



CELEBRATING

100 YEARS

the Hebrew Watchman

1925-2025

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# A Silver Celebration: Young Israel of Memphis Marks 25 Years



Omer Shaish and Tomer Adaddi wow the crowd.

As the sun’s amber rays dipped toward the Memphis horizon on August 31, nearly 300 community members gathered at the University of Memphis Scheidt Family Performing Arts Center for an extraordinary event: Young Israel of Memphis’s 25th anniversary Candlelight Concert.

“For 25 years, Young Israel of Memphis has greatly enhanced the lives of all its members and families,” says Rabbi Akiva Males of Young Israel of Memphis. “Our shul has served as a home for meaningful Tefilah (prayer), uplifting Torah study, and a space for experiencing the true joy of Jewish religious life.”

“Twenty-five years is a major milestone,” says Young Israel President Noam Davidovics. “We knew we had to mark the occasion with something beyond a traditional dinner. And so, the

concept of our Candlelight Concert was born.”

After fervent recitation of Tehillim (Psalms) in support of the Jews of Israel, led by Rabbi Males, the concert began. Award-winning pianist and conductor Tomer Adaddi led The Promised Land Philharmonic Musicians, featuring a talented string trio and Jewish musicians from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. With the rich, resonant voice of vocalist Omer Shaish, the crowd was treated to a beautifully curated collection of Israeli and Jewish pieces that spoke to the heart.

The first piece – a masterful performance of the Mi Sheberach for the brave soldiers of Israel’s Defense Forces – set the tone for the evening. Adaddi’s charm and humor captivated the audience as he introduced each piece, from



Nearly 300 people gathered for Young Israel of Memphis’s 25th anniversary Candlelight Concert.

Elvis’s “Can’t Help Falling in Love” to a moving rendition of “Bring Him Home” from Les Misérables – a prayer for hostages still held in Gaza. Spirited Chassidic niggunim and a playful interpretation of Fiddler on the Roof’s “If I were a Rich Man” had the crowd clapping their hands and stamping their feet.

Local talent shined when 13-year-old Young Israel member Amitai Horowitz joined the ensemble on stage, delivering a stirring performance of Pachelbel’s Canon. And the finale, a lively version of Eyal Golan’s “Am Yisrael Chaim” brought everyone (including the cellist!) to their feet.

The evening celebrated three remarkable women who embody the congregation’s values: Elana Kahane, recipient of the Torah Award, for creating opportunities for Torah study within the com-

munity; Sarah Bracha Wogan, recipient of the Tefillah Award, for her heartfelt prayer leadership; and Esther Katz, recipient of the Tradition Award, for her relentless dedication to the community.

“It was such an unbelievable event, and I was honored to be part of it,” Sarah Bracha Wogan reflects. “Being part of our community for all these years has been so rewarding.”

Meticulous planning and countless volunteer hours were instrumental in the evening’s success. Event chairs Sarah Ardestani and Deena Davidovics led a committee including Sarah Bauer, Adi Brown, Abbe Kaplan and Yocheved Naftel. Kevin Braverman compiled a 52-page playbill with design by Ruthie Rashkin and Chani Karasik. Josh Kah-

(See Silver Page 2)

# Memphis JCC to Engage in Bullying Prevention Month Programming



Jacqueline Friedland

October is National Bullying Prevention Month, and the Memphis JCC is preparing a month of programming to sup-

port and elevate this important message.

Throughout the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year the J has been speaking with many area K-12 schools about creating fine art pieces around the theme of bullying. These student-created pieces will be on display from the end of September all through the month of October, in the Shainberg Art Gallery.

On Sunday, October 19, at 2 p.m., the J will host USA Today and Amazon Bestselling Author and 2025-2026 Jewish Book Council, Network Author on Tour, Jacqueline Friedland. She will be speaking about her novel “Counting Backwards.” This novel, told in a dual-timeline format explores who “deserves” the right to reproduce.

Young attorney, Jessa Gidney, takes a pro bono immigration case and discovers a shocking pattern of medical abuse in this all-female detention center. As she

fights for their rights, she learns of a shocking connection to her own family’s past relating to eugenics and the Holocaust.

During her time at the JCC Friedland will discuss social justice and upstander behavior present in characters in her novel.

On Sunday, October 26, at 1:30 p.m., the JCC is hosting an Original Speech and Monologue Competition. Like the Youth Art Contest, the Original Speech and Monologue Competition also has a bullying theme. This competition is open to students in grades 6-12. Entries are due by October 9. Information regarding the submission process for the Original Speech and Monologue Competition can be found on the Arts tab of the JCC website by clicking the National Bullying Prevention Month button.

The Original Speech and Monologue

Competition is to be judged by New York-based actress English Bernhardt. Bernhardt was Cady on the First National Tour of “Mean Girls” and toured with Idina Menzel during Menzel’s time with “If/Then.” Later that evening Bernhardt will perform in “An Evening with English Bernhardt: A Cabaret to Raise Awareness Around the Importance of Bullying Prevention.” This one-night-only performance is Sunday, October 26, at 7 p.m. This cabaret is sponsored by Amro Music.

The Memphis JCC is proud to take a stance against bullying and hopes you join them this October to help show the importance of bullying prevention. To find out more about any of these programs, please reach out to Cultural Arts Director Jonathan McCarter at [jmccarter@jccmemphis.org](mailto:jmccarter@jccmemphis.org) or 901.259.9248. **HW**



## Meet BBYO Leader Grant Krulewitz



Grant Krulewitz

I am Grant Krulewitz, a 12th-grade member of Lester Sherman Okeon AZA #1204, and Delta Region’s 98th Aleph Godol (president).

When I was in middle school, each week at the dinner table, my older brother would regale us with his BBYO adventures that day. I looked forward to when I could have as much fun as he did. When I finally had the opportunity to join, I understood how special BBYO truly was. I fell in love with the organization after attending their fall convention as a freshman. The friends I made,

the traditions I was passed, and the pride for Judaism I felt, all fueled my passion for the organization. Because of this, I committed to not only staying involved but also to expanding and enhancing these opportunities for others.

Since then, I have experienced more than I could have imagined. These include International Convention (IC), where thousands of Jewish teens from more than 60 countries develop everlasting global friendships, and the summer program International Leadership Training Conference (ILTC), where youth leaders come together to learn, collaborate and network worldwide.

