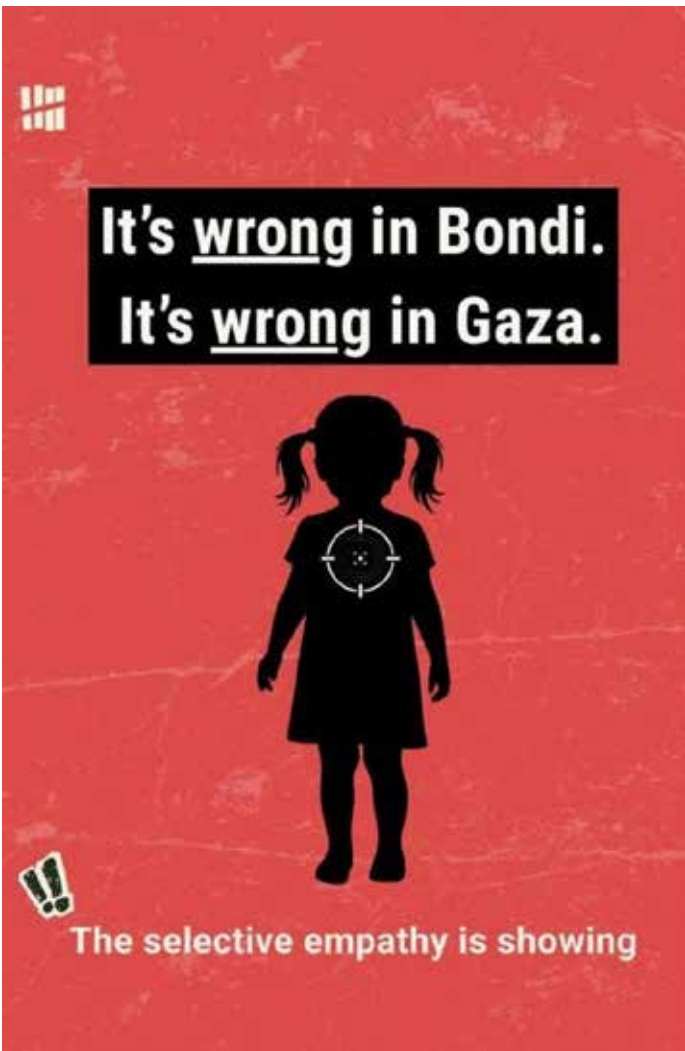


many defy Israel even as it protects them and builds further settlements. They attack and kill Palestinians, burn down their houses, and destroy their olive trees as Jews. Palestinians don't say "the Israelis are coming" as tanks, armored cars, and settlers approach. They say, "The Yahud (the Jews) are coming." For them, the Star of David is the symbol of menace, death, and destruction. The self-declared "Jewish state" is now committing genocide in Gaza, in the judgment of international genocide scholars and human rights organizations. The state organizes the genocide, the military carries it out, obeying orders as other militaries have done in violation of the laws of war. Palestinians and others have for decades stressed the difference between Zionism and Judaism. Zionism and Zionists are responsible for the catastrophe in Palestine, but the fact remains that they are still Jews. For Netanyahu, there is no difference. Being Zionist is what it is to be Jewish. In Australia, peak Jewish organisations such as the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), the Australia Israel and Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), and the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) claim to be representative bodies of the tiny (about 120,000) Australian Jewish population. These organizations support Israel all the way, whatever it does. What they have been "supporting" since October 2023 has been summarized by Jeffrey St. Clair in Counterpunch. So far, Israel has killed at least 72,000 people in Gaza. That is only the low figure because of the high number of bodies buried under the rubble. The true figure is likely to be hundreds of thousands. At least 170,000 people have been wounded, including the loss of feet, hands, arms, and legs. Apart from the low estimate of 20,000 children killed, 45,000 have suffered "new war-related injuries", according to the UN's Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Nearly half — 21,000 — have been disabled. Children have been deliberately starved, and hospital patients have died because of the lack of medicine or the widespread destruction of life-preserving equipment such as dialysis machines. It is hard to describe the current situation as catastrophic when it was already catastrophic. Can

there be a double or a triple catastrophe? The Palestinians are being washed out of their tents by floodwaters. Thousands of tents are available, but are prevented from entry because Israel pretends to regard tent poles as "dual-use" war material. Having massacred the Palestinians, destroyed their homes, deprived them of food and medical supplies, and starved them, Israel continues its air and ground attacks on these totally helpless people, in violation of the ceasefire. The short Al Jazeera documentary entitled "Target Iran" has covered Israel's attack on Iran in June. More than 1,000 civilians were killed, including scores of children. Then there is southern Lebanon, where, since the November 27, 2024, cease-fire, which Israel has not just broken but never observed in the first place, the UN says 127 civilians have been killed. OHCHR (the UN office for human rights) said four Israeli drone missile attacks in November 2025 on the Ain Al-Hilweh refugee camp in the coastal city of Sidon killed 13 civilians, including eight children. Israel's attacks on the south have included the destruction of village homes, factories, and construction sites. Scores of civilians have also been killed in Israeli air attacks on Syria in the past year. The core lobby groups in Australia, the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA), the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), and the Australia Israel Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), support Israel, whatever crimes it commits. They dwell incessantly on October 7, as if Israel had done nothing to warrant such an attack. Their targets are not just Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran, but any group, government, or individual in Australia standing up for human rights and international law on the Palestine question. They enjoy across-the-board support from federal and state governments and the media. Other groups include the Australian Jewish Association, which stands for "the strengthening of Jewish identity and support for Israel". It affirms that "Judea and Samaria" are "integral parts of Israel's history and religious history," and it opposes the creation of a Palestinian state. StandWithUS Australia is "proud to support Israel education and pro-Israel activity," while the Australian Jewish Funders "stand united in sup-



