)

◆We're hiring for Shule Assistant! Please help us spread the word! More detailed information on the position can be found here:

<https://www.winchevskycentre.org/employment-2> ◆



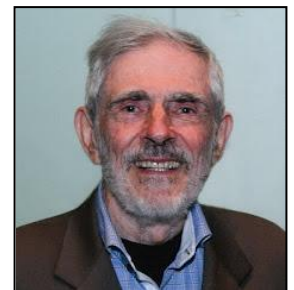
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## HONOURABLE MENTSHN

### Horace Chandler Davis 1926 - 2022

By David Abramowitz

Horace Chandler Davis was born in Ithaca, New York and didn't use his first name. He was a celebrated mathematician, a poet, composer, and science fiction author.



At 17 he enlisted in the US Navy in World War II. In 1948, he met and married another student at Harvard University, Natalie Zemon, and they had three children.

After receiving his doctorate in 1950, Chandler taught mathematics at the University of Michigan (UM). Subpoenaed by the U.S. House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) in 1953, he refused to answer their questions *by using the First Amendment* of the US Constitution. He was fired by the UM and charged with contempt of Congress. Upon losing his court challenge in 1960 he served a six-month jail sentence. His case raised awareness of the dangers of HUAC to a democratic society. A paper he wrote during his incarceration has the following acknowledgement: *"Research supported in part by the Federal Prison System. Opinions expressed in this paper are the author's and are not necessarily those of the Bureau of Prisons."*

Escaping the continuing persecution in the US, Chandler moved to Canada in 1962. He taught in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Toronto (UT), teaching generations of students and encouraging the role of women in mathematics. Known for his work in

linear algebra, *he was one of the inventors of fractals, most notably the dragon curve*. Chandler was recognized in his field by his election as Vice-President of the American Mathematical Society.

An early opponent of the US in Viet Nam, Chandler was the chairman of the Toronto Anti-Draft Program and frequently hosted draft-dodgers in his home. He also was active in Science For Peace. Every Friday, for decades, he stood in the *Toronto Vigil against the Occupation of the Territories*, a movement inspired by the Women in Black in Israel.

I was a fellow member with Chandler on a committee to free Israeli dissident Mordechai Vanunu. He regularly attended the Academic Freedom Lectures in Ann Arbor, Michigan in the 1990s by the UM Faculty Senate expressing its disapproval of the University's treatment of faculty, who, like him, had been attacked by HUAC.

In his later years, Chandler served as an editor of *The Mathematical Intelligencer*, as well as writing poetry and songs, some of them recently published in a volume of *Art Songs*. In 2012 he became a fellow of the American Mathematical Society. He was part of the 2019 class of fellows of the *Association for Women in Mathematics*. Not long before his death, from his hospital bed, he co-organized and spoke at an online event in support of an imprisoned dissident Russian mathematician.

Chandler is survived by his wife, Natalie Zemon Davis; his son, Aaron Davis (Candida Girling); daughters, Hannah Davis Taieb and Simone Davis (Peter Armstrong); four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Donations in his honour may be made to the *Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund* supporting students working for social change, or to *Greenpeace Canada*, or to *B'Tselem*, the Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories. ♦

[https://jacobin.com/2022/10/h-chandler-davis-lifelong-radical-communism-academia-obituary?fbclid=IwAR21dsQg5tmLAb6MGD2k28t\\_c1y0\\_Q69U-5MgVmvyc3Bo0tQCAclq8Fatxs](https://jacobin.com/2022/10/h-chandler-davis-lifelong-radical-communism-academia-obituary?fbclid=IwAR21dsQg5tmLAb6MGD2k28t_c1y0_Q69U-5MgVmvyc3Bo0tQCAclq8Fatxs)

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## POETRY & SONG

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### Envoi, a poem by Chandler Davis

*Envoi for Natalie Zemon Davis, "Society and Culture in Early Modern France", Stanford UP, 1975. An envoi is a stanza in conventional French balladry that sums up the moral of the piece.*

Born abroad, she longs for you, compagnons.  
She longs to shake your hand, to share your wine.  
She longs for home, four hundred years away.

Through the pane she hears you but is not heard.  
She deserves your pity but will not have it.

The songs you think are vanished once they're sung,  
The pleas you think are wasted if turned down,  
Jokes you dismiss if no one laughs or winces,  
She listens for. You speak sometimes too soft.

And since there is no God she notes your prayers.  
And since there is no God she marks your fall. ♦

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## WHAT'S IN ORDER

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### Get well to:

David Abramowitz, Fagie Fainman, Adele Rosenbloom

### Heartfelt condolences to:

Carl Rosenberg and his wife Delta Vázquez León on the loss of Delta's mother, Ruth León Solana

Nigel and Anna Barriffe on the loss of Nigel's father Roy Barriffe.

The following names come from our Nizkor ceremony recited at Kol Nidre. We hold heartfelt condolences to the following losses in this past year:

- Anna Yanovsky
- Gillian Halstead
- Horace Chandler Davis
- Harry Drexler
- Faina Okun
- Lillian London
- Vivian Rabinovitch
- Eileen Garber
- Michael Marshall
- Donna Hossack
- Judith Weisman ♦

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## GETTING TO KNOW OUR UJPO MEMBERS

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### Shayle Kilroy

*Interviewed by Sarena Sairan*

#### Since when have you been a member of UJPO (Toronto)?

I became an official member in my own right in 2021, but I'd been part of a family membership for 13 years before that (since I was 13).

#### What brought you to UJPO?

I grew up in a Lefty Jewish community in Toronto, and in 2008 my parents bought a Naivelt cabin and we participated in *Oy Di Velt Vet Vern Yinger*, the community

theatre project facilitated by Jumblies Theatre about the history of Naivelt. As an adult, I stay involved in UJPO because non-Israel centric Jewish community that is rooted in Social Justice is very important to me, and the history of UJPO (Yiddish, labour rights, Communism) is a lineage I am proud to be a part of.

**In which boards and/or committees are you active?**

I am on Camp Committee and I am also the Interim Office Manager :)

**What is your life outside UJPO, (that you are willing to share..)?**

I am currently finishing my Masters in Yiddish Studies at University of Toronto and am working on building infrastructure for more robust Yiddish learning and speaking opportunities in Toronto.

*lomirrednyiddishtszuzamen!*

Other than that, I love to bake for my family and friends, watch mildly scary movies, and run around the park at night with my dog.

**Are you able to bring your non-UJPO activities and skills into a close relationship with your UJPO activities?**

Yes! A lot of my life revolves around activism in Toronto and Jewish and Yiddish community building, both of which mesh perfectly with UJPO activities.

**Are other members of your family involved in or members of UJPO?**

Yes, my sister and I co-own our family's Naivelt cabin now! (anyone here a plumber...?)

**Have there been any changes in UJPO since you joined, that you would like to mention? Are there changes you would like to see over the coming years?**

I'd love to see us get more immersed in the Yiddish world. It's our organization's history and I think members are excited to engage more with the language. I also hope that we can get more people up to Naivelt and continue to make the most of our little summer enclave, and make it as accessible as possible to as many folks as possible.

**How do you see yourself contributing to the health of the organization?**

I am passionate about understanding how Jewish communities are built and maintained and am engaging in research in relation to this in my Masters. I hope to bring lots of energy and enthusiasm to working for UJPO and help to build and maintain our community.

**Last and not least – recent book and/or movie and/or play you recommend!**

My favourite thing to watch in Halloween season is *Over the Garden Wall*. It's hard to explain what's so good about it, but just watch it and you'll see. It's a cartoon but perfect for all ages. ♦

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## A LITTLE NOSH

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### Roast Chicken with Bread and Greens

*By Harriet Zaidman*

This gorgeous-looking chicken dish, adapted from Ina Garten, looks impressive and the taste is spectacular. Croutons made from a hearty French bread soak up the juices as the chicken cooks. The bread gets toasty and sticks to the bottom of the pan, developing a crunchy texture. The result is a tasty addition to the moist meat. The Champagne vinegar and Dijon mustard dressing on the chicken are a delicious combination. Serve on a bed of greens to make a statement about how easy it is to cook a special meal.

