

## THE WEEKLY PRINT

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NOVEMBER 30, 2023

## After Hamas, what might come next for Gaza?

*With Israel determined to destroy Hamas and with widespread destruction in Gaza, no single individual or authority can reconstruct the Palestinian enclave, analysts conclude*

By Ruth Marks Eglash

On Sunday, the third day of a temporary cease-fire between Israel and the militant Islamist group Hamas, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu paid an unexpected visit to troops stationed in the northern part of the Gaza Strip.

After receiving a security briefing from commanders and visiting one of Hamas' terror tunnels, Netanyahu told the soldiers: "We have three goals in this war: Eliminate Hamas, return all of our hostages and ensure that Gaza will not go back to being a threat to the State of Israel."

Despite anxieties in Israel that there will be outside international pressure to constrain its military operation against Hamas, Israeli political and military leaders appear determined to continue the fight until Hamas, which carried out the worst terror attack on Israel in its 75-year history, is completely removed from the Palestinian enclave.

Though no one is willing to publicly estimate how long such a task might take – the terror group is deeply embedded inside the civilian population, making the mission complex – there has already been growing

speculation as to what might come next for Gaza.

President Joe Biden has hinted at bringing in a "revitalized" Palestinian Authority (PA), the body headed by Mahmoud Abbas that governs the West Bank from Ramallah. Netanyahu has repeatedly dismissed such an idea, accusing Abbas of inciting terror and being every bit as bad as Hamas, yet has offered no alternative end goal.

Meanwhile, far-right members of Israel's coalition have spoken out loudly about their desire to reoccupy Gaza (Israel unilaterally

withdrew from the Strip in 2005), while more moderate voices suggest bringing in a temporary multinational force – potentially led by Abraham Accords signatories – to help the Palestinians transition the enclave into a place that could realistically coexist alongside Israel.

In every scenario, aid to rebuild what is now being described as an uninhabitable territory would need to come from either regional or international sources – or both.

“I think there is a greater understanding than it appears between Washington and Jerusalem that it is unrealistic to assume the Palestinian Authority will take control of Gaza if Israel achieves its goal of toppling Hamas from power,” David Makovsky, director of the Koret Project on Arab-Israel Relations at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, told *Jewish Insider*.

Makovsky noted that a recent opinion piece published by the president in the *Washington Post* made clear that PA control of Gaza was not an immediate goal, but “an objective to work towards as part of a wider peace effort.”

“Note Biden’s use of words ‘ultimately’ and ‘under a revitalized Palestinian Authority,’” he said.

“So, why not the PA now?” Makovsky continued. “There are multiple reasons. First, it would not exactly be a great optic for the PA to arrive in Gaza on the back of an Israeli tank, and one must agree that the PA already has its hands full with territorial challenges in the West Bank.”

In addition, he explained, “Given the extent of the destruction in Gaza, one does not want to set up the PA for failure given the massive scope of the challenges.”

“Yet, the war cannot end with Gaza being an ungoverned space that could both ensure Israel is forced to directly control Gaza or breed the return of other terror groups,” Makovsky noted, adding that in a policy paper he co-authored with Dennis Ross and Robert Satloff they advocate for “an interim administration that could enlist the international system including the U.S. and a consortium of Abraham Accords countries in helping with the transition.”

Asher Fredman, a senior fellow at the Misgav Institute for National Security, told JI that the Abraham Accords countries could definitely play a role in post-war Gaza,

particularly on the issue of humanitarian aid.

“I do think there is a role for them in the rebuilding and physical reconstruction of Gaza,” he said, pointing out that financial assistance to the PA and to UNRWA, the U.N. agency that works with Palestinian refugees in the region, has diminished in the past few years because of concerns about corruption.

“If the PA remains more or less what it is today, then I do not see those countries helping extensively,” said Fredman, the former Israel director of the Washington-based Abraham Accords Peace Institute.

However, he noted, pulling in the Abraham Accords countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, as well as Saudi Arabia, to help with reconstructing and reimaging Gaza, would fit well into Biden’s India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC) plan.

“The IMEC plan is built on regional connectivity and there is a lot of potential for a reconstructed Gaza to be part of this economic prosperity,” Fredman said.

Earlier this month, during a visit to the region, Biden’s coordinator for global infrastructure and energy security, Amos Hochstein, reportedly discussed the opportunity to develop offshore gas fields on behalf of the Palestinians as part of a plan for post-war Gaza. Israel already approved such a development last June, with *Haaretz* reporting that a gas field off Gaza’s coast contains as much as 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

While such a plan still appears a long way off, there has also been talk of who might lead Palestinians in Gaza – and even in the West Bank – if the war gives way to a new configuration in the region.

One name that has long been touted as a future Palestinian leader is Mohammed Dahlan. Born in the Gaza Strip in 1961, Dahlan fled to the UAE after Hamas seized control of the enclave in 2007. At that time, he had been serving as the Palestinian national security advisor to the PA; he has since maintained powerful support inside Palestinian society.

Despite having some bitter enemies – particularly Abbas – Dahlan, a fluent Hebrew speaker who spent years in an Israeli prison for security offenses, has deep connections with Israel and is said to have

close ties with the powerful UAE leader Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

In an interview last month with *The Economist*, Dahlan dismissed the suggestion that he or any single individual could run Gaza post-war. He also rejected the idea of a multinational force being stationed in the Strip. Instead, he called for a transitional period with an administration run by technocrats in Gaza and the West Bank.

Such a step, he told the magazine, could reunify the Palestinian territories – Gaza and the West Bank – after more than a decade of infighting between Hamas and Fatah, Abbas’ political faction that runs the PA. However, he was clear that any future plan would need to include all Palestinian political factions, even representatives of Hamas.

