

The longer Iran waits, the more risks it takes

Tehran weighs attacking Israel via Iraq, but lacks aerial defenses due to Israel's assault

Analysis Amos Harel

The Iranian window of opportunity is narrowing. Over the last few days, the regime in Tehran has been threatening to attack Israel in retaliation for the latest Israeli assault on October 26 (which itself was retaliation for the Iranian attack on October 1).

On Tuesday, the United States will be holding its presidential election. In the days surrounding the election (both before and after the day itself), the Iranians seem to be taking more risks. If they decide to act, the Israeli response is likely to be strong, and the signals from Washington are that it will come with American backing.

In the days following the Israeli attack, the Iranian regime made a great effort to downplay its importance and convince the public that the Israeli Air Force had failed in its mission. But the truth was more in line with the Israeli estimates of serious damage to Iran's air defense systems and missile and drone production lines. Western intelligence services and media have gradually reached this conclusion, too.

Accordingly, the character of the regime's public

declarations changed. The last few days have seen Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and other senior officials issue a series of statements threatening imminent revenge.

By contrast, Israeli leaders have warned the Iranians that Israel will immediately retaliate. Israeli sources have noted that the

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absence of functional air defenses (the consequence of Israel's last assault), Iran will struggle to protect itself. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last week at an army officers' course graduation ceremony that Israel would strike Iran's "soft underbelly" and that today it has more freedom of operation than ever to attack. "We can reach everywhere in Iran, as needed," he said.

Meanwhile, the United States, which is beefing up its defensive and offensive

capabilities in the Middle East (among other things, B-52 heavy bombers have been deployed in Qatar), warned Iran that it would not be able to restrain Israel, if it were attacked.

According to a U.S. media report, the Biden administration believes the Iranian attack will come this time from Iraq in an attempt to obscure to a degree Tehran's responsibility. The Shiite militias in Iraq funded by Iran have ballistic missiles, drones and cruise missiles. To date, they have launched a small number of drones at Israel. The militia can launch a relatively large attack, in the spirit of October 1, although such a strike would constitute a considerable act of escalation from Tehran's point of view.

Israel's defense establishment believes that Tehran has committed itself to retaliate at some as yet unspecified date due to the severity of the blow it suffered October 26 and its fear that the Iranian public will interpret non-retaliation as a sign of weakness.

The Israeli-American deployment should ensure the Iranian attack will be intercepted relatively successfully. And yet, the risk is significant. An Israeli

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Protesters demanding a hostage deal in Tel Aviv, Sunday.

Hadas Parush

Court: Documents leaked through PMO could have hindered Gaza hostage release

Bar Peleg

A Rishon Letzion court ruled on Sunday that the leak of military intelligence from the Israel Defense Forces to the Prime Minister's Office, and subsequently to foreign media outlets, could have harmed the security services' ability to secure the release of the hostages held in Gaza by Hamas.

The court allowed the

publication of the name of Eli Feldstein, the spokesperson in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's circle who is suspected in the case. It was also revealed that the three other detainees being questioned are members of the security establishment.

During a hearing, the attorney for one of the suspects stated that his client passed information about

the hostages to Feldstein, believing the prime minister needed to be aware of it.

"This was to ensure that whoever is making decisions about the hostages has all the relevant information," said attorney Micha Patman. He added that his client conveyed the information "through the channel that reached the Prime Minister's Office, the channel of the person who is currently

detained [Feldstein]."

Feldstein's attorney, Oded Savoray, noted during the hearing that he has not been able to meet with his client since the arrest. "The only source of information I have is the media, which has been receiving leaks from the investigation," he said.

Feldstein, whose detention was extended until Tuesday, is being treated as a security detainee by the Shin Bet se-

curity service, which is leading the investigation.

The main suspicion in the case is that Feldstein unlawfully received highly classified documents from members of the security establishment, which later surfaced in international media with a slanted interpretation that aligned with the narrative of Netanyahu

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Ministers advance Haredi 'daycare bill' despite attorney general's warning

Chen Maanit and Noa Shpigel

The Ministerial Committee for Legislation passed on Sunday the so-called daycare bill, which would allow subsidized tuition at daycare centers for families of yeshiva students without their reporting for military service, contrary to the attorney general's stance.

Ahead of the committee's meeting, Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara sent a legal opinion to Justice Minister Yariv Levin, asserting that the bill is unconstitutional and should be withdrawn.

The opinion states that the proposed legislation "will encourage draft evasion" and "will harm those serving." It also determined that the bill is intended to circumvent the

Supreme Court ruling establishing that the state can no longer exempt ultra-Orthodox men from being drafted.

The bill stipulates that for the purpose of daycare admission for toddlers, only the mother's employment status would be considered, regardless of whether the father

has fulfilled his obligatory military service. It was proposed after Baharav-Miara's directive to the state to stop providing daycare funding to yeshiva students who are eligible for military service.

That directive was issued after the Supreme Court's June ruling that the state

can no longer exempt ultra-Orthodox men from military service, and that it can no longer fund yeshivas and adult kollels whose students have not received military exemptions.

"A law passed by the Knesset cannot be considered constitutional when

its implication is a violation of the principle of equality, while promoting state-sponsored and institutionalized avoidance of military service," stated the legal opinion drafted by Deputy Attorneys General Avital Sompolsky and Gil Limon for Levin, with Baharav-Mi-

ara's approval. According to the opinion, "The proposed arrangement violates equality among parents who need daycare subsidies, in a way that amplifies the inequality in burden-sharing compared to those who serve."

It also says that the bill is intended to overcome the state's failure to draft yeshiva students despite the expiration of the military

exemption law and the Supreme Court's ruling on the matter. "It is not legally possible to advance the proposed legislation, as its purpose is to enable daycare subsidies for families where the mother works and the father is required to serve but does not report for military service, choosing instead to

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Ben-Gvir aide queries cop at home before promotion News Page 2

Key House races where Jewish/Israel issues could play a big role



Photos: Josh Namdar, Marti Bug C

Ben Samuels

WASHINGTON - With so much attention being dedicated to the neck-and-neck nature of the 2024 U.S. presidential race, it would be easy to overlook just how competitive this year's congressional elections are. They will determine whether the Republicans maintain their hold on the U.S. House of Representatives or whether the Democrats will manage to reclaim it after two years in the minority.

Like the presidential election, many of these races are placing a rare focus on Israel as a key differentiating issue. Republicans have often used Democrats' wavering support for Israel's conduct in Gaza as a political weapon, while Democrats are often playing up Republicans' failure to speak out against far-right extremism under Donald Trump.

Like in previous elections, the Jewish electorate is expected to play an outsized role in electing U.S. lawmakers

based on the community's active voter participation - all the more important in several key districts where they make up a decent portion of the population.

The following are key races to track on Election Day with the Middle East, anti-Semitism and the Jewish vote expected to play a key role.

Arizona

Rep. David Schweikert (R) vs. Amish Shah (D) Rep. Juan Ciscomani (R)

vs. Kirsten Engel (D)

Jews make up approximately 9 percent of voters in Arizona's 1st Congressional District, which holds Phoenix's suburbs. Shah is running after defeating Andrei Cherny, the Jewish grandchild of Holocaust survivors who would have been a big addition to the Democrats' pro-Israel flank. Schweikert, a member of the House Freedom Caucus, spearheaded legislation after October 7 aiming to divert \$6 billion in unfrozen Iranian assets toward Israel aid. He would later oppose supplemental assistance to Israel, however, after the proposed money failed to be provided by offset cuts to the IRS. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee has been his second largest PAC contributor, behind only Club For Growth - an anti-tax initiative largely bankrolled by GOP megadonor Jeff Yass.

While Ciscomani's 6th Congressional District, which includes Tucson and Pima County, holds the state's third-largest Jewish population, Israel-related interest groups are playing an unexpectedly significant role in determining one of the most important swing races

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Amit Segal scrutinized Journalist may be implicated in PM security leak

Trump engaging with Arab voters Here's why Netanyahu's still rooting for him



Julia Demaree Nikhinson/AP

haaretz.com

Including child of Palestinian collaborator

Be'er Sheva illegally bars kids without legal status from school

Eden Solomon

The Be'er Sheva municipality is refusing to register children without legal status in Israel in the city's schools, removing some of them from schools they already attend, in violation of the law regulating compulsory schooling. This law stipulates that every child residing in Israel is entitled to attend a school, regardless of his or her legal status. The municipality argues that it is abiding by the law, while the Education Ministry says that "these children's right to attend school is under investigation."

In one instance, the city's education department decided to suspend three children who have no legal status from schools in the city, even though they've been attending these schools since reaching the relevant age. The three, 13-year-old twins and their 17-year-old sister, were born in Israel to a mother who was born in the Gaza Strip. The mother has been living in Israel since 2000, when she arrived here with her family after her father had collaborated with Israel, thereby endangering their lives in the Gaza Strip.

The mother, Noor (all



Kids in Segev Shalom in the Negev.

Ilan Assayag

names in this story changed), got married in Israel and had five children before getting divorced. She currently raises the children on her own. She says that the state gave her parents Israeli citizenship, but she only received a temporary identity card. Noor says that for years, the Population and Immigration Authority posed many difficulties when she tried to renew the card, turning her into a person devoid of legal status. Her children also received temporary cards when they were born, but she has not managed to renew them over the last four years,

turning the children, too, into persons with no legal status. Her twin boys, who were supposed to begin grade 8 this year, attended a city school last year. Mid-year, a representative of the city's education department asked Noor to present their identity cards, attesting to their status. When he saw that Noor and her children have no legal standing in this country, he determined that they could not continue studying at that school. After the intervention of a teacher and a social worker at the school,

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# Jaffa light rail shooters had planned to attack soccer stadium

Josh Breiner

An indictment filed Sunday against three people charged with aiding the shooters in the October attack in a Jaffa light rail station says the assailants intended to attack a soccer match at nearby Bloomfield Stadium.

The three suspects, all residents of East Jerusalem, allegedly drove the assailants after they had entered Israel from the West Bank without a permit. The State Prosecutor's Office has charged them with negligent manslaughter and several other offenses.

Seven people were killed in the attack, and 16 others were wounded. The assailants, Ahmad Himoni and Muhammad Masak, both in their 20s and residents of Hebron, used a rifle and a knife to kill and wound passengers and bystanders. One was shot and killed at the scene, while the other was seriously wounded.

According to the indictment, the two entered Israel without permits along with other Palestinians. It also said the M-16 assault rifle

used in the attack had been disassembled and concealed in a backpack with labels in Hebrew reading "young field education and Land of Israel studies guides."

The three defendants, employees of the company Hamudi Transportation, allegedly transported the assailants from East Jerusalem's Sur Baher neighborhood to Tel Aviv in a company vehicle, with one of the defendants instructing all passengers to turn off their phones.

According to the indictment, the terrorists originally planned to carry out the attack at Bloomfield Stadium. Upon reaching the location, they asked the driver, who has also been charged, if a soccer game was being held and were told there wasn't.

The attackers then went to the light rail station on Jaffa's Jerusalem Boulevard, where they began their killing spree, one of them shooting and the other stabbing. The surviving attacker admitted during his interrogation that they had initially intended to commit the attack at Bloomfield Stadium.



Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon on Saturday.

IDF Spokesperson's Unit

# Nahariya resident, 57, dies of wounds from rocket barrage

Yaniv Kubovich, Adi Hashmonai, Fadi Amun and Reuters

A 57-year-old Nahariya man, Edward Sloslov, died from wounds sustained from a rocket barrage last week, it was announced Sunday.

The IDF announced that a soldier was killed by a grenade explosion in the northern Gaza Strip Friday night into Saturday. The military is investigating the incident. His name was not released. The IDF said that two

drones were launched at northern Israel from Lebanon on Sunday night.

According to the army, one crashed in an open area near northern Israel's Eliakim, and the other was intercepted by an Israeli navy missile boat off the coast of Caesarea before it entered Israeli territory.

Firefighters were working to extinguish a fire that broke out as a result of the drone hit near Eliakim, the IDF added. The IDF announced Sunday that Israeli forces cap-

tured an operative of Iran's terrorist infrastructure in Syria in recent months, and that he is currently being investigated in Israel.

The IDF named the operative as Ali Suleiman Al Atzi, a Syrian citizen who lives in southern Syria.

He was recruited by Iran and became involved in gathering intelligence on IDF forces on the Syria-Israel border for future terrorist activity, the army said.

The IDF added that the operation to detain Al Atzi

exposed the methods of Iranian agents on the Golan Heights front.

A dialogue among Palestinian factions in Cairo has been "positive", senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan told the Palestinian group's Al Aqsa TV on Sunday, though he added that he did not want to rush to any conclusions.

Hamdan also said that Hamas had not received any new written proposals regarding a possible ceasefire in Gaza.

## PMO

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Judge Menachem Mizrahi of the Rishon Lezion Magistrate's Court stated "there was a serious risk of harm to state security and to information sources." He mentioned that the Shin Bet, the IDF, and the police initially conducted a joint covert investigation, which became public as the suspicion solidified.

"The investigation is ongoing, and any further publication could damage the investigation, its objectives, and state security," Mizrahi said.

He further clarified, "I have reviewed the investigation materials and the conduct, and I am convinced that this is a thorough and highly professional investigation

that should be allowed to proceed to its conclusion."

Einav Zangauker, whose son Matan is being held captive in Gaza by Hamas, spoke during the hearing and appealed to the judge to allow the publication of details related to the document leak from Netanyahu's office. "The public deserves to know what is happening in the inner workings of the prime minister's circle," she said.

Two of Netanyahu's close advisers, Yonatan Orlich and Ofer Golan, were seen hours before the court session leaving the office of attorney Amit Hadad, who represents Netanyahu in his corruption cases. They claimed their meeting was related to a hearing scheduled for Wednesday regarding charges of witness harassment in Case 4000, involving Shlomo Filber, the former Commu-

nications Ministry director general. This marks their second meeting with Hadad in the past week.

Opposition leader Yair Lapid and chairman of the National Unity party Benny Gantz delivered a joint statement in Tel Aviv on Sunday slamming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu following the leak of security documents from his office.

Lapid said that "this affair came from the Prime Minister's Office, and the investigation should check whether it was on his order or not. If Netanyahu knew, he is complicit in one of the most serious security offenses in the law. If Netanyahu didn't know, then what does he know? If it's true, he's not fit for office." Gantz added that contrary to the impression they are trying to create in Netanyahu's office, "it is

not a question of a suspected leak – but of peddling of state secrets for political needs. If sensitive security information is stolen, and becomes a tool in a political campaign, this is not only a criminal offense, it is a national crime."

The Hostages and Missing Families Forum issued a statement following the publication of Feldstein's name, saying that "the attack against the hostages and their families has an address ... there are motives that constitute a real concern that the security of the state and the goals of the war have been harmed." According to the forum, "the suspicions indicate that people associated with the prime minister acted to carry out one of the biggest deceptions in [the public's] consciousness in the history of the country."

"A country that abandoned

its citizens, who became victims of brutal kidnappings, is actually working to discredit them, to undermine public opinion on the obligation to return them, as if they were the nation's enemy," the forum added. On Friday, the court allowed the publication that several individuals, including a spokesperson from Netanyahu's office, had been arrested on suspicion of unlawfully leaking classified documents. In response to petitions from Haaretz – represented by attorney Tali Lieblach – and other media outlets, Judge Mizrahi partially lifted the gag order and wrote that the investigation concerns "the risk to sensitive information and sources, as well as the impact on achieving the objectives of the war in Gaza." The security cabinet had defined one of these objectives as "resolving the

hostage issue." Last week, Haaretz reported that the Prime Minister's Office employed a spokesperson who had failed a security clearance process but continued to work on security matters.

The spokesperson was part of Netanyahu's entourage. Security officials have recently expressed concern about the handling of classified documents following reports in international media that appeared to rely on leaked Hamas documents and supported Netanyahu's stance on hostage negotiations. The first report, in the British-Jewish newspaper The Jewish Chronicle, turned out to be false; the second, in the German newspaper Bild, drew significant ire from security officials, leading the IDF to launch an investigation into the source of the leak.

## AG

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pursue religious studies," the opinion states.

The legal opinion clarified that to avoid the financial consequences arising from the expiration of the military service exemption law, the government must either adhere to the Supreme Court ruling on mandatory universal conscription or "legislate a new law that meets the required legal standards."

In the letter, the attorney general clarified that the way to avoid the financial consequences of the exemption law's expiration is to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling regarding universal conscription duty, "or alternatively, to legislate a new arrangement that meets the required legal standards."

