

NEWS. COMMUNITY. HERITAGE. PERSPECTIVE.

OUR J NEWS

THE MAGAZINE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

ISSUE #43 | AUGUST 6, 2026

BOY GEORGE: "I STAND WITH THE JEWS"

Why moral clarity should
never require courage

HEROES BEYOND BORDERS

Israel's humanitarian
mission of hope
and healing

HEALING THROUGH HOCKEY

The game that heals
more than the ice

JUDEA & SAMARIA

Sovereignty, development
and a changing landscape

ELUL

A TIME TO REFLECT,
REMEMBER & RENEW

*As the Jewish year draws to a close,
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and look ahead with hope.*

Inside:

In-depth analysis,
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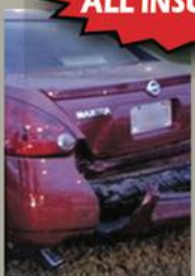
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Around Town

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Letter *from the* EDITOR

— MONTH OF ELUL: —

A time of personal self-evaluation that concludes on the 25th anniversary of 9-11

— By Linda Chase —

Dear **OURJNEWS** Community,



Elul is the final month of the year on the Hebrew calendar. In 2026, Elul begins at sundown on August 12th and concludes with the start of Erev Rosh Hashanah on Friday, September 11 (the 25th anniversary of 9-11). Elul's conclusion and the start of the High Holidays is even more significant this year, as the 3,000 innocent souls murdered on that horrific day are remembered.



Bridging Elul and the High Holidays on the somber 25th anniversary of 9-11 powerfully aligns collective historical mourning with the Jewish mandate for spiritual reckoning, ultimate renewal and the sacred resilience of life. Concluding the introspective period precisely on 9-11's 25th anniversary merges national grief with personal and communal soul-seeking.



Elul is critically important as a 29-day spiritual journey for deep soul-searching (cheshbon hanefesh) and returning to core values (teshuvah) ahead of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 5787. The month prior to the High Holy Days is a yearly reminder that personal renewal, forgiveness and healing are always within reach before closing out the previous year and stepping into a fresh cycle.



Throughout Elul, the shofar is sounded to awaken the conscience. Hearing or reflecting on these piercing notes on the shadow-laden anniversary of September 11 bridges the memory of sudden, catastrophic loss with a timeless call for moral clarity, vigilance and healing. Elul is also a time of year during which Jews traditionally visit the graves of loved ones. This custom not only reminds us of the individuals who impacted our lives, but also prompts us to think about our own lives and the legacies we will leave to others.



*Wishing you a
Good Shabbos*

Warmly

Linda

“

*Let the memory of the
2,996 victims of 9-11
be a blessing, as our
community honors
those lives lost during
Elul, the High Holy
Days and for years
to come.*



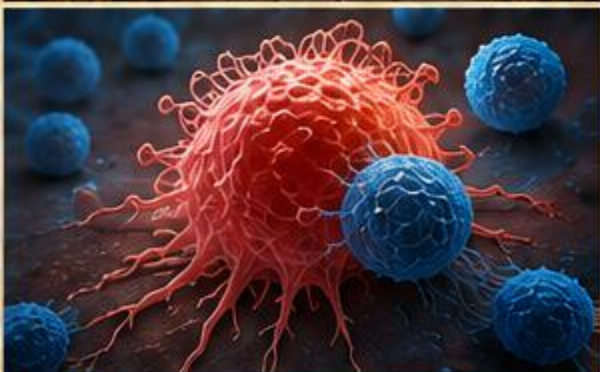


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Did You Know?



Did You Know that Film star **Audrey Hepburn** recalled childhood memories of the Holocaust

By Linda Chase

- ✿ Long before iconic actress Audrey Hepburn became Hollywood's "My Fair Lady," she was an eyewitness to the horrors of the Holocaust. Hepburn is widely considered one of the top three greatest actresses of all time. She brought a refreshing European sophistication, elegance and intelligence to post-war Hollywood during an era that needed an escape from the world's ills. Today, she is widely known for her indelible impact on cinema and fashion, solidifying her elite status as a superstar. Lesser known is her childhood in Nazi-occupied Europe.
- ✿ Hepburn was born on May 4th, 1929 into an aristocratic family in Brussels, Belgium. Her family was not Jewish, however they were related to diarist Anne Frank. Born just weeks apart, Audrey and Anne never met but they shared parallel lives as teenagers in Nazi-occupied Holland. Audrey's mother, the Dutch baroness Ella van Heemstra and Anne's father, Otto, were second cousins, making Audrey and Anne second cousins once removed. Hepburn witnessed the horrors of the Holocaust firsthand. She recounted seeing cattle cars filled with Jewish people bound for the death camps, an image that haunted her for the remainder of her life. Audrey's family also suffered devastating personal losses. Her uncle, Otto Ernst Gelder, was executed by a Nazi firing squad and her brother was sent to a German labor camp.
- ✿ To fight back, Audrey actively aided the Dutch resistance movement. She performed underground dance recitals (known as "Black Evenings" because windows were blacked out to raise money for Jewish people in hiding. Taking advantage of her youth and unassuming presence, Audrey acted as a courier, hiding resistance newspapers in her woolen socks and delivering food and messages. She also volunteered at a hospital that served as a resistance hub and helped carry messages to downed Allied airmen hiding in the woodlands.
- ✿ After the war, Audrey read Anne's diary while it was still in manuscript form prior to its wide publication. The harrowing account of what Anne endured closely mirrored Audrey's own personal family trauma and she often referred to Anne Frank as her "Soul Sister." In fact, Otto Frank (who thought Audrey bore a striking resemblance to Anne) personally approached Audrey to play Anne in the 1959 film adaption of "The Diary of Anne Frank." Hepburn respectfully declined, because she felt the emotional toll of her own wartime memories made the role too painful for her to portray.
- ✿ Audrey's enduring film roles included "Roman Holiday," "Sabrina," "Funny Face," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Charade," "My Fair Lady" and "Wait Until Dark." Her final film role would be a cameo appearance as an angel in Steven Spielberg's "Always." The same year as that film's release, Audrey was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF. On her appointment, Audrey stated that she was grateful for receiving international aid after enduring the German occupation as a child and wanted to show her gratitude for a cause close to her heart.
- ✿ Following a lifetime as both an entertainer and a humanitarian, Hepburn passed away much too young at 63 on January 20th, 1993.



“
As you grow older, you will
discover that you have two
hands, one for helping yourself,
the other for helping others.

– AUDREY HEPBURN





KOSHER CARNIVORE: THE DIAGNOSIS THAT STARTED IT ALL

— ★ A PERSONAL JOURNEY. A POWERFUL MISSION. ★ —

By **Isaac Romano**
Founder, Kosher Carnivore

I never thought much about health. I ate what I wanted, lived how I wanted, and hadn't seen a doctor since I was a teenager. After my daughter was born in my late 20s, I figured it was time for a checkup.

My bloodwork came back wrong on two fronts: blood sugar through the roof, thyroid hormones way off, and zero symptoms for either. My doctor was puzzled enough to send me for an abdominal ultrasound to check my pancreas. My pancreas was fine. But the scan found a large mass on my right kidney, later diagnosed as renal cell carcinoma, a slow-growing cancer that gives no warning until it's too late. Diabetes, Hashimoto's, and kidney cancer, all in one month.

SURGERY REMOVED MY RIGHT KIDNEY AND THE CANCER WITH IT.

Once I recovered, I went deep into research and landed on the carnivore diet. Within months my blood sugar stabilized and I felt better than I had in years. That world runs on beef organs, but as a kosher-keeping Jew, I couldn't find any that were actually kosher. Every organ supplement on the market was treif.

So I started kashering beef liver myself, dehydrating it, and encapsulating it at home. I posted the process online, mostly to document it for myself. The messages started pouring in. Turns out kosher Jews everywhere had been searching for exactly this and finding nothing, until the algorithm found me.

At first, people trusted me simply because I was a religious Jew being transparent about the process. As demand grew, I partnered with a real facility and earned Star-K certification, which let us scale properly. Today we've added kosher collagen and creatine monohydrate to the lineup.

WHAT STARTED AS A WAY TO KEEP MYSELF ALIVE TURNED INTO A MISSION:

bringing ancestral, whole-food nutrition to the kosher community, without compromise on kashrut or quality.

Real, simple ingredients over lab-isolated pills. That's still the whole point of Kosher Carnivore.

Isaac Romano
Founder, Kosher Carnivore

“Real, simple ingredients over lab-isolated pills. That's still the whole point of Kosher Carnivore.”



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HEALING THROUGH HOCKEY *for the Community*

METULA STRONG



By Linda Chase and Koby Shabtai



Koby Shabtai and his son Asher. Three generations of hockey inspired a mission that is now helping young Israeli athletes rebuild after the war.

“ EVERY STICK, HELMET AND PAIR OF SKATES REPRESENTED ONE MESSAGE:

We have not forgotten you. ”

Koby Shabtai is a South Florida hockey player and dedicated advocate for Israel’s national and youth hockey programs. Koby has spearheaded several grassroots relief efforts, including an initiative to replace damaged equipment at the Beit Canada hockey rink in Metula, Israel. In September, thanks to Koby’s efforts, players from the Israeli Women’s National Hockey Team, as well as players from Metula North Stars U18, will be visiting South Florida for a special hockey retreat.

I didn’t grow up playing hockey. I grew up in Herzliya, Israel, where hockey really wasn’t part of our culture. Growing up, there were only two ice rinks in the entire country. One was a tiny recreational rink in Ramat Gan. I went there once as a kid and honestly hated it—I just didn’t get the point.

I also remember going on a school field trip to Metula. We had two choices: go skating or shoot rifles at the range. Like most Israeli kids, I thought shooting guns sounded much cooler, so that’s what I chose. Looking back now, it’s funny to think I passed on skating at the very rink that would later become such an important part of my life.

Like a lot of kids my age, my only real exposure to hockey was The Mighty Ducks. We all thought Gordon Bombay was the coolest guy in the world. Years later, movies like Goon made me appreciate the sport even more, but hockey was still just something I watched for fun. I never imagined it would become part of my life.

Everything started to change after I met my wife. Her father, Michael Litsky, was a huge hockey fan. He had a collection of signed New York Ranger hockey sticks stored in a closet in our apartment. Every time I opened that closet, there they were. At the time, they were just hockey sticks to me, but looking back, it’s funny how something I barely paid attention to eventually became such a big part of my life.

Then, in 2016, I traveled to Detroit for work at the North American International Auto Show. My host happened to have tickets to a Red Wings vs. Bruins game, so I went. That was my first NHL game, and something clicked. I was completely hooked.

After that, every time we visited my in-laws in South Florida, Micheal would take me to Florida Panthers games. Little by little, I became a Panthers fan. When my family moved to Florida in 2021, I started going to a lot more games, and my love for hockey just kept growing.

A CALL FOR HELP FROM METULA

After I started playing hockey, I became curious about how hockey even made it to Israel. I made a post about the history of hockey in Israel, and that’s how I met Paul Shaindman.

A few days later, Paul told me that the rink in Metula had been heavily damaged during the war. All of the loaner equipment—skates, helmets, pads, and sticks—was gone. The program couldn’t continue.

Continued Next Page...

With the help of friends, family, and the South Florida hockey community, we shipped seven pallets of equipment to Metula—over 200 pairs of skates, helmets, pads, and more.

That effort became the birth of Healing Through Hockey.

BUT REPLACING EQUIPMENT WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING...



MORE THAN HOCKEY—

A Week of Healing



UNITY. FRIENDSHIP. COMMUNITY.
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.



Players from Israel’s Women’s National Team will be visiting South Florida this September for a special training retreat.

WHY WE’RE BRINGING THEM HERE

After delivering equipment to Metula, I kept thinking: what more can we do?

These players have been through so much. They deserve more than equipment—they deserve an experience they’ll never forget.

That’s how the idea for a training retreat in South Florida was born.

This September, players from the Israeli Women’s National Team and the Metula North Stars 18U team will join local players for a week of hockey, culture, friendship and healing.

WHAT THEY’LL EXPERIENCE

- High-level on-ice training and skills development
- Strength & conditioning and off-ice sessions
- Team bonding and cultural experiences
- South Florida adventures and unforgettable memories

A COMMUNITY THAT SHOWS UP

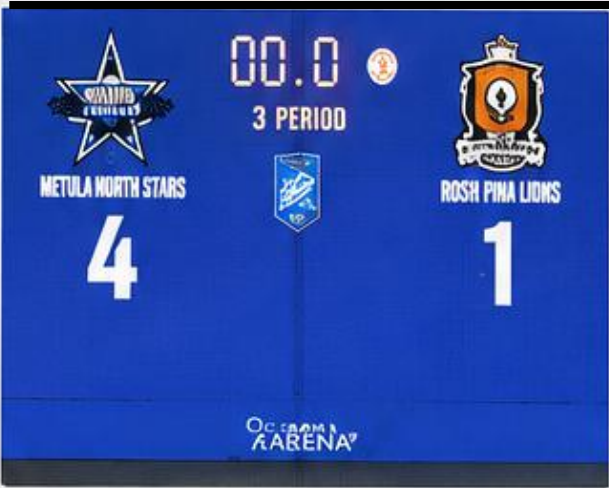
This retreat is only possible because of the incredible support of our local hockey community.

