

**Narrator, If Americans Knew:**

Israel's actions have been enabled by the pro-Israel lobby, which has operated in the US for many decades. In 2016 and 17, American journalist Clayton Swisher produced an investigative report about this lobby for the Al Jazeera news network.

Mm mmmThe report included footage obtained by British undercover reporter Tony Kleinfeld who infiltrated several pro-Israel organizations. When Israel partisans in the US learned of the film they successfully pressured Al Jazeera not to broadcast it. Eventually the documentary was leaked and it's explosive information became public. Despite the significance of it's content, US media failed to tell Americans about it.

**Narrator:**

In 2005 Palestinian civil rights groups sought a peaceful means to protest against Israel's occupation. They identified goods from Israel and called for their boycott. The BDS movement was born.

**Omar Barghouti: BDS Co-Founder:**

We called for boycotting Israel, divesting from it, and eventually imposing sanctions on it, as was done against apartheid south Africa.

**Narrator:**

The secretive Ministry of Strategic Affairs, based in the prime minister's office in Jerusalem, was given a mission: establish a covert campaign to defeat the BDS movement.

**Eric Gallagher: A director at AIPAC from 2010 to 2015:**

Does the war of ideas matter? I don't know. I don't know. I know that like getting 38 billion dollars in security Aid to Israel matters, which is what AIPAC just did. That's what I'm proud to have been a part of for so long.

**Narrator:**

AIPAC's website shows members of congress attending it's conferences, and declaring their support for Israel:

**Paul Ryan: Republican Speaker of the House:**

And on behalf of Congress thank you for sending a clear and unequivocal message to the world that the United States stands with Israel now, tomorrow, and always.

**John Mearsheimer: American political scientist and international relations scholar.**

What AIPAC does is to make sure that money is funneled your way if your seen as pro-Israel, and it'll go to a significant lengths to make sure that you stay in office if you continue to be staunchly pro-Israel.

**Jim Moran: A member of Congress from 1991 to 2015:**

They have questionnaires. and anyone running for congress is expected to fill out a questionnaire. They evaluate the depth of your commitment to Israel on the versa that questionnaire then you have an interview with local people. if you get a pack support, then more often than not you're gonna win.

**Tony Kleinfeld: British undercover reporter**

Could you give me the names of some website?

**Jacob Baime: Executive director of the Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC),**

"I couldn't, I couldn't, but Canary Mission is a good example

Canary mission is highly highly effective, to the extent that we monitor the Students for Justice in Palestine and their allies."

**Mearsheimer:**

They are picking out individuals they think are critical of Israel and there smearing them, and they are telling them that what's going to happen here if you don't cease and desist from acting like this, we in the end will do much to destroy your career.

**Canary Mission representative in ad for Canary Mission:**

A few years later when these individuals are applying for jobs within your company...

**Narrator:**

Canary Mission's promotional video threatens to pass these smears on to prospective employers.

**Canary Mission representative in ad for Canary Mission:**

Make sure that today's radicals are not tomorrow's employees.

**Baime:**

The research operation is very high tech. When I got here a few years ago the budget was like three thousand dollars. Today it's like a million and a half, maybe it's like 2 million. I don't even know at this point it's huge it's a massive budget.

We've got major political consulting firms on retainer that are here all the time... We have our own opposition researchers. We have lot of communications capabilities and what's most interesting about it I think is that

ninety percent of people who pay attention to this space very closely have no idea what we're actually doing, which I like.

**Narrator:**

Tony discovered that the Israeli government has launched a covert campaign to gather information on American citizens.

**Sima Vaknin-Gil: Director General of Israel's Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy"**

We have three different sub campaigns: data Gathering, working on activist organization, money Trail.

**Narrator:**

The Israeli official named one organization that was a partner in it's covert campaign, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies , or FDD.

**Narrator:**

Jonathan Schanzer works for the FDD. He produces research on the financing of armed groups.

**Kleinfeld:**

I'm very interested in getting involved in like BDS activities and stuff like that.

**Schanzer:**

Hopefully you mean anti-BDS.  
( Laugh)

**Vaknin-Gil:**

This is something that only a country, with its resources can do the best.  
We have FDD. We have others working on this.

