



Jerusalem 7:06
Toronto 8:42

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*

which Jews across the west are being threatened, abused and attacked.

Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy has accused the Israelis of starving Gazan civilians, killing a disproportionate number of

them, causing a humanitarian catastrophe, and repeatedly striking hospitals and aid workers.

Yet it's Hamas that's to blame for all this by stealing the food aid, using Gaza's population as human shields and cannon fodder, and turning hospitals into legitimate military targets under international law by hiding its infrastructure of mass murder underneath them.

Australia's foreign minister Penny Wong has accused Israel falsely of "killing civilians by the thousands", for overseeing the starvation of children and for pushing ahead with "illegal settlements" in the West Bank.

Norway's foreign minister, Espen Barth Eide, has accused Israel of war crimes.

And when a heckler at a meeting in Calgary last April shouted "There's genocide happening in Palestine right now!" Canada's prime minister Mark Carney responded: "I'm aware! That's why we have an arms embargo!"

These statements are all blood libels against Israel, based on lies and wild distortions and the reversal of victim and aggressor in a vicious scapegoating that's truly wicked.

The picture these governments are all painting, depicting Israelis as inhumane monsters, is bound to incite hatred of Israel, a belief that it's so evil it shouldn't exist at all, and corresponding violence against Jews as "supporters of child-killers" or "genocide".

In any event, what conceivable business is it of Britain and the rest to intervene in Israel's domestic affairs and instruct it what to do with its own government ministers?

They treat no other country like this. But this virulent hostility is now the default position throughout the western so-called progressive and educated world.

Indeed, the more "progressive" the government, the worse this gets. It's no coincidence that Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway, which have liberal or left-wing governments, are viciously hostile to Israel and are where there's some of the most extreme and pervasive Jew-hatred in the west.

And their double standards are quite eye-watering.

Mahmoud Abbas's Palestinian Authority is still getting money and support from Britain and the rest despite continuing to pay some \$300 million annually to terrorists and their families as a reward for murdering Jews, and despite the clear evidence of its systemic, medieval and Nazi-style demonization of Jews.

The Palestinian Authority's so-called ambassador to Britain, Hussam Zomlot, actually accused the Israelis of having "genocidal genes". If that isn't extremist rhetoric that can incite violence, what is? Yet Zomlot isn't being sanctioned by the British government but continues to be treated as a respected diplomat.

The five foreign ministers' statement of "unwavering support for Israel's security" is sheer humbug. Their repeated calls for an immediate ceasefire by Israel would mean victory for Hamas and the certainty of future slaughter of Israelis.

Given the Palestinian Arab strategy of a Palestine state as a stage towards Israel's destruction, the unceasing calls to slaughter Jews emanating from Palestinian society and that society's overwhelming and declared support for repeated October 7-style massacres, the two-state solution would be in fact a final solution.

And so these five governments are actively working for Israel's surrender to genocidal Islamism.

The vilification of Israel is an attempt to cast it as a pariah state in order to prime the world to support its destruction. Britain, Canada Australia New Zealand and Norway have now shown beyond doubt they are part of that shocking campaign.

These five governments have chosen to stand with genocidal Islamists against Israel, with lies against truth and thus with barbarism against civilisation. They are allies of Israel no longer. They are a menace to civilisation itself. (Substack Jun 11)

Commentary...

Allies No Longer By Melanie Phillips

Two members of Israel's ruling coalition, Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, have been targeted with sanctions by the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway.

You don't have to support Ben-Gvir and Smotrich to see how loathsome this move is. Never before have these countries sanctioned members of an ally's government.

And this during a global onslaught against Israel in which it's being accused of war crimes, human rights abuses and genocidal extermination of which it's not only innocent but is itself the victim.

The statement by the foreign ministers of the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway underlines the already all-too obvious fact that the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway are very much part of that onslaught.

Ben-Gvir and Smotrich themselves will hardly be affected by these sanctions. The real purpose of this statement — despite its hypocritical pieties about wanting "a strong friendship with the people of Israel" — is to treat Israel as a pariah, on the basis of systematic lies, distortions and demonization.

The foreign ministers state: "Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich have incited extremist violence and serious abuses of Palestinian human rights."

These men are therefore not being targeted for what they've done but for what they've said.

Yes, the language they use is variously sometimes extreme or recklessly inflammatory. Many Israelis are deeply opposed to the hardline policies both men represent.

