



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*

But peace for Israel and Gaza only ultimately comes if Hamas if prevented from regaining political or military power in the Gaza Strip.

Still, this could be the beginning of the end, though there is still a lot that must

Commentary...

What Yayha Sinwar's Death Revealed About Hamas's Waning Capabilities By John Spencer

Last week, in a surprising chance contact, Israeli forces eliminated the leader of Hamas and the mastermind of the October 7 massacre, Yayha Sinwar. Like the death of Osama bin Laden 10 years after 9-11, Sinwar's death gives strategic closure to many people in Israel; Sinwar was the mastermind and commander of the deadliest massacre against Jews since the Holocaust, and the atrocities of October 7 caused deep psychological trauma for Jews, along with a loss of personal security that will be felt for a long time. The closure Sinwar's death provides Israeli's population is important for their moving forward and healing as a nation.

But there's also poetic justice in the facts surrounding who killed Sinwar, when, and where. Sinwar was not killed by Israeli Special Forces acting on information collected by their elite intelligence organizations. He was killed by regular Israeli soldiers with tanks from the IDF's Gaza division. It was the same division that collapsed on October 7. Videos and photos of their tanks and crews pillaged, burned, and desecrated were spread by so called journalists who travelled with Hamas on their massacre. The soldiers that killed Sinwar were also from the same unit that accidentally killed three Israeli hostages in Northern Gaza nine months ago.

Sinwar was also killed on the first day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, a seven-day festival period during which Jews recall the days when the Israelites lived in huts (sukkot) during their years after the Exodus from Egypt. Sinwar initiated the October 7 massacre on the last day of Sukkot last year.

Then there's the fact that Sinwar was killed in the city of Rafah in Southern Gaza. Israel's government had to overrule the strong objections and threats of the international community to move into Rafah, yet that is where six Israeli hostages were found after they were brutally murdered last month. Over 100 cross-border tunnels being used to arm and supply Hamas were also found there.

But the details of Sinwar's death also tell us a lot about the state of Hamas. Much like when U.S. forces discovered Saddam Hussein cowering in a hole, the myth about Sinwar has been busted. He was not found looking defiant and capable, surrounded by an elite bodyguard force in one of the luxury bunkers discovered in areas of Gaza like Khan Yunis. Sinwar was killed looking desperate, dirty, and disheveled, living in fear, running from tunnel to tunnel, rubble house to rubble house, with only a couple other men, in a district he had hidden in because the world told the IDF they could not go there.

He was not commanding a military force with any capability. He oversaw nothing.

He had the pocket litter of a bum: a pack of mentos, tissues, some money, and a fake passport with the occupation listed as employee of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Hamas is clearly broken. It clearly is operating without leadership, on autopilot and functioning as separate, disconnected guerrilla gangs completely unable to do organized acts.

Yes, Hamas could nominally elect and announce new leaders to replace Ismail Haniyeh, the Qatar based Hamas political leader killed last month, with another terrorist, someone like Khalil al-Hayya, who currently leads the hostage negotiations outside of Gaza. They could ceremonially announce a leader to run shadow operations inside Gaza, perhaps Yayha's brother, Mohammed Sinwar. Fanatical member of Hamas may still believe they can survive and one day win the war against Israel.

happen. If Hamas refuses to let the remaining 101 hostages go, the war will continue. If Hamas still has the guns and coercive power to include primary control of humanitarian aid distribution in Gaza, the war will continue. If Hamas believes they can survive as a political or military power in Gaza the war will continue.

The IDF will continue operations to rescue hostages and find, clear, remove Hamas military capabilities and political power in Gaza. The challenge of getting humanitarian aid to Gazans when gangs of Hamas try to prevent and steal it will continue. Pockets without Hamas gangs must eventually be created so that new Gazan powers can be formed to govern, secure, and distribute humanitarian aid, and to facilitate rebuilding.

Wars are won when the enemy loses the means and will to continue fighting violently toward what are in essence political goals. There will be no cease in the cycle of violence without the full military and political defeat of Hamas. But the death of Yayha Sinwar is a major moment that signals to Hamas, Israelis, and Gazans that there could be paths to end the war. (Newsweek Oct 20)

October 7 and the Battle for the West By Arthur Herman

After the events of last October 7, most of us assumed—naively as it turned out—that the brutal massacre of 1,200 innocent Israelis would trigger a great outpouring of sympathy and support for Israel. We also hoped it would lead to the definitive repudiation of the kind of hatred of Jews and Judaism that inspired Hamas's terrible atrocities, and that before October 7 had culminated with the Holocaust.