port of Israel". The small Jewish anti-Zionist organizations include the Jewish Council of Australia, which opposes the destruction of Gaza and has called on the federal government to impose sanctions on Israel. However, according to Jeremy Leibler, president of the ZFA, polling shows that the "overwhelming majority of Australian Jews are Zionists and, in particular, support Israel and the IDF since October 7." The poll he quoted shows 72 percent "support" Israel, 25 percent give uncritical support, and 55 percent give support "in critical terms". Parliamentary support for Israel includes the Australia-Israel Allies Caucus, which has federal and state branches. An MP member of the caucus, Andrew Wallace, describes Australia and Israel as "two pioneering and freedom-loving nations". The bolstering of trade comes from the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce, while media support for Israel is led by Murdoch's Sky News and News Corporation's daily, The Australian. Palestine is no longer just foreign policy. This is something politicians everywhere have to deal with now. Australia has a

population of about one million Muslims, and like a returning tide, the "Palestine question" is flooding back into the political mainstream of "Western" countries whose governments (like Australia's) created a Jewish settler entity in Palestine and have maintained it with strong political, military, and economic support ever since. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese described the Bondi attack as an act of "evil". The NSW Premier, Chris Minns, referred to "cowardly acts of terrifying violence," Federal Home Affairs minister Tony Bourke to an "appalling act of violence," and former opposition leader Tony Abbott to "an absolute atrocity There should be no place in Australia for the kind of evil we've seen this evening". None of these expressions has ever been used by any of them to describe the horrors of Gaza and the rampaging of soldiers and settlers across the occupied West Bank. Israel is never called out for its state terrorism. Instead, the politicians justify genocide as self-defence and stress the value of Australia's relationship with Israel, and have sought to defend the continuing

supply of weaponry or weapons parts to Israel through third countries. Even allowing for the unwillingness of politicians to speak directly, the statements made by Albanese and other politicians are totally removed from what is really happening on the ground. They can see what is going on in Gaza and the West Bank as well as any of us, but, as has been the custom in Australia for decades, they are not going to criticize beyond the limits imposed by the patchwork of organizations called the Israeli lobby. In late October 2025, Francesca Albanese released a report naming 63 countries that fall into the category of genocide enablers, Australia among them. "Framed by colonial narratives that dehumanize the Palestinians," she wrote, the genocide has exposed "an unprecedented chasm between peoples and their governments, betraying the trust on which global peace and security rest". The genocide cannot be dealt with by constantly backing away from what needs to be said openly and honestly, or by banning demonstrations by people justifiably horrified by the mass slaughter in Gaza. Irrespective of their religion, and, in fact, in defence of it, Jewish Australians should also be condemning outright the genocidal state that has the effrontery to speak in their name and threatens their safety by its actions. Some are doing just this, but others — still the majority — remain blindly attached to a state that could hardly do anything more to earn its reputation as a global pariah. If "never again" means anything, it means joining all those standing against the genocide being committed by Israel. After October 7, 2023, the Sydney rabbi Eli Schlanger wrote to Anthony Albanese to act firmly against terrorism "by removing the cloak of legitimacy around those who spread hate". Yet on a visit to Israel, Schlanger was photographed holding an assault rifle, holding a missile, hugging, kissing, and dancing with soldiers, sharing a meal with them, and clearly identifying completely with the inhumane assault on Gaza. This celebration of the mass murder of Palestinians ended with Schlanger's own death when he was killed during the Bondi massacre.

The article first appeared on The Palestine Chronicle.

Whether fired from the back or penetrating from the front, we don't know, but from the video, no shots were fired during the struggle between the heroic bystander and the gunman. At no stage was the gun pointed at Ahmad al-Ahmad. He pushed it down, and it stayed down all the time. Mobile phone videos lingered on Ahmad well after the struggle, but there is no video of Ahmad being shot then, several times, according to reports. So, who shot Ahmad al-Ahmad?

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese described the Bondi attack as an act of "evil". The NSW Premier, Chris Minns, referred to "cowardly acts of terrifying violence," Federal Home Affairs Minister Tony Bourke to an "appalling act of violence," and former opposition leader Tony Abbott to "an absolute atrocity There should be no place in Australia for the kind of evil we've seen this evening". None of these expressions has ever been used by any of them to describe the horrors of Gaza and the rampaging of soldiers and settlers across the occupied West Bank.



An influencer visits Ahmed al-Ahmed (L), the bystander who is hailed as the "Bondi hero". Al-Ahmed underwent surgery for multiple gunshot wounds, some of which are noticeable in the picture. ● REUTERS



The mother of Matilda Britvan, 10, one of the victims of a recent mass shooting that targeted a Jewish holiday celebration, hugs her son after speaking at a vigil at Bondi Beach, in Sydney, Australia, on December 16, 2025. ● HOLLIE ADAMS/REUTERS