Note: If you don't have a cast iron stewpot or baking dish, make do with a glass or metal baking dish or a roasting pan, then use a double layer of foil to cover the chicken when called for.

Yield: 4 - 6 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes, plus chilling and resting time

Cook Time: 45 minutes - Adjust time depending on the size of the chicken

Total Time: 1 hour and 5 minutes, plus chilling and resting time



### Ingredients

For the Chicken:

One 4 - 4 1/2 pound whole chicken

4 sprigs fresh thyme (or rosemary or other herb of your choice)

2 large garlic cloves, minced

1 lemon, cut into several slices and the rest in large chunks

2 teaspoons salt  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons olive oil

Country bread, sliced thick, cut into large crouton-sized pieces

For the Arugula Salad:

1/4 cup Champagne or white wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon minced garlic  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
1/3 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup scallions, white and green parts, thinly sliced, or red onion  
2 tablespoons dried currants, raisins or cranberries  
6 cups baby arugula, light packed, spinach or romaine lettuce

## Method

1. Make the chicken: Place the chicken on clean work surface. Pat the skin dry with a paper towel. Using your finger, gently loosen the skin from the breast and thighs. Cut the lemon slices into smaller pieces. Carefully slip the small lemon pieces, the thyme and the minced garlic underneath the skin. Place the lemon chunks in the cavity of the chicken. Using kitchen twine, tie the legs together and tuck the wings underneath. Season with salt and pepper. Wrap the chicken in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
  2. Preheat the oven to 500°. Remove the chicken an hour before roasting to take the chill off. Place the bread pieces on the bottom of a large, ungreased cast-iron skillet or baking dish. Rub the chicken with the olive oil. Place the bird on top of the bread, breast side up. Roast for 30 minutes, then flip over and roast for an additional 15 or more minutes, depending on the size of the bird, until the juices run clear between the leg and the thigh. Remove the chicken and cover or wrap tight with aluminum foil. Let it rest for 20-30 minutes.
  3. Meanwhile, make the dressing: In a small bowl, combine the vinegar, mustard and garlic. Season with salt and pepper, while stirring, drizzle in the olive oil. Add the scallions and currants and set aside.
  4. To serve, carve the chicken into pieces and scrape out the croutons from the baking dish. Spread the arugula on a platter, top with the carved chicken and croutons. Drizzle with the dressing. Serve warm.
- Alternate suggestion: Toss the arugula in the dressing, serve on the platter or on the side. ♦

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# YIDDISH

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## If I Were Rothschild

### The Monologue of a Kasrilevke Melamed

By *Sholem Aleichem*

Translated by *Julius and Frances Butwin*

*Note: Sholem Aleichem, born in what is now Ukraine, was not normally political but used his humour, in this instance, to support the then growing social justice movement. It is a shame that **Fiddler on the Roof** eliminated his critique of capitalism in **If I Were A Rich Man**, particularly as it is so relevant today. - D. Abramowitz*

IF I WERE ROTHSCHILD, ah, if I were only Rothschild – a Kasrilevke melamed let himself go once upon a Thursday while his wife was demanding money for the Sabbath and he had none to give her. If I were only Rothschild, guess what I would do. First of all, I would pass a law that a wife must always have a three-ruble piece on her so that she wouldn't have to start nagging me when the good Thursday comes and there is nothing in the house for the Sabbath. In the second place I would take my Sabbath gabardine out of pawn – or, better still, my wife's squirrel-skin coat. Let her stop whining that she's cold. Then I would buy the whole house outright, from foundation to chimney, all three rooms, with the alcove and the pantry, the cellar and the attic. Let her stop grumbling that she hasn't enough room. "Here," I would say to her, "take two whole rooms for yourself – cook, bake, wash, chop, make, and leave me in peace so that I can teach my pupils with a free mind."

This is the life! No more worries about making a living. No more headaches about where the money for the Sabbath is coming from. My daughters are all married off – a load is gone from my shoulders. What more do I need for myself? Now I can begin to look around the town a little. First of all I am going to provide a new roof for the old Synagogue so the rain won't drip on the heads of the men who come to pray. After that I shall build a new bathhouse, for if not today, then tomorrow – but surely soon – there is bound to be a catastrophe: the roof is going to cave in while the women are inside bathing.

And while we are putting up a new bathhouse we might as well throw down the old poorhouse too and put up a hospital in its place, a real hospital such as they have in big towns, with beds and bedding, with a doctor and attendants, with hot broths for the sick every day. . . . And I shall build a home for the aged so that old men, scholars who have fallen upon hard times, shouldn't have to spend their last days on the hearth in the synagogue. And I shall establish a Society for Clothing the Poor so that poor

children won't have to run around in rags with – I beg your pardon for mentioning it – their navels showing. Then I shall institute a Loan Society so that anyone at all – whether he be a teacher or a workman, or even a merchant – could get money without having to pay interest and without pawning the shirt off his back. And a Society for Outfitting Brides so that any girl old enough to marry and without means should be outfitted properly and married off as befits a Jewish girl. I would organize all these and many other such societies in Kasrilevke.

But why only here in Kasrilevke? I would organize such societies everywhere, all over the world, wherever our brethren the Sons of Israel are to be found. And in order that they should all be run properly, with a system, guess what I would do. I would appoint a Society to head them all, a Board of Charity that would watch over all the societies under it. This Board of Charity would keep watch over all of Israel and see to it that Jews everywhere had enough to live on, and that they lived together in unity. It would see to it that all Jews sit in yeshivas and study the Bible, the Talmud, the Gemorah, and the various Commentaries and learn all the seven wisdoms and the seventy-seven languages. And over all these yeshivas there would be one great yeshiva or Jewish Academy, which would naturally be located in Vilna. And from there would come the greatest scholars and wise men in the world. And all of this education would be free to everyone, all paid for out of my pocket. And I would see to it that it was all run in orderly fashion, according to plan, so that there should be none of this grab-and-run, hit-and-miss, catch-as-catch-can business. Instead, everything would be run with a view to the common welfare.

But in order to have everyone think only of the common welfare, you have to provide one thing. And what is that? Naturally, security. For, take it from me; security from want is the most important thing in the world. Without it there can be no harmony anywhere. For alas, one man will impoverish another over a piece of bread, he will kill, poison, hang his fellow-man. Even the enemies of Israel, the Hamans of the world – what do you think they have against us? Nothing at all. They don't persecute us out of plain meanness, but because of their lack of security. It's lack of money, I tell you, that brings envy and envy brings hatred, and out of hatred come all the troubles in the world, all the sorrows, persecutions, killings, all the horrors and all the wars. . . .

Ah, the wars, the wars. The terrible slaughters. If I were Rothschild I would do away with war altogether. I would wipe it off completely from the face of the earth.

You will ask how? With money, of course. Let me explain it to you. For instance, two countries are having a

disagreement over some foolishness, a piece of land that's worth a pinch of snuff. "T e r r i t o r y" they call it. One country says this "territory" is hers and the other one says, "No, this territory is mine." You might think that on the First Day, God created this piece of land in her honor . . . . Then a third country enters and says, "You are both asses. This is everybody's 'territory,' in other words, it's a public domain." Meanwhile the argument goes on. "Territory" here, "territory" there. They "territory" each other so long that they begin shooting with guns and cannon and people start dying like sheep and blood runs everywhere like water . . . . But if I come to them at the very beginning and say, "Listen to me, little brothers. Actually, what is your whole argument about? Do you think that I don't understand? I understand perfectly. At Passover you are more concerned with the matzo balls than with the seyder. 'Territory' is only a pretext. What you are after is something else – something you can get your hands on – money, levies. And while we are on the subject of money, to whom does one come for a loan if not to me, that is, to Rothschild? I'll tell you what. Here, you Englishmen with the long legs and checkered trousers, take a billion. Here, you stupid Turks with the scarlet caps, take a billion also. And you, Aunt Reisel, that is Russia, take another billion. With God's help you will pay me back with interest, not a large rate of interest, God forbid, four or five percent at the most – I don't want to get rich off you."