“Hamas will not disappear,” Dahlan said in the interview, adding that even after the war it would be impossible to govern Gaza without Hamas’ consent. ♦

# Dani Dayan's new paradigm for Yad Vashem: Fighting today's antisemitism

*After visiting Ivy League colleges in the U.S., the Yad Vashem chairman raises concerns about the 'academization of antisemitism'*

By Ruth Marks Eglash

**Y**ad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, was established in 1953 by the Israeli government with the aim of documenting, researching, educating and commemorating a singular mass event: the Holocaust.

Following Hamas' massacre in southern Israel on Oct. 7 and the subsequent war in Gaza, however, the world-renowned institution's chairman, Dani Dayan, believes it is time to "change the paradigm." He sees a new role for Yad Vashem tackling the rampant rise in antisemitism and anti-Zionism, believing that the core of the issue lies in the administrative offices of Ivy League – and other – college campuses.

"Until now, we thought this is not our problem, we are experts on pre-Holocaust antisemitism through to the Shoah and not necessarily modern antisemitism because it is not retroactively relevant to the Shoah," Dayan, using the Hebrew word for Holocaust, told *Jewish Insider* in an interview.

"But now, with the current situation and the magnitude of rampant antisemitism, I think that forces us to put our weight and our prestige on this issue too," he said.

Dayan, Israel's former consul general in New York, returned last week from a trip to the U.S., where he met with presidents, provosts and deans from Ivy League and other colleges on the East Coast, including Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, New York University and Queens College – campuses that over the past two months have seen a sharp rise in antisemitic incidents, including physical harassment, of Jewish students.

Last month, two weeks after Hamas' mass terror attack on southern Israel, Jewish students at Cornell University received death threats online from a fellow

student. At Cooper Union College in New York, Jewish students were forced to shelter in a campus library during a pro-Palestinian demonstration. There have also been cases of faculty and staff at multiple universities celebrating Hamas' atrocities, which saw more than 1,200 people murdered in Israel and a further 240 people taken captive, as well as forcibly condemning Israel's military response in Gaza, where the death toll is said to have surpassed 15,000, as disproportionate and even genocide.

According to data collected by the Anti-Defamation League, in the month following Hamas' attack, antisemitic incidents in the U.S. increased by 316% compared to the same time period last year. Many of those incidents took place on college campuses.

Dayan also met with New York State Attorney General Letitia James while he was in the U.S., "because I am not naïve enough to think that education alone will do the job."

If there was any bright spot in his trip, Dayan said it was that he "found an amazing, amazing group of young Jewish students and young Jewish leaders in all the campuses I visited."

"If this is the next generation of American Jewish leadership, then we have a reason to be optimistic," he told JI. "But that is where I conclude the good news."

"Based on what they [Jewish students] described to me and the feelings I detected, I can sum it up with one word: ostracized," said Dayan. "I sensed a deep feeling of ostracization from the rest of the student community."

Dayan, who served as consul general from 2016-2020, said that he is very familiar with Ivy League institutions not only through his work as an Israeli diplomat but also as a father of a student at Columbia

University.

"I know about campus life intimately and without any intermediaries," he said. "Back in 2018, 2019, 2020, we already thought the antisemitism situation on campus was really bad, but it is nothing compared to what is going on today."

"What is happening today is much more violent, more aggressive and more extreme," described Dayan, saying that he compared the rise in antisemitism on college campuses to a cancer.

"I told the administrators that we had begged them to confront antisemitism and anti-Zionism on their campuses when it was in stage one, but they didn't listen," he said.

Now, continued Dayan, "we've reached stage two, which requires much more aggressive and sharper action to confront it and defeat it."

"If they don't deal with it now, in a few years, they will find themselves in stage three," he said. "Then I have no doubt that it will include the physical attacks against Jewish students and other things that today we believe are unthinkable."

"But they will happen," Dayan warned. "It's inevitable, that's the nature of antisemitism – if it's not stopped, it metastasizes into larger and larger dimensions."

Then, he added, "we will reach stage four, and stage four is terminal, it has no cure."

Dayan, who has headed Yad Vashem for the past two years, said that while it is Jews who ultimately suffer under rampant antisemitism, it will also have an impact on higher education in America, particularly on elite institutions.

"They will pay an enormous price because while, of course, it hurts the Jews, it hurts the hosting societies and the hosting institutions no less," he said,

giving examples of German educational institutions that suffered before, during and after the Holocaust. “If they don’t start dealing with this for the Jews, then at least they need to do this for themselves.”

Asked if he thought the heads of the various institutions that met with him understood the urgency of the threat he was describing this time around, Dayan said that he did not think “one meeting, as loaded and as explicit as it was,” would do the job.

“I am determined to continue doing this,” he said, describing how his recent trip was planned at the last minute and that he intended to begin visiting more universities in the U.S., Europe and South America, where he was born and raised.

“I think that my task as chairman is to deal with the presidents and with the provosts and with the deans, and I intend to do it frequently and constantly,” said Dayan. “This is a change in Yad Vashem’s paradigm

– we don’t deal with modern antisemitism, because modern antisemitism doesn’t retroactively influence the Shoah but under the current situation, we have to reconsider this paradigm.”

“I think we can really play a role in combating what they call the academization of antisemitism and the academization of the anti-Israel ideology, which is probably the source of all other manifestations of antisemitism on campus,” he concluded. ♦

NOVEMBER 27, 2023

## The BBC faces complaints, criticism over Israel-Hamas war coverage

*The Jewish community’s concerns about the broadcaster have been elevated to the U.K.’s official media regulator*

By Lianne Kolirin

In the immediate aftermath of Hamas’ Oct. 7 massacre in Israel, the venerable British Broadcasting Corporation refused to refer to the group as terrorists, despite the government’s designation.

During the bombing of the Al Ahli Arab Hospital 10 days later, the BBC, like other news outlets, was quick to blame the IDF for the blast.

Earlier this month, a BBC newsreader misquoted a *Reuters* report, this time about the IDF’s operation at the al-Shifa hospital.

All of the recent missteps are casting a harsh light on Britain’s official and well-respected broadcaster, especially as it concerns its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The complaints are coming from inside and outside of the Jewish community, and taken together they raise fresh questions about bias in the BBC when it comes to Israel.

