

North American Jews are being given redemptive opportunities at one time thought unfathomable. The opportunities should not be missed.

By Eric Resnick, Co-chair, CPA Middle East Committee

The May 27 op-ed by former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert in Haaretz has highlighted a phenomenon we have been seeing unfold for a few weeks. People are finally finding the space and the courage to call the genocide we see unfolding in Gaza exactly what it is. The list includes former Israeli Defense Forces chief of staff Yair Golan, saying, “A sane country does not fight against civilians, does not kill babies as a hobby, and does not give itself the aim of expelling populations.” Obama’s deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes, who formerly backed Israel, called Gaza “unimaginably worse” than he thought, and called for it to stop. Biden’s State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller admitted to denying Israel’s war crimes while he held that position. An open letter signed by 350 celebrities May 12, including Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon, Mark Ruffalo and Laura Poitras said, “Let us reject the propaganda that colonizes our imaginations and makes us lose our sense of humanity.” Even influencer Piers Morgan has had a change of heart, admitting that he was wrong about defending Israel on his show. Olmert, a founding member of Netanyahu’s Likud Party air brushes Israel’s history of war crimes and his role in them, but apparently what we see in Gaza now is too much

even for him. Calling the IDF actions in Gaza an “illegitimate military campaign,” and admitting to his previous denial, he continued, “In recent weeks I have been unable to [deny]. What we are doing in Gaza is a war of extermination: indiscriminate, unrestrained, brutal, and criminal killing of civilians.” Olmert wrote that Israel is deliberately starving Gaza “as part of a declared policy.” “Yes, we are committing war crimes,” he concluded. More recently even the New York Times, with its well-documented pro-Israel bias, has begun using the G-word, which appeared in a July 15 op-ed by Omer Bartov. Bartov, a Brown University professor of Holocaust and Genocide studies, who lived in Israel and served in the IDF, and who penned an earlier Times op-ed denying genocide in Gaza, wrote, “My inescapable conclusion has become that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people.” “This was a painful conclusion to reach, and I resisted as long as I could,” Bartov wrote, “but I have been teaching classes on genocide for a quarter of a century. I can recognize one when I see one.” Jewish actor and reliable Zionist activist Mandy Patinkin is even offended by the genocide he sees, and arguably more offended that Jews are supporting it. His emotional video has gone viral. Whether intentional or not Olmert and the others have given North American rank-and-file Jews an opportunity that should not be missed. Zionist Jewish congregations have been adding the singing of the Israeli national anthem, Hatikvah, to their Shabbat services in a

grotesque display of genocide support. Every week Jewish Federations, which are the Israel Lobby and government in communities, include a message to membership that begins, "Jewish Federations stand in total and complete solidarity with Israel." It makes no difference to them what Israel does. They even ask for donations to support it. Israel engages in a policy of strategic starvation; it's total and complete solidarity. Israel drops 2,000-pound bombs on starving refugees in tents; it's total and complete solidarity. Israeli snipers pick off starving people waiting in food lines, it's total and complete solidarity. The Penn State/Haaretz poll found that 82% of Israelis, including 69% of secular Jews, support expulsion of all Palestinians from Gaza. 47% support killing all Palestinians in Gaza. This Genocide is far from condemned or even cursed among Zionist Jews in North America. There is no limit to the Israeli depravity congregations and Federations support with total and complete solidarity. If Jews are uncomfortable with that but have been silent for whatever reason, Olmert and the rest give you an opening to express yourself, and you should take it. Zionist leadership is toxic and dangerous, and incriminating all of us. It's okay to reject them publicly. Omar El Akkad wrote a book on the Gaza genocide titled "One Day; Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This." Zionist leadership will try to deny their solidarity with genocide by then too. They will not want to be social pariahs. Their contemporary statements of solidarity

incriminate all Jews and will forever haunt those who got along by going along. Olmert, Bartov and the rest give you an opportunity. Take it. _____ Eric Resnick is a lifelong resident of Canton and longtime Jewish anti-Zionist activist. He co-chairs Cleveland Peace Action's Middle East Committee and is a long-time member of Jewish Voice for Peace