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15th Annual Memphis Yeshiva Invitational Basketball Tournament Tips Off on Thursday, November 14



The Hometown Cooper Macs look for their second Invitational Title at this year's event.

The 15th Annual Memphis Yeshiva Invitational will tip-off Thursday, November 14, 2024. In its 15th year, the Invitational has become one of the largest Jewish high school athletic events in North America. Featuring 16 of the top Jewish high school varsity basketball teams, the event, culminating in “Championship Sunday” on November 17, 2024, will crown a National Champion and a Tier II Champion from one of the most competitive invitational fields in the country.

The hometown Cooper MACS, led by second-year coaches Kobi Pinto and David Winestone, look to bring the national title home to Memphis where it has not been since the MACS last won the Invitational in 2008. But the road to the title will certainly not be an easy one for the MACS as this year’s Invitational is likely the most competitive assemblage of Jewish high school talent anywhere. Jewish Hoops America Na-

tional Top 25’ers, YULA (JHA Rank 1), Magen David Yeshivah (2), Northshore Hebrew Academy (5); TABC (6), Valley Torah (10), Maimonides (12), Posnack Day School (13), DRS (15), HAFTR (16), and Katz Yeshiva (24) join nationally recognized programs from MTA, Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, Hebrew Academy of Montreal, Robert M. Beren Hebrew Academy, and Hillel Yeshiva of New Jersey in the 2024 event.

The event, which was founded in 2007, serves as an opportunity for Jewish teams to not only compete in high level basketball, but also to meet, develop friendships with, and learn from, their counterparts in schools across North America. For many schools, the event has become both the athletic and extracurricular highlight of the academic year.

“We are so proud of this event’s growth, not only in size, but in prominence,” commented Josh Kahane, Tournament founder and director. “With 16 participating schools, nearly 400 out-of-town guests, 75,000 viewers of our live game broadcast, and over 100,000 hits on our website, we have created something truly remarkable and, in every sense, national. But what is most rewarding, and what perhaps makes this event distinct from any other, is that we have accomplished all of this within the framework of a meaningful and inspiring Shabbaton; with programming that both excites and inspires each and every athlete. To some degree the excitement and camaraderie created throughout the event off the court matches if not even exceeds that which takes place each day on it.”



The Nation’s Top Jewish Varsity Teams will come to Memphis to compete in the 2024 Memphis Yeshiva Invitational.

All 32 games of the 2024 Invitational are streamed live by Eighty-Five Creative with play-by-play and color broadcasting led by local sports personalities Greg Gaston and Eli Savoie. Nearly 50 hours of broadcast time will be aired during the event and well over 100,000



Comedic hypnotist Ronnie Baras to entertain at this year’s Friday Night Oneg.

viewers from across the globe have historically tuned in.

Shabbos provides the opportunity to take a break from competition and join the Memphis Jewish community for time filled with engaging programming, interesting learning activities, camaraderie, and plenty of time for players to meet and develop friendships with one another.

“Our annual Invitational, at least for one weekend a year, has also become such an enormous opportunity to showcase Memphis and inform families and communities from across the country about all that we have to offer,” commented Kahane.

(See **Invitational** Page 2)

Netanyahu Says Gallant Fired Over ‘Loss of Trust’



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and then-Defense Minister Yoav Gallant at the Knesset in Jerusalem, March 13, 2024. Credit: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90.

By David Isaac

(JNS) – The dismissal of Defense Minister Yoav Gallant by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Tuesday led to a battle of narratives as the Prime Minister’s Office said Gallant was fired over disagreements connected to the war’s conduct while the opposition tried to frame the move as petty politics.

Four opposition leaders held a joint press conference at the Knesset in Jerusalem last Wednesday, accusing Netanyahu of dismissing Gallant in order to pass a “draft-dodger bill” needed to placate his ultra-Orthodox coalition partners and keep his government from toppling.

Yair Lapid of the Yesh Atid Party led off the press conference, saying Netanyahu fired the man responsible for all

the war’s successes. (Netanyahu sources said most of the achievements that Gallant boasted of in his speech were decisions he opposed at the time they took place.)

“What happened yesterday is not normal,” Lapid said. “You cannot trust the prime minister or the Cabinet. The only person who could be trusted was fired yesterday. Netanyahu is not qualified. He cannot lead Israel in a time of war. The fighters cannot trust him. He had a choice – and he chose dishonor.”

Joining Lapid at the press conference were Benny Gantz of National Unity, Avigdor Liberman of Yisrael Beiteinu and Yair Golan of The Democrats (a

(See **Gallant** Page 3)

Invitational...
(Continued From Page 1)



Yehuda "Omar" Pryce will share his inspirational story with the Invitational Participants Shabbos morning.

On Friday night, the student athletes are hosted for Shabbat Dinner in the homes of community members and then re-join together for an exciting and fun Oneg. Shabbos day, student athletes from all of the participating teams lead the religious services and deliver Divrei Torah joined by members of the greater Jewish community.

As with each of the previous annual events, this year's Shabbos programming will offer participants the opportunity to hear from engaging and unique personalities.

On Friday evening, November 15, the Invitational will welcome internationally renowned comedic hypnotist Ronnie Baras. For over 20 years, Ronnie has been travelling the world with his hypnotism and mentalism comedy shows. He is a certified hypnotherapist. Ronnie has performed several times in Las Vegas including headlining at the renowned Venetian Hotel. He performs weekly throughout the United States (and sometimes Canada) and has recently completed a performing tour in Israel. The evening promises to be a positive event the players will remember for a lifetime.

On Shabbos afternoon, November 16, the Invitational will host international presenter, Yehudah Pryce. Formerly "Omar Pryce" and a leader of the Crips – one of the most infamous Los Angeles based criminal gangs – at the age of 22,

Pryce was sentenced to 24 years in Pelican Bay State Prison, a maximum-security prison in California, for multiple counts of armed robbery, drugs, and other violent gang related conduct.

At Pelican Bay, confined to his cell for 22 hours each day, Pryce began studying Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, but did not connect with any of them. After hearing a speech from a local rabbi who visited Pelican Bay, Pryce read, "To Be a Jew" by Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin. From that moment on, he spent most of his time online researching Judaism, hungrily absorbing as much as he could. Pryce began reading at least one book a day on Jewish thought and philosophy. He ordered and studied the Sapirstein Edition of "Rashi on Chumash," a set of "Mishnah Berurah," as well as other books on Judaism. Two years into his Jewish journey, Pryce knew he would convert to Judaism.

Thirteen years into his 24-year sentence, in 2015, a legal ruling in California involving prison overcrowding made eligible for parole all prisoners who had committed a crime under age 23. On October 22, 2018, after 16 years in prison, Pryce was released from Pelican Bay; he was 35 years old. Within a few weeks of his release, while living in a halfway house in Los Angeles on parole, Pryce submitted his conversion application to the Rabbinical Council of California.

Just eight weeks after converting, "Yehudah" Pryce married Ariella. Today, he spends his days helping kids develop their best selves in his capacity as social worker and serves as Senior Director of National Mental Health and Well-Being Programs at Defy Ventures. Pryce also works closely with the Los Angeles District Attorney's office counseling youth who have been arrested.

