



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

Gallant on Tuesday.
The Biden administration began micromanaging every aspect of Israel's war effort immediately after Oct. 7, 2023. It sent American generals to Israel Defense Forces headquarters, where they made "suggestions"

Commentary...

The Opportunity of Trump's Victory By Caroline B. Glick

A collective sigh of relief was heard across Israel as the results of the U.S. presidential election were declared. But we cannot rest on our laurels. At this critical juncture, Israel must carefully assess the challenges it faces in the immediate term, as the lame-duck Biden administration completes its term. And it must set goals for the next four years to ensure that the opportunity Donald Trump's return to the White House affords us is not squandered.

To understand the immediate requirements, we need to remember what happened during Barack Obama's final months in office.

No longer concerned about winning an election, in December 2016, the Obama administration decided the time had come to punish Israel for opposing its nuclear appeasement of Iran and for rejecting its efforts to establish a Palestinian terror state. That month, America's U.N. ambassador Samantha Power drafted an anti-Israel resolution that declared all Israeli presence beyond the 1949 armistice lines—including the Western Wall in Jerusalem—illegal. Power then pawned it off on other Security Council member states to sponsor and abstained from the vote, ensuring the passage of what became U.N. Security Council Resolution 2234.

Resolution 2234 was the most anti-Israel resolution ever passed in the Security Council. It effectively called for an international boycott of all Israeli activities beyond the 1949 armistice lines. But 2234 wasn't meant to be a standalone event. The Obama team planned to pass an additional resolution that would set out a timetable for Israel to agree to a Palestinian state in Hamas-controlled Gaza, all of Judea and Samaria and eastern, southern and northern Jerusalem. The resolution was supposed to include sanctions on Israel if it failed to capitulate within the set time schedule.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu worked with Trump's transition team to scuttle it. Netanyahu and Trump's advisers appealed to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who signaled that Russia would veto the resolution. Stunned, the Obama team angrily shuffled away.

There is good reason to assume that in the two and a half months before Trump returns to office, the outgoing Biden team intends to get that long-shelved resolution passed.

The Biden team may also initiate a resolution requiring Israel—on pain of Security Council sanctions—to accept a ceasefire in Gaza that will leave Hamas in power, a ceasefire in Lebanon that will leave Hezbollah on Israel's northern border and in charge of Lebanon, or both.

Now as then, Netanyahu must work with Trump's team and Israel's many allies in the Senate and House of Representatives to block these anticipated moves.

Beyond punishing Israel for not bowing to the administration's yearlong demand for capitulation, the purpose of the Biden administration's anticipated U.N. ceasefire resolution is to prevent Israel from winning the war and to block the Trump administration from supporting an Israeli victory. The Biden team is expected to reinstate Obama's effort to pass the Palestinian statehood resolution in order to prevent both Israel and the incoming Trump team from abandoning the failed and destabilizing "two-state" chimera.

In other words, the purpose of the U.N. operation is to prevent Trump from adopting his own policies and prevent Israel from securing itself.

Blocking the Biden administration's anticipated moves is Israel's most pressing diplomatic challenge. But obviously, they are also a means to enable Israel to win the war it is currently fighting. As to the war, Israel must move deliberately to achieve its strategic goals on all fronts—and particularly in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran.

It is to this end that Netanyahu fired Israeli Defense Minister Yoav

that made no sense but to which Israel had to listen—if it knew what was good for it.

The administration began slow-walking critical military supplies to Israel last December, forcing IDF officers to justify nearly every bullet and tank round expended. It threatened sanctions to block Israel from taking any action that would fundamentally shift the strategic balance in Gaza, and throughout the region, in its favor. It blocked a congressional effort to pass a law sanctioning International Criminal Court officials for waging lawfare against Israel, and so effectively greenlighted ICC prosecutor Karim Khan's bid to issue arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant.

The Biden team delayed Israel's action in Rafah for months by threatening an arms embargo and by forcing Israel to maintain futile hostage talks with Hamas's state sponsors Qatar and Egypt until they reached their inevitable, failed conclusion.

The administration spent a year pressuring Israel to agree to surrender sovereign territory to Hezbollah in exchange for a respite from the Iranian proxy's missile war. The U.S. offer, if accepted, would be a strategic catastrophe for Israel, keeping Hezbollah's forces intact, fully armed and poised along Israel's border just steps away from communities they were trained to overrun and massacre.

The administration continues to pressure Israel to leave Iran's regime, nuclear installations and oil platforms intact.

