

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*

Commentary...

Beyond Anger By Abe Greenwald

Many Jewish friends contacted me yesterday to express their rage over the massacre of at least 16 people at a Hanukkah celebration in Sydney and other anti-Semitic events over the weekend. Some spoke about their plans to buy guns, others talked about making aliyah, and others just wanted to vent. I too was heartsick, and I listened to them sympathetically. But I wasn't quite where they were.

I had been so enraged for so long over the explosion of Jew-hatred since October 7, 2023, that my anger eventually morphed into something else—probably out of an innate capacity for self-preservation. You can't survive forever in a perpetual state of fury, especially when you wake up every day to a new anti-Jewish outrage. Somewhere along the way, my anger turned into resolve.

So I've resolved to call out Jew-haters at first sight, live a more robustly Jewish life, identify proudly as a Jew, and profess my love of Israel and commitment to Zionism in any company and all circumstances, should the subject arise. I'm resolved to welcome but not rely on others who want to join the fight. I'm resolved to protect myself against anti-Semitic harm to the best of my abilities, and to the fact that I might, in the end, move to Israel.

In some sense, I've taken that last step already. I don't mean I've initiated the process of making aliyah; I haven't. What I mean is that while I live in the United States and love it with my full American heart, I also exist ideationally in an inner Land of Israel. It's a part of me that came into being only over the past two years, and it's where I derive strength and hope. It's where my anger was alchemized into resolve.

I've always been a passionate Zionist, but this was something new.

From what I can tell, I'm not alone among American Jews (and some Gentiles) in discovering a new personal Zion inside themselves. It's a condition we carriers seem to be able to spot in one another.

We watched our beloved West collapse into moral cowardice and moral inversion, saw a self-sacralized media normalize blood libel, witnessed deadly attacks on innocent Jews, lived through the election of a left-wing anti-Semite in New York City, and finally observed the rise of rabid Jew-hatred on the right. And through it all, we were increasingly stunned by a Jewish state that successfully took on enemies a hell of a lot tougher than students in keffiyehs, that mobilized into a multifront war machine like the world has never known and tuned out the noise and hate to focus on the task of survival. Knowing that we had a connection to a land and a people giving their lives to secure civilization, while so many here at home had succumbed to the most unimpressive barbarians, does something to you.

Mainly it imposes an obligation. I feel obliged to summon at least a portion of the strength that Israelis have shown over the past two years. Perhaps even more challenging, I'm obliged to share in some measure of their Herculean love of life.

I don't have a fraction of their courage and, in truth, I haven't been called on to sacrifice a thing—unless you count my sense of comfort and security as a Jew in America. But since that was an illusion, or a vestigial sentiment from another age, I'm better off without it.

We are obliged not to let the battle fall on Israelis alone. Whether that means legally obtaining a weapon or making aliyah and fighting alongside them or getting in the face of every Jew-hater you see, that's up to you. But it means, above all, we must do more than get angry after each attack. It means being resolved to the unending fight that is Jewish survival. (Commentary.org Dec 15)

The Massacre at
Bondi Beach Was
Inevitable

By Douglas Murray

Do words have any meaning? Most people think so, which is why there is an endless debate about which words should be a matter for the law, and which words should be permitted by law, which should be in the realm of manners.

Where does "Gas the Jews" fit into that? There are contexts where those words could be in the realm of manners. For instance, somebody might use them in a comedy club, doing a routine about forbidden statements. But how about using them immediately after the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust? How about if the words are used on the streets by a mob—not in a spirit of jest, but of intent?

That's what happened outside the Sydney opera house on October 9, 2023—two days after Hamas and other Palestinian terrorists invaded Israel, slaughtered 1,200 people, and took another 250 hostage. The people in the mob outside the opera house that night were not objecting to the war that resulted from that massacre. They were not trying out some new comedy material. They were using the massacre of Jews as the impetus to stand in their own city, oceans away, and advocate for the gassing of Jews.

Of course, the Australian authorities did not take any meaningful action regarding that protest. No more than they chose to take action against the numberless protests in major Australian cities since October 2023 in which protesters have chanted "Globalize the Intifada" and much more.

Which is not to say that the Australian government are free-speech absolutists. They are not. Nor does Australia have an equivalent of the First Amendment which strictly protects Free Speech, even up to the point of incitement. On the contrary, the Australian authorities are among the toughest in the world when it comes to policing speech.

