

The Israeli Lobby

Mearsheimer and Walt argued that neither strategic interests nor moral rationale can fully explain U.S. support for Israel, and turn their attention to the “Israel lobby”, which they describe as an impressive array of organizations whose agendas include working to benefit Israel, in many cases by influencing U.S. foreign policy

Groups advocating the setting up of a Jewish state had first begun popping up around the United States in the 1880s. By the early 1900s, and for decades after, the large majority of Jewish Americans were not Zionists, and many still actively opposed it. In the coming years however, Zionists were successful in influencing American politicians, the media, and much of the general public

In 1978, Israeli professor Dr Sarah Schmidt first reported on the existence of a secret society founded in 1914 called the Parushim, that covertly pushed Zionism in the US and internationally. She noted that “the Image that emerges is that of a secret underground Guerrilla Force determined to influence the course of events in a quiet, anonymous way. Weir p. 11

The immediate precursor to today’s pro-Israel lobby began in 1939 under the leadership of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, who founded the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC), which by 1943 had acquired a budget of half a million dollars. With its funding, AZEC embarked on a campaign to target every sector of American society, ordering that local committees be set up in every Jewish community in the nation to capture the support of Congressmen, clergy, editors, professors, business and labor

The lobby’s size, wealth, and influence grew substantially after the Six Day War in June 1967. As American foreign aid to Israel began to exceed private contributions, some pro-Israel organizations increasingly focused on political activities intended to preserve or increase U.S. governmental support. This increased effort reflected awareness that backing Israel was costly for the United States and therefore had to be justified and defended in the political sphere.

Today’s unanimity towards support of a Palestinian homeland for Jews was only created after years of strenuous and sometimes secretive efforts to overcome the objections of anti-Zionist Jewish individuals and organizations.

Council on Foreign Relations

In detailing the Israeli lobby, Mearsheimer and Walt focus on the better known elements of this complex, including organizations such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations (CPMAJO); the Washington Institute for Near East Policy; the Anti-Defamation League (ADL); the Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA); the Middle East Forum; the Zionist Organization of America; and Christians United for Israel.

One key, but often ignored, source has been the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the think tank of monopoly-finance capital, also known as Wall Street’s think tank.

As a think tank and policy center, it is the most important U.S. locus of the deep state exerting influence behind the scenes. In the United States, it mainly focuses on directing the federal

government but has power in many areas of life in the United States, such as elite universities, finance capitalist firms, other think tanks, nonprofits, Congress, top corporations, and the mainstream media. While some of its activities are semi-secret, for members only, much of what it does can be revealed by perusing its website; reading its journal, *Foreign Affairs*; examining its annual reports; and following the activities of its members and leaders.

Over recent years especially, the CFR has developed a close relationship to the Zionist state of Israel and has influenced the formulation of U.S. foreign policy to reflect this. In effect, the CFR has been and remains part of what has come to be known as the “Israel lobby” in U.S. political life.

It is important to note that Mearsheimer and Walt do not identify the CFR as part of the Israel lobby, when it is, in fact a central player.

An examination of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy finds that it is also quite close to the CFR. Robert Satloff, its executive director, is a longtime member of CFR. As of 2018, fourteen of the seventeen-person board of advisors (sixteen men and one woman) were CFR members. Three of these (Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, and James Stavridis) were former directors of the Council, and at least two others (Condoleezza Rice and Michael Mandelbaum) served as staff members there.

The Middle East Forum was founded and is still headed by longtime CFR member Daniel Pipes, who is currently president of the organization. *The Israel Lobby* reported that in 2002, Pipes established a “Campus Watch” to encourage students to report on and intimidate individuals at any university or college who could be considered hostile to Israel.

Not only is the CFR part of the Israel lobby, but Zionist Israel also has its own Israeli CFR exactly patterned on and cooperating with its U.S. counterpart, even publishing a journal called the *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*. The Israel Council on Foreign Relations was founded in 1989 by David Kimche, formerly Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ambassador-at-large, and deputy director of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency. “Based on models of the New York Council on Foreign Relations and British Chatham House,” Wikipedia states with respect to the Israeli CFR, “the Council is not affiliated with governmental or academic institutions.... Participants come from a wide cross-section of the most influential spheres of Israeli society.” The Israeli CFR operates under the auspices of the World Jewish Congress, the president of which (since 2007) is billionaire Ronald S. Lauder. Lauder and his family members are longtime members and major contributors to the U.S. CFR. Lauder is a vocal supporter of Israel’s ultraconservative Likud party and has close ties to Benjamin Netanyahu, its right-wing leader.

