



**ISRAEL NEWS**  
*A collection of the week's news from Israel*  
*From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of*  
*Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

Echoing Ramban from nearly 630 years earlier, the famous French novelist and naval officer Pierre Loti wrote in 1894, "Jerusalem, the city of sadness... I have seen the desolation of many ruins in the world, but none so heavy as this. It is a city that has died of its

## Commentary...

### Jerusalem: From Biblical Desolation to Over 1 Million People

By Nissan Ratzlav-Katz

For centuries, Jerusalem was a ghost town. Today it's a city of 1 million, one of the fastest-growing travel destinations on earth. How did this happen?

"What shall I tell you regarding the Land? It is very neglected and desolate... The more sacred the place, the greater its desolation. Jerusalem is the most desolate of all..." So wrote Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman (Ramban or Nachmanides), one of the towering rabbinical figures of the Middle Ages, in a letter to his son in 1267. Already an elderly man at that point, he arrived in the Land of Israel after fleeing persecution in Spain. The Jerusalem he saw had been devastated by the competing conquests of Crusaders, Mongols and Mamluks.

A very different chronicler arrived in the city around 1491. Martin Kabátník, a member of the Bohemian Christian sect known as the Unity of the Brethren, wrote in his Journey to Jerusalem:

"There are few Christians but there are many Jews, and these the Muslims persecute in various ways. Christians and Jews go about in Jerusalem in clothes considered fit only for wandering beggars. The Muslims know that the Jews think and even say that this is the Holy Land which has been promised to them and that those Jews who dwell there are regarded as holy by Jews elsewhere, because in spite of all the troubles and sorrows inflicted on them by the Muslims, they refuse to leave."

Nearly 115 years later, a highly influential work titled *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610*, by George Sandys, was published in London. The book describes Jerusalem as "buried in her own ruins...."

Dutch Orientalist, professor and theologian Adrian Reland wrote in a two-volume work, *Palaestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata* (published 1714), that Jerusalem at the start of the 18th century was home to around 5,000 people. Most of them, he noted, were Jews.

A more descriptive and chilling account was provided by the famous French writer and diplomat François-René de Chateaubriand less than 100 years later, in *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris* (published 1811). Describing the Jews of Jerusalem circa 1806, he wrote: "One must see these people in Jerusalem; one must see these rightful masters of Judea living as slaves and strangers in their own inheritance; one must see them awaiting, under every form of oppression, a king who is to deliver them.... Crushed by the Cross and the Crescent, they still wander about, seeking for their country and finding only a grave."

An author later known for a very different reason, Karl Marx, published an article that appeared in the *New-York Daily Tribune* on April 15, 1854, describing Jerusalem at the time. He noted that the city had a population of about 15,500 people, of whom 8,000 were Jews.

"The Mussulmans," Marx wrote, "forming about a fourth part of the whole, and consisting of Turks, Arabs and Moors, are, of course, the masters in every respect, as they are in no way affected with the weakness of their Government at Constantinople. Nothing equals the misery and the sufferings of the Jews at Jerusalem, inhabiting the most filthy quarter of the town, called hareth-el-yahoud, the quarter of dirt [sic], between the Zion and the Moriah, where their synagogues are situated the constant objects of Mussulman oppression and intolerance, insulted by the Greeks, persecuted by the Latins, and living only upon the scanty alms transmitted by their European brethren."

Another famous author, Herman Melville of *Moby-Dick* fame, visited Jerusalem around 1857. In a private journal, he described the city as a "collection of abandoned stone quarries." As he put it, "No country will more quickly sicken the fancy than the face of Judea.... The yard-walls look like old tomb-stones... Jerusalem is a city of stones."

A little over a decade later, Mark Twain wrote in *The Innocents Abroad* (published in 1869) that "Jerusalem is mournful, and dreary, and lifeless. I would not desire to live here."

Jeremiah mourned the destruction of Jerusalem and also provided a bright vision of the city's future.

own holiness."

Jeremiah (Yirmiyahu), who lived between 627 and 587 BCE, saw and mourned the destruction of Jerusalem in his day. He described "the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem" as being "desolate, without inhabitant, human or animal..." (33:10-11)

However, in the same passage he also provided a bright vision of the city's future, in which "there shall once more be heard the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thanks offerings to the house of the Lord: 'Give thanks to the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!' For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the Lord."