Coaches from Palm Beach Skate Zone, Florida Alliance, and Fort Lauderdale IcePlex are volunteering their time to lead on-ice sessions and off-ice training.

Local rinks—Palm Beach Skate Zone, Florida Alliance, and Fort Lauderdale Ice Plez—are donating ice time.

Families are opening their homes to host players. Businesses and friends are helping cover the costs.

It’s a true community effort, and it shows the best of what hockey is all about.



OUR MISSION

Healing Through Hockey was created to do more than provide equipment.

It’s about building bridges, creating opportunities, and showing young athletes in Israel that they are not alone.

WE’RE BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS
THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME.

THE REALITY IN METULA

The Metula rink remains too damaged to practice. The nearest ice is a six-hour round-trip drive.

These athletes are determined to keep pushing forward, and we’re here to help them every step of the way.

TO EVERYONE WHO’S HELPED

To every coach, family, business, and friend who has stepped up—thank you.

You are showing these athletes what it means to be part of something bigger than ourselves.

THIS IS WHAT HEALING LOOKS LIKE.



“ Sometimes healing doesn’t come from words. Sometimes it comes from putting on your gear, stepping onto the ice, and realizing you’re surrounded by people who genuinely care about you. ”



HELP US BRING ISRAEL’S HOCKEY FAMILIES TO SOUTH FLORIDA



Support the Healing Through Hockey Initiative
Help provide lodging, meals, transportation, ice time and unforgettable experiences for Israel’s Women’s National Team and the Metula North Stars U18 players.



Every donation helps these young athletes rediscover hope, friendship and the game they love.



TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE—ON AND OFF THE ICE. ✨ THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH METULA. ✨

HISTORY. HERITAGE. TRUTH.

Solomon's Pools,
located in Beit Zayit
in Judea.

King Solomon Was *Not* a Palestinian

By Dr. Rafael Medoff,
Historian & Author

The Palestinian Authority's official news agency, Wafa, reports that the PA intends to ask UNESCO to protect the site known as Solomon's Pools from "Israeli occupation attempts to erase its Palestinian identity."

That would be a tall task for UNESCO, since the site doesn't actually have any "Palestinian" identity to erase; when the pools were built the word "Palestinian" didn't even exist. The country was called Judea.

And although there is no direct evidence that the pools were built by King Solomon, Israel has every reason to preserve and highlight the site's identity, because it is unquestionably Jewish.

The site consists of three huge reservoirs and four aqueducts. There is archaeological evidence dating some of them to the time of the Hasmoneans (the Maccabees) and some to the period of King Herod.

That makes sense, since the Hasmoneans were priests and the purpose of Solomon's Pools was to provide water for use in the daily rituals of the Second Temple, such as bathing of the priests and washing the area where sacrifices were brought.

“The country was called Judea. When the pools were built, the word “Palestinian” didn’t even exist.”



ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

The pools were built in ancient Judea, with evidence dating to the Hasmonean period and the time of King Herod.



OSLO AGREEMENTS

The Oslo agreements placed Solomon's Pools within the area controlled by the Palestinian Authority.



OSLO II ACCORD

Article 32, Paragraph 2 (7) of the Oslo II accord states: "The Palestinian side shall ensure free access to archaeological sites, open to the public without discrimination."



ACCESS IN PRACTICE

Nevertheless, visits by Israelis to the site are extremely rare and take place only under the protection of the Israeli Army.



A SAD REALITY

This is apparently because of the phenomenon of Palestinian Arabs violently assaulting Israeli Jewish passersby.



Solomon's Pools are part of Israel's ancient Jewish heritage.
History is not a threat—it is a truth.

HEROES BEYOND BORDERS:

How Israel Continues to HEAL THE WORLD



From disaster zones to operating rooms, Israel's humanitarian mission knows no borders.

By Melissa Berenson, Founder of Heroes for Israel Project

When headlines focus on conflict, they often overlook another side of Israel—one that quietly saves lives across the globe.

Whether responding to devastating natural disasters, training physicians in developing nations, or performing lifesaving surgeries on children who have nowhere else to turn, Israel has built a remarkable legacy of humanitarian service rooted in the Jewish principle of **Tikkun Olam**—repairing the world.

This commitment extends beyond politics, geography, ethnicity, or religion. Israel's aid is given not because of who people are, but because they are human.

SAVING A LIFE IN RWANDA

Recently, Israeli pediatric heart surgeon Dr. Sagi Assa traveled more than 4,000 kilometers to Rwanda with **Save a Child's Heart** to help save the life of **Angel**, an 11-day-old infant born with a life-threatening congenital heart defect.

Working alongside Rwandan physicians—many of whom were trained in Israel through the organization's medical fellowship program—Dr. Assa helped perform the surgery that gave Angel a chance to live.

The mission was about more than saving one child. It was also about empowering local medical professionals with the skills to save countless others long after the Israeli team returns home.

It is a model Israel has embraced for decades: don't simply provide aid—build lasting partnerships and create sustainable solutions.



A RESPONSE WHEN TRAGEDY STRIKES

That same spirit has been visible in recent weeks following the devastating earthquake in Venezuela.

While many nations focused on the destruction from afar, Israel mobilized one of its hallmark humanitarian responses, providing expertise and assistance to help those affected by the disaster. Israeli emergency personnel have repeatedly demonstrated that when tragedy strikes, they are prepared to respond regardless of political alliances or diplomatic relationships.

This is nothing new.

For decades, Israeli search-and-rescue teams, doctors, engineers, and humanitarian specialists have been among the first to arrive after earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and other disasters around the world.



HELPING COMMUNITIES. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

Through organizations such as **MASHAV**, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, and internationally respected nonprofits like **Save a Child's Heart**, Israeli expertise has reached communities across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and beyond.

Thousands of children from more than 70 countries have received lifesaving cardiac care through Israeli hospitals. Many come from nations that have little or no diplomatic relationship with Israel. Others come from communities where families could never afford advanced medical treatment. In Israel, they receive the same compassionate care because every life has equal value.

A GLOBAL IMPACT BEYOND MEDICINE

The humanitarian impact extends well beyond medicine.

Israeli specialists have shared innovations in agriculture with drought-stricken regions, developed water purification technologies for communities lacking clean drinking water, trained emergency responders around the world, and provided disaster relief on nearly every continent.



A PRINCIPLE THAT GUIDES A NATION

This commitment reflects one of Judaism's most enduring values.

Tikkun Olam teaches that every person has a responsibility to help repair a broken world. It is not limited by nationality, race, religion, or politics. It is measured by action.

In an era increasingly defined by division, Israel continues to demonstrate that compassion requires no passport.



The story of an 11-day-old baby in Rwanda and the humanitarian response to victims in Venezuela are connected by a common thread: ordinary people choosing to save lives.

These are the heroes of Israel.

Not because they seek recognition, but because they answer the call wherever suffering exists.

• THEIR MESSAGE IS SIMPLE AND TIMELESS: •
WE ARE ONE HUMANITY. — AND EVERY LIFE IS WORTH SAVING.

Sometimes, it takes a boy *(George)*

Why moral clarity should
never require courage.

BY JONATHAN S. GREENWALD/JNS



Boy George performs on stage during the Henley Festival 2026 at Mill Meadows in Henley-on-Thames, England, on July 8, 2026.
Photo by Ki Price/WireImage/Getty Images.

If you're ever confused,
I stand with the Jews."
Those may be among the
most consequential song
lyrics released this year.

On July 27, Boy George released his newest song, "We Will Dance Again," commemorating the victims of the Oct. 7, 2023 massacre in southern Israel. He most likely knew it would be controversial. He most likely knew there would be a price to pay.

In today's entertainment industry, expressing solidarity with Israel or even with Jewish victims of terror is often met with criticism, professional backlash and public condemnation. Yet Boy George recorded the song anyway.

That decision matters.
Not because Boy George is a politician.
Not because he is Jewish.
Not because he has spent his career as an advocate for Israel.
It matters because he chose moral clarity over cultural conformity.

Immediately afterward comes an even more revealing line: "I don't feel brave; I just need to behave like a human." Those words should not sound courageous. They should sound ordinary. When standing with victims of terrorism is considered brave rather than simply human, something has gone terribly wrong.

🎵 "I don't feel brave;
I just need to behave
like a human."
— BOY GEORGE

Since the Hamas-led terrorist attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, we have witnessed what can best be described as Moral Inversion: a reversal of the moral order, in which victims become villains, terrorism becomes "resistance," and evil is judged not by what is done, but by who does it.

“
When our principles
depend upon who the
victim is, they are no
longer principles;
they are preferences.
”

Moral Inversion occurs when the identity of the actor becomes more important than the nature of the act. It does not simply alter political opinions. It changes a society's moral vocabulary. It teaches people to measure identical acts by different standards depending upon who commits them. It transforms selective outrage into virtue and moral consistency into controversy.

When Moral Inversion takes hold, telling the truth becomes an act of courage rather than an act of conscience.

No event better illustrates that inversion than Oct. 7, which should never have been morally complicated. Men, women and children were tortured, raped, murdered, kidnapped and, in many cases, their bodies were desecrated. Entire families were wiped out. Young people attending a music festival were hunted down simply because they had gathered to celebrate life.

Such atrocities should have elicited universal condemnation. The response to such atrocities should never depend upon politics, ideology or the identity of the victims. It should depend upon our shared humanity. When that moral instinct becomes conditional, we lose something far greater than consensus—our moral compass.

This is what happened. The conversation after Oct. 7 quickly shifted to justification, context and competing narratives. The massacre itself was too often pushed into the background while debates over politics took center stage.

Boy George refused to participate in Moral Inversion. He refused to redefine evil to make it acceptable.

He has reminded us that before there are political movements, ideological labels or competing historical grievances, there are human beings.

Continued Next Page....



Boy George Continued

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Boy George refused to participate in Moral Inversion. He refused to redefine evil to make it acceptable. He has reminded us that before there are political movements, ideological labels or competing historical grievances, there are human beings.

His declaration, "If you're ever confused, I stand with the Jews," is not simply about Israel. It is about refusing selective humanity. It is about insisting that Jews deserve the same empathy afforded every other minority community. That should not be controversial.

Perhaps nowhere is this contradiction more striking than among those who proudly champion gay rights while embracing movements that offer those rights little or no legal protection.

Among Middle Eastern nations, Israel stands alone in affording gay and lesbian individuals robust legal protections. By contrast, in the vast majority of Muslim-majority countries, homosexuality remains a criminal offense, with penalties ranging from imprisonment to capital punishment.

One need not agree with every policy of the Israeli government to recognize that reality. Nor must one abandon compassion for innocent Arab civilians to condemn Hamas. Those are not contradictory positions but the product of moral consistency.

This is not really an article about Boy George. It is about a culture that has become so morally disoriented that saying, "I stand with the Jews," is viewed by many as courageous. It isn't. It is human.

If saying, "I stand with the Jews," is now considered courageous, then the problem is not Boy George. It is a culture that has forgotten the difference between popularity and principle.

Humanity should never require courage.