Just this past June, Australia barred an Israeli called Hillel Fuld from coming into the country. Fuld is a pro-Israel activist whose brother Ari Fuld was stabbed to death by a jihadist terrorist in 2018. Ari Fuld was a hero in his life and in his final moments when, taking on the terrorist, he saved many more lives. But the Australian authorities were persuaded that the brother of the slain Ari could cause a risk to "health, safety or good order" in Australia. And so, he was barred from entry.

It is worth digesting that for a moment. A man whose brother was killed by a terrorist should not enter Australia because he could potentially alert people to the threat of Islamist terrorism. Which could in itself cause public disorder.

Not to become too personal about this, but I've had a similar experience with the Australian authorities. When I last did a speaking tour of theaters in Australia, in the summer of 2024, I received a letter warning me about the terms of my visit. Though they granted this British-born, American-based author the right to speak in Australia, they made it clear that if I said anything, or was even reported as having said anything, which could cause community tensions (a supremely vague concept), then I would instantly have my visa revoked and be removed from the country.

This is standard in modern Australia. Yet calls for "Jihad," "Intifada," "gassing," and more have been tolerated and gone unpunished.

It is not just the Israeli government, but Jewish groups inside Australia that have been begging the Australian authorities to take threats against the Jewish community seriously. After all, the threats long ago became real. During the last two years, synagogues and other Jewish sites in Australia have been repeatedly assaulted. In December 2024, a Melbourne synagogue was firebombed. Jewish businesses have been attacked. And Jews have been the targets of constant harassment.

Then this past weekend came the terrorist attack on Bondi Beach

in Sydney. It is the most serious terrorist attack in the nation's history.

There will be plenty said in the coming days about why the two perpetrators (father and son) were allowed to own guns, despite their connections with individuals jailed for plotting terror attacks. There will be many questions raised about how their shooting spree could go on for almost ten minutes and why the Australian police were so unprepared for it. There will be questions about why a Jewish event celebrating Hannukah on the beach was not better protected, given the escalating risks against Australian Jews. And there will be official expressions of mourning for the 15 victims counted so far, ranging from a ten-year-old girl to an elderly Holocaust survivor who died sheltering his wife.

But the main question is why the Australian authorities did not take the concerns of Jewish Australians seriously, and why indeed they spent the last two years pandering to the ever-growing contingent of Muslim immigrants and others who have clearly been on the path to radicalization. It will not be enough for them to say that they did not know.

Far from tamping down the problem, the Anthony Albanese government has been viciously maligning Israel since October 7, 2023. It has expressly tried to stop people from correcting those denigrations. It has allowed mass incitement every week on Australian streets and tried to bar those who oppose such incitement.

If anyone thinks that this is an edge case, they do not need to look simply at the blood spilled on Bondi Beach. They merely have to ask a question many of us have asked for the past two years: What other group would expect to be treated like this?

In 2019, there was a terrible attack on a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, by a lone gunman. It was a vicious, appalling attack. Outpourings of sympathy issued from all communities.

But imagine for a moment that there had not been. Imagine that immediately after that attack there had been huge crowds of Australians outside the Sydney opera house calling for Muslims or Arabs to be “gassed.”

Does anyone think that the Australian authorities would have taken this lightly? Does anyone think that if there had been anti-Muslim or anti-Arab demonstrations on the streets every week for the two years following the 2019 attack—expressly celebrating the attack and calling for it to happen again—that the Australian authorities would have stood by, or actually placated the mob? To ask the question is to answer it.

In the meantime, Jews in Australia will be asking the same question that Jews in New York and around the world are asking. And they will be facing the same conundrum that Jews around the world now face. If they are in Israel, they are attacked. If they are outside Israel, they are attacked. And if they are in New York or other cities outside Israel, feeling increasingly unsafe and wondering whether to move to Israel, then—as happened at Park East Synagogue in New York City last month—they will be attacked as well.