But what these five foreign ministers fail to acknowledge is that much of the rhetoric and attitudes of these men is in response to the sustained and endemic violence by Palestinian Arabs against Israeli Jews, in pursuit of the extermination of both Jews and the State of Israel.

The foreign ministers state that "extremist settler violence and settlement expansion" undermine a future Palestinian state.

Yes, there is a problem with a small minority of Israelis living in the disputed areas of Judea and Samaria, or the West Bank, who are aggressive and violent. And yes, there are some illegal Israeli settlements.

But what the foreign ministers fail to acknowledge is that much of this so-called "settler violence" is actually self defence against the multitudinous attacks on Israeli residents by local Arabs, which occur almost every day.

And they also fail to acknowledge the illegal Arab settlements which are being built across the "West Bank" in order to encircle and squeeze out the Israeli residents — the only people who are entitled to live there under international law several times over.

Why do these foreign ministers ignore this Arab violence against Israelis? Why do they ignore this Arab expansionism? They view the Israeli residents in these territories as an impediment to a future Palestine state. Why?

Twenty per cent of Israel's population is Arab. Why shouldn't a future Palestine state contain thousands of Israeli residents? Why are the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway thus promoting the ethnic cleansing of Jews from a future state of Palestine?

Their badly written statement hysterically repeats a combination of "settlers," "violence" and "extremism" in every paragraph about the "West Bank," with no mention at all of the murderous violence Israeli residents there have suffered for so many years. The only violence these foreign ministers can see is by Israelis. Why is that?

And if, as they say, "violence is incited by extremist rhetoric," well these ministers and other members of their governments are themselves guilty of precisely such incitement. In statement after statement, they've helped fuel the current pre-pogrom atmosphere in

Responsibility, Anyone? On the Future of Haredi Politics

By Rabbi Yehoshua Pfeffer

“Anyone who is not a Torah student must serve in the army!”

The rabbinic leadership of previous generations—from Rav Yechezkel Abramsky to Rav Aharon Leib Steinman—made this statement unequivocally. Granting deferrals to boys who were not full-time Torah students, they warned, undermines the status of true yeshivah students.

This, of course, is precisely the case today. Allowing thousands of non-yeshivah boys to enter the IDF would relieve the intense pressure on those genuinely dedicated to full-time Torah study. Moreover, it would temper the deep resentment Israelis feel toward the Haredi community, which refuses to serve despite the army’s manpower crisis. And it would grant Haredi leadership valuable leverage in shaping the legislation on which the survival of the current government depends.

So why is the statement not being made by the Haredi establishment?

The answer, I believe, lies in one word: responsibility. And this, more than anything, is the area that requires a dramatic transformation.

Some years ago, I was struck by a radio interview with then-Health Minister Yaakov Litzman, a Gerrer Chassid representing Agudat Yisrael.

“Imagine that in the next elections, the Haredi parties win a majority in the Knesset,” the interviewer opened. “What do you do?” Litzman refused to entertain the premise. “We will always be a minority,” he said flatly. But the interviewer pressed: “Just imagine it happened—what then?” Litzman, however, held the line: “It won’t happen. It can’t happen. We will always be a minority.”

He was not dissembling. On the contrary, he was expressing a profound (and troubling) truth.

What Litzman was really being asked was: What do you want? Suppose the keys to the State of Israel were handed over to the Haredim—what then? What would you do with the country? And Litzman’s answer was clear: We do not want the keys. We cannot be the majority. Because being the majority implies something we cannot assume: full responsibility for the Jewish state.

And once Haredim accept responsibility for Israel as a whole, they cease, by definition, to be Haredim as we know them.

Haredi society was born in retreat: retreat from modernity, secularism, and the Zionist state. With the blessing of Israel’s founding father and first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, it focused its energies on a single monumental project—rebuilding the decimated Torah world. Yeshivot, Chassidic courts, communal infrastructure and religious services all took shape within a carefully guarded internal sphere.

And what about Israel? Well, that was someone else’s concern.

The Haredi project succeeded beyond anyone’s expectations. The Torah world today is larger, more established, and more influential than ever before. But its scope of responsibility never expanded. It remained bounded by the Haredi space itself, tracing a parallel line with the State of Israel.

In the early years, this approach was almost obvious. Our mission is to perpetuate the Judaism of thousands of years. Time would tell whether Israel becomes part of this Jewish history. In the meantime, there was urgent work to do.

Down the line, as Israel became the accepted political representative of the Jewish people, the argument for exclusive internal focus weakened. Yet to assume national responsibility would have meant stepping outside the isolationist framework that, until now, has served as both protection and identity.