It was long in coming, but the vision began to take shape in 1949. Shortly after Israel's War of Independence, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion rejected United Nations efforts to internationalize the city and instead declared Jerusalem to be "an inseparable part of the state of Israel and its eternal capital."

Yet for the next 19 years, the city remained divided between the Jewish state and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Then, on June 5, 1967, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol sent an urgent message to King Hussein saying that "we shall not engage ourselves in any action against Jordan, unless Jordan attacks us." The king ignored Israel's appeal and joined neighboring Arab states in their attempt to destroy Israel.

On the 6th of June, the 27th of Iyar in the Jewish calendar, the first Israeli national unity government since 1948 held its initial Ministerial Security Committee meeting. On the agenda was the response to Jordan and the liberation of Jerusalem. In accordance with the decision taken, IDF forces encircled the Old City that very day.

The modern holiday of Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) takes place one day later – this year, it starts on Thursday night, the 14th of May – marking the city's full liberation from Jordan during the Six-Day War.

But none of it might ever have happened had Jordan opted for peace or even hesitated a few days. The rest, as they say, is history.

Since 1967, the unified capital of Israel has more than tripled in population size to become the nation's largest city. And in 2024, Jerusalem became the first Israeli city to have more than 1 million residents (1,046,300 by May 2025).

Part of that increase is due to new immigrants (olim). Jerusalem is the number one destination for olim, with about 3,000 of them moving to the city every year. According to Pini Glinkevitch, director of the city's Immigration and Absorption Authority, the largest contingent is from South America, followed by the United Kingdom and the United States.

The world of Torah learning and academia are also flourishing in the capital. There are more than 500 yeshivas and kollels (advanced study halls for married men) within the Jerusalem municipal boundaries alone. For comparison, there were only approximately 200 major yeshivas across Eastern Europe on the eve of World War II. The largest single yeshiva at the time was the Mir Yeshiva in Belarus, which had about 500 students. The reconstituted and replanted Mir Yeshiva in Jerusalem has around 9,000 students today.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem is recognized as one of the world's elite academic institutions, with international ranking higher than Harvard and Oxford in some subjects. This single university has produced 10 Nobel Laureates, one Fields Medal winner, two Turing Award winners, and its technology transfer company, Yissum, is ranked 15th in the world with over 10,000 registered patents.

No wonder the Startup Genome report has been consistently ranking Jerusalem (and Tel Aviv) as among the most vibrant tech hubs in the world in recent years.

In tourism, as well, Jerusalem is no longer "mournful, and dreary, and lifeless," per Mark Twain. In 2019, the UK-based market research company Euromonitor International declared Jerusalem to be "the fastest-growing travel destination in the world..." out of 600 cities worldwide and "a top global tourism spot."

On the cultural front, Jerusalem is home to world-class institutions like the Israel Museum (housing the Dead Sea Scrolls and an incredible collection of fine arts and archaeology), Yad Vashem, the Bible Lands Museum, the Tower of David museum and exhibit in the Old City, and the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design (one of the world's most prestigious art schools). In addition, specific events like the Jerusalem Light Festival and the prestigious International Book Forum regularly draw tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world.

Time Magazine included Jerusalem in its 2023 list of the 50 "World's Greatest Places." Based on nominations by the magazine's international network of correspondents and contributors, the city was especially highlighted for its culinary scene and "modern-meets-ancient" vibes.

And to connect all the dots, let's note that "the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride" is heard at about 19,000 weddings every year in Jerusalem alone.

Despite all the libelous claims to the contrary, Israeli control over Jerusalem has been a continuing boon for its non-Jewish residents as well. From 1910 until 1946, the non-Jewish population of Jerusalem went from 24,900 to 65,100. That's a total net growth of 40,200 in 35 years, or 161 percent. Not bad at all for a city under British colonial occupation. Then, in 1948, Jerusalem came under Jordanian occupation – and non-Jewish population growth went down to near-zero. And there was, of course, no Jewish population growth whatsoever since there were no Jews left after Jordan's thorough ethnic cleansing of the city.

When Jerusalem came under exclusive Israeli sovereignty in 1967, the situation changed dramatically. From 1967-2025 the non-Jewish population of Jerusalem grew from 68,600 people to roughly 400,000 (around 40% of the city).