The BBC prides itself on its impartiality, but its refusal to refer to Hamas as terrorists, despite the fact that the group has been proscribed as such by the British government, has angered many.

The move was justified in a lengthy piece by John Simpson, the BBC’s world affairs

editor, who described the term terrorism as a “loaded word.”

“It’s simply not the BBC’s job to tell people who to support and who to condemn — who are the good guys and who are the bad guys,” Simpson wrote.

The refusal was described by Grant Shapps, the country’s defense secretary, as “verging on disgraceful,” while he called on the BBC to “locate its moral compass.”

Israeli President Isaac Herzog raised the coverage with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunak’s visit to Israel following the attacks last month. “We feel that the way the BBC characterizes Hamas is a distortion of the facts,” he told Sunak.

Following a forceful written complaint, the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BoD) met with the BBC’s director general, Tim Davey, and some of his senior team. In a statement issued by the BoD following that meeting on Oct. 20, the BoD said: “The BBC was left in no doubt as to the strength of feeling in the Jewish community.”

The matter has since been escalated to Ofcom, the official media regulator, but the BoD is still awaiting a response.

Marie van der Zyl, president of the

BoD, told JI it was an “outrage” that the broadcaster refused to recognize the Oct. 7 attacks as a terrorist attack. “We cannot give moral equivalence to people who murdered, raped and kidnapped and who committed heinous crimes,” she added.

Criticism of the BBC’s coverage of the conflict did not stop there. Along with other media outlets, the BBC came under fire over its early reporting of a blast at the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza on Oct. 17, which it blamed, citing reports from the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, on the Israel Defense Forces.

Reporting the attack on BBC News, its correspondent, Jon Donnison, said, “It’s hard to see what else this could be really, given the size of the explosion, other than an Israeli airstrike or several airstrikes.”

Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick compared the BBC’s reporting to a “21st-century blood libel.” Home Secretary James Cleverly, who was then serving as the U.K.’s foreign secretary, urged broadcasters to “focus on accuracy rather than pace.”

In a post on its corrections and clarifications page, the BBC later admitted that “it was wrong to speculate in this way”

about the hospital blast.

The BoD's concerns hit a fever pitch earlier this month, after a BBC journalist misquoted a *Reuters* report, this time about the IDF's operation at the Al-Shifa hospital.

*Reuters* said that the IDF was taking "medical teams and Arabic speakers" into the hospital to help patients, but the newsreader announced that the IDF was "targeting" medical teams and Arabic speakers. The BBC soon issued a statement acknowledging the error as well as an on-air apology.

The BoD issued a strongly worded statement in which it said it was "absolutely appalled" by the error, adding: "At best, this shows a staggering lack of care when reporting on a highly volatile situation, which can have a knock-on effect all over the world, including in Britain, where antisemitic attacks have risen by more than 500 per cent since October 7th."

Fresh headlines were made in recent days as Jewish staff accused the corporation of double standards, saying that the BBC had told them they could not attend a large march against antisemitism in London. According to reports in the British press, staff in current affairs and journalism who asked for permission to join the demonstration were denied due to BBC rules on impartiality.

In a statement, the BBC denied that any official guidance had been given but added "this does not mean discussions which consider the guidance have not taken place between colleagues."

Jewish journalist Danny Shaw spent more than 30 years working for the BBC, 22 of which were spent covering domestic issues, including terrorism.

"There's nothing new about it," Shaw said of the debate around the use of the "terrorist."

He told *JI* that the idea behind the policy is that "terrorist" is a subjective description which has different meanings for different people."

"This isn't a new thing and it's particularly sensitive when you are covering international conflicts, where there may be a dispute about who is defining them as a terrorist," he said.

While he "understands the sense" around it, Shaw admitted that the policy

would also "infuriate him."

Shaw said that the "BBC has made some mistakes" in its coverage of the Israel-Hamas war, in particular in its coverage of the blast at the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital. "There was far too much speculation on that bulletin," he said.

Posts on social media have also fallen short of expectations of impartiality, he said. Nevertheless, Shaw believes that context is all important when discussing the BBC.

The BBC's approach to balance and impartiality must be regarded as part of a broader strategy, he said. "You can't take a snapshot of a conversation in half an hour and expect to hear every single item and interview balanced and impartial — that isn't the way it works."

"But over time it has to be, especially in the run-up to an election and particularly on the most politically sensitive issues."

He added: "It's very easy for someone to jump and say the BBC is biased one way or another. You are talking about a huge organization with a vast amount of output on the biggest story of this year. Plus there's the extreme difficulty of reporting a fast-moving story with a lack of verified information, which makes it really hard."

"I know how difficult it is when you're dealing with fast-moving events, information flowing at you from all different sources. You are under pressure to hit deadlines, you have got 24 hours news and you are going live on a program — what reporter hasn't made a mistake on-air? I certainly have."

"All of those factors do not excuse mistakes but they explain some of it," he added.

Nevertheless, the ongoing issues have proved too much for some.

Writing in *The Telegraph* last week, Danny Cohen, the BBC's former head of TV, called for an independent review into the broadcaster's coverage of the war, saying Britain's Jewish community is "being harmed through its unbalanced reporting."

In particular, Cohen singled out Caroline Hawley, the BBC's diplomatic correspondent, whom the *Telegraph* said had made numerous social media posts about the "shocking" and "terrifying" situation in Gaza — with little evidence of such expressions of sympathy for Israel.

"The BBC's credibility with the Jewish community is reaching a point of no return," said Cohen, adding that Hawley's "biased, unbalanced" social media feed "reads like a series of press releases from Hamas central command."

While other media outlets have also fallen afoul of the Jewish community's expectations over their coverage of the current conflict, the onus on the BBC is greater, according to van der Zyl.

"They are the national broadcaster with worldwide impact," she told *JI*. "From a U.K. perspective we fund it and it has to be held to account. In the fog of war it's even more important that there's accurate reporting."

