

Having trouble viewing? [View this mailing online.](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO THE FLAME HOTLINE DONATE TO FLAME



January 11, 2022



Scandal—and opportunity—erupt as Arab-Israeli lawmaker says it's time to accept Israel's Jewish identity

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Just a few weeks ago, member of the Israeli Knesset, Mansour Abbas—who is head of Israel's United Arab List party—said it's time for his countrymen to accept Israel's Jewish identity.

He was met by outrage—both from Arabs inside Israel and out—but he also received appreciation from Jewish Israelis and many of his fellow Arab-Israeli citizens.

Abbas' statement reflects a sea change in Israeli politics—a positive one.

At a conference organized by the *Globes* financial newspaper, Abbas broke new ground for an Israeli-Arab politician, noting that “The State of Israel was born as a Jewish state, and the question is how we integrate Arab society into it.”

He also said the country is “on the verge of a new era.” Abbas, who heads the first Arab party to join a governing coalition in Israel, stated that the country's Jewish identity is “the people's decision . . . [and] that's how it will remain.”

While the “overthrow” of Benjamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister by popular vote last March was momentous, perhaps an even more significant transformation in Israel’s government is this unique presence of an Arab party in the ruling coalition.

Israel may never be the same.

Not only does the current governing coalition incorporate parties ranging from Israel's hard left to the far right—unlikely as it seems—it also boldly (albeit of necessity) invited Mansour Abbas' United Arab List (UAL) party to join them.

Surprisingly, perhaps, both left- and right-leaning Israelis seem to take pride in

HOME

SUBSCRIBE

DONATE

PR FOR ISRAEL

HOTLINE ARCHIVE

ABOUT

CONTACT US

**THIS MONTH'S AD
APPEARED IN
PUBLICATIONS
REACHING 10 MILLION
READERS**



**IF YOU SUPPORT
PUBLISHING FLAME'S
BOLD PR MESSAGES,
PLEASE HELP US!!**

the new Arab presence in the government. Indeed, Abbas and his UAL may even have a leavening effect on normally bitter left-right animosities among the disparate Jewish parties.

What makes Abbas' presence in the government—let alone his statement accepting Israel's Jewish nature—so transformative is that it reflects in Israel's internal politics what the Abraham Accords symbolize in its global politics.

The Abraham Accords broke the chokehold held on Arab peace by the Palestinian Authority, which denied any possibility of reconciliation with Israel until the PA's intractable maximalist demands were met for a state with "1967 borders and a capital in Jerusalem."

Likewise, the Arab parties in Israel have *not only* never been invited to join a ruling government, they have *also* represented themselves as opposition to any Israeli government. The Arab-Israeli parties in Israel's Knesset (parliament) have generally participated in Israel's political system as a hostile force, seeming to protest Israel's very existence.

Mansour Abbas just broke that chokehold, by admitting the obvious: His fellow Arab-Israeli citizens will forever be a minority in Israel, and it's time they begin to work with that reality.

But make no mistake. Just as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (no relation) continues to rant his vitriolic condemnation of the Abraham Accords, he equally opposes Mansour Abbas' statement.

President Abbas condemned the current UAL leader, maintaining he represents only himself and not the Palestinian people. He said, "It is unfortunate that Mansour Abbas is adopting the false Israeli narrative instead of supporting his people's struggle," and accused the Arab-Israeli Knesset member of "falling in line with extremist elements in Israel."

Mansour Abbas' colleague, the former United Arab List chairman and Islamic Movement official Masoud Ghanaim shot back: "We in the movement and the party do not recognize the state as Jewish."

Both these statements reflect the impotence of the old guard. When the 86-year-old President Abbas leaves office, the Abraham Accords and the words of Mansour Abbas will potentially free his successor from chains of the Palestinian jihad his people have shackled themselves to for 74 years. Whether they will throw those chains down—and opt for peace with Israel, as well as greater independence and prosperity—remains to be seen.

Likewise, it's clear from a string of recent polls that most Arab-Israeli citizens agree with Mansour Abbas: They like living in Israel and want to make the most of it. They want representation, they want to participate in their future. Those Arab-Israeli Knesset politicians who resist embracing Israel's democracy may soon find themselves out of office.

To the credit of the Jewish parties in Israel's ruling coalition, they've shown admirable willingness to cooperate with Mansour Abbas in supporting

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

DONATE NOW »

 **SUBSCRIBE FREE**

**FLAME'S WEEKLY
HOTLINE
E-NEWSLETTER**



FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

SUBSCRIBE NOW »

significant initiatives to tangibly enhance Arab-Israeli society.

Both Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid have worked with Mansour Abbas to forge initiatives for improving policing in Arab population sectors, as well as speed integration of Arab-Israelis into the Start-Up Nation's economy.

In October, the Israeli cabinet passed two broad plans that would allocate over \$10 billion for Arab communities in fields from education to health to fighting crime.

Bennett said "Our goal is to reduce the gaps in education, welfare, women's employment and the economic-municipal sphere in particular." He continued, noting that, "As we deepen the math and science education in Arab society, we will increase the participation of Arabs in the high-tech market, and we will all benefit." The plan now goes to the Israeli Knesset, where it is intended to pass in rounds of budget negotiations.

While neither ruling-coalition kingpins Naftali Bennett nor Yair Lapid supports negotiations for a Palestinian state, it's clear that Arab-Israeli citizens have more to gain from accepting the Jewish state than trying to dismantle or destroy it.

Most importantly, the tools of democracy are in their hands. By seizing them and putting them to work—by following the example of Mansour Abbas—Arab-Israeli citizens stand every chance of creating one of the freest, most successful societies on earth for Arabs.

I hope you'll take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME's lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—which exposes "Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste" and those who support boycotts of the Jewish state.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, Ben & Jerry's recently announced that it would cease its contract with its Israeli affiliate because the affiliate refused to stop selling the company's ice cream in the ancient Jewish territories of Judea and Samaria. This move, championed by the company's anti-Israel board chair, is just the latest attempt to boycott the Jewish state—joining the BDS movement—which some 35 U.S. states consider illegal and anti-Semitic. To clarify this issue for the American people—including many Jews—FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called "[Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste](#)." I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which will run soon in the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and other media nationwide. It spells out why Ben & Jerry's should be held to account for this attempt to delegitimize the State of Israel. This piece will also be sent to all

members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider [giving a donation now](#), as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting anti-Semitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline [at no charge](#) every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively tell the truth about Israel? Just go to [free subscription](#).



Facts and Logic
About the Middle East
PO Box 3460
Berkeley, CA 94703

Copyright 2022 FLAME. All rights reserved.

[Unsubscribe](#)