—  —

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Hot
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Jewish

(Hot like my coffee)

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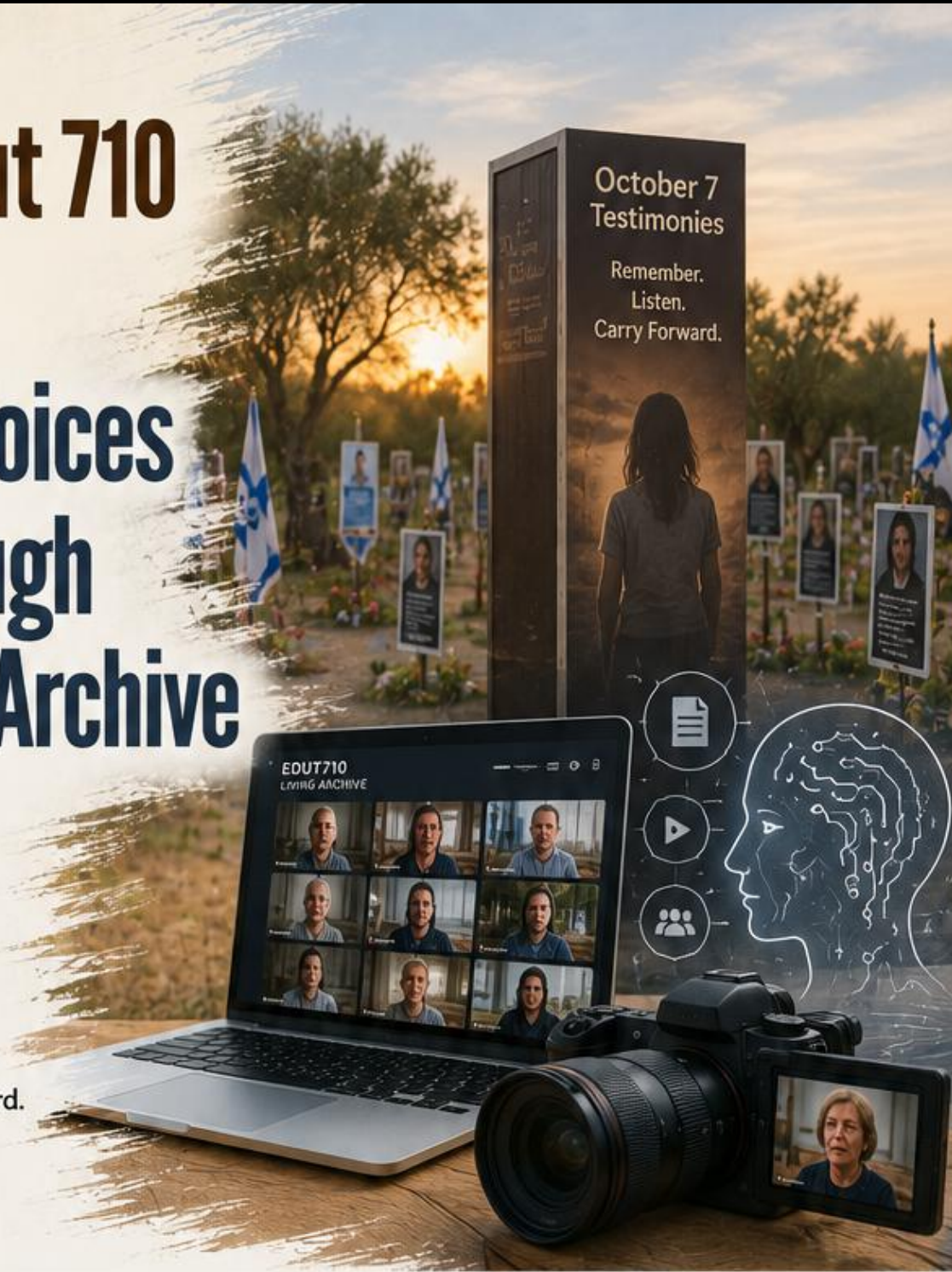
 18% OF SALES HELP JEWISH FAMILIES
WITH PEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE CASES

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Hebrew U. and Edut 710 Partner to Bring Oct. 7 Survivors' Voices to the World Through AI-Powered Living Archive

Staff Report

The collaboration reflects the shared commitment of the Hebrew University and Edut 710 to ensuring that the voices of October 7 remain living voices, preserved for future generations, and made accessible to the people who will teach them, study them, create from them, and carry them forward.



ABOUT THE EDUT 710 COLLABORATION

The partnership with Hebrew University grew organically from the work of Edut 710 itself. As the testimony collection expanded, it became clear that preserving thousands of stories was only the first step. The next challenge was enabling people to discover and learn from those voices without losing the individuality of each testimony. The collaboration brings together Edut 710's archive with the Hebrew University's expertise in digital humanities, archival preservation, and responsible AI.

The connection between Edut 710 and the Hebrew University was initiated by **Prof. Renana Keydar**, testimony researcher, senior fellow at the Faculty of Digital Humanities, and one of the founders of the Edut 710 initiative.



ABOUT EDUT 710

Edut 710 is a civic initiative founded by leading professionals in documentary filmmaking, historical research, education, technology, and mental health. The initiative was established to document and preserve the testimonies of survivors of October 7, recognizing the profound historical importance of these voices.



FIRST TESTIMONIES
The first filmed testimonies were recorded on October 9 in Eilat and the Dead Sea region.



APPROXIMATELY 2,000 TESTIMONIES HAVE BEEN FILMED



AROUND 1,100 ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE on the 710 Testimony website and YouTube channel.



THE REMAINING TESTIMONIES are currently in various stages of editing and processing.



DROR PRIZE
for Social Change



LANDAU PRIZE
of Mifal HaPais



CIVIL SOCIETY HEROES AWARD
of the Zionist Council

With the exception of a small number of board members, the organization's activities are carried out entirely by volunteers. Edut 710 has received several major awards, including:

Featured testimonies on the platform include well-known figures from Israeli public life, leading media personalities, community leaders, released hostages, and families of abductees.



TO LEARN MORE:
www.edut710en.org





Gush Etzion

LEADING WITH

Inclusion

Gush Etzion to require housing for people with disabilities in new communities

By JNS Staff

The Gush Etzion Regional Council in Judea, south of Jerusalem, announced on Monday a new policy that requires allocating apartments in new neighborhoods to people with special needs.

The council’s plenum approved the first-of-its-kind-in-Israel initiative this week.



A BINDING COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

Under the plan, 3% of every new zoning plan containing more than 100 housing units will be dedicated to people with disabilities.



BUILT INTO EVERY NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Alongside the planning of synagogues, kindergartens, public institutions, open spaces and community infrastructure, every new neighborhood in Gush Etzion will also be required to include designated apartments that enable people with special needs to live as part of the community.



INTEGRATED. SUPPORTED. INCLUDED.

The designated apartments, integrated into ordinary residential buildings, will be operated by nonprofit organizations and professional bodies specializing in supported and inclusive housing.

“

This is a historic decision that reflects the way we view settlement in Gush Etzion. New construction is not merely about adding housing units, roads and infrastructure, it is an opportunity to build a complete, stronger and more inclusive community.

In our view, 3% of the apartments represent 100% social and communal responsibility.

Gush Etzion is proud to lead such an initiative, and I hope it will become a model for other local authorities across Israel.

– **Yaron Rosenthal**
Head of the Gush Etzion Regional Council



The policy was developed based on the experiences gained from the inclusive community of Giv’at in Gush Etzion.



Photo: An aerial view of a neighborhood in Gush Etzion, south of Jerusalem.
Photo by Eli Feuer/Binyan HaGush.

MISSION TRIPS TO ISRAEL



CONNECT • SERVE • LEARN • INSPIRE

Experience Israel. Make a Difference.

**AFSI**
AMERICANS FOR A SAFE ISRAEL

Experience ISRAEL

with AFSI/Americans for a Safe Israel



For decades, AFSI/Americans for a Safe Israel has led more missions to Judea and Samaria than any other American organization.



Our Chizuk Missions are at the heart of AFSI's work — connecting Americans with the land, its people, and the realities on the ground.



These unforgettable journeys offer first-hand experiences that strengthen bonds and deepen understanding.



**JOIN OUR NEXT CHIZUK MISSION TO ISRAEL**
OCTOBER 20-28, 2026

TOUR GUSH ETZION, JERUSALEM, SHOMRON & THE GALILEE

**PRICE: \$4,700** PER PERSON (SINGLE) | **\$3,500** PER PERSON (DOUBLE)

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afsi.org/missions

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HEROES



FOR ISRAEL PROJECT

WHERE ANYONE CAN BE A HERO

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★ MISSION TRIP ★

DECEMBER 6-13TH

for ISRAEL at HANUKKAH



EXPERIENCE *Israel* LIKE NEVER BEFORE
LIKE A LOCAL

 UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES

 MEET THE PEOPLE

 SEE ISRAEL FIRSTHAND

 CELEBRATE HANUKKAH

 MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

★ MORE DETAILS COMING SOON! ★

A BOLD STEP TOWARD SOVEREIGNTY



★ By AFSI Staff ★



The Israeli Cabinet approved a 1.3-billion- shekel (\$434 million) plan to establish and develop dozens of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said on Tuesday.



“Together with [Settlements and National Missions] Minister Orit Strook, we formulated a decision that will enable the rapid establishment of communities through pioneer neighborhoods in the coming days, in parallel with the permanent development process of the communities.”



According to the Cabinet decision, which was adopted on June 14 and first published by Channel 12 News, the government will finance rapid initial construction consisting of prefabricated buildings, including up to 15 homes and two public buildings at each location.



**BUILDING COMMUNITIES.
STRENGTHENING ISRAEL.
SECURING OUR FUTURE.**



**JUDEA &
SAMARIA**
THE HEARTLAND
OF ISRAEL



SECURITY
Strengthening
Israel's strategic
depth



GROWTH
Expanding Jewish
presence and
development



UNITY
Building a stronger
nation for future
generations



HERITAGE
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Committed to the
future.

A STRONGER ISRAEL BEGINS WITH STRONGER ROOTS

ISRAEL AT THE CENTER



Rep. Khanna Says Armed Israeli Civilians Detained Him in Judea and Samaria



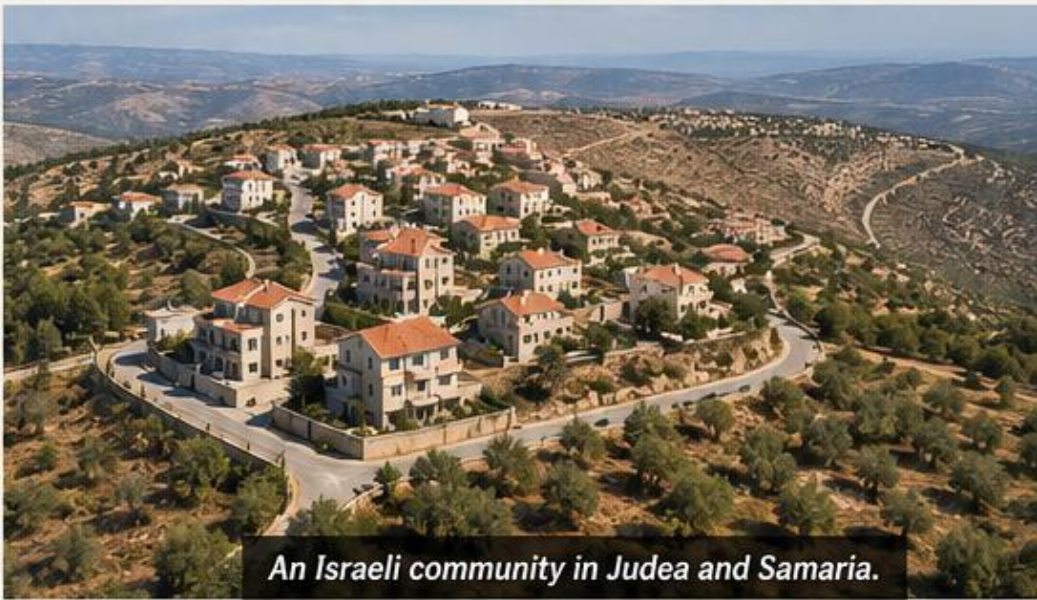
Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.)

By Len Bennett, Author of *Unfinished Work*

Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) said he was briefly detained by armed Israeli civilians while traveling through Judea and Samaria, an area commonly referred to internationally as the “West Bank.”

Khanna described the incident on social media, stating that his vehicle was stopped before Israeli security forces arrived and allowed him to continue his trip. No injuries were reported, and the circumstances surrounding the encounter remain disputed.

The incident quickly reignited debate over Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria, as well as competing narratives regarding the region’s legal and historical status.



An Israeli community in Judea and Samaria.

THE FACTS MATTER



1. ISRAELIS, NOT “SETTLERS”

“Israeli settlers” are Israelis, just as Ro Khanna is an American.



2. JUDEA AND SAMARIA, NOT “WEST BANK”

The “West Bank” was the term used by Jordan when it illegally occupied the area from 1948 to 1967. Its historical and biblical names are Judea and Samaria.



3. INTERNATIONAL LAW

Article 80 of the UN Charter affirms that what was promised the Jews at San Remo in 1920 cannot be overturned. Jews have the right to live anywhere in Israel.



4. PEACE OFFERS REJECTED

From the 1947 UN Partition Plan (rejected by Haj Amin al-Husseini, Hitler’s ally) to Camp David (2000) and the U.S. “Peace to Prosperity Plan,” offers for a Palestinian state were rejected or ignored.



5. SECURITY REALITY

After the October 7, 2023 massacre, which killed 1,200 and took hundreds hostage, support in Israel for a two-state solution collapsed. The threat is real.



6. NO “PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES”

There are no “Palestinian territories.” The so-called disputed territories are no longer in dispute. The two-state solution died on October 7 because the Palestinians want “from the river to the sea.”



Israel’s rights to Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem are rooted in history, legal agreements and international law. The real path to peace begins with truth, not libel.



BUILDING OUR FUTURE IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA

Time to **Settle** All of Judea and Samaria

AFSI Staff

Cabinet Minister Orit Strock outlined to Arutz Sheva - Israel National News her vision for expanding Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria, calling for future settlement efforts to extend into Areas A and B as well as Area C.

According to Strock, the current government has reversed the damage caused by the Oslo Accords and the 2005 Disengagement in Area C, but this is only the first stage of the process.

“The entire Land of Israel is ours - not only Area C, but also Areas B and A. There are 1.3 million dunams of land that are free of any settlement, and we need to take them because they are ours. We need to move into Area A.”

– Orit Strock



Strengthening communities in all parts of Judea and Samaria secures our heritage, our future, and the heartland of our people.

BUILDING CITIES OUT OF SAND

*From barren land to vibrant cities—
a century of Zionist
vision and achievement.*

By Dr. Rafael Medoff,
Historian and Author

One hundred years ago this week, a tiny advertisement in the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency's* daily news bulletin announced:

“The American Zion Commonwealth, builder of Balfouria and Herzliah, is now building Afule at the railroad junction in Emek Jezreel. Afule is being made into a modern city and is rapidly becoming the centre of Emek. Hundreds of Jews in America have already bought land in Afule, thus helping to build the Homeland and, at the same time, making a safe investment.”

