



## **Jewish Israeli politician Dr. Cassif speaks out on Israel's path towards Fascism**

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**Zain Raza (ZR):** Thank you for tuning in today and welcome back to another episode of The Source. I'm your host, Zain Raza. Today I'll be talking to former member of the Israeli parliament and Israeli politician Dr. Ofer Cassif. Dr. Ofer Cassif is also a lecturer for politics and philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He received his Ph.D. at the London School of Economics and post-doctorate at Columbia University. Dr. Ofer Cassif, welcome back to the show.

**Ofer Cassif (OC):** Thank you very much. My pleasure.

**ZR:** Let's start this interview with your personal situation. Last year when we interviewed you, it was after a month when Israel had started its offensive in Gaza. At that time, you were temporarily suspended from the Israeli parliament as you were quite critical regarding Israel's assault on Gaza focusing on the indiscriminate nature of its attack on civilians. I was trying to update myself on your situation in the German media, and after doing an online research, I only found one short article about you in the Tagesschau which stated that earlier this year you were expelled from the Israeli parliament, also known as the Knesset, with 85 out of 120 MP's voting for your expulsion. This expulsion came in response to your signing of a petition supporting South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice. Can you update our viewers on your current status and also address whether any mainstream German media outlets have contacted you for an interview thus far?

**OC:** Well, first of all, as you said last year, exactly one year ago I was suspended for 45 days because I told the truth. You know, many times criminals are afraid of the truth. So that's part of the issue, mainly the main part of the story. I was suspended because I said what everybody knows now, and we're supposed to know a year ago already. That is to say that Israel is carrying out a genocide in Gaza, that the government of Israel is not interested in the security of the Israelis and the well-being of the Israelis, let alone of the Palestinians, but only in its own survival. And in order to pursue the fascist plan – perhaps we are talking about it later, the decisive plan of Smotrich's and because I also said that this plan resembles the final solution that was against my people, the Jewish people during the Holocaust. Because of that I was suspended. Now, as you said correctly, after I joined the petition that was initiated by

Israeli citizens in support of the South African appeal to the ICJ, and demanding – it was almost one year ago, it was in December last year, that the petition was initiated, if I remember correctly, and about 1000 Israelis, Israeli citizens signed this petition calling to the ICJ to order Israel to immediately end the attack on Gaza and also to investigate whether there was a genocide in Gaza. I was accused because of that, as if I supported violence and terrorism of Hamas against Israel, which is totally a lie and hogwash. So, I mean, it's Orwellian because it is to say that once I signed a petition against violence, it means that I support violence. Even George Orwell could not imagine such an Orwellian situation. Unfortunately, a great part of the opposition, so-called, also supported my impeachment. So it was very close to get there. They needed 90 members of the Knesset to vote in support of the impeachment. They had 86. Now, ever since, of course, there is the continuation of the assaults. At the moment, not physical, but verbal. But we were at least twice very close to even a physical assault by other members of the Knesset against me and my comrades. And a continuation of attempts to silence us to delegitimize our views against the ongoing bloodshed and our call to immediately end the genocide, as well as to release the Israeli hostages who are dying in agony in the hands of Hamas in Gaza. So we've been under a terrible attack by the right wing, which also includes some part of the opposition. And now there are new attempts to enact a law that will actually prohibit us from participating in the next elections.

**ZR:** Can you talk more about that law and what this law is all about and what it encompasses?

**OC:** This law, which has massive support in the parliament and shamefully also, you know, the so-called alternative to Netanyahu, the Benjamin Gantz party, apart from one, when it was voted for in the plenum, they ran out and didn't vote against it. So they are also part of this persecution. And the law says that – there is a law already that was enacted in 1985, which part of it says that if someone, if a list, or a person, who is a candidate to the Knesset, supporting continuously and systematically – that's the degradation of the Supreme Court, what I just added – so if one supports continuously and systematically violence or terrorism against Israel or Israelis, you won't be able to participate in the elections. So now they are going to change the law that it would be enough for someone to even implicitly once, you know, if you said something implicitly and even once and, you know, one time in apparently support of an act of terror, would that would be enough to prohibit you from participating in the elections. The law also lowers the ability of the Supreme Court to revoke such decisions against their participation, because one has to understand that the process in banning someone, a list, or a person from running to the elections the beginning is that there is a committee, an elections committee, that consists of politicians, of representatives of the parties, and they obviously the bigger party is or the more representatives a party has in the parliament, the more members it has in this committee. And they have the authority to decide whether a list or person can run in the elections. Obviously, it is a political decision. Now up until now, I myself, the first time I was a candidate in 2019, this committee banned me from participating, but the Supreme Court revoked the decision. Now they want to in this court also to change the ability of the Supreme Court to revoke. So eventually the meaning is and