Baharav-Miara noted that



Attorney General Baharav-Miara  
Oren Ben-Hakoun

no such arrangement has been presented so far and that "the government has refrained from clarifying what constitutional arrangement it envisions that would meet these legal standards while addressing the military's growing needs."

Minister Ofir Sofer of Religious Zionism said Sunday in an interview with the Kan public broadcaster that he

would not support the daycare bill unless he sees "substantial progress on the conscription issue." He added, "We need combat soldiers now, this isn't something that can be pushed off. We all need to wake up to this reality."

Leader of the United Right party Gideon Sa'ar announced that his faction will vote against the law. According to Sa'ar, "Legislating this law in the current state of affairs will send a message that encourages the evasion of IDF service, and will assist in doing so. We cannot harm the value of IDF service, the servicemen [and women] and their families who carry the heavy burden of the country's security on their shoulders."

"If the proposal approved today [Sunday] by the Ministerial Committee for Legislation is brought to a vote in the Knesset – we will vote against it," Sa'ar wrote in a post on X.

He also noted that the government has not yet settled many details, but the main obstacle is the Israeli demand for the right to militarily enforce an agreement in the event that the Lebanese violate it (for

## RISKS

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response that takes advantage of the opportunity to strike at more of Iran's strategic assets could prolong and intensify the conflict, which has been going on and off for more than a month.

What will probably not be achieved in the window of opportunity before the U.S. election is an agreement to end the war in Lebanon. The Biden administration sent emissaries to the region and issued rosy predictions of success, but it is evident that the differences in the positions of the parties involved remain substantial. They have yet to settle many details, but the main obstacle is the Israeli demand for the right to militarily enforce an agreement in the event that the Lebanese violate it (for

example, if armed Hezbollah men are deployed south of the Litani River).

Although military leaders believe they are close to completing the operation's main goal of destroying Hezbollah's infrastructure in the first line of border villages, it is doubtful whether a cease-fire can be reached in the immediate future.

The efforts to reach a cease-fire will also continue during the lame duck period in Washington, between Tuesday's elections and the inauguration of the new president into the White House on January 20.

### Sensitive intel leaks

The Rishon Lezion Magistrate's Court on Sunday extended the remand of one of Netanyahu's spokesmen, Eli Feldstein, and two other suspects in the affair involving leaked intelligence from the IDF to the Prime

Minister's Office and from there to foreign media. The court lifted some of the gag orders it had issued in regard to the affair but kept in the dark some of the suspects' names. A fourth suspect was released.

The affair, which the Shin Bet security service is investigating, focuses on allegations that especially sensitive intelligence was taken from the army without authorization. The detainees are suspected of passing the information to the spokesman, who allegedly leaked to foreign media outlets in an attempt to influence Israeli public opinion about the hostage negotiations with Hamas.

It is believed that that raw intelligence leaked from the IDF distorted some of the details as part of a campaign to manipulate public opinion. The defense establishment engages in campaigns of its own

# Ben-Gvir's top aide queries cop at home prior to promotion

Josh Breiner

About a month before National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir decided to promote a senior police officer to head the Police Operations Division, his chief of staff met and interviewed the officer, Haaretz has learned.

In July, Hanamel Dorfman, Ben-Gvir's chief of staff, visited Maj. Gen. David Filo at his home in the central Israeli city of Modi'in, while Filo was serving as the deputy commander of the police Central District.

During this visit, they held a lengthy meeting that police sources described as "an audition in every respect."

According to the sources, Dorfman inquired about Filo's personal background, his family, and his aspirations for advancement within the police.

A senior police official said that Dorfman is involved "in every single appointment ... even at the lower ranks," and that he even participates in Ben-Gvir's personal meetings with officers.

"Since when does a minister's chief of staff visit his senior officers at their homes, especially someone who was a Shin Bet person of interest just a few years ago?" the senior official asked. "How could an officer possibly say 'no' to them?"

"They're doing whatever they want with the police. When someone like [Dorfman] pays a visit to a senior officer's home, the message is clear. In these meetings, they want to see who's on their side," he added.

According to multiple senior sources, Dorfman maintains direct contact with senior police officers and is regarded as one of the most influential figures in the National Security Ministry and within the police force, particularly after the appointment of Police Commissioner Danny Levy, which was made at the direction of Ben-Gvir and his office.

Multiple sources told Haaretz that Dorfman was directly involved in the recent extensive reshuffling of senior police appointments, in which all officers at the rank of major general were replaced.

Dorfman is a former far-right activist who was con-

sidered a person of interest by the Shin Bet's Jewish terror division. He was arrested multiple times and was subject to an administrative order that prohibited him from entering the West Bank.

After failing to enlist in the military, Dorfman pursued a law degree. Upon graduating, he interned at Ben-Gvir's law firm, where he went on to work as an attorney.

Dorfman is also the son-in-law of far-right Activist Benzi Gopstein – one of Ben-Gvir's close advisers and the head of the violent racist group LeHava – who was recently convicted of incitement to racism and was subject to sanctions by the Biden administration.

Last year, Haaretz reported that Dorfman participated in interviews conducted by Ben-Gvir with senior officers slated for promotion, in contrast to the usual practice of previous ministers, who held these meetings one-on-one.

Filo is known as a respected police officer and was a top candidate for promotion to the rank of major general. Before his appointment as the head of the operations division, he served as the deputy commander of the Central District and, before that, as Tel Aviv District deputy commander. He was unexpectedly reassigned from the Tel Aviv District after holding several important roles in it.

A senior police official described Filo as "one of the most principled officers in the force," but added that his meeting with Ben-Gvir "should not have taken place."

Ben-Gvir praised Filo during a police promotion ceremony last month. "The more you get to know this person, the more you fall in love with the seriousness and dedication to his work," Ben-Gvir said of Filo.

"Filo, the operations division is the heart that pumps blood into the veins, and it must be more alive and vibrant than ever," he added.

The police said in response that "The esteemed officer was appointed by the Commissioner...based on the latter's familiarity with the officer and his great appreciation for the officer's work throughout his years of service."

Ben-Gvir's office did not reply to a request for comment.

## SCHOOL

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the twins were allowed to remain in school. A month later, they were again forbidden to attend, and since then they have not attended school. "We're home all day, doing nothing," says one of the twins. "I don't have an option of studying on my own or making up the material, since I was removed from the class WhatsApp group."

Last year, their sister, who has special needs, attended the Dekalim School for children with special needs, but at the beginning of this year she was prohibited from con-

tinuing there. Noor, a single mother, says she has to go to work, since there is no other provider, and the children remain at home alone. She has rent to pay and many expenses, with the children having their own needs. "It's hard for them to be at home all day. Sometimes I tell them to try and study math online, but it's impossible without a school."

### Ministry not involved

Ibrahim, an Israeli citizen, has encountered similar obstacles to those encountered by Noor. His three children were born in Israel to a mother born in Hebron, and they are also without legal status. The family recently moved from the Segev Shalom regional council to

Be'er Sheva, with the aim of giving the children a better education. One of the main reasons for moving was their wish that the children attend a bilingual school, attended by Jews, Muslims and Christians, says Ibrahim.

In August, ahead of their move, Ibrahim went to the municipality to register his children, ages 7, 9 and 11, in a municipal school. He was told that he first has to rent a home in the city and register his address in the city. He gave the city his rental contract and his property tax and utility bills, proving that the family was living in the city, but then a new demand cropped up. "Without changing the address in their ID cards, the children cannot be placed in a city school," said

the municipality in their letter. The Education Ministry specifically says that ID details are not a prerequisite for school registration, and that a rental contract or property tax bill are sufficient. In any case, the relevant law requires that the children be registered regardless of their circumstances.

In a similar case last year, the municipality refused to register two children ages 3 and 6, claiming that they do not appear in the country's population registry and do not have an ID number. The two were born in Israel to a mother with Israeli citizenship and a father who was born under Palestinian Authority jurisdiction. The children had no legal standing since their father was not

an Israeli citizen.

Their mother Maryam, who lives in Be'er Sheva, turned to the city's education department several times last year in order to register her children, but was turned away. She referred the city to the ministry's circular obliging local authorities to register any child under their jurisdiction. She was told that the circular refers to refugees, and asked her to send a document from the Interior Ministry describing the children's status. "The children cannot be registered without an identity card," she was told. Following the intervention of attorney Reut Shaer from the Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), including threats of legal action, the municipality agreed

to register the two children, after they had missed school for six months.

ACRI says there were at least five other such cases last year, with the city cancelling registration or refusing to register children with no legal status in its schools. ACRI turned this month to the Education Ministry's legal adviser, attorney Eilat Cohen-Melkman, and to the director of the ministry's southern division, Miri Navon, demanding that they instruct the municipality to urgently register children who themselves or whose parents have no legal status. They also demanded that the Be'er Sheva Municipality stop posing bureaucratic demands, including produc-

ing unrequired documents, which delay the children's registration. ACRI's letter says the ministry was aware of the municipality's wrongful conduct but refrained from intervening and exercising its authority. ACRI threatened to take legal action if this was not addressed.

ACRI also said that the city had claimed that no harm was done to the children, and that raising this issue during a war was "wasting the city's precious time, bordering on harassment." The municipality also argued that there was a "lacuna" in the law, and that this should be amended so that only the Interior Ministry would determine a person's legal status, and that only a person approved by the

ministry could register for school. "Education services are intended for citizens, or at least for people with formal standing or a temporary residence permit," said the city.

The Education Ministry said, "The placement of children in schools is under the jurisdiction of local authorities. We found that the status of the children in these cases was under investigation by these authorities. At the end of this process, the ministry will examine their decision."

The ministry and municipality refused to explain why they were claiming to abide by the law, which explicitly determines that anyone from age 3 and up is entitled to attend a recognized school regardless of his or her status, or that of their parents.

## Sister of oldest hostage, 86:

## ‘Public has normalized situation since the Lebanon fighting began’

Eden Solomon

Eighty-six-year-old Shlomo Mansour is the oldest hostage still held by Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He is the only one from Kissufim, a kibbutz near the Gaza border, and he has, like the other 100 remaining hostages, spent 394 days in captivity.

Mansour's family has not received any sign that he's alive since he was abducted on October 7. "At first, when we realized he had been taken hostage, we felt some relief," says Shlomo's sister, Hadassah Lazar. "We said to ourselves, 'At least he wasn't murdered,' and we were confident that they would release the hostages within two weeks."

"We were optimistic," she says. "But now, I feel we're not even at the starting point of bringing the hostages back. I don't see the end."

Mansour was born in Baghdad, Iraq, and survived the Farhud – a murderous pogrom against Iraqi Jews in 1941 – when he was only three years old. "He saw attackers break into their home and shoot his dog, which tried to protect them," Lazar says. "He then ran up to the roof, where he witnessed horrific scenes: an infant being abused while the mother pleaded for her baby's life, and brutal attacks on others," she says. "Everything that happened in the Farhud was an exact parallel to what occurred in the kibbutzim [near the Gaza border] on October 7 – people were murdered, raped and tortured."

Mansour and his family immigrated to Israel in 1951. They endured harsh circumstances after settling in transit camps in Atlit, south of Haifa, and later in the Talpiot transit camp in Jerusalem. "Youth movement represen-



Hadassah Lazar with a photo of her brother, Shlomo Mansour, last week.

Olivier Fitoussi

tatives came to encourage young people to join kibbutzim, and Shlomo, wanting to lift the burden from himself and his parents – who were living together in cramped quarters – chose to go to Kissufim," Lazar says.

"Shlomo was among the founders of Kissufim," she continues. "He was a skilled carpenter, a strong man who took good care of his health and rode his bike up until the day he was taken hostage."

Lazar says her brother was underweight at the time of his abduction and was worried about his health.

Mazal, Mansour's wife, was with him when he was taken hostage on October 7. "They struck him, tied him

up and abducted him in his car," Lazar says. "Mazal managed to escape to a neighbor's shelter room, but Shlomo was taken. Since then, we haven't received any sign of life from him – a fact that keeps all of us awake at night."

Lazar says the stalled hostage negotiations are destroying the families' lives. "It's like a game of ping-pong: you go back and forth, traveling to Doha, talking, coming back and then something else falls through and [the talks] derail," she says.

"It's making our lives incredibly difficult; everything has been turned upside down. We have no sense of day or night. We have no con-

trol anymore. Routine has become meaningless.

"We do have brief moments of cautious hope," she says, "but then something is said that deflates us completely. Like what [Bezalel] Smotrich and [Tamar] Ben-Gvir say – that they prefer to complete all the war's [military objectives] before discussing a hostage deal. The level of frustration makes me climb the walls."

Lazar believes public attention to the hostages' plight has reached "emotional burnout." "It feels like the situation has become normalized. Since the fighting in Lebanon began, the hostages have been pushed aside," she says. "It seems the public has

grown weary, too. Hearing about the hostages over and over, some people might even be tired of listening. But I always say: imagine if it were someone from your own family."

Sometimes, she feels like she's shouting into the wind, she says. "I beg them to prioritize the hostages, to focus solely on them. During the memorial ceremonies, I cried out: 'Set everything else aside and dedicate all resources to freeing the hostages.'"

"To anyone trying to obstruct a deal, I say: imagine your grandfather being held there," she adds. "If it were someone from your family, I know you'd do everything possible to bring them home."

## Psychiatric patients in open wards to pay for medications

Ido Efrati

Mental health patients are required to take psychiatric medications as a condition for hospitalization in psychiatric wards and as a condition for receiving the rehabilitation basket state the findings of a unique study carried out in Israel. The study, which deals with informed consent for accepting medications and the right of psychiatric patients to choose, also found that, in many cases, psychiatrists avoid providing patients with explanations and information about the medications' serious side effects and their efficacy rates.

"At first glance, it's possible that quite a few people may find it natural that patients in the psychiatric system can be given medication without consent," says Dr. Nili Karako-Eyal, an expert on law and health at the College of Management and one of the study's authors. "But Section 13 of the Patients' Rights Law prescribes obtaining informed consent, even in the case of medications." However, the study findings indicate that patients do not receive explanations about the risks of the treatment, its side effects, chances of success, withdrawal, and alternative therapies.

The study was based on interviews with 20 mental health patients who received voluntary psychiatric treatment for at least three years. The interviewees also spoke about a subjective experience of a lack of free will. They said that their requests for psychiatric rehabilitation services or admission to an open psychiatric ward were sometimes conditioned on taking anti-psychotic medications. The study was recently published in the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal of the American Psychological Association (APA).

The study also states that a particularly strong effect is "the provision of non-

consensual treatment – frequently at open psychiatric wards where patients were apparently voluntarily hospitalized." Some interviewees described a dynamic in which the alternative to not consenting to medication therapy meant being sent back to closed wards. "The coercion is clear – you must take the therapy as if you're required to agree," said one of them. "I wasn't told that directly, but it was result for anyone who did not give consent." Another interviewee said, "You realize that if you stop, you'll be sent back there, and you don't want to go back there ... This is the most severe form of deprivation of liberty that the state can impose on a person who does not have a court order."

Dr. Refael Yonatan-Louis, a clinical psychologist and researcher at the College of Management and co-author of the study, says that psychiatric hospitalization does not necessarily require medication therapy and may be effective without it. "Hospitalization has a range of responses – such as supervision, group therapy, psychological therapy, social work with rehabilitation interfaces and support in the community," he says. "I'm not saying that there is no place for contribution by medication," he emphasizes. "Nonetheless, studies indicate that the response rate to these medications are around 50 percent, and sometimes less than that, and the response for isn't always significant among those who do respond."

Yonatan-Louis explains that giving medications as the first therapy response, without telling the patient about the full significance of the therapy and its alternatives is the dominant approach in the psychiatric system. "Telling a patient that there are no alternatives or that there is nothing better for him is coercion based on a patronizing attitude," he argues. "One of the most ba-

sic things is presenting to the patient the full picture and allowing him to choose," says Yonatan-Louis. "Some of the side effects are dramatic."

The Rehabilitation in the Community of Persons with Mental Disabilities Law came into effect in 2000, under which [persons with mental disabilities are eligible to a basket of rehabilitation services provided by a broad rehabilitation system. However, the regulations require that the eligible persons to under psychiatric monitoring, which in practice means taking medications. "We saw very difficult legal, human, and moral things in the study," says Dr. Karako-Eyal, "such as condition the provision of rehabilitation services in the community on taking medications."

She explains that a circular by the Health Ministry director general on the basket of rehabilitation services requires the patient to go to regular meetings with a psychiatrist. "At these meetings, the patient is usually explicitly or implicitly told that in order to continue receiving the rehabilitation services in the community he must take medications," she says.

