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ISRAEL NEWS

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From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
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Commentary...

The Peace Washington Missed By Amit Segal

It's Wednesday, June 24, and there is a famous phrase: "If you want peace, prepare for war." For Israel, the experience has been closer to "If you want peace, be at war." While fighting still raged in Gaza, while Israel was striking Syria, and while another war with Iran loomed, peace with two of those countries looked genuinely within reach. Lebanon might finally be rid of Hezbollah; a newly independent Syria might normalize with Israel. Now that the fronts have gone relatively quiet, both of those options are off the table.

At the outset of yesterday's talks—the fifth round between Lebanon and Israel—Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Leiter remarked that "we all got on the same train."

"We sat in the same car and traveled to the same destination, with the United States serving as the locomotive. The train was heading in a very clear direction: full peace between the countries, Iran and its malign influence out of Lebanon, the disarmament of Hezbollah, and peace and security for Lebanon and Israel. Today, this train is in danger of derailing. I hope we can get it back on track," Leiter said.

The truth is, it's already a wreck. What began in April as a desperate Lebanese effort to stop Israel's advance on Hezbollah has completely inverted. The supplicant now makes demands: President Joseph Aoun set the tone before talks even started—"we accept nothing less than an end to the Israeli occupation"—and Lebanon is reportedly now pressing for a complete Israeli withdrawal, with Hezbollah's disarmament looking less and less like a precondition it is willing to accept.

The roads to peace have largely disintegrated because, instead of peace going forth from Jerusalem, it is being dictated by Washington. In late June 2025, the U.S. issued sweeping sanctions relief for the ex-al-Qaeda-led government in Syria, which, according to my sources, would have been a successful bargaining chip for normalization. Meanwhile, the U.S.'s recent forced peace with Iran has weakened the confidence of Hezbollah's opposition, pushing the Lebanese to take the easy way out: demanding withdrawal with no plan to disarm the terror group. It is worth restating that the chances the LAF will disarm Hezbollah under current circumstances are somewhere between zero and never. This is the same army that was stopped at the door of a Hezbollah safe house by a group of women while the weapons were carried out the back. When Iran was actively being beaten by Israel and the U.S., and Hezbollah dragged Lebanon back into war on Iran's behalf, the government ordered the army to act against the terror group. The chief of staff refused, afraid of mutiny in his ranks and renewed civil war; and out of fear that a mutinous general might turn generalissimo, the government backed down. That chief of staff is still in his job. The LAF are effectively scarecrows—meant to scare off Hezbollah, but more often used by the birds as a perch instead.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia are currently pushing a plan to integrate Hezbollah into the armed forces—which, apart from being unlikely, seems to require a complete Israeli withdrawal as a precondition. It's unclear whether the plan is even being discussed in higher circles, but the question remains: Why are Egypt and Saudi Arabia effectively helping Iran?

Because, contrary to what some might assume, there are not two axes in the region but three. There is the anti-Iran axis, with Israel at its center; there is the Axis of Resistance, with Iran at its head; and then there is the go-along-to-get-along axis, which includes Egypt and Saudi Arabia. There is also the U.S. wildcard, which—as recent events attest—can jump between axes. To chart their course through this

turbulent period, the Egyptians and Saudis can't afford to let either axis gain absolute dominance, short of an outright victory that neither Israel nor Iran seems capable of winning. Absent a decisive shift, they want to

strengthen their own bloc at the expense of the other two. In their eyes, a slightly chaotic Lebanon is better than an Israeli-dominated one.

Is Israel going to withdraw? Certainly not. To put it bluntly: Israel doesn't trust the Lebanese government. It has never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

An unnamed senior official was quoted by Channel 13 as saying the IDF "captured territory in recent days for the purpose of negotiations, to then withdraw from them." Israel is standing on the precipice of a slippery slope: first a partial withdrawal, then back to the yellow line, then the outposts, and finally Israel's own border. At that point, Israel's border no longer means the line where sovereign territories meet, but the range of Hezbollah's missiles and drones. So, Israel is going to throw up barricades and fight for every inch of Lebanese territory.