Follow this year's Memphis Invitational by attending games at the Memphis Sports and Event Center or via the Invitational's streaming broadcast. The full schedule and event information can be viewed at www.memphisinvitational.com. **HW**

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11/14/2024

Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Nov. 15, 2024 / 14 Cheshvan, 5785.....4:35 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. Nov. 16, 2024 / 15 Cheshvan, 5785 5:33 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Vayeira

New Hezbollah Chief Vows to Continue 'War Program' Against Israel

By Akiva Van Koningsveld

(JNS) – In his first speech since being appointed Hezbollah leader earlier last week, Naim Qassem vowed to continue the path of his slain predecessor Hassan Nasrallah.

"What is my plan? A continuation of my predecessor's. We will carry on with the war program as it has been outlined so far," Qassem said in the televised speech, according to a translation by Lebanon's "L'Orient Le Jour" daily.

Nasrallah, who was killed in an Is-

raeli strike on Sept. 27 after heading the Iranian-backed terrorist group for more than 30 years, remains "the symbol of the resistance and the beloved of resistance fighters," he said.

Qassem in his address also paid tribute to the slain head of Hezbollah's executive council, Hashem Safieddine, as well as Palestinian Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, who he said had "resisted until his last breath."

The newly minted Lebanese terrorist

leader also thanked Hezbollah "for placing its trust in me for this heavy responsibility."

During Qassem's speech, Israeli Air Force jets began attacking targets in the Baalbek region of northern Lebanon, several hours after issuing an evacuation warning to residents of the area, according to local reports.

According to the terrorist, the region is facing an "American, European and global war aimed at ending resistance

and our peoples." He said that supporting Gaza was "essential to confront the Israeli threat to the entire region, and because the people of Gaza needed to be supported."

He went on to state that, "Iran supports us in our project and asks for nothing in return."

Qassem, who had served as deputy secretary general of Hezbollah since 1991, was elected its new leader last Tuesday.

According to a recent report in the UAE-based "Erem News," quoting an Iranian source, Qassem left Beirut on Oct. 5 for Damascus, before flying to Tehran. He was reportedly aboard the plane used by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi for a state visit to Lebanon and Syria.

"The transfer of Naim Qassem to Tehran was by order of the higher authorities in Iran for fear of being assassinated by the Israeli entity, because he is on the list of wanted," the Iranian source said.

The first address Qassem delivered after Nasrallah's assassination was delivered in Beirut, while the second and third speeches were delivered from the Islamic Republic, according to the source.

Commenting on Qassem's new role, [former] Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant tweeted last Tuesday, "Temporary appointment. Not for long." **HW**



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The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

Lunch is Monday–Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m. Monthly Luncheon is at noon.

Monday, November 18
Speaker: Tim Flesner
Topic: Living the Golden Life
Tim always brings an interesting take to all his talks and makes them fun as well. Come join us for information and fun!

Wednesday, November 20
Game of Bingo with kids from the MJCC Early Childhood Department
This will be a lot of fun for all ages Newcomers are welcome. Have some fun, while teaching the young ones how to play this easy game.

Monday, November 25
Speaker: Josh Golden, LMSW.
Topic: Aging Gracefully
Josh always brings a neat, experienced perspective to all his talks. This talk will focus on how seniors can help make their home environment more conducive to staying in their home. It is also very good for children of aging family members to learn things they can do for their family members. Sherrie Serca, NP, will also be joining him. A Q & A period will follow the presentation. There is no charge for the talk, but reservations are needed to ensure that there is enough room for everyone. Lunch reservations are needed so the caterer can prepare enough food. Just call the MJCC Front Desk at 901-761-0810 and tell them if you’re coming for lunch or just the speaker. Everyone is welcome.

Wednesday, November 27
Special Edition of Team Trivial Pursuit
This session will focus on 50’s and 60’s history and politics with a little movies and music mixed in. Come challenge your own memory and those of the others to see how much is remembered from those past times.

Thursday November 28
The MJCC Senior Program will be closed for Thanksgiving. Have a Great Thanksgiving!

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. Steve works Monday thru Thursday 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. HW

Gallant... (Continued From Page 1)

merger of the Labor and Meretz parties). The most extreme criticism came from Golan, who said of Netanyahu, “His heart is coarse, cruel and evil.”

The High Court
Earlier last Wednesday, the High Court of Justice ordered Netanyahu to respond to petitions against Gallant’s firing by noon on Thursday. The Attorney General’s Office, though often opposed to the government’s positions, is reportedly planning to defend the prime minister against the petitions.

The Likud Party issued a statement criticizing the opposition leaders. “Just two years ago, the four of them formed a government together with the ‘Muslim Brotherhood party’ [Ra’am, aka the United Arab List] and reached a surrender agreement with Hezbollah [the U.S.-brokered maritime deal with Lebanon] – and they still dare to talk about security?” the Likud said.

Sources close to the prime minister told “Ynet” that Gallant had bucked Netanyahu on a host of key military decisions, including refusing to support the prime minister’s demand to assassinate Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, opposing an IDF presence on the Philadelphia Corridor on the Gaza Strip’s border with Egypt, and refusing to let the IDF take charge of the distribution of humanitarian aid to the Strip, which the sources say perpetuates Hamas rule. Gallant conducted himself in an ad-

versarial matter, they added, frequently holding meetings with heads of organizations subordinate to the prime minister without his presence.

And up until two weeks ago, Gallant avoided coming to Cabinet meetings to which Netanyahu had summoned him. In a statement released by his office last Tuesday, Netanyahu said that over the past several months, the trust between himself and Gallant had “begun to crack,” resulting in an “increasingly wide crisis of confidence.”

“Defense Minister Gallant and I had substantial disagreements on the management of the military campaign, disagreements which were accompanied by public statements and actions that contravened the decisions of the Cabinet and the Security Cabinet,” Netanyahu said.

The prime minister said that he had made “multiple attempts to resolve these disagreements,” but they only grew and became public knowledge. “[W]hat is even worse, they have reached the knowledge of the enemy; our enemies have taken great delight in these disagreements and have derived much benefit from them,” Netanyahu said.

Their disputes interfered with the military campaign, said the prime minister, an opinion shared by the majority of the Cabinet — “virtually all members share the feeling that this state of affairs cannot continue.”

Three major disagreements

Gallant, for his part, said in a statement to the press last Tuesday, that there were three major disagreements between himself and Netanyahu, revolving around the issues of ultra-Orthodox recruitment, a hostage deal and an investigation into the failures of Oct. 7, 2023, which Netanyahu opposed.

Gallant was appointed defense minister on Dec. 29, 2022. The first dramatic public break with Netanyahu came three months into his tenure, during the crisis over the government’s judicial reform effort.

As protests spread across the country, Gallant called for an immediate halt to the process in a televised speech on March 25, 2023, saying “the societal rift was a clear danger.”

Netanyahu fired Gallant, but when mass protests erupted, he reinstated Gallant 10 days later. Large protests also followed last Tuesday’s dismissal.

Following the disaster of Oct. 7 13 months ago, the two men publicly disagreed on several occasions. In May, Gallant criticized the prime minister for not having a clear post-war vision for the Gaza Strip.

“Since October, I have been raising this issue consistently in the cabinet, and have received no response,” Gallant said during a televised address on May 15.

In July, a JNS/Direct Polls survey found that a majority of Likud voters had lost faith in Gallant and wanted him fired.

In August, after Gallant referred to the government’s slogan of “absolute victory” as gibberish, Netanyahu’s office accused the defense minister of adopting “the anti-Israel narrative.”