Do you understand what I've done? I have not only put over a business deal, but people have stopped killing each other in vain, like oxen. And since there will be no more war, what do we need weapons for? What do we need armies and cannons and military bands for, and all the other trappings of war? The answer is that we don't. And if there are no more weapons and armies and bands and other trappings of war, there will be no more envy, no more hatred, no Turks, no Englishmen, no Frenchmen, no Gypsies and no Jews. The face of the earth will be changed. As it is written: "Deliverance will come –" The Messiah will have arrived.

And perhaps, even – if I were Rothschild – I might do away with money altogether. For let us not deceive ourselves, what is money anyway? It is nothing but a delusion, a made-up thing. Men have taken a piece of paper, decorated it with a pretty picture and written on it, Three Silver Rubles. Money, I tell you, is nothing but a temptation, a piece of lust, one of the greatest lusts. It is something that everyone wants and nobody has. But if there were no more money in the world there would be no more temptation, no more lust. Do you understand me or not?

But then the problem is, without money how would we Jews be able to provide for the Sabbath? The answer to that is – How will I provide for the Sabbath now? ♦

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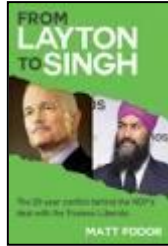
# CANADA

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## From Layton to Singh: the 20-Year struggle for the NDP's soul

By Paul Weinberg, September 16, 2022, from [rabble.ca](http://rabble.ca)

Jagmeet Singh in a surprise move emailed a public letter that placed the treatment of Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories at the level of an international crisis. It is the clearest statement on this issue from the federal NDP.



There is no chance that the minority Liberals government governing with the support of the NDP in Parliament will bend to any concerns about Israeli impunity.

And while I don't have an insight into how the NDP leader made his decision it can be credited to the grassroots lobbying within the party membership and activist groups at large such as Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) (full disclosure, I am a member of IJV).

Does this signify a switch from top-down decision making on policy that expanded when Jack Layton served as NDP leader from 2003 to 2011? Time will tell. Writer, political strategist and PhD candidate in political science at York University, Matt Fodor delves into the weeds of leadership philosophy and styles in a new book, *From Layton to Singh: The 20-year Struggle for the NDP's Soul*.

Layton emerged as an innovative and inspiring city councillor on the Toronto municipal scene. (As a writer for various local alt. weeklies I knew the man personally). At the NDP leadership convention in 2003, he won on the first ballot. Support came from across the spectrum. They included members of the party left, Libby Davies and Svend Robinson, as well as former leader Ed Broadbent, former Ontario NDP party president Janet Solberg and the United Steelworkers.

Layton's decision to professionalize and expand the federal party bureaucracy in Ottawa with strategists and communications specialists (doing continuous polling and focus groups) made sense in the competitive partisan context. By 2015 the NDP party headquarters on Laurier Ave. employed 250 people on staff, a jump from 40 one year earlier.

The problem, says Fodor, is that the federal NDP became more highly centralized around the leader and the party operatives, the latter working on devising the political messaging and policy.

It was already the case that the primary function of the membership in the federal NDP riding associations was not to discuss policy at the grassroots or educate members on policy, but primarily to raise money and volunteers for political campaigns at election time.

Layton became the leader of the federal NDP in 2003 at a propitious time when Paul Martin, the business friendly and right leaning Liberal prime minister was heading the country and there was a perceived opening on the centre left.

As finance minister in the previous Jean Chretien Liberal government Martin gained high marks among elite circles for eviscerating the Canadian welfare state in areas like housing and unemployment insurance, the consequences of which we are experiencing today in 2022 in a more unequal Canada.

Fodor says the federal NDP, which had never held power was positioned within the party as a social democratic oasis true to its roots. This was in contrast to the provincial NDP counterparts governing Ontario, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Manitoba starting in the 1990s which emphasized market friendly Third Way policies.

Layton led the NDP through four federal elections, relying on advisors from the provincial wings.

In the high mark 2011 election Jack Layton sought to remove the so-called political stigma of a tax and spend party. No mention was made in the platform for new social programs. Indeed, the focus was on rewarding job creators through tax cuts for small business, the maintenance of Canadian corporate rates as "competitive," and a more modest childcare plan (25,000 spaces annually) than what had been advocated in previous NDP platforms. There was also no call for pharmacare, criticism of international trade agreements was muted and unions were noticeably absent from the platform.

"Altogether, the NDP increasingly accepted the parameters of neoliberal capitalism," writes Matt Fodor.

A rearrangement in national partisan fortunes seemed to be in the cards as the federal Liberals were mired in third place in the House of Commons under weak leadership following the 2011 election when Stephen Harper and the Conservatives were ushered in with their first majority government.

In the same election, the NDP had surged to second place under Layton after gaining seats in his native Quebec at the expense of the Bloc Quebecois which looked tired and a spent force (temporarily it turned out). The NDP had successfully pitched itself as a social democratic party in line with Quebec values.

Things still looked promising even after Layton's untimely death from cancer following the 2011 election. His number one recruit in Quebec Tom Mulcair took charge of the federal NDP during a contentious 2012 leadership convention where he won after four ballots (his major opponent was Layton policy strategist Brian Topp.)

Previously a minister in the Quebec Liberal provincial government Mulcair had primarily left that allegiance because of differences over environmental policy, not as a dissident on the left.

Mulcair fitted well into a reconfigured neo-liberal federal party in the 2000s under Jack Layton who supported a balanced budget.

You know what happened next. Justin Trudeau and the Liberals came sailing into power after languishing in third place in the previous Parliament by running to the left of the Mulcair led NDP in support of increased government spending. The Conservatives followed in second place.

What struck some NDP activists as especially galling was that Mulcair in the 2015 campaign was calling for a balanced budget throughout the entire mandate of a first national NDP government, making it hard to imagine anything socially significant being enacted.

For all of the brain tissue supposedly resident at the federal party headquarters, the Liberals had a better understanding of the Canadian public mood.

The 2015 election also witnessed a resurgence of an intolerant white ethnic nationalism (Islamophobia disguised as secularism) in Quebec which helped spell the rapid decline of the NDP in the province. The Bloc Quebecois experienced a comeback after running ads mocking Mulcair's opposition to the banning of niqab by the Conservative government at citizenship ceremonies. The Liberals also opposed the ban but managed to see its seats increase in the province

Is the Jagmeet Singh led NDP continuing the legacy of Jack Layton?

The decision on Israel and Palestine was a matter of the right thing to do policy-wise. I doubt the party here relied on focus groups.

And a Singh led NDP is less apologetic about its social democratic values in, for instance, supporting taxes on the wealthy and corporations – including specifically the oil sector.

Fodor still detects a certain level of caution in the federal NDP that can be hobbling.

It is back in its traditional national role as a smaller party trying to find space as the two big parties the centrist

Liberals and Freedom Convoy loving Conservatives dominate the political conversation and duke it out.

Following the 2021 federal election a confidence and supply agreement was signed where the NDP promises to ensure the survival of the current minority government headed by the Liberals under Trudeau until 2025 in exchange for specific items such as a means tested public dental care plan for low-income people.

This is no formal coalition. Singh and the NDP can still criticize the Liberals in power.

What Fodor finds inspiring are the never-ending insurgent challenges to the party establishment within the NDP. Recent ones have focused on the environment and the climate emergency.

He includes Avi Lewis and the other authors of the Leap Manifesto or more currently, the longshot candidacy of Anjali Appadurai, up against the front runner, David Eby, in the BC NDP leadership contest.

Because of the volatile nature of politics in the post pandemic world nothing is absolutely certain and *so From Layton to Singh* offers important lessons for Canada's major party on the left for when it's time might arise again.

*From Layton to Singh* will be published this fall on October 18 by James Lorimer & Company. ♦

*Paul Weinberg is a freelance writer as well as author and editor (and UJPO member)*

<https://rabble.ca/books/review-of-from-layton-to-singh-the-20-year-struggle-for-the-ndps-soul/>

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## MIDDLE EAST

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### **CIA unable to corroborate Israel's 'terror' label for Palestinian rights groups**

*By Isaac Scher, The Guardian, August 22, 2022*

*Exclusive: sources say report shows CIA unable to find evidence to support Israeli claim, but finding does not prompt US rebuttal*

A classified CIA report shows the agency was unable to find any evidence to support Israel's decision to label six prominent Palestinian NGOs as "terrorist organizations".