Jewish people have been saying "Next year in Jerusalem" at the end of every Passover Seder, smashing a glass to remember Jerusalem at every wedding, mentioning Jerusalem at every meal, and turning to face Jerusalem for every prayer for nearly 2,000 years, wherever they were in the Diaspora. It is this living memory that helped make the vision of Jeremiah a reality and the reborn capital of the Jewish state a blessing for its residents and for the world.

Happy Jerusalem Day! (Aish.com May 12)

## **While Attention Shifts to Iran, Hamas Continues to Rearm Quietly** By Meir Ben Shabbat

In a joint operation by the Israel Defense Forces and the Shin Bet security agency, a weapons production site belonging to Islamic Jihad was destroyed over the weekend in the northern Gaza Strip, the IDF Spokesperson said. He added that the site belonged to Islamic Jihad but had recently also been used by Hamas to manufacture explosive devices and store weapons "intended to harm IDF troops operating in the yellow line area and Israeli civilians."

In a separate statement, the IDF Spokesperson said Sunday that forces under the command of the Kfir Brigade had destroyed two underground tunnel routes in which several living quarters and weapons were found. During searches in the area, the forces found dozens of rockets and explosive devices.

The two fairly routine statements provide official confirmation of media reports about the rearmament processes taking place in the Gaza Strip, to which the public is not exposed and whose scale it cannot even assess. Under cover of the war against Iran and Hezbollah and the ceasefire in Gaza, figures who until recently were mentioned almost daily in military correspondents' reports have disappeared from Israeli consciousness.

One example is Izz al-Din al-Haddad, who assumed command of the military wing in Gaza after the elimination of Mohammed Deif and Raad Saad, and who is considered one of the surviving architects of the Oct. 7 massacre. Others include Mohammed Oudeh, commander of the northern brigade; Tawfiq Abu Naim, head of Hamas' security apparatuses and a member of the terrorist organization's founding generation; Ali Amoudi, one of the senior leaders in Gaza; and other operatives who have lowered their media profile and are operating under a heavy cloak of secrecy.

The deadline set for Hamas to disarm expired, was extended, and no one is following its renewed validity anymore. Hamas political bureau member Basem Naim stressed a few days ago that it was impossible to discuss the ceasefire agreement because of "violations by Israel." He made clear that "resistance" is the Palestinian people's "right" and that weapons are an inseparable part of that "resistance."

Earlier, the spokesman for Hamas' military wing claimed that the

demand to disarm was "a scandalous attempt by the occupation to achieve through negotiations what it could not achieve on the battlefield." Hamas' position on the issue of weapons does not need to be read between the lines.

Alongside the restoration of governance, Hamas is continuing its military entrenchment. Although for now it is projecting a desire for quiet that will allow it to rebuild, it will not miss any opportunity that comes its way to abduct soldiers or carry out an offensive operation if it believes its chances of success are reasonable.

Israeli counterterrorism efforts in Gaza are far from keeping pace with Hamas' reconstruction and reflect a walk on an excessively thin tightrope in the face of the threats on the ground. A large share of the IDF's attention and resources is rightly directed toward Iran and Lebanon. This is precisely the space in which the Shin Bet and IDF Southern Command can step in, since they do not bear the operational burden on the Iranian and northern fronts and can bring their capabilities to bear in the Gazan arena, where it all began.

This is not only about thwarting weapons smuggling and production or cutting off Hamas' takeover of resources intended for Gaza's civilian population. It is also about initiating offensive operations against members, infrastructure, weapons stockpiles, tunnels, governing facilities and the like. Such operations would force Hamas to invest its resources in escape and concealment rather than reconstruction.

A string of successful counterterrorism operations in the Gaza Strip, without interfering with efforts on other fronts, is the mission Israel's political and security leadership should assign to the Shin Bet and IDF Southern Command. That is what is needed at the national level. The indirect benefit would be restoring the Shin Bet's reputation, channeling its positive forces into the operational sphere, and restoring the reputation it lost. (Israel Hayom May 12)

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## **Who Has the Upper Hand in Iran?** By John Spencer

One of the strangest habits in modern war analysis is how quickly survival gets confused with victory. Iran has not collapsed overnight. The regime still broadcasts threats, launches missiles and drones, and floods television and social media with declarations of imagined strength. From that surface-level reality, a growing chorus of commentators has rushed to claim that Iran has embarrassed the United States, exposed Israeli weakness, and seized control of escalation through its ability to threaten the Strait of Hormuz. Much of that analysis mistakes continued existence for strategic success and ignores nearly every measurable indicator of national power.