In September, it was reported that Netanyahu intended to fire Gallant and replace him with Gideon Sa’ar of the New Hope Party, who had just joined the coalition. Gallant shortly afterward apologized to the prime minister in an effort to prevent his dismissal.

Israel Katz, currently foreign minister, will take over the Defense portfolio. Gideon Sa’ar will become foreign minister. HW

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In Amsterdam, Anti-Israel Pogrom Recalls Pre-Holocaust Era



'NIW' editor-in-chief Esther Voet (wearing white) hosts Israelis at her home in Amsterdam on Nov. 8, 2024. Credit: Courtesy.

By Canaan Lidor

(JNS) – Walking through the misty streets of Amsterdam on a cold November night, two young Jewish men feigned confidence and casual body language so as not to arouse the suspicion of dozens of antisemitic thugs looking for victims to assault.

This event only sounds like it happened in the 1930s or '40s.

In fact, it happened last Thursday night, on the eve of the anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogroms in Europe, to Aviv B. and a friend. The two tourists from Israel were among dozens of Maccabi Tel Aviv fans returning to their hotel from a soccer match in the Dutch capital against the local Ajax powerhouse, Aviv told JNS last Friday.

The fans came under a series of assaults that left at least five people wounded, according to police, and constitutes the largest-scale antisemitic event in the kingdom since the Holocaust. Police said they had detained 62 people. The municipality condemned the attacks as antisemitic and vowed to study how they were allowed to happen.

Coinciding with a divisive debate in the Netherlands and Europe about Mus-

lim immigration, it underlined the return of violent antisemitism to streets where it had nearly wiped out the local Jewish population less than a century ago.

Salo Muller, a Holocaust survivor and retired physiotherapist for Ajax, was reminded by the incident of the lead-up to the Holocaust.

“Police should’ve brought the Maccabi fans safely to their hotels. Instead, they were abandoned to their fates. Just like during the war. It’s scandalous and it saddens me to my core,” he told JNS. “This terrible thing should’ve never happened. The mayor and police should’ve anticipated this. People on scooters hunting Jews.”

Locals and other witnesses described the events as an antisemitic pogrom perpetrated and organized by at least 100 men of Arab and Muslim extraction. Hundreds of Israelis and Jews hunkered down indoors last Thursday night, some of them at the homes of local Jews, as a local Jewish sports club set up a safe house for them.

Israel sent two military rescue flights to airlift its citizens out of Amsterdam as the Jewish state’s National Security

Council advised them to avoid traveling anywhere in the Netherlands except for airports, and to refrain from displaying any signs that they are Israeli or Jewish.

Amid an international uproar by Jewish groups and beyond, the leader of the largest political party in the Netherlands, Geert Wilders, said he’d like to see the perpetrators deported and called an emergency meeting with Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof.

“Looks like a Jew-hunt in the streets of Amsterdam. Arrest and deport the multicultural scum that attacked Maccabi Tel Aviv supporters in our streets. Ashamed that this can happen in the Netherlands. Totally unacceptable,” wrote Wilders of the Party for Freedom.

“We have become the Gaza of Europe. Muslims with Palestinian flags hunting down Jews. I will not accept that. Never. The authorities will be held accountable for their failure to protect the Israeli citizens. Never again,” he added.

Rabbi Menachem Margolin, the head of the European Jewish Association, called the events “the strongest example of the extreme antisemitism, the all-pervading Jew-hatred, that is spreading like a cancer throughout the continent.”

Aviv, a 37-year-old business owner from Petach Tikvah who asked that his last name be withheld, described to JNS what he saw at the iconic Dam Square in Amsterdam, which features a prominent monument for the victims of World War II – including the 75% of Dutch Jewry who were murdered by the Nazis and their local collaborators.

“My friend and I took a metro from the Johan Cruyff Arena” – where Ajax handily won against Maccabi Tel Aviv – Aviv said. “Security was tight at the arena, and we felt safe. But when we came to Dam Square, it was a battle scene. People getting knocked out. People flying up in the air. Explosions from firecrackers. Smoke grenades. The perpetrators had set up a preplanned ambush. It was insane.”

The perpetrators acted in “small groups of five-10 men, each one encircling a victim or two and then punching them and kicking them mercilessly,” he said.

On social media, one video showed a young Israeli man on his knees forced to say “Free Palestine” by men standing around him. Some accounts spoke of an attempted car ramming. At least one person is said to have jumped into a canal to escape his attackers. And another is missing his passport and other valuables after an assault that may have also been a robbery.

“We decided to walk slowly and casual-like to not get picked off. We heard the perpetrators shouting around us, looking for Jews to beat up. But they didn’t pick up on us, and we made it to safety,” Aviv told JNS from Schiphol Airport, where he and dozens of other

Israelis were under heavy guard, awaiting the rescue flights.

Aviv had thought of Amsterdam, which he’d visited four times in the past, as a relatively safe destination. But after last Thursday night, “I don’t think I’ll be visiting Amsterdam again in the near future,” he said.

He added, “I want to stress that the Ajax fans are not the ones who turned on us. They are our friends and terrific sports enthusiasts. There’s a bond and at no point did we feel threatened by Ajax. This was an ambush that happened after the match, by Arabs, who sort of used the match as an opportunity.”

Esther Voet, the veteran editor-in-chief of the Dutch Jewish weekly “NIW,” is already seeing attempts to frame the incidents as “a soccer riot gone out of hand,” she told JNS. “It’s not a soccer riot. It’s an attempted antisemitic mass assault.”

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, the president of the Conference of European Rabbis, said in a statement, “Just like back then in 1938, security forces and the police have stood idly by and watched these pogrom-like conditions.”

Dutch Chief Rabbi Binyomin Jacobs is not calling the incidents a pogrom because he expects firm action by the government, he told JNS. “The government isn’t OK with this. So I’m not calling it a pogrom. But it’s an unprecedented escalation in the level of antisemitic persecution around soccer and in general.”

Asked whether Amsterdam is safe for Jews at the moment, Jacobs said he can only speak of his risk calculations. “I am walking around with a kippah, I will not be intimidated. But I am extra alert,” said Jacobs, who for years has been avoiding public transportation in the Netherlands for fear of antisemitic assaults.

Voet is one of the Dutch Jews who opened their homes to Israelis looking for places to lie low. Her deputy editor-in-chief, Bart Schut, who is not Jewish, drove up from his home in the southern Netherlands to Amsterdam, to take people in his car to Voet’s home in Amsterdam’s center. They were afraid to order a taxi because many taxi drivers are Muslim, she explained.

Voet has been covering antisemitism for many years and has studied hundreds of cases, including serious assaults of extreme violence. Nevertheless, she was taken aback by the events of last Thursday night. “I never imagined something like this could happen in this scale, no,” she told JNS.

Like many other Dutch citizens, Voet has questions about how the violence was allowed to happen at a time of elevated hostility toward Israel in Europe and in a city with decades of experience in handling mass sports events.

(See **Amsterdam** Page 9)



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Hezbollah Rocket Hits Ben-Gurion Airport

(JNS) – Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon last Wednesday fired two barrages of rockets toward central Israel, setting off sirens in several cities, including Tel Aviv.

Israel’s Channel 12 reported that at least 10 rockets were launched in the first barrage last Wednesday morning, some of which were intercepted by air defenses. According to the news channel, it was the largest barrage fired by the Iranian terrorist proxy at central Israel since the start of the war more than a year ago.