Personally, I've got a suggestion for President Aoun: if you want to regain the south, start with the north and work your way down. Once you've reclaimed sovereignty in the Bekaa Valley and Dahiyeh, I'm sure Israel will be happy to hand you the land south of the Litani.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that the U.S. had demanded normalization from Syria as a precondition for sanctions relief, or that it had maintained overt pressure on Iran rather than opening negotiations. There is a real possibility that an Israeli embassy would now be under construction in Damascus—while, with no other option remaining and plenty of regional backing, Hezbollah was being driven out of Beirut. As the vice president has been fond of saying recently, the U.S.'s and Israel's interests are not always aligned—but I believe that would be a region better for all involved.

(It's Noon in Israel Jun 24)

Why Is the Media Ignoring the Montreal Shooter's Antisemitism? By Casey Babb

For the second time in two weeks, a Canadian police officer has been killed. Both incidents were connected to attacks against Canada's Jewish community.

On Monday morning, police responded to reports that a lone gunman had carried out an attack in Côte-des-Neiges, a prominent hub for Montreal's Jewish community. The attack, near several kosher restaurants, Jewish schools, and community centers, led to the deaths of Montreal police officer Mohamed Lamine Benredouane, 34, and bystander Michel Mizrahi, 68. Mizrahi was a Jewish civilian and a member of the local Chabad chapter. Alleged shooter Seth Hatfield, 25, of Lethbridge, Alberta, was also killed, while another police officer was seriously injured.

The attack came just 11 days after Toronto police officer Marc Pinizzotto, 43, was killed while executing a high-risk search warrant connected to dozens of shootings in the greater Toronto area, including one at the U.S. Consulate last March and others on multiple synagogues and Jewish day schools. Reports indicate those shootings may have been part of a guns-for-hire plot, connected to Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia—a violent Islamist group backed by Iran.

Together, these incidents have heightened tensions amid what Canadian prime minister Mark Carney recently described as a "crisis of antisemitism in Canada."

So why isn't the media reporting on the antisemitic elements of Monday's shooting?

In the wake of the shooting, the suspect allegedly left behind a 104-page manifesto, which is now public. In it, he cited feminism, liberalism, capitalism, pornography, and male isolation, among a

slew of other factors, as components of a social rot that must be addressed through violent revolution. “I call on all of you now, and I ask you to join me,” he wrote. “Let us be the initiators of a new bloodletting, one in which the blood will flood out from the lacerated bodies of our opponents; all those culpable people, be they bourgeois or lumpen, who hitherto have remained unpunished.”

The apparent manifesto, which ended with a call to “KILL THEM ALL!” was laden with incel ideology and rambling diatribes against women as well as hateful and delusional commentary on “homosexuals,” “black people,” and “immigrants,” among other groups.

The alleged shooter also referred to the “influence of Zionist Jews,” “elite Zionists and their Western bourgeois allies,” and the idea that Israel serves as a “kind of base” that Jews, with their “newly acquired power,” have been using to “assist in the expansion of capitalist hegemony.”

Yet virtually no Canadian coverage of the attack mentions these references to Jews, Zionists, or Israel. Nor do they note that the attacker clearly harbored long-standing antisemitic and anti-Zionist conspiracy theories.

Instead, articles from major outlets like the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Global News, and CTV, among many others, focus almost exclusively on what they described as Hatfield’s “violent incel” ideations and “anti-feminism.” Canadian journalist and author Warren Kinsella noted the omission, writing on X that these major media outlets included “not one mention of the killer’s antisemitism, seen throughout his manifesto.” Joe Roberts, the executive director of the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, Oklahoma, acknowledged, “Yes, the Montreal shooter was an incel. Yes, he was a revolutionary Marxist. That is not the end of the story. It is the beginning. Because his manifesto is also explicitly antisemitic and anti-Zionist, and the media’s refusal to say that plainly is indefensible.”

The motive for the shooting has not yet been confirmed. But the omission of the suspect’s antisemitism is striking. Canada has arguably become one of the most antisemitic countries in the Western world. In the past several years, we have seen countless shootings at Jewish day schools, hangings of Jewish effigies, firebombings of synagogues, and acts of vandalism. Dozens of university faculty have openly glorified and supported listed terrorist organizations, while targeted acts of harassment, intimidation, and violence against Jews in Canada have made international headlines.

B’nai B’rith Canada, which has tracked antisemitic incidents since 1982, recorded 5,791 in 2023. At the time, that was an all-time record. In 2024, the total climbed to 6,219. By 2025, it had reached 6,800, an increase of nearly 145 percent from 2022, the last year before Hamas’s October 7 attacks on Israel. That translates to an average of more than 18 antisemitic incidents every single day in a country that prides itself on multiculturalism and civility. The federal agency Statistics Canada, using the narrower lens of police-reported hate crimes, found that Jewish Canadians—who are roughly one percent of the country’s population—were the targets of 70 percent of all religiously motivated hate crimes in 2024. According to the Center for Israel and Jewish Affairs, a Jewish Canadian is 25 times more likely to be targeted in a hate crime than any other Canadian.