Additionally, as Delta’s Godol this year, I had the privilege to attend BBYO’s International August Executives Conference. There, I met the teens leading regions across the globe, including from Argentina, Serbia, Latvia, Ukraine and China to name just a few. As a leader in our region, I am obliged to offer Jewish teens the same warm welcome I eagerly awaited – especially in Memphis.

BBYO has introduced me to wonderful, intelligent people who inspire me every day. These friends continue to support me both in and out of BBYO. There exists a special connection between all members, whether past or present, that no one should miss. **HW**

## Bat Mitzvah



Rosie Felsenthal

Rosie Felsenthal, daughter of Abby and Scott Felsenthal, will celebrate her

bat mitzvah on Saturday, September 20 at Baron Hirsch Synagogue. Rosie will deliver a bat mitzvah address to the congregation following services.

Rosie is in the seventh grade at Bornblum Jewish Community School where she serves on the Student Council and is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Rosie is also a competitive dancer at Visions Academy of Performing Arts and enjoys putting her creativity to use in making jewelry and designing clothes.

Rosie is the granddaughter of Min-dy and Ed Brucker and Judy and Peter Felsenthal. She is the great-granddaughter of Marcia and the late Eddie Moskovitz, the late Mae and Isidor Brucker, the late Miriam and Jake Alabaster and the late Elaine and Donald Felsenthal. **HW**

# THE Hebrew Watchman

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## Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Sept. 19, 2025 / 26 Elul, 5785 .....6:42 p.m.  
Havdalah, Sat. Sept. 20, 2025 / 27 Elul, 5785 ..... 7:36 p.m.  
Weekly Torah Portion: Nitzavim

Silver...  
(Continued From Page 1)

ane, Jonathan Kaplan, Allan Katz and Jonathan Wogan served as the fundraising committee for the event.

“This was Noam’s vision from the beginning, and he remained involved in every detail – no matter how big or small – with a team of volunteers rallying around him, from planning, fundraising, decorating, food preparation, setup and cleanup,” says Rabbi Males. “I thank everyone who rolled up their sleeves and shared their time, energy and resources.”

“It was truly a shul effort,” adds Davidovics. “The day of the event, volunteers were putting 4,000 batteries into 1,200 candles!” And when the lights dimmed and all those candles lit up the stage, the effect was breathtaking.

Chef Erling Jensen provided a sumptuous kosher feast, completing an evening that seamlessly blended musical excellence, community recognition and culinary delight.

“I’ve been involved in Young Israel since moving to Memphis 13 years ago,” says Davidovics. “It was amazing to see the entire community come together to celebrate everything this shul means to us.”

“This incredible event exceeded all expectations,” says Rabbi Males. “The warmth that filled the room made it truly unforgettable.” **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, September 22**  
**Erev Rosh Hashanah: Special Bingo**  
Come have some fun before Yom Tov and maybe win some prizes. Great way to get together with friends and start the New Year off on a fun note!

**Wednesday, September 24**  
**No Senior Lunch**  
The second day of Rosh Hashanah Yom Tov! Have a Happy Healthy New Year! Shanah Tovah Umetukah! Enjoy the Holiday!

**Sunday, September 28**  
**Special Sunday Funday**  
The Senior Lunch Bunch will go to Germantown Community Theatre to see the musical comedy “Nunsense.” This hilarious musical spoof follows five nuns trying to raise money to bury their dearly departed sisters after a cooking mishap. Come laugh along with the Sisters of Hoboken! We will leave the MJCC at 1:30 p.m. and go directly to the theatre.  
Pick up and return transportation is available to people who live in the area. The cost of the tickets including transportation is only \$22. Please call the front desk at the MJCC to make your reservations. There are only a limited number of tickets available. If you wish to meet the group there, please call Steve Kaplan at 901-259-9220 to make your reservation. He is also available to answer any questions.

**Monday, September 29**  
**Art Project with Mid-South Hobbies**  
Mid-South Hobbies will bring a cool art project for the group to do. This special program is FREE. It is always a lot of fun, and their teachers make it very enjoyable. No experience is necessary, and if the project is not finished, they give everyone the supplies to finish at their own home. Come have a nice lunch and bring home something that you made yourself. Reservations are needed by the Friday before so we have enough projects and food for everyone.

**Wednesday, October 1**  
**Team Trivial Pursuit**  
This time Trivial Pursuit will have a few Jewish Holiday questions thrown in! Come have fun and test your knowledge. Bring a group or just yourselves. Prizes galore, almost!! The fun is seeing which team comes up with right answer.

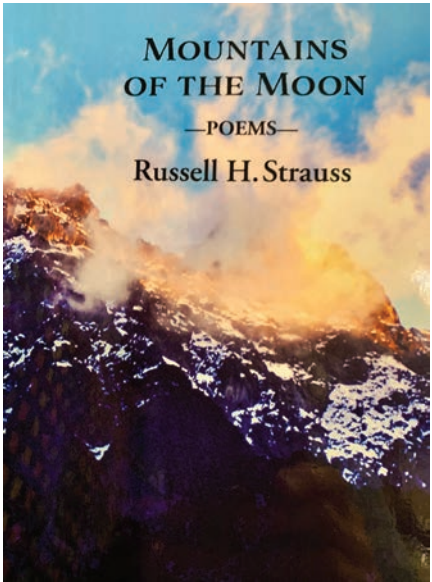
Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org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

# Memphis JCC to Screen “October 8” Film as Part of Local Area October 7 Commemoration

On Sunday, September 28, at 2 p.m., the Memphis JCC will host a screening of the documentary “October 8.” This film centers on a well-crafted examination of the impact of the October 7 attack and its ripple effect even onto the college campuses of the United States.  
The screening will take place in the Belz Theater of the Orgel Family Performing Arts Center. After the screening viewers are welcome to gather in the

Belz Social Hall to process the film.  
This screening is a recipient of a Jewish Community Center Association and Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, October 7 Commemoration Grant. Due to this support the screening is free to JCC Members and five dollars for the community. Registration is required and can be done by calling 901.761.0810 or by going to the Arts tab of [jccmemphis.org](#) and clicking on Cultural Arts Events. [HW](#)

# “Mountains of the Moon” Poems by Russell H. Strauss



Russell H. Strauss has given Memphis a gift with his recent publication of his best collected poems in a new volume called “Mountains of the Moon.”  
Author Susan Stevens Chambers says, “Russell Strauss skillfully takes us through significant historical events with narratives that ring with truth and heartfelt emotions. From Jewish issues surrounding Nazi persecutions to Black young men witnessing atrocities in America’s South, we are drawn to his descriptions.”  
One poem, ‘Chanukah in Ukraine, 2022’ recalls a woman in war torn Ukraine trekking to light Chanukah candles when she “never heard the final crash / nor saw the flash / as she became / herself, a flame.”