the intention is to actually ban us and Arab lists, that is to say that there is 21% of the population in Israel, citizens well, Palestinians, won't be able to vote for their representatives. That's a crystal clear issue of apartheid. And another aspect of the facistation and dictatorship in Israel.

**ZR:** Before we get into the bigger picture, which will include geopolitics and the US election, I want to still stick with the Israeli parliament for a bit longer as the mainstream media here in Germany does not provide an in-depth examination on it. We mostly hear from politicians and mainstream media outlets here, for example, that Israel is the only democracy in the region that also provides freedoms to minorities. We get the impression that it is the only progressive force in the region that shares the same values as many European countries. In July of this year, Israel's parliament passed a law that rejected the establishment of a Palestinian state, citing, quote, "It would pose an existential danger to the state of Israel and its citizens, perpetuate the Israel-Palestinian conflict and destabilize the region", unquote. Furthermore, just last month, the Israeli government also banned the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine, known as UNRWA, from operating in its territory and for prohibiting authorities from having any contact with them, despite the fact that 2.2 million people in Gaza depend on it. UNRWA employs 3000 workers, supports 700 schools and 140 medical centers in Palestine. Israel's parliament based its decision, citing that UNRWA has been infiltrated by Hamas. However, an independent inquiry undertaken by former French Foreign minister Catherine Colonna came to the conclusion that Israel has yet to provide any supporting evidence for this accusation. Both of these laws not only received worldwide condemnation, but independent international lawyers have also stated that they violate international conventions as well as humanitarian law. Can you comment on these laws implemented by the Israeli parliament and thereafter talk about why the Israeli parliament continues to violate international agreements as well as laws that it is itself a signatory to?

**OC:** First of all, what you mentioned, which is totally accurate, is just the tip of the iceberg. There's a list of more than 100 bills that are going to literally and practically – and also, you know, the jure, to turn Israel into a full fledged fascist dictatorship. For instance, in the other two laws that passed this week, actually two days ago, on Wednesday, one is that it will be passing to arrest, to put in prison Palestinian minors under 14 years old, if they are accused of terrorism. Only Palestinians, by the way, in practice. And in another law that was passed on Wednesday, is that families, the entire families of so-called Palestinian terrorists are going to be expelled from Israel. Citizens, I'm talking about citizens. So families of Palestinian citizens of Israel who are accused or are convicted in terrorism will be expelled even if they were not involved in those acts of so-called terrorism at all. So this is only the tip of the iceberg. Now, there's another law that was passed last week which actually not only allows, but obliges the schools to fire teachers that are accused of incitement of supporting terrorism without a hearing and without even the involvement of the courts. So, of course, definitely it's a political persecution because we have to understand that the very concept of terrorism is used and manipulated and I should say, abused by the Israeli establishment in order to, on the one hand, to let Jewish terrorists to go away with their activities and incitements with no charges and no punishment, and on the other hand, to persecute, charge and put in prison or