It seems unlikely that the situation for Jews in Canada will improve anytime soon. A survey earlier this month for the Association for Canadian Studies found that almost a third of Canadians believe antisemitism in the country is “becoming more acceptable,” while over a fifth of the respondents agree that “Israel’s military actions in Gaza justify negative attitudes toward Jewish people in Canada.” The survey also found that roughly 17 percent of Canadians agree that their views of Jews have worsened since October 7, while nearly 30 percent of respondents found that calls for Israel’s erasure are not antisemitic.

What makes these findings particularly troubling is not just what they reveal about the present—but what they predict about the future.

As I wrote in *The Free Press* last March, Jews in Canada have already begun retreating inward. They are choosing not to publicly wear Judaica, including necklaces and kippahs. They are celebrating Jewish holidays more privately. Jewish events are almost always held

in secrecy, behind multiple lines of security, and the country’s Jewish organizations are spending millions of dollars a year to build higher and higher walls. Fear among Jews in Canada is palpable, and with no clear strategies or solutions to confront a situation that is spiraling out of control, many are now asking themselves how much worse things can get.

With two deadly incidents in June alone, both connected to attacks on Canada’s Jewish community, along with media organizations that seem uninterested in reporting all the facts about what is happening, the answer to that question appears to be: “Quite a bit.” (*The Free Press* Jun 23)

Social Justice and Sympathy? Or More Like Pawns on a Chessboard

By Rawan Osman

I spoke this week at the JNS International Policy Summit in Jerusalem as part of a panel titled “Syrian Security Challenges.” Together with Middle East researcher, journalist and author Jonathan Spyer, we reminded the audience that nothing has changed for the Syrians: Minorities continue to be persecuted; jihadists and criminals have been integrated into the new government and the new Syrian army; the population remains poor; and the suffering that defined decades under the dictatorship of Bashar Assad has not lifted.

Speyer spoke about the Al-Hol refugee camp in northeastern Syria—once holding tens of thousands of ISIS members, their families and their victims, now gradually emptied through releases, escapes and quiet resettlements that the world has barely registered—people who had been abducted, enslaved, forcibly married, converted and impregnated.

I sat there wondering how much the world actually knows about this, the security challenges it poses, and the tragedies its inaction and indifference have brought upon millions.

From an Israeli strategic perspective, one genuine shift has occurred: the fall of Assad severed the land corridor connecting Hezbollah to the mullahs’ regime in Iran—a development with real consequences for the balance of threat. But that is an Israeli gain, not a Syrian one. For the Syrians, the faces in power have changed, but the tragedy has not.

The conflict was never, at its core, about statehood.

Meanwhile, Iranian dissidents sit in dark prison cells awaiting execution. Afghan women are dying slowly in cold, dark confinement while the world ignores their enslavement at the hands of one of the most backward Islamist movements on earth. How are Ukrainians living today? What about the Russians who never chose this war and are paying its price anyway? What about the people of North Korea? Somalia? Nigeria?

And yet, somehow, the world has reserved its most passionate solidarity for the Palestinians alone.

This asymmetry is neither accidental nor driven by sympathy. Genuine sympathy would be indiscriminate. It would not skip over Yazidi women sold in open markets, Uyghur Muslims sterilized by state decree or Christian communities burned out of their homes in sub-Saharan Africa. Sympathy does not choose its beneficiaries based on who the perpetrator is. What we are witnessing is something else entirely.

We sometimes say that Jew-hatred is the true motive driving the pro-Palestine camp. Those operating from conspiratorial antisemitism are difficult to reach.

But there is another constituency: People who genuinely believe they are seeking justice, who see themselves as moral observers, continuously exposed to the Palestinian cause and feeling compelled to take a side. For this group, the question of motive is more complicated and more important to answer. Their engagement is not accidental. It is the product of three deliberate mechanisms: framing, visibility and emotional manipulation.