There are also poems that reflect humor and nostalgia for the poet’s adolescence as found in “Rocking with the Wolfman.” “it’s Saturday night, you cool cats and kittens / down in drive-ins and over in lovers’ lanes, / and you’re listening to the Wolfman, / voice of station K-L-A-R-K. The D.J. will appear in the Larkin High School Gym and who knows who else may be there – Elvis or Jerry Lee? The date is August 25, 1957.”  
Russell says one of his favorites in the volume is about his father who was the head of a labor division for temporary workers for the State of Tennessee. Day laborers who reported for employment were down and out on their luck and some rather rough looking. Yet his father always showed them respect: “‘Good morning, gentlemen,’ he always intoned.”  
“Thin smiles appeared on scarred faces. / Tattooed arms reached to remove caps, / as one by one, proud to be addressed; as colleagues and worthwhile human beings, / they returned his greetings.”  
Russell H. Strauss grew up in Memphis and except for three years teaching at schools in small towns, he has always lived here. A graduate of the University of Memphis, he taught for 13 years before moving on to the Tennessee Department of Labor, where he worked for 37 years, retiring in 2013. He has served four terms as president of the Poetry Society of Tennessee and served from 2010 to 2012 as president of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. He also serves on the board of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South and is a volunteer at the Temple Israel Archives.  
Copies of “Mountains of the Moon – Poems” may be purchased at the Temple Israel Judaica Shop. [HW](#)

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# After Charlie Kirk is Fatally Shot in Utah, Jewish and Israeli Leaders Call for Prayers and End to Political Violence



Charlie Kirk debates with students at The Cambridge Union in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England, May 19, 2025. Credit: Nordin Catic/Getty Images for The Cambridge Union

By Asaf Elia-Shalev

(JTA) – Israeli and pro-Israeli U.S. Jews were among those expressing concern after Charlie Kirk, the 31-year-old conservative activist who founded Turning Point USA and emerged as a leading voice of the pro-Trump right, was shot last Wednesday during an appearance in Utah.

Kirk was confirmed to have been killed about two hours after the shooting, which occurred around midday as Kirk launched into remarks for his “American Comeback” campus tour at Utah Valley University in Orem.

Video from the scene showed a single gunshot striking Kirk in the head or neck, causing panic among attendees. He was rushed to a nearby hospital. The FBI said it was assisting in the investigation.

Prominent politicians from both political parties quickly condemned the violence. President Donald Trump, who has counted Kirk as one of his most loyal surrogates, called him “a great guy” and urged supporters to “pray for Charlie.” Utah Sen. Mike Lee and Gov. Spencer Cox also issued statements of support. California gov. Gavin Newsom posted on X: “The attack on Charlie Kirk is disgusting, vile, and reprehensible. In the United States of America, we must reject political violence in EVERY form.”

Israeli leaders and Jewish activists, some of whom have developed relationships with Kirk through his pro-Israel activism, also reacted with alarm.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu posted on X: “Praying for @charliekirk11.”

Amichai Chikli, Israel’s minister of Diaspora affairs, wrote: “Praying for Charlie.”


And Shabbos Kestenbaum, a right-wing American Jewish activist, urged his followers: “Please stop what you’re doing and pray for our friend Charlie Kirk. Many in the Jewish community are reciting chapters from the Book of Psalms, and I ask you do the same. Something is deeply broken in America. The political violence must END. GOD HELP AMERICA.”

Kirk founded Turning Point USA in 2012 while still a teenager. The organization has grown into a powerful platform for conservative youth activism, hosting major conferences and expanding into high schools and churches. Kirk became a regular commentator on Fox News and other right-wing outlets, building a reputation as an outspoken critic of higher education, liberal policies and what he calls “woke culture.”

Kirk’s Turning Point USA has maintained ties with pro-Israel organizations and regularly hosts pro-Israel speakers at its conferences. Kirk himself has traveled to Israel and praised Trump’s policies there, including the 2018 U.S. embassy move to Jerusalem.

This is a developing story. HW

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# Gael Garcia Bernal, Ayo Edebiri Among 1,200 Hollywood Stars Pledging to Boycott Israeli Film Institutions



(L-R) Ilana Glazer, Gael Garcia Bernal and Ayo Edebiri are among the hundreds of signatories of a new pledge to boycott Israeli film institutions in protest of the war in Gaza. Credit: Bruce Glikas/WireImage; Gareth Cattermole/Getty Images; Vittorio Zunino Celotto/Getty Images

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Hundreds of top film directors, actors and writers signed onto a pledge last Monday “not to screen films, appear at or otherwise work with Israeli film institutions ... that are implicated in genocide and apartheid against the Palestinian people.”

The pledge, which is being promoted by the activist group Film Workers for Palestine, is distinct from other previous arts and culture Israel boycotts in naming specific Israeli cultural institutions the letter’s signatories are boycotting. Those include major Israeli film festivals like the Jerusalem Film Festival, Haifa International Film Festival, Docaviv and TLVfest.

Signatories include rising stars Ayo Edebiri, Josh O’Connor and Joe Alwyn (who had a supporting role in the recent post-Holocaust drama “The Brutalist”); veteran performers Olivia Coleman, Tilda Swinton, Gael Garcia Bernal and Javier Bardem; and acclaimed directors Yorgos Lanthimos, Adam McKay and Ava DuVernay, whose film “Origin” compared Nazi rule to slavery and global caste systems.

They join several progressive Jews who have long been vocal pro-Palestinian activists, including Ilana Glazer, Hannah Einbinder, Emma Seligman and Wallace Shawn.