arrest before that Palestinians, and I am talking about Israeli citizens, who haven't actually been doing anything that even resembles terrorism. One example, if I may, a young teacher who I visited last week, a young teacher who is an expert in therapy with animals, she put on TikTok a few weeks ago, a dance that she danced last year. TikTok automatically put the dates of the dance in this video, and the date was 7th of October. So she was arrested as if this dance meant that she supported the massacre committed by Hamas. And again, this is just one example. There are hundreds, if not more than that. So there is a political persecution first and foremost of Israeli Palestinian citizens and also of democratic Jews like myself. We've been persecuted by the police, which is actually now a private militia of the minister and the government as a whole. So what you just mentioned regarding UNRWA and regarding other laws, is just the tip of the iceberg, just the beginning. There is, if one side of the coin, as it were, is the ongoing genocide and atrocities and domicides and other terrible war crimes and crimes against humanity, against humanity in Gaza, as well as war crimes and ethnic cleansing in the West Bank and in Lebanon. 30 villages in the south of Lebanon: perished. 30 villages were totally wiped out of the earth by Israel. If all those atrocities and crimes are one side of the coin, the other side of the coin is the attempts to silence those who raise their voice against those crimes within Israel. Those come together. And Germany is an expert in such a history, unfortunately. So that's what I have to say. And as to your question regarding the German media, you know, a German scholar, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, I don't know if the viewers are aware of her name, she published her research 60 years ago. And I think it was 1961 when it was first published about the spiral of silence. There she explained how the media creates the impression, and the emphasis is on the impression, as if the public believes in something or doesn't believe in something, and how it creates a spiral of silence where the media and people are afraid to raise an alternative voice. That's part of what's going on in the German media, given the history, the criminal history of Germany. But in the name of being ashamed, of lamenting, to say the least, the kind that Germany committed 90 and 80 years ago, they allow similar, not identical, similar crimes to be carried out now. That's insane.

**ZR:** Let us move now to the recent election in the United States and what it means for the situation in Israel and Palestine. On Wednesday, Donald Trump won the US election in a historic victory against Kamala Harris, capturing 270 Electoral College votes in contrast to Harris's 226. Trump secured 50.7% of the votes casted and Harris around 47.7. Both the House and Senate have become majority Republican. It is well known that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has a very fond relationship with President elect Donald Trump. It was, after all, during Trump's first term when the US officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and stated that the American embassy would be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In addition, the Abraham Accords, a series of bilateral agreements focused on normalizing relationships between Arab dictatorships and the Israeli state, were signed under Trump's initiative. Under these agreements, Israel's sovereignty was recognized by Sudan, Morocco, Bahrain and the United Emirates and diplomatic relations were fully restored. However, these agreements completely ignored the question of the Palestinian statehood and Israel's ongoing occupation, as well as settlement expansion. During the recent election campaign, Trump received around \$100 million from Miriam Adelson in return for

his promise to annex the West Bank and recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Palestinian region, as soon as he assumes office. Miriam Adelson is the wife of Sheldon Adelson, a billionaire who was a long time supporter of the Israeli occupation of Gaza and the expansion of settlements in Palestinian territories and even funded Benjamin Netanyahu's election campaign. Now that Trump will assume office in the United States, how do you see the situation developing in the West Bank and Palestine?

**OC:** Well, again, everything you said is totally accurate. And obviously I didn't want, to say the least, Trump to win, but at the same time, I cannot say even one good word about Kamala Harris and the Democrats. Because Kamala, the vice president of Biden, she is responsible, like all the administration, Biden's administration, to the ongoing genocide in Gaza. Had the Biden administration wanted the genocide to stop or not to begin in the first place, they could have done that. They did not. On the one hand, sometimes very rarely, by the way, the rhetoric of Biden and his administration was against the genocide and the death toll, the destruction, the atrocities, all the terrible things that go on in Gaza. So the rhetoric sometimes, again, not too often, was against that. But at the same time, practically, they continued to arm Israel and to allow the Israeli criminal government, the fascist government, to go on and carry out this continuous genocide. So I cannot say anything in favor of Kamala Harris and her candidacy. So I'm very happy that she lost. The problem is that the one who won poses a great danger. First and foremost, by the way, to the Americans themselves, women, LGBT and the working class, etc., etc., immigrants, minorities, he is a bloody racist associated with neo Nazis. Everybody knows about it. But as far as what's going on in the Middle East and especially the ongoing atrocities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Gaza, Lebanon, the danger of a regional war with Iran that may spread into a world war, all those are now under even a greater risk given the new president. Nevertheless, Trump is unpredictable, he is unpredictable, because he is literally and pathologically, how should I put it, not fully baked. So nobody really knows how he's going to act. I think that the main question is who's going to be in his administration? We can predict how he's going to behave, as it were, or to act vis a vis Israel, Palestine, Iran, Lebanon, vis a vis the Middle East, let's put it like that. We can predict that more or less in accordance with the administration. So if on the one hand, if he nominates, for instance, the ex ambassador, American ambassador to Tel Aviv, Mr. Friedman, who is a full fledged fascist and racist and associated very closely with the thugs like Smotrich, if he gives him the position of the Secretary of State, for instance, that means that very fast, we have to dig serious shelters here. But if, on the other hand, he prefers to nominate others, let's call it relatively more moderate, perhaps a Palestinian or Arab politicians that are associated with him, like his son in law, I think, he is from Lebanon originally, or his parents, I don't know, of Lebanese allegiance, and was responsible for the Trump's campaign in Michigan, so that may change the equation. So it's very early to know. Definitely, and obviously, I am afraid of what's going to happen given the characteristics of Trump that I mentioned before. On the other hand, I read a few articles in the last couple of days by Americans who are more familiar, definitely much more than me, more familiar with the politics in the States in general and with the surrounding of Trump's in particular, some of them may actually say that there is a chance that Trump for his own interests, by the way – because like Netanyahu he is a psychopath and is interested only in his

