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Tel: 416 781-3571 e-mail: tzc@torzc.org  
Founding Editor: Yossi Winter

ב"ה שבת שלום  
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## Thank You, Caroline



### The Next Stop on My Zionist Journey

Caroline B. Glick

When I was 12 years old, my family took our first trip outside the United States. We came to Israel on a two-week family tour. It was July 1982. The Lebanon War had just begun. In retrospect, it was the first step on what has become my lifelong Zionist journey.

I was moved by everything I saw. The IDF soldiers hitchhiking home for leave from the battlefields in Lebanon looked like movie stars. Maale Adumim, now a major city, was a clutch of mobile homes in the desert but the gleam in the eyes of the settlers showed the promise of what was to come.

The markets of Jerusalem, the beaches in Tel Aviv, the shells of Syrian tanks on the Golan Heights and the fish in the Sea of Galilee captivated my imagination.

The Western Wall awoke me to the immutable fact that the nation of Israel, the land of Israel and the law of Israel are indivisible.

Hearing Hebrew, the language of prayer shouted out from every corner filled me with awe. And seeing the multiethnic society of Jews from every corner of the world shook me to my core. After two thousand years, in an act of will with no parallel in human history, Jews of all races, backgrounds, and cultures; Jews with unique, fervently kept traditions came home and began patching together a people forcibly separated for fifty generations.

During that first trip to Israel I understood that the future of the Jewish people was being forged in Israel, not in the Diaspora, not even in my warm community on the south side of Chicago.

I loved America. But I wanted to move to Israel.

Nine years later, in 1991, two weeks after I finished college, I fulfilled my wish. I boarded an El Al flight to Tel Aviv with a one-way ticket in my hand. A week later, I took my first step towards the second stop on my Zionist journey: the Israel Defense Force. Two months after dropping down, I started basic training.

I served in the IDF for five and a half years, leaving as a captain. Most of my service was spent in negotiations sessions with the PLO. As the coordinator of negotiations on civil affairs with the Palestinians in the Ministry of Defense, I was a core – if junior – member of the Israeli negotiating team during the Oslo peace process years.

In the IDF, as in all the stations I passed in my professional life I viewed my work as a calling. I always believed that I had the ability to impact the country and the people for the better, and that it was my duty to try to do so.

For the past 18 years, as a writer in the Israeli and international media, it has been my conviction that my job is to use my pen, my keyboard and my voice to shape and expand Israel's maneuver room whether in relation to the international arena, to military questions, to legal affairs or to political issues.

The job of a commentator is to interpret reality. The media's habit of simplifying issues by treating everything as an either-or proposition is disastrous for formulating policy. Israel's options are rarely binary. On almost all issues, Israel a full spectrum of options. Yet due to media pressure, our leaders often miss them. To advance its interests in the international arena for instance, Israel doesn't need to bow before foreign powers. It needs to show foreign powers that that they want what Israel has to offer and that it is in their interest to work with Israel. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is the only prime minister Israel has had that fully understands and implements this basic truth.

The same is the case with the Palestinians. Israel has nothing to fear in its dealing with the Palestinians. The choice we were presented with for more than a generation: either peace with a Palestinian state or war without one, was a false and destructive conceit. It was based on a wide array of lies and delusions. I devoted hundreds of columns and my book "The Israeli Solution" to expose them.

So too, if we want to understand historic processes unfolding, we need to understand history. I saw it as my job as a columnist to explain the relevance of history to our current challenges and to expose the ignorance of much of what passes for historical wisdom in the popular discourse, whether in relation to German history, to Jewish history, to American history, or to Islamic history.

Over the past several years, I found myself returning over and over again to the study of basic issues of governance. This was no esoteric exploit.

Over the past several years, the term "rule of law" in Israel has been turned on its head. Rather than denote the dispassionate enforcement of duly promulgated laws, it has come to mean what President Reuven Rivlin once referred to as the tyranny of the "rule of law mafia," that is, the rule of unchecked lawyers.

Israel's Basic Law – Knesset, defines the Knesset as the sovereign. That is because the public elects its members in national elections. Members of Knesset in turn, elect the government as the executive arm of the people's will. That is how it works in democracies. The parliament legislates laws. The executive implements policies in accordance with the law and the mandate it receives from the public at the ballot box. The job of the judicial branch is to interpret laws.

Over the past several years, and with growing intensity in the past four years, the authority of the Knesset to promulgate laws has diminished. The combined forces of the Attorney General and the justices of the Supreme Court have seized not only the power to abrogate laws and interfere with the legislative process, but to dictate laws through legal opinions and judgments. The same goes for executive power. Not only have the justices and attorneys arrogated to themselves the power to cancel government decisions and policies. They have asserted the power to dictate policies to the government.

Through these acts of the legal fraternity, the powers of Israel's elected officials have been whittled down. This week we learned that Supreme Court President Esther Hayut has quietly empaneled a forum of eleven justices to determine the legality of Basic Law: Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People.

In Israel, Basic Laws are essentially the constitutional foundations of the state.

If Hayut goes through with adjudicating petitions against the law, even if the justices rule that the Basic Law is legal, by claiming the power to adjudicate a Basic Law, the justices will seize the power to undermine the foundations of the state. The Law of Return, which is the anchor of Jewish peoplehood and the ingathering of exiles has long been a red flag

for post-Zionist radicals who reject Israel's right to exist as a specifically Jewish state. There is every reason to believe that if the justices seize the power to undermine Basic Laws, they will not hesitate to go after the Law of Return.

