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Zionism International is Working Both Sides of the Atlantic



Photograph by Nathaniel St. Clair

In the Gaza genocide, now expanded to the West Bank, the US and UK have not only provided the main weapons of physical annihilation, they are also collaborating with their junior partner Israel in the war of public disinformation and deception. By now, it has become obvious to most observers in the US and UK that the provision of advanced weapons to the apartheid state, including thousands of American 2000-pound bunker-buster bombs, precision-guided air-to-ground hellfire missiles, and assorted other instruments of mass destruction, is part of an effort to wipe out the Palestinian civilian population through death and eventual deportation. Britain's military corporation BAE provides Israel with parts of the F-35 fighter jets along with "systems for naval drones, missile guidance and components in fighter jets used against Palestinians in Gaza" (Lee-Doktor 2024).

Both governments are widely out of touch with their constituents. By May 2024, a Data for Progress poll indicated that 70% of likely voters, including 83% of Democrats, favored a permanent ceasefire and de-escalation of violence in Gaza. A similar YouGov poll found that 56% of Britons favored cutting arms shipments to Israel and an immediate ceasefire (66%). Despite these findings, neither of the leading political parties in the US nor the UK have taken any serious action to end human slaughter in Palestine (Data for Progress 2024; Smith 2024).

Zionism International's Anglo-American Alliance

What explains the contemporary political alignments of the US and British governments with Israel, which has become a pariah state in most of the rest of the world? The first thing to look at is the role of the political class and how their foreign policy in the Middle East (West Asia) has been designed to bring about the horrific situation in Gaza. The genocide is organized on the ground by Israeli military and state politicians and technocrats but that is possible only through its relationship to the larger goals of the sponsoring powers that work together toward shared hegemonic objectives in the region.

That the Israel lobby, also called Zionist lobby, plays a central role in enabling Israeli and very wealthy Jewish interests in the US and UK to instruct Anglo-American policy in Palestine, if not broader reaches of the region, is now indisputable. Mearsheimer and Walt (2008) lifted the veil on the Israel lobby in American politics at a time when few academics or journalists dared to explore the subject. Joined by the Anti-Defamation League, Christians United for Israel, and other constituent groups in the Israel lobby, an emboldened AIPAC has waged a money war on any politician not fully behind the US-Israel strategic alliance.

In mid-June 2024, an AIPAC-partnered super political action committee had spent \$14.5 million to unseat Jamaal Bowman, a Democratic two-term incumbent congressman in New York's 16th congressional district. Bowman had risked defeat by daring to criticize Israel's genocide in Gaza and called upon the US government to cut military aid to that country. AIPAC and associated Zionist groups are also among the largest contributors to favored political candidates, for the White House down to state legislative races, who can be relied upon as influencers and shields in the service of Israel's agenda.

In New York, AIPAC and allied organizations spent their money by "filling television screens, stuffing mailboxes and clogging phone lines with caustic attacks," causing Bowman to lose the party primary to a pro-Israel Democrat. It was the largest funding pool any interest group had ever spent on a political race and was one of several where AIPAC sought to unseat legislators deemed unfriendly to Israel. Cori Bush, another progressive Democratic

incumbent, was also unseated in the primary for Missouri's 1st congressional district with the aid of AIPAC's major financial contribution to her rival.

AIPAC and its financial arm, the United Democracy Project (UDP), have a dual character, not only lobbying for Israel but also in defeating left-wing candidates who oppose both Israeli apartheid and overweening corporate power in American politics (Marcetic 2024). The linkage is important to recognize, as the apartheid system and its backers are directed against both Palestinians and the American working class and workers of all nations (Fandos 2024). One analysis of AIPAC found that the lobby's "electoral efforts are largely in line with the interests of Wall Street and other corporate actors — the same interests that have, for years, fought to maintain a status quo of free market fundamentalism" (Marcetic 2024).

By March 2024, AIPAC, its super PAC, the UDP, and allied groups had already spent \$30 million during the 2024 election cycle to unseat progressives who took a stand against Israel. The amount spent by the Israel lobby for the full 2023-2024 election cycle was expected to reach \$100 million. "AIPAC has become a fundraising juggernaut in recent years, raising more money for candidates than any similar organization this cycle" (Piper & Fuchs 2024). It is clear that the Zionist lobby has Kamala Harris under its supervision, as she has been listless in responding to the ongoing US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza and mass murders and terrorism in the West Bank.

Where does AIPAC get its money? Created in 2020-2021 and designated as a 501(c)4 social welfare organization, AIPAC, like other super PACs, is not required to disclose its contributors. This lobbying powerhouse prefers to keep such information under wraps. But according to a Jewish newspaper, *The Forward*, in 2023 its biggest funders included owners of pro sports teams, "heads of private equity firms; real estate titans; a Maryland congressman... the former CEO of Victoria's Secret; the co-founder of the dance-exercise company Zumba; and the creator of Squishmallows," a popular children's toy (Barshad 2024).