In October, Israel labeled as terror groups Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al-Haq, the Bisan Center for Research and Development, Defense for Children International–Palestine, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, and the Union of Palestinian Women Committees.

Israel claimed that the organizations were front groups for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine



(PFLP), a leftist political party that has a paramilitary branch.

Earlier this year, Israel passed intelligence about the designation to the US, but a CIA intelligence assessment of the material did not find any evidence to support the claim, according to two sources familiar with the study.

The CIA report “doesn’t say that the groups are guilty of anything”, one source said. The assessment was highly classified, a second source said.

Numerous states, including allies of Israel, have rejected the terror designation as unfounded.

The United States has not publicly criticized or questioned it, but neither has it placed the groups under a US terror designation.

In light of the CIA’s assessment, “the United States should very clearly call on the Israeli government to reverse these designations, and to allow these organizations to continue their vital work,” said Omar Shakir, Israel/Palestine director of Human Rights Watch.

“The reality here is that the United States has for too long turned a blind eye, and in some cases even green lighted, quite serious Israeli government abuses,” Shakir added.

“The position toward the Palestinian human rights organizations highlights a much larger failing in US government policy on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and puts the United States squarely out of touch with the consensus in the human rights movement.”

Since announcing the designation, Israel has continued its efforts to stop the six NGOs from continuing their advocacy work. On Thursday, the Israeli military raided the West Bank offices of all six groups, confiscating property, sealing off office doors, and posting official notices declaring the groups illegal.

After the raids, the state department spokesperson, Ned Price, confirmed that the US government had analyzed Israel’s evidence for the terror charge.

“What happened last year is the Israeli government designated these organizations,” he said. “We have not followed through with any designations, nor have we changed our approach to these organizations.”

Price declined to comment on the CIA report, and referred the Guardian to the CIA. The CIA did not respond to the Guardian’s questions.

The classified assessment mirrors the findings of European governments that were also shown dossiers of Israeli evidence.



Cartoon by Mike Constable

Last month, nine member states of the European Union said in a joint statement: “No substantial information was received from Israel that would justify reviewing our policy toward the six Palestinian NGOs.”

The designation, according to political analysts, was intended in part to dry up the European funding streams to the Palestinian NGOs, but the tactic has proved unsuccessful.

According to Lara Friedman, the president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, the US government’s public stance is a mixed one.

“A lot of us would have liked to see an affirmative rebuttal of the designations,” she said. “They didn’t do that, but there’s been nothing undertaken by this administration that would suggest they are viewing these organizations as terrorist organizations.”

But, she added: “The US administration has had 10 months to convince Israel” to reverse the designations. “Instead, this is now Israeli law.”

A handful of US legislators have publicly criticized Israel’s terror designation.

Last month, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and 21 other Democrats sent a letter to Antony Blinken, the secretary of state, and Avril Haines, the director of national intelligence, urging the US government to stand up to the Israeli government.

The lawmakers wrote: “A reported lack of evidence to support this decision raises concerns that it may be a deeply repressive measure, designed to criminalize and silence prominent and essential Palestinian human rights organizations.”

According to a federal government source, Blinken has shied away from the issue of the designations since Israel announced them. “The secretary himself said basically: this isn’t something we want to touch too much.”

The source added: “Most letters written to the secretary don’t make it to his desk verbatim, in full.”

Beyond lawmakers' public effort to address the issue, there have been private challenges to the Israeli designation.

Last year, an Israeli delegation provided a similar dossier and briefing to members of Congress. That dossier, seen by the Guardian, repeats claims that the groups are "cover institutions" for the PFLP.

But at the briefing, there was dismay at the quality of the dossier's evidence, said a congressional source.

Among skeptics was the Florida Democratic congressman Ted Deutch, who has described himself as "a passionate supporter of Israel".

After receiving the dossier, said the source, Deutch told the Israeli delegation its evidence was insufficient.

Deutch's office did not respond to a request for comment. ♦

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/22/cia-report-israel-palestinian-rights-groups>

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## Israeli settlers outraged after Tel Aviv schools use Green Line in maps

*Israel's Education Ministry criticized the Tel Aviv Municipality's decision to distribute the unapproved maps including the Green Line to schools.*

*By Uri Sela Walla, The Jerusalem Post (jpost.com), August 23, 2022*

The Tel Aviv Municipality has started hanging maps of Israel in schools with the Green Line marked, despite an Education Ministry prohibition on the matter, after a decision was made by mayor Ron Huldai. Haaretz first reported on the decision to hang the maps on Sunday.

According to the Education Ministry, the only maps that are allowed to be used in educational institutions are those that are prepared by the Survey of Israel (SOI) and receive its approval. The ministry criticized the municipality's decision to distribute the unapproved maps to schools.

"This is an amateur and non-professional map, invented by the Tel Aviv Municipality. This is reflected in the cartography and the trending use of the term 'sovereignty line,'" the ministry stated, clarifying that "the map was not submitted for approval by the Education Ministry, and therefore it is not approved for study nor for use as a poster on the walls."

The heads of the settlements were also outraged. "Students from the schools in Efrat will visit Tel Aviv during the coming school year, even though the mayor of Tel Aviv doesn't like us that much, it turns out, or sees us as not legitimate residents of Israel," said council head Oded Ravivi.

The head of the Beit El Council, Shai Alon, said that "the conduct of the Tel Aviv Municipality, where there are probably not many people who like the settlements in Judea and Samaria, is part of a broad symptom in which the political instability and the lack of political horizons vis-à-vis the Palestinians lead to the independent conduct of various parties that manage the conflict as seen by the eyes and lead to the prevailing chaos as far as Judea and Samaria is concerned."

"The Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality is a leader in education and puts education at the top of its list of priorities. An excellent education includes knowledge of the world, skills and values. All three are embodied in the professional map that was painstakingly made by an expert cartographer, for the city's students.

"It is important that they know the borders between us and other countries and the borders of Israeli sovereignty and the complex reality in certain areas."

"For us at the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality, it is important that the students know not only the city and the area they live in but the entire country - that they know where each locality is, how many people live there and what the composition of the population is. It is important that they know the borders between us and other countries and the borders of Israeli sovereignty and the complex reality in certain areas. It is important that they get to know the Middle East and know how small Israel is compared to the countries around it. This is knowledge that is necessary for everyone. ♦

*Israeli settlers outraged after Tel Aviv schools use Green Line in maps - Israel News - The Jerusalem Post (jpost.com)*

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## Kahanism's Raucous Return

*By Joshua Leifer, Jewish Currents, September 23, 2022*

Early last week, Itamar Ben-Gvir, the 46-year-old lawyer and leader of Israel's extreme-right Jewish Power party, released a short campaign video on social media. "This is a clip you must watch to the end," he tweeted. The video shows a succession of short quotes attributed to "B.G.," set against grainy black-and-white footage from the early days of Zionist settlement in British Mandate Palestine. "The Bible is the soul of the Jewish People, from its beginning and for all the generations," reads one quote. "One does not receive a land, one conquers it," reads another. "If you put all the values in the world on one hand, and the existence of Israel on the other, I would choose Israel's existence," reads a third. At the end, Ben-Gvir himself appears in the frame, wearing a suit and tie, his usually conspicuous yarmulke now only barely visible on the back of his head. "I agree with every word, yet it wasn't I who said these, but

a different B.G.,” he smiles. Then, as a picture of David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s founding leader, appears in the foreground alongside Ben-Gvir, he says, “Let’s get Israel back on track.”