The Biden team's success to date in preventing Israel from defeating its foes owes in large part to its exploitation of the Israeli security brass's institutional and ideological opposition to Netanyahu, his coalition partners and voters. Gallant was the central figure in the administration's divide and conquer effort to block Israel from taking action that would change the strategic balance of power in the region.

During the eight months that Gallant's fellow retired generals Benny Gantz and Gadi Eisenkot served with him in Netanyahu's War Cabinet, Gallant colluded with them and the administration to block government plans to order operations like the seizure of Rafah—that would pave the way to the dismantlement of Hamas's military forces and ending its political and economic grip on power.

It was only with the resignations of Gantz and Eisenkot in June that Netanyahu was able to overrule Gallant and order the invasion of Rafah, cutting Hamas off from the rest of its state sponsors. Since then, working with the IDF Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, Gallant opposed, slowed and watered down—but was unable to block—Israel's ground operation in Lebanon.

Gallant and Halevi blocked the government's plan to task the IDF with distributing food, medicine and water to Gazans even though it is the only way to dismantle Hamas's continued political and economic control over the area.

Gallant and Halevi opposed the operation to blow up the beepers of Hezbollah operatives, which neutralized Hezbollah's senior and mid-level command structure.

Gallant tried to block Israel's move to eliminate Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah by insisting that Israel provide advance notification to the administration, knowing full well that the Biden team would try to block the operation.

Gallant openly and repeatedly called for Israel to end its war effort in Gaza in the interest of freeing the hostages, even though there is no actual deal on the table to release them.

Since Oct. 7, 2023, Gallant had refused to remove Halevi or any of the other senior IDF commanders responsible for the Oct. 7 fiasco from their positions. Instead, he rubber-stamped every action Halevi advocated, including firing more aggressive generals from the IDF and promoting to senior positions incompetent, dovish generals who had failed to warn of or prepare for Oct. 7.

Finally, Gallant reportedly opposes taking any independent

Israeli strategic action against Iran.

By removing Gallant from office, Netanyahu removed the major political obstacle to pursuing victory on all fronts. This is imperative as Israel moves from managing the war under the Biden administration to winning the war in anticipation of Trump's inauguration on January 20.

Looking towards the four years ahead, Israel must determine its strategic goals not only for winning the war, but for securing its borders and its position in the region, and safeguarding its alliance with the United States for years to come.

Oct. 7 and the war that followed exposed three strategic vulnerabilities that Israel can work with the Trump administration to overcome. The first is the specter of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River. The second is the U.N. system. The final vulnerability is Israel's strategic dependence on U.S. munitions.

Since Oct. 7, any residual public support for the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River has disappeared (outside the fever swamps of the radical left). The onslaught from Gaza, which has been an independent Palestinian state since 2005, and the near-unanimous support the atrocities enjoyed among Palestinians in Judea and Samaria made clear that a Palestinian state is not a solution to anything. Rather, it is an existential threat to Israel no less severe than Iran's nuclear weapons project.

To contend with the Palestinian threat, Israel needs to extricate itself completely from the strategic deathtrap of the so-called "two-state solution." David Friedman, Trump's first-term ambassador to Israel, recently published "One Jewish State." Friedman's book sets out the case for Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria. In it, Friedman urges Israel to determine its goal for securing its national rights and security needs in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

Israel should immediately take Friedman's advice. Netanyahu, his ministers and advisers must determine a clear strategy for extending Israeli sovereignty to Judea and Samaria and taking permanent military control of Gaza. They must then work with the Trump administration to secure U.S. support for those plans in the framework of a regional peace.

The moral corruption of the U.N. system is nothing new. But since Oct. 7, Israel has recognized that this system, replete with its in-house terror group the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), terror auxiliary force the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and international courts trying Israel for genocide and treating Israel's leaders and soldiers as war criminals, is itself a mortal threat to the Jewish state.

Broadly speaking, the U.N. system today is a full-blown alliance of the Marxist, post-national left, China and Islamic terrorist groups. Israel obviously cannot contend with this behemoth on its own. Working with the Trump administration and other nation states that are similarly—if less existentially—harmed by the U.N. system, Israel must spearhead an effort to dismantle, divide and permanently weaken the U.N. system and restore the power of nation states to work separately and in alliance with others to secure international peace and prosperity.

Finally, in light of Israel's experience with the Biden administration's exploitation of Israel's strategic dependence on the United States for munitions as a means to undermine Israel's war effort, Jerusalem needs to end its client-state relationship with Washington. Israel and the United States must cooperate in transforming the U.S.-Israel bond into a true alliance between a global superpower and a regional power.