The pledge is the latest demonstration of pro-Palestinian sentiment in the arts world. Over the weekend, a docudrama about the killing of 5-year-old Gazan

child Hind Rajab won a major prize at the Venice Film Festival, which was also marked by large pro-Palestinian protests.

Language in the pledge’s “frequently asked questions” page notes that there are “a few Israeli film entities that are not complicit” but does not name them, instead directing its followers to “seek guidelines set by Palestinian civil society.” It also specifies that only Israeli institutions, not individuals, are included in the boycott.

The Israeli film community, while often reliant on government funds, is one prominent engine of public critique of the country’s treatment of Arabs and Palestinians. This year’s edition of the Jerusalem Film Festival included a special screening of “Yes,” a no-holds-barred takedown of post-Oct. 7 Israel by native director Nadav Lapid, as part of a program on “freedom of expression and creativity in Israel”; the festival is among the stated targets of the new boycott.

Film Workers for Palestine also backed a recent campaign targeting the arthouse streaming service Mubi for accepting an investment from a venture fund that also has links to the Israeli military. While the Mubi campaign has been publicly supported by Lapid and fellow acclaimed Israeli director Ari Folman, they have not signed onto the campaign targeting Israeli film institutions. **HW**

# 6 Shot to Death at Jerusalem Bus Stop in City’s Deadliest Attack in Nearly 2 Years



Police and rescue personnel at the scene of a terror attack at Ramot Junction, near the entrance to Jerusalem, Sept. 8, 2025. Credit: Chaim Goldberg/Flash90

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Six people were shot to death and at least six others gravely injured in a shooting on a Jerusalem bus stop last Monday morning, in the kind of terror attack that has become rare in recent years.

Hamas issued a statement celebrating the attack, which ended when the two men carrying it out were killed. An off-duty security officer and a civilian with a gun license reportedly killed the gunmen, Palestinians from the West Bank.

The attack prompted immediate re-crimeation among politicians as well as military raids on West Bank villages near Ramallah. Israel has a policy of demolishing the homes of those who commit terror attacks.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and National Security Minister Itamar

Ben-Gvir, speaking at the scene of the attack, each lay blame with the Supreme Court, which ruled last Sunday that security prisoners in Israeli prisons must be given more food. Netanyahu canceled a planned court date in his corruption trial to respond to the shooting.

The shooting was the deadliest attack in the city since seven people were killed at a synagogue in a nearby neighborhood in January 2023, before the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war.

It took place at a bus stop at Ramot Junction, an area in Jerusalem’s northwest where roads from multiple directions converge and where two children were killed in a terror ramming in early 2023. Three people were shot to death at a bus stop in the same neighborhood in November 2023, during the first ceasefire in the war in Gaza, by two brothers who had been affiliated with Hamas; a fourth person was killed by an IDF soldier who said he mistook him for a terrorist. A bombing at the same bus stop had killed two the previous year.

The latest attack comes as President Donald Trump is pressing for an end to the war in Gaza. He said on TruthSocial last Sunday that the Israelis had accepted his latest terms for an end to the conflict that would include the release of all 48 hostages in Gaza. “I have warned Hamas about the consequences of not accepting. This is my last warning, there will not be another one!” Trump wrote. **HW**

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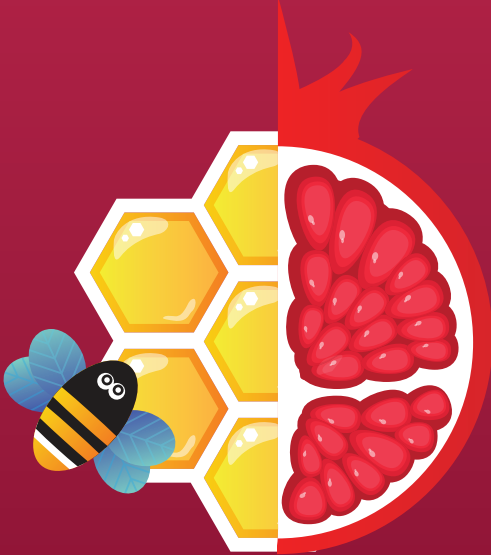
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# Connecting the Dots: The Power of Aggregation

*Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors*  
*Questions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@WellsFargoAdvisors.com*  
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To have less stress and more confidence about the future, taking the time to review account statements is helpful. But it can be even more meaningful to have a single place where you can see the total picture of all of your assets and liabilities – and how it may fluctuate over time. Building a comprehensive account summary or net worth statement can make it easier to connect the dots. As more dots are connected, you get a more meaningful picture and see a clearer, more actionable path.

As individuals build wealth, it becomes more challenging to keep track of one’s overall financial picture. There will likely be household cash accounts, investment accounts, retirement plans, real estate, loans, and a number of credit cards. Executives may have stock options and other equity-based benefits that vest over time, and deferred compensation plans. Business owners often have multiple entities related to their core business, along with real estate holdings connected to the business. You may have private investments as well.

So gathering financial information and documents from different sources can become a bit of a chore.

**How do successful people do this?**  
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that the goal is to see the big picture, not to focus on the microscopic details.

**Let technology do some of the work for you.** Many credit cards offer very useful spending summaries. And increasingly, financial institutions are offering account aggregation tools that make it easier to see all your accounts, even at various institutions, in one place. After you take a little bit of time to set this up, you don’t need to wait for a monthly statement or quarterly review to get a broader view of your finances. In many cases, values are updated regularly, so you can get a current picture any time it’s convenient for you to go online or check in on mobile.

Work with an experienced professional. An investment plan and net worth statement can form a “foundation built from facts” that may enable really good (if not always easy) conversations about spending, values, choices, and things to look forward to.

**If I feel pretty sure that I am doing okay, why do all this extra work?**

One reason is that having good metrics appears to be a hallmark of good performance. For example: successful business owners or executives can quickly tell you the key metrics that they watch to know how their business is doing. Athletes measure their training

(and their rest) so that they will know whether they are progressing toward performance goals.

Another reason is, there is a payoff. We generally have more confidence when we know how we’re doing. Uncertainty, on the other hand, is likely to increase anxiety and stress.

Building a net worth statement is not an end in itself. But developing this positive habit can lead to lifelong benefits by providing a starting point for meaningful conversations about what we want our money to accomplish.