She added: "People believe what they read and even if they later apologize people still believe it."

While they regard themselves as "independent of everybody," there is another way of looking at the BBC, she said. "There's a long-standing bias against Israel in the newsroom," she said. She gave as an example a report from November 2021 of a group of Jewish students who were subjected to an antisemitic attack while traveling through the center of London on a privately hired bus during Hanukkah.

The BBC's coverage reported that an anti-Muslim slur had been heard from inside the bus. The issue was later escalated to a complaint to Ofcom which eventually ruled that the BBC had made "significant editorial failings."

Meanwhile, there have also been calls for the BBC to publish a long-buried report into claims of bias over its coverage of Israel.

Cohen wrote in *The Telegraph*: "In 2004, the Balen Report addressed the question of anti-Israel bias in the BBC. But the public has never had the chance to read it. Indeed, the BBC has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds of license-fee payers' money to keep its contents secret."

While van der Zyl admitted that the corporation has been quicker to respond to complaints about its coverage since Oct. 7, it is far from perfect.

"The BBC is not alone but this is our national broadcaster and it's the most important to deal with, and it's got to be held accountable when it makes serious errors of judgment." ♦



# Schumer delivers landmark Senate speech on rising antisemitism

*The Jewish Senate majority leader denounced anti-Israel protesters, young people, the media, erstwhile allies and others whom he said were helping to propagate antisemitism*

By Marc Rod

In a Senate floor speech that lasted for nearly an hour on Wednesday morning, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) called out the wave of antisemitism that has followed the Oct. 7 Hamas terror attacks on Israel, denouncing anti-Israel protesters, young people, the media, erstwhile allies and others whom he said had were helping to propagate antisemitism, and who have abandoned or failed to grasp the scope and severity of the crisis Jewish Americans are experiencing.

"Vitriol against Israel in the wake of Oct. 7 is all too often crossing into brazen and widespread antisemitism, the likes of which we haven't seen for generations in this country, if ever," Schumer, who is the highest-ranking Jewish elected official in U.S. history, said. "I want to explain through the lens of history, why this is so dangerous: The normalization and exacerbation of this rise in hate is the danger many Jewish people fear most."

In the aftermath of the Oct. 7 attacks, Schumer lamented, "the solidarity that Jewish Americans initially received from any of our fellow citizens was quickly drowned out by other voices." He lambasted anti-Israel demonstrators who have supported, justified, excused or denied the atrocities committed by Hamas on Oct. 7.

Some, he added, "skipped over expressing sympathy" for the victims of the attack, "in their haste to blame the attack on the past actions of the Israeli government."

The current wave of antisemitism, he emphasized, isn't coming primarily from the far right, but from "people that most liberal Jewish Americans felt previously were their ideological fellow travelers" — people whom Jewish Americans had joined in protests against other forms of hatred and

discrimination — "but apparently... in the eyes of some, this principle does not extend to Jewish people."

He called out slogans adopted by anti-Israel protesters such as "From the river to the sea" — echoed by a Democratic House member — which he noted is a founding slogan of Hamas, and said efforts to draw equivalencies between Hamas' attack and Israel's efforts to defeat Hamas have "alarmed" and "shocked" the Jewish community.

"Can you understand why the Jewish people feel isolated when we hear some praise Hamas and chant its vicious slogan?" Schumer asked. "Can you blame us for feeling vulnerable only 80 years after Hitler wiped out half the Jewish population across the world?"

Schumer's speech focused in significant part on the long history — both recent and further in the past — of persecution and violence that Jewish people have faced around the world, arguing that framings, adopted by left-wing activists, of Jews and Israel as powerful oppressors play into long-standing antisemitic narratives.

"Antisemitic conspiracy theories throughout the generations often theorize, often weaponize this very dynamic, by pitting what successes the Jewish people have achieved against them and against their fellow countrymen," Schumer said. "That's been throughout history and it's happening now."

Schumer said he's confronted anti-Israel marchers about what should be done about Hamas, and he said they don't have answers or "don't seem to care."

"And when we see many people in news organizations remain neutral about the basic absurdity of these claims and actions,

we are deeply disappointed," he said. "More than anything, we're worried, quite naturally, given the twists and turns of history, about whether these actions and sentiments could eventually lead."

Even outside of those who've intentionally or unintentionally supported antisemitism, Schumer said that many outside of the Jewish community have failed to grasp the severity of the current wave of antisemitism and the threat it poses to the Jewish community.

"I have noticed a significant disparity between how Jewish people regard the rise of antisemitism, and how many of my non-Jewish friends regard it," Schumer said. "To us, Jewish people, the rise of antisemitism is a crisis, a five-alarm fire that must be extinguished. To some of the other people of good will it is merely a problem, a matter of concern."

The Senate majority leader noted a series of incidents, including attacks on Jewish people and Jewish-owned businesses and harassment of and violence against Jewish college students, as those where anti-Israel activity had crossed into antisemitism.

He highlighted the story of a Queens high school teacher who earlier this month hid in an office for hours as students rioted over her participation in a pro-Israel rally, and said he'd invited that teacher into the Senate chamber to watch his speech.

The New York senator described fighting this current wave of antisemitism as a basic test of the "future of the American experiment."

Referencing at multiple points his own family's history before and during the Holocaust, and fleeing from Europe to the United States, as well as his own experiences dealing with previous waves of anti-Israel

sentiment, Schumer highlighted that, for Jewish Americans, “any strength and security that we enjoy always feels tenuous.”

“On top of feeling alone, the second dominant feeling of Jewish people who have endured throughout history has been the sting of the double standard, which is the way the world has practiced antisemitism over and over again,” Schumer continued. “And in recent decades, this double standard has manifested itself in the way much of the world treats Israel differently than anybody else.”

He highlighted how those double standards have led people to excuse the Hamas attacks, and ignore Hamas’ own practices that deliberately endanger Palestinian civilian lives.