It was, like much of Ben-Gvir’s rhetoric, partially an act of trolling. For the followers of Meir Kahane – the American-born rabbi who became the leader of an armed, far-right theocratic and racist movement in Israel – Ben-Gurion, a secularist and socialist, has long represented not a hero worth emulating, but an ideological foe. Yet Ben-Gvir’s video was also a challenge to the Israeli center and center-left, which has sought to label him as beyond the pale of acceptability. By comparing himself to Ben Gurion, Ben-Gvir asserted that he and his party are not a deviation from Zionism’s founding spirit but its authentic continuation. Indeed, with little more than a month before Israel’s next elections, Ben-Gvir is no longer campaigning as the leader of the Kahanist fringe; he is making a bid to represent the mainstream. The Religious Zionism list, of which Ben-Gvir’s Jewish Power is a major component, is currently polling between 11 and 14 seats, competing to be the Knesset’s third largest party. If Netanyahu’s Likud wins enough seats to form the next coalition, Ben-Gvir could very likely hold a cabinet position in government. He has said he would like to be Minister of Public Security, the office that oversees the police.

The significance of Ben-Gvir’s rise exceeds the purely electoral realm. Earlier this month, students at a secular public school in Ramat Gan, far from his typical strongholds of support – the hardline settlements of the occupied West Bank, the hardscrabble cities in Israel’s south – greeted him with enthusiasm and chants of approval. Later that same day, when a troop of Israeli Scouts from bourgeois north Tel Aviv encountered Ben-Gvir in a public park, the youth movement members mobbed him affectionately, shouting his name with adoration. His popularity among adolescents indexes a deeper cultural phenomenon: Like Trump and other politicians of the populist right, Ben-Gvir promises the catharsis of transgression. He offers, in his own words, an expression of Zionism “without stuttering, without weakness, without lies.” He represents in his person the possibility of reconciling Zionism’s ego and id, of fully unleashing the violent ethnonationalism that the rule of law both channels and represses. As Ben-Gvir has gained prominence, he has brought ideas such as the forced expulsion of Palestinians from Israel – ideas which shaped Israel’s founding but were later confined to the ideological margins – back into the heart of Israeli political discourse.

Itamar Ben-Gvir first pierced mainstream Israeli consciousness in a now infamous 1995 interview in which he threatened Yitzhak Rabin’s life. Together with a group

of young followers of Kahane, Ben-Gvir, still in his late teens, had followed Rabin’s driver, surrounded the car, and broke off the metal Cadillac logo that was affixed to the hood. “The symbol is a symbol,” Ben-Gvir told the news reporter sent to interview him about the event. “Just as we got to this symbol, we can also get to Rabin.” Three weeks later, Yigal Amir, a right-wing religious law student, shot and killed Rabin after a Tel Aviv peace rally. That Ben-Gvir’s political allies did “get to Rabin” has given the video a haunting, uncanny quality. It also cemented the persona that Ben-Gvir would continue to perform for the rest of his career. In the video of him as a street activist chasing down Rabin, he appears as half urchin, half clown, his face doughy, his kippah perpetually askance. Ever since, this combination of malice and jest has formed the core of his political brand.

Maturity did not temper Ben-Gvir’s views. Banned from army service because of his membership in the Kahanist “Kach” group, which was designated an illegal terrorist organization by the state, Ben-Gvir eventually became a lawyer, although his admission to the bar was delayed due to his voluminous rap sheet (he has been indicted 53 times, seven of which ended in convictions, including once for supporting a terrorist organization). He soon emerged as one of the Kahanist right’s most prominent legal advocates, specializing in the defense of Jewish terror suspects. His clients have included one of the extreme-right militants involved in the arson attack in the Palestinian village of Duma that killed three members of the Dawabshe family, including an 18-month-old.

Ben-Gvir entered the parliamentary arena as an aide to Michael Ben-Ari, the only other Kahanist – besides Kahane himself – ever to win a seat in the Knesset. Ben-Ari was part of the older generation of Kahane’s followers, a cohort of imposing, grizzled, even frightening figures. Each marked their own territory. For Ben-Ari, it was the blighted districts of South Tel Aviv, where, during the 2010s, he routinely led demonstrations against African asylum seekers and refugees that ended in physical assaults and shattered storefront windows. (Ben-Ari has since moved to a settlement in the occupied West Bank.) For Benzi Gopstein, leader of Lehava – an organization ostensibly committed to breaking-up mixed Jewish-Arab couples – it is downtown Jerusalem, where, on Thursday nights, his young disciples fly their billowing black flags and chant “Death to Arabs” at passersby. For the Boston-born Baruch Marzel, it is the rocky hills of the Tel Rumeida, the notorious settlement in Hebron, where he and his followers have proudly brawled with Palestinians and attacked human rights activists. In March 2019, Israel’s High Court barred Ben-Ari from running for Knesset because of his

long record of racist incitement. In August 2019, the Court barred Gopstein and Marzel on similar grounds.

As the November 1st election approaches, Ben-Gvir has been careful to avoid the fate of his Kahanist elders. While no less ideologically extreme, Ben-Gvir has made a self-conscious stylistic break with his predecessors. After years of stubbornly defending his choice to hang a portrait of Baruch Goldstein – the American-born Kahane supporter who shot and killed 29 Palestinians at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron in 1994 – in his living room, Ben-Gvir announced during the winter 2020 election campaign that he would remove it so that Jewish Power would be allowed to merge into a parliamentary list with other right-wing parties. He appears to take pride in having narrowed the scope of his animus but not its intensity. Instead of deporting all Arabs, as he once advocated, now he calls only to deport those deemed “disloyal.” During a campaign stop last July to Jerusalem’s Machane Yehuda market, long a bastion of the hard right, Ben-Gvir publicly chastised a supporter who began to scream “Death to Arabs.” It’s “death to terrorists,” Ben-Gvir corrected him. Yet there is little reason to view this surface-level moderation as anything but instrumental. When asked in a September 6th interview on Israel’s Channel 13 if such changes reflected a new relationship to Kahane’s legacy, Ben-Gvir was quick to respond that they did not. “You asked me about Rav Kahane,” Ben-Gvir said. “The answer is his picture is still in my home. Yes, I believe he was a hero.”

In tandem with these small rhetorical shifts, Ben-Gvir has demonstrated a political *savoir faire* that none of his predecessors possessed. Even when they sought seats in the Knesset, Kahane’s followers maintained the pose of a revolutionary vanguard. Not only did they make no effort to appeal to the Israeli mainstream, as journalist Anshel Pfeffer has observed, they openly expressed their disdain for it and reveled in their role as outsiders. They were coded American in the Israeli imagination, often speaking Hebrew with American accents. Kahane’s central preoccupations – Jewish racial purity, intermarriage – were, as the scholar Shaul Magid writes, “American ideas, or fears, that Kahane transplanted into Israeli society,” and that initially found only a limited audience. As Kahane grew disillusioned with the secularism and hedonism of Israeli society of the 1980s, his extreme Zionism “deconstruct[ed] itself and [became] its opposite,” morphing into a “militant and apocalyptic post-Zionism” that sought an overthrow of the existing order and its replacement by a fascist state governed by *halacha*, or Jewish law.

Ben-Gvir, by contrast, presents his ideology as authentically Israeli, aimed not at subverting Zionism but at

its full realization. His rhetoric is bluntly, relentlessly nationalist, and he appears in public always accompanied by an Israeli flag. He positions himself not as a threat to the state but as its truest defender. His working theory might be described as an Israeli version of the Nazi stab-in-the-back conspiracy: that Israel’s enemies and their allies (always figured as Arabs and leftists) have seized control of key institutions like the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and even the army. He has thus dubbed his campaign tour “the quest to save the state of Israel.” For soldiers and police, he demands full legal immunity from indictment for misconduct. He decries the army’s existing rules of engagement, which he claims are “killing” soldiers in the field. He insists the army be given a “free hand to crush the terrorists.”