One of the study's participants said that, in effect, the rehabilitation services "require you to take pills. I felt that the social workers were the psychiatrist's partners. The social worker can send me to a hostel if I didn't take the medications."

Yonatan-Louis agrees that the study's findings indicate a basic lack of understanding that patients in the mental health system also have free will and the right to choose. "A doctor in an oncology ward would imagine forcibly treating a person without his consent," he says. "This creates a system where part of its norms is to force people to do things against their will, and that's a very slippery slope."

## Tlaib urges voters to oppose Trump, withholds support for Harris

Rachel Fink

In the final days of the U.S. presidential campaign, Democratic Rep. Rashida Tlaib spoke at a United Auto Workers rally in her home state of Michigan, where she encouraged union members to vote, and earlier criticized Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump. But, stopped short of coming out in support of the Democratic nominee, Kamala Harris.

Tlaib's decision not to endorse Harris drew mixed reactions within the party, which is anticipating razor-thin margins in Tuesday's election. Tlaib is the only Palestinian-American lawmaker and has been one of the staunchest critics of the Biden-Harris administration's support of Israel in the Gaza war.

According to local outlet, The Detroit News, Tlaib was one of the featured speakers at Friday's UAW rally in Detroit, where she focused her remarks primarily on the importance of voting, without specifying a specific candidate. "Don't underestimate the power you all have," she told hundreds of union members in attendance. "More than those ads, those lawn signs, those billboards, you all have more power to turn out people that understand we've got to fight back against corporate greed in our country."

Steering clear of the presidential election, Tlaib

spoke about the importance of down-ballot contests, specifically the judicial races, voicing support for Democratic-nominated Michigan Supreme Court candidates Kyra Harris Bolden and Kimberley Thomas in their respective races against Republican opponents.

Earlier in the day, Tlaib took to her X account to

Rep. Rashida Tlaib  
Amanada Andrade-Rhoades/Reuters

criticize Trump's campaign appearance in Dearborn, home to Michigan's largest Arab-American population. "Trump is a proud Islamophobe + serial liar who doesn't stand for peace," Tlaib tweeted. "The reality is that the Biden admin's unconditional support for genocide is what got us here. This should be a wake-up call for those who continue to support genocide. This election didn't have to be close."

Trump's campaign efforts have earned the en-

dorsements of Dearborn Heights and Hamtramck's Muslim mayors.

Tlaib's anti-Trump post was as far as she was willing to go in terms of a presidential endorsement. A fierce critic of both Israel and American support for its military campaign in Gaza, Tlaib is the only member of The Squad to decline to endorse the Democratic nominee. The other three members – U.S. representatives Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez – all voiced their backing for Harris in July after President Joe Biden announced he was dropping out of the race.

Ocasio-Cortez joined Tlaib at the UAW event, where she reiterated her pro-Harris views. "This is the place where miracles happen," Ocasio-Cortez told the crowd, "and this is the place that is going to deliver a Kamala Harris presidency, right here in the state of Michigan." Tlaib's decision to oppose Trump but not support Harris mirrors that of the National Uncommitted Movement, an organization co-founded by her sister which began as a campaign to vote "uncommitted" in Michigan's Democratic presidential primary in protest of Biden's Israel policy.

In September, Uncommitted announced that it would not endorse Harris but expressed its disapproval of Trump. The move is emblematic of a large swath

of Democratic voters who have been left feeling disillusioned by Harris' inability to create enough meaningful distance between her own policy on Israel and that of her predecessor.

The congresswoman's refusal to endorse Harris has been met with mixed reviews from Democratic voters. "Rashida Tlaib can kiss my entire ass and I will support any Democratic challenger to her seat," wrote one Harris supporter on X.

Others were more willing to give her grace for attempting to walk the line between official endorsement and outright condemnation. "Rashida Tlaib is doing Get Out The Vote in Michigan. The Uncommitted movement are up on the air with anti-Trump ads," tweeted anti-MAGA activist Leah Greenberg. "These folks deserved so much better from the party. But in spite of it all, they know how much is at stake and they're throwing in to fight against the fascist movement." Another social media user put it slightly less delicately. "Y'all better leave Rashida Tlaib the fuck alone for the rest of your miserable lives," they wrote on their X account. "If there's a single member of Congress with a fucking soul intact, it's her. If there are more, it's those few who have unwaveringly stood by her."

"She's earned her voice & doesn't owe y'all shit," they added.

## American Airlines announces it won't resume service to Israel until September of 2025

Hadar Kane

American Airlines announced on Sunday that it won't resume service to and from Israel until September 2025. The airline has not operated in Israel since the start of the war in Gaza. The stock of Israel's national airline El Al

surged six percent following American Airlines' announcement. In August, the company announced that it won't return to Israel until March 2025, and this marks an additional delay.

Other airlines that have recently postponed their operations in Israel include French airline Transa-

via, which has canceled its flights to and from Israel until November 30.

The company stated that it "remains committed to prioritizing the safety of its customers and crew above all."

Meanwhile, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency has extended its

recommendation to airlines to carefully consider any flights to Israel until the end of November.

The Greek airline Aegean has postponed its return to operations in Israel until November 30, while Azerbaijan Airlines has extended its flight cancellations to Israel until November 17.

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# Family: Police demanded guns in exchange for body

Man's brother said police initially agreed to release body of E. J'lem resident, then insisted family hand over firearms first

Josh Breiner

The police withheld for five days the body of a man who was fatally shot, informing his family that it would only be released if they surrendered firearms allegedly in their possession.

According to the victim's brother, Mahmoud Jaber, police initially agreed to release the body but later reversed their decision, demanding the family hand over firearms in exchange. On Saturday, after Haaretz first reported on the case, the police released the body on the condition that a small funeral be held.

Last Sunday, two residents of Al-Eizariya in East Jerusalem were killed, reportedly due to an inter-family conflict over a land dispute. One of the victims, 60-year-old Lutfi Jaber, was shot while leaving his home. A member of the rival family, in his 40s, was also shot dead.

That night, a substantial police and Border Guard force entered the village, with Judea and Samaria District commander Finzi threatening to revoke the identity cards of those involved, despite lacking the legal authority to do so. The following day, police arrested six suspects from both families on suspicion of involvement in the shootings.

On Thursday, Lutfi Jaber's brother, Mahmoud, went to the Judea and Samaria District police station to arrange for the release of his brother's body for burial. He said police agreed to the release following an agreement involving a financial guarantee and a commitment to hold a small funeral.

"I was sitting at the central station, and the officer had already promised to release the body for burial

at 8:30 P.M.," Mahmoud recounted. "I thought, no problem, the most important thing is to bury him, as five days had already passed."

Mahmoud said that at that moment, the officer received a phone call and then asked the family to leave.

"I asked him what happened, and he said: 'We're not giving you the body. Go to your mukhtar and bring us 20 pieces or five or six guns, and then we'll release the body,'" referring to the village leader. "I told him, 'Where am I supposed to get guns? Do you expect me to buy them and bring them to you?'"

The family says that police informed them a similar condition had been imposed on the rival family, whose relative's body was also being withheld. "They're acting as if there are no laws, holding bodies without any authority or reason," Mahmoud beamed. "Who uses a body this way?"

Mahmoud noted that his brother worked at a café near Damascus Gate in Jerusalem's Old City and had

no security-related record. The family has been seeking to bury the body since the incident, he added.

"We were stunned," he said. "We've been at home for nearly a week – children and grandchildren – waiting to bury him according to custom. This is disrespectful. I've never heard of an exchange deal for a body."

On Monday, Finzi the district commander threatened to revoke the East Jerusalem identity cards of the family members over the incident, despite lacking any legal authority to do so. During the investigation, he told the press that he had instructed police to "take a hard line against the families involved, arrest those connected to the case, and consider revoking their identity cards." According to the police statement, this was due to their "center of life" being in the West Bank and their "involvement in a breach of law and order."

In response to a request for comment, the police stated, "The matter is under investigation, and we cannot respond at this time."



Judea and Samaria District commander Finzi and National Security Minister Ben-Gvir in Jerusalem, August. *Olivier Fitoussi*

## Haaretz shareholder: Schocken's comments 'unacceptable'

Rachel Fink

Businessman and Haaretz shareholder Leonid Nevzlin has come out with a strongly worded statement in opposition to the recent remarks by the newspaper's publisher, Amos Schocken, at a conference in London.

Nevzlin, who also sits on the company's board of directors, labeled Schocken's comments as "appalling, unacceptable and inhumane" and called for Haaretz to "uphold its core values without bias."

"I wish to express my position, which completely disagrees with Amos Schocken's stance as the newspaper's publisher in response to the events of October 7 and the current war," Nevzlin began his statement, which he posted to his X account on Sunday. "His recent statements at the Haaretz conference in London are appalling, unacceptable, and inhumane, displaying profound insensitivity toward the victims of that tragic day, the casualties of the ongoing war, the hostages and their families, and the people of Israel as a whole."

Nevzlin was referring to comments Schocken made last week during a speech he gave at a conference co-organized by Haaretz in which he stated, among other things, that Israel is carrying out a second Nakba. "The Netanyahu government doesn't care about imposing a cruel apartheid regime on the Palestinian population. It dismisses the costs of both sides for defending the settlements while fighting the Palestinian freedom fighters

that Israel calls terrorists," he told conference participants.

"In a sense, what is taking place now in the occupied territories and in parts of Gaza is a second Nakba," Schocken went on to say. "A Palestinian state must be established and the only way to achieve this, I think, is to apply sanctions against Israel, against the leaders who oppose it and against the settlers."



Leonid Nevzlin *Ohad Zwigenberg*

Schocken's comments prompted Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi to launch a renewed campaign urging a government boycott of the newspaper. After widespread public outcry, Schocken clarified his remarks explaining that his mention of Palestinian freedom fighters was not a reference to Hamas. "I should have said: freedom fighters, who also resort to terror tactics – which must be combated. The use of terror is not legitimate," he wrote. "As for Hamas, they are not freedom fighters as their ideology essentially states, 'It's all ours, others should leave.'"

In Sunday's statement, Nevzlin criticized Schock-

en for using Haaretz' platform to share his "extreme views," which the Russian-born businessman said were in conflict with "the newspaper's values, my values, and those of the vast majority of the newspaper's journalists and staff."

Nevzlin acknowledged Schocken's clarification in his response, but said that despite the apology, "Haaretz must uphold its core values without bias, ensuring it does not present only one side. He added, "True democracy requires recognizing all perspectives and delivering objective information."

Nevzlin, who made his fortune in the 1980s through his business dealings in the Russian oil industry, has been a minority shareholder of Haaretz since 2011, when he acquired 20 percent of the newspaper's shares. He now owns 25 percent, with Schocken's family owning the remaining 75 percent.

Two years ago, Nevzlin, who is an Israeli citizen, announced that he was renouncing his Russian citizenship in protest of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "Russian citizenship in itself has turned into a mark of moral turpitude that I no longer want to carry ... I'm against the war. I'm against the occupation. I'm against the destruction of the Ukrainian people," he wrote of his decision at the time.

"I cannot allow myself to be the citizen of a country that kills the children of another country, and who tortures its own children that disagree with their acts," he declared.



Democratic supporters in Nevada, Wednesday. *John Locher/AP*



Voters in Black Mountain, NC, last month. *Stephanie Scarbrough/AP*

## HOUSE

Continued from page 1

of the 2024 election.

It's a repeat of the 2022 race, where Ciscomani narrowly defeated Engel by a little more than 1 percent to replace Democrat Ann Kirkpatrick. During his first term, Ciscomani has been a solid AIPAC ally, co-sponsoring a variety of hawkish legislation targeting Iran and pushing for commissions investigating domestic antisemitism. AIPAC PAC has been his largest contributor after raising nearly \$100,000, while the more progressive J Street PAC has bundled nearly \$200,000 for Engel.

### California

Rep. Mike Garcia (R) vs. George Whitesides (D)  
Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D) vs. David Kim (D)  
Dave Min (D) vs. Scott Baugh (R)

There are 10 House races considered competitive in California and one of the most intriguing is District 27, where about 5 percent of this Los Angeles-area seat is Jewish. They could well make the difference in Garcia's toss-up race against Democratic challenger Whitesides – a former NASA chief of staff who has been endorsed by the Democratic Majority for Israel and the Jewish Democratic Council of America. AIPAC PAC, meanwhile, has been Garcia's second-largest contributor, largely motivated by the third-term lawmaker's legislative efforts combating Iran and leading the charge to secure supplemental Iron Dome funding in 2022.

In Gomez's District 34 in LA, AIPAC's United Democracy Project super PAC is making its only investment in a general election race, spending more than \$1.5 million in hopes of securing Gomez's seat against his progressive rival. Kim has advocated for withholding assistance to Israel until a cease-fire with Hamas is reached, as well as backing the BDS movement and advocating for the United Nations to "prosecute illegal settlers in the West Bank and deliver justice to Palestinian families."

One of UDP's most notable investments in its opening 2024 salvo was against Min, who successfully won his Democratic primary race in the 47th Congressional

District despite the AIPAC super PAC's \$4.6 million effort against his bid to replace Rep. Katie Porter. The Republican challenger in his Orange County district, Baugh, has come under fire in recent days for accepting the endorsement and openly campaigning with Huntington Beach Mayor Gracey Van Der Mark, who holds a history of promoting antisemitic conspiracies and affiliating with far-right extremists. The Republican Jewish Coalition announced its endorsement of Baugh earlier this month.

### Connecticut

Rep. Jahana Hayes (D) vs. George Logan (R)

The 5th Congressional District, which covers the state's northwest, holds a potentially influential Jewish constituency that could be motivated in a race where Israel has become a political weapon. A repeat of their 2022 campaign, both Logan and national GOP fundraising arms have positioned Israel as one of the key policy differentiators. Although Hayes backed supplemental military assistance to Israel, she also signed onto letters accusing Israel of violating both U.S. and international law over its conduct in the Gaza war.

Republicans have also attacked Hayes for meeting with members of the Muslim advocacy group Council on American-Islamic Relations, while ignoring her affirmative vote on an antisemitism bill that progressive critics warn conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Hayes, in turn, said the United States has a "responsibility to support our allies, who are Israel. However, what that support looks like matters, and how they use that support matters," during a debate last week in which she accused Logan of failing to acknowledge Palestinian suffering. J Street PAC has been Hayes' second-largest contributor, potentially throwing her and the Democratic Party a life preserver.

### Nebraska

Rep. Don Bacon (R) vs. Tony Vargas (D)

The 2nd Congressional District election has been one of the most highly monitored – a fundraising arms race that has been a proxy war of sorts between AIPAC and J Street. The district, which includes the progressive city of Omaha and a large University of Nebraska satel-



Early voters in Sandy Springs, Georgia, last month. *Jeff Amy/AP*



A pre-election exhibition in Philadelphia. *Hannah McKay/Reuters*

lite campus, is being particularly scrutinized this year, since its single electoral vote is split from the rest of the state. Trump surrogates like Sen. Lindsey Graham have unsuccessfully pushed to install a winner-take-all approach. Vargas will challenge the GOP incumbent, who is among the pro-Israel establishment's favorite congressional Republicans, for the third straight cycle. AIPAC has been Bacon's largest bundler, while J Street has been leading the way for Vargas – whose stated foreign policy objectives are squarely in line with the group.

### Nevada

Rep. Susie Lee (D) vs. Drew Johnson (R)

Jewish voters make up approximately 5 percent of the 3rd Congressional District in suburban Las Vegas, again giving them a potentially pivotal vote in a race that could help determine which party controls the House. Johnson has attacked Lee for supposedly "turning her back on Israel," accusing her of "refusing to support Iron Dome funding and allowing our tax dollars to go to Hamas."

Lee, meanwhile, has attempted to craft a center-right approach to Israel, siding with hawkish Democrats in backing the codification of West Bank-manufactured products as "made in Israel" and backing sanctions on the International Criminal Court.

### New Jersey

Rep. Tom Kean Jr. (R) vs. Sue Altman (D)

Jewish voters make up approximately 5 percent of northern New Jersey's 7th Congressional District, which went to the Republican incumbent last year after he successfully defeated Democrat Tom Malinowski – a favorite of the liberal pro-Israel community. The pro-Israel community has been skeptical of Altman since her ascendance, largely due to her background as a progressive organizer and involvement with the leftist Working Families Party. While she has attempted to distance herself from the progressive left on Israel, including condemning pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University, the national GOP published selectively edited clips of her condemnation presenting her comments as an endorsement.