We were wrong.

On the contrary, the reaction to October 7 entailed a frightening surge in anti-Semitism, especially from the political left. We were stunned and appalled to watch violence unleashed not just against Israel and supporters of Israel. There were actual physical attacks on Jews and Jewish students on America's most prestigious campuses: according to Hillel International, over ten times as many anti-Semitic incidents took place on campuses between July and September 2024 than during the summer of 2023. This surge was accompanied by ostracism of anyone—no matter how liberal—the anti-Israel mob decided to label Zionist. In effect, any Jew who didn't denounce Israel's actions as "genocide" or justify the brutality of Israel's enemies, including Hamas, became persona non grata on the left.

A year later is a good time to figure out what is going on.

In the piece I published in Mosaic a year ago, I warned that the October 7 attack on Israel was only part of a larger attack on the West and Western values. That view has become fairly standard among my fellow conservatives, if it wasn't before. Now, it's important to turn that perspective around and to recognize the inevitable: that systematic attacks on the West and Western values—expressed through critical Marxism, radical feminism, the transgender ideology, and the entire fabric of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)—would eventually turn against Jews and Judaism. After all, this was true of anti-Western, illiberal ideologies of the past, including fascism, Nazism, and Communism. It is now true of their successors, from radical Islam to today's radical "woke" left.

The key question is: why? I can offer several answers.

One should be obvious. The entire history of the Jews as a people, and their identification with their history, is immune from ideological revision and intellectual fashion. It's a history that springs from a single world-shattering event, the Israelites' covenant with

תג שמה

God. Out of that covenant flows a nearly 4,000-year-old narrative built around obedience to a divine authority who transcends politics and nature. It's a historical narrative organized around themes of personal responsibility and redemption, not class or race or gender.

It is this history that has set Jews apart from other communities for millennia, but it has also made them more resilient, because it is built on the proposition that God's laws take precedence over the laws instituted by those with whom they live and work.

That which makes the Jews strong is precisely what drives others to fury and envy. How dare the Jews persist while we rise and fall? That is the burning question enemies of the Jews have asked themselves from the time of the Philistines, Egyptians, Persians, and Romans to the Nazis and the Islamic Republic of Iran and its proxies. Now it includes a very angry and frustrated "woke" left.

What is particularly infuriating for them about Jewish history is that it has an overriding moral dimension, expressed through individual action both good and bad. If individuals or a nation suffer success or disaster, responsibility ultimately belongs to human beings, not class or race or gender or intersectionality. Good and evil exist; they are inescapable and crucial dimensions of each individual life, and they reveal the power and justice of God. There is no sidestepping moral decision making, no passage "beyond good and evil" for any of us.

Ultimately, accepting the validity of this perspective offers us a deep sense of freedom, but it's a freedom that comes with a price: that of personal responsibility before the imperatives of God's laws.

As it happens, the West is the great inheritor of that Jewish freedom and strength derived from the binding personal relationship with God and God's laws. It has passed down first through Christianity, and then through the moral foundations of the modern state, including the notions of human rights and individual freedom that the left used to celebrate, and perhaps still does. But paradoxically, the entire thrust of our postmodern Western culture has been to neutralize and then deny that Judeo-Christian inheritance for the sake of a secular ideal based on political expediency and the universal power of self-interest.

Much of the West deliberately exalted this de-Christianized ideal in order to appear tolerant and open to other cultures and identities, including of course Islam. But it has come at a terrible price. By adopting what the French philosopher Pierre Manent has called a "radical secularism," we have come to deny our own identities, Jew and non-Jew alike.

Which brings us back to October 7, and radical Islam.

The bitter truth is that the Islamists see through our disguise. They know what the West denies, i.e., that we are a Judeo-Christian civilization with deep religious and moral roots. Accepting that fact doesn't necessarily mean confrontation, let alone unleashing a new spirit of "crusade" (the term from which both radical Islamists and liberals recoil in horror). On the contrary, taking pride in our Judeo-Christian inheritance would make it easier for Muslims and others to come to terms with its living presence in the West, both here in America and particularly in Europe, where the denial of that inheritance has sunk to the level of mass psychosis.