Framing: Academics, religious leaders, political figures and self-described witnesses have spent decades constructing a one-sided, anti-Zionist narrative that is, in many of its expressions, straightforwardly antisemitic. They demonize Israelis so thoroughly

and so relentlessly that the Israeli voice is treated as inherently suspect before it is even heard. In much of the Arab and Muslim world, this is not even a matter of persuasion. Contact with Israelis is legally forbidden and socially penalized, which means an entire civilization has been sealed off from the other side of the argument.

Visibility: Al Jazeera, founded in 1996, is a media empire that has been waging a systematic war against Israel since its inception. But it is far from alone. Alongside the established anti-Zionist broadcast channels, there are thousands of social-media pages, Telegram groups and online communities dedicated to delegitimizing the Jewish state, spreading conspiracy theories, and inciting hatred against Jews and their country. The coverage of this conflict is a coordinated propaganda infrastructure.

Emotional manipulation: By exaggerating Palestinian suffering while erasing Palestinian agency and responsibility as a party to this conflict—and by depicting Jews as cunning, manipulative and cruel—the architects of these campaigns have successfully recruited emotional masses into justifying Palestinian violence. The goal is to enrage, not to inform. And once enraged, these masses set off two chain reactions that extend far beyond campus protests.

The first is political: They pressure elected officials who are not moved by sympathy or justice, but by the calculus of votes and the fear of losing office, producing a class of politicians who take positions they do not believe in order to survive.

The second is social: They radicalize frustrated segments of the right, who watch the left's embrace of Islamist causes with fury and respond in kind, fracturing and weakening the democratic liberal camp from within and accelerating the very polarization that makes Western societies easier to destabilize.

What these three mechanisms produce is rage, hatred and moral disgust. Negative emotions, not humanitarian ones. The proof is in the silence. University students willing to go on hunger strikes, to risk their academic futures, to devote months of their lives to the Palestinian cause have had nothing to say about Yazidi slaves, Afghan girls, Christians in Nigeria or the dissidents rotting in Iranian prisons. If this were about human suffering, the cause would be legible across borders, instead of having one address.

Who is most susceptible to this kind of manipulation? Those who are ideologically primed to romanticize armed struggle, to loathe hierarchy, to reject state authority and to frame every conflict as a confrontation between the oppressor and the oppressed, regardless of the facts on the ground.

And who has worked hardest to press exactly those buttons? Islamist movements that are globally organized, strategically patient and fully aware that the radical left is simultaneously easy to mobilize and easy to discard. The left can be inflamed against states, institutions and order, and then, once it has done its work, swept aside without ceremony.

The left can be inflamed against states, institutions and order, and then, once it has done its work, swept aside without ceremony. This is not a new playbook. It is precisely what happened in Iran in 1979, when the left marched alongside Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, helped dismantle the shah's regime, celebrated the revolution as a victory for the oppressed, and was then methodically crushed the moment Khomeini consolidated power. The mullahs needed the left to tear down the existing order. They had no need for it afterward.

The same logic applies today: a structured, institutionally rooted Western establishment capable of defending liberal democratic values is far harder to defeat than a mass of enraged students and activists who believe that they are fighting for justice. These movements are not funding campus activism out of solidarity. They are funding it because the left is useful and because it costs very little to set the West against itself.

Misdiagnosing the problem is therefore not merely an intellectual error but a strategic vulnerability. What we are facing is not a humanitarian movement that has gone too far. It is a civilizational war waged against the West, in which the Palestinian cause serves as the spearhead and Israel as the primary target.

Those who believe that offering the Palestinians a state would end

the conflict are operating with the wrong map entirely. The conflict was never, at its core, about statehood. It is about the land that was Islamized for centuries and then reclaimed by the people who were there before Islam arrived: the Jews.

That reclamation is experienced not merely as a political defeat but as a theological catastrophe—a rupture in the narrative of Islamic expansion and permanence that cannot be absorbed or negotiated away. Restoring Islamic sovereignty over that land is not one goal among many. It is a precondition for restoring the prestige and spiritual authority that Islamist movements need to justify their global ambitions and inspire the spread of Islam elsewhere. A Palestinian state under those conditions would not be a conclusion, but rather, a staging ground.

Israel is therefore on the front line not by accident but by design. Defeat Israel, and the logic of the entire Western order begins to crack: its right to defend itself, its Judeo-Christian foundations, its insistence that liberal democracy is worth protecting. The rage directed at Jews and Zionists is not the endpoint. It is the opening move. (JNS Jun 24)

The JD Vance Foreign-Policy Test Ride is a Disaster

By Jonathan S. Tobin

After months of cooling his heels as U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio took the lead on a number of foreign-policy initiatives, including the war on Iran, U.S. Vice President JD Vance has now emerged from the shadows. Having opposed the war from the start, Vance's stock rose within Trumpworld as the president grew frustrated with Iran's refusal to surrender.