own good – so because of that, he may actually put some weight in order to end the attacks on Gaza and lead to a release or exchange of prisoners and hostages, etc.. I hope so, I cross my fingers, as it were, but I do not have too many expectations. There was a Marxist philosopher, an Italian, Antonio Gramsci, who said that the best thing for a socialist to act is to stick to pessimism of the intellect and the optimism of the will. So I try to cling to that.

**ZR:** I would like to now dig deeper into Israel's offense in Gaza and as well as the problems that are happening with Lebanon as well as Iran. Let me first recap the situation for our viewers. On October 1st, Israel responded to the Israeli assassinations of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on Iranian soil in July and of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut in September by firing 200 rockets into Israel, claiming that it targeted and successfully hit a number of military installations. Israel responded with an attack of its own on October 26th and struck military targets inside Iran, mostly concentrating on missile manufacturing sites and aerial defense systems. According to the Iranian military, one civilian and four soldiers were killed in the attack. The Iranian military responded by suggesting that they will respond at some point in the future. The US has pledged full support for Israel and last month deployed an anti ballistic missile defense system known as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, with nearly 100 American troops to operate it, alongside 652 bombers arriving in Qatar. The war between Hezbollah and Israel in southern Lebanon, as you have already stated, is also in full swing with on ground clashes happening and rocket exchanges taking place on a daily basis. The civilian death toll in Lebanon has mounted to 3000 civilians, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. In Gaza, the death toll has surpassed 43,400 people, and in the north of Gaza, the Israeli army has ordered a complete evacuation of the area, calling it a combat zone, besieging it in the process, but not allowing any food, water or medical supplies. Despite Benjamin Netanyahu's proclamations that progress is being made on all fronts, just this week, he fired the defense minister Yoav Gallant, citing lack of trust. Can you first provide your assessment on the firing of Yoav Gallant and then talk about where you think Israel is making any progress in its goals in Lebanon, Iran, as well as Gaza?

**OC:** As I said before, and as I said last time we were talking, the government of Israel and in general, Netanyahu in particular, are interested in violence. They are interested in violence because for Netanyahu personally, he knows that's the only way he's going to stay in power. He wants to stay in power. He doesn't care about the well-being, even the lives, even of Israelis. He sacrificed the hostages on the altar of his own good. Everybody knows that. Same about those who are with him in the government. The government consists largely of messianic bigots, like Smotrich, Ben-Gvir and their gangs. And they believe that the longer the war goes on, the more Palestinians and even Israelis are killed, the greater the chances that the Messiah is going to come and the third temple is going to be established. Those are fanatic bigots, crazy, messianic, racist fanatics. I said in the plenum, and I'm telling you now, for those thugs human blood is the red carpet for the Messiah. They are also interested, or at least do not care, if there is a regional war with Iran, no matter what level of destruction is going to be even upon the Israeli society. So people have to understand that this government really consists of insane fanatics on the one hand, and numb opportunists, on the other hand. And they are responsible for the bloodshed that goes on and the death toll within Israeli