A direct impact was reported in a parking lot at Ben-Gurion Airport, while a large rocket fragment damaged a parked car in Ra’anana, north of Tel Aviv. Flights from Ben-Gurion were briefly halted following the attack.

There were no immediate reports of injuries in the attack.

Shortly afterwards, another Hezbollah barrage triggered alerts in the central Galilee.

Less than an hour before the barrage on central Israel, rocket sirens were activated in Ramat Trump (Trump Heights) and nearby areas in the northwestern Golan Heights. The new community is named after the 45th president of the United States, who about two hours before last Wednesday’s attack clinched his electoral victory ahead of becoming the 47th president.

Last Wednesday afternoon, more air-raid sirens were activated across central Israel, including in areas near the airport, warning of additional aerial attacks from Lebanon. One rocket was intercepted, the IDF said.

Israel’s Magen David Adom emergency response group said it did not receive any reports of casualties following the Hezbollah attack.

Two weeks ago, a Hezbollah rocket attack on the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, the second in as many days, sent millions of Israelis running to bomb shelters.

The military confirmed that two rockets headed toward central Israel were intercepted by air defenses. There were no injuries in that attack, either, though rocket shrapnel damaged a car in the coastal city of Herzliya.

Hezbollah took responsibility, claiming it had targeted the “Gillot base of the

Military Intelligence Unit 8200 in the suburbs of Tel Aviv with a qualitative missile salvo.”

More than 26,000 rockets, missiles and drones have been launched at Israel by Iran and its regional terrorist proxies since the Hamas massacre on Oct. 7, 2023, according to IDF data.

The numbers were published on the first anniversary of the terrorist invasion. There have been some 13,200 launches from the Gaza Strip, 12,400 from Lebanon, 400 from Iran, 180 from Yemen and 60 from Syria. [HW](#)

Bar Mitzvah



Lucas Badrian

Lucas Badrian, the son of Adam Badrian and Abby McCulley, will become a

bar mitzvah on Saturday, November 16 at Temple Israel, Memphis, Tennessee. He will deliver the d’var Torah to the congregation following the services.

Lucas attends a community school in the seventh grade and is on the honor roll. He enjoys reading comic books, playing basketball, spending time with his grandparents, learning how to cook and video games. He is also a member of the Arlington Boy Scouts. He is the grandson of Norman and Sherrie Badrian and Mickey and Jalena Bowling and the great-grandson of Sam and Helen Less, both of blessed memory, and Isidor and Lena Badrian, both of blessed memory. [HW](#)



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Beth Sholom Kicks Off Its 70th Year with a Grand Gala on December 7



Gala Co-Chair Rebecca Landau and husband Morris at the 2023 Beth Sholom Grand Gala. Credit: Diane Reich

Beth Sholom will host its third annual Grand Gala at the synagogue on December 7 at 7 p.m., presenting an evening of great food and plenty of dancing to the sweet soul music of Memphis Soul Remedy. Last year, the event drew guests from the greater Memphis Jewish community, and organizers expect an even larger crowd this year.

“Beth Sholom has become known for its annual Grand Gala, which has become a community event,” explains Samantha Alperin, who is co-chairing the event with Rebecca Landau. “It’s a fun night. People can get dressed up, dance, and enjoy being together.”

This year, the Grand Gala will begin the synagogue’s year-long celebration of its founding on December 16, 1954. Guests will enjoy viewing 70 years of Beth Sholom history through a dynamic



Gala Co-Chair Samantha Alperin and husband Lon at the 2023 Beth Sholom Grand Gala. Credit: Diane Reich

photo presentation compiled by Marcy Milman Productions. Plus, a video produced by the renowned Running Pony video production company will feature members who have played key roles in the formation, growth, and success of Beth Sholom over 70 years.

Alperin notes that the sit-down dinner will be catered by Kevin Sullivan of Kitchen Laurel. Mixologist Candace Duncan returns to serve cocktails and mocktails at her eponymous Candy Bar stations. Beer will be donated by Ghost River Brewery.

Gala tickets are available now on bsholom.org for \$100. Individual and corporate sponsorship opportunities start at “Chaver” for \$1,000 (2 tickets); “Mensch” for \$1,800 (4 tickets); “Tzedek” for \$2,500 (6 tickets); and “Rosh” for \$5,000 (a full table of 8). Corporate

sponsors will be featured in all publicity for the event.

Alperin and Landau thank the members of the planning committee for their help in organizing the event: Diana Bresinger, Rachel Feinman, Sharon Finkelstein, Susan Levko, Marcia Menuskin, Rachel Morrison, Nancy Sayer, Carolyn Schrier, Laura Tanenbaum, Keri Unowsky, and Lauren Weinberger.

The Grand Gala host committee members are Samantha and Lon Alperin, Judy Bookman, Andrea and Ted Cohen, Emily and Corry Davis, Leslie and Jonathan Epstein, Rachel and Josh Feinman, Sharon Finkelstein, Michelle and Evan Glazer, Naomi and Josh Katz, Susan and Fred Levko, Rebecca and Morris Landau, Rachel and Anthony Morrison, Jill and Scott Notowich, Amy and John Pregulman, Nancy Sayer, Kate and Danny Schaffzin, Carolyn and Adam Schrier, Jill and Scott Shanker, Keri and Dan Unowsky, and Lauren and Michael Weinberger.

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Florida Man Faces Up To 20 Years in Jail for Threatening to Kill Jews, Black People

Nathaniel James Holmes, 51, allegedly made the threats last month, the Justice Department stated.

(JNS) – The U.S. Justice Department unsealed an Oct. 24 indictment against Nathaniel James Holmes, 51, who is accused of making death threats against Jews and Black people.

Holmes, who was arrested on Nov. 1, “transmitted threats to injure others, including threats to kill three particular victims, the children of one victim, and Jewish and African American individuals generally,” on four days in October, per the indictment.

He faces up to 20 years in federal prison if convicted on the four counts of transmitting interstate threats to injury [of] other persons, the Justice Department said. [HW](#)



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Federation Welcomes 45 Agency Representatives at Leadership Sunday and Monday



Federation’s Annual Campaign Co-Chair Molly Lane discusses priorities and goals with Board member Andie Uiberall during the organization’s fundraising kick-off, Leadership Sunday and Monday. The two joined with 45 other community volunteers to secure 300 Annual Campaign gifts.

Biden and Harris Concede Trump Victory

(JNS) – President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris spoke individually with President-elect Donald Trump last Wednesday, acknowledging Trump’s victory in the 2024 presidential elections and offering to assist with his transition into power.

Biden called Trump and “expressed his commitment to ensuring a smooth transition while emphasizing the importance of working to bring the country together,” the White House said last Wednesday.

His vice president, Kamala Harris, called Trump to concede the election, and to offer to help with his transition.

Trump “acknowledged Vice President Harris on her strength, professionalism, and tenacity throughout the

campaign, and both leaders agreed on the importance of unifying the country,” said Trump spokesman Steven Cheung, according to the Associated Press.

In a speech to her supporters at Howard University in Washington, D.C., Harris urged them to accept her loss and said she would help Trump with his transition.

“Folks are feeling and experiencing a range of emotions right now, I get it. But we must accept the results of this election,” she said, adding: “The light of America’s promise will always burn bright, as long as we never give up and as long as we keep fighting.”