“Why does the criticism for any civilian deaths seem to fall exclusively on Israel

and not at all on Hamas?” Schumer asked. “Hamas has knowingly invited an immense civilian toll, an immense civilian toll during the war, exploiting the double standard that so much of the world applies to Israel.”

He also spoke about why “Jewish people defend Israel,” given its role as a safe haven for the Jewish people.

“We fear a world where Israel is forced to tolerate the existence of groups like Hamas that want to wipe out all Jewish people from the planet,” Schumer said. “We fear a world where Israel, the place of refuge for Jewish people, will no longer exist. If there is no Israel, there will be no place, no place for the Jewish people to go when they are persecuted in other countries.”

He again referred to his own family history, recounting that his grandfather, who survived the Holocaust, had broken

down with emotion on his first visit to Israel.

“This had nothing to do with politics, or with money, or with racism, or with oppressive colonial power. It was deeply human,” Schumer said.

In the introduction to his speech, Schumer also took pains to emphasize that he was not seeking to characterize all criticism of Israel and its government as antisemitic, or to downplay Islamophobia, highlighting his own history of working on that issue.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) praised Schumer for the “extraordinary” speech.

“I want to compliment him for providing a history lesson for Americans about the history of the Jewish people, putting it in context with the conflict that’s underway,” McConnell said in his own remarks. ♦

NOVEMBER 30, 2023

## Lawmakers to introduce bill extending Holocaust education program through 2030

*With the Never Again Education Act currently expiring in 2025, a new bill set to be introduced on Thursday would extend the Holocaust education program for an additional five years*

By Marc Rod

House lawmakers are expected to introduce a bill on Thursday reauthorizing the Never Again Education Act, the law passed in 2020 to create a program providing Holocaust education resources to middle and high schools through the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The original bill authorized the program for five years, until the end of the 2025 fiscal year; the new bill would reauthorize the program, extending it through 2030. The reauthorization effort is being led by Rep. Buddy Carter (R-GA), joined by Reps. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Kathy Manning (D-NC) and Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL).

Carter linked the effort directly to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas.

“As Israel’s ally, it is our duty to ensure

that the horrors of the Holocaust are not repeated. With pro-Hamas demonstrations happening at colleges and high schools across the nation, it is critical that we properly educate our students about the history of antisemitism,” he said in a statement. “No one should be discriminated against because of their faith, culture, or heritage. When we say ‘never again,’ we mean it.”

Wasserman Schultz noted that children are being exposed to virulent antisemitism, particularly through social media.

“More than ever, teachers need resources to develop and improve Holocaust education programs that reach generations who, with every passing year, lose touch with the murderous slaughter of six million Jews,” she said in a statement. “If this sensitive

subject is not taught to young people, we are doomed to witness similar horrors like the one just inflicted on the Israeli people, a massacre that antisemitic terrorists vow to repeat. It is so critical right now, as Holocaust denial and antisemitism surge in the very social media spaces that students inhabit, and because Jewish students increasingly fear for their own safety. Education is key to ensuring future generations are informed on how deadly antisemitism can be.”

Manning also highlighted the current rise in antisemitism.

“Teaching about the Holocaust and the 2000-year history of antisemitism is critical to ensuring that future generations of students learn the unique nature of antisemitism as well as the importance of speaking out against all hate,” she said

in a statement. “During this time of rising antisemitism, I’m pleased to work with my congressional colleagues to reintroduce this vitally important bill.”

The bill is being supported by the Jewish

Federations of North America, Christians United for Israel, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, National Council of Jewish Women, World Jewish Congress North America, the

Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the Republican Jewish Coalition, the American Jewish Congress and the National Education Association. ♦

NOVEMBER 29, 2023

## Avigdor Liberman warned of a Hamas attack. Now, he says Israel is under same delusions about Hezbollah

*Former defense minister, who presciently predicted the October massacre and resigned in 2018 over weak policies on Hamas, fears the same can happen again on the northern front*

By Lahav Harkov

In April 2016, Avigdor Liberman, then and now an opposition lawmaker, sat on a stage in Beersheva and made one of the most memorable statements of his decades-long political career.

“If I’m defense minister...I give [Hamas leader Ismail] Haniyeh 48 hours. Either return the bodies [of IDF soldiers] and the civilians [held in Gaza], or you’re dead. As far as I’m concerned, reserve a plot for yourself in the nearest cemetery,” Liberman said.

The next month, Liberman’s Yisrael Beytenu party joined Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s ruling coalition and he became defense minister. Haniyeh survived and is enjoying the good life in Doha, Qatar.

However, on Dec. 21 of that year, Liberman sent an eerily prescient report to Netanyahu saying that Israel must initiate a surprise attack on Gaza, and that not doing so “is a severe mistake with far-reaching consequences that could be...even more so than the results of the Yom Kippur War in their influence on the Israeli Home Front, on the consciousness of Israeli citizens and on the image and standing of the State of Israel in the region.”

Nearly seven years ago, Liberman anticipated what would take place on Oct. 7 in the memo to Netanyahu: “Hamas plans to move the next conflict into Israel’s territory, with significant, well-trained forces (such as the Nukhba force) into Israeli territory while

conquering an Israeli village (and perhaps several) in the Gaza envelope and taking hostages.”

“I gave this document to three people: the prime minister, [then-]IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot and head of military intelligence Herzi Halevy,” Liberman told *Jewish Insider* this week. Eisenkot is now a member of Israel’s war cabinet and Halevy is chief of staff of the IDF.

“They were very skeptical,” he recounted. “They said it’s not serious. I demanded a discussion of the report in security cabinet meetings and got the same reaction. I was one person; the whole IDF said that Hamas is deterred and had no interest in an escalation.”

Even worse than not taking initiative, Liberman said, was that Israel allowed the constant transfer of aid money from Qatar to Gaza, which bolstered Hamas; that decision by Netanyahu and the cabinet was what spurred Liberman to resign from the Defense Ministry in November 2018.

