

Lying allegations of antisemitic pogrom in Amsterdam fall apart

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Since clashes between Israelis and Amsterdam residents began Wednesday night, a hysterical press campaign has accused Amsterdammers of organizing pogroms against Jews. Allies of Israel, from US President Joe Biden to French President Emmanuel Macron, compared the events to the darkest hours of the Holocaust. The most explicit amalgam of Amsterdam's population with Nazis came from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Netanyahu—who is facing allegations by a lead prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague of extermination, persecution and starvation for leading the Gaza genocide—claimed these clashes repeated Hitler's 1938 Kristallnacht pogrom. On Friday, he said, "Tomorrow, 86 years ago, was Kristallnacht, when Jews on European soil were attacked for being Jews. This has now recurred."

On Sunday, Netanyahu claimed the Amsterdam clashes "recalled" Kristallnacht, adding:

A clear line connects the two antisemitic attacks against Israel that we have seen recently on Dutch soil: The reprehensible legal assault against the State of Israel at the International Court in The Hague, and the violent assault against Israeli citizens on the streets of Amsterdam. In both cases, there was dangerous antisemitism.

This narrative has been exposed in a matter of days as a Big Lie concocted to justify a police crackdown on mass opposition to genocide and war in Europe. Videos seen by millions on social media showed the clashes were provoked not by Amsterdammers but far-right Israeli football hooligans of the Maccabi Tel Aviv club, visiting for a match against Ajax Amsterdam. They assaulted Arabs, tore down Palestinian flags and chanted slogans calling for the killing of Arabs and praising the Gaza genocide.

It was a provocation coordinated by forces in the Israeli regime and the far-right Dutch government led by Geert

Wilders. Maccabi Tel Aviv hooligans are notorious for their racism and close ties to the Israeli state and armed forces. The club has never had an Arab player, and the Israeli regime uses its hooligans, like the "La Familia" hooligans of Beitar Jerusalem, to attack protests in Israel. Amid August 2020 protests against the official handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, German state broadcaster Deutsche Welle reported:

While the protests were raging in Jerusalem, in Tel Aviv, a group of young men attacked anti-Netanyahu protesters with batons and broken bottles. Five people were injured as a result. Videos of the attack were widely shared on social media, with users initially assuming La Familia were responsible for the attack. However, it later transpired that the attackers were members of Maccabi Tel Aviv ultra group Maccabi Fanatics.

Before the Maccabi-Ajax game, the *Jerusalem Post* and *De Telegraaf* reported that Mossad, Israel's foreign intelligence agency, would escort Maccabi fans to Amsterdam. Analysis of pictures of the Maccabi fans shows some are in fact members of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

Sources not friendly to the Palestinians have had to admit that what then took place was a provocation by the Israeli football hooligans. Amsterdam police chief Peter Holla told France24: "Violence had begun Wednesday night between fans. ... The Maccabi fans took down a flag from a façade of the Rokin [canal] in Amsterdam and destroyed a taxi. One Palestinian flag was burned."

The *New York Times*, another outlet favorable to Israel and the Democratic Biden administration's arming of the Netanyahu government for the genocide, was forced to admit:

In Amsterdam, many civic leaders agree on basic facts. They largely concur that some Israeli fans stoked anger in the city's Muslim population by chanting incendiary and racist slogans, including declaring that there were "no children" in Gaza anymore, and by defiling the Palestinian flag and vandalizing the cab. They also agree that Israeli fans were assaulted on multiple occasions in different locations, often in hit-and-run attacks on bikes and on foot, and that some attackers appear to have singled out their victims for being Jewish. ...

A video taken after midnight by a teenage Dutch YouTube personality and verified by The Times shows a group of men, many wearing Maccabi fan colors, picking up pipes and boards from a construction site, then chasing and beating a man. The incident was also captured in a video shot by a photographer, Annet de Graaf.

In the YouTube video, the Dutch teenager says that Israeli fans also threw rocks at a house draped with a Palestinian flag, before the police loaded them into a bus.

After the clashes, several Maccabi hooligans were briefly hospitalized before being released. On Friday, after press rumors spread that certain Maccabi supporters had disappeared, the Israeli Foreign Ministry confirmed all the Maccabi hooligans were in fact accounted for.

The Wilders government's response exposes its political sympathy for the far-right hooligans. It allowed all the Maccabi Tel Aviv hooligans to leave the country, thus making a mockery of police promises to investigate the clashes. Now, the Wilders government is carrying out mass arrests of those suspected of having fought the Maccabi hooligans. On Friday, 62 were arrested. Dozens more were arrested yesterday at a protest Amsterdam authorities banned.

The Amsterdam events are politically extraordinary. Far-right Zionist hooligans went there and staged a provocation that Wilders used to intensify the police-state crackdown on opposition to genocide and war. Far from banning the hooligans from future matches, as has occurred after other football clashes, US and European officials embraced them. They shamelessly call to defend pro-genocide hooligans in the name of opposing genocide!

Attempts to equate these events with Kristallnacht are obscene political lies. On November 9, 1938, the Nazis launched a state terror campaign against Germany's Jewish population. It is estimated that 91 Jews were killed, 30,000 were arrested and 267 synagogues, as well as countless

Jewish-owned shops, were destroyed. This ultimately led to the Holocaust, the industrial mass murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis and European Nazi-collaborationist regimes, including over 100,000 Dutch Jews.

What is the far-right force attacking an oppressed minority and supporting genocidal methods in Amsterdam? It is not the Moroccan immigrants, taxi drivers, and other city residents who confronted the Maccabi hooligans and sent a few to the hospital. No evidence has been presented that they were driven by antisemitism, i.e., hatred of Jews, but rather that they were angry at the hooligans' thuggery and support for genocide. It is Wilders' pathologically anti-Muslim Freedom Party (PVV) and other NATO governments supporting the Gaza genocide.

Now the French government is creating conditions to repeat the Amsterdam provocation. Macron has maintained that the November 14 game between the French and Israeli football teams at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis will be held. French officials claim that in order to oppose antisemitism, Israeli fans must march through this largely Muslim working class suburb of Paris, guarded by 4,000 heavily-armed French riot police and Mossad agents Netanyahu has pledged to send.

These are not operations to defend Jews or oppose antisemitism, but far-right provocations to justify repressing mass opposition to genocide and war. Workers and youth must reject the lie that opposition to the Gaza genocide and to Zionism is antisemitic. Instead, the deep opposition in the working class to the genocide and to the escalating war in the Middle East must be mobilized in a struggle to halt arms shipments to the Israeli regime, halt the slaughter, and oppose the NATO imperialist governments which are arming Netanyahu and allowing the genocide to continue.



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