As a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed to between the United States and Iran, with Israel cut out of the process, it was Vance taking questions about the issue on the White House podium. He was then dispatched to Switzerland to negotiate a conclusion to the war that would presumably ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, lower gas prices and somehow also accomplish the key initial goal of the war: ending the threat of an Iranian nuclear program.

Persuading Trump to sideline the highly competent Rubio—and being allowed to both shelve and insult America's Israeli allies—was no small triumph for the vice president. Putting Vance at the helm of American foreign policy represented a victory for the neo-isolationist and anti-Israel wing of the administration and the Republican Party. It also further solidified, at least for the moment, the vice president's status as the frontrunner to succeed Trump in 2028.

Nevertheless, the veep should have been more careful about what he had wished for.

It was one thing to argue that the war on Iran wasn't worth the price the president was paying for it in terms of public disapproval of the conflict and higher gas prices, both of which seemed sure to hurt the GOP in the fall midterm elections. It's quite another to be tasked with coming up with an agreement to conclude a war without being saddled with responsibility for a pact with Iran that is almost certain to be construed by America's enemies and allies, not to mention the electorate, as a humiliating defeat.

Trump may have been joking when he said, "If it works out, I'm going to take the credit. If it doesn't work out, I'm blaming JD." But having been put behind the wheel for a test ride to see if his approach to world affairs is better than Rubio's, the vice president is going to be hard-pressed to avoid driving the country and the administration into a ditch from which it will not easily be extricated.

Vance put himself in the situation because Trump was frustrated with the war. The joint U.S.-Israeli military strikes had succeeded in inflicting enormous damage on Iran's military as well as its nuclear and missile programs, and eliminated most of its senior leaders. But whether or not, as critics of Israel have asserted, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu oversold the president with claims that the Islamist terror regime would soon collapse in the face of these devastating blows, Tehran wasn't surrendering.

It countered these attacks by menacing shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, thus raising fuel prices worldwide and putting economic pressure on Trump to stop the war. In return, the United States placed a blockade on Iranian ports that threatened Tehran with economic collapse. But the impulsive Trump lacked the patience to wait out the Islamists and agreed to first a ceasefire in April and then the MoU that, at least temporarily, ended the war.

As it stands now, that document sets up Iran to have won the conflict. Washington is already unfreezing assets that will result in the regime getting billions in funds that it can use to solidify its tyrannical hold on power, as well as reinforce its beleaguered Hamas and Hezbollah terror auxiliaries. Even worse, Trump appears to be willing to allow Iran to keep its missiles and to include the current conflict in Lebanon in the deal, thus enabling the Hezbollah terrorists to survive and to continue threatening northern Israel with continued attacks.

In exchange for this, the Islamists look to being let off the hook with recycled promises about not building nuclear weapons that—short of restarting a war that he is apparently tired of—Trump lacks the leverage to enforce.

If he doesn't reverse course, then there will be no avoiding comparisons of this attempt at appeasement to former President Barack Obama's 2015 Iran nuclear deal that Trump had rightly criticized as disastrously weak.

And the man he has sent to Lake Lucerne to wrap up a deal along these lines and to somehow do it in a way that won't look like an abject defeat is Vance.

It's true that, at least until he was sent to Switzerland to accomplish this impossible feat, Vance at least got the opportunity to do something he and his fellow neo-isolationists had been itching to do for many months: to insult and treat Israel like a vassal state.

At a White House presser on June 18, Vance had mischaracterized the MoU with Iran to make it not sound as if it were an American defeat. Contrary to his assertions, the economic benefits to Tehran for simply agreeing not to threaten traffic in the Strait of Hormuz will not await proof of its good behavior. In addition to lifting the blockade on Iranian ports, allowing them to resume the sale of oil, the release of billions in frozen funds immediately gives the Islamist regime a lifeline that will enable it both to survive and continue funding its terrorist proxies.

It's also clear now that the United States has no intention of forcing the Islamic regime to give up the ballistic missiles it has built to threaten Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Among other things, Vance also told an obvious lie when he claimed that the release of funds to Iran was somehow not as bad as Obama's similar gesture. Contrary to his assertion, Obama did not send U.S. taxpayer dollars to Iran but, like Trump, also unfroze Iranian assets.