It is this aspiration to represent the broader Jewish Israeli public that also sets him apart from Betzalel Smotrich, nominally the leader of the Religious Zionism list, the far-right parliamentary bloc that includes Ben-Gvir’s Jewish Power as well as the vociferously anti-LGBT party Noam. Smotrich is the product of the right-wing yet conventional world of religious nationalist (and largely Ashkenazi) *yeshivas*; he does not come from the Kahanist tradition, even if his anti-Arab racism brings him close to it. His rhetoric, while no less extreme than Ben-Gvir’s, is devout and messianic; he gives off the impression of an overgrown *yeshiva bochur*, clever if somewhat humorless. He is, in Israeli parlance, a “sectoral candidate,” a representative of a discrete sociological niche. But Ben-Gvir, raised in a non-religious suburb outside of Jerusalem by immigrants from Iraqi Kurdistan, represents a different Israeli story. He was not raised strictly Orthodox but became religious as a teenager. For this reason, he can speak authentically to a wider swath of the Israeli public. He has been explicit about his aspiration for Jewish Power to represent Israeli society as a whole – an aspiration that Smotrich does not share. Smotrich resisted merging his party with Ben-Gvir’s, until polls showed the likelihood that Ben-Gvir would pass the electoral threshold while Smotrich would not. In the drawn out haggling between Smotrich and Ben-Gvir over the composition of the parliamentary list, one of the sticking points, according to Ben-Gvir, was that he wanted to guarantee spots on the list for representatives from Israel’s sociogeographic periphery, from Sephardic traditionalist communities, and from Haredi communities. He got the first two but not the third.

Ben-Gvir’s rise is inseparable from the steady rightward march of Israeli society. In the 1980s, there was broad opposition, including on the right, to Kahanist proposals. That is no longer true today. In 1984, for instance, polls showed that approximately 15% of Jewish Israelis endorsed the idea that “Palestinians should be

deported to Arab countries and Israeli Arabs induced to emigrate.” In 2016, a Pew Survey found that 48% of Israeli Jews agreed “Israel should deport or remove Arabs from Israel.” The same 2016 survey found that 79% of Jewish Israelis agreed that Jews should receive preferential treatment over non-Jews. Against this backdrop, past efforts by politicians on both the right and the left to quarantine Kahane and limit his influence appear prescient – and insufficient. After Kahane won a seat while leader of Kach, the Knesset passed a law banning any party that “incites to racism” from participating in elections. But this move was not simply realpolitik or image-management. Was not Kahane, journalist Bernard Avishai wrote in *The New York Review of Books* at the time, “doing no more than carrying to its logical extreme what had become the conventional wisdom under Begin?” There were fears that the tendencies to which Kahane gave expression came from somewhere deep within the Israeli collective psyche, and that, if left unsuppressed, the phenomenon would almost surely grow.

Such fears have been borne out. Over the last decade, in particular, Netanyahu’s Likud and the Israeli right more broadly have undergone a process of Kahanization. The culmination of this shift was Netanyahu’s efforts in 2019 to broker a merger between Smotrich and Ben-Gvir’s parties, which resulted in Likud guaranteeing a spot on its list to a representative from Religious Zionism. With this deal, the wall between the far right and what had once been the mainstream right collapsed. At the same time, Likud politicians have moved beyond territorial-maximalist positions on the occupied territories to an explicit embrace of ethnic cleansing and extra-parliamentary violence. Often in response to acts of Palestinian resistance, leading Likud politicians, such as former Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz, have begun threatening to carry out a second Nakba – the 1947–1949 expulsion of more than 700,000 Palestinians by Israeli forces – as retribution. “Remember 1948, remember our War of Independence and your Nakba,” Katz warned in June. “Ask the elders among you, the grandfathers and grandmothers, and they will explain to you that eventually the Jews wake up and know how to protect themselves and the idea of a Jewish state.” Likud MK Dudi Amsalem has threatened that when his party returns to power, they will “pulverize the bones of the left.” Kahane’s rhetoric has found a comfortable home in today’s Likud.

Accordingly, Kahanist talking points have found a wider audience than ever before. Ben-Gvir’s ubiquity on Israeli television over the last two years has meant that ideas such as mass population transfer and stripping Arabs and leftists of their Israeli citizenship are now discussed during prime time with some regularity. They are also

rarely rebutted. “A responsible media would at least confront the man,” the academic Tomer Persico lamented in Haaretz. “Instead, Israelis can’t avoid seeing his smiling mug everywhere, with journalists vying to outdo one another in their obsequiousness to him.” But while it is true that Ben-Gvir has received an amount of airtime far disproportionate to the electoral strength of his party, the platforming of Ben-Gvir cannot on its own explain the often overwhelming support his ideas seem to garner. In a recent media stunt, Ben-Gvir filmed a TikTok inside the cabin of an Israir plane where he pointed out empty seats for the Arab and left-wing MKs whom he has been calling on Israel to deport: “Tibi, Odeh, Ofer Casif,” he smirked, “just send them away!” A poll conducted shortly after the video in late August found that 64% of Israeli voters support Ben-Gvir’s proposal to deport anyone who “acts against the army or the state”; the number was close to 80% among voters identifying with the Netanyahu camp. Among Lapid supporters, it was 47% .

Israeli liberals, the few that remain, have responded to Ben-Gvir’s ascendance much as their American counterparts did to Trump, repudiating his extremism and denying that his rhetoric has any place in Israeli parliamentary politics. From Yair Lapid’s Yesh Atid to Zehava Galon’s Meretz, preventing Ben-Gvir from returning to the Knesset with a larger mandate, and perhaps even holding a ministerial position, has become a rallying cry, a disaster that must be avoided at all costs. Their response, in essence, echoes the Trump-era liberal refrain, “This is not who we are.” Last spring, for instance, former Meretz MK and retired IDF general Yair Golan called Ben-Gvir “a pathological lover of violence, a racist man with clear fascist tendencies. It’s simply an abnormal error that this man is in the Knesset, he shouldn’t be there.” Lapid, in his public remarks, has referred to Ben-Gvir as a “convicted criminal” and called him “the greatest danger to the state of Israel.”

Yet one reason why Ben-Gvir has appeared so frightening is that he is willing to admit what the Zionist mainstream long denied. For all their distaste for Ben Gvir’s rhetoric, the MKs of Yesh Atid and Meretz remained in a government that oversaw the shuttering and persecution of leading Palestinian civil society organizations in the West Bank, enabled the ongoing mass transfer of the Palestinian communities of Masafer Yatta, and voted to extend the emergency legislation maintaining the two-tiered, apartheid legal system in the West Bank. And they did so while mouthing rhetoric about the importance of democracy, equality, and rule of law. What Ben-Gvir offers, then, to the Israeli public is – to use another Trump-era phrase – the permission to “say the quiet part out loud”: to do away with obfuscation,

euphemism, and politesse, to align intention and deeds. If there will be no two-state solution, Ben-Gvir says, then Israel will annex all the occupied territories. If Palestinians refuse to accept their permanent second-class status and instead fight back, he warns, they will be removed, one way or another, from their land. Population transfer, ethnic cleansing, ethnonationalism, Ben-Gvir asserts, have been part of Zionism since Israel's inception. And not only that, he argues, they are a part of the Zionist legacy that Israelis should openly embrace again. ♦

<https://jewishcurrents.org/kahanisms-raucous-return>

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## INTERNATIONAL

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### German Jews file war crimes charges against Israeli leaders

By Ali Abunimah, *Rights and Accountability*, Sept. 12, 2022

A Jewish group in Germany has filed criminal charges against Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and defense minister Benny Gantz over the bombardment they ordered in Gaza this summer.

The Israeli surprise attack from 5-8 August left some 50 Palestinians dead, including 17 children. At least 360 people were injured.

“This was a supposed preemptive strike that was carried out without a concrete threat,” Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East said on Sunday.

“In public, this excessive attack was largely portrayed as self-defense against Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who in fact only fired rockets in response to the Israeli bombardment,” the group added. “But even in the opposite case, there would be no justification for such a scale of civilian suffering and destruction.”

“Israel, thanks to international – including German – complicity, has the most modern weapons technology at its disposal and is of course capable of carrying out precise attacks,” Jewish Voice stated.

“When so many civilian casualties are accepted in order to eliminate a few combatants, the end result is deliberate massacres.”

#### Favored “moderate”

By filing charges against Lapid and Gantz at Germany's Federal Court of Justice, the group is seeking “consequences for the two men who are responsible for this suffering above all others.”

The criminal complaint, a copy of which has been seen by *The Electronic Intifada*, accuses the two men of crimes

against humanity and war crimes for their role in the attack on Gaza.

The charges were timed to coincide with a two-day visit to Germany by Lapid to promote the weapons trade between Berlin and Tel Aviv.

The visit also gave German Chancellor Olaf Scholz an opportunity to effectively endorse Lapid in Israel's upcoming elections.