At the time, he warned that a cease-fire with Hamas “cannot be interpreted in any way other than a capitulation to terrorism. This will severely harm our security in the long run. The response that we gave to the 500 rockets shot from Gaza was not enough, to say the least. The south should come first. Our weakness is being broadcast to other fronts.”

Speaking to *Ji* in English from his party’s

office in Modi’in, sitting behind a heavy wooden desk with a Premier League soccer game between Tottenham Hotspurs and Aston Villa playing on the TV mounted on the wall — he is a known sports fan and a particularly big supporter of Spurs — Liberman warned that Israel is repeating the mistakes it made with Hamas in the south, only with Hezbollah across the northern border.

Israel’s top security officials were “part of this misconception that it is possible to deal with Hamas, that they can contain everything and compromise, that [Hamas is] not a terrorist organization and they are responsible for over two million people,” Liberman said.

“We’re making the same mistake regarding Hezbollah, claiming that it’s a Lebanese [political party] that has responsibility for the daily life in Lebanon,” he added. “Hezbollah is not a Lebanese [party] and they don’t have any responsibility. They’re a terrorist movement.”

*The interview was edited for length and clarity.*

**Jewish Insider: Do you think Israel should initiate a new front in the north?**

**Avigdor Liberman:** It’s a huge problem and I’m very disappointed that the same



misconception is continuing in the north. They're giving the same explanations regarding Hezbollah and no response to the Houthis. They're trying to contain everything that is possible.

It's clear that it's only a matter of time. Hezbollah is waiting for us to be submerged in Gaza with a lot of forces. At the most convenient time for them, they will open the second front. We are leaving all of the initiative in the hands of Hezbollah.

We have a very strong position with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 from 2006. All members of the UNSC, including Russia and China, voted in favor of it, and the government of Lebanon also approved it. According to the resolution, there is no place for even one Hezbollah terrorist between the Litani River and our border. Today there are thousands. I think there should be a clear demand from our government to implement Resolution 1701.

I don't see that [Hezbollah leader Hassan] Nasrallah is ready to implement it. It's impossible, from my point of view, to avoid this confrontation... It would be much better to clarify this position to all of our partners, including the U.S., U.K. and France.

Our priority as a normal country should be the security of our citizens. We have over 200,000 displaced people in Israel today. It's crazy. The traditional vision of the IDF was to immediately move operations to our enemy's territory, but today we created two buffer zones within Israel, one in the north and one in the south...It's completely unacceptable.

**JI: What do you think about the deal for Hamas to release Israeli hostages in exchange for a temporary pause in fighting and Palestinian prisoners?**

**AL:** It's very difficult. We are split between our minds and hearts. We want our boys and girls and their mothers back from Gaza, and we see how these animals from Hamas are playing this deal. But first of all, we are happy for every person, child, mother we can bring back to Israel, to their home. But still, we have more than 150 other hostages.

It's completely unclear why it took more than a week [for the Israeli government to accept the deal]. Either make the decision

immediately or place more pressure even if it takes four or five more days to release all of our hostages.

**JI: Do you think there should have been a rescue operation?**

**AL:** In the past our approach was to rescue, not to negotiate. I think that today we are discussing this issue too much and it shows that the real weakness in our society is the hostages. Hamas is using this. It's clear psychological blackmail.

We're dealing with blackmailers, people [for whom] this kind of behavior, the atrocities – it's normal.

**JI: What do you think the next steps should be?**

**AL:** It's crucial for us, if we want to stop the war as soon as possible, to place a lot of pressure...because for us to continue the war [much longer] is a mission impossible. We have an economy, we are under international pressure and I think it's in our interest here to have the war be more intensive and to do everything to have a more intensive war but to end the war in a short period of time.

We had the Six-Day War, and even [the] Yom Kippur War – after 19 days we were on the highway to Damascus and Cairo. Today, it's over 50 days.

**JI: You said that the economy cannot withstand a drawn-out war. As a former finance minister, what do you think the current one, Bezalel Smotrich, should do?**

**AL:** We have a budget for 2024, but it's nonsense to say it's possible to move forward with what they approved in the Knesset. We're in a completely different situation; it's chaos.

I think [Smotrich] doesn't understand the situation. He told the media that it's like coronavirus, which we also successfully overcame. That's stupid, because [the COVID-19 pandemic] was a worldwide phenomenon, where all countries were in the same boat... Today, it's our local problem and we're without any sympathy from other countries. Before COVID-19, the interest rate was almost zero and today we have a

very high interest rate. We have hundreds of thousands of reservists who were able to work during [the pandemic]. They were the main labor force in our economy, people aged 23-45. I think it's crazy to compare the situation to COVID-19.

The first thing we need to do is to give up all of our commitments regarding coalition money [the Israeli equivalent of pork-barrel funding]. We have to close all of the crazy ministries; today we have 37, half of which are completely unnecessary.

We need to start a program to create prosperity again. We should allocate funds differently, to the most important engines of our economy, high-tech and real estate, which completely collapsed.

**JI: Why don't you join the emergency government?**

**AL:** I don't recall anyone inviting me.

It's not a big dream for me to be minister number 38. I'm ready to take responsibility and be part of the war cabinet, but if I'm not there, then why would I waste additional government money? I don't want any coalition money, no budget, nothing. I don't want a ministry – but at minimum, I would have to be part of the war cabinet.

Of course, it's completely unacceptable for all of them – Netanyahu and [National Unity Party leader Benny] Gantz and Eisenkot and [Defense Minister Yoav] Gallant – because my approach and my vision are completely different from theirs.

**JI: If you think Gantz and Eisenkot are part of the problem, then what political constellation would you support after the war?**

**AL:** I'm not ready to discuss political issues after the war. First of all, what we hope for is victory. We should win this war and after that, everything is open, but it's not the right time to draw conclusions and to look for people who are responsible for this tragedy. I think that today we should only concentrate on one issue – winning this war. ♦

# Israeli-American philanthropist wants U.S. Jewry to go to war with, not 'handle,' antisemitism

*Yossie Hollander, who funds Holocaust education and other efforts to combat antisemitism, thinks the American Jewish leadership has for too long been ignoring the threat of far-left antisemitism and wants a new umbrella group to lead the fight against it*

By Judah Ari Gross

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

**Y**ossie Hollander, an Israeli software entrepreneur and philanthropist now living in California, wants American Jewry to go to war against the groups and individuals responsible for the current wave of antisemitism in the United States. He wants that war to be well-funded, professionally organized and supported by the Israeli government, and he doesn't think the current communal infrastructure is up to the task.