Biden also called Harris to salute her on her campaign, AP reported. [HW](#)

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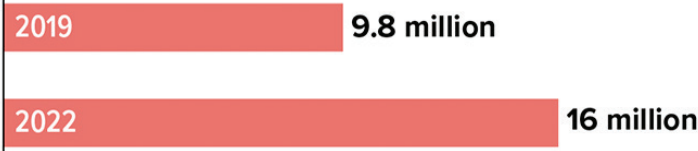
The Federal Reserve’s Survey of Consumer Finances (conducted every three years) revealed that the average net worth of U.S. families surpassed \$1 million (\$1,063,700) for the first time in 2022, after increasing 42% from 2019. (A family’s net worth is the total of their financial assets minus their liabilities, or debts.) The historic rise during the 2019–2022 period was due in part to pandemic-era stimulus payments and low interest rates, which pushed up home values and stock prices. And overall, these financial gains far outpaced the losses in purchasing power caused by high inflation.

Unfortunately, having a national average net worth that exceeds \$1 million does not mean the typical American is a millionaire. A small number of very wealthy households skews the average. As always, the median net worth (\$192,900 in 2022) was much lower than the average, but its growth was by far the largest on record. Even after adjusting for inflation, the three-year increase in the median net worth (37%) rose more than the average (23%), showing that wealth inequality narrowed.

Still, the net worth of U.S. families varies greatly depending on housing status, education, and income level. Only about 12% of U.S. families have a net worth above \$1 million, and many of those are older. This emphasizes the financial reality that for most people it takes time and diligence to build wealth.

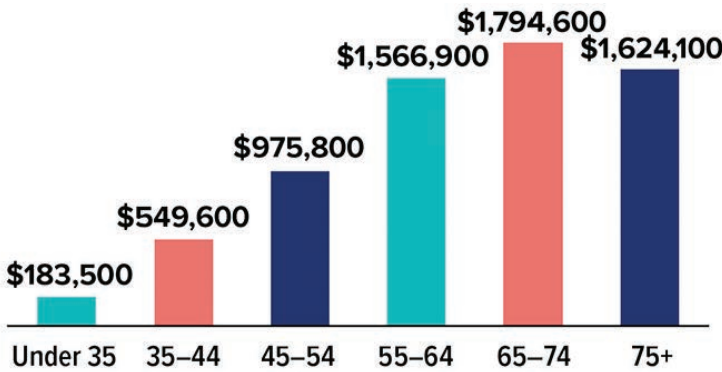
Sources: Federal Reserve, 2023; The Wall Street Journal, October 27, 2023

Number of Millionaire Households



Source: The Wall Street Journal, October 27, 2023

Average (mean) net worth, by age group



Source: Federal Reserve, 2023

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Amsterdam...
(Continued From Page 4)

Meital, one of the Israelis who took refuge at Voet’s home en route to a safe-house organized for Israelis by the local Maccabi sports club, said the attacks brought back memories of Oct. 7, 2023. On that day, thousands of Hamas-led terrorists murdered some 1,200 people in Israel and abducted another 251 to Gaza, plunging the region into a war that is still ongoing and which has provoked a massive wave of antisemitic incidents in Western Europe.

“I came here for a vacation to get away from the war,” she told JNS. “Instead, they tried to do another October 7 to us.”

Herman Loonstein, a Dutch-Jewish lawyer, said that police “were just looking the other way.” He told JNS that as he was driving around Amsterdam to help extract stranded Israelis, he witnessed scant police presence. “Police just drove past assaults. It’s difficult to explain.”

The Amsterdam police did not immediately reply to a request for reaction to claims of failure on the authorities’ part. In a statement, the municipality wrote: “This outburst of violence toward Israeli supporters is unacceptable and cannot be defended in any way. There is no excuse for the antisemitic behavior exhibited last night by rioters who actively sought out Israeli supporters to attack and assault them.”

Last month, the “NIW” exposed how some police officers in the Netherlands are opting out of protecting Jewish events because of their animosity to Israel. Loonstein said he thought about this revelation when he pulled up to a police station last Thursday night to let off some Israelis he’d picked up to bring to safety.

“There were eight police cars parked out front. Why were they not in the city center, on the streets? Is it because they don’t want to protect Jews? I don’t know but I can’t help but wonder,” he said. “What I do know is that yesterday, a pogrom occurred in Amsterdam as the

police looked away.”

Some anti-Israel intellectuals defended the violence.

“Haven’t followed it closely and I condemn all violence of course, but if you understand Hebrew and hear how Maccabi fans chanted about Palestinians and Arabs, and climbed a building to steal a Palestinian flag, well that’s pure provocation,” wrote Rena Netjes, an anti-Israel activist with 40,000 followers on X. Netjes has worked for the Rights Forum, an institute many Dutch Jews have accused of spreading antisemitism, though its spokespeople have denied this.

Tamir Dotan is one of the 10,000-odd Israelis living in Amsterdam, which has one of the largest Israeli expat communities in Europe. He went to the match but returned home before it started because stadium security wouldn’t let in his friend after they found a Maccabi scarf in his bag (both men had seats in the home crowd stands).

Dotan called Mayor Femke Halsema, a

left-wing politician who in April allowed anti-Israel protesters to picket the opening of the national Holocaust Museum, “a doormat who represents the declining number of naïve Dutchmen who think they can get along with the antisemitic beast that reared its head on October 7. Now, after a short delay, it appeared also here in Amsterdam on Thursday.”

The events of May, when Arab men wearing keffiyehs beat up Jews at the prestigious University of Amsterdam, “were a huge wakeup for the Dutch public,” Dotan said. “What happened on Thursday will be an eye-opener for many more.”

Dotan, who has lived in the Netherlands for 35 years, said he was “filled with immense pride to see airplanes coming from Israel to airlift stranded Jews. No other country would do it.”

He paused, adding: “Of course, those planes are evacuating people to a place under constant rocket fire. Which just goes to show the insanity of the world Jews inhabit right now.” **HW**

Reflections on Kristallnacht and its Significance in a Post-October 7th World

By Dr. Michael Berenbaum

Eighty-six years ago this week, a series of pogroms took place in Germany and Austria. More than 1,000 synagogues were burned, their pews destroyed, sacred Torah scrolls, and holy books set aflame. More than 7,000 Jewish businesses were ransacked and 30,000 men aged 16-60 were arrested and sent off to newly expanded German concentration camps. These pogroms were given a rather elegant name, *Kristallnacht* (The Night of Broken Glass), and it is by that name that they are best known.

Over the past 30 years the Germans have ceased to refer to *Kristallnacht* as *Kristallnacht* but as the Reich Pogroms of November 1938. Crystal is beautiful, and has a certain sound and delicacy to it, but the Reich’s pogroms tell the much deeper truth of sanctioned violence against the Jews.

Synagogues were often built in triangulation with the Cathedral and the Protestant Churches to indicate that Germany was a pluralistic, multi-religious community and the synagogues that were built were an expression of the great progress that the Jews had made within Germany. There were 2,200 synagogues in Germany for 525,000 Jews and those synagogues became part of the public manifestation, the public presence of Jews in German society, just as synagogues in the United States are a public manifestation of the prominent presence of American Jews and their acceptance within society.