Lapid, whose brutal anti-Palestinian policies are indistinguishable from those of opposition leader and former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is nonetheless favored by European leaders and often falsely presented in Western media as “centrist” and “moderate.”

#### Fugitives from justice

As for Gantz, this is not the first attempt to bring him to justice in a European or international court.

The Israeli defense minister is a likely target of an ongoing International Criminal Court investigation, although that process appears to have slowed to a snail's pace – if it is advancing at all – on the watch of the new chief prosecutor, Karim Khan.

Khan appears more intent on appeasing the ICC's Western paymasters, as they attempt to turn the tribunal into a political weapon in their geopolitical war against Russia, rather than a forum for victims who have no other recourse to seek impartial justice.

Since 2018, Ismail Ziada, a Palestinian-Dutch citizen, has been suing Gantz in the Netherlands over a 2014 bombing in Gaza that killed Ziada's mother, three brothers, a sister-in-law and a 12-year-old nephew, as well as a seventh person visiting the family.

Judges have so far blocked Ziada's search for justice, on the basis that foreign officials cannot be sued civilly in Dutch courts. That case is under appeal.

Gantz, who was army chief at the time of the 2014 assault, later bragged in an election campaign that he had bombed Gaza back to the “stone ages.”

But even European countries that recognize universal jurisdiction over war crimes and crimes against humanity have bent over backwards to shield accused Israeli war criminals.

In 2002, Belgian courts halted an effort to bring Ariel Sharon to justice over the Sabra and Shatila massacres of Palestinian refugees, which he oversaw as defense minister during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon 40 years ago this week.

The following year, just months after the illegal US-led invasion of Iraq, Belgium repealed its universal jurisdiction

law under intense American pressure, shielding American, British, Israeli and other Western leaders from efforts to hold them accountable for their crimes.

Other Israeli leaders implicated in war crimes, including General Doron Almog and former foreign minister Tzipi Livni, have repeatedly escaped prosecutors with the apparent complicity of European governments.

While regularly evading arrest, Livni was even awarded a “peace prize” in Germany in 2020.

Unfortunately, the prospects that justice will be served in the country whose government murdered millions of Jewish people during World War II, are slim.

Prosecutors in Germany – where former members of Hitler’s Nazi party dominated the justice ministry well into the 1970s – have made it clear that they are fine with Israel killing Palestinians and even German citizens.

In spite of a German law requiring them to do so, federal prosecutors have refused to open an investigation into Israel’s July 2014 killing of Ibrahim Kilani, a German citizen, along with his wife and German-born children.

Germany’s warped and deeply hypocritical political culture views unconditional support for Israel’s crimes against the Palestinian people and theft of their land as a form of “atonement” for the Holocaust, as if Israel – which did not exist at the time – and not European Jews, were Hitler’s victims.

For Nazis past and present, lavishing praise and support on Israel is a sort of “get-of-jail-free” card that can be used as a shield against any accusations of anti-Jewish bigotry.

Palestinians are the metaphorical and real sacrificial scapegoats.

State broadcaster Deutsche Welle, for instance, has been conducting a purge of Palestinian and other Arab journalists, although German courts recently reversed two of those firings.

The journalists were forced out of their jobs based on false allegations of anti-Semitism because of criticisms they had made of Israel.

Nonetheless, in keeping with the ideological rigor enforced in Germany, Deutsche Welle this month adopted a new code of conduct making it compulsory for all employees to support Israel’s “right to exist.”

But Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East is determined to challenge this perverse status quo.

“As a Jewish organization, we stand for universal human rights,” the group said. “Like many Jewish organizations worldwide, we insist that Israel neither

represents Jews nor speaks on our behalf. Israel must be held accountable for war crimes like any other state.” ♦

<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/german-jews-file-war-crimes-charges-against-israeli-leaders>

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## German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, This Is What’s Really Disgusting

*By Amira Hass, Haaretz , Aug 21, 2022*

Europe and the United States apparently believe the antisemitic libels to the effect that Israel, as a modern all-Jewish organization, is an omnipotent multi-armed octopus, which should not be angered.

Beyond international law and without borders – this is Israel’s infinite space where it conducts its prolonged war against the Palestinian people.

“Our” Holocaust lasted 12 years, and Zionism has been benefiting from it ever since. The Palestinians’ non-Holocaust has already been going on for 75 years. And the world – in other words the United States and Europe, headed by Germany – doesn’t simply sit on the sidelines.

The self-defined enlightened countries repeatedly give Israel a green light to carry on with the non-Holocaust it has been perpetuating for so long. Their occasional limp condemnations, absent diplomatic warnings and punishment, only signal to Israel that it can continue to abuse, humiliate, crush and torture, bomb and kill and imprison and expel, steal land and water. And all that while disgracefully and cynically exploiting our families who were murdered by Nazi Germany and its collaborators.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz would have stopped the process of outlawing seven Palestinian civil organizations, had he known that the European countries would impose a single sanction against Israel. Israeli armed burglars would not have broken into the offices of those organizations last Thursday and looted their contents, had a senior official in U.S. President Joe Biden’s Democratic administration ordered Gantz ahead of time to condemn any attempt to deny the crimes of the Holocaust.

But Europe and the United States are strong and capable and effective at imposing various sanctions on the nation that is occupied, dispossessed, expelled. As though they believed the antisemitic libels that Israel (as the modern umbrella organization of all the Jews) is an omnipotent and multi-armed octopus that they must take care not to anger.

Israel is constantly opening new fronts in its prolonged war against the Palestinian people, and chooses as many targets as possible. It has inexhaustible resources for that purpose – money, soldiers, legal experts, yes-men, citizens

who don't give a damn and falsehoods that it wraps in mantras of security and classified material.

There is no need to wait 50 or 60 years until the archives are opened and documents reveal some other secret government plan behind a horrific act allegedly perpetrated by individuals (like the massacre in Kafr Qasem), or intentions that differ from those that are declared (like the Military Rule imposed on Israel's Arab citizens from 1948 to 1966, and which was designed to prevent their return to their lands and to complete our grab of those lands).

Even without documents we know why Israel is forbidding the existence of seven Palestinian civil organizations, including prominent human rights organizations:

1. The activity of the organizations strengthens Palestinian sumud, or steadfastness, in the face of the occupation and its invasiveness.
2. The information, testimonies, documents and analyses provided by these organizations are an important data base for any Palestinian claim against the Israeli occupation in international legal forums, now and in the future.
3. The organizations and their activists also level criticism against the Palestinian Authority, its oppressive practices, failures in areas of social justice and its neo-liberal policy. Israel's pursuit of them intensifies the suspicions and questions of whether the PA also wants them closed. Sowing suspicion and mutual accusations among the Palestinians is a common practice of Israeli intelligence organizations.
4. The organizations preserve and nurture the Palestinian spirit of unity that supersedes the hamula, or extended family – thereby contravening Israel's intention and activities to disband and erode Palestinian society, so that each person, or at most each family, will be alone in their confrontation with the built-in cruelty of Israel's coerced rule.

While publicly adhering to the “two-state solution,” European countries did not suspend diplomatic relations with Israel in response to its devouring of the remaining Palestinian land in the West Bank, in violation of UN resolutions and international law. They did not return their ambassadors, as a means of forcing Israel to stop imprisoning over 2 million people in the detention facility called the Gaza Strip. They haven't suspended trade agreements with Israel, because since the first day of the Oslo Accords, Israel has been violating the basic principle on which the accords are based: The Gaza Strip and the West Bank are a single territorial unit.

These countries are not cancelling trade agreements related to weapons and spyware, because Israel has crushed and is crushing Gaza with its weapons and using science fiction-like means to spy on every Palestinian from the age of one hour until after death. They do not restrict the entry of Israelis into their territory in response to the long-standing restrictions on movement that Israel imposes on Palestinians and their spouses.

Israel keeps destroying and confiscating humanitarian equipment (solar panels, water pipes and mobile structures) funded by European countries, and is well aware that there will be nothing more than a toothless verbal condemnation. Israel also allocates the land and water it has stolen from the Palestinians to the Jewish citizens of Great Britain and France, the United States, Canada and Argentina, with the assurance that those countries would punish no one for this rapacity.

