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exposé reveals the money machine behind Israel's 2023 protests

Documents submitted to the Israeli Registrar of Nonprofits by Blue White Future are one of the most expensive political campaigns in Israeli history.

by Kor Rishon — Published on 02-17-2025 01:55 — Last modified: 02-17-2025 09:04



AP / Ohad Zwigenberg

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An unprecedented sum of \$33.8 million directly funded the campaign and protest demonstrations against the judicial reform. The entire amount channeled through a single nonprofit organization. While right-wing critics had repeatedly claimed these protests were not spontaneous but rather a planned campaign supported by substantial funding, newly revealed documents now provide concrete evidence of the scale of financial backing.



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Analysis of documents submitted to the Israeli Registrar of Nonprofits by Blue White Future confirms this as one of the most expensive political campaigns in Israeli history. The invested sum of over 120 million shekels stands unmatched compared to other social advocacy organizations. Approximately half the funds supported field organizations orchestrating nationwide demonstrations, while the remainder financed public relations professionals and media campaigns across traditional and social platforms.

Blue White Future distributed funds to various organizations including Brothers in Arms, Bonot Alternativa ("Women Building an Alternative") – which organized the "Handmaid's March" – and numerous other protest groups, including those in academia. Documents exposed on the Mida website additionally reveal the organization's engagement of a Washington public relations firm for a three-month period at 75,000 dollars, specifically to advance its positions with the Biden administration.

Founded in 2009 as "Blue White Peace" before quickly adopting its current name, the organization's stated mission focuses on advancing a two-state solution to preserve Israel's Jewish and democratic character. Key figures include Orni Petruschka, Attorney Gilead Sher – former chief of staff to Ehud Barak and Oslo/Camp David negotiating team member – and Ami Ayalon, who previously headed the Shin Bet and served in the Labor Party.

The organization maintained relatively modest operations for most of its existence, with annual donations ranging from 150,000 to 1 million shekels. A notable expansion occurred in 2020 during protests against the sovereignty initiative in Judea and Samaria, though the budget remained under 7 million shekels, primarily from US sources.

The dramatic escalation in both activities and funding emerged in 2023. According to Attorney Sher, prominent activists including Shikma Bressler, Ilan Shiloah, Dan Halutz, and Orni Petruschka convened on December 14, 2022 – after the right's electoral victory but before the new government's installation – to establish the "Steering Committee of the Campaign Headquarters." From January 2023, the organization substantially expanded its operations, hiring executive staff and collaborating with various partners. It later modified its bylaws to provide members with insurance and legal protection against potential lawsuits.