Hollander, who has long donated to Holocaust education causes and other efforts connected to combating antisemitism, is convinced that American Jews have misdiagnosed the threat of Jew hatred, focusing too much on white supremacists and far-right antisemitism. (Hollander dismisses that threat as insignificant, despite the fact that it has claimed the lives of more Jews in America than far-left antisemitism.)

His solution is a new umbrella organization, one funded with \$100 million a year, which would hire lawyers, lobbyists and media relations experts to play a far more aggressive role against university professors that espouse antisemitic views, school districts that adopt curricula that paint Jews as oppressors and Qatari-funded media campaigns.

Earlier this month, eJewishPhilanthropy spoke with Hollander about his analysis of the situation in the United States today and his vision for this organization.

*This interview has been edited for length and clarity.*

**Judah Ari Gross:** Let's speak first about combating antisemitism in the U.S. and especially on college campuses.

**Yossie Hollander:** In the short term, the priorities of American Jewry should be to make sure that the American support for whatever Israel needs to do continues. And that is not a given at all.

**JAG:** When you say support, you mean from the United States government or from within the American Jewish community?

**YH:** The United States government. We need [President Joe] Biden to stand with Israel. We know the patterns in the past that we get initial support from the U.S. but only to a certain point. And then whoever decides or pressures the administration that this is enough and [Israel] should stop. We can't afford to stop right now. So that's why I think this is the most important thing right now.

We have to keep exposing what [Hamas] did. Israel showed the 47-minute movie [of compiled footage from the Oct. 7 attacks] to a few people. But the internet is full of other things that we need to expose, and the Israeli [military] spokesman should release a video of the horrific acts every day. And all the social media companies need to make sure it gets distributed. I think that's the only way that America keeps support because as we all know there are people living in the progressive wing and especially in the democratic one that want to see Israel gone. They don't even deny it.

**JAG:** Do you think that part of the issue is the lack of a clear plan for what happens in

Gaza the day after the war?

**YH:** I don't think that has anything to do with it. I think it has to do with what Biden and the people around him say.

**JAG:** OK, so that's your focus for the short term. What is your long-term focus?

**YH:** We have to look at the antisemitism in the U.S. According to [Anti-Defamation League] data, only 18% of antisemitism comes from the right. [Ed. note: The source of this data is not immediately clear. In the ADL's 2022 survey of antisemitism in the United States, at least 852 of the 3,697 incidents of antisemitism (23%) were attributed to known white supremacist groups, which does not include all cases of right-wing antisemitism.]

And [right-wing antisemitism] is the least dangerous one. They may kill a Jew here and there in a synagogue, but they don't control anybody in Washington, they don't have anybody in the universities. No disrespect, but you know, most of the right-wing antisemites don't have the GPA to get into universities. So, the antisemitism in the universities, for example, is all left-wing and Islamist.

What we're seeing in the demonstrations is Islamists and the radical left. It is not right-wing masses demonstrating. So, I'm not suggesting we ignore them, but that's not where we have the problem. They have zero influence on Biden. Qatar has influence on Biden, the progressive wing of the Democratic Party has influence on Biden.

We need to think about who are the real enemies and where they sit in the centers of control and how we fight them. And that's a bigger strategy that we have to

divide between universities, high schools, district attorneys, social media. It's a whole strategy that Jewish people need to get around because right now they are basically ignoring the fact. They kind of try to stay within the comfort zone, which was a few crazy Nazis. This is what I call a Jewish comfort zone. This is not what's happening out there, OK? The people who are tearing down the posters are not Nazis. The people with the keffiyehs are not Nazis.

**JAG:** *What does that mean in practice?*

**YH:** In practice, the Jews should start organizing. Until now, in the universities, most of the Jewish focus was on what I call student activism.

There was very little top-down effort to change university infrastructure. Now you see people like Bill Ackerman and Marc Rowan starting an activity on the boards. But there are many other activities we should be doing on the university level.

**JAG:** *Such as?*

**YH:** What we need to do is make sure that all the professors that are antisemites are removed from universities. Removed. Already a few have been removed, by the way. The university started removing those professors. They need to be removed from academic life. They can't be in touch with students. You should never allow them to talk to any student, ever. We need to remove the faculties that are becoming a hotbed for antisemitism, like many of the Middle East studies.

Students for Justice in Palestine was removed from Brandeis, suspended in Columbia, and [Florida Gov. Ron] DeSantis tried to outlaw them in Florida state universities. This needs to be a national standard. We cannot have organizations that are antisemitic and anti-America.

If there were a Ku Klux Klan parade in the university, all the students, professors and organization involved would be out tomorrow, within 24 hours. And we need to make sure that none of these students [who take part in pro-Hamas activism] ever gets a job in the United States. Half of them are not U.S. citizens. So we need to throw them out of the U.S. tomorrow.

It's war. It is war not just against Israel or the Jewish population. It's a war against the U.S. This is war, and we have not been fighting so far. We've been 'handling' it. We need resources and we need focus. If anybody thinks that it's going to get better, just look at the statistics. The Harris-Harvard poll showed 50% of adults under the age of 25 support Hamas over Israel. How do you think that happened? That's a combination of TikTok, of universities, of high school education.

There's a lot that needs to be done, but the Jewish people have to start getting organized a little bit more centrally. Not each one doing whatever they want in their own ways. It's very nice, but it's not working. We've been fighting antisemitism from the left and the Islamists for the last 20 years. So far we've been losing. We haven't been fighting it in an organized way. We need to get organized.