The problem has been in plain sight all along. It's shameful that so many people in positions of power decided to metaphorically shoot the messengers, while all the time clearing a path for the real-life shooters to take aim, and fire. (City Journal Dec 16)

Hanukkah Terror Has Roots in Australia's Alienation of Jews

By Danielle Pletka

As Jewish families across Australia celebrated the first night of Hanukkah, shots rang out at Bondi Beach in Sydney. The target was a party, per New South Wales Premier Chris Minns, “[on] the first day of Hanukkah. What should have been a night of peace and joy celebrated in that community with families and supporters, has been shattered by this horrifying evil attack.” The death toll as of this writing is 12, including one shooter. Police identified one of the shooters as Naveed Akram.

Minns' statement is notable for its contrast with the immediate reaction of Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. In the aftermath of what was clearly a targeted terrorist attack on Australia's Jewish community, Albanese released a statement labeling the attacks

“shocking and distressing.” Albo, as he is known, was quick to sympathize with “every person affected.” Who was that “every person”? Beachgoers? Surfers? The target was a “Hanukkah by the Sea” celebration of the Jewish festival of lights. But for Albanese, a mention of Jews was one word too many in a seventy-word statement. (He later condemned the attack on the Jewish community.)

Here's the problem: Albanese and his Foreign Minister Penny Wong have done their utmost in the twenty-six months since the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel to signal their uninterest in the well-being of Jewish communities, in Israel, Australia, and beyond. Like their political counterparts in Europe and the United States, Laborites in Australia have turned on Israel and Zionists everywhere. And like the fringes of the left in the United States, Spain, England, Canada, and France, they have gone further, aligning themselves with Israel's enemies.

The surfacing of Jew-hatred in Australia has been notable, even by international standards. Aussie Jews, like much of the world's Jewish communities, believed the pieties about “never again,” but were rudely awakened when a post-October 7, pro-Palestinian march in Sydney began chanting, “Gas the Jews.” A synagogue was firebombed in Melbourne. The leader of one of Australia's most prominent Jewish organizations had his former home vandalized and burned in Sydney. Two Sydney nurses were caught on video threatening to kill Jews. Universities have, as in the United States, worked assiduously to isolate Jewish students.

The difference between Australia and, say, the United States, is that the government has played a significant role in the alienation of Jews. As a president of Harvard University might say, it's all about the context. And under Albanese, the context has been a growing hostility to the State of Israel and its supporters. Australia recently repatriated its own “ISIS brides,” and has welcomed pro-Hamas activists, yet banned supporters of Israel, including former Israeli government ministers.

At the United Nations, where Canberra once voted regularly with the United States on Middle East issues, including Israel, Albo has also hewn a different path. After supporting a series of steps elevating Palestinian status inside the world body, all the while insisting this was not about recognizing a Palestinians state, in November 2024, the Aussie government for the first time voted to support a resolution recognizing the “permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.”

After further steps breaking with Australia's pro-Israel history, in September 2025, Canberra recognized a “State of Palestine.” Per Albanese, “This is the world saying that the cycle of violence has to stop.” But Albanese offered few concrete demands about how the “cycle of violence” should stop, insisting only that Hamas could have no role in a future “Palestine,” and that “reform” was needed in the Palestinian Authority.

For Australia's Jewish community, Albo's decision to recognize “Palestine” was of a piece with his increasing discomfort with Jews and Zionists. The prime minister dithered for days before visiting the site of the synagogue firebombing. And in the face of other clearly antisemitic attacks, he was equally eager to insist that it was criminals, not antisemites, who were responsible. Yet the reality was far more complex: In fact, criminals were being recruited by the Islamic Republic of Iran to terrorize the Jewish community in Australia.

Notably, I understand that the prime minister and his foreign minister were reluctant to hold Iran accountable for the string of anti-Jewish attacks and were forced into revealing Tehran's role only when Aussie intelligence threatened to make the revelations itself. In the face of incontrovertible intelligence, Albanese was ultimately forced to expel the Iranian ambassador and then labeled the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization.

Sadly, however, the ship has sailed for Australia's Jews. As in France, where Muslims outnumber Jews by at least ten-to-one, Muslims in Australia now outnumber Jews by eight-to-one. That demographic reality has political implications, and Labor appears to understand them all too well. (Middle East Forum Dec 14)

Was Bondi the Rehearsal? Then Canada Is the Target.

By Peter Shurman

I wrote recently that an incident like Bondi Beach could happen in Canada. I expected pushback. I did not expect fear, real, unfiltered fear from people who have lived their entire lives believing this country was different.