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<https://monthlyreview.org/articles/the-council-on-foreign-relations-the-israel-lobby-and-the-war-on-gaza/>

There are key connections between the CFR and AIPAC. *The Israel Lobby* describes how AIPAC was transformed from a relatively weak, low-budget operation into a large and powerful one after 1975. Much of this transformation took place under the leadership of Thomas A. Dine, executive director of AIPAC from 1980–93. Dine was at the time a member of the CFR and remains a member today. AIPAC raises a lot of money to maximize its influence, including funding candidates to run against progressives who are critical of Israel.

The ongoing war on Gaza has stimulated vast fundraising by AIPAC to try to counter the negative publicity coming from reporting on the mass slaughter of Palestinian civilians by the Israeli army. One report indicates that \$90 million has been raised recently for lobbying in the United States. A variety of wealthy U.S. Americans have been tapped for this \$90 million, including a number of finance capitalists who are members of the CFR.

Academia

The lobby's campaign to mold debate about Israel has faced the greatest difficulty in academia. This effort has been going on for decades. In the early 1980s, for example, AIPAC recruited students to help it identify professors and campus organizations that might be considered anti-Israel. The findings were published in 1984 in *The AIPAC College Guide: Exposing the Anti-Israel Campaign on Campus*.

Criticism of Israel at colleges and universities became especially intense in the spring of 2002 (after 9/11) when the IDF reoccupied Palestinian-controlled areas in the West Bank and employed massive force against the Second Intifada.

The Israeli lobby moved aggressively to "takeback the campuses." New groups sprang up to squash criticism of Israel. A new organization—the Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC) —was formed to coordinate the twenty-six different groups that now sought to make Israel's case on campus.

Al-Jazeera film *The Lobby* (Great Britan)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzGHKb8i9vTzCgnbENCKuz7fqU12xNBce>

Al-Jazeera film *The Lobby* US (2018)

Israel's actions have been enabled by the pro-Israel lobby, which has operated in the US for many decades. In 2016 and 17, American journalist Clayton Swisher produced an investigative report about this lobby for the Al Jazeera news network. The report included footage obtained by British undercover reporter Tony Kleinfeld who infiltrated several pro-Israel organizations. When Israel partisans in the US learned of the film they successfully pressured Al Jazeera not to broadcast it. Eventually the documentary was leaked and it's explosive information became public. Despite the significance of its content, US media failed to tell Americans about it.

This documentary reveals an entire network of Israeli organizations, including Israel intelligence, with millions of dollars of Israeli technology (provided by U.S. funding), whose goal is to spy on students in U.S. colleges and universities, and pass this information on to the Israeli government.

Sima Vaknin-Gil: Director General of Israel's Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy: "We have three different sub campaigns: data Gathering, working on activist organization, money Trail." ... "This is something that only a country with its resources can do the best.

One Hour Version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZA6V7Fa5aw>

For a partial transcript:

https://www.seattle911visibilityproject.in/911VP_2025_update/AIPAC/LobbyUSClipsTrans.pdf

Episode 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ISjXhMUVKE>

Episode 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xytkl7afHcQ>

Episode 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlyY4hxDMvc>

Episode 4: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1OgxfCT044

Episodes 1-4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoHq6dBpxYU>

<https://archive.org/details/youtube-MnzRsfMqOql>

The notorious Canary Mission anti-Palestinian doxing website, used by the Israel government to target pro-Palestinian supporters, is exposed as being funded by major pro-Israel donors in the U.S.

<https://www.972mag.com/al-jazeera-film-us-israel-lobby/>

<https://www.thenation.com/article/world/canary-mission-israel-covert-operations/>

Efforts to protect Israel from criticism have also targeted individual speakers, visiting professors, and guest lecturers, in order to create an atmosphere where free expression and open debate are curtailed. Pro-Israel groups and individuals have fought a multifront battle— against students, professors, administrators, and the curriculum itself—to shape discourse on campus. The campaign to keep Americans from reading or hearing critical views about Israel even occurs at the high school level

As early as 2019, anyone running for congress was expected to fill out a form to determine a candidate's commitment to Israel. If the candidate was deemed supportive enough, AIPAC would go to great lengths to make sure the candidate was elected. Conversely, if the candidate was not deemed supportive enough, AIPAC would go to great lengths to make sure that candidate was not elected. AIPAC has usually prevailed.