Trump's determination to decrease America's foreign aid budgets, and his doctrine of supporting allies to enable them to defend themselves as the surest way to decrease America's need to fight wars, fully aligns his position with Israel's strategic requirements. Israel should move quickly to forge a new defense relationship with America that would end U.S. military assistance over a 10-year period. During that period, the relationship would shift from supplier-client to a strategic partnership geared toward weapons systems development. To end its vulnerability, Israel should maintain and expand its efforts to rebuild its domestic arms industries with the goal of being fully capable of producing all the munitions it requires to win its wars and preserve post-war peace by the end of Trump's term. This

transformation of U.S.-Israel ties will enable the alliance to survive and thrive over time, to the great benefit of both countries.

In his congratulatory message to Trump on Wednesday morning, Netanyahu wrote, "Your historic return to the White House offers a new beginning for America and a powerful recommitment to the great alliance between Israel and America."

This is absolutely true. And by firing Gallant, Netanyahu has facilitated the rebuilding of Israel's alliance with America on firmer footing than ever before. By working together to achieve common goals, Israel and the United States, under Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump, can secure the peace of the Middle East and their nations' separate and common interests in the international arena, to the benefit of the world as a whole. (JNS Nov 7)

Trump 2.0: Pompeo, Friedman Among Floated Appointees

By Ariel Kahana

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump is expected to soon begin selecting the members of his new cabinet. Final decisions are anticipated in the coming weeks, with several candidates being vetted for multiple positions simultaneously.

In a wide-ranging interview on "The Joe Rogan Experience" podcast last month, Trump declared that his "biggest mistake" during his first term was hiring "bad people, or disloyal people." The former president effectively acknowledged that it was these errors that led to an exceptionally high turnover rate among senior administration officials.

Several senior officials who departed or were dismissed afterward became vocal critics of Trump. Former national security advisor John Bolton published a highly critical memoir about his tenure, for example. For his upcoming term, Trump intends to place significantly greater emphasis on personal loyalty when it comes to staff selection.

According to multiple sources and reports in American media outlets, the State Department leadership is likely to be chosen from among three contenders: former national security advisor Robert O'Brien, Sen. Bill Hagerty of Tennessee and Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida. For the crucial position of U.S. ambassador to Israel, sources indicate David Friedman, who maintains a decades-long relationship with the president-elect and served in the same role during Trump's first term, is being strongly considered for reappointment.

Former U.S. ambassador Richard Grenell, who served as Trump's envoy to Germany, has emerged as a leading candidate for national security advisor. The defense secretary position has drawn three prominent candidates: former secretary of state Mike Pompeo, Rep. Mike Waltz of Florida and Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas. For the Department of Homeland Security leadership, former immigration and customs enforcement director Tom Homan, former acting secretary Chad Wolf and Rep. Mark Green are under consideration. Former director of national intelligence John Ratcliffe and Sen. Mike Lee lead the field of candidates for attorney general.

For White House chief of staff, the highest-ranking position within the president's inner circle, veteran political strategist Susie Wiles has emerged as the leading candidate. Wiles, widely credited as the mastermind behind Trump's recent election victory, may be joined in the senior leadership team by former Trump White House official Brooke Rollins, who is also under consideration for the role.

The treasury secretary position has attracted five high-profile candidates: JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon, though sources indicate uncertainty about his willingness to accept; former Soros Fund Management executive Scott Bessent; hedge fund manager John Paulson; Fox News commentator Larry Kudlow and former U.S. trade representative Robert Lighthizer, who served during Trump's first term.

Sources close to the transition process emphasize that these selections remain fluid, noting Trump's penchant for last-minute decisions and willingness to reverse course. His decisive election victory has significantly expanded his options for filling these crucial positions, an advantage the president-elect appears poised to leverage fully. (Israel Hayom Nov 7)

Why Does the U.S. Put Up with the U.N.'s Antisemitism?

By Danielle Pletka & Brett Schaefer

Since the October 7 Hamas terror attack in which more than 1,200 innocents were murdered and hundreds raped, tortured, and kidnapped, the United Nations has been clear and consistent in its messaging: Israel must exercise restraint, cease its anti-terrorism campaigns, facilitate humanitarian aid for Gaza residents, and agree to an immediate cease-fire with Hamas and now Hezbollah.