Wars are not scored like debates on cable television. They are judged through military capability, economic endurance, political cohesion, freedom of action, strategic leverage, and the ability to sustain power while degrading an opponent's. By those standards, Iran is substantially weaker today than it was before the war began. The United States and Israel still hold the upper hand because the foundations of Iranian power have been systematically reduced in ways that will take years to rebuild, if they can be rebuilt at all.

The scale of military destruction alone is extraordinary. Much of the senior leadership structure that spent decades constructing Iran's regional military network is dead. Senior IRGC commanders, missile force leaders, intelligence officials, nuclear scientists, operational planners, and even the Supreme Leader himself have been eliminated. Mohammad Bagheri, Hossein Salami, and other senior figures who represented the institutional backbone of Iran's military strategy are gone. Entire command relationships were shattered during the opening phases of the war, leaving surviving leaders scrambling to maintain continuity while under constant pressure.

The damage extends far beyond personnel losses. Nuclear facilities that represented decades of investment and strategic ambition now sit buried under rubble after sustained strikes on enrichment sites, underground complexes, centrifuge production facilities, research centers, and supporting infrastructure. Analysts continue to speak as though Iran can simply restart enrichment at industrial scale in a matter of months. That misunderstands what was destroyed. Advanced centrifuge production depends on precision manufacturing, specialized tooling, secure facilities, trained personnel, supply chains, and protected infrastructure. Large portions of that ecosystem no longer exist.

Iran once believed it could steadily push its nuclear and missile programs toward a threshold where the military cost of stopping them would become politically unacceptable for any outside power. That strategy shaped Tehran's thinking for years. The regime hoped to create a fait accompli, a hardened shield of missiles, proxies,

underground facilities, and enrichment capability that would eventually deter meaningful intervention. Instead, the war demonstrated that the shield was penetrable and that the consequences of crossing certain lines were far greater than Tehran anticipated.

Its missile enterprise has suffered similar devastation. Before the war, Iran had steadily expanded ballistic missile production and stockpiles as the centerpiece of its deterrent strategy. Analysts estimated the regime could manufacture roughly one hundred ballistic missiles per month. Today many of the machine tooling centers, fuel production facilities, assembly plants, storage depots, and transport infrastructure that sustained that output are destroyed or inoperable. Production has effectively collapsed under sustained strikes, economic isolation, cyber operations, and industrial disruption. A state can expend missiles quickly in war. Rebuilding the industrial base that creates them is a much slower process.

Iran's naval capabilities have also absorbed severe damage. Large portions of the Iranian Navy and IRGC maritime forces were destroyed or rendered ineffective during the campaign. Tehran had invested heavily in asymmetric maritime warfare through fast attack craft, anti-ship missiles, naval mines, IRGC naval units, and swarm tactics intended to threaten global shipping. Many of those capabilities were directly targeted. Naval staging areas, missile launch infrastructure, command facilities, and key maritime assets were destroyed in strikes specifically designed to prevent Iran from controlling chokepoints or sustaining attacks on international commerce. Iran can still create disruption. It can still threaten shipping lanes and inject uncertainty into global markets. But threatening commerce is not the same thing as commanding the sea.

The debate over the Strait of Hormuz reflects a broader misunderstanding about power itself. Many analysts point to Iran's ability to threaten oil markets as evidence that Tehran somehow controls escalation and can ultimately force the United States and its allies into retreat. Secretary of State Marco Rubio described this dynamic accurately when he referred to Iran's use of the Strait as an "economic nuclear weapon." By openly threatening the world economy through coercion and instability, Iran may have accomplished the opposite of what it intended. It reinforced for regional governments and global powers why the regime can never again be allowed to hold that level of leverage unchecked.