Both candidates attempted to position themselves as

strong on Israel during their only debate last month, with Altman accusing Kean of deliberately conflating her positions with those of the Working Families Party. AIPAC has been Kean's largest bundler, raising three times more than the second-largest contributor.

### New York

Rep. Anthony D'Esposito (R) vs. Laura Gillen (D)  
Rep. Mike Lawler (R) vs. Mondaire Jones (D)  
Rep. Pat Ryan (D) vs. Alison Esposito (R)  
Rep. Marc Molinaro (R) vs. Josh Riley (D)

In each of these four districts, Jewish voters consist of at least 10 percent of the voting population. D'Esposito's 4th Congressional District on Long Island includes a large Orthodox constituency and he has taken a hard-right approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – including endorsing legislative efforts condemning slogans like "From the river to the sea..." as antisemitic. He has recently come under fire for alleged ethics violations, including hiring a woman with whom he was reportedly having an affair.

Gillen, meanwhile, told Jewish Insider that House Democrats need pro-Israel centrists such as herself, saying: "I have outlined a results-focused policy plan to combat antisemitism. And I have no qualms calling out members of my own party when they are wrong on these issues." Pro-Israel Republican PACs like NORPAC and the Republican Jewish Coalition are two of D'Esposito's four largest bundlers.

In Lawler's 17th Congressional District race, covering the Lower Hudson Valley suburbs, the Jewish vote and Israel will similarly play a top-tier role in determining whether Democrats can win back what was once a safely blue seat until Lawler upset senior Democrat Sean Patrick Maloney in 2022.

Both Lawler and the GOP have positioned him as one of the most active voices on matters related to Israel and antisemitism, building strong ties with the local Orthodox community.

His opponent, who was associated with the progressive left, represented a different district in 2020, opting not to run for reelection in his new district because of Maloney's supposed strong hold. Jones has shifted toward the center since reemerging, particularly on Israel. He notably endorsed AIPAC-backed George Latimer over Jamaal Bowman in their New York primary earlier this year, alienating much of his previously solid progressive base. It has been Lawler's largest bundler, while J Street has been Jones' leader.

Ten percent of Ryan's District 18 (in the Lower Hudson Valley) are Jewish, and the AIPAC-allied, pro-Israel Democrat is hoping the goodwill accrued from years

of building ties with local Orthodox and Hasidic communities – and taking on progressive Democrats (and, at times, the Biden administration) over critiques of Israel – could similarly help secure his highly competitive seat.

AIPAC has been his largest bundler of donations, whereas the Republican Jewish Coalition has been Esposito's second-largest backer.

The pro-Israel group is also Molinaro's largest bundler, hoping to help protect the vulnerable Republican whose 19th Congressional District includes the Catskills and the Hudson Valley. The first-term Republican made quick work of becoming a pro-Israel advocate, pushing the Federal Aviation Administration on what guidance it had given to U.S. airlines over canceled flights to Israel, backing legislative efforts taking on Iran and pushing Israel's further regional integration, as well as a resolution denying that Israel is a racist state.

Riley, who unsuccessfully ran against Molinaro in 2022, holds a moderate-to-hardline position on the Middle East, finding himself to the right of the Biden administration's approach to Iran.

### Pennsylvania

Rep. Susan Wild (D) vs. Ryan Mackenzie (R)  
Rep. Matt Cartwright (D) vs. Rob Bresnahan Jr. (R)  
Rep. Scott Perry (R) vs. Janelle Stelson (D)

In Pennsylvania's District 7, where Lehigh Valley holds a sizable Jewish population, Jewish Democrat Wild has attempted to tow a line between left-of-center Israeli policies while joining attacks against Israel's critics alongside fellow pro-Israel Democrats.

The AIPAC-endorsed lawmaker has sharply criticized the UN for ignoring Israeli victims of terror attacks, slamming rising antisemitism on X and pushing for additional funding for securing Jewish sites. During their debate in September, the Republican Jewish Coalition-endorsed Mackenzie attacked her for being "caught red-handed sending letters to her constituents saying that she was pro-Israel and both pro-Gaza at the same time," dismissing her positions as "embarrassing and deceitful." J Street has been Wild's largest bundler.

In the neighboring 8th Congressional District, the AIPAC-endorsed Cartwright has consistently led the charge for uninterrupted security assistance to Israel, legislating against threats posed by Iran and pushing Israel's regional integration. He forcefully spoke out against a Pittsburgh city ballot measure that required it to cut ties with any entity performing business with Israel. Both candidates have expressed support for Israel, marking a rare point of agreement between the two in what has been identified as one of the country's most important bellwether races. AIPAC and J Street stand as Cartwright's second and third-largest fundraisers.

One AIPAC endorsee who is facing an unexpectedly tight race, meanwhile, is Perry in District 10. The Republican was one of AIPAC's most contentious endorsements when it first created its political action committee due to his role in the January 6 insurrection, as well as his previous comparisons of Democrats to Nazis and promotion of the white supremacist-adjacent "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory.

While AIPAC is his fourth-largest bundler this cycle, it discreetly ceased fundraising operations for him after he voted against providing \$14 billion in supplementary military aid to Israel in April.

The Democratic Majority for Israel-endorsed Stelson, a former TV anchor, has taken on the rare line of being a Democrat running as a hawkish alternative on Israel to her Republican opponent.

## 100 BBC workers allege pro-Israel bias in Gaza war coverage

Haaretz

More than 100 employees of the BBC have accused Britain's national broadcaster of pro-Israel bias in its coverage and called for it to "recommit to fairness, accuracy, and impartiality" in a letter, the British newspaper The Independent reported on Saturday.

The letter to CEO Tim Davie was signed by 230 media professionals in Britain, including 101 anonymous BBC employees. It said the broadcaster was not meeting its own journalistic standards in covering the war in Gaza. It called on the BBC to report on the war "without fear or favor" and commit to editorial standards that emphasize

"fairness, accuracy, and due impartiality."

The letter also calls on the BBC to commit to several binding clauses in its coverage, including "reiterating that Israel does not give external journalists access to Gaza," preventing media outlets from verifying reports; "including regular historical context predating October 2023"; and "challenging Israeli government and military representatives in all interviews."

The BBC, which has also been accused of coverage that is overly favorable to Hamas over the past year, rejected the accusation, saying it "strives to live up to our responsibility to deliver the most trusted and

impartial news."

The Independent quoted a BBC spokesperson as saying: "When we make mistakes or have made changes to the way we report, we are transparent. We are also very clear with our audiences on the limitations put on our reporting – including the lack of access into Gaza and restricted access to parts of Lebanon, and our continued efforts to get reporters into those areas."

In September, the BBC denied claims that it had violated its editorial standards over 1,500 times by allegedly downplaying Hamas' October 7 attack. A spokesperson said that the broadcaster would "carefully consider" the report making the accusation.

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# Terrorists are not freedom fighters

Haaretz publisher Amos Schocken did not call Hamas terrorists "freedom fighters." In his speech at the Haaretz conference in London last week, he said, among other things, that "The Netanyahu government doesn't care about imposing a cruel apartheid regime on the Palestinian population. It dismisses the costs of both sides for defending the settlements while fighting the Palestinian freedom fighters, that Israel calls terrorists."

Schocken was referring to the Palestinians living under occupation and oppression in the West Bank. Consequently, after a storm erupted, he made it clear that "As for Hamas, they are not freedom fighters." He also said that the planners and perpetrators of the October 7, 2023 massacre must be severely punished.

But even in his clarification, Schocken erred. The fact that he didn't mean to include Hamas terrorists doesn't mean that other terrorist acts are legitimate, even if their perpetrators' goal is to free themselves from occupation. Deliberately harming civilians is illegitimate. Using violence against civilians and sowing terror among them to achieve political or ideological goals is terrorism. Any organization that advocates the murder of women, children and the elderly is a terrorist organization, and its members are terrorists. They certainly aren't "freedom fighters."

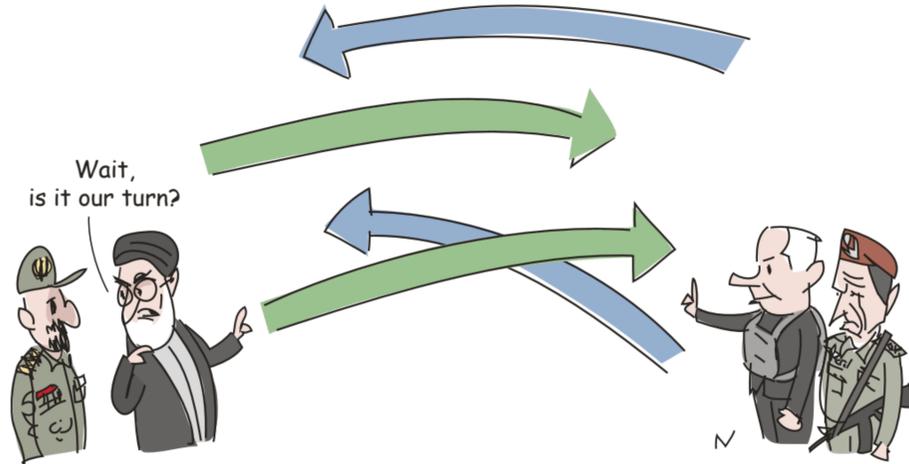
Throughout history, nations have waged armed struggle against oppressive occupiers to liberate themselves and achieve independence; not every armed struggle is terrorism. But the term "freedom fighter" has a positive, even romantic, connotation, which could lead people to support illegitimate acts of violence. Those should be unacceptable in any way, shape or form.

Many Palestinians, first and foremost Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, have stressed that terror and violence aren't the right way and won't advance their goal, which is the establishment of a Palestinian state. Yet their efforts to act nonviolently, such as through diplomatic activity and calling for boycotts, have been attacked by Benjamin Netanyahu's government and termed "diplomatic terror" or "economic terror." Netanyahu has thereby blurred the critical difference between genuine terrorism and activities that, even if many Israelis dislike them, are nevertheless legitimate.

Though Schocken erred in his phrasing, he has for years consistently supported a nonviolent diplomatic solution that would culminate in the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. That is the life's work that Netanyahu and his supporters want to destroy. Consequently, they leaped at the opportunity to wage a campaign to silence Haaretz by instituting an advertising and subscription boycott of it by government ministries and other state agencies.

Netanyahu knows that an independent, critical media is democracy's insurance policy, and that's especially true of a press that defends the liberal values he wants to destroy. He and his poisonous environment must not be allowed to succeed in this.

## Response to response



Ernan Wolkowski | eranwol@haaretz.co.il

Talia Sasson

# Eiland, you're playing dumb

Last Friday, Maj. Gen. (res.) Giora Eiland published an article in Haaretz titled, "Laying siege to Israel's enemy isn't a war crime," in which he sought to respond to an editorial published in the paper the previous week (October 23). The editorial criticized his plan, known as "the generals' plan," and deemed it a criminal proposal for ending the war.

Eiland is considered one of the key people behind the generals' plan, both on his own behalf and as an agent for others. The plan calls for moving civilians from the north to the south of the Gaza Strip, then imposing a siege on anyone who remains in the northern part and starving them for the sake of defeating Hamas. Effectively, this is Eiland's plan for total victory.

Eiland knows that behind this plan stand politicians who seek to entrench an Israeli occupation of northern Gaza and build settlements there, in violation of international law. Eiland claimed that he doesn't agree with the idea of building settlements. Yet he knows that it exists. Consequently, in my view, from the moment he proposed the plan, he bears responsibility for it in its entirety.

The proposed plan, which advocates starving residents of occupied territory, violates international law,

according to both the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Convention of 1907.

Eiland argues that it's possible to separate the "innocent" civilian population from Hamas by allowing people to leave Gaza's occupied north. Yet whether or not they actually leave, he says, it's permissible to starve anyone who remains. He bases this argument on the claim that prior to October 7, 2023, Gaza was a state, so we have the right to treat it just as we would any other state, and to treat its entire population as a single unit.

But in fact, Eiland, Gaza isn't a state and never was a state; it is completely dependent on Israel for its supply of water and electricity. Most of its residents fled from Israel in 1948, and since then, they have lived in large refugee camps in Gaza. Israel surrounds the territory on three sides and controls the crossings through which food and medicine can be supplied to its residents. Consequently, let's not play dumb by calling it a "state."

Gaza is a hybrid territory where the civilian population is controlled by a terrorist organization and gangs. Its economy and infrastructure are dependent on Israel. Moreover, as long as a civilian population is living in occupied territory, it is illegal to starve it, even if it refuses to evacuate southward.

As for the claim that it's permissible for an occupying army to move a civilian population from place to place within an occupied territory based on the occupier's military needs, Eiland appears to be ignoring the fact that Israel is now reoccupying northern Gaza for the second or third time since the war began. Israel knew before it first entered

**As long as a civilian population is living in occupied territory, as Gazans are, it is illegal to starve it, even if it refuses to evacuate southward.**

Gaza that if it occupied territory but didn't ensure that somebody other than Hamas would control it once the Israeli army left, Hamas would return.

Consequently, the claim that an occupying power is permitted to go in and out of a territory as it pleases, oust the civilian population from its homes each time it does and even starve it through a siege is extremely dubious, even though Eiland claims he copied the idea of a siege from the U.S. Army's field

manual. Every jurist knows that you can't just copy rules; you have to examine their appropriateness to the situation.

Nobody disputes Israel's right to defend itself against a brutal terrorist aggressor like Hamas. But it still has an obligation to act reasonably toward the civilian population of any territory it occupies, regardless of the needs of the war.

Israel, however, has long since exceeded the bounds of reasonableness in its behavior toward Gaza's residents, as evident from the International Court of Justice's harsh criticism of its behavior. We have long since ceased to comply with international humanitarian law. And the generals' plan is the diametric opposite of compliance with that court's provisional orders.

So far, Israel has managed to escape by the skin of its teeth from those seeking a ruling that it's perpetrating a genocide in Gaza. But now, along comes Eiland and uses his lofty titles – major general in the reserves and a former head of the National Security Council – to promote a morally unacceptable plan that deserves to be roundly condemned. Moreover, this plan is likely to serve as a tool for Israel's enemies and for all those who seek to gnaw our very right to exist down to the marrow of the bone.

Rogel Alpher

# Most Israelis are OK

Here's a wild gamble: even when the full details of the classified documents leak from Benjamin Netanyahu's office are released, as well as the full details of the fraudulent consciousness campaign undertaken on his behalf against the citizens of Israel in general and hostages families in particular – even then, he will sustain no political damage.

The first poll after the truth gets known will find that most Israeli citizens have correct opinions about it. They will say that they are against the leak to Bild, against the fraud maneuver done to the Jewish Chronicle, against close working ties with a man without suitable security clearance. Most will say they are for a hostage deal and that Netanyahu prioritizes personal political considerations over state interests, or the hostages.

Most will say the correct things. Will side with the politically correct positions. Most will give the impression that they support democracy. The poll will find, for instance, that most Israelis object to the daycare subsidies bill and demand the non-Torah-student ultra-Orthodox young men be drafted. Most Israelis may even say they accept the pronouncement that that Netanyahu is obligated to make good his promise that there is no objection to his standing criminal trial while at the same time serving as prime minister, and that he should testify in his trial at the set date without asking for postponement.

And here are some more wild gambles about the results of coming polls: most Israelis are against settlement in the northern Gaza Strip, are for holding an election at an earlier date, against constraints on freedom of speech and support the High Court of Justice in its clash with minister of justice Yariv Levin. Most Israelis are really OK.

And in the next poll, too, and in the one after it, most Israelis will say that Netanyahu is best suited to be prime minister, with a considerable lead over his rivals. The Likud party will go on gaining strength in parliamentary seats charts. Most Israelis will say they are for ending the war in Gaza and for an agreement in Lebanon. Netanyahu will do the opposite. Likud will get two more seats. Netanyahu's

suitability rating will grow. Most Israelis will support the position of his opposition rivals. Their parties will lose seats. Their premiership suitability rating will go on dropping. It will be reported that additional hostages were murdered in captivity. Most Israelis will be angry. Most will say: Netanyahu is responsible. And will give him two more seats, and five more points, respectively, in premiership suitability.

Despite Netanyahu's attempts to control the media, some major media outlets are still reporting the truth about his doings to the public. That truth is also available on social networks. You cannot say

**There is no connection between Israelis' opinion of Netanyahu's conduct as prime minister and their opinion about his suitability as prime minister.**

about the public that, if only it had known what was being done to it and on its behalf, if only it was exposed to relevant information, it would have revolted. Most Israelis know. Most can still tell fake from truth. Most don't close their eyes. Most are cool. And most Israelis decide: Netanyahu is most suitable to be prime minister, by a large margin.

