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The manufactured 'pogrom': Weaponizing chaos in Amsterdam

The western world and mainstream media have once again jumped on an opportunity to conflate anti-Zionism with antisemitism after Israeli football hooligans, protected by the Mossad, wreaked havoc on the streets of Amsterdam, deliberately provoking a harsh response.



Photo Credit: The Cradle

For the first time in living memory, mainstream media has risen to defend football hooliganism. On 6 November, Tel Aviv's traveling thugs arrived in Amsterdam, beginning their rampage by tearing down Palestinian solidarity flags, chanting racist slurs like "[Let the IDF win to f** the Arabs](#)," and attacking taxi drivers.

By the night of 7 November, as their team faced Ajax, their provocations escalated into a full-blown spectacle of chaos, spilling into the city both before and after the match. Yet, in an extraordinary twist, the provocateurs who left a trail of havoc were transformed into victims. Imagine a rowdy guest smashing bottles at the bar, getting shoved out the door, and then calling the police to report being assaulted. That's the level of irony we're witnessing here — a tale as inflated as it is easily debunked.

The mainstream narrative, amplified by Israeli outlets, would have you believe Amsterdam had hosted a premeditated attack on Jews — a "pogrom" so harrowing that emergency evacuation flights were required to whisk the supposed targets to safety.

Dutch right-wing politicians and media wasted no time in seizing the moment, re-framing the incident to suit their agendas.

This investigation will unravel how the night's events were weaponized — not only to conflate anti-Zionism with antisemitism, but to stoke fears of Islamic communities in Europe.

Beneath the headlines lies a more complex story: hooligan provocation, citizen frustration, and the calculated exploitation of crisis for political gain.

The timeline goes as follows:

6 November: The arrival of chaos

The chaos in Amsterdam began on 6 November, with the surreal sight of a state dispatching its premier intelligence agency to act as bodyguards for a fanbase notorious for racist chants and violent behavior. [Mossad agents](#), ostensibly sent to ensure "security," arrived alongside the first wave of Tel Aviv's traveling hooligans.

Far from embodying the spirit of sportsmanship, these provocateurs wasted no time stirring tensions, tearing down [Palestinian solidarity banners](#), and setting the stage for the disorder that would engulf the city in the days to come.

Provocations begin: Palestinian solidarity banners, displayed by local residents in support of Gaza, became their first targets. These banners were torn down with an air of impunity, an act of symbolic violence that set the stage for further unrest.

Clashes with taxi drivers: The provocations didn't stop there. Clashes erupted with local taxi drivers after one hooligan reportedly destroyed a cab, leading to physical altercations.

These incidents, now [confirmed](#) by Amsterdam Police, hinted at the unrest to come but received little attention from authorities, who appeared unprepared to manage the growing tension.

Hooligans take refuge in Holland Casino: The cab drivers' pursuit forced the hooligans into retreat. Desperate and outmatched, the same provocateurs who had flaunted their arrogance earlier now gambled for their safety, [seeking refuge in the Holland Casino](#). Cornered and with no cards left to play, they dialed the police for assistance — a stunning reversal for a group that had spent the evening rolling the dice on chaos and provocation.

7 November: Match day chaos

Hateful Chants and disrespect for remembrance: Hours before the Europa League match between Ajax and Maccabi Tel Aviv, the streets of Amsterdam were filled with the hateful echoes of the hooligans' chants. Phrases like “Death to Arabs” and “There are no schools in Gaza because there are no children left” pierced the air, turning the city into a stage for their aggressive rhetoric.

Inside the stadium, during a one-minute silence to honor victims of a recent flood in Valencia, they [disrupted the moment](#) with loud hollering and shouting, mocking the solemnity of the occasion and further enraging locals.

Post-Match vigilantism: After the game, simmering tensions erupted into confrontations as local citizens, frustrated by both the hooligans' provocations and the ongoing genocide in Gaza, took matters into their own hands.

Near Central Station, Tel Aviv hooligans were seen in large groups, pulling metal poles from the ground to use as weapons while moving toward the city center—a hub for cab drivers, many of whom are of Moroccan descent. Groups of Amsterdam residents began hunting down the Tel Aviv hooligans, delivering harsh beatings to some and publicly confronting others.