Which brings us to our current crisis.

Haredi representatives and politicians cannot say that non-learning boys should enlist, because doing so would represent a fundamental shift in orientation. It would signal a new kind of responsibility: not just for our yeshivot, not just for Haredi housing or budgets, but for Israel. For the IDF, the most central institution in the Israeli collective experience.

With responsibility comes belonging, and with belonging, identity. A person might still be Haredi, but a broader Jewish and Israeli identity transforms the way one sees the world. It fosters concern for wider society, a sense of solidarity with non-Haredi Jews, and a

willingness to weigh political decisions beyond the narrow calculus of sectoral gain.

Which is exactly what Haredi politicians fear most.

Those of us who are Jewish before we are Haredi, who recognize the gravity of this moment and the moral summons it entails, must say clearly and unequivocally: This cannot go on.

With success comes responsibility. And the extraordinary success of the Haredi enterprise renders the continued refusal to share in the burdens of statehood, especially amid a devastating war, ethically and spiritually indefensible.

And behold, a remarkable twist: Amid the debate, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee turns to Haredi representatives and activists, urging them not to bring down the government. The Iranian issue is at the forefront, he explains, and elections at this time would make it difficult for Washington to stand behind Israel. Anybody for responsibility?

Our politics must reflect both deep Jewish-Israeli responsibility and the enduring values that the Haredi world holds dear. It is an existential matter, both for Israel and for the continued thriving of Haredi society. If today’s political leadership cannot rise to this challenge, the only path forward is to build an alternative.

(JNS Jun 11)

Advancing Israel’s Sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, and Beyond By Sheri Oz

Israel’s commitment to its historical homeland and the security of its people is being powerfully articulated through a series of legislative initiatives presented during the current government’s term.

These bills represent a multi-faceted drive to secure Israeli sovereignty, not only over vital territories in Judea and Samaria, but also to fortify the nation’s legal, procedural and policy autonomy in the face of persistent external pressures.

This legislative wave underscores a powerful national resolve, championed by the current government, to shape Israel’s future in accordance with its foundational values and strategic imperatives.

The current legislative landscape showcases a determined, unified strategy to solidify Israel’s presence across Judea and Samaria.

The seven bills specifically targeting settlement areas in Judea and Samaria all propose extending Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration to these communities. This crucial step aims to finally normalize the lives of hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens who, despite living in established towns and cities, currently operate under an anachronistic military administration.

Approval of this legislation would end the discriminatory legal status for Israelis and ensure they live under the same civil law as all other citizens, in contrast to the current situation in which the “Settlements Law” needs to be renewed every five years for residents to receive their civil rights as citizens of Israel.

For the Jordan Valley, legislative efforts emphasize its indispensable security role. These six bills seek to apply Israeli sovereignty over this strategic region, widely recognized as Israel’s eastern defensive barrier. The urgency of this move has been underscored by recent events, reinforcing the need to secure this vital area for national defense.

Adding another layer of strategic importance are the two identical bills focusing on Ma’ale Adumim. These proposals seek to bring this crucial urban center, strategically linking Jerusalem to the Jordan Valley and Judea Desert, under full Israeli law. Ma’ale Adumim is not merely a settlement; it is an inseparable part of Israel’s historical heartland and a key to securing its capital.

These distinct yet interconnected legislative thrusts—integrating broad settlement areas, securing a vital security corridor and solidifying control over key urban blocs—demonstrate a comprehensive strategy to realize Israel’s rightful claims throughout Judea and Samaria. Proponents emphasize that these steps reflect the Jewish people’s natural right to self-determination in their ancestral land and will not fundamentally alter Israel’s demographic balance.

Beyond direct territorial claims, a related legislative front is emerging to safeguard Israel’s sovereignty against international challenges and preserve its autonomy in critical policy domains.

Defending against political warfare (The bill on limiting cooperation with the International Criminal Court): This vital bill aims to protect Israel's public officials, security forces, and citizens from what are correctly perceived as politically motivated and one-sided criminal proceedings by the International Criminal Court. By prohibiting both public and private entities from assisting the ICC in its baseless inquiries against Israelis, and by imposing robust sanctions for non-compliance, Israel is sending an unequivocal message: It will not cooperate with attempts to delegitimize its actions or persecute its defenders. This legislation, mirroring similar protective measures taken by other sovereign nations, is a necessary shield against legal warfare designed to undermine Israel's very right to self-defense.