Like a record skipping, U.N. Secretary General António Guterres has repeated this mantra over and over and over and over again. And with rare exceptions, mostly in the early months following the attack, the Biden-Harris administration has been right behind him.

A myriad of laws dictate how the executive branch manages America's relationship with and funding of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Notwithstanding a web of legislative restrictions and instructions, many involving the Palestinians, terrorism, or instability in the Middle East, the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development managed in 2023 to shovel \$12.97 billion into the U.N. system undeterred by the world body's single-minded targeting of Israel and de facto support for its adversaries after October 7.

One of the most egregious examples of inaction on the part of both the U.S. and U.N. leadership is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Despite an agreed framework between the U.S. and UNRWA in which the organization agreed to vet its employees for connections to and support for terrorism, there is voluminous evidence that Hamas has compromised the organization.

Part of the problem is that UNRWA, like the rest of the U.N., does not consider Hamas and Hezbollah to be terrorist organizations. This creates a glaring loophole in vetting that the State Department has not addressed effectively. In fact, Secretary of State Antony Blinken has repeatedly certified that UNRWA is following U.S. legal strictures. State's disingenuousness is why Congress suspended funding to UNRWA earlier this year.

Israel asserts that hundreds of Hamas members remain employed by UNRWA. Hamas embedded its facilities within or under UNRWA buildings specifically to use them as shields. The practice was so common and overt it could not have been missed by the U.N. or its State Department counterparts.

Indeed, the U.N. itself was forced to admit after an investigation that at least nine UNRWA employees participated in the October 7 attack. An UNRWA teacher's passport was found on the body of Hamas leader and October 7 mastermind Yahya Sinwar. A recently eliminated leader of Hamas in Lebanon, Fatah Sharif, was simultaneously the capo of the UNRWA teachers' union.

Yet the United Nations has yet to lift immunity from prosecution for any of those UNRWA employees. In fact, when NGO recipients of U.S. humanitarian assistance flag concerns about U.N. staff connections to or support of terror groups, the organization rarely takes action.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Israeli Knesset overwhelmingly voted to ban UNRWA from operating in Israel? The move was, predictably, criticized by the U.N., the State Department, and other governments. But no other nation would allow an organization with UNRWA's record to operate with impunity within its borders.

Israel has similarly drawn criticism for its actions in the ongoing conflict even though, as John Spencer, chairman of the urban warfare studies program at West Point's Modern War Institute, observed, "Israel has taken more steps to avoid harming civilians than any other military in history." Nonetheless, United Nations officials from Guterres to World Food Program honcho Cindy McCain to U.N. human-rights chief Volker Türk have blamed Israel repeatedly for targeting schools or hospitals. But the U.N. is near silent when evidence shows Hamas and Hezbollah housing their weapons or facilities near, under, or inside those structures.

Similarly, warnings of famine in Gaza by the U.N. in almost all instances focus blame on Israel rather than on the theft and misuse of aid by Hamas — a habit grounded in bias and mirrored by the Biden-Harris administration. USAID director Samantha Power in particular has repeatedly cited Hamas "Health Ministry" fatality figures that inflated the number of women and children casualties, blamed Israel for hunger in Gaza despite Hamas's aid diversion that is so evident even the Palestinian Authority condemns it, and argued for denying

Israel weapons transfers on "humanitarian" grounds by misrepresenting humanitarian law.

It is against the law to provide any U.S. resources to a terrorist entity, but cynical administrators have used humanitarian exceptions as a blanket excuse for supporting terrorism. A regularly used work-around enables aid to bleed over to terrorists via a Treasury Department license that says NGOs carrying out humanitarian assistance are immune to enforcement and prosecution. These exceptions exist for Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Yemen.

And then there's UNIFIL, the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Lebanon, which is charged under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 with keeping arms and militants out of southern Lebanon along the Israeli border. Specifically, it is tasked with "taking steps towards the establishment between the Blue Line [the "line of withdrawal" of Israeli forces in 2000] and the Litani river of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL." Yet, over the past 15 years, Hezbollah became the "most heavily armed non-state group in the world," with most of those arms located in the very area overseen by UNIFIL.

UNIFIL reported that it was denied access to sites of interest by the Lebanese Armed Forces and that Hezbollah "civilians" blocked roads and assaulted peacekeepers on patrol. Credible reports allege that Hezbollah may have bribed peacekeepers to use UNIFIL posts and cameras to spy on Israel. Instead of addressing the many violations, the U.N. Security Council simply recycled the UNIFIL mandate year after year — with nodding acquiescence from Washington — while Hezbollah imported arms, dug tunnels into Israel, and stored weapons within sight of UNIFIL bases.