But savoring his moment at the same podium from which Rubio had informed the press about America's efforts to decisively defeat Iran, Vance turned his ire on the Jewish state. He scolded Israelis, including members of the government, for having the temerity to criticize the United States for abandoning the war, strengthening an enemy nation and betraying the persecuted people of Iran by ensuring that their tyrants will stay in power.

He warned them that they had no recourse but to accept whatever Trump did because "Donald J. Trump is the only head of state in the entire world who is sympathetic to the nation of Israel at this moment in time, and he happens to be the head of state of the world's superpower."

What's more, he added, "If I was in the cabinet of the Israeli government, I might not be attacking the only powerful ally that I have anywhere left in the entire world."

The not-so-subtle message to Jerusalem was that it was a vassal state that had better shut up about being betrayed in this manner. And while Democrats who appeased Tehran knew that they had to put up with being criticized for their feckless behavior, Trump and Vance made it clear that they won't tolerate Israelis doing the same to them.

That was a pointed reference to Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel

Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who, unlike Netanyahu, didn't hold back when it came to expressing their feelings about what the Americans did. And while the two often say and do outrageous things that do not aid Jerusalem's cause, Ben-Gvir wasn't wrong when he said the United States ought to have dealt with "the Nazis of the 21st century"—Iran—"just as the United States dealt with the Nazis of the 20th century."

Israel is no vassal state. The United States gets enormous benefits from its alliance with this democratic Middle East partner in terms of weapon development and intelligence. As Vance himself stated in 2024, it's the ideal MAGA ally since, unlike Europe, Israel fights alongside America.

Still, Vance's willingness to characterize Iran's possession of weapons to threaten other nations as morally equivalent to Israel's military was troubling. "You can't tell a country, whether Israel or Iran, they're not allowed to have any self-defense," he said.

And yet, Vance revealed his own bias against Israel when, perhaps channeling the blood libels spread by leftist antisemites like his podcaster friend Tucker Carlson, he warned the Israelis that those who decried an American decision to surrender were simply being bloodthirsty.

"I guess my response to them would be: What is your exact proposal? You're a country of 9 million people. You can't just kill your way out of solving every single national security problem that you have," said Vance.

That accusation was as reckless as it was unfair. Israel isn't trying to kill its way out of anything. It was viciously attacked on Oct. 7, 2023, by Iranian minions who carried out the worst mass slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust. It was the target of direct missile barrages launched on April 14 and Oct. 1, 2024. And it was attacked by missiles, rockets and drones throughout the war that started on Feb. 28, leading to casualties, damage and sending much of the country into bomb shelters day after day.

Had America been similarly attacked, we know very well that Trump and Vance would have exacted a far greater revenge on the assailants than the targeted strikes that Israel executed on Iranian targets.

Being able to vent his contempt and lack of sympathy for an ally that fought side by side with American forces and who were essential to the success America achieved may have given Vance some satisfaction. But it won't get him out of the fix in which he now finds himself.

Simply put, the Iranians know that Vance's position in the talks is weak. That's why they are treating him with the same contempt that they once treated Obama's envoys, as they continually take back any concessions he says he's wrung out of them, making it clear that if he wants an agreement, then it will have to be on their terms.

We don't know yet how the negotiations will end. Perhaps Trump's natural aversion to bad deals and his unwillingness to be a party to a pact that will rightly be characterized as an abject surrender that will not achieve any of America's war goals will cause him to recall Vance and return to war. He ought to know that as unpopular as the war may be, ending it in defeat will be even more unpopular. Having invested so much political capital in the conflict already, he won't win it back by mimicking Obama's appeasement.

Or perhaps he is so sick of the conflict and too panicked by gas prices, plummeting polls and the prospect of a Democratic sweep of the midterms to reverse course again.

Either way, he has set up Vance to fail. Trash-talking Israel may earn him cheers from the antisemitic groggy wing of the GOP, but neither they nor his fellow Israel-bashers at mainstream media outlets like The New York Times will win him the 2028 GOP presidential nomination. And if the vice president is the architect of an end to the war that will be the moral equivalent of President Joe Biden's retreat from Afghanistan, then it may earn him a place in history, but not one that will be a stepping stone to the Oval Office. (JNS Jun 23)