And build they did. Afula (as it is now spelled) is today a thriving metropolis with a population of more than 65,000. Herzliya is home to more than 113,000 Israelis. Balfouria is a small but successful agricultural community, one of the many Jewish towns built on land that once consisted of malarial swamps or desert sands.

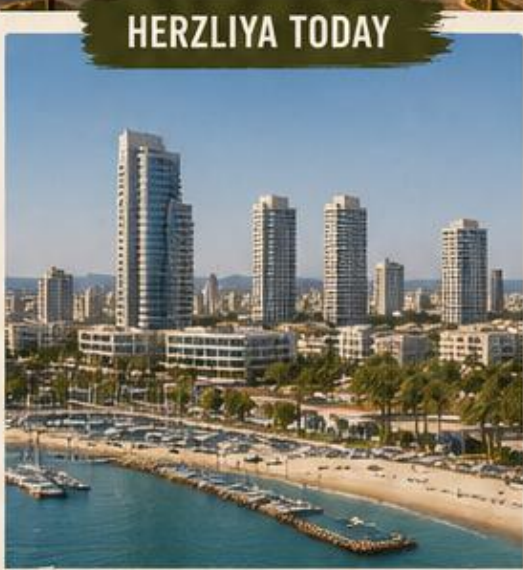
Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority's first planned city, Rawabi, has barely one-tenth of its anticipated population nearly twenty years after the project began. And Rawabi's founder, Bashar Masri, is being sued by victims of Palestinian Arab terrorism because of his relationship with Hamas.

Last year, extremists gathered outside a Manhattan synagogue and shouted pro-Hamas slogans as Jews tried to enter to attend an informational meeting about purchasing homes in Israel. Among other things, the demonstrators screamed, “We need to make them scared!” We need to make them scared!”



AFULA TODAY

A thriving city of more than 65,000 residents.



HERZLIYA TODAY

Home to more than 113,000 Israelis.

TWO DIFFERENT PATHS



ZIONIST ACHIEVEMENT

- Turning swamps and desert into thriving communities
- Building modern cities, infrastructure, and industry
- Creating opportunities and a future
- Investing in the land and in people



RAWABI'S REALITY

- A planned city with only a fraction of its promised population
- Founder sued over ties to Hamas
- A legacy of corruption and failure

VS.

“If supporters of the Palestinian Arab cause spent less time trying to intimidate American Jews, and instead tried to learn from their experiences, perhaps they would have some Afulas and Herzliyas of their own.”



Palm Beach County Judge Dismisses Lawsuit Challenging \$1 BILLION Investment in Israel Bonds

By Staff Report

A Palm Beach County judge has dismissed a taxpayer lawsuit challenging the county’s historic \$1 billion investment in Israel Bonds, marking a significant legal victory for county officials and preserving one of the largest public investeming in Israel Bonds ever made by a local government.

The lawsuit alleged that the county’s decision to invest such a substantial portion of its portfolio in Israel Bonds was politically motivated and fell outside the scope of Florida law governing public investments.

County officials strongly disputed those claims, arguing that the investment was based solely on sound financial principles and complied with all legal requirements.

According to county leaders, the Israel Bonds met the same standards applied to every public investment: safety, liquidity, and competitive returns. Officials have maintained that the bonds offered an attractive opportunity to generate additional income for taxpayers while remaining within the county’s authorized investment guidelines.

For Palm Beach County, however, officials have consistently emphasized that the investment was never about politics. They have argued that their responsibility is

to safeguard taxpayer dollars while achieving the strongest possible returns within the law—and that the Israel Bond portfolio fulfilled those objectives.

A SMART INVESTMENT FOR TAXPAYERS



\$136 MILLION
estimated in interest income over three years



Includes approximately **\$23 MILLION** more than comparable U.S. Treasury securities



Additional earnings help **OFFSET GOVERNMENT EXPENSES** and reduce the need for local tax increases

The court’s dismissal allows Palm Beach County to continue holding its Israel Bond portfolio without interruption. While the plaintiffs may choose to appeal the ruling, the decision represents an important affirmation of the county’s authority to make investment decisions based on financial merit.

Israel Bonds have long been purchased by institutional investors, pension funds, banks, and governments seeking a fixed-income investment while also supporting Israel’s economic development. Since their creation in 1951, Israel Bonds have raised tens of billions of dollars to help finance infrastructure, transportation, healthcare, technology, renewable energy, and other national projects.

The case drew national attention because of both the unprecedented size of Palm Beach County’s investment and the broader debate over whether public investment decisions involving Israel should be viewed through a financial or political lens.

With the lawsuit dismissed, the county’s landmark investment remains in place, preserving what officials say is both a prudent financial decision and a valuable source of additional revenue for Palm Beach County taxpayers.



A commitment to Israel.

A win for taxpayers.

SOUND INVESTMENTS. STRONG RETURNS. SHARED VALUES.

Berlin to rename section of street after Yad Vashem

By Etgar Lefkovits

The Berlin Senate has decided that a prominent street near the German Reichstag will be officially renamed Yad Vashem Street, after Israel’s Holocaust museum, symbolizing the importance of Holocaust remembrance and sending a strong message against antisemitism.

The future Yad Vashem Street in Berlin will border Wilhelmstrasse, which was the center of power during the Nazi era, housing both Hitler’s Reich Chancellery and the Reich Security Main Office.

“The symbolism of the date is enormous. There could hardly have been a better one for the day of the renaming.

— Kai Diekmann, chair of the Friends of Yad Vashem

The official renaming ceremony is scheduled for January 20, 2027, the 85th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference. On Jan. 20, 1942, senior Nazi officials met in a villa on Berlin’s Lake Wannsee to coordinate the mass murder of millions of Jews across Europe.

“The symbolism of the date is enormous. There could hardly have been a better one for the day of the renaming,” said Kai Diekmann, chair of the Friends of Yad Vashem. “With this, Berlin is sending a powerful message against antisemitism and for preserving the memory of the crimes against humanity committed in the name of Germany.”

The announcement comes less than a week after Yad Vashem announced that it selected Munich as the site for its first Holocaust education center outside Israel as part of its effort to expand Holocaust education and combat rising antisemitism and historical distortion in Europe.



Instagram’s recommendation algorithm can rapidly funnel ordinary users from mainstream self-improvement content toward antisemitic conspiracy theories and extremist propaganda within days, according to a new report by a U.S.-based antisemitism watchdog.

“You don’t have to search for antisemitic content to find it on Instagram,” said Oliver Marks, research director at the Antisemitism Research Center (ARC), the research arm of the Combat Antisemitism Movement, which released the study.

“Our findings show that users engaging with normal self-improvement posts are algorithmically guided toward virulent antisemitic narratives and conspiracy theories. When platforms optimize for engagement without sufficient safeguards, they can end up amplifying hate to vast audiences.”

The report identified three key trends: speed, volume and convergence. Speed referred to the near-immediate appearance of antisemitic content. Volume described the growing proportion of such material over time. Convergence referred to different user profiles being directed toward similar antisemitic narratives and conspiracy theories despite starting with different interests.

The organization said the findings underscore the need for greater transparency and accountability in social media recommendation systems and called on Meta, Instagram’s parent company, to review its algorithms and implement stronger safeguards.

THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE

On January 20, 1942, senior Nazi officials met in a villa on Berlin’s Lake Wannsee to coordinate the mass murder of millions of Jews across Europe—a date that will now be marked in Berlin with the renaming of a street in honor of Yad Vashem.





Massive ancient tunnel on Jerusalem's outskirts baffles archaeologists

By Pesach Benson

Archaeologists in Jerusalem have uncovered a mysterious ancient tunnel carved deep into bedrock near Kibbutz Ramat Rachel, a discovery that has left researchers puzzled.

The tunnel was found during excavations conducted by the Israel Antiquities Authority ahead of the construction of a new residential neighborhood being advanced by the Israel Lands Authority north of the kibbutz.

Stretching roughly 50 meters (164 feet) underground, the tunnel was discovered after archaeologists encountered what initially appeared to be a natural cavity in the rock.

"We were excavating in relatively rocky and exposed terrain when suddenly we discovered a natural karstic cavity," excavation directors Sivan Mizrahi and Zinovi Matskevich said in a joint statement. "To our amazement, as the excavation progressed, this cavity developed into a long tunnel. Parts of it are still collapsed, so the tunnel has not yet revealed all of its secrets."

The underground complex was accessed through a staircase descending from the surface into a hewn entrance leading to the tunnel. Archaeologists found the passage filled with layers of soil that had accumulated over hundreds, and possibly thousands, of years.

Excavations conducted at several points inside the tunnel revealed that some sections reach up to five meters (16 feet) in height and approximately three meters (10 feet) in width.

"The quarrying was executed meticulously," said Mizrahi and Matskevich. "It is clear that whoever carved this tunnel invested tremendous effort, careful planning, and possessed the capabilities and resources necessary to achieve this goal," they added.



A shaft carved into the ceiling may have served as a ventilation opening.

Despite the scale and sophistication of the work, researchers have not yet determined the tunnel's purpose.

Initial theories suggested the passage may have served as an ancient water installation designed to reach an underground spring. That possibility was later dismissed because the tunnel walls showed no traces of plaster typically used in water systems, and geological consultations indicated there were no underground water sources in the area.

Researchers also examined whether the tunnel may have functioned as an agricultural or industrial installation, but the absence of similar sites nearby made that explanation unlikely.

Archaeologists now believe the tunnel may have been intended to reach a chalk layer suitable for quarrying building stones or producing lime. Supporting evidence includes a shaft carved into the ceiling that may have served as a ventilation opening, along with quarrying debris discovered on the floor.

KEY DISCOVERY

- Length: approx. 50 meters (164 feet)
- Height: up to 5 meters (16 feet)
- Width: approx. 3 meters (10 feet)
- Located near Kibbutz Ramat Rachel
- Excavated by: Israel Antiquities Authority
- Access: Staircase from surface to hewn entrance
- Purpose: Unknown
- Date: Unknown

Still, even that theory remains uncertain.

"It is possible that the quarrying and construction of the tunnel were never completed," the excavation directors said, "and therefore its intended purpose and nature remain unknown."

The tunnel's age is also unclear because excavators found no pottery, coins, or other artifacts that could help date the site.

"The date of the tunnel is also a mystery to us, since not even the smallest find was uncovered that could indicate when it was created," said Mizrahi and Matskevich.

"The symbolism of the date is enormous. There could hardly have been a better one for the day of the renaming."

— Kai Diekmann, chair of the Friends of Yad Vashem



The site lies only a few hundred meters from major archaeological locations, including an Iron Age public building and Tel Ramat Rachel, where remains dating from the Iron Age through the Islamic period have been uncovered.



"The neighborhood offers a rare combination of modern urban development and preservation of historical heritage," said Shikma Sig, Jerusalem region planner at the Israel Lands Authority.

"Usually we have explanations for the discoveries we uncover," Re'em said, "but sometimes, as in this case, we stand astonished and amazed."

Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu said,

"During Jerusalem Day week, this special discovery reminds us of the deep and ancient connection of the Jewish people to Jerusalem. Beneath the city's soil, extraordinary enterprises of life, creativity and construction are revealed time and again, testifying to generations of people who lived and worked here and left their mark."

NEARBY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

- Iron Age Public Building
Discovered a short distance from the tunnel site.
- Tel Ramat Rachel
Remains from the Iron Age through the Islamic period.
- Future Archaeological Park
The tunnel and surrounding discoveries will be part of a public park integrated into the new neighborhood.

THE PALESTINIAN ARMY GROWS

—BUT WON'T ARREST TERRORISTS

By Dr. Rafael Medoff

Three decades after the Palestinian Authority promised to root out the terrorists in its midst, Israeli forces continue to discover terrorists and weapons caches in PA towns.

► In recent weeks, Israeli security forces arrested terrorists in Nablus (Shechem), Qalqilya, Habla, and Aida, and captured a fugitive terrorist trying to enter Israel in the trunk of a car.



Recent Israeli operations in PA territory have also resulted in the discovery of **hundreds of weapons, large quantities of ammunition**, and sites for manufacturing arms and explosives, including a **weapons depot** hidden inside a prominent hardware store in Bethlehem. Eighteen weapons-manufacturing machines were confiscated in the Nablus area in the last month alone.



A PROMISE UNKEPT

The PA pledged, in Article XVIII of Oslo I and Article XV of the Annex to Oslo II, to *“take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism.”*



SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Do the PA authorities lack the manpower to do the job that they promised to undertake? *Apparently not.*



The PA's security forces have, in fact, *“evolved from a civilian policing body into a military-capable organization with offensive capabilities, supported by foreign training, funding, and equipment,”* according to a new report from the Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs.