Meanwhile, the U.N. stands idle as Iran breaches the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, brutalizes its own population, and finances and arms Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthi terrorists now dominating Yemen who have been terrorizing shippers in the Red Sea. Iranian proxies have taken over Gaza, Lebanon, and Yemen, turning all into staging grounds to launch attacks on Iranian-designated targets. Iran stands at the threshold of a nuclear weapon that may be used to fulfill its threat to "wipe Israel off the map."

Yet it is Israel, not Iran, that the U.N. urged to practice restraint after Iran's unprecedented missile attacks in April. Likewise, the call to end "tit-for-tat violence" conveniently came after Iran's October missile attack but before Israel's response.

The global body's passivity has largely been mirrored in the Biden-Harris administration's non-policy on Iran. Desperate to entice the Islamic Republic to return to President Obama's failed nuclear agreement, the U.S. loosened sanctions and excused Iran's steps toward a nuclear weapon. The administration cracked down on several terror-finance networks in the wake of October 7, but the president and his staff seem alarmingly indifferent to Iran's nuclear advances. Indeed, they seem more intent on preventing Israel from attacking Iranian nuclear sites. Nor has the United States encouraged European members of the Iran nuclear deal to implement the so-called snapback that would restore U.N. sanctions on Tehran.

As if that were not sufficient, the U.N. has also been instrumental in facilitating the global lawfare of the increasingly authoritarian and corrupt Palestinian Authority to bypass a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and renege on promises to recognize Israel's right to live in peace and security. Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and Gaza have rejected peace proposals and frameworks that would have resulted in statehood, yet it is Israel that is characterized as intransigent by the Security Council and General Assembly.

The blatant bias against Israel in Turtle Bay can only be chalked up to one thing. Yet, in the face of this virulent antisemitism, the present administration has been almost supine. Early on, the Biden-Harris administration reversed the prior administration's decision to end funding for UNRWA and fought for a waiver of U.S. law to resume funding for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) even though it had granted full membership to the Palestinians. (U.S. law bars funding to the U.N. or any U.N. specialized agency if it grants the Palestine Liberation Organization the same standing as member states.)

In May, a resolution elevating Palestinian representation in the General Assembly passed 143-9 — a clear sign that the United States

declined to fully use its influence to oppose the effort. In September, the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution demanding that Israel end its “unlawful” presence in the West Bank. A rumored effort to suspend Israel’s membership in the U.N. General Assembly may be next, unless U.S. officials up their efforts to stem the tide of hate sweeping through that body.

The United States is sending billions annually to the United Nations. The question must be asked: Why does the Biden administration fail to exercise its leverage effectively to fight the U.N.’s institutional antisemitism? We have the tools but choose not to use them. (National Review Nov 4)

Now is the Time to End UNRWA By Sacha Roytman Dratwa

In a recent bold move, Israel’s parliament voted to end the nation’s relationship with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). This decision, with overwhelming support from both the ruling coalition and the opposition, has now been ratified by the Israeli government.

This decision is not merely a political stance; it reflects a growing recognition that UNRWA has become a vessel for terrorism rather than a lifeline for those it purports to help.

UNRWA was formed at the end of the War of Independence in 1949, born in a sin of privileging Palestinian refugees over all others in the world, ensuring that it had uniquely problematic inbuilt obstacles to solving the conflict, like the ability to hand down the refugee status ad infinitum.

It had a bloated budget and staff, many times that of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the agency of all other refugees across the globe, and almost immediately adopted the endless, privileged and unjust narrative of the Palestinians, which reportedly in recent years became a narrative intertwined with terrorist organizations.

This narrative ensured that blatantly antisemitic and annihilationist language was found in its textbooks.

UNRWA stands alone among relief organizations, facing accusations of harboring terrorists within its ranks and storing military materials in its schools and institutions.

Moreover, its facilities have been exploited to house Hamas offices and launch deadly attacks. For many years, all of this was known because Israeli officials provided evidence to the United Nations and asked its donor countries if they should continue to allow an organization with such a troubling track record to continue receiving support from a global institution tasked with promoting peace.

Apart from a few examples, these exhortations were met with a deafening silence, until the massacre on Oct. 7, 2023, when the evidence stared the world in the face as UNRWA staff took part in the bestial bloodletting.

Even the United Nations has admitted that some of its employees were involved in the invasion of Israel, as well as the murder, rape and mutilating of innocent Israelis.