society, too. That's something that we should bear in mind. And that is the greatest risk to the whole region, including obviously the Israeli society. But they don't care about it. That is the basis that we have to understand in order to tackle deep and to confront and to put an end to those atrocities. I have been saying that we should and then understand that, and first of all, I have nothing good to say about Yoav Gallant. And the [different] minister is responsible for the genocide in Gaza and for that atrocities all around and including the sacrifice of the hostages and soldiers, Israeli soldiers, as cannon fodder, he is responsible no less than Netanyahu. He was there. So in that sense, I'm not lamenting that he's not going to be there. That's not the issue at all. I would expect the public in Israel, those thousands when they took the streets after Netanyahu fired Gallant, to take the streets in millions because of the sacrifice of the hostages and because of the genocide in Gaza, not expecting until Netanyahu fires Gallant. The problem with this issue is that and I go back to what I said before to the other side of the coin, this is the turning of Israel into a full fledged fascist dictatorship. Because, what Netanyahu did, he fired Gallant in order to put instead of him in office Israel Katz, who is a puppet of Netanyahu. In that sense, now, Netanyahu controls the police for sure because as I said before, there is no Israeli police anymore. By the way, the head of the Shin Bet said so, too. There is no police in Israel. The police is now in the hands of the government, including Netanyahu and Ben-Gvir, as I said before. It is a militia of the government that serves the government and the so-called leader rather than the public or even the state. Same about the prison services that are in the ends and control, they were occupied or conquered, as it were, by Ben-Gvir as well. The stage that Netanyahu is interested in achieving is to conquer the military. And the Shin Bet, the secret police, etc., etc., the security service, as it is called, and the Mossad. In that way, again, as Germans are very aware of, given the German history, that way, Netanyahu and his thugs are going to control the also called security institutions and branches and services and turn Israel, as I said before, into officially as practically a full fledged fascist dictatorship. That's the real meaning of firing Gallant. Because the next is for sure, although he denies it, but who believes Netanyahu, he is a pathological liar on top of other psychopaths traits that he has, the next, now, it is easier on him without Gallant to fire the Chief of Staff and the head of the security services and the Mossad and the attorney general as well. And that way to put instead of them puppets, people who are devoted and loyal to him in person, not to the good of the Israelis and the state of Israel and the next will be not only to ban us from participating in the elections, but perhaps to ban elections altogether. And to begin with quote unquote, "a night of the long knives". And we are going to be targeted first. And when I say targeted, I also mean physically. We are under serious risk of death. As simply as that. Because once they conquer all the services, as I mentioned, part of them are already in their hands, as I said, they are literally going to get rid of the opposition. First and foremost, the Arab citizens and the Democratic Jews like myself and thousands of others. They are going to get rid of us either by expelling us from the country or by putting us in prison, or by shooting us, or lynching us, or killing us in other ways. That's the future of the almost civil war we are facing. And unfortunately, the international community, as it is silent vis a vis the ongoing genocide in Gaza, the ethnic cleansing in the West Bank and the massacre in Lebanon, there are going to be probably silent vis a vis the lynching and assassination of us.

**ZR:** Well, we will not try to be silent on this issue, and I hope to stay in contact with you. But to my last question, and I know I've asked this in the first question before, but I would like to expand on that question; has any mainstream German media outlet contacted you, or for that matter, French or British or any major media outlet? How has the reception been? Have you received full length interviews where you can provide in-depth analysis like you have done today?

**OC:** No, unfortunately – I have been interviewed, you know, I think literally hundreds of times by media from all over the globe, but so-called mainstream media mostly never contacted me.

**ZR:** Dr. Ofer Cassif, Israeli politician, thank you so much for your time today.

**OC:** Thank you. And let's hope for better days.

**ZR:** And thank you for tuning in today. If you are watching our videos regularly, you would know from our content that YouTube, which is owned by Google, can shadowban and censor us at any time. So we are asking all of our viewers as a precaution, to join our alternative platforms on Rumble, Telegram and a podcast called PodBean. If that day ever comes where we get shadowbanned or censored, we won't be able to reach you even with an announcement. So make sure to join these channels by clicking on the links on the description of this video below. It literally costs you nothing and takes only a few minutes to join. I thank you for tuning in and for your support. I'm your host, Zain Raza. See you next time.

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