As Bernie Sanders has pointed out, AIPAC is funded by corporations that are happy to support the defeat of progressive members of Congress who tend to stand up for both Palestinian rights and worker rights in America. Almost 60% of AIPAC's money comes from corporate CEOs and other top executives from Fortune 500 companies. The largest single donor to the United Democracy Project is Jan Koum, the multibillionaire former CEO of WhatsApp and a regular Republican funder. The biggest institutional contributors to UDP come from FIRE, finance/insurance and real estate sectors (Marcetic 2024)

AIPAC is cited for developing the strategy of targeting candidates in *both* parties, a practice that corporate funders can be expected to copy in the coming years (Marcetic 2024). In money-take-all politics, this makes sense inasmuch as there is no real difference in the two parties' position on Israel and other major foreign and domestic policy areas. Harris's message, no less than Trump's, is more military, more wars, more neoliberal capitalism, more fracking. Without a radical shift, what little separation exists between the parties will likely be extinguished in the years ahead, giving way to a final bacchanalian orgy of destruction of the planet and its people.

Neoliberal ideology, which has fetishized market fundamentalism, has encouraged the breakdown of moral and ethical social standards, destroyed any sense of a public realm, and has worked hand in hand with the neoconservative foreign policy agenda. This is true on both sides of the Atlantic. Similar to the US though on a smaller scale, Britain, going back to the Balfour declaration, has long allied with the Zionist cause, which in recent years has wielded great influence on the country through its lobby's access to ministers, party donations, partnerships with British capital, and successful repression of progressive public opinion about Israel.

Zionism International's Political Front

As opposition leader, Keir Starmer purged Labour's ranks of MPs critical of Israel, taking cues from the lobby and marginalizing such critics as "anti-semites." Starmer himself declared a few months before taking over the leadership of Labour, "I support Zionism without qualification" (Mendel 2020). More recently interviewed on Britain's LBC radio, he stated that Israel has the right of siege in Gaza, including its cutting off of water and power (McShane 2023), an endorsement of genocide.

Since becoming prime minister in 2024, Starmer has put into operation the next phase of his pro-Zionist policy by arresting British critics of Israel through the employment of the draconian "Terrorism Act 2000, Section 12," originally enacted under the Tony Blair government. The act covers a range of offences, including anti-Israel materials posted online. A journalist and pro-Palestinian activist, Sarah Wilkinson was arrested under the act in August 2024 after a raid on her house by 12 police who confiscated all her electronic devices (Wilkins 2024). She was threatened with a long prison sentence for posting online remarks about the "incredible" way that Hamas was able to launch its assault on 7 October.

The same month, an independent British foreign affairs journalist Richard Medhurst, who is also sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, was arrested at Heathrow Airport and charged under the act, which bans any writing regarded as favorable to proscribed organizations, such

as Hamas. There is no conceivable application of this law to Jews or Israelis living in Britain who express a horrifying approval of terrorism, murder, and torture employed by the IDF against Palestinian civilians (Cook 2024).

Israel exercises direct power lines to British electoral politics and Parliament through such groups as Labour Friends of Israel (LFI) and Conservative Friends of Israel (CFI), both of which actively lobby for the Jewish state. For the Tories, upon election to Parliament, an MP almost automatically becomes a member of CFI. Conservative cabinet members have come to expect regular donations from the lobby, which has amounted to hundreds of thousands of pounds given to at least one-third of all current sitting members of the party. Large numbers of Labour MPs have also been feeding at the trough. Twenty percent of Labour's sitting MPs have been funded by pro-Israel groups or individuals – including 15 who have been directly funded by the Israeli state ((Oborne 2009; McEvoy, 2024a and 2024b).

A 2017 *Al Jazeera* documentary, “The Lobby,” exposed the fact that the Israeli government, working through its embassy in London, has had a direct hand in managing the various friends of Israel groups, including its multiple city branches. It also revealed that the Union of Jewish Students in the UK, which receives money from the Israeli Embassy, sends student delegations to Israel for propaganda immersion. Prior to the 2024 general election, 15 new MP candidates took funding from the LFI and CFI (McEvoy 2024d).

The twelve winning Labour candidates and three Conservatives were quick to accept the handout, a *quid pro quo* for their showing solidarity with Israeli and genocide policies. Pro-Israel organizations gave the Tories over £430,000 in donations or hospitality gifts, including 187 trips to Israel (McEvoy 2024b and 2024d). US elections and in a parallel fashion, though on a smaller scale, those in Britain are open doors for contributions from wealthy individuals and corporate elites, and the Zionist lobby has front-row seats in exploiting these opportunities to block Anglo-American politicians from invoking human rights standards on the apartheid state.