What the Nazis did on *Kristallnacht* was to essentially show in the most physical, the most public way imaginable how far they were willing to go and the price they were willing to pay, to tear the Jewish community out of the fabric of Germany.

Hour after hour on *Kristallnacht* the pace of the pogrom intensified, and minute by minute the damage toll increased. No Jewish institution or business or home was safe. The terror directed at the Jews was often not the action of strangers but neighbors. Some brought their children to see the burning synagogues, just as an earlier generation in the American South brought children to lynchings and just as only three years later ordinary men and women in Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and in other former Soviet occupied territories brought their children to see the “Holocaust by

Bullets,” the execution and burial in mass graves of Jewish neighbors and even friends.

In the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*, the Jews in Germany were left without their synagogues. Many had lost their businesses and their homes. The concentration camps of Buchenwald, Dachau and Sachsenhausen were overflowing with new Jewish inmates. Most Jews were without illusions. Jewish life in the Reich was no longer possible. Many committed suicide. Most desperately tried to leave. Unwanted at home, Jews had only a few havens abroad. They could not stay and yet they had nowhere to go.

The American response to the 1938 pogroms was interesting if not fascinating. By 1938, America understood and had embodied the value of freedom of religion. No other event garnered such universal condemnation. From the extreme right to the extreme left, leadership in the Catholic, Protestant and every other form of religious denomination condemned *Kristallnacht*. If you are setting a synagogue up in smoke, you are destroying freedom of religion.

By attacking the synagogue, the Nazis were attacking not only the heart and soul of the Jewish community, but they were also attacking the institution that was responding to the unfolding catastrophe. The Nazis deprived Jews of anything roughly resembling a public life or a communal life. And they violently ripped them out of the presence of German society.

How had the German synagogue been functioning under Nazism? With the imposition of increasingly stringent laws requiring Jews to be excluded from institutions of everyday life, the synagogue pivoted to become the replacement for those now-verboten institutions. On Monday it became a theatre because Jewish actors could not perform on the German stage. On Tuesday it became a symphony hall as Jewish musicians were dismissed from German orchestras. On Wednesday it became an opera house, because Opera singers needed a place to earn a living. During the day, the synagogue served as a school, for Jewish children expelled from German schools. Their teachers were often professors, writers and artists struggling to survive in a new world. The art teacher might be a world class artist, the music instructor, a concert pi-

anist. The Jewish school was the safest place for a Jewish child; yet the most dangerous part of the student’s day was walking to and from school. Harassment was routine, bullying was accepted, violence was sanctioned. Teachers turned their back even when they did not overly encourage the violence.

On Monday morning the synagogue became the place for the distribution of welfare. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, classes were convened in the synagogue teaching Jews mobile professions, because the best way to survive, the best way to leave is if you had a mobile profession so you could earn a living in the country to which you must immigrate. Synagogues were a training center for a generation en route to exile.

The synagogue was also a place where you taught people who didn’t know what it really was to be Jewish. The synagogue remained a place where prayers were recited, but prayers took on a new meaning.

What are the implications for us of remembering the November 1938 pogroms in today’s post-October 7 world?

- The synagogue remains the most important symbol of the Jewish presence in a society.
- An attack on a synagogue is an attack on all society.
- Synagogues must be secured not only by self-protection but by civil society, which regards freedom of worship as an essential, indispensable component of a free society. The same is true for Hillel Houses in the center of campuses and for other Jewish buildings.

- In Europe, synagogues have become seemingly armed camps, protected by the police and even the military. Sadly, we are already seeing that begin to happen in the United States. We cannot allow the situation to deteriorate any further.

- Civil society must hold. In the aftermath of the worse antisemitic killings in American history, the Tree of Life synagogue murders, civil society took control; political leaders, police officials, religious leaders and communal leaders all came together. The Pittsburgh Steelers and the Pittsburgh Penguins put Jewish stars on their uniforms, the World Series paused for a moment of silence, and the “Pittsburgh Gazette” printed the Kaddish on its front page. Haters cannot

win, if those who do not hate join together to defeat them.

- Mayors and governors, police chiefs and district attorneys, moral leaders and community leaders must take the lead, and Jews must call upon their friends to step forward.

- Religious leaders must also step forward. Freedom of religion must mean freedom for all religions including Jews.

- If a swastika is painted on a Jewish building, a Priest, a Minister, an Imam and all civil leaders must join hands with the Rabbi in cleansing the building and jointly removing the stain.

- We may not allow our friends to become indifferent, and certainly, not compliant.

- If powerless Jews in 1938 Germany were not passive, powerful Jews today dare not remain passive, or worse yet, be reluctant to exercise their power and call upon their friends.

- We dare not accept this level of antisemitism as the “new normal.”

So we remember.

We remember with pride the role of the synagogue and the prominence of the synagogue in German society.

We remember the cruelty that was inflicted on Jews 86 years ago.

We remember the bystanders who watched the synagogues burn and who brought their kids to watch the synagogues burn.

We remember the outrage of the world that did not step up to do something serious about the situation.

We remember the courage of the Jews who understood they had to get out and that got out, and the despair of the Jews who knew they had to get out and couldn’t find a place to go.

We remember sadly that this was only the beginning: the beginning of the end.

And as a post-October 7 society, we must resolve to make this the end to the explosive antisemitism we are experiencing today.

Dr. Michael Berenbaum, Distinguished Professor of Jewish Studies at American Jewish University is educational consultant to ASHER, the American Society for Holocaust Education and Remembrance. ASHER’s mission is to teach people how to understand events in a post-October 7 world, against the backdrop of Jewish history, in which the Holocaust plays a pivotal role. Learn more at www.ASHERUSA.org. **HW**

Bar Mitzvah Problems



*Editor's note:
This story is being
reprinted in memory
of Ted Roberts in
appreciation of his
longtime service
as a newspaper
columnist.*

Ted Roberts

When the good Lord was framing the world – not only its geography, but its social custom – funerals, marriages, brisses, divorces, holidays, superbows, etc. – included in the list, of course, were bar mitzvahs. Naturally, what would old, retired Hebrew scholars like me do if we couldn't teach bar mitzvah to frisky 12-year-olds? But his creative load was heavy, so the Lord delegated bar mitzvahs to the Archangel Michael – who though divine, is not perfect. So consequently, this social/religious custom has its flaws. The Archangel doesn't possess the perfection of Godliness, you know.

Though of course, the bar mitzvah is also a mitzvah to the teacher (me). Its value is much disputed among rabbis. And as you might guess, its value varies widely depending on how well the teacher does or does not goad 12-year-olds, who lust for the field of sports, into learning the trope of Torah and Haftorah. The latest mitzvah index published in 2010 says one bar mitzvah a year

obliterates two cases of petty theft on the part of the teacher or one Shabbos tennis match. It's a tough code. For example, it takes FOUR students a year to rack up enough credits to pardon lustful thoughts about your neighbor's wife.

My problems always begin with the dressing phase. The grand day is here. My prodigy is matriculating. I rummage through my closet of crumpled clothes. See, once having worn a shirt or suit or pants, I don't throw them in the dirty clothes – that way I never see it again. Instead, I neatly hang them up. That way, they're available for a second, third, or fourth use. But once they enter the laundry system, they're devoured by the dirty clothes hamper and enter some Scifi fifth dimension. I suspect the wife donates them to the Salvation Army. Often, I pass a guy on the street.