Most can tell fake from truth. And according to the opinion of most Israelis, the office of the prime minister of Israel is currently manned by the most suitable couple. Most Israelis decided that these things are not connected. There is no connection between their opinion of Netanyahu's conduct as prime minister and their opinion about his suitability as prime minister.

They support Netanyahu's leadership, despite objecting to his doings, his policy and his vision. The job is Netanyahu's for as long as he wants it. Most will also say that the Ben Gvir police is political, and will put their hands forward to be arrested when that police will cuff them. Most follow Netanyahu with open eyes, voluntarily. Why? Most Israelis may know the reason.

Israel Harel

# Toward an 'agreement' for the forever war

The IDF and other security forces believe – according to the headlines – they have achieved most of the objectives in Lebanon (and Gaza). The time is thus ripe for a cease-fire. The basis of the deal: a draft submitted by U.S. envoy Amos Hochstein. Following the cease-fire (typical of U.S. understanding of Hezbollah, Iran, and the forces in Lebanon), he proposes the Lebanese army will be instructed "to: Monitor and enforce any unregulated entry of arms and related materiel" (i.e., de facto consent to the continued existence of Hezbollah) and to dismantle "all infrastructure inconsistent with the commitments and confiscate all unregulated arms."

The Lebanese army? This army will dismantle infrastructure? UNIFIL? And what if they again fail, hear, hear? "Israel has an inherent right to defend itself ... including taking action against imminent threats to Israel's security." Innovation. Very nice on your part, America. Thank you from the depths of our heart.

The military and defense establishment's position with respect to a cease-fire should deprive Israel's people of sleep. At the height of

the 2006 Second Lebanon War, Israel also blinked first. Remember, the IDF jumped on Resolution 1701 as a great way out. The result was inevitable: October 8, 2023. When a bonfire is left burning in Lebanon, the flames of murderous violence displace tens of thousands of Israelis from their homes. It is weak-hearted, and this is the price we pay. The lesson this time? Don't stop until a white flag is waved by Hezbollah, after the military destroys all its missile inventory and after the terrorist organization has its funds seized and completely halts operations.

This result will be possible when Israel and others begin dealing with the root of the evil: Iran. The country built, financed, equipped, and trained Hezbollah to slaughter Jews like Hamas (and to which Israel closed its eyes, acquiesced and accepted). It is therefore necessary to behead the primary party.

They told us before that economic sanctions would work, so why not go forward with them? There are many ways. For example, Western countries didn't buy fuel from Iran because of sanctions on its oil exports. An Israeli-American blockade of Iran's oil ports is therefore an effective step. The West won't interfere, and the price

of oil will only rise in China and the other countries that evade the sanctions. This is just one of the numerous steps in that direction that could weaken the regime.

An economically weak Iran – and consequently also domestically and militarily weak – is the heartfelt wish of the Sunni states. It cannot withstand a long siege and will be forced, if only to save the regime, to reach a binding agreement with the West. One of the West's principles is a cease-fire by its proxy organizations. At that point, with no financing, arms shipments or training, Hezbollah and the other militias will have to dismantle.

IDF briefings now state Israel has achieved the primary missions, the forces are tired, a cease-fire is needed. I met reservist officers and men at the (many) funerals and condolences. There, in contrast to the prevailing mood at the IDF HQ and retired generals who echo it in the media, I see strong unequivocal motivation to continue to bear the burden and fight until the enemy surrenders. The wives who share the burden agree: don't stop midway. Don't let the enemy recover. Just don't repeat the mistakes of the past, which will force us to pay the price of October 7 in the future.

Vered Guttman

# I'm an Israeli American, and for the sake of Israel we must elect Kamala Harris

I am an Israeli American and I am going to vote for Kamala Harris.

Like many expat Israelis, I feel the pain of this past year's events every day. The shock and grief of the October 7 massacre; the lost lives of innocent Israelis and Palestinians; the destruction on both sides of the border caused during the longest war in Israel's history; and the many hostages still held by Hamas in inhumane conditions for over a year now.

Throughout this awful year, the Biden-Harris administration has shown nothing but complete support for Israel. From supplying Israel with the arms needed for its defense to deploying U.S. forces to the region. They insisted on Israel's right to defend itself. I've been working with families of hostages held in Gaza and with released hostages during this past year. I've heard from them nothing but praise for President Joe Biden and his administration, who stood with them, showed compassion, met with them on a regular basis and briefed them on any development concerning their loved ones. This, they said, was the type of commitment they could only hope to get from the Israeli government.

When Iran attacked Israel in April and then again in October, President Biden built an international coalition, including Arab countries, to help defend Israel. This may have saved my family's lives. Can you be sure that a President Trump would manage, or even try to do the same?

The differences between Harris and Trump on Israel and the Gaza war are stark. While both candidates call for an immediate end of the multi-front war, they come from different perspectives.

Trump channels his isolationist undertone. His running mate, Senator JD Vance, even voted to withhold funding from Israel this year. Trump wants U.S. troops out of the region, a move that would put Israelis at risk while the war is still going on. Given his isolationist trends and practices, Trump is also unlikely to even try to form regional coalitions, as Biden did, to protect Israel in case of another Iranian strike.

VP Harris, on the other hand, comes to the issue fully committed to Israel's defense while always keeping in mind the importance of releasing all hostages, which is where most Israelis stand. In contrast, when Trump discusses the hostage issue, he makes a point



Netanyahu and Harris in Washington, July. Roberto Schmidt/AFP

**Trump channels his isolationist undertone. wants U.S. troops out of the region. VP Harris, on the other hand, comes to the issue fully committed to Israel's defense.**

of saying that most of them are already dead – a point which is not only cruel, but also inaccurate.

VP Harris has publicly expressed her concern over the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza. While I believe that Israel had to go into Gaza right after the October 7 massacre, the toll this long war has taken on Palestinian civilians is no longer acceptable. It's time

to sign a cease-fire deal and end the war, just as the IDF, Shin Bet security service and Mossad have been saying for months. It's time to bring back the hostages, and to end the suffering of Palestinians and Israelis alike.

When that happens, Trump and Harris have very different visions for the "day after." Trump, who has never embraced the two-state solution, is likely to let

Israel's right-wing government annex the West Bank and Gaza, if it so desires. This could, very likely, be the reason Netanyahu and members of his cabinet are rooting for Trump. Such a move would spell the end of any prospect of peace, and will condemn Israelis to generations of conflict that most of them – except for the extreme right – wish to avoid.

Since moving to the U.S. more than twenty years ago, I have been touched and inspired by the Jewish community's belief in Israel and its wish to hold Israel to the highest possible standards. American Jews hope for the creation of a just society in Israel, based on the Jewish values of tikkun olam, and "kol Israel arevim ze ba'ze" – that all Jews are responsible for one another.

Such a society cannot give up on the hostages and cannot turn its back on the mitzvah of *pidyon shvuyim*, the release of captives. Such a society cannot support an endless, unnecessary war, and it cannot wreak destruction on another people.

I believe that Kamala Harris stands for the values and principles which the majority of the American Jewish community believe in. She definitely stands for what this Israeli American is for.

# Why Ukrainians are visiting Auschwitz during wartime

Ukrainian guide Natalia Tkachenko: Death camp acquires whole new significance when you're in midst of a brutal war

## Allison Gordon

OSWIECIM, Poland – While Russian rockets soar above her Ukrainian hometown, Natalia Tkachenko is leading a tour through the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

She works as an educator and guide at the memorial and museum created on the site of the former Nazi death camp, and is familiar with the lasting impact of war. She grew up in Kropyvnytskyi, a small city in central Ukraine that over the course of the 20th century had suffered at the hands of Stalin, the Nazis and communist Russia.

As she teaches and guides visitors through the place associated with the worst atrocities of the Holocaust, she cannot help but reflect on the horrifying effect of war in her own country.

Tkachenko and other educators at the museum are careful not to compare current conflicts to the Holocaust. Nonetheless, she notes in an interview: “The ‘Never Again’ motto is not working for a long time already. Still, war is [seen as] a way of solving some issues. Still, war is used as a tool.”

“Something is not working, and it's not working in a spectacular way,” she adds.

According to the latest tally of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the number of civilian casualties in Ukraine since the February 2022 Russian invasion began totals 37,916. The actual toll is likely much higher. More than two years have passed and the fighting has not abated, with Russia recently launching a new front in the Kharkiv region in response to a sputtering counteroffensive from Ukraine.

Tkachenko, who has been

working at the site for the past five years, worries constantly about her friends and family who have remained in the country. “Every day is a day when some rockets are flying over my town or into my town,” she says.

When asked if the conflict in Ukraine has strengthened her commitment to the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial's mission of remembrance and personal responsibility, Tkachenko pauses before responding. “I think it stayed the same because it has always been quite strong,” she says. “I work here by choice.”

## Mystery monument

Tkachenko, who is 33 and not Jewish, grew up with a basic understanding of the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau, where more than 1.1 million men, women and children, including nearly 1 million Jews, were murdered between 1940 and 1945. But her family rarely discussed the Holocaust or World War II.

“I discovered the Jewish history of my town very late,” she recalls. “I knew there were Jewish people, but I didn't know any details.”

Before 1939, Kropyvnytskyi was home to more than 14,600 Jews. By now, only traces of that once vibrant community remain. After Germany invaded the Soviet Union, most Ukrainian Jews were killed by what is often described as the “Holocaust by bullets” – a brutal campaign executed by the Nazis' paramilitary killing squads, the Einsatzgruppen. These “special action groups” followed the troops on the frontlines, systematically murdering Jews in the areas conquered by Germany. The victims were

often forced to dig their own graves and then shot.

Tkachenko attended university in her hometown, and on her commute would pass a monument marking the ravine where the local Jews were executed during the Holocaust. “Only when I started working in Oswiecim did I discover what this monument was about,” she says.

Her family members were reluctant to speak about the horrors they experienced under Stalinism and during World War II. They rarely

**‘It probably works as a bit of catharsis for them, letting out some emotions. You look at it differently when you are experiencing war on your territory.’**

discussed the repressive Soviet regime, including the Holodomor (Great Hunger) that wiped out millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33. “This memory got lost in my family, unfortunately,” she says.

Although both of her grandfathers served in the Soviet Army, Tkachenko says “they didn't speak about it” when they returned from the front.

## ‘I never thought of coming here’

Working as an educator and guide at the world's most notorious death camp was not Tkachenko's original career plan. She grew up in a bilingual home and had a knack for languages. After

obtaining her master's degree in English philology, she planned to pursue an academic career.

But while searching for a gap-year program before launching her academic career, she came across the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace – a German-funded initiative that sends volunteers to countries impacted by Nazism.

It had not occurred to her that she might be placed in Auschwitz-Birkenau, but she accepted the challenge, she says, because “this goes in line with my feelings of what is important to do in the world.”

Tkachenko soon became swept up in her work and today cannot imagine working anywhere else. “I saw that there is something really meaningful being done here,” she explains.

After completing her volunteer service in 2014, she spent the next five years working at Oswiecim's International Youth Meeting Center. She became an educational specialist at the museum in 2019 and is now a full-time resident of the small town in southern Poland.

Her friends and relatives sometimes worry that working at this infamous site could jeopardize her mental health. “With my skills, I could find other jobs with less of a psychological burden,” she admits. “But I feel it is meaningful – I want to do this.”

The job is helping her understand human nature better, she adds. “It unveils and uncovers a lot of psychological mechanisms. I am learning from this history about myself and the potential in any given person,” she reflects.

While the museum prefers to steer clear of poli-



Visitors walking through the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp in Oswiecim, Poland.

Matthias Schrader / AP

tics, the Holocaust and Auschwitz specifically are invoked in the context of contemporary conflicts all the time, especially since October 7 and the ensuing Israel-Gaza war. Visitors roaming the grounds cannot help but reflect on the current state of the world, and neighboring Ukraine is often on their mind. Today, 3.7 million people remain displaced within Ukraine, while 6.3 million Ukrainians have moved abroad, fleeing the war as refugees and asylum seekers.

Tkachenko knows many Ukrainians wounded in the war and has a family friend who died in action while serving in the navy. Her

family has decided to remain in Ukraine, trying to chart a normal life despite constant missiles and the threat of violence.

“It's something from history that is funny,” is how she puts it. “People react the same way – they try to find some space for normality amid war.”

The educator says she is surprised by how many Ukrainians continue to visit the site since the war erupted in February 2022. “My first intuition would be that Ukrainian groups wouldn't be coming here – that they would be too traumatized to come,” she says. “But this seems to be not the case.”

According to official

memorial figures, at least 12,900 Ukrainians visited Auschwitz-Birkenau last year, compared to some 9,300 in 2019 (the year before the pandemic struck).

Even Ukrainians from the hardest-hit cities, including Kharkiv and Dnipro, have made the educational journey here. According to Tkachenko, these visitors – many of whom have endured Russian attacks and been forced to flee their homes – feel compelled to bear witness and learn from Auschwitz, including the need for tolerance and humanity even in times of war.

“You could see they established parallels much

more strongly than other groups,” she says.

To Tkachenko, this response is natural. “It probably works as a bit of catharsis for them, letting out some emotions,” she says. “You look at it differently when you are experiencing war on your territory.”

The warning provided by her workplace, Tkachenko believes, is now more important than ever. “Auschwitz is a very valuable lesson of how we as a society function, how many mechanisms there are that enable such things.”

Citing the words of the Polish journalist and Holocaust survivor Marian Turski, she concludes: “Auschwitz didn't fall from the sky.”

## Monday 4.11

### CHANNEL KAN 11 (Y11/H11)

06.00 The Morning News 07.00 News Flash 07.05 This Morning - with Ariele Golan 08.00 News Flash 08.05 Kalman-Lieberman - Live Reshet Bet radio show 09.00 News Flash 09.05 Kalman-Lieberman (cont.) 10.00 News Flash 10.05 Today's Agenda 11.00 News Flash 11.05 Today's Agenda (cont.) 12.00 Truth-seeker - Reviews some of the most iconic and enduring mysteries the world has known 13.00 We'll Meet Again - Docu-reality (s.2) 13.50 Moked 11 (Celebrity Call Center) - Celebrities tackle the everyday problems of people through phone calls 14.25 Sofa Stories - Celebrities share experiences from their personal lives 15.00 The World Today - World News 16.00 Pocket Games - Economic magazine 16.45 On the Other Hand - with Guy Zohar 17.00 Five O'Clock - with Maya Rachlin 18.55 Seven O'Clock - with Ayala Hasson 19.50 The Evening News 21.30 Who Is It? - Sketch show (2 eps) 22.25 On the Other Hand - with Guy Zohar 22.35 News 23.05 Celebrity Trump: A Second Chance 23.55 Moked 11 (Celebrity Call Center) - see 13.50 00.30 Stripped - Docu-reality (s.2)

### KESHET (Y12/H12)

06.00 News Flash 06.10 Today's Headlines 07.00 News Flash 07.05 The Morning Show - with Nir Raskin 09.30 News Flash 09.35 Special news broadcast - with Nesli Barda & Yoav Limor 11.00 Vegan Cooking with Nadai Ellis 11.45 Guy News 12.00 Special news broadcast 15.00 Today's Edition - with Ofer Hadad & Amalya Duek 16.55 Five O'Clock - with Rafi Reshet 17.55 Six O'Clock - with Oded Ben-Ami 19.00 The Early Edition - with Kerem Marciano 19.55 The News 22.00 Life is Hard - Israeli comedy series 22.40 Guy News 23.15 Tonight - with Yair Sherki & Avri Gilad 00.10 Sports Results 00.25 Friday Night News - The articles

### RESHET (Y13/H13)

06.00 The Morning Show - with Omer Yardeni & Rotem Israel 10.00 News Flash 10.05 Starting the Day - with Elad & Yarden 11.00 News Flash 11.05 Starting the Day (cont.) 12.00 News Flash 12.05 The Legal Parade - Law magazine 12.40 Behind the Money - Financial magazine 13.00 News Flash 13.05 Behind the Money (cont.) 13.15 The Tube - with Guy Lerer 13.50 Game of Chefs - Reality 14.00 News Flash 14.05 Game of Chefs (cont.) 15.00 Special news broadcast 16.55 Talk of the Day - with Lucy Aharish 17.55 Six O'Clock News 18.55 Israel at War - with Raviv Drucker 19.00 News 21.15 Game of Chefs - Reality 22.45 The Tube - with Guy Lerer 23.15 Sports Corner 23.20 The Day That Was - with Tali Berman 23.50 Real Estate During Wartime 00.25 Sports Corner 00.30 Yaniv - Israeli comedy series 01.05 Ha-Chaim Ze Lo Haacol - Israeli comedy series 01.35 Celebration - with Tzahi Koma (s.4)