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# Anti-Israel Protester Bumps Republican Congressman, Gets Pushed Back

*By Mike Wagenheim*

(JNS) – An anti-Israel protester reportedly made physical contact with Rep. Tim Burchett (R-Tenn.) last Thursday, leading the congressman to push the protester.

Politico reported that the confrontation took place outside the Longworth House Office Building on Capitol Hill. The protester approached Burchett and criticized his stance on the Israel-Hamas war before bumping the legislator. What was said was unclear.

Burchett then reportedly shoved the protester.

“Everyone has a right to their opinion, and they can say all of the filthy stuff they want, but they don’t have the right to bump the congressman,” Burchett spokesman Will Garrett stated.

Capitol Police reportedly questioned the protester but have declined to comment on the incident. It is unclear whether the protester is affiliated with any organization.

Burchett posted a montage last year of verbal confrontations he’s had with the anti-Israel group Code Pink, whose members have accosted him on several occasions about the war and his support for Israel.

Burchett said members of the group threatened to kill his wife and daughter, which Code Pink denied. **HW**

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# Man Linked to Neo-Nazi Groups Pleads Guilty to Attempting to Destroy Nashville Energy Facility

Skyler Philippi, 24, of Columbia, Tenn., was “motivated by a violent ideology,” said the U.S. assistant attorney general for national security.

(JNS) – A Tennessee man associated with Neo-Nazi groups pleaded guilty to attempting to destroy an energy facility in Nashville using a weapon of mass destruction, the U.S. Department of Justice announced last Tuesday.

In August 2024, Skyler Philippi, 24, of Columbia, Tenn., told undercover agents that he had written a “manifesto” outlining his intent to attack “high tax cities or industrial areas to let the

kikes lose money,” using a slur for Jewish people. The department said he had previous affiliations with white supremacist and Neo-Nazi groups, the Atomwaffen Division and the National Alliance.

“For months, Philippi planned what he had hoped would be a devastating attack on Nashville’s energy infrastructure,” said John Eisenberg, U.S. assistant attorney general for national secu-

rity. “Motivated by a violent ideology, Philippi wanted ‘to do something big.’ Instead, the FBI disrupted his plans, and Philippi now awaits sentencing.”

Court documents state Philippi said to undercover agents in July 2024 that he intended to fly a self-built drone with explosives into Nashville electrical substations. In August 2024, he ordered C-4 and other explosives from the undercover agents.

On Nov. 2, 2024, he met with the agents at a hotel and participated in a “Nordic ritual,” according to the Justice Department, stating, “This is where the New Age begins.” The group then drove to the operation site, where Philippi was taken into custody.

Philippi faces a maximum penalty of life in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 8, 2026. [HW](#)



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After losing her son, Aaron, to cancer at age 28 in 2022, Brona Pinnolis set up Aaron’s Awesome Adventure Fund with the help of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. The Fund raises money for children to attend sleepaway camp – an experience that Aaron treasured and inspired his love of adventure and the outdoors.

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## A Look Back at the Legacy of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis in Photos

*In honor of the 30-year anniversary of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, we are showcasing the Foundation’s history and impact through a content series across multiple platforms, including a photo series highlighting key moments in the Foundation’s history.*



June 2012: The Jewish Foundation of Memphis launched “Life and Legacy,” an initiative to make legacy giving part of the philanthropic culture across Memphis Jewish organizations, synagogues and schools. Through training, marketing and matching grants from local donors and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, the Foundation was successful in building greater awareness and securing 500+ legacy commitments as part of this effort. Pictured signing the partnership agreement with Baron Hirsch Congregation is Foundation Past President Kay Saslawsky z”l along with past Foundation Board member Irvin Skopp and previous Baron Hirsch Executive Director David Fleishhacker.

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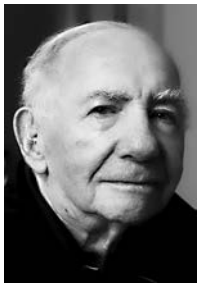
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# A High Holidays Question: A Reward for No Temptation?



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

By Ted Roberts

My rabbi loves challenges, so he loves my halachic questions. “So, Ted,” he says, “any arcane halachic questions today?”

We go to his office where he keeps, in a secret drawer, his wife’s delicious plum cake.

Now that I’ve got him in a mellow mood, I begin. “OK, here’s a tough one tailored for Yom Kippur.”

“I’m ready,” he says as he sips his beverage. “OK,” I begin. “Picture an evil man – not a Hitler, not a Haman, not an Arafat – not a thug. Just a consistent louse. This no-goodnik keeps none of the mitzvahs. He loves pork roast, he

works on his lawn on Shabbos, he drives to the neighborhood bar three times a week, including Friday night, where he takes the name of the Lord in vain for three or four hours.

And if the bartender gives him change for a twenty instead of a ten, he gloats and keeps it.

He cheats on his wife, on his business associates, and has no time for his kids.

My rabbi nods.

“One day,” I continue, “this ethically imperfect Jew takes a cruise with several of his fellow devils where they plan to gamble, drink, violate the Sabbath, chase women and toss around the name of the Lord like it was a five dollar poker chip. But Rabbi – as you know – man proposes to play golf – G-d disposes of clear skies and sends the storm. The cruise ship hits a Caribbean iceberg. (G-d-power always trumps geography.) Our sinner is shipwrecked. For one year he sits on a rock pile and exists on raw fish as his entree and palm leaves for salad. He can’t even make a fire. He

mistreats nobody, since there’s nobody to mistreat. He cheats not on his wife, since there’s no one to cheat with this side of Miami. He doesn’t even curse. What fun is it? Who’s to hear?

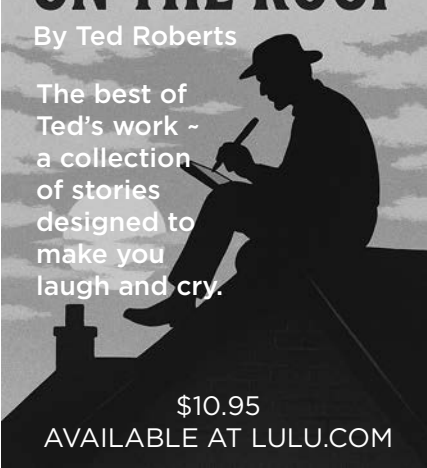
He keeps the Shabbos; no car, no fire, no TV. He doesn’t muzzle his ox, since he has no ox. He doesn’t sow his field with two kinds of seeds, since he has no seeds, no fields.