But doing this requires those of us who are non-Jews to acknowledge who we are, and our eternal debt to Judaism—which, paradoxically, the drama of the Holocaust served to obscure (except for evangelical Christians, who understand very well what Israel and the Jews represent for them and the rest of us). To put it slightly differently, just as we can't and don't expect Muslims to shed their core identity, we shouldn't shed ours. The model for Muslims of how to adopt to the modern West should in fact be the Jews themselves, who live in freedom in our midst and recognize our laws without relinquishing who they are, or who they want to be.

In short, what may lie ahead is a new cultural synthesis that can grow up in the shadow of October 7, for Jews, Muslims, and the West alike. A synthesis in which we are all honest about who we are, perhaps for the first time. (Mosaic Oct 15)

Israel Fights Alone, Carrying by Itself a Catatonically Suicidal West By Majid Rafizadeh

Culminating with the dispatch of arch-terrorist Yahya Sinwar this week, how many of the world's most vicious terrorists has Israel liberated the world from in a few short weeks? Little Israel is showing the world how to win again -- and saving civilization and a free way of life into the bargain. For those of us fortunate enough to live in a free society rather than in a society of fear, as the former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky calls them, let Israel keep winning!

The multi-front war that Israel is currently waging against the Iranian regime and its numerous terrorist proxies is a battle that actually the West should have taken on -- and long ago at that. Yet from the presidency of Barack Obama on, the Biden-Harris administration and European governments, rather than confronting the threats presented by Iran, they appeased and bankrolled it. The leadership of the West opted for a path of inaction, appeasement, ignoring sanctions and eschewing secondary sanctions -- meaning countries that do business with Iran may not do business with the US -- and providing billions of dollars to terrorists to enable them to attack Israel, US troops, and for Iran to put the finishing touches on their its weapons program.

Obama's totally illegitimate but much-touted Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which he claimed "achieved a detailed arrangement that permanently prohibits Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. It cuts off all of Iran's pathways to a bomb," was no such thing. The statement was a deception, just as much as, "If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor" was -- based on the "stupidity of the American voter," as his associate Jonathan Gruber said. The problem with the JCPOA was, of course, its "sunset clauses." They assured Iran that it could legitimately have as many nuclear weapons as it can produce in just a few short years.

This approach, apparently aimed at avoiding confrontation, has only strengthened Iran and its terror networks by allowing them to expand their influence and aggressions unchecked. The West has indeed been feeding the crocodile in hopes it will eat it last, as Winston Churchill noted. It is a suicidal strategy -- but it is exactly what the West has done. To avoid confronting the threat, the West appears to have chosen, instead, trying to bribe its enemies into postponing their assault, presumably in the hope that it will fall on someone else's watch.

Meanwhile, Iran and other countries that seemingly wish America nothing but ill, have used that bribe money to enlarge the threat. The West has left Israel to fight a war that should never have been Israel's alone. The Western nations, through diplomatic miscalculations, the need for votes, cowardice and a fear of conflict, have essentially outsourced their responsibilities for maintaining global peace to Israel, watching from the sidelines as the conflict ramps up.

Instead, Europe, the United Nations and their institutions have been trying to undermine Israel at every turn (for instance here, here, here, here and here).

Israel, smaller than New Jersey, is left grappling with the world's top state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, as well as the well-armed and proxies that the Iranian regime uses to protect itself from retaliation. Iran's reach extends far beyond its borders. Its fingerprints are visible in acts of terrorism across the globe from Argentina to Europe, to trying to assassinate a Saudi, a dissident, and American heads of state on American soil.

Domestically, Iran's regime systematically suppresses dissent and commits human rights abuses on a massive scale -- from imprisoning and executing political opponents -- even children -- to violently crushing protests. Its foreign terror activities include funding and arming militias, rebel groups, and terrorist organizations across the Middle East, Africa and South America. The West's failure to neutralize these threats has given Iran the space and financing to flourish, while at the same time abandoning Israel to confront this monstrous regime alone. Instead of helping Israel defeat Iran's terrorism and towering abuses of human rights, or even just thanking it, the West goes out of its way to defame, sabotage and attack Israel.

Meanwhile, Iran -- which is reportedly in the final stages of

producing what the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan 26 years ago called "an Islamic Bomb" -- is arming Russia in its war on Ukraine, and arming terrorist groups in countries such as Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, where its influence perpetuates conflict and chaos, and is deeply intertwined with other enemies of the West -- Russia, China and North Korea.