### HOT 3 (H3)

09.40 Matlock 10.25 Maxima 11.05 New Amsterdam (s.3) 11.55 Matlock 12.40 A Place to Call Home (s.3) 13.25 New Amsterdam (s.2) 14.10 Maxima 14.55 Days of Our Lives 15.35 The Young and the Restless 16.15 The Bold and the Beautiful (2 eps) 17.00 Days of Our Lives 17.40 The Young and the Restless 18.15 A Place to Call Home (s.3) 19.05 Matlock 19.45 New Amsterdam (s.3) 20.30 A Very Royal Scandal 21.25 A Place to Call Home (s.4) 22.20 Connected (s.11) 22.45 Top Chef (s.21) 23.30 A Very Royal Scandal 00.25 Maxima 01.15 Connected (s.11) 01.40 Top Chef (s.21) 02.25 A Very Royal Scandal

### HOT HBO (H4)

09.10 Mad Men 09.55 Succession (s.4) 10.55 The Trial of Christine Keeler 12.00 A Gentleman in Moscow 12.45 Curb Your Enthusiasm 13.20 Mad Men 14.05 Succession (s.4) 15.10 The Trial of Christine Keeler 16.10 A Gentleman in Moscow 17.00 Curb Your

Enthusiasm 17.35 Succession (s.4) 18.30 Wreck 19.20 A Gentleman in Moscow 20.10 Curb Your Enthusiasm 20.40 Mad Men (s.2) 21.30 Somebody Somewhere (s.3) 22.00 The Penguin 22.55 Nightsleeper 23.40 It's Florida, Man 00.05 The Undoing 00.55 Sex and the City (s.5) 01.25 Somebody Somewhere (s.3) 01.50 The Penguin

### HOT ZONE (H5)

06.25 The Rookie (s.3) 07.10 FBI: International (s.3) 07.50 Law & Order (s.23) 08.30 Chicago Fire (s.11) 09.10 NCIS (s.21) 09.55 Seal Team (s.6) 10.40 FBI: Most Wanted (s.5) 11.25 The Rookie (s.3) 12.05 Law & Order (s.23) 12.50 FBI: International (s.3) 13.30 NCIS: Los Angeles (s.13) 14.10 Chicago Fire (s.11) 14.50 NCIS (s.21) 15.35 FBI: Most Wanted (s.5) 16.15 Law & Order (s.23) 17.00 Seal Team (s.6) 17.45 FBI: International (s.3) 18.25 Chicago Fire (s.11) 19.10 The Rookie (s.3) 19.50 NCIS (s.21) 20.35 FBI: Most Wanted (s.5) 21.15 Law & Order (s.23) 22.00 Chicago Fire (s.11) 22.40 CSI: Vegas (s.3) 23.20 FBI: International (s.3) 00.00 NCIS (s.21) 00.45 The Rookie (s.3) 01.30 Chicago Fire (s.11) 02.10 NCIS: Los Angeles (s.13)

### HOT CHANNEL 8 (H8)

06.00 Stormy 07.50 How to Lose a War 08.40 Tech Billionaires Mark Zuckerberg 09.25 The Brain 10.05 Trump: On the Campaign 11.40 How to Lose a War 12.35 Tech Billionaires - Mark Zuckerberg 13.25 The Brain 14.05 Trump: On the Campaign 15.40 Stormy 17.30 How to Lose a War 18.20 Tech Billionaires - Mark Zuckerberg 19.05 Trump: On the Campaign 20.35 The Brain 21.15 Stopping the Steal 22.40 A Storm Foretold 00.35 Leibowitz: Faith, Country, Man - Country 01.40 Stopping the Steal

### YES DOCU (Y8)

07.40 Sanctity of Space 09.20 History of the Sitcom 10.05 John McCain: For Whom the Bell Tolls 11.45 Deadlocked: How America Shaped the Supreme Court 12.45 Public Defender 13.40 The Insurrectionists Next Door 14.55 Q: Into the Storm 15.55 Trump: True Crime Story 17.25 Mau 18.45 History of the Sitcom 19.30 Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America 21.05 Deadlocked: How America Shaped the Supreme Court 22.00 Stopping the Steal 23.30 Stormy 01.20 Q: Into the Storm 02.15 Stopping the Steal

### HISTORY (Y44/H43)

05.20 Storage Wars 05.40 50 Years of Clandestine Affairs (pt.1) 06.35 The Curse of Oak Island (s.1, 2 eps) 08.00 How Disney Built America 08.40 Pawn Stars 09.20 American Pickers 10.05 The Food That Built America (s.4) 10.50 Ancient Aliens 11.30 History's Greatest Mysteries (s.5) 12.15 The Proof is Out There (s.4, 2 eps) 13.35 The Secret of Skinwalker Ranch (s.5) 14.15 The Unexplained (s.4) 15.00 Pawn Stars 15.40 American Pickers 16.25 The Food That Built America (s.5) 17.10 The Longest Week 17.35 Layla Goo: Noa & Yanat Ben Arzi 18.05 Rabin Special Interview: Dayan & Reshet 18.25 Yitzhak Rabin: A Personal Point of View 19.15 Yitzhak Rabin of the Palmach 20.00 Storage Wars 20.20 Pawn Stars Do America (s.2) 21.45 American Pickers 22.30 Pawn Stars 23.10 The Icons That Built America 23.55 How Disney Built America 00.35 The Proof is Out There (s.4) 01.20 History's Greatest Mysteries (s.5) 02.00 Pawn Stars

### YES TV DRAMA (Y5)

06.00 Station 19 (s.6) 06.45 The Conductor 07.40 The Lovers 08.10 Nancy Drew (s.4) 09.00 Station 19 (s.6) 09.50 The Bold and the Beautiful 10.20 The Young and the Restless 11.05 Spencer Sisters 11.55 Matlock 12.45 The Conductor 13.30 The Lovers 14.05 Nancy Drew (s.4) 14.50 Station 19 (s.6) 15.30 The Conductor 16.20 The Bold and the Beautiful 16.45 The Young and the Restless 17.25 Nancy Drew (s.4) 18.10 Spencer Sisters 18.55 Matlock 19.55 The Bold and the Beautiful 20.15 The Young and the Restless 21.00 Grey's Anatomy (s.21) 21.50 Sullivan's Crossing (s.2) 22.35 The Green Veil 22.55 Bloody Murray 23.35 Dr. Death 00.35 Sex and the City (2 eps) 01.25 The Green Veil 01.55 Bloody Murray



“Challengers.” Yes Movies Drama, 23.40.

### YES TV ACTION (Y6)

06.20 Rookie Blue (s.5, 2 eps) 07.30 NCIS: Los Angeles (s.10) 08.10 S.W.A.T. (s.5, 2 eps) 09.40 Special Ops: Lioness (2 eps) 11.25 The Rookie (s.5, 2 eps) 12.55 Chicago Fire (s.3) 13.40 S.W.A.T. (s.5, 2 eps) 15.10 NCIS: Los Angeles (s.10, 2 eps) 16.35 Rookie Blue (s.5, 2 eps) 18.00 Special Ops: Lioness (2 eps) 19.45 Chicago Fire (s.3) 20.30 S.W.A.T. (s.5, 2 eps) 22.00 From (s.3) 22.50 After the Flood 23.40 Peacemaker 00.35 Taagad (2 eps) 01.50 The Deuce (s.3)

### YES TV COMEDY (Y7)

06.20 Hot in Cleveland (s.6, 2 eps) 07.15 Young & Hungry (s.3, 2 eps) 08.05 The Bugzlogos (s.4, 2 eps) 09.05 How I Met Your Mother (s.2, 2 eps) 09.55 Enlightened (s.2, 2 eps) 11.00 Young & Hungry (s.3, 2 eps) 11.50 The Bugzlogos (s.4, 2 eps) 12.50 How I Met Your Mother (s.2, 2 eps) 13.40 The Nanny (s.4, 2 eps) 15.20 Friends (s.7, 2 eps) 16.10 How I Met Your Mother (s.2, 2 eps) 17.00 Hot in Cleveland (s.6, 2 eps) 17.50 Parks and Recreations (s.4, 2 eps) 18.40 The Nanny (s.4, 2 eps) 19.30 Friends (s.7, 2 eps) 20.20 Hot in Cleveland (s.6, 2 eps) 21.10 Parks and Recreations (s.4, 2 eps) 22.00 The Nanny (s.4, 2 eps) 22.50 Friends (s.7, 2 eps) 23.40 Dave (s.3, 2 eps) 01.05 Enlightened (s.2, 2 eps) 02.00 Young & Hungry (s.3, 2 eps)

### EUOSPORT (Y61/H59)

06.00 Snooker - Northern Ireland Open: Final 08.00 Triathlon - Supertri League 09.30 Snooker - Northern Ireland Open: Final 11.55 The Minute 12.00 Alpine Skiing - World Cup in Soelden, Austria: Men's Giant Slalom 14.00 Alpine Skiing - World Cup in Soelden, Austria: Women's Giant Slalom 15.00 Snooker - Northern Ireland Open: Final 17.00 Alpine Skiing - World Cup in Soelden, Austria: Women's Giant Slalom 18.00 Alpine Skiing - World Cup in Soelden, Austria: Men's Giant Slalom 19.00 Triathlon - Supertri League 20.00 Archery - World Cup 21.00 Climbing Show 21.30 Trail Running - World Series 22.30 The Minute 22.35 Alpine Skiing - World Cup in Soelden, Austria: Men's Giant Slalom 23.00 Snooker - Northern Ireland Open: Final 01.00 2024 Australian Open: Women's Final: Qinwen Zheng vs. Aryna Sabalenka 02.30 2024 Australian Open: Men's Final: Jannik Sinner vs. Daniil Medvedev

### MOVIE CHANNELS

#### HOT CINEMA 1 (H16)

06.20 The Ides of March (USA, 2011). Drama. Directed and starring George Clooney. With Ryan Gosling, Paul Giamatti, Philip Seymour Hoffman.

hoeven. With Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone.

#### HOT CINEMA 3 (H18)

07.10 Blonde Ambition (USA, 2007). Comedy. Dir: Scott Marshall. With Jessica Simpson, Luke Wilson.  
08.40 Labor Pains (USA, 2009). Romantic comedy. Dir: Lara Shapiro. With Lindsay Lohan, Luke Kirby.  
10.10 The Switch (USA, 2010). Romantic comedy. Dir: Josh Gordon, Will Speck. With Jennifer Aniston, Jason Bateman.  
11.55 Rat Race (Canada/USA, 2001). Comedy. Dir: Jerry Zucker. With John Cusack, Rowan Atkinson, Cuba Gooding Jr., Whoopi Goldberg.  
13.45 Going the Distance (USA, 2010). Comedy. Dir: Nanette Burstein. With Drew Barrymore, Justin Long.  
15.30 For Better or for Worse Un homme heureux (France, 2023). Comedy. Dir: Tristan Seguela. With Fabrice Luchini, Catherine Frot.  
17.00 Life of Crime (USA, 2013). Crime comedy. Dir: Daniel Schechter. With Jennifer Aniston, Yasin Bey, Isla Fisher.  
18.40 Going in Style (USA, 2017). Comedy. Dir: Zach Braff. With Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman, Matt Dillon.  
20.15 Love, Rosie (Germany/UK, 2014). Romantic comedy. Dir: Christian Ditter. With Lily Collins, Sam Claflin, Christian Cooke.  
22.00 What's Love Got to Do with It? (UK, 2022). Romantic comedy. Dir: Shekhar Kapur. With Mim Shaikh, Iman Boujelhal.  
23.45 The Heat (USA, 2013). Comedy. Dir: Paul Feig. With Sandra Bullock, Melissa McCarthy.  
01.45 Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising (USA, 2016). Comedy. Dir: Nicholas Stoller. With Seth Rogen, Rose Byrne, Zac Efron.

#### HOT CINEMA 4 (H19)

06.45 Park Benches (France, 2009). Comedy. Dir: Bruno Podalydes. With Florence Muller, Jerome Prad.  
08.35 Atonement (UK/France, 2007). Drama. Dir: Joe Wright. With Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, Brenda Blethyn.  
10.40 The Great Beauty La grande bellezza (Italy/France, 2013). Drama. Dir: Paolo Sorrentino. With Toni Servillo, Carlo Verdone, Sabrina Ferilli.  
13.00 Emperor (Japan/USA, 2012). History drama. Dir: Peter Webber. With Matthew Fox, Colin Moy, Tommy Lee Jones.  
14.45 The Truth La verite (France/Japan/Switzerland, 2019). Drama. Dir: Hirokazu Koreeda. With Catherine Deneuve, Juliette Binoche, Ethan Hawke.  
16.30 In Her Shoes (USA, 2005). Comedy. Dir: Curtis Hanson. With Cameron Diaz, Toni Collette.  
18.40 Out of the Blue (USA, 2022). Crime drama. Dir: Neil LaBute. With Diane Kruger, Hank Azaria, Ray Nicholson.  
20.25 Very Good Girls (USA, 2014). Romantic drama. Dir: Naomi Foner. With Dakota Fanning, Elizabeth Olsen, Sterling Jones.  
22.00 Good Will Hunting (USA, 1997). Drama. Dir: Gus Van Sant. With Robin Williams, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Minnie Driver.  
00.05 Black Tide Fleuve noir (France/Belgium, 2018). Crime. Dir: Erick Zonca. With Vincent Cassel, Romain Duris, Sandrine Kiberlain.  
01.55 The Unknown Girl La fille incondue (France/Belgium, 2016). Crime. Dir: Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Luc Dardenne. With Adele Haenel, Olivier Bonnaud, Jeremie Renier.

#### YES MOVIES DRAMA (Y1)

07.00 The Electrical Life of Louis Wain (UK, 2021). Biography drama. Dir: Will Sharpe. With Benedict Cumberbatch, Claire Foy, Andrea Riseborough.  
08.55 Love & Mercy (USA, 2014). Music biography. Dir: Bill Pohlad. With John Cusack, Paul Dano, Elizabeth Banks.  
10.55 Saints Rest (USA/Israel, 2018). Musical drama. Dir: Noga Ashkenazi. With Hani Frustenberg, Dana Ivgy, Allie Trimm.  
12.20 The Old Man & the Gun (USA, 2018). Biography. Dir: David Lowery. With Robert Redford, Casey Affleck, Sissy Spacek.  
13.55 The Importance of Being Earnest (UK/USA/France, 2022). Adaptation of Oscar Wilde's play. Dir: Oliver Parker. With Rupert Everett, Colin Firth, Reese Witherspoon, Judi Dench.

15.30 Endless Love (USA, 2014). Drama. Dir: Shana Feste. With Gabriela Wilde, Alex Pettyfer, Bruce Greenwood.  
17.15 Iron Jawed Angels (USA, 2004). Drama. Dir: Katja von Garnier. With Hilary Swank, Anjelica Huston, Molly Parker.  
19.20 Incitement Yamin Noraim (Israel, 2019). Thriller. Dir: Yaron Zilberman. With Yehuda Nahari Halevi, Amitya Yaish Ben Ousilio, Anat Ravitzki.  
21.30 Ferrari (USA/UK/Italy/Saudi Arabia, 2023). Biography drama. Dir: Michael Mann. With Adam Driver, Shailene Woodley, Giuseppe Festinese.  
23.40 Challengers (USA/Italy, 2024). Drama. Dir: Luca Guadagnino. With Mike Faist, Josh O'Connor, Zendaya.  
01.50 Incitement Yamin Noraim (Israel, 2019). Thriller. Dir: Yaron Zilberman. With Yehuda Nahari Halevi, Amitya Yaish Ben Ousilio, Anat Ravitzki.