Realizing the vision (The sweeping law on applying Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria): This foundational bill represents a bold declaration of Israel's long-term vision for its historical homeland. It calls for the comprehensive application of Israeli law, jurisdiction, and administration throughout all of Judea and Samaria within a mere 90 days. This essential step would finally rectify the anomalous legal status of the region, superseding outdated military ordinances with the full force of Israeli civil law. Crucially, it also provides a clear, conditional pathway to residency for non-Israeli (i.e., Arab) residents, ensuring proper security vetting and adherence to national responsibilities. This legislation is a profound statement of Israel's rightful and permanent claim to its ancestral homeland.

Empowering the people (Referendum Basic Law amendment): This significant bill empowers the Israeli public to directly participate in historic decisions concerning national sovereignty. It mandates a national referendum to approve any government decision or agreement that applies Israeli law or sovereignty to new territories, unless it secures an overwhelming 80-Knesset-member majority. This ensures that such momentous steps, whether expanding or adjusting Israel's sovereign footprint, reflect the broad will of the Israeli people, reinforcing the nation's democratic foundations.

Safeguarding national health (The bill on strengthening health-care sovereignty against WHO regulations): This forward-looking bill extends Israel's assertion of sovereignty to vital policy domains, specifically protecting the nation's health-care system from undue external interference. It mandates that Israel will object to, or refrain from approving, World Health Organization (WHO) regulations that undermine the independent judgment of the Israeli government or Knesset, impose unwanted resource transfers, or risk unjust condemnation. This is a crucial response to growing concerns about the politicization of international health bodies, particularly in the wake of global pandemics. Israel must retain full control over its public health decisions and resources to effectively safeguard its citizens.

The consistent political backing for these diverse legislative efforts highlights a powerful, unified national consensus. Initiators overwhelmingly hail from the Likud, Religious Zionist Party, Otzma Yehudit and Yisrael Beiteinu. This broad alignment among Israel's national and religious Zionist parties underscores a deep, shared ideological commitment to extending and strengthening Israeli sovereignty across all its crucial dimensions—territorial, legal, procedural and policy—reflecting the nation's unwavering determination for a secure and prosperous future.

It should be noted that popular empowerment comes from an unexpected quarter, with a Labor Knesset member initiating the bill proposing a referendum before extending Israel's sovereignty beyond its current bounds. This underscores the fundamental democratic imperative that such momentous decisions—whether involving territorial expansion or concession—must ultimately reflect the will of the Israeli public, reinforcing the nation's democratic foundations.

The legislative initiatives concerning Judea and Samaria, fortified by bills safeguarding against political warfare, asserting comprehensive claims, empowering democratic processes and protecting national health autonomy, paint a clear picture of Israel's unwavering commitment to its sovereignty on the part of the nationalist camp. These proposals are poised to definitively shape the legal and geographical status of these territories and ensure Israel's enduring strength and independence in the international arena.

(JNS Jun 11)

Israel's Brilliant Handling of the 'Flotilla' Affair

By Ruthie Blum

It was supposed to be a grand act of defiance—another headline-grabbing spectacle in the ongoing campaign to vilify the Jewish state. Instead, it became a floating punchline.

The so-called “freedom flotilla” set sail earlier this month from Sicily, bound for Gaza, carrying meager amounts of food and other forms of aid. Aboard the lone boat, the British-flagged schooner *Madleen*, was a small cast of sanctimonious “humanitarians.”

Chief among them was Swedish climate crusader Greta Thunberg. Joining her was French Member of the European Parliament Rima Hassan and another 10 or so activists trying to make themselves relevant.

What they billed as a noble mission was actually a farce. Wasting no time in exposing the charade, the Israeli Foreign Ministry mockingly christened the vessel the “selfie yacht.”

And with good reason.

From the moment the motley crew departed, the journey resembled an influencer retreat more than a relief operation. Social media lit up with snapshots of a gleeful, keffiyeh-clad Greta and her companions beaming with self-congratulatory pride.

Responding with neither alarm nor outrage, Israel chose an approach that blended humor with restraint and just the right amount of ridicule. When the ship was some 120 miles away from its destination, Israeli naval forces intercepted and boarded it—bearing refreshments.

Yes, really.

Rather than arrest the dozen pro-Hamas agitators, the men and women in uniform handed them braided challah rolls and bottles of water. Even Greta grinned as she accepted the sandwich, which happened to be wrapped in non-biodegradable cellophane.