Across the Gulf, states are already accelerating efforts to bypass dependence on the Strait through pipelines, expanded port infrastructure, and alternative export corridors. The UAE's growing alignment with Israel reflects a wider regional shift underway. Governments that once viewed Iran as a difficult but necessary regional power increasingly see it as the primary source of instability threatening economic growth and long-term security. Tehran spent years trying to convince the region that resistance movements and proxy militias represented strength. The war has increasingly exposed them as engines of destruction that drag entire societies toward crisis.

The same flawed black-and-white thinking shapes discussion of Iran's nuclear material and enrichment program. Some analysts insist Iran will never negotiate, never surrender enriched uranium, and inevitably race toward a bomb again the moment fighting stops. No serious strategist can predict with certainty how the regime behaves under sustained military and economic pressure. The material could ultimately be removed through negotiation, coercive diplomacy, or force. What matters strategically is that Iran has once again validated every warning that drove decades of nonproliferation concerns. The regime demonstrated how close it intended to move toward nuclear weapons capability while simultaneously funding proxy terrorism, threatening maritime commerce, and destabilizing the region through armed militias.

Iran's air defenses and air force have also been badly degraded. Israeli and American aircraft operated repeatedly over Iranian territory after dismantling much of the country's integrated air defense system. Radar sites, command nodes, surface-to-air missile batteries, and air bases were systematically targeted. Iran's air force, already aging and technologically outmatched before the war, was further devastated through losses in aircraft, infrastructure, maintenance capacity, and operational readiness. Once a country loses the ability to contest its own airspace in a meaningful way, every other vulnerability becomes magnified.

Economically, the pressure is immense. Oil exports, industrial production, energy infrastructure, shipping, and foreign investment have all suffered major disruption. Analyses from the Foundation for Defense of Democracies estimate economic losses well into the hundreds of billions when direct damage, lost production, sanctions pressure, and long-term contraction are combined. Even if the war

ended tomorrow, recovery would likely take years. Sustained military destruction layered onto sanctions creates compounding effects that spread through every sector of a national economy. Inflation rises. Currency stability erodes. Capital flees. Supply chains fracture. Public frustration deepens.

Political stress inside the regime is becoming increasingly visible as well. Iranian leaders have publicly contradicted one another over retaliation, negotiations, military strategy, and relations with outside powers. That matters because authoritarian systems depend heavily on projecting unity and control. Visible disagreement signals strain throughout the governing structure. The regime has also kept internet access heavily restricted for much of its population since the war began, fearing unrest and uncontrolled information flow. Governments confident in their domestic stability rarely isolate their own citizens from the outside world during conflict.

Iran's regional proxy network has suffered devastating setbacks. Hamas's senior leadership and much of its military infrastructure were destroyed in the war that followed the October 7 attacks. While Hamas still exists as a political force in portions of Gaza, it no longer resembles the organization that once coordinated large-scale cross-border assaults, sustained prolonged combat operations, and relied on steady external resupply from Iran and its regional network. Its tunnel systems, weapons production capacity, command structure, and foreign support pipelines have been systematically dismantled or severely degraded. Cut off from many of its external backers and facing constant military pressure, Hamas has been reduced from a regional instrument of Iranian power projection to a battered and isolated insurgent remnant struggling to survive.

Hezbollah, long marketed as Iran's crown jewel of deterrence, suffered equally devastating blows. Senior leadership figures were eliminated, experienced commanders lost, weapons stockpiles destroyed, and critical infrastructure across southern Lebanon heavily damaged. The fall of the Assad regime in Syria and sustained interdiction campaigns also severed or severely disrupted many of the logistical corridors that once allowed Iran to move missiles, weapons systems, and advanced military equipment into Lebanon. Hezbollah remains dangerous, but the image of an untouchable proxy army capable of dictating escalation across the region has been badly shattered.

The Houthis have also suffered major attrition and remain increasingly isolated and under pressure even if they retain some disruptive capacity. Shi'ite militia groups tied to Tehran across Iraq and Syria face operational constraints, leadership losses, and growing scrutiny from local governments. For decades Iran relied on proxy warfare because it offered strategic depth at relatively low direct cost. That model is now strained across nearly every theater simultaneously.