What we need is we need 10 Jewish billionaires to each put together at least \$10 million a year in one big batch with an aggressive agenda and professional management, not federation management. When you hire professionals, you need professionals to manage them. We need to put in \$100-\$200 million a year. And Israel needs to join the fight as well as a strategic practice.

**JAG:** *In terms of the role that you see the State of Israel, the government of Israel having in these efforts, there have been a number of articles recently raising questions about the role that the Qatari government has in funding programs at universities and think tanks. Is there concern that if Israel starts entering this as a government — not private Jewish funders and Jewish philanthropists — but Israel as a government playing more of a role that you could have a similar blowback of state-sponsored propaganda?*

**YH:** We have a lot of organizations that bring opinion makers and people to visit Israel. It's part of the education and explanation and communication of what Israel is about. Suppose Israel decides to fund 20 times more than it currently funded. The Jewish organization in the United States will help bring more people to Israel and the people in Israel will fund the

organization that does it here. What's the big problem with this? Things that are done anyway, just do it 20 times more. Just to give you an example.

Another example is declaring that Iran fights us not just on the nuclear front, but on the soft war [of public opinion]. They must understand that Qatar is an enemy state, not a friendly state, and start treating it as such. Israel has the tools to fight Qatar, but it needs to decide that it does because Qatar is fighting us, but we're not fighting Qatar. That's the big difference.

So you ask: What could Israel do to fight Qatar? Israel could do a lot. What could Israeli-American Jews do to fight Qatar? Not much.

**JAG:** *You said that you want to see some large donors coming together and putting money toward this. Is there anything concrete on the table? Are there any talks that are currently happening?*

**YH:** No comment on that. I hope so.

**JAG:** *Do you think that this requires new organizations or should it be done by working within the existing frameworks and filling in those roles and bulking out those organizations?*

**YH:** I think it requires a new coordinating umbrella organization. It doesn't mean that the money will not go to an existing organization. If the Lawfare Project will say, 'OK, if you can give us \$2 million more a year, then we can do X,' that's fine if the program makes sense.

**JAG:** *But there is already the Anti-Defamation League, which has the mission of combating antisemitism. So you could just give more money to the ADL and get it to hire more of the professional people that you want, or you could say, 'OK, ADL, you've had your time, we're going to go and create a new 'Anti-antisemitism League.'*

**YH:** You're putting it in the black and white. The ADL would be part of the fighting network, the question is, how it is coordinated and planned, and the ADL will not be the center of coordination for the Jewish world. ♦

# In growing European trend, Germany freezes UNRWA Gaza aid

*The U.N. agency has distributed materials to Palestinian students fomenting antisemitism*

By Lahav Harkov

Germany moved to freeze its funding for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees' Gaza operations indefinitely, marking a trend in Europe away from aid to the Palestinians.

The German Development Ministry announced last week that Gaza would be excluded from its continued contributions to UNRWA, "due to the current situation."

Berlin contributed close to \$1 billion in the last five years, making it UNRWA's largest donor. The U.N. agency, which also considers descendants born after the 1948 war to still be refugees, has distributed materials to students encouraging antisemitism and inciting violence against Jews and Israelis and hired teachers who do the same.

IMPACT-se, an Israeli organization analyzing educational materials in the Middle East, published two reports following the Oct. 7 attacks on Israel finding that over 100 Hamas terrorists who murdered Israelis are graduates of UNRWA schools, and that at least 14 teachers and staff members of UNRWA schools celebrated the massacre on social media, including one post describing the assault as "an unforgettable glorious morning." Palestinian Authority schools in the West Bank were also found to engage in glorification of the Oct. 7 terrorists.

Criticism of UNRWA has come from both the German left and right. Social Democratic Party MP Falko Drossman called for "a new initiative" and said that "there cannot be a status quo ante with UNRWA," while Christian Democrat Union human rights policy spokesman Michael Brand said that UNRWA "failed" in that it provided "too little help" and allowed for "too much terror."

Max Lucks of the Greens, the party of German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, said that "UNRWA is not making

a contribution to a peaceful solution" and allows Jordan and Lebanon to avoid finding solutions for Palestinians living in their countries.

IMPACT-se CEO Marcus Sheff called Germany "a key player in ending Palestinian hate education."

Sheff said his organization "warned for years that the result of Palestinian hate education, funded by the international community, will be disastrous. Sadly, this was the case. Now, all decent people need to make sure the hate teaching ends."

Meanwhile, Brussels has been revisiting its Palestinian aid funding following the Oct. 7 massacre.

Last week, the EU concluded its review of Palestinian development aid, announced in the aftermath of the Hamas attack. Brussels announced that it would withhold €39 million from 51 Palestinian NGOs until the groups provide more thorough documentation of "procedures and tools used to enforce the contractual obligations stemming from the restrictive measures and anti-incitement clauses." Two organizations were denied €8 million grants for violating the EU's clause against incitement to hatred and violence, *The Irish Times* reported.

In 2020 and 2021, after Brussels began requiring that Palestinian organizations sign an agreement that they will ensure that no beneficiaries of the funding are connected to EU-recognized terrorist organizations, NGOs dropped 13 projects amounting to €14.3 million in aid, the report stated.

Switzerland also canceled contracts with three Palestinian NGOs meant to receive a combined €600,000 over violations of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs Code of Conduct.

Following the Oct. 7 attack, Switzerland

suspended funding to 11 NGOs to "carry out an in-depth analysis of the compliance of these organizations' communications with the FDFA's Code of Conduct and anti-discrimination clause."

The Swiss Federal Council also took steps towards outlawing Hamas last week.

NGO Monitor, which studies the funding of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian organizations, called the EU and Swiss decisions "necessary and welcome steps."

"The EU's introduction of a new anti-incitement requirement will hopefully lead toward better screening of Palestinian NGOs," the organization stated. "We hope the language of this new condition is specific enough to address ongoing Palestinian NGO incitement, since similar existing policies are largely inapplicable in the Palestinian context." ♦