After the closing of the seven organizations, Israel and its obedient Jewish citizens, who profit from this official robbery, will keep going, and cross other red lines, persecute other civil society groups and silence other activists, with a license from Europe and the United States. ♦

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-08-21/ty-article/.highlight/german-chancellor-olaf-scholz-this-is-whats-really-disgusting/00000182-bfb0-dc1b-a197-bffda9410000>

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## Colombia's Quiet Revolution

*Asad Ismi, Global Research, September 19, 2022*

“It was the straw that broke the camel's back,” Guillermo Ramirez told me. He was explaining how Colombia's affordability crisis led to the election in June of the first leftist government in the country's 200-year history. Ramirez is Colombian-Canadian and a member of Colombia Action Solidarity Alliance (CASA), a Toronto-based activist group. He has been following Colombian politics for 27 years and visited Colombia in January.

In April 2021, the right-wing government of President Iván Duque announced its intention to increase taxes on food items. This would have affected the poorest Colombians the most – people who were already suffering enormously from the drastic effects of COVID-19 on the economy.

A shocking 40 per cent of Colombians live in poverty, a result of “decades of neoliberal policies which have pushed Colombia into an economic crisis, with unprecedented levels of poverty and inequity,” as Raul Burbano told me. Burbano, also Colombian-Canadian, is program director at Common Frontiers, a Canadian working group composed of labour, faith-based and social



justice organizations focused on the Americas. Burbano went to Colombia in June to observe the elections.

According to Colombian researcher Veronica Uribe-Kessler, 20 per cent of the richest Colombians get 55 per cent of the country's income, while 80 per cent of the people "scramble over the remainder," as Kessler puts it. This makes Colombia Latin America's second most unequal nation (after Brazil).

"Colombians barely have enough money to pay for food and cannot afford to spend more, and so the regressive tax proposal sparked a major rebellion against the Duque regime," says Ramirez.

On April 28, 2021, Colombia exploded into a national strike that enveloped 600 cities and went on for several months, a stunning level of protest not seen in 50 years. The uprising was led by unemployed youth and forced Duque to retract the tax increase – but only after Colombian security forces had killed 45 protestors and "disappeared" 405 others. The violence only increased public anger at the government.

"Many young people in Colombia do not have opportunities to study in universities because they cannot afford the expensive privatized education system," says Ramirez. He adds that there are no jobs for them. "They don't even have access to the Internet because they are too poor to pay for this."

Unemployment in Colombia stands at 15 per cent, according to official figures, but for youth it is close to 24 per cent. More than 63 per cent of the workforce is consigned to the informal sector and only 15 per cent of those earn even the minimum wage.

Ramirez emphasizes that the 2021 national strike led directly to the victory of leftist politician Gustavo Petro and his Afro-Colombian running mate, environmentalist, lawyer and social activist, Francia Márquez, in the June 2022 national elections. This sea change in Colombian politics reflected public determination to address poverty, inequality, unemployment, official corruption and state repression.

Transparency International ranked Colombia at number 87 out of 180 countries on its Corruption Perception Index for 2021. U.S. News declared Colombia the world's second most corrupt country for 2021. The Borgen Project, a U.S.-based anti-poverty NGO, points out that "corruption exists at every level of government" in the country. And there isn't much recourse to deal with it because the judiciary, police and military are also corrupt and, as a result, crime in Colombia has become "normalized."

In terms of official repression, Colombia has long had the worst human rights record in Latin America, with state-linked paramilitary death squads murdering thousands of people a year. This figure has recently come down to about

400 per year, which still makes Colombia the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists and human rights and environmental activists.

A lot of the violence stems from efforts to maintain the skewed distribution of income in favour of the rich. But, in contrast to Duque, the new leftist government intends to tax the wealthy, Colombia's 4,000 richest families. As Burbano explains, "Through a progressive tax reform, Petro expects to raise \$10.9 billion annually with which he plans to pay for pension, health care and education reforms." Petro also proposes free higher education, agricultural reforms and giving women heads of families a salary.

"Land reform is another key priority," says Burbano. "Decades of conflict and government corruption have resulted in Colombia having one of the most unequal land distribution[s] in Latin America. Land redistribution also means recognition of land rights of Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants."

Three per cent of Colombians own over 70 per cent of arable land and this concentration has long been a major source of poverty.

Although Petro and Márquez's economic reforms appear modest, one policy stands out as fairly radical: the pair's determination to wean Colombia off dependence on oil and other mineral exports and put it on the path to a green transition. To this end, Petro has instituted a ban on unconventional oil fields, offshore drilling and fracking, and has stopped new licences for oil exploration.

The new government is also hostile to mining, with Márquez being well-known for her anti-mining activism. Oil and mining are the main official export revenue earners for Colombia (joined by cocaine as the unofficial one), but both have brought massive violence and displacement to many communities all over the country and little benefit to most Colombians.

As Burbano explains, "Vice president-elect Francia Márquez is a human-rights and environmental activist. The new government's platform is centred on protecting the environment and climate justice. They have promised to gradually reduce Colombia's dependency on the extractive industry, and oil and coal in particular, replacing these with agriculture, tourism and clean energy.

"Canada is a global leader in mining and I think this will not sit well with Ottawa as it will affect Canadian mining profits. In 2019, according to Natural Resources Canada, 23 Canadian mining companies held assets totaling \$1.38 billion in Colombia. In the past, Canada was a staunch ally of Colombia, turning a blind eye to the egregious human rights violations committed by the state. I suspect, going forward, Canadian foreign policy towards Colombia will become much more hostile."

Francia Márquez has been key to the leftist victory in

Colombia, making possible the building of an amazingly diverse coalition called “Historical Pact” that includes the liberal, conservative and communist parties along with Afro-Colombians, Indigenous nations, the environmental movement, youth, students, parts of the urban middle class, farmers and 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

It was not Petro who joined the unemployed youth when they led the national strike against Duque, but Márquez who marched with them. Burbano points out that “Márquez has an incredible history of grass-roots struggle to protect the environment and for Afro-Colombian and Indigenous rights. Her position as Vice-President signals to the most marginalized in Colombia that things are finally changing. Her role will be key to ensuring the new government sticks to its promises as it negotiates priorities within the bureaucratic structures. The fear by many is that the government may cede too much space and power to liberal and conservative elements.”

Ramirez agrees on the significance of Márquez’s role: “She was able to bring into politics a lot of groups that had long been isolated and they proved to be a powerhouse. These groups included not only Afro-Colombians and the Indigenous but also women in general who were greatly encouraged to vote due to Francia and that made a big difference in the election.”

As Márquez herself put it in a 2021 interview, “People want change, in terms of justice, equity and to root out the logics and structures of coloniality, racism, patriarchy. Protests are not just a response to recent events but to the country’s systemic inequality. And that social upheaval led by the youth in 2021 – and in which I also took part – is also an example of that historical burnout.”

The left’s unprecedented triumph in Colombia comes as part of a second wave of progressive governments that are gaining power all over Latin America. The first wave took place from 2000 to 2015. There are now nine leftist governments in Latin America, including Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Honduras, Nicaragua and Cuba. Brazil is expected to elect a leftist government in October.

As Kyla Sankey, who teaches in the School of Business and Management at Queen Mary University of London, points out in a recent article, “By the end of the year, for the first time in its history, Latin America’s six largest economies – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru – should all be under left-wing rule of one kind or another.”

Sankey believes that “Latin America’s second wave of left-wing governments could be more powerful than the first” (the title of her article in Jacobin magazine), especially given the greater opportunities this time for leftist governments to build alliances with environmental and social movements.

Ramirez agrees, adding that the United States, traditionally the major imperialist power in Latin America and the violent remover of leftist governments, is in a much weaker position today than it was 15 years ago. Now China holds more sway in South America.

“So many leftist governments will make possible the advance of regional integration in Latin America,” Ramirez says, “which will make the implementation of a green agenda easier across borders. Closer co-operation between Latin America, China and other countries internationally will help displace the U.S.-dominated world order that has impoverished and killed millions of people.”

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<https://english.10mehr.com/?p=2125>

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