Our ex-ethical thug, as Yom Kippur rolls around, is now a Tzadik. So, here’s my question: Is he inscribed in the Book of Life? Does he get a golden star from the Judge of all mankind, even though his past record is as crummy as stale pound cake? And please, Rabbi, don’t tell me that nothing has changed, that he’s still propelled by an evil heart. Because you explained in one of your sermons, remember, that Judaism is a religion of deeds, not intentions. Nobody has a pure heart – it’s how we control those evil inclinations that spring from our human heart – that’s what counts. Action, deeds. Jimmy Carter, ex-prez

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By Ted Roberts

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“who lusted only in his heart,” would never be condemned by us, right, so long as he didn’t act on his libidinous impulses? So, Rabbi, what’s your answer? Has our protagonist redeemed himself?” Dear Reader, why don’t you ask your rabbi.

*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*

## ISRAEL INSIGHTS Qatar, Friend or Foe, Part II

By Howard Weisband

On Monday morning, September 8, at one of the busiest intersections in Jerusalem, the Ramot interchange, filled with pedestrians, private cars and public buses, two Palestinian terrorists, armed with machine guns and knives, having crossed the security fence from the West Bank, climbed aboard a public bus and opened fire. Six people, Jewish residents of Ramot, were murdered and some 20 people injured.

Hamas quickly claimed responsibility.

On Tuesday, September 9, the Israel Air Force attacked a building in Doha, Qatar, where Hamas leaders had gathered in a pinpointed operation to eliminate Hamas leadership. Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Katz issued a joint statement, which included:

“The prime minister and the defense minister believed that the action was completely justified in light of the fact that this Hamas leadership initiated and organized the October 7 massacre, and has not stopped launching murderous actions against the State of Israel and its citizens since then, including taking responsibility for the murder of our citizens in yesterday’s attack in Jerusalem.”

(This Jerusalem terror attack was particularly chilling personally as it occurred a short walk from where I and my family lived in Ramot for some 33 years.)

Israeli intelligence knew that Hamas leadership had gathered in the Doha location. While at this writing, on September 10, it remains uncertain as to who was killed and who was injured among the Hamas leaders, clear messages were dealt to both Hamas and Qatar. In short, Hamas has learned that it cannot hide in Qatar. Perhaps the latter has learned that its duplicitous actions, mediating negotiations while harboring and providing sanctuary to the terrorists themselves, will no longer go unanswered.

Turning to the media, Israeli and international sources were quick to analyze and comment on the strike in Qatar. As is the norm, some were in favor, others were critical.

Gregg Roman, executive director of the Middle East Forum, wrote on September 9: “Qatar’s protection allowed Hamas to preserve its leadership cadre from the attrition that typically degrades terrorist organizations over time. While Israel systematically eliminated Hamas commanders in Gaza – from Mohammed Deif to Marwan Issa – the organization’s strategic brain trust remained intact in Doha, ensuring continuity of planning and institutional memory. This arrangement made it functionally impossible to defeat Hamas through military means alone, as the organization could simply regenerate its tactical

losses while its strategic leadership remained untouchable.”

Jerusalem Post analyses were decidedly in favor of the Israeli action, with their various headlines themselves telling the story:

“Qatar strike highlights Israel unwilling to negotiate by Hamas’s rules,” by Zvika Klein, editor, September 9. His subheading: “Explosions in Doha targeted Hamas’s political leadership tied to stalled hostage talks, with Israel signaling it will no longer tolerate delays in negotiations.”

“Thirty years of Hamas privilege ends in Doha,” by Seth Frantzman, September 9.

“The Doha message: Israel’s Qatar strike shows it speaks the language of the Middle East,” by Alex Winston, September 10.

David Horovitz, editor, in The Times of Israel, September 11, was clearly more cautious: “Netanyahu takes a calculated risk on a legitimate target in a deeply problematic location.”

Readers of this column might remember a column I wrote in January 2025, titled “Qatar, Friend or Foe.” Quoting several sources, I’ll repeat just one here: “Yigal Carmon, writing in MEMRI, described the relationship beyond academic terminology: “Every vegetable vendor and taxi driver in the Muslim

world knows the truth about Qatar and its Islamist and anti-U.S. activities, except for the American, European, and Israeli governments and intelligence agencies (who possibly also know but act as if they don’t). This is because Qatar developed over the decades a Western image that totally contradicts its actual behavior.”

I clearly believe, and have believed for some time, that Qatar is benefiting by playing both sides against the middle. Supporting Hamas financially and politically, and providing the terrorist organization a home base, while seemingly acting as an honest broker and mediator of ceasefire and hostage negotiations, Qatar is rather cynically representing Israel and the United States to the advantage of Hamas.

Will Israel’s strike against Hamas in Qatar make a difference? I have my doubts.

*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*

## Congressman Cohen Says National Guard Won’t Solve Memphis’ Endemic Problems

MEMPHIS – Congressman Steve Cohen (TN-9) responded last Friday to President Trump’s decision to deploy the National Guard in Memphis with the following statement:

“First, I had hoped the National Guard would not be deployed here. Mayor Young told me earlier this week that it was a possibility and that, if Governor Lee decided to send them, he would work to use them in a manner that is secondary and supportive of the police.

“Memphis is not ‘a troubled city,’ as President Trump has said. We have a crime problem. We do have problems

that may be ‘endemic,’ but they are the result of centuries of racial discrimination, including slavery that separated families without educational opportunities. Even after they were freed, they faced Jim Crow discrimination in the South. These are the historical facts. What Memphis needs is consistent federal investment in police protection with additional, permanent patrols and community policing to establish relationships. We need programs like the Minority Business Development Center that Trump’s Commerce Department just eliminated, which helped create jobs and capital accumulation.

“In the short run, the Guard can help the police in a supportive role. In the long run, Memphis needs federal dollars invested in proven programs.

