

Let's Compare China's 'Agents' in Canada to Israel's

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What would happen if the media and intelligence agencies applied the same standard used regarding China to the Israel lobby?

In the *Globe and Mail* Andrew Coyne has written two columns in recent days arguing that the discussion over Chinese interference should focus on "[domestic accomplices](#)". "[What we need a public inquiry to look into is domestic complicity in foreign interference](#)", noted the regular CBC commentator.

In a similar vein Justin Trudeau responded to criticism regarding purported Chinese interference by noting, "[We know](#) that Chinese Canadian parliamentarians, and Chinese Canadians in general, are greater targets for interference by China than others." The prime minister added,

"We know the same goes for Iranian Canadians, who are more subject to interference from the Iranian government. Russian speakers in Canada are more vulnerable to Russian misinformation and disinformation."

Why ignore how Israel and its Canadian lobby use Jewish MPs and Jewish organizations as their agents?

The leading Israel advocate in parliament, Anthony Housefather chairs the Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group. That group was previously led by another Jewish Liberal MP, Michael Leavitt, who resigned to head Israel lobby group Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center. Housefather and Leavitt have repeatedly [met](#) Israeli officials in Canada.

As part of the media frenzy about Chinese interference, there has been significant discussion about Trudeau attending a 2016 Liberal Party fundraiser at the Toronto home of Chinese Business Chamber of Canada chair Benson Wong. Among the attendees was Chinese Canadian billionaire Zhang Bin who is alleged to have donated to the Trudeau Foundation/University of Montréal at the request of a Chinese government official.

But Trudeau has far more extensive ties to pro-Israel funders. Since 2013 the [chief fundraiser](#) for the Trudeau Liberals has been Stephen Bronfman, scion of an arch Israeli nationalist family. Bronfman has [millions invested](#) in Israeli technology companies and over the years the Bronfman clan has secured arms for Israeli forces and supported its military in other ways. Bronfman openly linked his fundraising for Trudeau to Israel. In 2013 the *Globe and Mail* reported:

“Justin Trudeau is banking on multimillionaire Stephen Bronfman to turn around the Liberal Party’s financial fortunes in order to take on the formidable Conservative fundraising machine.... Mr. Bronfman helped raise \$2-million for Mr. Trudeau’s leadership campaign. Mr. Bronfman is hoping to win back the Jewish community, whose fundraising dollars have been going more and more to the Tories because of the party’s pro-Israel stand. ‘We’ll work hard on that,’ said Mr. Bronfman, adding that ‘Stephen Harper has never been to Israel and I took Justin there five years ago and he was referring at the end of the trip to Israel as ‘we.’ So I thought that was pretty good.”

In 2016 Trudeau [attended](#) a fundraiser at the Toronto home of now deceased billionaire apartheid supporters Honey and Barry Sherman. The event raised funds for the party and York Centre Liberal party candidate Michael Levitt. In 2018 CBC reported on multimillionaire Mitch Garber [attending](#) one of Bronfman’s fundraisers with Trudeau. On Federation CJA Montréal’s website Garber’s profile boasts that his [“eldest son](#) Dylan just completed his service as a lone soldier serving in an elite Cyber Defense Intelligence Unit of the IDF in Israel.”

A thorough investigation of pro-Israel Liberal fundraising would uncover a litany of other examples. And they’ve had far greater success. While the Trudeau government has banned Chinese firms, arrested a prominent Chinese capitalist and targeted that country militarily, they’ve been strikingly deferential to Israel. The Trudeau government has [expanded](#) the Canada-Israel free trade agreement, [organized](#) a pizza party for Canadians fighting in the Israeli military, voted against over [60 UN resolutions](#) upholding Palestinian rights, [sued](#) to block proper labels on wines from illegal settlements and [created](#) a special envoy to deflect criticism of Israeli abuses. During a 2018 visit to Israel former foreign affairs minister Freeland announced that should Canada win a seat on the United Nations Security Council it would act as an [“asset for Israel”](#) on the Council.

Part of the Chinese interference story is about funding University of Montréal and University of Toronto initiatives tied to China. But Jewish Zionist donors have set up far more initiatives, including numerous Israel and Israel-infused Jewish studies programs.

Having fought to establish Israel and with major investments in Israel, David Azrieli spent \$5 million to establish Israel studies and \$1 million on Jewish studies at Concordia University. At the University of Toronto more than \$10 million was donated to establish the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies and the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Chair in Israeli Studies. Millions of dollars more have been donated to launch similar initiatives at other universities.

On many occasions pro-Israel donors have leveraged donations to block academic appointments or suppress discussion of Palestinian rights. The [hundreds of millions](#) of dollars donated by Israel supporters (Schwartz/Reissman, Peter Munk, Seymour Schulich, etc.) partly explains why over a [dozen](#) Canadian university presidents recently traveled with apartheid lobby group, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, to Israel despite opposition

from significant segments of their institutions.

Much more influential than the 'China lobby', the Israel lobby has largely been ignored in recent discussion about the need for an inquiry into foreign interference. But any serious foreign agent registry ought to include the apartheid state's domestic accomplices.

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