OSLO LIMIT'S VS. TODAY'S REALITY

OSLO AGREEMENTS LIMITED:

- 12,000 personnel
- 4,000 rifles
- 4,000 pistols
- 120 machine guns
- 15 armored vehicles



TODAY, THE PA FORCES:

- 70,000 soldiers
- Tens of thousands of rifles and pistols
- Dozens of armored vehicles
- Genuine military training



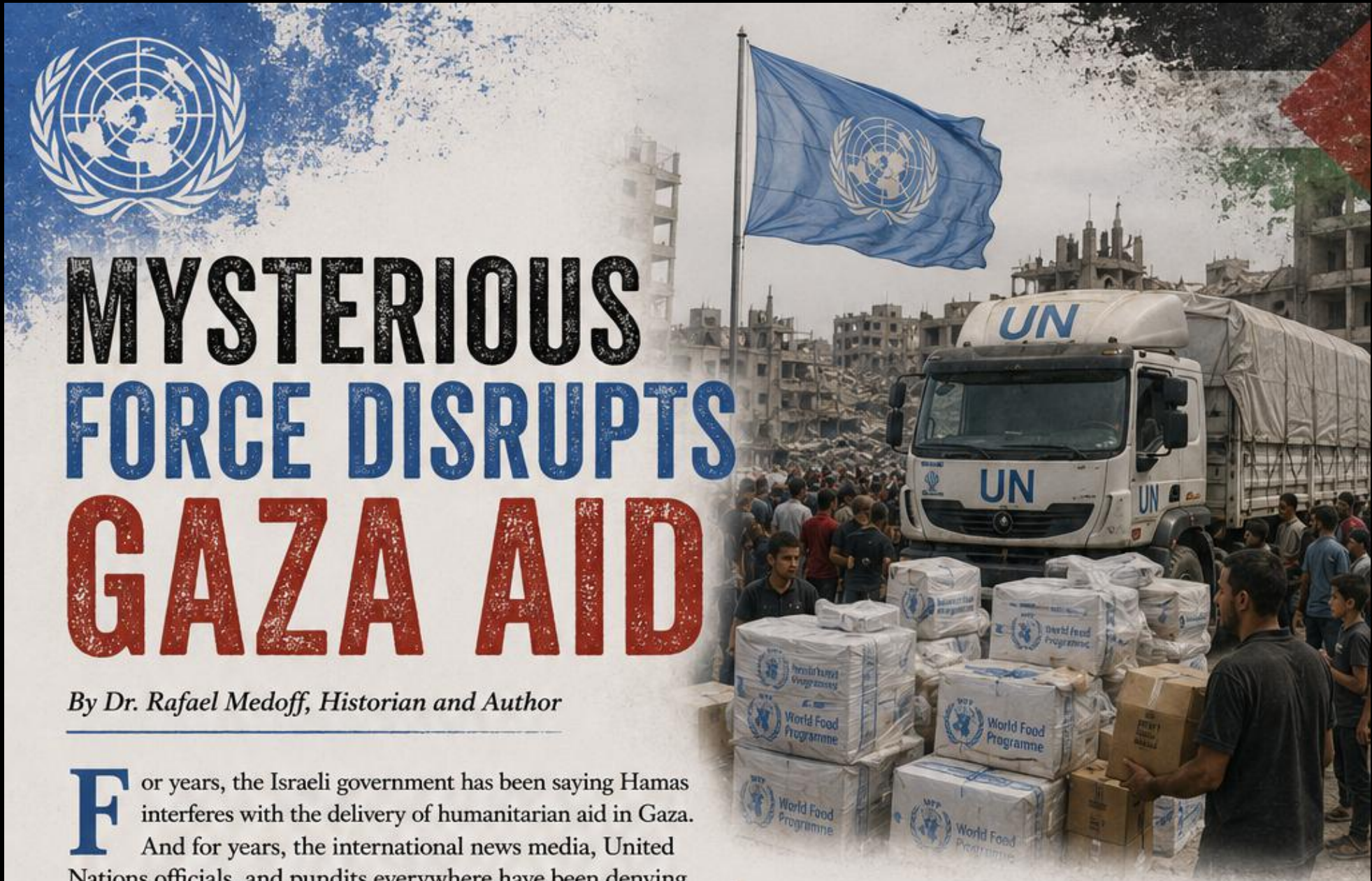
Yet today, the PA forces consist of 70,000 soldiers and tens of thousands of rifles and pistols. They undergo *“genuine military training and are equipped with dozens of armored vehicles,”* the study's author, Lt. Col. (res.) Maurice Hirsch, reports.



In short, the PA could capture the terrorists and seize their weapons—if it wanted to.

The problem is that it doesn't want to, because it views the terrorists as its comrades and brothers.





MYSTERIOUS FORCE DISRUPTS GAZA AID

By Dr. Rafael Medoff, Historian and Author

For years, the Israeli government has been saying Hamas interferes with the delivery of humanitarian aid in Gaza. And for years, the international news media, United Nations officials, and pundits everywhere have been denying and mocking Israel’s claims—even when former hostages described the stockpiles of stolen food and other aid they personally saw in the Hamas tunnels.

 This week, one of the UN’s senior officials for Palestinian Arab affairs finally confirmed what Israel has been saying all along.

“I strongly condemn the recent obstruction of humanitarian operations in Gaza by the de facto authorities, which endangered humanitarian personnel, intimidated workers delivering lifesaving food assistance and disrupted life-saving humanitarian operations,” Dr. Ramiz Alakbarov, the UN Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process declared in a statement.

 Alakbarov made it clear that the “de facto authorities” to whom he was referring are the Hamas forces which control 30% to 40% of Gaza. He cited recent incidents in which Hamas terrorists halted food distribution at the Abu Rashid site in Jabalia, and assaulted truck drivers delivering emergency supplies to a World Food Programme warehouse in Gaza.

“ These incidents are not isolated. They are completely unacceptable and reflect an increasingly dangerous pattern of intimidation, violence and obstruction, including smuggling attempts, targeting and abusing humanitarian operations.”

He added that these actions by Hamas are “placing humanitarian workers at risk, disrupting the delivery of life-saving assistance, and further constraining the ability of humanitarian organizations to operate.”

 Alakbarov did not use the word “Hamas” in his statement, presumably for the usual reason—fear that Hamas terrorists would do to UN officials what they did in southern Israel on October 7, 2023.



 But Hamas knew Alakbarov was talking about them. A Hamas spokesman responded to the UN official by insisting that the recent Hamas actions interfering with aid distribution were simply “a law enforcement operation.”



MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGH

Tumors found to rewire immune cells, may lead to new cancer treatments

By Pesach Benson *TPS- IL*

Israeli scientists have discovered how cancerous tumors can exploit a normal function of the immune system, a finding that could eventually lead to new cancer treatments.

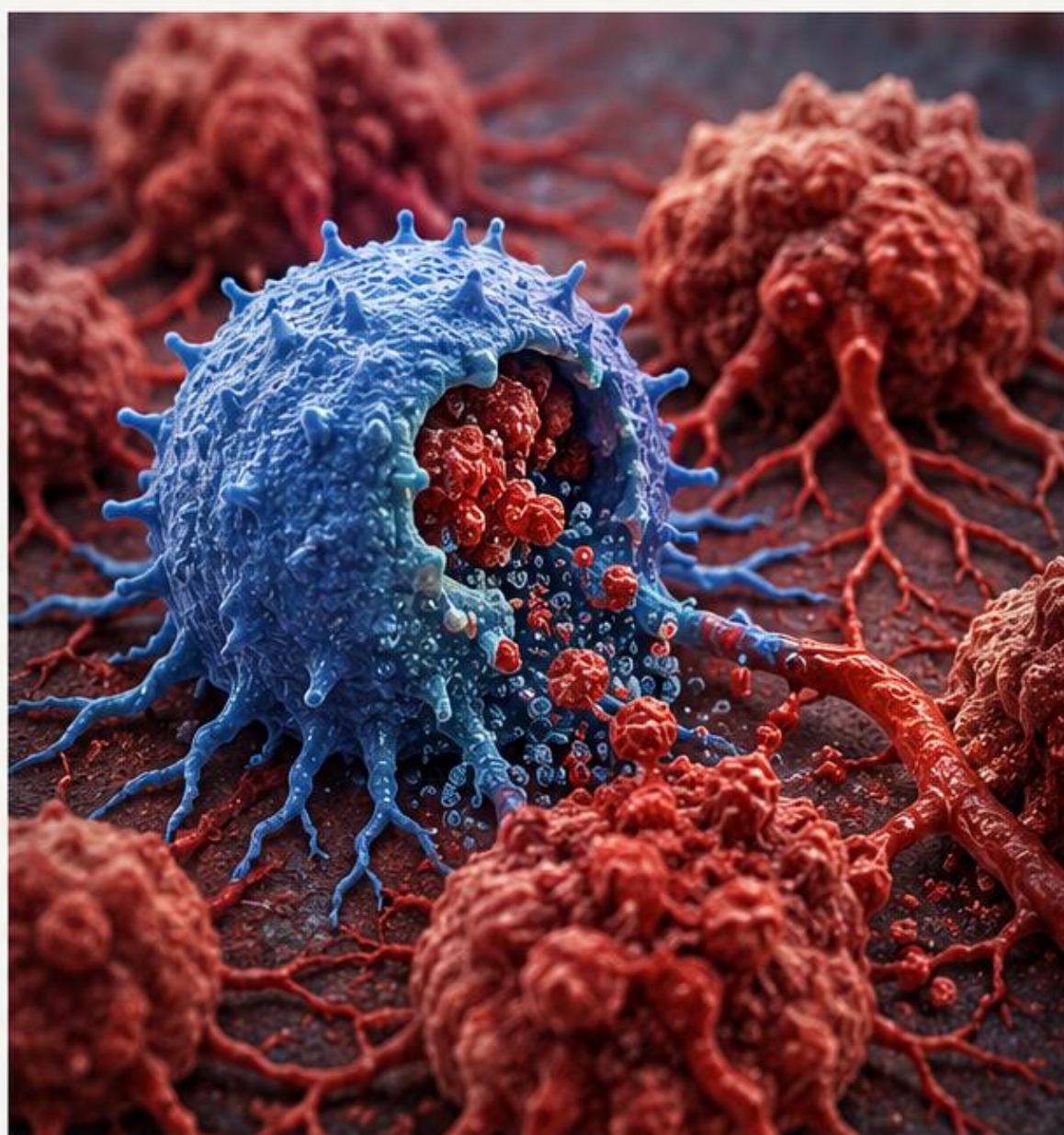
A study by researchers at Tel Aviv University focused on macrophages, immune cells that patrol the body and remove dead and damaged cells. This process helps maintain healthy tissue and prevent inflammation.

Scientists have long known that tumors can recruit macrophages to support their growth, but the mechanism by which healthy immune cells are transformed into tumor-supporting cells has remained unclear.

The study, led by Tel Aviv University's Dr. Merav Cohen and doctoral students Roi Balaban and Ori Moskowitz, found that the process begins when macrophages engulf dead cancer cells. Instead of simply breaking down the cellular debris, the macrophages undergo changes in gene activity that alter their behavior and shift them toward supporting tumor growth.

To observe this process, the researchers developed a technique called Effero-seq, which enabled them to identify macrophages that had consumed dead cancer cells and track how their gene expression changed over time.

Using a melanoma model, the team found that these reprogrammed macrophages activated genes that promote the formation of new blood vessels within tumors. These blood vessels supply tumors with oxygen and nutrients, allowing them to grow more rapidly. At the same time, the macrophages became less responsive to signals that normally trigger immune attacks against cancer cells.



A macrophage (blue) engulfs a dead cancer cell. New research shows this process can reprogram immune cells to support tumor growth.

The researchers also analyzed data from patients with uveal melanoma, a rare form of eye cancer. They found that patients whose tumors contained higher numbers of macrophages with this genetic signature generally had lower survival rates, suggesting the mechanism may also play a role in human disease.

According to Cohen, the findings offer new insight into how tumors manipulate the body's immune defenses.

"The better we understand these mechanisms, the better equipped we will be to develop treatments that block them and restore the immune system's ability to fight cancer," Cohen said.

The researchers suggest that future therapies may focus not only on targeting cancer cells directly, but also on preventing immune cells from being reprogrammed to support tumor growth. However, they caution that this approach remains experimental and will require further study before clinical application.

"This research points to a new and promising therapeutic target, one that focuses not only on the cancer cells themselves, but also on the processes that enable them to thrive," Cohen said.

The findings were published in the peer-reviewed journal *Science Immunology*.



OXFORD UNION CONTROVERSY

Calls for Oxford Union president to resign after hailing Hamas as ‘future heroes’

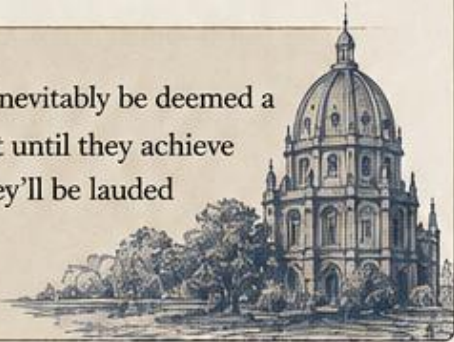
By David Isaac

Arwa Elrayess, politics, philosophy, and economics (PPE) student and the first Palestinian to serve as president of the Oxford Union debating society, is facing backlash after saying Hamas will one day be “lauded as heroes.”