As the documentary also disclosed, Israel's main propaganda unit, the Ministry of Strategic Affairs, regularly funnels talking points to British MPs to get them to serve as spokespersons for Israeli interests, such as during Prime Minister's Question Time. AIPAC is also channeling money to universities in Britain in support of the propaganda efforts organized by the campus-based think tank Pinsker Centre (named after a late 19th century Zionist). The Centre's role is to construct a narrative of Jewish student victimhood that avoids even a word of condolence for Palestinian students whose relatives are being starved and slaughtered by Israeli Jews. Beyond the campuses, AIPAC seeks to create a stronghold in Parliament similar

to the power it wields in Congress. “The Lobby” also exposed plots in the Israeli Embassy in London to take down public officials seen as critical of the apartheid policy or insufficiently pro-Zionist.

Israel and its modern-day political Maccabees have made their mark. Members of Labour Friends of Israel have employed the “anti-semitic” card to suppress opposition. It succeeded quite well in purging Labour of pro-Palestinian MPs and party members, particularly during Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership period (2015-2020). The “anti-semitic” tag is equivalent to the use of “heretic” during the Spanish Inquisition. Though contemporary heretics may not be burned at the stake, they are likely to lose their party membership, their jobs, or their student status. The militant attitude of LFI incites fear and intimidation among those concerned about social justice.

Stuart Roden, hedge fund manager and chairman of the Israeli venture capital firm Hetz Ventures, based in Tel Aviv, “has given the Labour party over half a million pounds ahead of the UK’s [2024] general election,” part of the £1m he’s donated to Labour since 2023. Roden is also the principal funder of a Zionist educational program, “I-gnite,” which teaches British children that “the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) are acting proportionately in Gaza” (McEvoy 2024c). In October 2023, Roden was filmed confronting pro-Palestinian protesters. He was not charged with interfering with the speech rights or feelings of Palestinian Britons or others involved in the demonstration.

AIPAC is just the newest of a number of pro-Israel influencers. These include the Jewish Leadership Council, the Zionist Federation, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, all elitist organizations amongst the 285,000 Jewish population in Britain. It was under Tony Blair, a member of Labour Friends of Israel, that the Israel lobby began to seriously make political inroads in the government, according to a 2009 (UK) Channel 4 investigative news program, *Dispatches*. The report also revealed that a press “watchdog” group on behalf of Israel, “Honest Reporting,” regularly challenged the Israel coverage in *The Guardian* and BBC. The group is headquartered in Jerusalem with another branch in New York City.

Its managing editor at the time, Simon Plosker, had previously worked for the group, Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM), the British equivalent of AIPAC, and for the Israel army press office. Bicom acts as an opinion creator within the British public, largely by issuing press releases to the British media, funding trips to Israel for British journalists, and organizing talks at British universities. Funding sources for Bicom have major investments in the occupied West Bank (Osborne 2009).

Israel makes little distinction between facts and propaganda. After the 7 October uprising, Honest Reporting falsely claimed that Palestinian journalists knew about the assault beforehand, a lie that its executive director admitted to a day later (Højberg 2023). This very likely caused dozens of Palestinian reporters to be targeted and murdered by the IDF, especially after Netanyahu's spokespeople repeated the unproven allegation. Benny Gantz, a member of Netanyahu's war cabinet, tweeted "journalists found to have known about the massacre... are no different than terrorists and should be treated as such" (Darcy 2023; Shamir 2023). From 7 October 2023 to 24 August 2024, at least 116 Palestinian journalists and media workers have been killed by the IDF, according to the US-headquartered Committee to Protect Journalists.

Walling Off the Truth

Journalists in the US and UK have paid little attention to what is happening to their colleagues in Palestine. It is another indicator of the racial hierarchy by which western media assign the status of victimhood (see Sussman 2022). The state and mainstream media collaboration of the US and UK with the Israeli propaganda apparatuses and their operatives in Britain and America make a farce of the notion of "freedom of the press."

Censorship operates in both countries *not primarily as repression* of the journalistic profession but at a deeper level of *omission* – a refusal to even discuss or analyze subjects outside the range of accepted hegemonic discourse. AIPAC and many trans-Atlantic journalists should properly be registered as foreign agents of West Jerusalem. With British and American reporters acting as stenographers and PA disseminators official lies, it is independent journalists, and there are many, whom seekers of honest journalism have come to rely upon.

In the film "Zone of Interest," the family of the Nazi and SS commander Rudolf Höss blithely basks in the pleasures of an idyllic and beautifully landscaped home walled off from the Auschwitz concentration camp next door. Walling off what anti-systemic information reaches the public is a central function of the state. Outside the Gaza death camp, journalists in America and Britain casually spread lies about the situation and ignore the tragedies of Palestinians and the historical realities of Zionist apartheid and genocide while enjoying the perks of their own insulated zone of interest.

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