"Hey he's wearing my sport coat," I shout to the wife.

"Don't worry, Dear." I just know she's augmenting her weekly budget with my coat that I only wore once.

So, I go through my closet and choose my wardrobe with care. Naturally, an argument follows.

"That's the shirt you wore last week to the Finklestein wedding."

"So, there aren't any holes in it."

On and on it goes. The debate takes thirty minutes – the dressing takes five. And I haven't even mentioned that she insists on a tie. And she absolutely turns purple if the top button – the one that

strangles you – isn't hooked up. I pray that when we appear before the divorce judge, he's a Jew whose wife dictated his bar mitzvah attire.

Then comes the ceremony – the least of my problems since all my students are exceptionally bright (I reject the slow learners) and I require a record of their school grades and their juvenile rap sheet. I also require a refundable deposit from parents just in case they're lacking in motivation or leadership skills.

"Sorry Mrs. Greenberg, Jimmy can't do his Haftorah – your deposit goes to my favorite charity. Sorry."

A great incentive for parental support.


But these days the ceremony has taken second place to the round of parties following the ceremony. Most feature Canaanite dancing – Typical Rap or Hip Hop. Don't ask me what the latter phrase means. All I see is a bunch of kids bouncing up and down with something like music in the background. Reminds me of the old westerns that showed Native American Hip Hopping to the accompaniment of drums and shrill screams. So hard on mature ear drums! And so irrelevant to the spirit of the occasion. I still perceive of bar mitzvahs as a cultural/religious milestone – not adolescent dancing lessons.

One more thing. If I was the Head Rabbi of North America, (beside banning ties), I'd set a monetary limit on bar mitzvah party expenses so no one would be embarrassed to serve salami sand-

The Scribbler On the Roof

By Ted Roberts

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wiches while wealthier members flew their 200 guests to Kenya for a safari.

The oldest joke in the world – the one that Noah told his wife – deals with the Jewish tycoon who flew all his guests to Kenya for a post ceremony celebration. Deep into the jungle they trek. Suddenly, the caravan stops. The bar mitzvah papa runs to his native guide.

"What's the delay? My guests are bored, let's get going."

"Bimpo Mako Mako," says the head bearer – meaning in Swahili – there are two bar mitzvahs in front of you.

The syndicated humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the roof, has appeared in newspapers around the U.S., on National Public Radio, and numerous websites. HW

IDF Expands Offensive to Uproot Hamas in Northern Gaza

(Nov. 7, 2024 - JNS) – The Israel Defense Forces has launched an operation to uproot Hamas terror infrastructure in the Beit Lahiya area in the northern Gaza Strip, the military announced last Thursday.

Troops began operating around Beit Lahiya, a city north of Jabaliya, following intelligence information and a sit-

uation assessment indicating the presence of terrorists, according to the IDF.

As part of its activity in the area, the IDF is facilitating the safe evacuation of Gazans from combat zones through organized routes.

IDF troops also continue to operate in the area of Jabaliya, eliminating approximately 50 terrorists over the last

24 hours.

In the area of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, IDF troops killed a number of armed terrorists and dismantled terrorist infrastructure. In cooperation with the Israel Air Force (IAF), an armed terrorist advancing toward troops was struck and eliminated.

Over the past day in central Gaza,

troops conducted targeted raids, locating weapons in the process.

In Lebanon, 60 Hezbollah terrorists were eliminated in a number of strikes in Baalbek and north of the Litani River.

The IAF struck over 110 terror targets last Wednesday in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. HW

ISRAEL INSIGHTS A Political Precipice?

By Howard Weisband

I am writing on November 6 and the U.S. elections results are in.*

Both the United States and Israel face problems within their respective political systems, but there is one advantage to the American system in that it is clear and known when the next elections will occur.

In Israel by law the ruling Knesset and Government can exist for up to four years before the next round of elections. But like most parliamentary systems, the Government can fall at any point within the term: if for instance, the coalition loses its majority and the Knesset approves a bill for new elections, or if a state budget is not approved by a certain date.

According to the Israel Democracy Institute, the last Knesset and Government to complete a full term of office occurred in 1988. For 36 years our electorate has anxiously awaited consistency and stability.

While you were at the polls yesterday, we received a sudden news flash that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has (again) fired his Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. The "again" is because Netanyahu first fired Gallant in the Spring of 2023, before October 7, but public and political pressure caused him to rescind that firing.

It's well known that the two men

dislike one another, lack trust between themselves, and do not communicate effectively. In politics that is not a rare situation, but this situation has existed between the two most important ministers in the Government for some time. But to take such action during a war, indeed multiple wars on multiple fronts, seems to defy all logic.

The first analysis of what happened in the Israeli English press came quickly from Herb Keinon in "The Jerusalem Post." Titled "With Israel at war, Netanyahu's firing of Gallant puts politics first," Keinon wrote:

"The timing is staggering because it comes in the midst of a war on seven fronts, with the country on high alert that the Iranians might attack again and with hundreds of thousands of reservists and soldiers in harm's way needing confidence in the political echelon sending them to battle.

"This move does little to build that confidence. On the contrary, it tears it down. The move is staggering because it sidelines, at a crucial time, the primary liaison (Gallant) with the Pentagon – the person Israel relies on to coordinate its response to a potential Iranian attack and whom the White House and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin know and trust."

Gallant addressed the nation, and David Horovitz soon followed up in "The Times of Israel": "In a controlled but passionate address to the nation on Tuesday night, three hours after he was fired, Gallant cited his differences with Netanyahu on precisely those three issues — his insistence on conscription for all Israelis of military age; his conviction that a hostage deal is doable and that there will 'no atoning' for the failure to secure it; and his calls for a state commission to clarify what went wrong and learn the lessons of October 7 — as the reasons for his dismissal."

The politics behind the moment relate to Gallant's (and others') refusal to support a proposed bill the day prior that would fund Haredi day care centers instead of yeshivot. The latter would be defunded due to decisions of the Supreme Court and the State Attorney tied to the Haredi community's decisions that their young men would refuse to serve in the army when drafted.

In my opinion there is no doubt that this became a personal issue, even a revenge factor, on Netanyahu's part.

On political, power, and partisan levels, the Prime Minister is grasping to hold his coalition together. He hopes that his action of firing Gallant will keep the

Haredi parties inside the coalition rather than their resigning and bolting the coalition because of the Government's inability to fund their institutions.

Will we soon be going to elections... during a complicated, painful war situation that requires full and competent decision making? Gallant is a former IDF Chief of Staff; Israel Katz, his replacement named by the Prime Minister, is inexperienced in the military system.

We seem to be on the edge of that proverbial political precipice once again.

*As a dual American and Israeli citizen, I certainly keep current and have opinions on U.S. politics, who are the better candidates for America, Israel, and the world, including within the current national elections. However, within these brief columns I prefer to focus on what's happening inside Israel.

Howard Weisband served as Assistant Executive Director (1975-77) and Executive Director (1977-84) of the Memphis Jewish Federation. Following Aliyah with his family in 1986, he served as Secretary General of the Jewish Agency for Israel through 1997, and then in other senior professional positions in Israel. Now retired, he and Kayla live in Jerusalem. He can be reached at hweisband@gmail.com HW

‘Daddy was a Member of Hezbollah. He Brought that Danger, Evil into their Home,’ Fetterman Says



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) at the Prime Minister’s Residence in Jerusalem, June 26, 2024. Credit: Amos Ben-Gershon/GPO.