“D.C. has been my second home for 19 years. I have a condo and a car, and I live in the city after work (not in my office). I do not perceive any change in the level of safety since Trump’s deployment of the National Guard in D.C. The president recently went out to a restaurant in D.C. and said that it is now the safest town in the world, and that it is safe to walk anywhere. That’s not true. There have not been ‘many arrests of very bad people,’ as he puts it.

Most of the arrests are for low-level offenses. While D.C. crime is bad, it was declining and doesn’t differ much from national trends.

“For Memphis, major investments in proven programs will make a difference; deploying the National Guard through a short publicity stunt will not. I certainly hope this is not a facade for increased ICE enforcement in Memphis. That’s what I think this is about, and that would harm our local economy, particularly the tourist and construction industries. This is all about Trump showing the world that he’s a tough guy. This is the Trump Show 2.0.” HW



# Rep. David Kustoff Delivers Statement on President Trump’s Deployment of the National Guard to Memphis

WASHINGTON – (Sept. 12, 2025) – Following President Donald Trump’s announcement of federal National Guard support for Memphis, Congressman David Kustoff released the following statement:

“I support President Trump’s decision to send the National Guard to Memphis. I thank the President for his

commitment to curb violent crime. It is important for the long term success in Memphis to have additional and permanent federal law enforcement officers and agents who can work in conjunction with state and local officials. I will continue to work with the White House to secure these important resources.” **HW**

# British Lawmaker Decried for Speech Invoking the Israeli Army’s ‘Blood-Soaked Tentacles’

By Grace Gilson

(JTA) – A British lawmaker, Shockat Adam, is drawing outcry after he referred to the Israeli army’s “blood-soaked tentacles” during an address in Parliament last Wednesday.

The comment by Adam, a Malawi-born businessman and optometrist who is an independent, came as the British Parliament discussed Israel’s strikes on Hamas leadership in the Qatari capital of Doha and as Prime Minister Keir Starmer prepared to host the Israeli president.

Adam said his niece and her young daughter had been at a library blocks from the scene of the Qatar strike.

“After having witnessed the Israeli army massacre over 60,000 people in Gaza, 19,000 of whom are children, the blood-soaked tentacles of the Israeli army are now reaching closer to home, especially in my case,” said Adam, a longtime critic of Israel who decried the British government decision this week not to call Israel’s war in Gaza a “genocide.”

His phrasing drew criticism from those who said he was echoing long-standing antisemitic stereotypes about Jewish power. Octopuses have been a common element in antisemitic imagery, including that of the Nazis.

“If Shockat Adam has no idea of the historical significance of language like ‘blood-soaked tentacles,’ then he’s grotesquely ignorant, and in no position to participate in this debate,” tweeted Tomos Doran, a Welsh commentator. “If he *\*is\** aware, then he really is just a Nazi. It’s pretty much as simple as that.”

Josh Howie, a Jewish right-wing political commentator, tweeted, “Pretty sure this country, including my grandparents, fought a war so that Nazis didn’t end up in Parliament.”

Adam did not draw a rebuke on the floor of Parliament, where the antisemitic symbol has been at the center of a previous controversy. In 2010, British MP Martin Linton faced criticism for warning voters of the “long tentacles of Israel” but later issued an apology after learning of the antisemitic roots of the language.

Adam did immediately address criticism of his rhetoric, which came the same day that Israeli President Isaac Herzog was in London to meet with Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Adam had called on Starmer to reject Herzog’s visa.

“As Israel prepares a full-scale ground invasion of Gaza [City], Starmer wel-

comes its president to Downing Street with open arms,” he wrote in a post on X. “History will judge this as the UK’s most shameful chapter of complicity.”

Starmer has said Britain would recognize a Palestinian state this month at the United Nations General Assembly if Israel does not agree to a ceasefire with Hamas. In advance of the visit, U.K. officials formally said they had not concluded that genocide is taking place in Gaza, inflaming critics of Israel.

Herzog and Starmer made no public appearance after their meeting. Herzog characterized the meeting as containing “tough” conversation.

“Things were said that were tough and strong, and clearly we can argue, because when allies meet, they can argue,” he said. “We are both democracies.” **HW**

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# Qatar to Hold Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit after IDF Strike

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – Qatar [is scheduled to] host an emergency Arab-Islamic summit in Doha on Sept. 14-15 in the wake of Israel’s attack that targeted Hamas’s leadership in the city, Reuters reported last Thursday, citing the Qatar News Agency.

“There is a response that will happen from the region. This response is currently under consultation and discussion with other partners in the region,” Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said in an interview with CNN’s Becky Anderson last Wednesday.

The participants will decide on a course of action, he said.

“We are hoping for something meaningful that deters Israel from continuing this bullying,” Mohammed added.

United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan flew to Doha last Wednesday to express his country’s solidarity, the BBC reported.

Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is expected to arrive in Doha on Thursday. The BBC cited him as saying that Israel’s “brutal aggression” required a response.

Qatari officials have remained tight-lipped about the fate of the Hamas leadership, which convened in Doha to discuss the latest Washington offer to reach a ceasefire in Gaza.

Qatar’s interior ministry identified the bodies of three of the five lower-level Hamas members, all confirmed dead by Hamas, along with that of a Qatari security officer, who were present at the site.

The terrorist group stated that Israel failed to kill its top members.

Qatari authorities were still searching for the two other lower-level terrorists, according to the BBC.

The Ministry of Interior announced that the funeral prayer for the martyrs of the Israeli targeting, including the Martyr of Duty, Corporal Badr Saad Mohammed Al-Humaidi Al-Dosari, a member of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), will be held after Asr prayer today.

“The Ministry of Interior announces that the funeral prayer for the martyrs of the Israeli targeting ... will be held on the afternoon of Thursday, September 11, 2025, at Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, and they will be buried in the Mesaimeer Cemetery,” the ministry tweeted last Thursday.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Thursday invoked the memory of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States as he defended Israel’s strike in Qatar targeting those behind the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre.

“We remember September 11. On that day, Islamist terrorists committed the worst savagery on American soil since the founding of the United States,” Netanyahu said. “We also have a September 11. We remember October 7. On that day, Islamist terrorists committed the worst savagery against the Jewish people since the Holocaust.”