Videos circulating on social media captured these acts of vigilantism, including one where a hooligan was thrown into an Amsterdam canal and forced to chant “Free Palestine.” In another, locals were seen shouting at the beaten hooligans, condemning them with comments referencing the atrocities in Gaza, such as, “You attack women and children, but now you face us.”

The situation begged the question: How could an Israeli team like Maccabi Tel Aviv, with its fanbase notorious for racism and violence, be allowed to compete in UEFA tournaments, especially while Israel stands accused by the ICC of complicity in genocide? This stark contrast becomes even more glaring when compared to the treatment of

Russian teams, which have been banned from international competitions and even excluded from the Olympics due to geopolitical conflicts. Yet, Israel's ongoing occupation and alleged war crimes seemingly do not warrant the same level of accountability, exposing a glaring double standard in the realm of global sports governance.

8 November: Manufacturing a pogrom

Mainstream Dutch media, amplified by Israeli and Western outlets, rapidly reframed the events as a “pogrom” targeting Jews, erasing the context of hooligan provocations that had sparked the clashes. Reports sensationalized the violence, describing it as premeditated antisemitic attacks. In an almost farcical twist, some claimed emergency evacuation flights were arranged to rescue the supposed victims, conjuring images of 19th-century Russia with mass murders and burning villages.

The exaggerated narrative conveniently shifted the focus from the hooligans' provocations to a carefully constructed portrayal of victimhood.

Political opportunism: Dutch right-wing politicians wasted no time amplifying the narrative, with Geert Wilders leading the charge like a conductor orchestrating a symphony of outrage, his notes echoing through media channels.

After his call with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, Wilders condemned the events as shameful antisemitism and vowed to protect Dutch Jews. At his side, Dilan Yesilgöz, like a dutiful first violinist, harmonized his message, amplifying the framing of a nation under siege by intolerance. Even King Willem-Alexander joined the chorus, expressing his and Queen Máxima's shock at the “violence against Israeli guests” and warning against the dangers of ignoring antisemitism, invoking historical parallels to past atrocities.

Together, their voices turned a night of chaos into a carefully crafted crescendo of victimhood, obscuring the provocations that had sparked the backlash.

By the end of November 8, the story was no longer about hooligan aggression but had been rewritten to serve political and media agendas, shifting attention from the truth to a spectacle of moral outrage.

Conflating Anti-Zionism with Antisemitism: The role of Dutch politicians and lobby groups

The Amsterdam incidents became fertile ground for Dutch politicians and media to conflate anti-Zionism with antisemitism, reframing legitimate outrage over Israeli policies into a broader narrative of victimhood and fear-mongering.

At the forefront of this narrative were two prominent figures: Geert Wilders, leader of the far-right Party for Freedom (PVV) and a vocal advocate for Israeli ultranationalist

interests, and Dilan Yeşilgöz, the newly anointed face of the Dutch liberal party VVD and a key figure in the current coalition government.

Wilders, known for his polarizing rhetoric and staunch pro-Israel stance, has long positioned himself as a defender of "Western values" against what he portrays as the dual threats of Islam and criticism of Israel.

Dilan Yeşilgöz: The groomed voice of Hasbara

Once the Minister of Justice, [Yeşilgöz](#) is now a prominent figure in the Dutch government, having run for prime minister as the VVD leader. Her rise to prominence has been accompanied by her unflinching alignment with Israeli narratives, a relationship solidified during a 2019 CIDI-sponsored "study trip" to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Critics have labeled such trips as "grooming missions," designed to provide politicians with a one-sided view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, effectively embedding pro-Israel bias into their policymaking.

The controversy surrounding Yeşilgöz's trip deepened when it was revealed that portions of her travel costs were covered by restitution funds meant for the Dutch Jewish community — funds intended to compensate for losses during the Holocaust.

Her participation in the trip and subsequent actions, such as labeling consumer boycotts of Israeli settlement products as antisemitic, underscore how she has become a key player in advancing the agenda of CIDI, often described as the Dutch counterpart to [AIPAC](#).

Geert Wilders: Israel's loyal advocate

[Geert Wilders](#), leader of the Dutch far-right Party for Freedom (PVV), has long-standing ties to Israel, having visited the country over 40 times. His connections include relationships with prominent Israeli figures such as Amos Gilad and Zeev Boker.