**Ali Abunimah: Author:**

If you had on tape a senior Russian or Iranian or even Canadian official saying they were running covert operations to spy on Americans, and using an organization like the foundation for defense of democracies (FDD) as a front group, I think it would be a bombshell.

**Narrator:**

Think tanks like the FDD play an important role for Israel in the media. Their selective use of evidence is often presented as legitimate academic research.

**Mearsheimer:**

They try to educate people to understand that is Israel is effectively a western liberal democracy in the sea of terrorists states, which is the Arab world. The

other goal is to intimidate and to smear people.

**Narrator:**

Schanzer is invited by pro-Israel congressmen to provide evidence before subcommittees on terrorism and the middle east. He uses them to insinuate that prominent activists for Palestinian equal rights, are linked to armed groups.

**Schanzer:**

The AMP's founder and president Hatem Bazian was one of two featured speakers at a 2004 fundraising dinner in California. Incidentally the other speaker at this dinner was Mohammed Almezan(?) who's currently in jail for his role in the Holy Land Foundation and for providing financial support to Hamas.

**Hatem Bazian: Chairman of American Muslims for Palestine:**

When you enter into the congressional record, now people begin to think that there's some legitimacy to it, so this dumping of utter nonsense and garbage into the congressional record, into a legitimate hearing, will have an effect down the line.

**Narrator:**

Schanzer's allegations that American students are some how connected to armed groups in the middle east has become part of the lobby's attempt to demonize BDS.

**Narrator:**

Our reporter was attending a dinner at the annual conference of the Israeli American Council in Washington. He met an American involved in the Israeli government anti-BDS campaign.

**Jackie Retig: Former director of academic affairs at the Israeli Consulate in New York:**

In my job I get to work with every major News Network... and I don't even do media. I do academic affairs. Every University president takes our calls, takes our meetings, works with us because we're a legitimate government organization...for the most part when it comes to be BDS, we are very behind the scenes... I'm meeting with University presidents, faculty, students. What they're doing is building relationships with local politicians, King sure the politicians know a to turn to them when Israel sensitive things come to the table.

**Narrator:**

Eric told him why Jerusalem is a favorite Hub of journalists covering the Middle East

**Gallagher:**

The overwhelming majority of journalists covering the Middle East are based in Jerusalem... we have an enormous interest in affecting the people who work on the ground there. And that's what they do there. They build relationships with people who can give them information that they can then feed to journalists who we're building relationships with. So Ior (Weintraub) has a staff of about 20 people.

So he's got real expertise to deal with the Press. He's an expert and making their jobs easier so, for instance, we actually now, when there's a terror attack in Israel, our staff gets to the scene usually before the Press does. Just because Ior is so good. They have bulletproof vests on, they have cameras and as soon as there's... twitter... an attack, we have like four guys at the scene.

He has this rapid response team, where he has people strategically placed around the country. So if there's an attack... like the Saron attack on Saron Market in Tel Aviv. They take pictures and get testimonies, and by the time the Press gets there, we do their jobs for them. By the time the Press got there, we were able to help affect the narrative... because...they're all scrambling, like, they need to get stuff to their editors immediately on what happened, back in Brussels or Washington. We're able to get to them information.

**Narrator:**

The former CNN correspondent Jim Clancy first reported on the middle east in the early 1980's.

**Jim Clancy:**

When TIP (The Israel Project) begins interacting with journalists and suggesting the lines and suggesting the interviews, then it's not journalism any more, it's just propaganda.

**Narrator:**

Tony had gathered that the lobby's concern with BDS was not it's economic impact but a much wider threat to the power of the pro-Israel lobby.

**David Hazony: American-born Israeli writer, translator, and editor:**

The specific potential of an immediate boycott, that's not a problem. The bigger problem is the democratic party... the Bernie Sanders people Bringing all these anti- Israel people into the Democratic Party. Being pro-Israel it is less of a bipartisan issue, and then every time the White House changes, the policies towards Israel change. That becomes a dangerous thing for Israel.

There is actually an important battle being fought on the campuses.