The reaction was remarkable. Not applause. Not debate. Quiet messages from Jews across Canada asking the same question in different ways: Are we crazy for thinking we're next?

They are not crazy. They are late but they are not wrong.

Australia is no longer an abstraction. It is the case study. Reporting there now suggests at least a possibility that a surge in antisemitic incidents followed Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's decision to distance his government from Israel and move toward recognition of a Palestinian state. Governments love to pretend words are cost-free. They are not. When leaders shift tone, the street hears permission.

This didn't happen in a vacuum. And it certainly didn't begin with Israel's response to October 7.

Let's be brutally clear about chronology...because history is being deliberately suppressed. Before October 7, 2023, there was no active war. No Israeli offensive. No escalation that explains what came next. What happened was a terrorist invasion. Hamas crossed a border and butchered civilians in their homes, at a music festival, in their cars. This was not "resistance." It was slaughter, designed to terrorize and filmed to be celebrated.

And yet somehow, in elite Western discourse, that day became optional context. The atrocity was downgraded. The response was put on trial. And Jews everywhere were quietly informed that their trauma was 'inconvenient'.

That inversion is not academic. It is lethal. Chants in our downtown city corps referenced "worldwide intifada".

This is an important subject. Feel free to share it. It's free and helps stimulate important discussion.

Canadian Jews understand this now because they are living the downstream effects. Truth is that antisemitism has simmered beneath the surface in Canada for a very long time. But suddenly there was a reason for haters to step into the daylight with a slew of new ones adding to their ranks. Synagogues defaced. Schools vandalized. A Jewish woman stabbed in an Ottawa supermarket. A Jewish father beaten in Montreal as his children watched. Women thrown out of Uber cars because a driver recognized Hebrew spoken on the phone.

These are not isolated "incidents." They are signals and they happened here.

And Canada's political class has responded with exactly the wrong instinct: caution, euphemism, and balance where none is required. How do our representative organizations even fulfill their mandate?

Canada has followed the same basic script as Australia. Softer language on Hamas. Louder scolding of Israel. Symbolic gestures meant to appease a radicalized street. The prime ministers may differ...Carney here, Albanese there...but the posture is identical: Don't offend the mob.

But the mob notices.

Here's what's new and deeply alarming. Fear has curdled into anger. And anger into questions that would have been unthinkable in Canada even five years ago.

I am hearing conversations that simply did not exist in this country before:

Should Jews arm themselves because law enforcement is clearly overwhelmed or worse, unwilling?

Should we trust politicians who smile at us on holidays and abandon us the rest of the year?

Should the community consider coordinated civil resistance? Economic, political, social until Jewish safety is treated as a baseline obligation, not a footnote?

These are not extremists talking. These are parents and grandparents, Canadians of long standing. People who have paid taxes, volunteered, built, voted, and believed.

They feel betrayed.

For decades, Canadian Jews bought into a promise: that this

country had learned the lessons of history. That pluralism here meant protection, not performance. That when hatred resurfaced (as it always does) it would be confronted early, decisively, and without moral gymnastics.

What they see instead is a state that manages antisemitism rather than confronting it. A media culture that contextualizes it. A political class terrified of saying one simple sentence: Targeting Jews is never justified. Full stop.

Bondi Beach didn't happen because Australia lacked gun laws. It happened because clarity collapsed. When antisemitism is endlessly excused as "anger," rebranded as "activism," or waved away as "legitimate outrage," the boundary between protest and violence dissolves.

Someone always steps through that gap.

And people always die.

To say that a Bondi-style attack will happen in Canada is not hysteria. It is pattern recognition. We have every prerequisite: radicalized rhetoric, online incitement, institutional cowardice, and a Jewish community increasingly aware that it may be on its own.

The most dangerous lie being told right now is that this is all "under control."

It isn't.

When a minority community starts openly questioning whether the social contract still applies to them, the country is already in trouble. When that community starts asking how to defend itself because the state won't (or can't) that trouble is advanced.

Is this the Canada Jews believed in? The Canada they helped build? The Canada that promised safety without assimilation and belonging without silence?

No. It isn't.

But denial won't fix that. Only leadership must. Leadership that draws lines. Leadership that names enemies. Leadership that understands that moral fog is not neutrality. It is surrender. Mark Carney: take note!