Elrayess made the remarks, which recently came to light, in a student WhatsApp group of about 100 incoming freshmen in September 2025, the *Daily Mail* reported on Wednesday.

“Any resistance group will inevitably be deemed a ‘terrorist’ organization by the West until they achieve their liberation (by which time, they’ll be lauded as heroes, as history has proven).

— Arwa Elrayess



Some members of the WhatsApp group challenged her comments, saying Hamas’s massacres had been “too severe and bad” to consider them freedom fighters.

“I think the severity of resistance is often proportional to the severity of oppression,” she said, according to the *Daily Mail*.

“It’d be laughable if any Palestinian group tried to gain their freedom through, for example, chaining themselves to the gates of the borders. There were various, more peaceful forms of resistance in the past that ended with nothing but massacres.

“This is not to justify anything, but just to point out that it’s quite rich to allow for decades of systematic oppression and massacres, only to act shocked when the resistance movement responds with proportional severity,” Elrayess said.

She also described the terrorist group’s Oct. 7, 2023, invasion of the northwestern Negev as “proportional,” claiming that after “decades” of mistreatment of Palestinians by Israel, “You can’t be surprised [by the events of Oct. 7.]”

“Proportional does not mean ‘right’ by the way. Just that you can’t be shocked that it happened,” she added.

Oxford Students Against Discrimination said it was “appalled” by Elrayess’s messages “at a time when Jewish students at Oxford have faced an unprecedented rise in harassment, intimidation, and fear.

“This is not a political debate. It is a failure of basic humanity, and a betrayal of every Jewish student who has had to navigate this university under her leadership,” the group said. “We call for her to resign.”



A FORMER OXFORD UNION COMMITTEE MEMBER

“This isn’t student radicalism; it is the explicit normalization of terror.”



CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTISEMITISM SPOKESPERSON

“The [Oct. 7] attacks came during a prolonged ceasefire and involved wanton rape and medieval torture, butchery and murder of civilians.”



“Any effort to excuse or explain it away should disqualify someone not only from being the president of the Oxford Union—one of the most prestigious positions at one of the U.K.’s most elite institutions—but also should render them unfit from holding any position at all.”

“The University of Oxford must take action to protect its students from extremists and the police should investigate some of these comments, which we are raising with our lawyers.”



From the fields of Judea and Samaria to the global stage, Jewish builders turn vision into thriving communities.

CAMPUS WATCH

M.I.T. AND THE NAZIS



By Dr. Rafael Medoff, Historian & Author

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) still has not published a full report on the problem of antisemitism on its campus. So one of its longtime faculty members is doing it.

Prof. Yossi Sheffi, director of the university’s Center for Transportation and Logistics, is the author of *“Unsafe at M.I.T.: A Chronicle of a Campus War on the Jews,”* which is being published this week.

It describes in detail many instances of antisemitism and harassment of Jewish students during the past several years, and the weak and inadequate response by the M.I.T. administration.



M.I.T. actually has a long record of indifference to Jewish suffering, going back to the 1930s.



1933

In 1933, M.I.T. president Karl Compton pressured Jewish students to refrain from sending a protest message to Adolf Hitler concerning the persecution of Jews in Germany.

1934

In the spring of 1934, a Nazi warship, the *Karlsruhe*, visited the United States. When it docked in the Boston harbor, its officers and crew were entertained at M.I.T. and Harvard. Local Jewish organizations and other opponents of Nazism called for a mass protest.

James A. Wechsler—who went on to become an editor at the *New York Post*—was an anti-Nazi activist at Columbia University at the time, and closely followed what was happening at M.I.T. He later recalled:

“The officialdom of M.I.T. was...entertaining cadets from the ship with Dean [Harold] Lobdell as their personal supervisor. The dean was distraught. He scurried through the building tearing down posters announcing the anti-Nazi demonstration.”

1937

In 1937, M.I.T. President Compton sent a representative to participate in the bicentennial celebration of the Nazi-controlled University of Gottingen.



1942

When Compton was asked to hire a German Jewish refugee scholar for M.I.T.’s mathematics department in 1942, he objected on the grounds that the department already had one Jewish professor.

Compton told his colleagues there was “a tactical danger of having too large a proportion of the mathematical staff from the Jewish race [since] the appointment of an additional member of the Jewish race would increase the proportion of such men in the department far beyond the proportion of [Jews in the general] population.”



Today’s M.I.T. administration will need to respond to Prof. Sheffi’s new study. It will also need to confront the university’s disturbing past.



ISRAEL NEWS

First time in 2,000 years Israel is doing conservation work at Tomb of the Patriarchs

By Amelie Botbol / JNS



The Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, Dec. 4, 2019. Photo by Wisam Hashlamoun/Flash90.

For the first time in 2,000 years, Jewish authorities are conducting conservation work at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, where, according to the Bible, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah are buried.

The site, revered as the burial place of the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Jewish people, is Judaism's second-holiest site.

The maintenance and safety upgrades include electrical renovations, air conditioning, improved drainage, new lighting and a fire protection system.

The renovation is helping transform the site into a world-class destination, Yishai Fleisher, director of international and government affairs for the Jewish Community of Hebron said.

"It has a really high-end look and feel and, of course, it will make worship inside much more pleasant, more moving and more spiritual. It also shows the State of Israel is engaging with the site and recognizes its importance to our heritage, tourism and the identity of Israel," Fleisher shared.

He also said the investment demonstrates the government's commitment to preserving a site central to Jewish history and emphasized its potential impact on tourism.

"After Jerusalem, it is one of the most important historical and iconic sites. The building itself is a 2,000-year-old Herodian structure—the only one of Herod's buildings that still stands. In a sense, we are finishing Herod's work."

The centerpiece of the renovation is the long-awaited installation of a roof over the Jewish prayer area. Annual winter rains have frequently flooded the site, damaging infrastructure, while a temporary canopy failed to provide adequate protection. The new roof, combining a metal frame with glass panels, will protect visitors while allowing natural light into the structure.

The Waqf Islamic trust and the Palestinian Authority-run Hebron Municipality hold jurisdiction over the site, while Israeli authorities are responsible for maintaining the section designated for Jewish worship. Any structural changes, however, required Waqf approval. Earlier this year, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who also serves as a minister within the Defense Ministry (overseeing civil affairs in Judea and Samaria) transferred approval authority from the P.A. to an Israeli body, clearing the way for the renovations.

The Hall of Isaac and Rebecca

Elected officials who championed the project gathered for a ceremony in the still-uncovered section.

"There isn't a single member of the Jewish people who has not felt a deep connection to the patriarchs and matriarchs, to the Cave of Machpelah, and to our roots here in Hebron," Smotrich said at the ceremony, referencing the legislation that paved the way for the project.

"This new roofing, together with air conditioning and modern electrical infrastructure, reflects the deep significance of this place and why we are here," he added.

Minister of Settlement and National Missions Orit Strook, who lives in Hebron, said that for decades Jews had acted as though the Cave of Machpelah was not theirs.

"Now, for the first time, we are renovating it. This carries the meaning of ownership and responsibility. It is a move of historical significance," she said.

Many Palestinian Authority officials have publicly called for the removal of all Jewish residents from Hebron and for barring Jewish visitors from the holy place.

In 2017, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee designated the Tomb of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs as an endangered Palestinian heritage site.

"We fought against it. I was one of the first people to push back. Many did not believe we could defeat them and, in the end, our fight led President Trump to initially withdraw from UNESCO because of the anti-Hebron decision," Fleisher said.

The best way to protect such sites is for Israel to invest in them, assert sovereignty over them, preserve and beautify them, and develop them into major tourist attractions.

"The government is showing that Jewish heritage will not be allowed to fall into the hands of people who want to erase our history and identity. It's a big day."

"On a simple level, we are fulfilling the fifth commandment, 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' by making their place beautiful. It's a great moment," Fleisher said.



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WITH ZOA
BOOK
CLUB**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 13
1:00 PM ET**

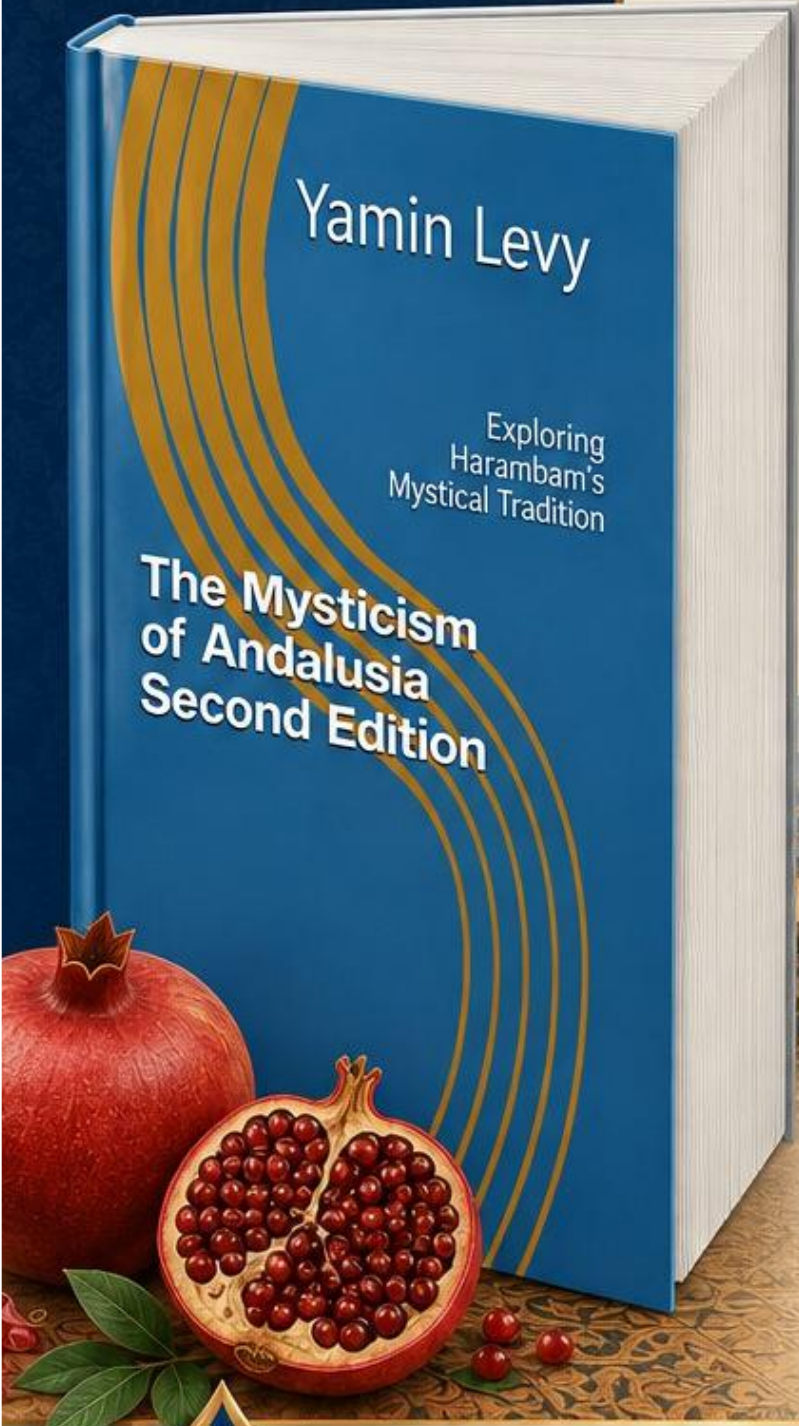
**THE MYSTICISM
OF ANDALUSIA**

**EXPLORING HARAMBAM'S
MYSTICAL TRADITION**

**FEATURING AUTHOR
RABBI
YAMIN LEVY**



**MODERATED BY
ELIZABETH BERNEY, ESQ.**
ZOA Director of Research
& Special Projects



Join us for a captivating Zoom Book Club as we explore the rich spiritual world of medieval Spain through the eyes of the Rambam (Maimonides). Discover how his teachings blended reason and revelation, philosophy and faith, leaving a timeless legacy for all who seek deeper meaning.



You may purchase the book on Amazon.
Purchase is not required to attend the
ZOA book club.



BELGIUM NEWS

Antwerp council votes to keep Israeli flag at city hall

By Canaan Lidor / JNS

The city council of Antwerp, Belgium last week decided by a narrow majority not to remove Israel's flag from its façade.

Twenty-seven members of the city council's 55 seats voted in favor of keeping the flag. "Removing the Israeli flag from this city hall would by no means be a neutral gesture. It would be a political signal. And for many—including myself—it would mean [a signal] that Israel has no right to exist," Michel Freilich, a member of the Antwerp City Council and a federal lawmaker of Belgium for the New Flemish Alliance of Prime Minister Bart De Wever, said in a speech ahead of the vote.

Antwerp Mayor Els van Doesburg, who represents the same party, has resisted pressure to have the flag removed, bringing the matter to a vote.



People sit in front of the Antwerp City Hall ahead of the election results on the day of the Belgian municipal and provincial elections, in Antwerp, Oct. 14, 2012.