Some analysts continue to argue that because Iran can still fire missiles, threaten shipping, or survive politically, the United States is strategically cornered and desperate for an exit. That argument confuses the ability to inflict pain with the ability to achieve strategic success. Damaged powers can remain dangerous for long periods of time. History is full of weakened states capable of lashing out violently even while losing the broader balance of power around them. Serious strategic analysis requires measuring what Iran has lost alongside what it can still do.

Many analysts want to simplify a deeply complex war into slogans. Iran is winning. America is losing. Trump is trapped. Those narratives often avoid confronting the measurable destruction Iran has suffered, the years required to rebuild its military-industrial base, and the strategic value of preventing a terrorist regime from reaching a no-turning-back threshold in nuclear weapons capability and missile production. They also dismiss the importance of preserving freedom of navigation, protecting regional partners, and degrading a state that spent decades funding terrorism and destabilizing the Middle East.

No one can predict the future with certainty. No analyst possesses a crystal ball capable of forecasting whether the Islamic regime can survive the long-term political and economic consequences of this war. But based on every serious measure of national power, Iran is weaker today than before the conflict began. Its military has been shattered across multiple domains. Its economy is under severe strain. Its proxies are degraded. Its deterrence credibility has suffered. Its strategic ambitions have been rolled back. The United States and its partners still hold the upper hand because the foundations of Iranian power have been systematically reduced, and rebuilding them may take far longer than many observers are willing to admit.

(Urban Warfare May 10)

## The Anti-Zionist Contagion By Melanie Phillips

Over the past few days, antisemitism has exploded as an issue in Britain.

It was a reaction to two things. Last week, two Jews were stabbed in separate attacks in the streets of London's largely Jewish area of Golders Green. This week, the insurgent Green Party very publicly sank into a sewer of Jew-hatred during the run-up to Britain's local government elections.

Dozens of Green Party candidates, whose supposed environmental concerns have given way to a hard-left, anti-Israel agenda, were revealed over the past few days as having a record of blood-curdling Jew-hatred.

Their party leader, Zack Polanski—who is himself a Jew—had asked whether British Jews were really unsafe or merely had “a perception of unsafety.” After the Golders Green attacks, he provoked outrage by criticizing the police for kicking the attacker to disarm him.

British Jews are under increasingly aggressive siege from abuse, intimidation, discrimination, arson attacks on their institutions, street violence and terrorism that left two Jews dead in a synagogue on Yom Kippur.

The Golders Green stabbings last week provoked a huge outpouring of revulsion and concern. There was a fusillade of bromides about “no place for antisemitism in Britain” from the prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer, and other Labour Party politicians.

The media suddenly started publishing accounts by deeply distressed British Jews about the state of fear in which they were being forced to live. Commentators produced outraged and horrified diatribes against a society that was forcing its Jews to consider emigrating.

Yet some of those voices had previously produced outraged and horrified diatribes against the State of Israel, recycling defamatory falsehoods about the behavior of the Israel Defense Forces in the Gaza Strip.

This discrepancy alone should have sounded a warning that, for all the public breast-beating, the real point was still being lost.

This is because attacks on Jews are still deemed to be in a separate category from attacks on Israel or Zionism. The assumption is that attacks on Jews are very bad indeed because they are against people, but attacks on Israel or Zionism are absolutely fine because they are merely against a country or an ideology.

The distinction is false, and itself helps fuel the hatred of both Israel and Jews.

The point was illustrated this week in Manhattan. At Park East Synagogue on New York City's Upper East Side, where an event marketing Israeli real estate was taking place, hundreds of masked Islamists and their supporters chanted from behind a police barricade: “We don't want two states. We want '48!”

The mob, which flew a Hezbollah flag, was spearheaded by a branch of Al-Awda, which is linked to Samidoun, a U.S.-designated terror organization.

The police thankfully prevented a repeat of what happened last November at Park East, when anti-Israel demonstrators blocked people from entering and exiting the synagogue. That intimidation helped motivate city legislators to tell the police to establish a protest-free “buffer zone” around houses of worship.

The city's Islamist mayor, Zohran Mamdani, is ruthlessly exploiting the false distinction between attacking Israel and attacking Jews.

“There is no tolerance for hatred of Jewish New Yorkers,” he said about the Park East demonstration. Yet at the same time, he registered his opposition to the synagogue event that was promoting the sale of land “in occupied West Bank in settlements that are a violation of international law.”