That massacre made an urgent need clear: We must dismantle UNRWA entirely and replace it with an organization led by countries truly committed to the welfare of Palestinians. This new entity should be dedicated to ensuring that international aid is not diverted to empower those who aspire to death and destruction and threaten peace and stability in the region.

For too long, the international community has failed to protect Palestinians from the grip of Hamas, allowing aid to be misappropriated and fueling the very violence it seeks to quell.

In the wake of the horrific events of Oct. 7, we must hold accountable not only those who perpetrate violence but the systems that enable it.

The United Nations, particularly Secretary-General António Guterres, must recognize their complicity and offer an apology to Israel for allowing a U.N. agency to contribute to the conditions that led to such tragedy.

Unfortunately, senior U.N. officials, including the head of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, rather than doing some serious soul-searching and embracing the possible need for reform, have merely tried to attack Israel further and given scant attention to the murderous members of its institutions.

This is not a case of a few bad apples as some have tried to excuse

it but part of an endemic worldview that sees Israel as an enemy and a Palestinian vision to seek the Jewish state’s end, either through military struggle or by inundating it with the descendants of Palestinians who fled in the middle part of the last century, against all historical norms and practices.

Nevertheless, this is not merely about reassigning blame; it is about reimagining how we support the Palestinian people. They deserve assistance that empowers them, fosters genuine development and contributes to long-lasting peace.

The Palestinian people deserve an agency that finds “durable solutions” for their plight—in the words of UNHCR’s mandate—and not just an institutional obstacle that compounds their misery and institutionalizes their resentment about losing wars and conflicts they started.

By holding organizations accountable and demanding transparency, we can redirect aid to where it is truly needed—supporting the aspirations of individual Palestinians rather than enabling violence against Israel.

Hopefully, this long-overdue step by Israel will lead to a serious re-evaluation of how we approach Palestinian aid. The world can no longer stand by while systems intended to provide relief become instruments of conflict. Let us strive for a future where aid truly serves its purpose, fostering hope, security and a pathway to peace for all in the region.

This can only be achieved once UNRWA has been ended. That time is now. (JNS Nov 7)

Gallant’s Dismissal is Defense of Democracy By Naveh Dromi

Despite the alarmism of some, Israeli democracy is alive and well. Unsurprisingly, these outcries come from the same camp that once accepted a prime minister with just six seats in the Knesset.

In reality, there’s a clear alignment between the protesters supporting Yoav Gallant in the streets and the disconnect between the prime minister and the defense minister. Both leaders have known all along that Gallant served as a representative of the opposition within the government, and the National Security Cabinet.

In normal times, this arrangement might have been manageable. But now, whether Gallant’s stance is rooted in his political or security perspective, both directly oppose the government’s position. He’s reportedly been against advancing into Rafah, opposed military presence on the Philadelphi Corridor and favors a diplomatic settlement in Lebanon. Nearly every initiative the prime minister aimed to push forward was met with Gallant’s opposition. Isn’t this, in itself, a blow to Israeli democracy and security?

Does Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu operate out of political self-preservation? Perhaps. However many in the public believe that his survival instinct often aligns with the nation’s needs. Gallant, too, has made decisions from his own political survival instinct—except his personal interests have not matched the national priorities of the people and the state. While Israelis, including soldiers and reservists, sought to reshape the Middle East, Gallant wasn’t on board. He remained aligned with a camp that distances itself from Netanyahu.

This is the crux of the issue. Gallant wasn’t alone in his opposition to legislation like the draft law for ultra-Orthodox men or the child daycare subsidies bill. Amid the ongoing war and its many sacrifices, it was clear that dissent within the coalition would grow. Yet these issues were no more severe than the judicial reform crisis. Simply put, Gallant isn’t a good fit.

Under Gallant’s tenure, he allowed the IDF chief to promote individuals who held senior positions on October 7. He was the preferred contact for the Americans, who have sought—and still seek—to prevent Israel from reaching a decisive victory. A defense minister who can’t think outside the box after October 7 and adopt an offensive approach is ill-suited for the role.

Netanyahu, despite the events of October 7, continues to enjoy public support. He’s seen as working in the national interest and pursuing a more assertive strategy. Gallant, on the other hand, didn’t need to do much to stay in his position: he could have followed in the footsteps of Gideon Sa’ar, who recently abandoned his boycott of Netanyahu and adopted a stronger stance following October 7. But Gallant did none of that. He’s still stuck on October 6—while the public has moved on. Only the Kaplan protest remains. (Ynet Nov 7)