Photo credit: Kristof van Accom/AFP/Getty Images.

Antwerp displays all the flags of countries with accredited envoys or consulates in Belgium. The PLO flag is not on display at city hall. In 2022, Antwerp removed the Russian flag from the façade to protest Russia's invasion into Ukraine. Anti-Israel activists argued the same should be done with the Israeli flag, but the mayor has resisted this argument, noting that Belgium has downgraded its diplomatic relations with Russia.

In 2022, Belgium kicked out of its territory more than 20 Russian diplomats and applied sanctions a year later that it has not applied against Israel, resulting in a fundamentally different bilateral relationship than the one it has with Israel.

The New Flemish Alliance has 30 seats in Antwerp's city council, where it formed a coalition with the left-wing Vooruit party, which pushed for removing Israel's flag.

Israeli-Belgian ties have improved under De Wever, who replaced last year that of former prime minister Alexander de Croo. His government had relied on a coalition featuring the deeply anti-Israel Green Party and the Socialist Party. It was one of the most hostile to Jerusalem in the history of the two countries' relationship.

However, tensions have burdened ties also under De Wever. His coalition partner, the center-left Les Engagés ("The Committed Ones") party, has pushed an anti-Israel line under Foreign Minister Maxime Prévot, the party's previous president. Prévot appeared to suggest Israel was involved in war crimes in Gaza and promoted Belgian recognition of Palestinian statehood, though the government stopped short of granting it.

Separately, Prévot accused the U.S. under President Donald Trump of breaching international law by striking Iran with Israel on Feb. 28.

A diplomatic row between Belgium, on one side, and Israel and the United States on the other erupted in May over the decision to indict three Jewish circumcisers, or *mohels*, for unlawfully conducting *brit milah*, the Jewish ritual circumcision of boys, typically performed on eight-day-old infants.

Bill White, the U.S. Ambassador in Brussels, wrote on X (that month) that, "Belgium will be thought of now as antisemitic by the world. Until this is resolved—there is no way around it," he added.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar wrote that with the decision to prosecute the *mohels*, "Belgium joins a short and shameful list, together with Ireland, of countries that use criminal law to persecute Jews for practicing Judaism. This is a scarlet letter on Belgian society."



Prévot attempted to defend against the allegation by saying the prosecution was initiated by "Jewish [community] representatives," but this claim was rebuffed by the community.

The complaint against the *mohels* was based on complaints lodged against them by Moshe Aryeh Friedman, an anti-Zionist activist who has lobbied authorities to limit several Jewish customs, including the one that enables Haredi schools to separate girls and boys at state-recognized Jewish schools. The mainstream Jewish community of Antwerp, which is largely Haredi, shuns Friedman.

“ This is simply not true: This was not initiated by ‘the Jewish representatives themselves,’ but by someone who denies the Holocaust, was invited to a Holocaust denial conference by former Iranian president [Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad, and calls himself Jewish but is not supported by any Jew in the world.”

— The Jewish Information and Documentation Center (JID)

The Jewish Information and Documentation Center (JID), a Belgian-Jewish advocacy group, said in response to Prévot.

Friedman has said he had never denied the Holocaust.



For many in Antwerp, flying the Israeli flag is not just about politics—it's about standing with a democratic ally, remembering the past, and defending the right of Israel to exist.

In a time of rising global antisemitism, Antwerp's decision is a statement of principle, solidarity, and courage.

OPPRESSOR OF MUSLIMS TO SPEAK AT UN

By Dr. Rafael Medoff, Historian & Author

A leader of a government that the US government says is committing genocide against Muslims is going to address the upcoming United Nations General Assembly. No word yet from New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani as to whether he would like to arrest him.

The first Trump administration, the Biden administration, and the current administration all determined that the Chinese government has been committing “genocide and crimes against humanity” against the Uyghurs, a predominantly Muslim minority living mostly in northwestern China.

Those crimes include “the arbitrary imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty of more than one million civilians, forced sterilization, torture of a large number of those arbitrarily detained, forced labor, and the imposition of draconian restrictions on freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, and freedom of movement.”

In 2021, President Biden signed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which prohibits importing goods from the region of Xinjiang, because they are made by Uyghur slave laborers. That law is still in effect.



Over one million Uyghurs are arbitrarily detained in camps in Xinjiang, where they face torture, forced labor, and the destruction of their culture and faith.

Every year, the government of China sends a high-ranking representative to address the UN General Assembly. Last year, it was Premier Li Qiang. This year’s representative has not yet been announced.

“The US government has determined that the Chinese government is committing ‘genocide and crimes against humanity’ against the Uyghurs.”



Why do you suppose Mayor Mamdani says he wishes he could arrest the prime minister of Israel on (false) genocide charges, yet has not said a word about arresting Chinese leaders for their actual genocide?

CHINA’S ATROCITIES AGAINST UYGHURS

Over one million Muslims arbitrarily detained in camps

Forced sterilization and family separation

Torture and severe mistreatment

Forced labor in factories and fields

Crushing of religion, culture, and identity

THIS IS NOT CONTROVERSY. THIS IS DOCUMENTED.



The United Nations General Assembly will soon welcome a representative of the Chinese government, despite the regime’s well-documented atrocities against its Muslim citizens.

Some years ago, white supremacists coined the pejorative term “Zios,” apparently thinking the rest of us can’t see that it’s a very thinly-disguised substitute for “Jews.”

Before long, “Zios” began showing up on the far left.

The organizers of the 2017 Chicago Dyke March tweeted “Zio tears replenish my electrolytes” to mock critics of their ban on Jewish symbols at their event.

An Oxford University student was arrested last year for leading a London crowd in chants of “Gaza, Gaza, make us proud, put the Zios in the ground!”

Meanwhile, a former PLO representative turned Oxford University professor, Karma Nabulsi, invented the term “scholasticide” to accuse Israel of trying to destroy all Arab educational institutions.

In 2024, the membership of the American Historical Association voted, 428 to 88, for a resolution declaring Israel guilty of “scholasticide” because it supposedly was trying to “obliterate Gaza’s educational system.”

That was a reference to damage inadvertently caused to college campuses in Gaza when Israeli forces captured terrorists and weapons that were situated on the campuses.

The AHA leadership subsequently vetoed the “scholasticide” resolution on the grounds that it “lies outside the scope of the Association’s mission.” Let’s see how long the AHA leaders maintain that position in the face of pressure from the membership.



“Silence in the face of real genocide elsewhere is not impartiality. It is hypocrisy. And hypocrisy at the United Nations has no place.”



Instagram algorithm steers users toward antisemitic content, watchdog says

By Pesach Benson/TPS-IL

Instagram’s recommendation algorithm can rapidly funnel ordinary users from mainstream self-improvement content toward antisemitic conspiracy theories and extremist propaganda within days, according to a new report by a U.S.-based antisemitism watchdog.



“You don’t have to search for antisemitic content to find it on Instagram.”

Our findings show that users engaging with normal self-improvement posts are algorithmically guided toward virulent antisemitic narratives and conspiracy theories. When platforms optimize for engagement without sufficient safeguards, they can end up amplifying hate to vast audiences.”

– Oliver Marks
Research Director, Antisemitism Research Center (ARC)

HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

Researchers created two Instagram accounts designed to simulate ordinary users interested in self-improvement content.

- The accounts interacted only with mainstream, non-political posts.
- Monitored during three consecutive days of 45-minute browsing sessions.
- One account focused on wellness and biohacking content.
- The other followed fitness and discipline creators.
- Researchers recorded all recommended videos during each session.

THE RESULTS



WELLNESS-FOCUSED ACCOUNT

59 CLASSIFIABLE VIDEOS

MORE THAN 32%

WERE CATEGORIZED AS CODED OR EXPLICIT ANTISEMITIC CONTENT

INCLUDING 9 SUCH VIDEOS DURING A SINGLE SESSION ON THE THIRD DAY.



FITNESS-FOCUSED ACCOUNT

71 CLASSIFIABLE VIDEOS

24%

WERE IDENTIFIED AS ANTISEMITIC CONTENT

INCLUDING 17 IN ONE BROWSING SESSION.

EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDED CONTENT

- Conspiracy theories claiming the Israel-Iran war was intended to “distract from a globalist plot to make Americans allergic to meat.”
- Content promoting unfounded theories about off-grid living and alleged digital ID systems as tools of government control.
- False claims about food products and historical events.
- Rants about “Jewish financial power” and claims that the Rothschild family orchestrated the sinking of the Titanic.

THREE KEY TRENDS IDENTIFIED



SPEED: Antisemitic content appeared during the first browsing session, before any meaningful engagement history had developed.



VOLUME: The proportion of antisemitic content increased over time.



CONVERGENCE: Different user profiles were directed toward similar antisemitic narratives and conspiracy theories despite starting with different interests.



The report follows earlier ARC investigations into online antisemitism, including the identification of more than 80 AI-generated fake “rabbi” accounts on Instagram that promoted antisemitic content. Similar activity was also reported on YouTube and TikTok, with many accounts later removed by Meta following reports from the Combat Antisemitism Movement.

The organization said the findings underscore the need for greater transparency and accountability in social media recommendation systems and called on Meta, Instagram’s parent company, to review its algorithms and implement stronger safeguards.



INVENTING NEW ANTI-JEWISH WORDS

By Dr. Rafael Medoff

Arab propagandists have invented a new word for the sole purpose of attacking Israel: “Wholocide.”



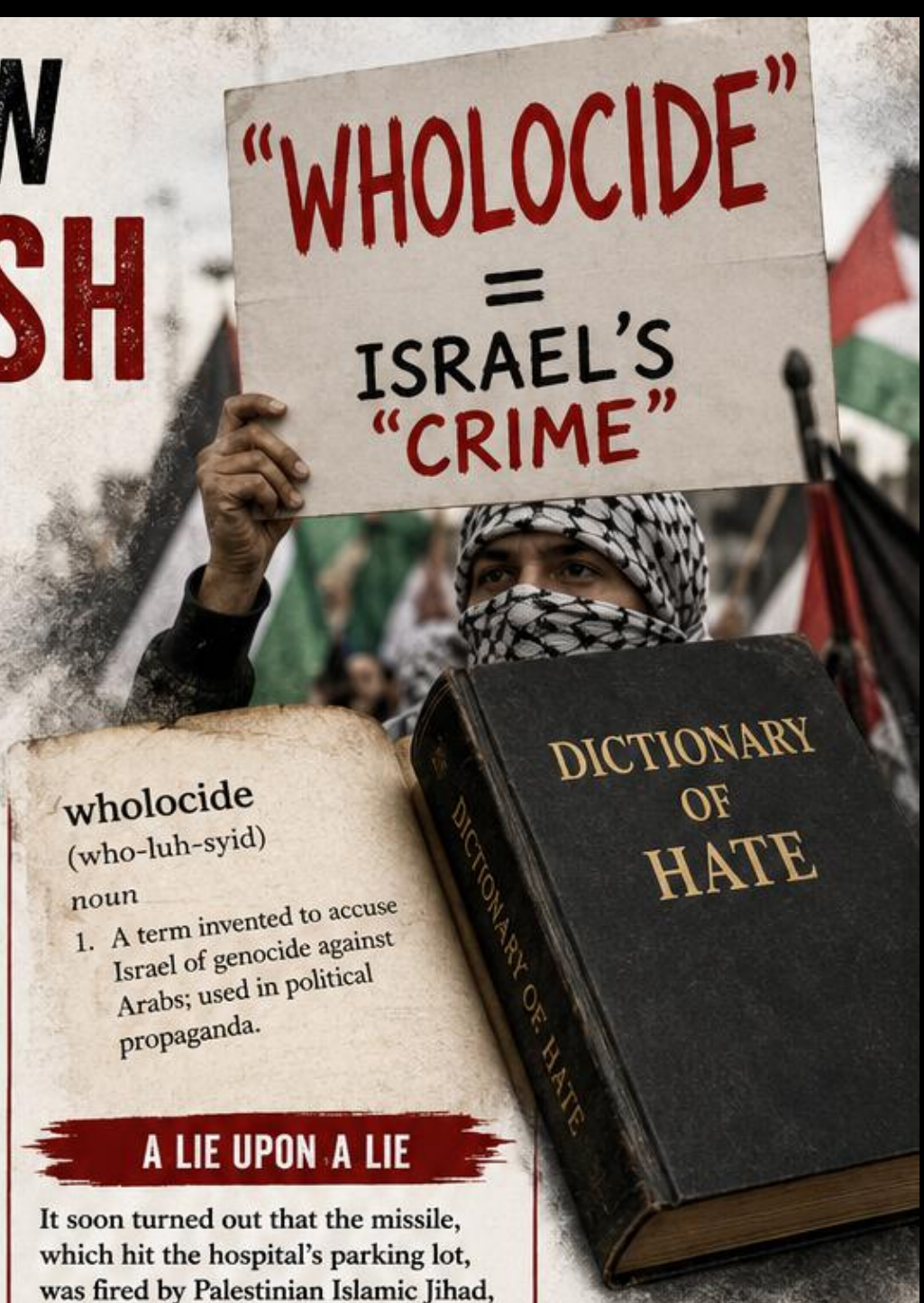
The Arab League’s Permanent Arab Committee the Human Rights last week officially proposed that the new word be used to describe Israeli policies toward Arabs, on the grounds that “genocide” is insufficient.



