

## *How Netanyahu has put Israel in jeopardy*

by Azriel Bermant / Tuesday January 23, 2024

Violent discourse is deeply embedded in Israel. Its mainstream media rarely if ever broadcast images of the destruction in Gaza. The Israeli pop singer Eyal Golan called for the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to “wipe out Gaza and leave no one there”. The singer Kobi Peretz danced with soldiers who sang, “May your village burn.” Celebrities have contributed to the febrile atmosphere, but the Prime Minister’s allies have clearly fanned the flames.

At the end of 2022, Binyamin Netanyahu (known as “Bibi”) formed a government with extremist racist parties, including the party Jewish Power led by Itamar Ben-Gvir, a man who has openly supported terrorist attacks against Palestinians. Ben-Gvir is a disciple of Meir Kahane, a Jewish fascist and leader of the Kach party, which was banned in the late 1980s because of its racist policies. Kahane was ostracised across the political spectrum. But Ben Gvir was appointed as Israel’s minister of public security, putting him in charge of the police and giving him enforcement authority in the West Bank. His presence in the government has emboldened extreme ultra-nationalist settlers, who have stepped up their attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank. Netanyahu forged a pact with the far-Right in order to cement his political base and safeguard his political survival. But in doing so he has fanned the flames of poisonous incitement that is inviting legal jeopardy for Israel.

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