(JNS) – Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) defended his statement that he loved Israel’s attack on Hezbollah pagers in a recent interview with “The New York Times.” “It was targeted for members of Hez-

bollah,” the pro-Israel Democrat said. “You know, no one uses beepers in that situation other than they were a member of Hezbollah.” The interviewer noted that a young

child was killed. “Unfortunately, tragically, because Daddy was a member of Hezbollah. He brought that danger and evil into their home,” Fetterman said. “That’s what tragically resulted in that poor child’s death, and that’s what’s so terrible. She paid the price because her father was a terrorist for Hezbollah.” Fetterman added that he thinks a two-state solution is an ideal but isn’t sure any longer that one is possible. The “Times” interviewer asked Fetterman about the “nuance” about the “price” being paid in innocent life in Gaza. Fetterman said “there isn’t any nuance.” “You think that the price that’s been paid is fair?” the interviewer asked. “The price is terrible. It’s awful. That’s history and that’s war, and Israel was forced to fight an enemy that are cowardly,” he said. “They hide in tunnels. They hide in schools and in refugee camps, and they’re in those kinds of places.” “That forces them to reach them—they have to go through these civilians,” Fetterman said. “That’s why they’re so evil, and that’s why that’s designed—

the death and destruction and the misery, was designed by Hamas. They understood that that’s going to happen. They don’t care.” “Some people blame Israel,” the senator said. “Well, I blame Hamas.” The interviewer asked Fetterman to comment on the leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The senator responded that it is “really curious” that many Democrats have decided that they couldn’t criticize Israel, so instead they went after Netanyahu. “You can think he’s a bad leader or a bad person or anything, but that happens to be the democratically leader of Israel, and he’s on our side,” Fetterman said. “That’s our ally, and if you had to pick who you want to criticize, you should be criticizing Hamas. You should be calling out Iran, or you should be calling out Hezbollah. Certainly not our ally.” Fetterman added that there are “idiots in this nation” who chant “from the river to the sea.” “At least own your antisemitism rather than trying to hide behind a turn on words,” he said. **HW**

Israel’s Iron Dome Performs Overseas as Marines Adopt System



An Israeli Iron Dome interceptor. Credit: Israel Ministry of Defense Archives.

By Lilach Shoval

(JNS) – The U.S. Marine Corps has successfully completed its first live-fire test of an air defense system incorporating Israel’s Iron Dome interceptor. The system combines American and Israeli technology – U.S.-made radar and command-and-control center, alongside Rafael Advanced Defense Systems’ Iron Dome interceptor (the Tamir model) and mobile launcher.

Raytheon serves as the prime contractor for the project. During the exercise, Marine Corps personnel operated the system fully through target interception and tested the continuous launch capability of the interceptors from the new mobile launcher. The successful test demonstrated both the forces’ proficiency in operating the system and its effective-

ness in challenging interception scenarios. The Tamir interceptor can counter various threats including cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, rockets, artillery shells, and mortar rounds. The test marks a significant milestone toward deploying the Marines’ first prototype battery and demonstrates Iron Dome technology’s ability to integrate with foreign air defense systems. The system, which has proven its operational capabilities with thousands of successful interceptions in a little over a decade, continues to protect lives during the Israel Defense Forces’ current war in the north and the south. It forms part of Israel’s multi-tiered defense array, which includes the Iron Dome, David’s Sling, Arrow 2, and Arrow 3 systems. Moshe Patel, director of the Israel Missile Defense Organization, said: “Iron Dome is a system with extensive operational experience, with many thousands of successful interceptions over more than a decade. The Iron Dome system continues to save lives now, during the war. “The Marine Corps live-fire test provides another proof of the Iron Dome in-

terceptor’s capability, together with its ground array, to quickly and effectively integrate with any relevant air defense system and intercept various aerial threats in complex scenarios. The Defense Ministry welcomes all air defense cooperation with U.S. military branches,” he added. Shlomo Toaff, senior vice president and head of the air defense systems division at Rafael, said: “The Iron Dome system continues to prove itself as an advanced and unique air defense system, with thousands of successful interceptions in complex operational scenarios. “The productive cooperation with the U.S. Marine Corps and our partnership with Raytheon demonstrates Rafael’s ability to provide unique and customized solutions that deliver effective and precise air defense against various aerial threats. “The success of this current test marks an important milestone, and we will continue to work with the Defense Ministry’s Research and Development Directorate to expand air defense capabilities in cooperation with our strategic partners worldwide,” he said. **HW**

Iran Executes Jewish Man Whose Family had Sought to Avert Death Sentence

(JTA) – Iran has executed a 20-year-old Jewish man who killed a man in a 2022 fight after the victim’s family refused to negotiate an alternative punishment. Arvin Ghahremani, 20, had been scheduled to be executed in May but received a stay after Jewish and human rights groups around the world called attention to his case. Ghahremani was arrested more than two years ago on charges that he had killed a man with whom he had a financial dispute. In a report published last Monday in Mizan Online, an Iranian news agency, the prosecutor for the city of Kermanshah, where Ghahremani lived, offered details about the killing, saying that the victim had been stabbed five times, including in his back and neck. The prosecutor said Ghahremani had

confessed to the crime and that the execution had been carried out in compliance with Iranian law after the victim’s family had twice declined referrals to the Dispute Resolution Council, a government body through which citizens can negotiate disputes outside of the formal justice system. Iran’s penal code is based in part on Islamic Sharia law, which requires qisas, or retaliation in kind, for certain crimes but allows blood money to the family of the deceased as an acceptable recompense in cases of manslaughter. But according to statements spread on Telegram in May by Iranian Jewish leaders, the victim’s family repeatedly refused offers of payment, known as diyat, and attempts by the community to mediate the issue with Islamic leaders were unsuccessful. The May statement noted that the

Jewish community had offered to fund a school or mosque named after the deceased, but the offer was not accepted. The nonprofit Iran Human Rights, which operates out of Norway, said Ghahremani had been hanged at Kermanshah’s central prison. The group tied Ghahremani’s execution to Iran’s explosive conflict with Israel, which has included a recent volley of strikes and a report last Sunday that Iranian leaders are readying a “strong and complex” attack in response to Israel’s recent bombing of Iranian military facilities. “In the midst of the threats of war with Israel, the Islamic Republic executed Arvin Ghahremani, an Iranian-Jewish citizen, today,” said the group’s director, Mahmood Amiri-Moghadam, in a statement. “Like many of those sentenced to qisas, Arvin’s case and the judicial process had significant flaws. Howev-

er, in addition to this, Arvin was a Jew, and the institutionalized anti-Semitism in the Islamic Republic undoubtedly played a crucial role in the implementation of his sentence.” Ghahremani was among the estimated 8,500 Jews who still live in Iran, following an exodus of most of Iran’s once-major Jewish population after the 1979 revolution that put Islamic leaders in charge. While Iranian Jews must be cautious about their contact with the Persian Jewish diaspora, the Kermanshah Jewish community drew attention to Ghahremani’s case by circulating messages on WhatsApp. Many used his Hebrew name, Arvin Netanel Ben Siona. One included a desperate voice note from his mother. “I am asking everyone to help pray,” Sonia Saadati said in a tear-filled message in Farsi. **HW**



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