Naturally, the world-famous eco-sold couldn't refuse. After all, hypocrisy pairs well with carbs.

This wasn't Greta's first environmentally inconvenient moment. On the contrary, she's often been observed violating her own hyped-up code of phony ethics. In fairness, building her brand on shaming others for behavior in which she herself indulges is part of the politically correct scam.

But her transition from planet savior to Palestinian “resistance” warrior has taken omni-cause theatrics to a whole new level. Luckily, she didn't have to find a different color to represent her latest iteration, since green is also Hamas's signature hue.

Greta isn't as clever at her antics as she and her admirers seem to think, however. Prior to her encounter with the Israeli military, the former child climate star and current infantile adult taped a short video in anticipation of the event.

In the pre-recorded clip, she declared that anyone watching it should know she'd been “kidnapped by Israeli occupational [sic] forces” and urged that pressure be put on the Swedish government for her release.

That she dared invoke abduction in this context as a TikTok ploy—with 55 hostages still in Hamas captivity—wasn't merely cringe-inducing; it was abominable.

This made what ensued all the more delicious, particularly as it caused her video to go viral for none of the reasons she'd intended. Having your “abductors” greet you with hospitality, not handcuffs, will do that.

And that was only the beginning of Israel's brilliant move. After the pampered progressives were escorted to the port of Ashdod, they were given medical exams and arrangements were made for return trips to their home countries. In the meantime, they were shown the 43-minute film of the atrocities committed by Hamas and Gazan “civilians” on Oct. 7, 2023.

Yes, these paragons of virtue-signaling, filled with hubris and armed with hashtags, were shown the mass murder, sexual violence, torture and kidnappings carried out and proudly documented by the Palestinian perpetrators whose flag they love to wave.

Talk about a punishment fitting a crime—though educating a group of ignoramuses on the justice of Israel's war against the sadistic, Iranian-backed barbarians along its southern border should be seen as a prize, not a punitive measure. In a sane universe, that is.

In Greta-land, there's no room for sanity. Or integrity. It's no

wonder, then, that as soon as she and her cohorts realized what they were watching, they refused to continue. Heaven forbid they should be confused by inconvenient facts, especially bloody ones, which might put a damper on their mendacious narrative.

Still, Israel handled the situation with class by exposing the “flotilla” pretense as an attention-grabbing ruse orchestrated by people who know little and care less about the region they presume to champion. In other words, it took the opportunity to turn the tables on its haters—with kosher snacks and an equally kosher response to the entire episode.

Doing so served as an example to the world that quiet confidence and moral clarity are superior to performative outrage. Through the calm dismantling of a contrived provocation, Israel upheld its dignity while letting its detractors reveal their own absurdity. (JNS June 10)

Israel’s Gambit: Empowering Gaza Militia to Help Crush Hamas

By Yaakov Lappin

A recent clash in which the Israel Defense Forces provided air support for a local Gazan militia against Hamas terrorists has brought into sharp focus a new and controversial Israeli tactic aimed at boosting the goal of dismantling the terror group’s rule from within.

On June 9, after Hamas terrorists reportedly opened fire on forces belonging to the Abu Shabab clan, an Israeli Air Force aircraft intervened, striking and killing five Hamas terrorists.

The incident occurred as Yasser Abu Shabab, the head of the militia, announced a recruitment drive for his armed group to establish “administrative and community committees” to serve as a governance alternative to Hamas in eastern Rafah.

The approach of empowering local armed groups is seen by some former Israeli defense officials as a pragmatic and effective tool for a transitional phase, while others warn it is a “dangerous and dirty game” fraught with long-term risks, though it could still deliver short-term benefits.

Lt. Col. (res.) Amit Yagur, former deputy head of the Palestinian arena at the IDF Planning Branch and a former naval intelligence officer, told JNS on Tuesday that this approach is rooted in a strategic imperative to prioritize civilian steps, alongside the military effort to achieve an irreversible defeat of Hamas.

Yagur argued for moving beyond the debate of “what not to do”—such as reinstalling the Palestinian Authority in Gaza or imposing a full-scale Israeli military administration.

“Our eyes need to be on the ball. The ball is the dismantling of Hamas militarily and governmentally,” Yagur stated. “The civilian effort against Hamas, in my opinion, is much more important than the military effort. Not that the military effort should be trivialized, it’s not black or white, we need both, but our backbone needs to be the civilian one, because the civilian aspect is what bothers Hamas the most, for the simple reason that the military damage is [from Hamas’s viewpoint] recoverable.”