Even more troubling, perhaps, is Iran's budding military alliances with authoritarian regimes in Latin America, the backyard of the United States. These alliances present a dangerous escalation in Iran's strategy to extend its reach into the Western Hemisphere, far beyond the Middle East. Israel, by confronting Iran, is doing more than defending itself -- it is confronting a global network of malign actors that threaten peace and stability worldwide.

Israel's primary adversaries include Iran's proxies, such as Hezbollah, a well-armed and well-financed terrorist organization that has long operated as Iran's cat's paw in Lebanon. Israel has also been contending with another Iranian-backed terrorist organization, Hamas, whose history of violence and terror is long, brutal, and characterized by suicide bombings, rocket attacks, and targeting Israeli civilians.

On October 7, 2023, when Hamas launched a terrorist jihad on Israel, it murdered 1,200 people, including infants, torturing, beheading, raping and burning alive many of the victims, and kidnapped more than 250 others. This atrocity was just one in a long series of gruesome acts committed by Hamas. The Palestinian Authority and terrorist groups have, with US encouragement, seemed to assume, that they will be able to resume ruling the Gaza Strip so it can continue to attack the people of Israel.

In addition to Hezbollah and Hamas, Israel is battling the Iran-backed Houthi rebel group in Yemen, which the Biden-Harris administration removed from the list of the Foreign Terrorist Organizations after less than a month in office. In gratitude, the Houthis attacked not only Israel, but also Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and US troops in the region. The Houthis also destabilized the Red Sea and blocked virtually all shipping through the Suez Canal. Vessels are now forced to detour around the continent of Africa, increasing the cost of each round-trip voyage by up to an extra million dollars just for fuel. Despite the Houthis' violations of international law and their wrecking-ball influence throughout the region, the international community has failed to take any serious action against them.

It is the West's responsibility to confront these forces, yet it is Israel that is doing the job. The Western powers, which should be at the forefront of the fight against terrorism, have abdicated their role, leaving Israel to bear the burden. This should not be Israel's fight alone-- it is one that the West should have taken on with full force. Israel has been stepping in where others have hesitated or even enabled its aggression -- an indictment of the West's inability to take up its own responsibilities.

If the West is too fearful or reluctant to engage directly in the fight against injustice, terror, and tyranny, the very least it can do is stand with Israel and stop trying to sabotage it at every turn (for instance here, here, here, here and here). Support should not be limited to words but include political, diplomatic and military backing. By failing to support Israel fully, the West is empowering exactly those countries working to revise the world order -- from one of freedom to one of tyranny -- by displacing the West.

Israel is single-handedly carrying the weight of multiple fronts in the battle against terrorism. The Free World, with its vast resources and influence, all currently under threat in at least three theaters -- Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific -- should be at the forefront of this fight. Instead, Israel is left to do the work that the Western democracies should have undertaken long ago. It is a grotesque reflection on the international community, particularly the Biden-Harris administration and the European Union, not to be offering unequivocal support. Israel's struggle is not just for its own survival but for the security and peace of the Free World. The West, through its passivity, is failing not only Israel, it is hollowing out its own survival. (Gatestone Oct 19)

The writer is a business strategist and advisor, political scientist, board member of Harvard International Review, and president of the International American Council on the Middle East.

How Israel Can Win Against Iran in its Own Dangerous Game

By Ariel Kahana

The world watches with bated breath, wondering how Israel will respond to Iran's second missile salvo. Behind closed doors in Jerusalem, a crucial strategy is taking shape -- one aimed at preventing Tehran's preferred scenario: a war of attrition. Such a conflict would unfold in a predictable, yet dangerous pattern: Israel retaliates, Iran launches more missiles at Israel and potentially other regional countries, Israel counters, and the cycle continues ad infinitum.

Israeli leadership, keenly aware of this trap, is reportedly considering a response of overwhelming force. According to Israel Hayom, the goal is clear: to strike Iran so decisively that the Islamic Republic will think twice before engaging in a protracted conflict with Israel.

It's worth noting that Iran's strategy of wearing down Israel and other US allies in the region is not merely a choice, but a necessity. Militarily, it's the only card left in Tehran's hand. Iran neither desires nor possesses the capability to deploy ground forces against Israel, given the vast geographical distance and intervening countries. Moreover, while Israel boasts one of the world's most formidable air forces, Iran's air capabilities are comparatively limited.