Australia didn't think Bondi would happen.

Canada is making the same mistake.

And when it happens here, because trajectories do not lie, no one will be able to say they weren't warned. (Substack Dec 17)

The writer is a former MPP for Thornhill.

A Painful Reminder of the True Meaning of Chanukah

By Jonathan S. Tobin

In a sense, it would be nice if celebrations of the Chanukah holiday could reflect the mindset of attempts by those who control Western popular culture to water it down in order to blend in with the Christmas cheer of the end-of-year holiday season. But right now, that's even more tone-deaf to the reality of Jewish life than it is in more peaceful times.

After the Bondi Beach massacre of 15 people at a Chanukah event, it's not really possible to pretend that the meaning of the "Festival of Lights" is anything other than what it has always been: a commemoration of one episode in the ongoing struggle to survive the attempts of antisemites to extinguish the existence of the Jewish people.

It's also disappointing that the leaders of a country that welcomed so many Holocaust survivors after World War II folded to Palestinian peer pressure and dropped their guard, effectively allowing such a horrific incident to happen in the first place.

The bloodshed in Australia—among whose victims were an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor, a 10-year-old girl and a Chabad rabbi—was much like the terrorist attacks against Jewish targets in Manchester, England, in September; Boulder, Colo., in June; Washington, D.C., in May; and Harrisburg, Pa., in April. The same is true of the pogrom last November against Israeli soccer fans in Amsterdam, in addition to many other instances of violence and intimidation aimed at Jews. They are all the tragic result of antisemitic incitement rooted in the demonization of Israel and the Jewish people, which has become routine since the Hamas-led

Palestinian Arab attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

And that is why the anodyne expressions of sympathy about the slaughter in Bondi Beach from the government of Australia, in addition to politicians, journalists and others around the globe who have participated in the efforts to falsely label Israel's war of self-defense against these terrorists as "genocide," ring hollow. Their crocodile tears about the victims are an insincere attempt to distance the tragedy from advocacy that has normalized the sort of discourse about Jews that inevitably leads to violence.

Attempts to separate the mainstreaming of blood libels about Israel committing "genocide" in Gaza or advocacy for the destruction of the one Jewish state on the planet from these attacks on Jews aren't merely wrongheaded. They are utterly disingenuous and give a pass to the effort to make Jew-hatred acceptable among those who think of themselves as decent people, rather than bigoted haters.

The spreading of these falsehoods about Israel's war against terrorist groups who seek the genocide of the Jewish people is often couched in the language of human rights, concern for suffering Palestinians or represented as merely "criticism" of Israel's government. In addition to being a distortion of reality, this has helped to create a belief among a broad audience—principally young people, who get their news from TikTok and other social-media platforms where algorithms prioritize Hamas propaganda—that Israelis and Jews are a class of human beings who are "white" oppressors of helpless victims.

In this way, Jews—the most persecuted minority group in history and a small people clinging to life in an equally small state—are now thought of as villains. To those who swallow this false dialectic, the Jewish people are deserving of neither rights nor sympathy, even when they are subjected to the sort of orgy of mass murder, burning, torture, rape and kidnapping that occurred on Oct. 7.

And it's how tragedies like Bondi Beach and all the other attacks on Jews, including the ongoing campaign of intimidation on college campuses, become possible, if not normalized.

That a reminder of this brutal reality of Jewish life in the 21st century should come at Chanukah seems particularly cruel. But as much as we mourn those killed and pray for the swift recovery of the wounded, the holiday is an apt time to remember the cost of hatred and the necessity for Jews to defend themselves and their one state.

Many secular Jews treat Chanukah as just a blue-tinsel version of the "goodwill to all" that animates the highly commercialized yet pleasurable December festivities. It allows those living in Western nations to be full participants in the end-of-year holiday spirit that homogenizes all religious observances into fodder for Hallmark movies (of which, there are now some Jewish ones on the TV channel, too). But while incorporating the gift-giving into what was traditionally a low-key festival does no harm, it tends to erase what Jews are actually commemorating when they light the candles.