(Al Jazeera The Lobby USA. Jim Moran: A member of Congress from 1991 to 2015.) See video/text

at documents/flashback videos/israely spies/jim moran

Jonathan Greenblatt, a Foreign Agent

The current CEO of the ADL, Jonathan Greenblatt, and its national director, Abraham Foxman, are both members of the CFR. In January 2020 Greenblatt submitted congressional testimony before the House Homeland Security Committee:

“Since 1913 the mission of ADL has been “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice And fair treatment to all.” ADL fights against antisemitism and bigotry in many ways, beginning with monitoring and exposing extremist groups, individuals, and movements who spread hate and commit acts of violence. Today, ADL is the foremost non-governmental authority on domestic terrorism, extremism, hate groups, and hate crimes.

ADL is also the country’s largest non-governmental provider of training for law enforcement on hate crimes, extremism and terrorism. The ADL provides law enforcement with information, expertise, and actionable intelligence to prevent, disrupt, and respond to those extremists who cross the line from espousing hateful ideologies to committing or inciting violent criminal acts thus protecting the Jewish people and all Americans <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/Testimony-Greenblatt.pdf>

On January 15, 2026, Greenblatt was hosted for an event at the Sinai Temple in Los Angeles. While a recording of the event was initially posted by the Sinai Temple, particular clips started going viral and the video was made private. The X account InfoLibNews captured a series of clips before this happened. In one of the clips, Greenblatt tells the audience the ADL is actively monitoring citizens’ speech and sharing information with the federal government:

“So, number one, we measure and track; number two, we monitor and disrupt. We have a whole apparatus. I have 40 analysts working full-time, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, monitoring extremists. We monitor them online, social media, messaging apps, video games, cryptocurrency, podcasts, short-form video, Wikipedia, LLMs.”

The groups monitored by the ADL include left-wing radicals like the DSA (Democratic Socialists of America), the “anti-war crazies” and the “pro-Palestine crazies,” in addition to extremists on the right, to include white supremacists, and armed militia groups. Greenblatt said they are also monitoring “political Islamists” and “Christian nationalists.” <https://cforc.com/2026/01/adls-jonathan-greenblatt-says-they-monitor-social-media-speech-24-7-share-info-with-intel-agencies/>

James Li exposed the authoritarian reality behind the ADL’s facade, moving from Jonathan Greenblatt’s admission of a 24/7 FBI-coordinated surveillance network to the infiltration of AI models and Evangelical curricula, ultimately revealing how the tax-exempt non-profit has morphed into a hostile intelligence apparatus prioritizing foreign interests over American civil liberties. Greenblatt said that the ADL is working with OpenAI, Alphabet (Google), Anthropic, Meta, Microsoft and more to influence large language models (LLMs) in AI to be pro-Israel. He also revealed that the ADL trains over 20,000 American police officers per year. <https://needtoknow.news/2026/01/anti-defamation-league-adl-chief-says-he-is-working-with-the-fbi-to-monitor-americans/>

Greenblat: ... we share the intelligence with the FBI. You saw last month... you heard about the thing that happened at Wilshire Boulevard Temple. our analysts investigated what happened they said they were Koreatown for Palestine. This good people, they weren't, we were able to ascertain they were from a group called the Turtle Island Liberation Front. Turtle Island is how like left wing activists refer to the United States. On Monday December the 15th, this is going to ring a bell, Kash Patel announced they cracked a terror ring where they arrested four people who were planning New Year's Eve bombings. Max Blumenthal:

Max Blumenthal: it's a confession that the ADL is a private arm of US federal law enforcement carrying out a kind of cointel pro operation, infiltrating left wing groups, much like J Edgar Hoover enacted to neutralize antiwar and socialist organizing and any anti-establishment activity during the 1960s and 70s, and taking credit for what by all accounts was a kind of phony manufactured plot by the FBI against a group that didn't actually exist, The Turtle Island Liberation Front.

The entire bust was based on a confidential informant that the FBI had planted among a small network of very goofy activists in LA. The confidential informant created the plot for these activists, took them out into the desert into like the Mojave Desert where the FBI then arrested them, and they were caught with materials that were said to be bomb making materials. Essentially the FBI created the plot as they always do, and the ADL is taking credit for that as Jonathan Greenblatt, a foreign agent.