The Hamas officials targeted in Doha had for years directed the Palestinian terrorist group’s operations, were directly responsible for the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre and have been managing the ongoing war against Israel, according to an Israel Defense Forces statement.

The military said measures were taken to minimize civilian casualties, including the use of precision munitions. It added that efforts would continue with determination to defeat Hamas. **HW**

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# The ISJL Launches Comprehensive Tour Resources to Explore American Jewish Identity Through Southern Stories

The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) is proud to announce its new tour resources designed to help Jewish groups and organizations create uniquely Southern and Jewish experiences. The comprehensive offering includes a brand-new curriculum and personalized consulting services that help visitors expand their understanding of American and Jewish identities through the lens of Southern

Jews, Southern culture and civil rights – from enslavement to contemporary justice movements.

### New Tour Curriculum Available

Southern & Jewish On the Road, an immersive tour curriculum, is specifically designed to serve a wide range of audiences, whether that be teen religious school groups, Jewish non-profit groups or even solo travelers. Organized by city, each curriculum unit provides

comprehensive support from pre-trip preparation to on-the-ground programming and post-trip reflection activities. The curriculum enables users to create customized experiences based on the educational goals, needs and/or preferred destinations of their group.

The curriculum currently features units on Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, and Jackson, Mississippi. Additional cities and destinations,

such as Atlanta, Memphis and New Orleans, will be released in the future, expanding opportunities for groups to explore Southern Jewish heritage across the region.

### Personalized Tour Consulting Services

In addition to the curriculum, the ISJL is offering virtual tour consulting services. A personalized and flexible experience, these consultations are available in single or multi-session format.

Over the past 25 years, the ISJL has supported dozens of communities on their trips across the Jewish South. The ISJL team is thrilled to lead the consulting services and share their expertise in Southern Jewish history, Jewish education and cultural programming once again.

### Preserving Southern Jewish Stories

“We are passionate about preserving and sharing the vibrant stories of Southern Jewish communities,” said Ana Berman, ISJL Programs and Education Coordinator. “Our goal is to help groups curate the Southern Jewish journey of a lifetime through meaningful and memorable experiences that honor both Jewish heritage and the broader historical context of the American South.”

Designed to bring history to life for today’s audiences, the ISJL’s tour resources are engaging, accessible and rooted in deep care for Southern and Jewish communities. To learn more, contact Ana Berman at [aberman@isjl.org](mailto:aberman@isjl.org).

The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) supports, connects, and celebrates Jewish life in the South. To learn more about the ISJL and its programs, visit [www.isjl.org](http://www.isjl.org), call 601-362-6357, or follow @TheISJL on social media. [HW](#)



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# Shanah Tovah

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from the **MJCC**

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**GOP Rep. Nancy Mace to Jewish Progressive: ‘I Have a Good Surgeon if You Ever Want to Get Your Nose Done’**



U.S. Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC) speaks as the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Federal Law Enforcement meets in the Rayburn House Office Building on July 23, 2025, in Washington, DC. Credit: Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – A Republican member of Congress who has been a vocal opponent of campus antisemitism told a progressive Jewish Democrat last Wednesday to “get your nose done.”

Rep. Sara Jacobs and multiple progressive watchdogs denounced Rep. Nancy Mace’s comments as antisemitic.

Mace directed the comment at Jacobs, a California congresswoman, on the social network X, in the midst of a spat over health care for transgender women.

“To @RepSaraJacobs, I talk about women’s safety and your response is commentary about my body on the House floor,” Mace wrote last Wednesday. “If you knew anything about survivors you would know some women change their bodies because of the trauma of sexual violence. They live with the consequences for a lifetime.”

She then added, “PS – I have a good surgeon if you ever want to get your nose done.”

Jacobs responded, “I didn’t say anything about your body but thanks for confirming! And going with the Jewish nose joke...very creative (and also very antisemitic).”

The idea that Jewish noses are unattractive is a longstanding antisemitic stereotype that has in the past fueled widespread use of cosmetic surgery by Jewish women.

The Nexus Project, a left-leaning antisemitism watchdog group, said on the rival social network BlueSky that Mace’s comments were “antisemitic, schoolyard bullying about their Jewish colleagues’ noses generally, and especially in a post about respecting women’s bodies.”

The Jewish Democratic Council of America also denounced the comments. “Telling a Jewish woman to get a nose job is antisemitism,” it said in a statement on social media. “Full stop.”

The spat came amid a debate between the two lawmakers on the House floor over a proposed Mace amendment to a defense spending budget that would have restricted transgender service members from accessing certain health care procedures and using the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity.



U.S. Congresswoman Sara Jacobs poses at the San Diego “No Kings” march on June 14, 2025, in San Diego, California. Credit: Daniel Knighton/Getty Images

Addressing Mace, Jacobs had defended “gender-affirming care” by noting that many of her colleagues had received procedures that could be classified as such.

“I think it’s very interesting that my colleague from South Carolina is so obsessed with the issue of trans people, using horrible slurs to talk about them when many people in this body have received gender-affirming care,” Jacobs said. “Filler is gender-affirming care. Boob jobs is gender-affirming care. Botox is gender-affirming care. Lots of my colleagues have received gender-affirming care.”

Mace shot back, “Absolutely ridiculous.” She followed up with her nose comment on social media shortly after.

Mace, who has frequently made comments disparaging transgender people after taking a more moderate stance earlier in her career, has also sought to style herself as a warrior for Israel and against antisemitism. She has met with the Anti-Defamation League to discuss college campuses, supported a full federal defunding of Harvard University over charges the school harbored antisemitism, and hosted a press conference with the Orthodox student group Olami to advocate for changes to the Department of Education’s handling of campus antisemitism.

Last month she announced a run for South Carolina governor, calling herself “Trump in high heels.”

Jacobs has family members in Israel and has found herself walking the tightrope of many Jewish progressives after Oct. 7. She also revealed this week that she had undergone a process to freeze her eggs so she could defer having children until she is older, an option she said she believes should be accessible to U.S. women.

Jacobs, who says she has a trans sibling and another who is gender-nonconforming, said Mace “is intentionally targeting a vulnerable group of people because she wants the attention. It is cruel. It is malintended. And it is not just about ‘she said something wrong once.’ This has been a very strategic targeted approach she has taken.” She did not further mention the nose comment. **HW**

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