It is a remembrance of a bloody war waged 2,190 years ago to resist an attempt by the rulers of the land of Israel at that time to extirpate Judaism and Jewish identity. The rebellion led by Mattathias and his five sons, known to history as the Maccabees, did so to preserve their people and faith against the powerful cultural forces of Hellenism that were dominant in the Mediterranean world. Arrayed against them were, in addition to the Syrian-based Seleucid Greeks, many Jews who preferred to assimilate into that non-Jewish world and trade their peoplehood for the pleasures and advantages of the Hellenist world.

The struggle took many years and involved a bitter conflict that was as much a civil war against the Hellenist Jews as it was a battle against foreign oppressors who had defiled the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. It was eventually won by the Jews with not a little help from the dominant world power of the day—Rome—which would prove in the following centuries to be an equally great danger to Jewish life.

That's not the stuff of Yuletide cheer, let alone holiday romances.

Jewish religious tradition downgraded the holiday that the Hasmonean dynasty created to remember their victory in large measure because the descendants of the Maccabees eventually became

tyrannical rulers of the land of Israel and every bit as assimilated as those they defeated. The story of the miraculous oil that lasted for eight days in the redeemed Temple overwhelmed, if not altogether replaced, the freedom-fighter narrative in an effort to put the emphasis on Divine intervention.

Yet the message of Chanukah remains one that incorporates both faith and the need for the Jews to act rather than to wait passively for rescue and deliverance. It may have been Benjamin Franklin's 1732 Poor Richard's Almanac that popularized the aphorism: "The Lord helps those who help themselves." But nothing better illustrates the truth of that phrase than the Maccabees' fight for freedom. The same is true of the modern Zionist movement. Building on the essential importance of the land of Israel in Judaism and Jewish identity, Zionism allowed the Jews to once again become actors on the world stage in their own right and no longer dependent on the kindness of strangers for life and liberty.

Jews and non-Jews alike can acknowledge that the Maccabean revolt was an expression of the will to self-determination and political liberty that all peoples share. But it's a reminder that preserving Jewish life in a world where universalist (and often coercive and destructive) views seek to extinguish and marginalize minority faiths requires the making of hard choices.

The post-Oct. 7 surge of antisemitism across the globe is shocking to those who would prefer to observe a Judaism in which a watered-down faith is emphasized over the particularist aspects of Jewish life. The essence of Jewish identity throughout history, however, has always been a refusal to bow down to the idols of popular culture. In the time of the Maccabean revolt, it was the powerful pull of Hellenism. Today, it is the secular faith of woke progressivism. And as has always been the case for Jew-haters, the determination of Jews to persevere and thrive, despite the challenges arrayed against them, is seen as a provocation that invites demonization and violence.

Hate among the angry mobs may be disguised as concern for Palestinians. Yet once you strip away the myths and lies from a cause inextricably tied to a belief that the Jews, alone of all the peoples in the world, are undeserving of a homeland, sovereignty, security and the right to self-defense, it becomes clear that it is nothing but a new version of the old virus of antisemitism.

Today, as was true then, Jews must be prepared to defend Jewish life, both in the State of Israel and elsewhere. That Jews must live in a world where holiday celebrations, as well as religious services, must include rigorous security is sad, but the story of Chanukah teaches us that this is nothing new.

Most importantly, we cannot be daunted by this challenge into succumbing to despair or to surrender to the forces arrayed against us. Rather, we must be inspired by the heroic victories of the past, as well as by the courage of the contemporary Maccabees who serve in the Israel Defense Forces. As difficult as it may be to contemplate the suffering of Jewish victims of this wave of animosity, we must also remember that it is fueled by antisemitic rage at the success of Israel, which, contrary to the narrative on TikTok, is not merely surviving in the face of delegitimization, but becoming stronger and more secure than ever.

The true miracle of Chanukah is a reminder that it takes extraordinary efforts and the faith of ordinary Jews to keep the flame of Jewish civilization lit in every generation. Doing so today requires Jews, both young and old, to find the courage to embrace a sense of peoplehood that is waning in the face of assimilation and pressure from those who denigrate Jewish identity, as well as to stand up for Israel and Zionism.

We cannot abandon the field to those who have taken up the cause that the Syrian Greeks once championed—whether they are Marxist progressives, Islamists or right-wing Jew-haters. As we light the candles this year, we remember the victims in Australia and the necessity not to let their murderers, as well as the Oct. 7 criminals and those deluded souls who cheer them on, prevail. Anything else is betraying the true meaning of the holiday. (JNS Dec 15)