Amos Gilad is a retired Major General in the Israel Defense Forces and has served as the director of policy and political-military affairs at the Israeli Ministry of Defense. Zeev Boker is a seasoned Israeli diplomat who has held positions including ambassador to Ireland and Slovakia. These associations underscore Wilders' alignment with Israeli ultranationalist politics.

Wilders' rhetoric often mirrors far-right Israeli talking points, notably his assertion that "Jordan is the only Palestinian state." He consistently conflates anti-Zionist criticism with antisemitism. Following the Amsterdam incidents, Wilders amplified the "pogrom" narrative and made a symbolic appearance at Schiphol Airport to meet with Israeli officials, reinforcing his unwavering allegiance.

This act, while largely performative, highlighted the deep intertwining of Wilders' political brand with Israeli interests, raising questions about the influence of foreign powers on domestic politics.

Adding to his connections, Wilders spent time living on a kibbutz in Israel during his youth, further cementing his personal and ideological ties to the country. In response to Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema's condemnation of the violence against Israelis — where she stated, "That this happened in Amsterdam is unbearable and unacceptable" — Wilders called for her [resignation](#), accusing her of failing to maintain public order.

De Telegraaf: The amplifier of Zionist narratives

A crucial player in spreading this narrative was De Telegraaf, the largest newspaper in the Netherlands and a stalwart of tabloid-style journalism.

Often compared to fast food for its sensationalism and lack of depth, De Telegraaf has a [legacy](#) that continues to haunt it. During World War II, it was the only major Dutch newspaper to remain operational under Nazi oversight, eventually serving as a mouthpiece for SS propaganda.

Although heavily sanctioned after the war, the stain of its wartime collaboration has earned it the enduring moniker of a foute krant (wrong newspaper).

True to form, De Telegraaf threw itself behind the far-right narrative surrounding the Amsterdam incidents.

Its pages framed the events as a premeditated antisemitic attack while deftly sidestepping the provocations of Tel Aviv's hooligans. The paper's editorial line seemed tailor-made to echo the agenda of [CIDI](#), the pro-Israel lobbying group in the Netherlands, which has long blurred the lines between criticism of Israeli policy and outright antisemitism.

But the real spectacle lies in De Telegraaf's editorial arsenal — a coterie of columnists and writers who labor tirelessly to push back the genie that alternative media has unleashed. This genie — the unsanitized truths of the occupation of Palestine, the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and the international outcry over Israeli policies — is what De Telegraaf seeks to shove back into the bottle with every op-ed and headline.

Maccabi Tel Aviv: A club steeped in racism and aggression

The events in Amsterdam were not an isolated display of hooliganism but part of a larger pattern tied to the culture surrounding Maccabi Tel Aviv. Known for its aggressive and [racist fan base](#), the club has long been associated with some of the [worst examples](#) of bigotry in Israeli football.

The New Israel Fund's initiative, "Let's Kick Racism and Violence Out of Israeli Soccer," reported that Maccabi Tel Aviv fans were responsible for 65 incidents of racist chanting during the 2022-2023 season alone.

These included slurs such as "monkey" directed at Black players and "death to Arabs," chants that have become disturbingly normalized in the club's culture. Despite laws intended to curb such behavior, enforcement has been weak, leaving this toxic environment to flourish.

This hostility is not limited to opposing teams. In a well-documented incident in August 2014, Maccabi supporters turned on their own Arab-Israeli midfielder, Maharan Radi, verbally assaulting him during training sessions and matches. Fans even stormed the pitch to hurl slurs at Radi, an act that led to arrests but highlighted the entrenched racism within the club's ranks.

While authorities pledged zero tolerance for such behavior, it remains a defining characteristic of Maccabi Tel Aviv's fan base — a reflection of deeper societal fractures.

As the dust settles, Geert Wilders demands a parliamentary debate, pressing the question: will Mayor Femke Halsema resign under mounting pressure?

Meanwhile, [tributes pour in](#) for the locals and cab drivers who stood their ground, defending the city against the hooliganism protected by Mossad agents and standing firm against Israeli provocations.

Beyond Amsterdam, Israel has eagerly embraced this event as an opportunity to bind a divided nation. By framing the Amsterdam incidents as part of a global wave of antisemitism, Israel amplifies its siege mentality, rallying citizens under the banner of existential threat while deflecting attention from the atrocities in Gaza.

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