#### YES MOVIES ACTION (Y2)

07.35 The Waste (Norway, 2015). Action. Dir: Roar Uthaug. With Kristoffer Joner, Ane Dahl Torp, Jonas Hoff Othrebo.  
09.20 Big Game (Finland/UK/Germany, 2014). Action adventure. Dir: Jalmari Helander. With Samuel L. Jackson, Omri Tommila, Ray Stevenson.  
10.55 Lone Wolf McQuade (USA, 1983). Action. Dir: Steve Carver. With Chuck Norris, David Carradine.  
12.40 Devotion (USA, 2022). Action. Dir: J. D. Dillard. With Jonathan Majors, Glen Powell.  
15.00 Ender's Game (USA, 2013). Action. Dir: Gavin Hood. With Harrison Ford, Asa Butterfield, Hailee Steinfeld.  
16.55 A Quiet Place (USA, 2018). Horror. Dir: John Krasinski. With Emily Blunt, John Krasinski, Millicent Simmonds.  
18.25 Dangerous Waters (USA, 2023). Thriller. Dir: John Barr. With Odeya Rush, Eric Dane, Saffron Burrows.  
20.10 Marlowe (Ireland/Spain/France/USA, 2022). Crime. Dir: Neil Jordan. With Liam Neeson, Diane Kruger, John Barrowman.  
22.00 The Lost City of Z (USA, 2016). Drama. Dir: James Gray. With Charlie Hunnam, Robert Pattinson, Sienna Miller.  
00.20 The Way Back (USA/Poland, 2010). Adventure. Dir: Peter Weir. With Jim Sturgess, Ed Harris, Colin Farrell.  
02.30 Escape Plan: The Extractors (USA, 2019). Action. Dir: John Herzfeld. With Sylvester Stallone, Dave Bautista, 50 Cent.

#### YES MOVIES COMEDY (Y3)

07.35 Horrible Bosses 2 (USA, 2014). Comedy. Dir: Sean Anders. With Jason Bateman, Jason Sudeikis, Charlie Day.  
09.20 Relative Strangers (USA, 2006). Comedy. Dir: Greg Gienha. With Danny DeVito, Kathy Bates, Neve Campbell.  
11.55 Paint (USA, 2023). Comedy. Dir: Brit MacAdams. With Owen Wilson, Elisabeth Henry, Paul Kosopol.  
12.30 Foo's Gold (USA, 2008). Adventure. Dir: Andy Tennant. With Matthew McConaughey, Kate Hudson.  
14.25 The Green Hornet (USA, 2011). Comedy. Dir: Michel Gondry. With Cameron Diaz, Seth Rogen, Jay Chou.  
16.25 Hit and Run (USA, 2012). Action comedy. Dir: David Palmer, Dax Shepard. With Kristen Bell, Dax Shepard.  
18.05 Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (USA/UK, 2016). Action. Dir: Burr Steers. With Lily James, Sam Riley.  
19.55 So Undercover (USA, 2012). Comedy. Dir: Tom Vaughan. With Miley Cyrus, Jeremy Piven, Mike O'Malley.  
21.30 Jumanji: The Next Level (USA, 2019). Action. Dir: Jake Kasdan. With Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black, Kevin Hart.  
23.30 Please Don't Destroy: The Treasure of Foggy Mountain (USA/Japan, 2023). Comedy. Dir: Paul Briganti. With Martin Herlihy, John Higgins, Ben Marshall.  
01.00 Bodies Bodies Bodies (USA, 2022). Comedy horror. Dir: Halina Reijn. With Amanda Stenberg, Maria Bakalova, Myrha Herrold.

**News on the Hour:**  
CNN (Y102/H205) | Sky News (Y103/H203)  
BBC (H204) | Fox News (Y105/H202)

**Ilene Prusher**

BOCA RATON, Florida – On the eve of a too-close-to-call U.S. presidential election, America is awash in political anxiety. But in the state that's home to one of the country's largest Jewish electorates, it's not just the Harris vs. Trump showdown that's keeping Jews up at night.

Also cause for mounting concern is whether Floridians will pass an amendment that guarantees access to abortion – a right that has all but evaporated in this sprawling state of over 23 million following the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe vs. Wade two years ago.

To many Jews, this is more than just a campaign for reproductive freedoms that had seemingly been a given for half a century. Rather, it is a moment of truth that makes them wonder whether the Sunshine State, a mecca of Jewish migration for decades, is beginning to look less like a New York breakaway in the tropics and more like the conservative Deep South – if not a dystopian state out of a Margaret Atwood novel.

Since October 24, when early voting started, activists have started showing up not to promote a presidential candidate but to reportedly intimidate Floridians to “Vote No on 4.” The airwaves are full of relentless ads for and against the measure, but mostly against – many of them directly promoted by Gov. Ron DeSantis himself.

If passed, Amendment 4 would add language to the Florida constitution dictating that its legislature cannot pass a law that would “prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient’s health, as determined by the patient’s healthcare provider.”

While Democratic candidate Kamala Harris has said she would restore and protect reproductive freedoms, her opponent Donald Trump takes pride in having appointed the Supreme Court judges who overturned Roe because, he claims, “everybody wanted it to go back to the states.”

**Harassing voters**

Two years after Roe vs. Wade was replaced with Dobbs v. Jackson, which stipulates that the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion, abortion is on the ballot in 10 states.

While Jews are at the forefront of trying to reinstate or enshrine reproductive rights in each of those states, probably nowhere is their impact felt more than in Florida, which has America's third-largest Jewish population with over half a million Jews.

Laura Guren Rodriguez is a senior representative of the National Council of Jewish Women – one of the founding partners of the Floridians Protecting Freedom campaign that has worked feverishly to get abortion on the ballot. She says she is hearing stories from her field volunteers about anti-abortion protesters coming out to voting locations and aggressively harassing people as they go to vote. Their rallying cry: “Vote No on Amendment 4.”

“The people who are usually showing up at the clinics, yelling at people as they go in, are now showing up at the polls,” says Guren Rodriguez, referring to protesters who make a practice of gathering outside of clinics that are known or even thought to be abortion-providers.

Guren Rodriguez, who lives in Miami, has spent the last few years forging alliances with pro-choice Floridians of many faith traditions in their campaign to try to convince the Republican-dominated, male-majority state legislature not to curtail abortion rights – at least not in such a draconian way.

In trips to Tallahassee, the state capital, she explains to the uninitiated that the Jewish position on when life begins differs from that of many Christians, who believe that it begins at conception.

“I told them that in Judaism we don't believe in life until the first breath is taken,” she recounts. “And all of them were like, ‘Oh my gosh, we had no idea that that's what Jews believe – we figured they held the same position as the Catholics.’”

Even more difficult, Guren Rodriguez says, is



Protesters against the abortion ban holding a National Council of Jewish Women banner in Florida. National Council of Jewish Women

# Florida Jews anxious over Nov. 5 – for special reason

Trump is expected to take Florida, but a downballot vote on guaranteeing abortion access is much harder to call

trying to get legislators to see why the Jewish community is at odds with a law that prohibits abortion after six weeks, a point at which many women do not even realize that they are pregnant. The six-week ban also threatens the use of in vitro fertilization and prenatal testing for those who do want to have children.

“I testified in front of two different committee meetings, and I tried to make clear that the lawmakers’ ban is fueled by their religious beliefs,” she says. “Not only is that a bad choice for health care, but it's an infringement on our freedom of religion – not just on Jews, but Muslims, Hindus and other minority religions.”

To be sure, not all Jewish

Americans are pro-choice, but the overwhelming majority are. The Pew Research Center found that 83 percent of Jews surveyed say abortion should be legal in most or all cases. While there is daylight among the various streams of Judaism, including Orthodox, all take both the physical and mental health of the mother into consideration.

As such, many leaders across the Jewish community argue that Florida's near-total abortion ban is a blurring of the church-state separation that America has promised since the ratification of the Constitution in 1788.

“We believe that the Jewish tradition says something specific about this issue: Ac-

cess to abortion is not just essential but it's crucial to our religious freedom,” says Rabbi Greg Weisman of Temple Beth El in Boca Raton.

He has been spearheading the South Florida Jewish community's reaction to the rapid evaporation of abortion rights in the state, and his Reform synagogue alone collected 6,000 signatures as part of a statewide effort to put the question on the ballot this fall.

Close to a million signatures were collected – more than legally required to get on the ballot – but multiple state institutions under DeSantis are working to derail the effort even as voters go to the polls, alleging that there were violations in the peti-

tion-gathering.

DeSantis even tried to get some of the TV ads supporting Amendment 4 banned, but lost that battle this week when a federal judge blocked his efforts to do so, citing free speech.

When Weisman meets with other clergy and religious folks around the state, he explains the Jewish position less as pro-abortion and more as pro-access. He stresses that Jewish law makes clear that the life of the woman carrying the fetus takes precedence.

“I've met with people on both sides of the aisle and of many faiths to try to convince them of why abortion needs to stay legal and why the Jewish community is in

favor of abortion access,” he says. He watched how, in two years, Florida went from having abortion access up through viability – usually considered to be 24 weeks of pregnancy – to 15 weeks, and finally, just six weeks.

“The law has enshrined the beliefs of some religious Floridians,” he says. “As a member of a religious minority, I really feel threatened by that. As a clergy person, even counseling someone on how to get an abortion might be actionable in the future.”

**A galvanizing issue**

Shira Zemel, director of the National Council of Jewish Women's Jews for Abortion Access campaign, has been working the phone a lot these days. She's based in Washington, but she and other advocates call voters in Florida to try to convince them to vote for Amendment 4.

They have made about 8,000 calls for Florida and also sign up for text banking – an increasingly popular campaign activity since many people no longer pick up a call from unknown callers, but texts get through.

“What's been really interesting is that when you speak to a voter, they often say they're going to vote because of the ballot measure,” Zemel says. “When this question is put to voters, it's galvanizing. We convened the entire Jewish community on this issue. I think people will turn out and vote for their essential freedoms.”

At least, that was the theory behind putting the question on the ballot. A Pew poll just after the overturning of Roe v. Wade in 2022 found that 62 percent of Americans said abortion should be legal in all or most cases. Another poll found that two-thirds disagreed with the Supreme Court's decision. Around this time last year, some 75 percent of Florida voters either somewhat opposed or strongly opposed the state's six-week abortion ban.

Polls this week, however, are coming in far lower than that. A Florida Atlantic University poll showed 58 percent support for the amendment, while St. Pete Polls put

it at 54 percent. Although that would still constitute a majority, in Florida a ballot measure needs to pass a 60 percent threshold, which is unusually high.

Still, why did support seemingly fall off a cliff? Advocates for Amendment 4 point to the disinformation campaign by DeSantis, who has deployed his own Department of Health to lobby against the measure. The actual ballots even include an additional financial impact statement – a block of wording that seems blatantly focused on dissuading Floridians from voting for the amendment.

**The Pew Research Center found that 83 percent of Jews surveyed say abortion should be legal in most or all cases.**

“The politicization of these financial impact statements erodes public trust in our institutions and threatens the integrity of every future ballot measure,” Michelle Morton, staff attorney at the ACLU of Florida, wrote in a condemnation of the August court decision that allowed that problematic wording to stay on the ballot.

Indeed, a less-informed voter might mistakenly conclude that Amendment 4 would do away with parental consent, provide public funding for abortions and “negatively impact the state budget,” the financial impact statement claimed.

“There's a lot of misinformation out there,” says Guren Rodriguez. “It doesn't surprise me that the state uses taxpayers' funds to try to influence people's decisions.” Although she fervently hopes the measure will pass, she realizes it may not and fears that in the next legislative season, DeSantis and friends will work to end citizen-generated ballot initiatives altogether.

**LINKS**

Continued from page 1

of parents in the film and television industry. A violinist and graduate of Harvard Law School, he co-founded the news site The Daily Wire, a right-wing media outlet, in 2015. He stars in video clips with titles such as “Ben Shapiro embarrasses pro-Palestinian Oxford student,” “Trans man goes on unhinged rant in Ben Shapiro's face,” and “Ben Shapiro debunks socialist redistribution of wealth.” He also moderates the popular podcast “The Ben Shapiro Show.”

Three of his books have been translated into Hebrew: “The Right Side of History,” “11 Rules for Winning the Argument: How to Debate Leftists and Destroy Them,” and “Bullies: How the Left's Culture of Fear and Intimidation Silences Americans.” He interviewed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his podcast and he himself was interviewed by Israeli journalist Amit Segal at a publish-

er's event. Since the outbreak of the Gaza war, Shapiro's videos have become viral and provided him with broad public exposure in Israel.

The content of the musical perfectly suits the message that Shapiro is trying to convey: The Jews will always live by the sword. “We thought of bringing the play to Israel already in 2022,” he said this year in an interview with Ynet. “At the time there was a huge dispute in Israel surrounding the government and the judicial reform, and we wanted to remind people and ourselves that there are greater external threats to the Jewish people. We argue with one another, but the reality is that there's an entire world of people who want to destroy us.”

The father and son connected with the Aspaklaria Theater in Jerusalem, which focuses on religious Jewish content, and with the Israel Sinfonietta Beer Sheva. They started working on the musical and then came October 7. Following the Hamas attack, Ben and David Shapiro decided to rewrite several scenes and to adapt the play to con-

nect the Jewish struggle, past and present.

Shapiro refused to be interviewed for Haaretz. However, during the same interview on Ynet he said: “In a sense October 7 was a worse event than the Holocaust, because the terrorists publicized their acts on live broadcasts whereas the Nazis tried to hide their crimes when the Allies approached.”

**A tribute to Israeli unity**

Back to the stage, where Israel, the young poet from the ghetto, is standing. “It's a writing ghetto. It's impossible to create here, it suffocates the soul. I'm leaving. There's nothing tying me here to these people, they're not my people,” he says to his friend. However, the flight plan runs into difficulties. At first he turns to the members of the Polish underground, with a request to help him get a forged passport in return for payment. They agree, but the plot thickens.

At the forefront of the Jewish struggle against the Nazis described in the musical are

Anielewicz and his fellow members of the left-wing Jewish Fighting Organization. The ring-wing Jewish Military Organization (Revisionist) isn't represented. The clear political affiliation is missing from the play, and appears modestly only in the symbol of the Hashomer Hatzair Zionist youth group on the wall of the organization's headquarters. In a video promoting the musical, Shapiro says that it was written in tribute to Israeli unity on October 7, and the unity of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, “who gathered together despite the differences between them, in order to fight for a Jewish future.” But that's not an accurate description.

“When we discuss combat in the context of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, it's important to mention that there were two underground organizations in the ghetto. The Jewish Fighting Organization, led by Mordechai Anielewicz, which included a variety of Zionist-socialist movements along with the Bund and the communists, and the Jewish Military Or-

ganization commanded by Pawel Frenkel, where members of Betar fought alongside many Jews from all sections of Jewish society,” says Prof. Havi Dreifuss of Tel Aviv University and the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center.

“An important part of the fighting, including flying the flags in the ghetto – the Polish flag and the blue and white flag – was carried out by the fighters of the Jewish Military Organization, and their part in that and in the uprising in general should be clearly stressed. In addition, there were also tens of thousands of other Jews in the ghetto who opposed the German attempts at expulsion in a variety of other ways, and they too played an important part in the struggle in the context of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.”

Anielewicz appears in the musical as a secondary figure and is presented as a militant fighter who leads the struggle against the Nazis. But his socialist ideology is missing from the story, and he draws his inspiration for the fight only from Jewish history. He sings about biblical warriors from Samson to the Maccabees. Behind him several verses are on display, including “I will utterly wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” Videos created with artificial intelligence are screened, apparently presenting the Israelites in battle, David's slingshot from the battle with Goliath and even the Temple Mount and the walls of Jerusalem.

Dreifuss notes that although Anielewicz grew up in Jewish youth movements – first the right-wing Betar and afterwards the left-wing Hashomer Hatzair – and was familiar with Jewish history, he wasn't an observant Jew. She adds that in some of the fighters' early writings there are metaphors of Masada and the Maccabees, but European and Polish myths influenced the underground members as well.

**Sirens in the north**

A short intermission between the acts. The guy sitting next to me tries to

sneak popcorn into the theater, and is scolded by the usher. Others go outside to refresh themselves or scroll down their phones and keep abreast of the sirens going off in the north that evening. In the third row sits a couple watching the play enthusiastically.

“I follow Ben Shapiro, I saw the ad for the performance and I said of course we'll come, I didn't ask anyone, I signed up immediately and brought my husband, says Frederique, pointing to the man sitting next to her, Shlomi. The two came from



Ben Shapiro Jason Kempin/Getty Images North America

Ashkelon. “Shapiro is the person who represents us in the most correct and dignified way, he's articulate, knows history. I see him replying in debates to all kinds of people who want to harm him, and he politely proves the whole truth to everyone who hates us – then, now and probably tomorrow too.”

Do you think that his comparison between the Holocaust and October 7 is correct?

“Of course. They're persecuting us because we're Jews, no other reason. They always try to soften us up and to tell us that they don't really want to destroy us, but in the end those who were right historically are those who took the tougher path of revolt. I think that the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising proved that even the Nazis respected us more when we fought and proved we're not cowards.”

