

Israeli Government Promotes Rape Advocate and Nakba Denialist as Experts on Palestinians

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As Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) arrived in the United States for the UN General Assembly on Sunday, the Israeli government press office emailed journalists a list of supposed experts to contact on various issues related to his visit.

All those listed hail from the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Israel's Bar-Ilan University, a [hotbed of right wing nationalism](#) in Israeli academia.

Appearing twice on the Israeli government-approved list is Mordechai Kedar, a professor of Arabic literature at Bar-Ilan University who recently advocated for the Israeli army to [use rape as a tool of war](#).

Rape as deterrence

Speaking to an Israeli radio program following the discovery of the bodies of the [three Israeli teens abducted and shot to death](#) in the occupied West Bank in June, Kedar [said](#), "Terrorists like those who kidnapped the children and killed them — the only thing that deters them is if they know that their sister or their mother will be raped in the event that they are caught. What can you do, that's the culture in which we live."

He continued: "The only thing that deters a suicide bomber is the knowledge that if he pulls the trigger or blows himself up, his sister will be raped. That's all. That's the only thing that will bring him back home, in order to preserve his sister's honor."

"It sounds very bad, but that's the Middle East," he reasoned.

Kedar's recommendation appears to have been implemented in Gaza, where several Palestinian men who were kidnapped and imprisoned by the Israeli army during "Operation Protective Edge" told the [Al Mezan Center for Human Rights](#) that they were tortured and "intimidated with threats that Israel would demolish their houses, kill their families and [rape their wives](#)."

When a group of Israeli feminists protested Kedar's comments in a letter to Bar-Ilan University president Daniel Hershkowitz, the school responded by defending and whitewashing Kedar's rape advocacy with racist tropes about the region.

"Dr. Kedar's words do not, God forbid, contain a recommendation to commit such despicable acts," [insisted a Bar-Ilan University spokesperson](#) in a joint statement with Kedar. "The intention was to describe the culture of death of the terror organizations. Dr. Kedar was describing the bitter reality of the Middle East and the inability of a modern and liberal

law-abiding country to fight against the terror of suicide bombers.”

Witch hunts

While Kedar faced no repercussions for inciting sexual violence, his colleague at Bar-Ilan University, Hanoch Sheinman, was [disciplined](#) by the administration for sending an email to students expressing sympathy for all those affected by Israel’s assault on Gaza. Outraged by the implicit reminder of Gaza’s suffering, students and their families flooded the university with complaints, prompting the administration to issue an apology and admonishment of Sheinman.

Meanwhile, Kedar’s rape advocacy boosted his profile in the US, which he is scheduled to visit this winter for an academic speaking tour. He told *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that he received even more speaking invitations as a result of the outrage stirred by his comments, which he referred to as a “[witch hunt](#).”

Kedar knows a thing or two about witch hunts given his role as chairman of the Israel Academia Monitor organization, one of many McCarthyite groups dedicated to [purging](#) Israeli universities of academics who identify with the left or question Zionism.

This was not the only instance of Kedar showing enthusiasm for crimes against Palestinians.

Kedar’s fervent rejection of basic rights for Palestinian inspired him to devise the “[Eight State Solution](#),” a detailed proposal to split the occupied Palestinian territories into eight cantons, with the besieged and ghettoized Gaza Strip serving as a model. The end result would be apartheid on steroids. He even created a website exclusively devoted to the project, dubbed the [Palestinian Emirates](#).

“The central strategic goal of the state of Israel should be to permanently remain in Judea and Samaria and to prevent Palestinian territorial contiguity,” argues Kedar, using Israel’s terminology for the occupied West Bank.

In Kedar’s bigotry-clouded view, Palestinians (and Arabs more generally) are inferior beings predisposed to violence, militancy and tribalism, therefore any Palestinian state would quickly become a hotbed for terrorism.

Hannibal architect

Another “scholar” listed as an expert by the Israeli press office is Yaakov Amidror.

Amidror, who served as a National Security Advisor to Netanyahu and as head of Israel’s National Security Council, is a [co-architect](#) of the [Hannibal Directive](#), an unwritten Israeli military protocol that amounts to an order to kill captured Israeli soldiers to avoid politically painful prisoner swaps.

Amidror with his fellow military leaders Yossi Peled and Gabi Ashkenazi [drew up](#) the Hannibal Directive in 1986 following the capture of two Israeli soldiers by [Hizballah](#) in then Israeli-occupied Southern Lebanon in the aftermath of a deal in which three Israeli soldiers were swapped for 1,150 Israeli-held Arab prisoners.

The Hannibal Directive was reportedly implemented on at least three occasions during

Israel's latest assault on Gaza. [Givati brigade](#) commander [Ofer Winter](#), an ultranationalist religious Zionist who [told his troops they were fighting a Jewish holy war](#), oversaw the most gruesome episode in [Rafah](#), where his [implementation of the Hannibal Directive](#) resulted in massive and indiscriminate shelling that killed 190 Palestinians, including 55 children, in less than two days.

In the aftermath of the Rafah slaughter, Amidror denied that the intention of the Hannibal Directive is to execute the captured soldier, though he admitted to *The Times of Israel* that, "[Soldiers \[lives\] can be risked](#)," adding that taking care to avoid civilian casualties in the event of an abduction is appropriate only if "you want to help the enemy."

Nakba denialist

Efraim Karsh — cited in the Israeli government press office email for his expertise in "Middle Eastern history and politics, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, superpower involvement in the Middle East, and Islamic movements," — is a card-carrying Islamophobe and [close associate](#) of anti-Muslim demagogue [Daniel Pipes](#).

Karsh has made a career out of [Nakba denialism](#), [insisting](#) that Palestinians left present-day Israel in 1948 because their own leaders forced them out.

The Nakba, or catastrophe, refers to the pre-meditated and well-documented ethnic cleansing of 750,000 indigenous Palestinians by Zionist militias in 1947-48. Karsh has devoted [entire books](#) to absolving Israel of responsibility for this atrocity.

It is no wonder the Israeli government champions him as an expert on the region.

Rania Khalek is an independent journalist reporting on the underclass and marginalized. For more of her work check out her website [Dispatches from the Underclass](#) and follow her on Twitter [@RaniaKhalek](#).

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