

# The Brutalization of Israel Is Well Underway. If We Do Not Act, Its Collapse Is Only a Matter of Time

## Haaretz Editorial

*It is impossible to watch the photographic documentation of the ugly, violent demonstrators during Wednesday's parade of Jewish supremacy through the streets of Jerusalem without hearing Prof. Yeshayahu Leibowitz's warning echoing in the background. "The national pride and euphoria that followed the Six-Day War are temporary and will bring us from proud, rising nationalism to extreme, messianic, ultranationalism. The third stage will be brutality and the final stage will be the end of Zionism," the farsighted philosopher said.*

The process of brutalization is at its height. "The general spirit was that of revenge," wrote Haaretz journalist Nir Hasson, who was assaulted by a gang of teens who hurled him to the ground and kicked him. "The leading symbol on the marchers' shirts was the Kahanist fist, the popular chant was a particularly bloody revenge song, alongside chants of 'Death to Arabs' and 'May their village burn.' The most popular minister was Itamar Ben-Gvir and the overall atmosphere was frightening."

Nor was Hasson the only person to be assaulted. The rioters threatened, cursed, shoved and attacked Palestinian passersby and anyone they identified as a journalist or who tried to film them. The reason they attacked journalists is that they couldn't find enough Palestinian victims, since Palestinian families were hunkered down at home. They have already learned that when the Jews are celebrating Jerusalem Day, it's better to vacate the arena so the celebrants won't be tempted to lynch them.

We aren't talking about a handful of wild weeds or any of the other euphemisms used by parts of the religious Zionist movement in its full Kahanist incarnation. Brutality is no longer confined to the margins or to the settlements and settlement outposts; it has spread in every direction. Terrifyingly, it has even penetrated the military, the Knesset and the cabinet.

Cabinet ministers and Knesset members joined the thousands of marchers, and some even danced to that bloody song of revenge, "Avenge but One of My Two Eyes upon Palestine," which speaks of the biblical Samson's revenge on the Philistines. Ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Miri Regev marched, as did lawmakers Tzvi Succot, Simcha Rothman and Almog Cohen, and of course the king of the Kahanists, Ben-Gvir, who took advantage of the opportunity to threaten the status quo on the Temple Mount (known to Muslims as Haram al-Sharif, the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque) and foment a religious war.

*If Israel's political center does not act to return the extremists to the margins of society, eliminate Kahanism and remove the malignant growth*

***of the occupation from the body politic, Israel's final fall will only be a matter of time. The countdown has begun.***