Well he should be, as the ADL is representing Israel and when it trains officers they're training them by connecting them with Israeli security forces and by training them in Israeli tactics and by lobbying them on behalf of Israel. In the 1980s the ADL was caught infiltrating groups that were organizing against apartheid in South Africa, working with Israeli intelligence there. Their informant was a possible Israeli intelligence agent as well and they were attempting to destroy the lives of people for fighting the apartheid regime in South Africa. Now they're doing the same thing in order to defend the apartheid regime of Israel. It is one of the most malicious assaults on free speech in the US today. It's being carried out by private organization which is substantially if not totally funded by pro-Israel donors who are sympathetic to another country

<https://theintercept.com/2025/12/16/fbi-informant-turtle-island-terror-plot/> See also:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAQwFdDB36s&list=UUDkEYb-TXJVWLvOokshtlsw&index=50>

Soon after the start of the October 2023 Israeli Palestinian hostilities, a new more aggressive Israeli form of campus persuasion appeared. Numerous news articles have reported campus "doxxing trucks," displaying large LED screens with names and images of ivy league college and university faculty members and students who have been critical of U.S. support of Israel.

In an interview, James Bamford, noted for his writing on United States National Security Agency (NSA), noted that the Israel on Campus Coalition is really operating as a foreign agent, which is illegal under U.S. law.

He noted that he has a lot of contacts within the FBI, particularly at the agent level, And he talks to them all the time about it. And they just are very, very angry because they know this is going on, they try to build cases against these people and go to the Justice Department, but nothing ever happens.

In a December 2023 article for The Nation magazine, Bamford noted that “What is missing from Congress are hearings into the decades of illegal anti-Palestinian espionage, covert action, and blacklisting of Americans within the United States by the Israeli government and its domestic collaborators—actions far more serious and damaging than campus semantics.

The Israeli-American Council (IAC)

The Israeli-American Council (IAC) is an American nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve and strengthen the Israeli and Jewish identities of future generations, strengthen the American Jewish community, and strengthen the relationship between citizens of the United States and the State of Israel.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli-American_Council

Growing antipathy toward Israel has been predictably identified as a crisis in need of action, particularly among young people and Jewish people. “We as Jews need to realize we have a commitment to Eretz Yisrael,” declared Anti-Defamation League (ADL) CEO Jonathan Greenblatt. “We need to reaffirm our relationship to the state of Israel ... You cannot take the Zionism out of Judaism.”

Israeli-American Council co-founder Adam Milstein said that Israel supporters needed to gather “intelligence” on “antisemites” so that “we can attack.” He also singled out the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), of which NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani is a prominent member.

In her speech at the event, U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi ... also vowed to continue cracking down on Palestine activism at universities.

In an apparent attempt to reassert itself, the IAC has announced its unprecedented bid to compete in the World Jewish Congress (WJC) elections, marking the first time an Israeli-American organization seeks representation in Zionism's central democratic institution.

Perhaps the most interesting moment of the event occurred during an interview with Israeli-American billionaires Haim Saban and GOP megadonor Miriam Adelson. When asked how the duo was able to gain access and influence politicians, Saban pointed out that pro-Israel groups did not create campaign finance rules in the United States. “It’s a system that’s in place,” he explained. “It’s a legal system, and we just play within the system. That’s it.”

[Interestingly, Saban is outspoken in his criticism of Donald Trump, saying, among other things, that a Trump win would be ‘disastrous’ for Israel, calling him a ‘conman, liar, cheat and thief,’ and says he gave the Clinton campaign an ‘eight-figure’ donation.]

Adelson punted on the question. “I want to be truthful, and there are so many things that I don’t want

to talk about.” The crowd applauded in response.

The Shift: Israeli-American Council summit was the latest reflection of Israel's failing brand jan 22, 2026

<https://mondoweiss.net/2026/01/the-shift-israeli-american-council-summit-was-the-latest-reflection-of-israels-failing-brand/>

see also:

<https://forward.com/fast-forward/335180/haim-saban-calls-donald-trump-a-clown-and-dangerous-for-israel/>

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/billionaire-democrat-haim-saban-backs-trumps-removal-via-25th-amendment-133757882.html>