Israel's trump card in this high-stakes game is its unparalleled air defense system. For years, Iran had counted on its network of proxy organizations to provide a protective umbrella against Western strikes. However, a year into the current conflict, this strategy lies in tatters: Hamas is reeling, Hezbollah is on the back foot, and the various militias in Iraq and Yemen amount to little more than an irritant for Israel. The result? Iran finds itself unexpectedly exposed.

Behnam Ben Taleblu, a senior researcher at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), offers valuable insight into Iran's evolving strategy. "April was a watershed moment," he explains. "Since the first missile attack, we've seen Israel decisively seize the initiative, escalating the situation to its advantage. Iran, caught off guard, has found its military options severely limited."

Ben Taleblu, who has spent years studying Iran's missile capabilities, emphasizes the murky nature of the information landscape. "Concrete data on Iran's missile arsenal is scarce," he notes. "But estimates suggest they possess around 3,000 short and medium-range ballistic missiles -- the largest such stockpile globally." These weapons, crucially, can reach Israel.

The second Iranian attack, in Ben Taleblu's assessment, showed marked improvement. "They doubled the missile count and employed more advanced systems," he observes. "While they didn't use the hypersonic missiles they've boasted about, they did deploy more maneuverable variants."

Oded Eilam, drawing on his experience as a former senior Mossad official, offers a more conservative estimate of Iran's capabilities. "Their arsenal likely numbers around 2,000 missiles," he suggests. "It's substantial, but their production capacity is constrained, with some lines dedicated to supplying Russia."

Even assuming the higher estimate of 3,000 missiles, questions linger about their operational readiness. Sources reveal that in the aftermath of the first attack, Iranian leaders initially doubted Israel's claims of successful interceptions. The reality of their failure took time to sink in, prompting a period of intense analysis and testing.

Learning from these setbacks, Iran deployed more advanced Fateh-2 missiles in their second strike. However, Eilam estimates their stockpile of these advanced weapons is limited to between 400 and 800. With 200 already expended in a single attack, Iran's reserves of truly effective missiles may be running low.

This raises a critical question: can Iran sustain a prolonged ballistic exchange with Israel? The numbers suggest their capacity for attrition warfare may be more limited than they'd like to admit.

Eilam is unequivocal in his assessment of the strategic balance:

"Iran faces a significant disadvantage against Israel. They lack a single Arrow missile and there isn't a single shelter in Tehran. They're vulnerable in terms of maintaining operational continuity or recovering from an attack – precisely the opposite of Israel's capabilities."

To break the cycle of escalation, Eilam proposes a bold strategy. "Israel should consider a severe, but targeted strike," he argues. "Hit the nuclear program – even if we can't destroy it entirely. Target weapons depots and missile factories. Strike symbols of regime power, like the Revolutionary Court in Tehran. The goal is to send a message that resonates with every Iranian citizen, even without access to the internet."

Crucially, Eilam emphasizes the importance of coordination with Washington. He suggests securing a US commitment: if Iran dares to launch a third strike against Israel, the American response would target Iran's oil industry – the regime's economic lifeline.

This approach, Eilam contends, offers the best chance of deterring a war of attrition. But even if Iran miscalculates and strikes again, he believes the strategic math remains in Israel's favor. "They can inflict pain, certainly," he acknowledges. "But they're exposed in ways they never anticipated. The regime isn't built for multi-front warfare, and their overriding concern is survival."

Eilam's final assessment is sobering: "If Iran, against all logic, opts for a war of attrition, Israel's response must be overwhelming. Collapsing the oil industry on Kharg Island would be a potential endgame. At that point, the regime's fate would be sealed."

(Israel Hayom Oct 11)

Biden Puts Israel in an Impossible Position By Noah Rothman

The Biden administration is once again threatening to hold its support for Israel's defensive operations against Iran's terrorist proxies hostage unless certain conditions are met. This is quite a conundrum for Israel. It would surely like to comply with the administration's demands, but, from Jerusalem's perspective, it already has.