The Palestinian Authority immediately endorsed the proposal, even though the Oslo accords prohibit the PA from engaging in “hostile propaganda” against Israel.



Ironically, the Arab League committee also recommended that October 7 be designated as an annual “Wholocide” memorial day. That was the date in 2023 when Hamas claimed Israel bombed the Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City, supposedly killing 500 people.



wholocide
(who-luh-syid)
noun

- 1. A term invented to accuse Israel of genocide against Arabs; used in political propaganda.

A LIE UPON A LIE

It soon turned out that the missile, which hit the hospital’s parking lot, was fired by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, not Israel; and it killed about 50, not 500, bystanders.

Since the premise of “Wholocide” is a lie, it’s actually quite appropriate that it will be commemorated in conjunction with another lie.

“WHOLOCIDES” JOINS A GROWING LIST OF WORDS INVENTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF ATTACKING JEWS AND ISRAEL.



“ZIOS” – A CODE WORD FOR JEWS

Some years ago, white supremacists coined the pejorative term “Zios,” apparently thinking the rest of us can’t see that it’s a very thinly-disguised substitute for “Jews.”

Before long, “Zios” began showing up on the far left.



“ZIO TEARS” – DEHUMANIZING HATE

The organizers of the 2017 Chicago Dyke March tweeted “Zio tears replenish my electrolytes” to mock critics of their ban on Jewish symbols at their event.



“SCHOLASTICIDE” – ANOTHER BASELESS ACCUSATION

Meanwhile, a former PLO representative turned Oxford University professor, Karma Nabulsi, invented the term “scholasticide” to accuse Israel of trying to destroy all Arab educational institutions.



THE AHA “SCHOLASTICIDE” RESOLUTION – REJECTED (BUT FOR HOW LONG?)

In 2024, the membership of the American Historical Association voted, 428 to 88, for a resolution declaring Israel guilty of “scholasticide” because it supposedly was trying to “obliterate Gaza’s educational system.”

That was a reference to damage inadvertently caused to college campuses in Gaza when Israeli forces captured terrorists and weapons that were situated on the campuses.

The AHA leadership subsequently vetoed the “scholasticide” resolution on the grounds that it “lies outside the scope of the Association’s mission.”

Let’s see how long the AHA leaders maintain that position in the face of pressure from the membership.

“Words can be weapons. Truth is our defense.
STAND WITH TRUTH. STAND WITH ISRAEL.





Kozo Okamoto in later years, living freely in Lebanon.

A TERRORIST NO LONGER?

By Dr. Rafael Medoff, Historian and Author

Kozo Okamoto, a Japanese terrorist who collaborated with Palestinian Arab colleagues to carry out one of the worst massacres of the 1970s, died a free and happy man last week.

In 1972, Okamoto helped carry out the slaughter of 26 travelers at Israel’s Lod Airport (today known as Ben Gurion Airport) on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

He was jailed in Israel, but later set free in a prisoner exchange, and granted asylum in Lebanon, which treated him as a hero.

Seventeen of the people Okamoto murdered were Americans. Yet for reasons which have never been explained, the United States never demanded that Lebanon hand him over for prosecution.

At the time of the attack, the *New York Times* had no trouble calling Okamoto a terrorist.

For example, the headline of a *Times* article about him on July 14, 1972, declared: “Terrorist Gives Israelis His Political Testament.”

As late as March 18, 2000, an article in the *Times* called Okamoto’s group, the Japanese Red Army, “a terrorist organization” and described the 1972 attack as “one of the most brutal terrorist attacks of its time.”

Not anymore.

The obituary for Okamoto in the *Times* last week called him a “militant” and an “attacker.” The word “terrorist” was nowhere to be found.

Same for the Associated Press, the *Washington Post*, and other major news media outlets, except for those in Israel and Japan.



The aftermath of the massacre at Lod Airport on May 30, 1972.

“
Terrorist Gives
Israelis His
Political
Testament.”
— Headline, *New York Times*
July 14, 1972



Kozo Okamoto in the 1970s, after his arrest in Israel.

THE LOD AIRPORT MASSACRE
MAY 30, 1972

26 innocent travelers murdered

22 injured

Attack carried out by the PFLP and the Japanese Red Army

17 of the victims were American citizens

“ Words matter. When terrorists are not called terrorists, victims are denied justice, and evil is normalized. ”

TO EXPLAIN IS TO EXCUSE? LESSONS FROM OCTOBER 7

By Bob Guzzardi

To *Explain is To Excuse*” and in this case, that is a valid analysis.

The authors of *While Israel Slept* are journalists who attempt to explain the failure of Israel’s military and intelligence services, one of the best trained and most technologically sophisticated in the world, to anticipate and prepare for the surprise attack of October 7, 2023 by Hamas from Gaza.

This is a fascinating account that stimulates questions about a complex event which has direct and relevant lessons for US President Trump in the War with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Although “mistakes were made” – highly skilled military and political leadership with long experience dealing with Hamas “misread” the intentions of Hamas leadership and their underestimated capabilities to launch such a devastating attack, the explanation (in my view) made the mistakes inevitable and understandable and even defensible. These “mistakes” should not be repeated but learned from.

There are three reasons, two of which the authors discuss.

The political, military and security services were led by highly skilled professionals, with a lot of experience and patriots fully committed to their roles of defending the lives of Israeli citizens. Not a fool, or a narcissistic, among them, all pursuing long established policies that had worked, and they all knew the implacable nature of the enemy and yet...

“THE ONLY SOLUTION IS
TOTAL ELIMINATION OF HAMAS
AND SOVEREIGN ISRAELI
CONTROL OF GAZA.”

“The lessons of October 7 must not be forgotten. They must be learned – by Israel, by its allies, and by every nation that values freedom and life.”

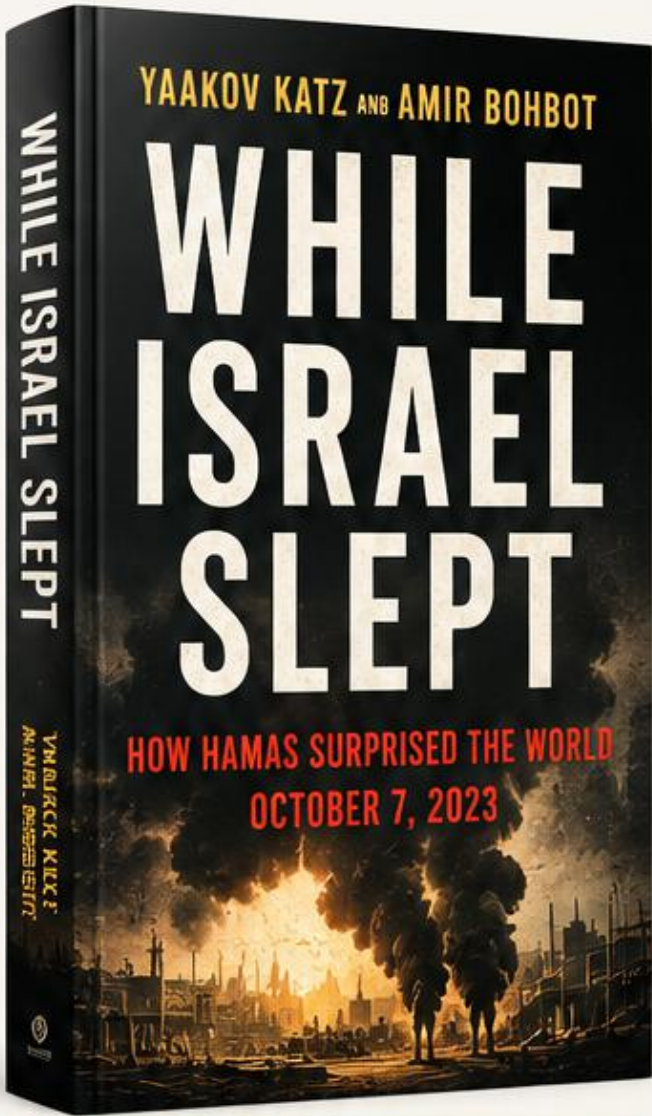
The “mistakes” emanated, in my view, from three constraints that the military and political leadership operated under:

1. The high value of every human life (Israeli, Muslim, Gazan, Jew and nonJew) is intrinsic to the defense services and the Israeli public and has been fully internalized by leadership. The high ethical standards of Israeli defense establishment often referred to are not a myth and they have real world consequences.

2. “War is hell” – the twin policies of containment of Hamas and avoidance of preemptive strikes into Gaza in order to avoid incurring the dreaded costs of war constrained a preemptive strike which would precipitate all out war. “War is Hell” as we have seen in the (almost) three years had consequences. The policies were not wrong, they were rationally designed to prevent death and destruction; they did not as we all know.

Israel faced, and faces, threats from many fronts. Iran and Hezbollah were seen as the most dangerous threats. Gaza was not the priority. In 2006, the Second Lebanon War was in retaliation to attacks by Hezbollah.

3. The economy. The authors do not discuss any economic policy nor the consequences of war on the economy. A strong economy is necessary to a strong military. Israel has had a policy using allocating scarce resources to building a strong and resilient economy which benefited everyone. Allocating those resources to a war in Gaza would have diverted scarce resources away from the economy. This was a rational, well considered and defensible policy. Inevitably, it led to war.



THE DEFINITIVE ACCOUNT OF
THE SURPRISE ATTACK THAT
SHOOK A NATION AND THE WORLD.

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	Authors	: Yaakov Katz and Amir BohBot

As an example of the value placed on life of Muslim Arab are exemplified by the lessons learned from the highly publicized targeted assassination in July 2002 that killed Salah Shehada, Hamas’s top military commander, as well as innocent civilian noncombatants and the ensuing reaction of both the international community and the Israeli public.

After the Gaza withdrawal of 2005, there were limited operations into Gaza almost every two years, in response to attacks by Hamas.

The extent to which political and military efforts to avoid the hell of war led to one of the most bizarre policies is described in Chapter 6 *Paying Terrorist Blackmail*.

In my view, given the fanatically supremacist, implacable, unappeasable aggressive and violent nature of the enemy as has been empirically and dramatically demonstrated by the most barbaric and depraved actions of the Oct 7 Muslim terrorists, the only solution is total elimination of Hamas and sovereign Israeli control of Gaza.



IN MEMORIAM

Professor Miriam Hoffman,

World-Renowned Yiddish Scholar

“The World’s Yiddishe Mameh,” Has Died

BY STAFF REPORT

Professor Miriam Hoffman, the fiery, funny, and fiercely principled matriarch of modern Yiddish culture, has passed away. She was 90.

Born Mirl Schmulewicz in Siberia in 1936, Hoffman spent her earliest years in the shadow of the **Tobolsk Slave Labor Camp** and the Russian border town of Saratov, before walking, at age nine, in a post-war refugee caravan from Poland to the Hindenburg-Kaserne Displaced Persons Camp in Ulm, Germany. That journey — from a stateless child behind barbed wire to one of the most influential voices in Yiddish language, academia and culture — became the foundation of a six-decade career devoted to proving that Yiddish was not a relic, but a living, breathing act of resistance to forgetting and a commitment to reviving the legacy of Ashkenazic Jewry.

Hoffman’s academic career began at the storied Sholem Aleichem Folkshul #21 on Bainbridge Avenue in The Bronx and culminated in 25 years as professor of Yiddish language and Jewish culture at Columbia University, where she turned an elective language course into a life-altering experience for thousands of students. Her 700-page textbook, “Key to Yiddish,” remains the preeminent reference for Yiddish educators around the world.

An award-winning playwright, Hoffman collaborated internationally on her Yiddish translations of Mel Brooks, *The Producers* (Montreal) and Neil Simon’s *The Odd Couple* (Israel). Together with her **longtime writing partner**, Rena Berkowicz Borow, she was embraced by the late Broadway impresario Joseph Papp, co-writing the libretto for the groundbreaking 1989 Yiddish/English musical *Songs of Paradise*, staged by The Public Theater — a landmark moment in the modern rebirth of Yiddish theater that paved the way for later Yiddish-language productions of *Waiting for Godot*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

For more than 35 years, Hoffman was a weekly columnist for the Forverts (The Yiddish Forward), where her thousands of essays fused sharp social critique with the warmth of Jewish folklore. “Yiddish will never die,” she insisted, “because it contains too much life — too much argument, irony, and love — to vanish quietly.”

In her later years, Hoffman extended her life’s work beyond the classroom, co-founding the not-for-profit **Yiddishkayt Initiative, Inc.** and its global platform, **YILoveJewish.org**, with her son, actor, director, and producer Avi Hoffman.


 A photograph of Miriam and Avi Hoffman. Miriam is seated in the foreground, wearing a white jacket with black trim and a watch. Avi is standing behind her, smiling, wearing a dark suit and tie. They are in a room with bookshelves and a laptop on a desk.

Miriam and Avi Hoffman



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