Hamas took into account that its capabilities would be hit and it plans on rearming after the war, Yagur said.

“It can smuggle or manufacture weapons after the war. What is not recoverable is the civilian issue. The moment you take away from a terror organization the population that is very important to it, because it lives within it, is embedded in it, and that is its source of legitimacy; the moment you take away its population and its essential rule over the population, then you have won the campaign. This is essentially irreversible, and this, we have not implemented over the past year and a half.”

In Yagur’s view, the use of local militias is key to making this civilian effort effective. “The ‘what should we do’ is the use of local militias that will help make this entire process of taking sovereignty away from Hamas more effective,” he said.

The militia’s role, he explained, is primarily to provide order and security for the Gaza civilian population, particularly around the new Israeli-backed humanitarian aid distribution centers.

“We saw that the population rushes the distribution centers, not because they want to wreck them, but simply because each one wants to get food, and they are used to the looting under Hamas where whoever gets there first and takes the most is the winner,” he said. “They need to be organized and policed, and this is what the militia

knows how to do well. This saves us the price of our soldiers having to confront this issue, because security control remains in the hands of the IDF.”

Yagur described this as the golden middle path that can lead to a transitional phase between active warfare and a “day after” solution in Gaza, which he envisioned as a civilian committee led by the United States and moderate Arab states.

Shalom Arbel, a former senior member of the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) who served from 1988 to 2013 in roles involving human intelligence recruitment and operations and before that as a major in the IDF reserves in Lebanon, Gaza and Judea and Samaria, outlined the risks on Tuesday.

“Of course, this has its pluses and minuses. The negatives,” he told JNS, “some of which we can already see in the public criticism, are really a public image issue, such as: ‘What, the IDF can’t do it? We’re giving what the IDF should be doing to a group of Gazan criminals? We’re letting a gang of criminals do our work for us?’ This is the general point, that it doesn’t look good—the image of shaking hands with gangsters, with militias, with criminals,” Arbel stated.

Beyond the image, Arbel raised concerns about a loss of control over the militia. “Who supervises this? According to what law does this operate? What are the rules? Who is the operator and within what legal and moral boundaries?”

He also pointed to the “day after” dilemma, describing the militias as a “double-edged sword.” “You are giving weapons to people who might one day fight you. And you are adding more weapons to a Strip that is already armed and needs to be disarmed of weapons, not have more weapons added. What do you do with them [militia members] afterwards? Will they be part of the Palestinian Authority? Will they be part of the next government? If so, then what is the next government? So what have you done for the ‘day after’ plan?”

Arbel stated that while the militias can help achieve the immediate goal of collapsing Hamas, it is a “bit of a dangerous game, a dirty game” and likely a short-term stopgap, not a long-term plan. He expressed a personal preference for direct Israeli military action, viewing the militia strategy as highly risky.

Yagur acknowledged these risks but framed them as a necessary part of a pragmatic, temporary solution. He also addressed concerns voiced by some of creating a “Somalia” in Gaza, stating that this is not where Gaza will be doing.

“The militias are good for exactly this bridge phase; they are not the end solution. The end solution as it is designated for Gaza, as far as I understand, is a solution of a civilian committee... led by the United States in partnership with several Arab states,” Yagur said. He asserted that managing risk is essential: “There are those who say, ‘it will turn against us.’ True, it could turn against us, but for that, we manage risks. All our lives, by the way... are risk management... We don’t live in a bubble and we need to descend to the realms of reality and also say what we can do. And therefore, at the current timing, in my view, this is a good solution.”

He noted the plan has the recommendation of the Shin Bet, and that Israel should strengthen its own “proxy muscle” in a world where its enemies use proxies against it.

Yagur added that the Abu Shabab militia is “closer to Fatah and opposes Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. Had they been ideologically affiliated with Hamas, they could not be trusted.”

Arbel, for his part, expressed deep skepticism about the significance of previous affiliations for groups like the Abu Shabab militia. He argued that while operatives might have past links to various organizations, as well as the Palestinian Authority or its General Intelligence, these formal labels are less important than the underlying social structure.

According to Arbel, such armed groups are based on families, origins, and intimate personal acquaintances rather than through formal party mechanisms.

“It’s a brother who takes his brother and takes his cousin,” citing Hamas itself and the Sinwar family as a prime example of this dynamic, he said. Their actions and allegiances, Arbel assessed, are driven by specific, localized interests rather than a rigid, top-down organizational or ideological commitment. (JNS Jun 10)