In an October 13 letter to the Israeli government undersigned by administration officials Antony Blinken and Lloyd Austin, the United States accused the Jewish state of cutting off humanitarian aid to parts of the Gaza Strip. Israeli actions have "contributed to starvation and widespread suffering, particularly in the enclave's north where Israel launched a renewed ground operation nearly two weeks ago," the Wall Street Journal reported. Israel must "reverse the downward humanitarian trajectory" within 30 days of the letter, it read, or there will be "implications" for the future disbursement of U.S. ordnance and financial aid.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller cast the missive not as an ultimatum but a friendly nudge of the sort that Israel has responded to with alacrity in the past. "We have seen Israel make changes before, and when they make changes, humanitarian assistance can increase," he told reporters. "We know it can be done, we know that the various logistical, bureaucratic obstacles can be surmounted," he added.

They surely can, although probably not immediately in the areas of the Strip where the Israel Defense Forces are conducting renewed counterinsurgency operations. But the United Nations maintains that Israeli defensive operations in the Gaza Strip are incompatible with the preservation of civilian humanitarian conditions. One or the other will have to suffer.

According to the U.N.'s World Food Programme, food aid entering Gaza's northern enclaves cratered in October as the IDF encircled a position near Jabalia where Hamas operatives were reportedly attempting to regroup. The civilian population there — some 400,000 civilians, according to estimates — is under increasing pressure to move southward away from the fighting. "Hunger remains rampant, and the threat of famine persists," the U.N. organization told CNN. "If the flow of assistance does not resume, one million

vulnerable people will be deprived on this lifeline."

The Israelis seem perplexed by the veiled accusation that they are deliberately engineering a famine in this extremely localized part of the Gaza Strip. "Israel has not halted the entry or coordination of humanitarian aid" said the military outfit responsible for the distribution of humanitarian aid inside Gaza. What's more, other U.N. organizations do not report a catastrophic disruption of their food aid distribution networks. "Despite the challenges," the Times of Israel reports, citing a statement from U.N. deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq, "the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, and its partners are distributing bread, meals and flour to designated shelters and beyond."

Neither Israeli officials nor U.N. representatives dispute the claim that aid deliveries have been truncated as a result of the fighting, and it's in neither party's interests to see U.N. representatives caught in the middle of those combat operations (at least, those U.N. representatives who aren't on Hamas's payroll). What is in dispute is the relative risk of hunger in those areas. Caution is warranted. The U.N.'s relative ability to recognize the prospect of famine is a matter of debate. After all, it was only four months ago that the U.N.'s Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) was rebuked by its own Famine Review Committee, "which found that previous famine projections were not plausible due to incorrect assumptions, misinterpretation of data, and a significant omission of food entering Gaza through commercial and private sectors," a Hayom report read.

The mischaracterization of the humanitarian conditions in Gaza of which the IPC initially warned made international headlines and yielded to widespread outrage over Israel's handling of the war that began on October 7, 2023. The clarification that revealed the extent to which the whole affair was made up didn't receive nearly the same level of coverage. And, if Israeli denials are any indication, the same sequence of events appears to be unfolding all over again. Certainly, this time could be different, but there is no greater indicator of future results than past performance.

Regardless, the pressure is once again on Israel. But the Biden administration has imposed an impossible conundrum on Jerusalem. If Israel has just 30 days to wrap up new counterinsurgency operations in the Gaza Strip's northern territories, it would have to do so with unnecessary disregard for the lives of both the IDF and Gaza's civilians. Speedy military operations in densely populated urban areas are also bloody operations, and the Biden administration would surely react with just as much horror to that outcome as it has to the tactics Israel is presently employing. But a more methodical approach designed to preserve as much life as possible may extend beyond Washington's arbitrary timeline. What's more, the circumstances that are contributing to Washington's apprehension may be yet another product of an imperfect information environment and the selective interpretation of facts on the ground by Israel's monomaniacal critics in the U.N. What a predicament.

Indeed, imposing this predicament on Israel seems to suit the Biden administration's political objectives, even if America's strategic goals in the region are frustrated in the process. The elusive fact of famine in the Gaza Strip seems immaterial. Rather, the impression that the threat of a humanitarian catastrophe looms forever just over the horizon appears to be an impression the administration wants to cultivate. If the Biden administration hopes to see its Israeli partners emerge from a speedy war against Hamas victorious, it's doing everything in its power to thwart that objective by impugning its ally's actions and motives while depriving Jerusalem of the tools it needs to see this war through to a rapid conclusion.

If you're confused, so is the Biden administration. When it comes to Israel's post-10/7 defensive operations, this White House doesn't know its own mind. It may be incumbent on voters to make it up for them. (National Review Oct 16)