Not far from there sits Racheli, 44, from Lashish.

“I've been following Ben Shapiro even before the war, because I'm really interested in the American media and all the things happening there in terms of woke theory. I don't agree with everything he says, but I think he's sharp, and he gives a Jewish point of view that's missing in the media. There's no question that his ideology is expressed in the musical, and in some way I hoped that he would know how to moderate it a little, because the first song with the rabbi was a little too much for me. But later I already felt that less.”

in fact understand where the comparison between the events comes from, but the broad context of the murderous behavior in the Gaza border communities and the Holocaust is essentially different. Unfortunately, it's definitely possible to identify a political use of the comparison between the Holocaust and October 7, but it serves both political sides, and in my opinion both are unacceptable.”

In the final scene the Jews in the ghetto organize the major uprising. Israel discovers that people don't return alive from the deportations; they arrive in Treblinka, and decides to join the struggle as part of the Jewish Fighters Organization. The revolt erupts on the eve of Seder night. Israel's sister is murdered, but he manages to rescue her baby daughter and hides with her in a bunker in the ghetto. A moment before the Nazis close in, he flees again with his niece while the rest of those in the bunker, including Anielewicz, commit suicide.

The two soldiers from the first act return to the stage. The grandson looks at the picture of his abducted grandmother that he found lying on the ground in the kibbutz. “Now she's with them, those Nazis,” he says. All the characters gather and begin to sing the theme song in a chorus, with pictures and names of the fallen from the Gaza war screened in the background. It is a rousing melody about survival and the eternal nature of the Jewish nation. It's not clear the musical will be of much help in keeping the Jewish people alive. The final scene made me squirm in my seat: Shapiro's exploitation of the fallen and the murdered, past and present, seems cynical and forced. However, judging by the applause of the audience, I'm apparently in the minority.

At the end of the play David Shapiro comes on stage to take a bow with the cast members, the orchestra, and conductor Rani Calderon. One of the viewers hisses: “What's this? I want an ending, it isn't finished! I want the hostages to return and to show those Hamas Nazis what's what.”

**sudoku**  
© Puzzles by Pappocom

The game board is divided into 81 squares, with nine horizontal rows and nine vertical columns. A few numbers already appear in some of the squares. The aim is to fill in numerals 1 to 9 in each of the empty squares, so that every row and column and every box (a group of nine squares outlined in boldface) contains all of the numerals 1 to 9. None of the numerals may recur in the same row, column or box.

5	4	8	9	1	2	3	6	7
9	3	6	5	8	7	2	1	4
1	7	2	3	4	6	5	8	9
8	5	1	6	7	3	4	9	2
2	6	4	1	5	9	7	3	8
3	9	7	8	2	4	6	5	1
4	8	3	2	6	1	9	7	5
6	2	5	7	9	8	1	4	3
7	1	9	4	3	5	8	2	6

Tips and a computerized version of Sudoku can be found at [www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com)

		6				9		
			9					
				1	6	4	3	
	1	9	4		2			
4	8		2	6	3	1		
	6		9			4		
2				8	9			4
		8			5			2
	9					7		1

Difficulty: Medium

# GALLERY גלריה

Ofer Aderet

**T**our guide Yoav Avneyon still remembers the day he first saw a picture of the Abu Aljiban house while scouting for historical photographs of Eretz Israel in the web. Of the multiple black-and-white images, one caught his eye, "some crazy villa on top of a hill," he describes. The captions didn't reveal much: "On the way to Rehovot," it said, next to the year 1932. With the help of some keen on history friends, he pinpointed the exact location of the structure on the outskirts of the village of Beit Dagan. "All three of them – the houseowner, the house and the village – rest in peace now," he says.

The talks between Avneyon and his friends paved the way for a fascinating research journey through Arab mansions built in Israel in Ottoman and British Mandate times – across Beit Dagan, Nes Tziona, Beit Guvrin, Rahat, Zikim and Be'er Sheva – and beyond. Some are in shambles, sometimes almost entirely. Others still stand, occasionally even reconstructed or rebuilt. According to Avneyon, all those mansions, regardless of their state, tell "a story that is at once fascinating and evoking great sorrow."

The house belonging to Zohdi Abu Aljiban, son of a wealthy and respected Jaffa family who owned lands and citrus groves, was razed to the ground. Today, on a hill where it used to stand there is but a little monument and some ruins. It is hard to imagine the grandeur and glitz of the now-decayed mansion, which Abu Aljiban began to plan in the 1930s with three well-known Jewish architects: Richard Kauffmann, Yehiel Segal and Yitzhak Rapoport. "The house was designed with a central space and an arched facade, like plantation houses of his effendi neighbors, but once the frame of the house was completed, Aljiban had a change of heart and decided to change the house to the International Style that was beginning to appear in Jewish neighborhoods," recounts architect and historian Samuel Giler in an article in "Et-Mol" periodical. In the end, says Giler, the Jewish architects "created one of the country's most beautiful houses."

However, the remaining plaque recounts the grim end of this mansion, which was blown up in a military raid, commanded by Shlomo "Chich" Lahat (the future seventh mayor of Tel Aviv) in February, 1948. This was a retaliation for a terrorist attack carried out two weeks earlier, when Jewish passengers were injured in a bus that hit a landmine on the way from Rishon Letzion to Mikveh Israel boarding school. The trail led to Hassan Salameh and his men, and hence to the



The dining room at Villa Salameh in Jerusalem.

Alex Levac



Ruins of the Abu Eljivan mansion, near Rishon Letzion.

Yoav Avneyon

## Palaces without kings: What remains of Arab architectural heritage in Israel

The impressive structures built by Arabs during the British Mandate and the Ottoman era are still scattered over Israel. Some are in ruins, others were conserved or thoroughly rebuilt. All embody stories of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of their former residents

house. This, despite the fact that the houseowner, Zohdi Aljiban, was not considered an extremist and was even friendly with his Jewish neighbors. "The building's fate was sealed and all that remains today of the grand plantation house are some ruins in the yard – a hexagonal stone pool under a large fig tree, and the fragments of a ceramic-plated pool," Giler says.

He further points out that Abu Aljiban's life story is representative of the Palestinian aristocracy tragedy in the last decade of the British Mandate, "when leadership devolved during the Arab rebellion from fez-wearing effendi class to keffiyeh-wearing gangs," he says. "The extremists took over the country's towns, and terrorized those who dissented," he recounts, saying that a month and a half after the house was demolished by the Israeli military, its Arab owner petitioned for compensation to the military governor of Ramla. This petition apparently went unanswered. Ever since, he led business from his exile in Beirut.

### Pyramids in the Galilee

Another mansion is located on the other side of the country, in moshav Elkosh, near the Lebanon border. It did survive the War of Independence, but stands deserted today. This mansion was the home of the village's mukhtar, Abed Majid Al-Sadeq, one of the last remnants of the Muslim village of Dayr al-Qassi, inhabited until 1948. "This is one of the amazing houses that sur-



The village of Dayr al-Qassi, in 1949.

Zoltan Kluger / National Library

vived in the Galilee," says Avneyon, recounting how, when he first went inside it, he blurted out a big "wow." He says that the murals that welcomed him were "extraordinary and impressive." "The ceiling looks like a carpet," he adds, "there is a wealth of styles there, of beauty and harmony of colors, well-preserved despite the place being open." Paintings of pyramids caught his eye. "Pyramids in the Galilee," he says with a smile. After studying them Mahmoud Yazbak, associate professor at the University of Haifa, discovered that similar motifs were painted in other Arab houses around the country. The house is also decorated with Quran verses, created by calligrapher

Mouhamad Ali, son of the Bahá'í faith founder.

During Israel's War of Independence, the village was deserted and sheltered Jewish immigrants from Yemen and Kurdistan. "We must not forget that the families used to live in these houses," warns Giler, pointing to another curious mansion in Nes Tziona. Built in 1923, it was the abode of Ramla-born Abdul Rahman Bey Al-Taji, who owned citrus groves, a soap factory and an olive oil press. The living room in the villa was covered with expensive Persian carpets, oil paintings hung on its walls and a grand piano stood in the center. Royalties, including princess Mary, daughter of king George V, was a guest here on her visit in 1934.

Avner Kahana, a longtime Nes Tziona resident, wrote about his Arab neighbor Abdul Rahman: "He was true to his name, Rahman ('Merciful'), wise and kind, he gave a lot of help to the colony and its people, and even aided the entire Yishuv to purchase land. A friend of the Yishuv." Giler adds that, under Ottoman rule, Rahman "saved the colony's farmers from expulsion, having rented some land for grain cultivation and listed the colony's farmers as his employees."

In his memoir, Jaffa merchant and public figure Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche calls Rahman "a righteous gentile" listing all his help. "When his son, Avner, was arrested for service in the Turkish military," Giler

says, "it was Abdul Rahman who rescued him from the military's hands, paying the Turkish authorities 40 sacks of clean flour as ransom. When Yosef Eliyahu and his family were expelled from Tel Aviv in 1917, and the country was undergoing famine, Abdul Rahman provided the family with ten sacks of flour and some camels, free of charge."

Abdul Rahman died in 1945, and during Israel's War of Independence his family moved to Jordan. The mansion was later transformed into a rest home for wounded Jewish soldiers. In her journal, nurse Estherke Avni (Kantor) recalls: "We arrived there and stopped at the foot of the hill. We walked into a citrus grove... Suddenly, a

mansion was revealed to us, something extraordinary, to this day I do not know if I have ever seen a house as beautiful as this one. It was a two-story house with lovely balconies and gables on the outside. Inside there were large halls and many rooms around them. A wonderful house. It was not simply empty, it was looted. The windows were broken, the handles, faucets, anything that could be taken away was looted."

Today, the house is not accessible to the public. It belongs to Nes Tziona's mental health center. In April, Giler managed to visit it with offsprings of its Arab owner, including his granddaughter who lives in Haifa and his great-granddaughter from East Jerusalem. "I took a picture of them sitting on the stairs. We chatted via WhatsApp with another grandson and granddaughter in Aman. It is a wonderful family," he recounts.

### Posh neighborhood for Christian Arabs

In recent years, Jewish entrepreneurs have rebuilt some Arab mansions. The two outstanding examples are the Fauzi Azar House in Nazareth, that is now an Abraham Hostel hotel; and Acre's Shukri house, currently the Effendi Hotel, owned by Uri Jeremias (Uri Buri). Though these projects are examples of Jewish-Arab cooperation, intended to promote coexistence, both have been embroiled in tragic conflict-related stories.

Entrepreneur Maoz Inon stumbled upon the house while walking around the old city of Nazareth. He talked Azar's family into reviving his house and turning it into a hotel. The house, built in 1830, has stone-arched windows and high, hand-painted ceilings. The hotel manager is the owner's granddaughter Suraida Shomar-Nasser. On October 7, Inon's parents, Yaakov and Bilha, were murdered in the Netiv Ha'asara massacre, and the Nazareth

hotel is currently closed, due to the security situation. The Acre hotel was set ablaze by Arabs in the 2021 riots, and one of the guests, Israel Defense Prize laureate military scientist Aby Har Even, was murdered.

The history of Villa Salameh, in Jerusalem's Talbiya neighborhood, is also symbolic of the Israeli-Arab conflict. Constantine Salameh, a Beirut native, purchased land in Talbiya from the Greek Orthodox church after World War I. He dreamed of building a luxurious neighborhood there for Christian Palestinians. He instructed French architect Marcel Favier to "create an abode of unprecedented splendor in this land."

Architect David Kroyanker wrote of an "unusually formal representative front" of the villa. This is how journalist and director Dalia Karpel described it in a 2003 article: "The entrance of Villa Salameh leads to a double-height central hall, in the center of which there's a marble octagonal fountain, from which other rooms branch off. On one side of the large hall there's a wood-paneled dining room and salon, or living room, next to it. A service elevator connects the dining room to the basement, which contained a kitchen, wine cellar, laundry room, servants' quarters, storerooms and a two-car garage. Internal elevator connects the ground floor with the two upper floors. Each of bedroom has its own bathroom, in Italian marble. Door handles, accoutrements and the decorations, including lamps and wooden furniture, are all in art deco style..."

**Villa Salameh was diligently attended to, which allowed it to preserve its beauty. Avneyon calls on authorities to prevent these cultural artifacts from decay.**

During Israel's War of Independence, Salameh's family left the house, later renting it to new residents – the government of Belgium, that housed its consul there. The consul's secretary was Esther Mileikowsky, married to Saadya Mileikowsky, an uncle of Benhamin Netanyahu. Esther sent Salameh's personal belongings, carpets and silverware that were kept in the house to his new home in Beirut. The villa was then involved in a cross-continent lawsuit, and Salameh's family received partial compensation from the State of Israel. Purchased later by businessman David Soffer, it is still rented out to the Belgian consul.

Despite this complicated legal story, the villa was diligently attended to, which allowed it to preserve its beauty. Avneyon calls on authorities to handle other buildings in the same manner, to prevent these cultural artifacts from decay. "The layers of this land are complex and multicolor, and must not be covered by the sands of oblivion," he warns.

## Putting a new twist on the eternal struggle to survive: Ben Shapiro musical links the Holocaust to October 7



A scene from "We Will Rise."

Ilan Assayag

Talia Banon Tsour

**A** cool evening in Be'er Sheva. Cars start streaming into the Cinema City parking lot. Among the last stores still open a group gathers next to a small sign, containing a page printed with the name of the musical in two languages: "Od Nakum," "We Will Rise," in which there's a Jewish boy wearing a yellow patch, walking next to a barbed wire fence and holding the hand of an Israel Defense Forces soldier who's in a field of poppies. There's an Israeli flag in the background. Anyone who approaches will notice a picture on the poster of a face that looks familiar, and alongside it the caption: "Writing: Ben Shapiro."

Nearby stands a woman next to her partner, talking on the phone and not showing much interest in the event. When asked if she's come to Ben Shapiro's play she replies: "Who? Who's that?" I explain that it's a Jewish media personality who supports

Trump, a prominent right-wing figure in America. "We don't watch news at all. We're protecting our souls. What do we say at home? Only Channel 14," she explains.

It's clear that not every person who has come to the debut of the musical knows what exactly he's come to

**In a video promoting the musical, Shapiro says it was written in tribute to Israeli unity on October 7.**

see. One couple wonders "Where's the concert?" Others say that they're friends of the production team. Among the audience were many members of the religious Zionist community.

Three minutes behind schedule, when the lights in the half-full theater are still on and the audience is still trying to find its way to their seats, the Israel Sinfonietta Beer Sheva orchestra begins to play. Above it, in a biblical font adorned with animated

flames, appears the caption "We Will Rise." In parallel with the pathos-filled music, pictures of burning houses and vehicles are shown on semi-transparent screens standing on the stage. For anyone who's still in doubt the caption explains: "Kfar Azza 7.10.23."

The figures of two armed soldiers go on stage, one of them with long sidelocks, wearing tzitzit and a large white kippa "Grandma? Grandma? Grandma! Have you seen my grandma?" shouts one of them, and is told: "They took her to Gaza." The soldier sees a picture of his grandmother as an infant in the Warsaw Ghetto, tossed on the paths of the kibbutz.

All at once the pictures from burning Kfar Azza are replaced by videos of

Jews in the ghetto. The comparison between October 7 and the Holocaust, which is likely to be jarring to many people, echoes throughout the musical.

The first song is performed by a rabbi who describes ghetto Jews as lost souls blind to the greatness of God and oblivious to the only path to certain redemption: faith in the Creator. Opposite him stands one of the Judenrat members, mocking the rabbi and his faith in the Jewish god, urging him and the other Jews to convert to Christianity. The musical was written by Shapiro in 2019 with his father, musician David Shapiro. It tells the story of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising through the eyes of Israel, a young Jew in the ghetto and an amateur poet. Alongside him emerge several familiar historical figures, such as Mordechai Anielewicz and Judenrat head Adam Czerniakow.

Shapiro, an orthodox Jew from Los Angeles, is the son

### Weather

**Rainy, especially in the morning**

Monday will be rainy and a bit colder than usual for this time of year, but the rain will taper off by the afternoon. Tuesday will be partly cloudy with a chance of light morning rain in the north and center of the country and along the coast. Wednesday will be partly cloudy to clear, and warmer.

**Tuesday** **Wednesday** **Thursday**

**Air pollution index:** 3.11,24

low medium high very high  
Jerusalem Tel Aviv Haifa Kravot  
Be'er Sheva Karmiel Afula Mod'in

pollution forecast for this morning:  
low-medium