Condemning Jew-hatred while simultaneously inciting it through incendiary distortions is the mind-twisting stock in trade of the anti-Israel left.

In Britain, Starmer's government is now talking about banning the “hate marches” that have taken place almost every week since the Hamas-led atrocities in Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. The belated realization is beginning to dawn that the chanting on these marches for the murder of Jews may help cause actual attacks on Jews.

Despite this, Starmer and many others are still failing to join the necessary dots. The rampant Jew-hatred that has so shocked them is the result of something that they won't acknowledge.

It's anti-Zionism that is poisoning Western society, spreading a

mind virus that's targeting both the Jewish world and Western civilization itself. This contagion is being spread principally by Islamists, who are gleefully tapping into the anti-Zionism that has captured the non-Muslim progressive classes, including vast swathes of the young.

The question that's constantly asked—if anti-Zionism really is antisemitism or is something different—fails to encompass the sickening enormity of what's happened.

Anti-Zionism is an evil in itself because it launders antisemitism. It singles out the Jewish state for a verbal pogrom of wild blood libels straight out of medieval Christian, Soviet and Nazi demonology.

Accusations against Israel of “genocide,” starving innocent Gazans to death or wanton “baby-killing” aren't just defamatory lies. They present the Israelis as positively evil and a uniquely demonic force in the world which therefore needs to be removed.

This murderous hatred doesn't just fuel the aim of eliminating Israel. It's also awakened that lightest of sleepers in the West, the secret wish of millions to remove the Jews from their world altogether.

The “hate marches” have been joined by people who may think they're supporting the poor, oppressed Palestinians against the cruel and oppressive Israelis who have occupied their land. Nevertheless, these marches are in themselves an attack on Jews because they are an attack on Zionism, a denial of the right of the Jewish people alone to have their own nation-state in their own ancestral homeland.

Led, organized and funded by Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran, these marches aren't organized principally to protest against Israel or in support of “Palestine.” They are instead an expression of near-delirious Islamist triumphalism and a statement that the Muslims now control the streets.

For the Islamists, the Oct. 7 atrocities signaled the beginning of the end of the Zionist entity, itself a stepping stone to the conquest of the West.

The Islamists believe that they're on course to victory because there's been no pushback against them, only against Israel. Hamas actually thanked Starmer for rewarding them on Oct. 7 by recognizing a “State of Palestine.” And they gloat that U.S. President Donald Trump is being outwitted by the regime in Tehran.

In America, the Democratic Party is hurtling down the anti-Zionist rabbit hole. This has given permission to the Tucker Carlson faction of MAGA Republicans to parade their vicious conspiracy theories about Jews and Israel.

Meanwhile, Britain and Europe are rapidly losing their historic cultural identity to Islamization. And that's not all.

It's now clear that the threat to the West from communism didn't collapse along with the Soviet Union in 1989. Communism merely shifted its strategy to wage a culture war that has colonized the Western intelligentsia by anti-West hatred, and to use the Palestinian cause as a Trojan Horse to destroy the West's moral compass altogether.

In the 1960s, the Palestinian terrorist leader Yasser Arafat cooked up a fictitious Palestinian identity with the Soviet Union.

In 1975, the KGB orchestrated the U.N. declaration that Zionism was racism.

In the 1980s, as the scholar Izabella Tabarovsky has documented, the Soviet Union promoted the “genocide” libel against Israel.

Fighting the menace of Islamist and communist-backed anti-Zionism is hardly being assisted by Diaspora Jews protesting that attacking them is unjustified because they have nothing to do with Israel. This merely reinforces the impression that Israel is too awful to be identified with.

Diaspora Jews should be loudly declaring instead that Palestinian identity is a fabrication created to destroy Israel and steal the Jews' own history in their ancestral homeland. They should be saying that Israel always acts in accordance with international law. They should be calling out Muslim antisemitism as a scourge going way beyond Islamist extremists.

They don't do so, either through fear or because too many themselves believe the lies or support the poisonous ideologies that underwrite them.

Anti-Zionism is a weapon of mass destruction—not just against Israel and the Jews but against the West. It's high time that Diaspora Jewish leaders acknowledged this and started fighting it robustly in public. They would gain many allies if they got up off their knees and did so. (JNS May 7)