Watching this dangerous trend of events, I have used my position as a columnist to warn the public about what is happening and to empower Israel's politicians to fight for their powers. If Israel is to maintain its democracy, our elected officials must be empowered to challenge the legal fraternity and restore to the Knesset the sole power to legislate laws.

Given the gravity of the situation, the disputes over Israel's borders, its energy policies, its immigration policies, its economic policies and its military policies become secondary concerns. The key question that hangs in the balance today is whether the Knesset will restore its power as the repository of the people's will in accordance with law or will it become a mere debating society with the actual power to determine Israel's future devolved entirely to bureaucrats ruled by a handful of unelected lawyers and judges? Because if the latter happens, the people will lose all ability to determine the outcome of every other aspect of national life.

Every once in a while, over the past year or two, I found myself wondering whether I should throw my hat into the ring and enter politics. Could I be effective in advancing the goal of restoring the powers of the Knesset from inside the Knesset or am I better off staying where I am. Since this was a purely hypothetical question, I left it open.

This brings me to my decision this week to move to a new stop on my Zionist journey. This week I decided to respond positively to an offer from Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked and Education Minister Naftali Bennett to join their new party, Hayemin Hahadash and run on their Knesset slate.

True, there is more than one party that reflects my views in the Knesset, at least officially. But in recent years, the political leaders who have done the most to translate my positions into action have been Shaked and Bennett.

They share my concern for Israel's future as a democracy. They dare to insist that to restore and strengthen Israeli democracy, the current power balance between bureaucrats on the one hand and elected officials on the other must be turned on its head. Whether they are discussing the vast expansion of the power of military lawyers over field commanders in the IDF, the necessity of enforcing the laws of Israel over its Arab citizens with the same alacrity as it is enforced over its Jewish citizens, or rejecting the notion that the Supreme Court has the power to overturn Basic Laws, Bennett and Shaked have consistently communicated and advanced positions I view as critical for the future of the country.

No less importantly for me as a proud Jew who never understood what I see as a largely artificial distinction between religious and secular Jews, their new party – Hayemin Hahadash – doesn't seek to serve just one type of Israeli. It seeks to represent the full spectrum of the Israeli society which I saw and fell in love with, in all its rich diversity in that pivotal first visit in the summer of 1982.

I am convinced that restoring Israel's democratic institutions is the most urgent task we face today. And while I would have been happy to continue advocating for legal reform from my position in the media, when Bennett and Shaked asked me to join them in their efforts to advance this goal from the Knesset, I said yes with little hesitation.

The Zionist journey I began in 1982 has taken me places I could never have dreamed of. It is my deepest hope and my intention that on my next stop, I will have the privilege of advancing the Zionist enterprise I fell in love with so many years ago.

## Thank You Very Much

Toronto Zionist Council and our newsletter have enjoyed a long and fulfilling relationship with Caroline Glick. As all her readers know, Caroline is unique. She has an incredible wealth of knowledge, a powerful intellect and the ability recognize what is important and synthesize a relevant and informed argument.

Through her writing Caroline has given us, her readers, insights into the context of the news, a better understanding of the days' events and in doing so, undoubtedly provided guidance to many of our leaders. For this we are very grateful.

From the Toronto Zionist Council, as you take a position among the leaders, we would like to wish you every success in your new endeavours, opportunities to learn more and understand more in your special ways and apply your new experiences and insights for the further good of Israel and all the of its citizens. Caroline, the same qualities that made your writing so essential will make you a leader among leaders, may you serve to increase Israel's standing as "a beacon unto the nations of the world", with your principled and moral leadership. Kol Tuv, the best of everything to you, Caroline.

## Syrian Withdrawal Fallout

Mark Langfan

While many pundits have gone hysterical over President Trump's Syrian pullout, President Trump really had no choice but to employ his own "Samson Option," one in which he knocked over everyone's toys and theories.

Firstly, President Trump isn't "gifting" Putin a "Christmas present," but rather is hanging a deadly Syrian Albatross on Putin's neck. Without American forces east of the Euphrates and American dollars helping Syrian reconstruction, Putin faces an Iranian victory in Syria, and a Russian loss. In fact, Russian rapprochement with Israel is a direct result of American withdrawal. Now, Russia has only Israel to help keep Iran's gobbling up of Syria in check. If Putin looks to Turkey to check Iran, the unacceptably high payment will be Turkish ownership of Northern Syria.

Putin is now hopelessly up a Syrian creek without a paddle.

Secondly, President Trump told all the the Arabs in Iraq and Saudi Arabia: Either fight Iran yourselves and pay for the fight yourselves, or bow as slaves to your new Persian masters. America can't afford either the money or the blood to fight the Arab war of liberation against the Persian colonialist Iran. The training wheels are off. America will help at the edges, but the fight has to be an Arab fight against Iranian Persian hegemony.

Thirdly, President Trump's message to the Pentagon is: You can spend hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars in a year fighting and dying in foreign wars, but you can't afford to or are legally barred from physically defending the American border, or pay for a defensive wall to slow the migrant invasions? Charity and defense begins at home. If America's home base isn't secure, nothing is secure.

To make matters worse, the Pentagon just "missed" an "accounting error" consisting of spending 331 million dollars paying for Saudi refueling over Yemen, but nobody at DOD can find a single penny to pay for the wall? You've got to be kidding me.

Fourthly, President Trump's message to the world is: America can't afford to protect you any more. President Trump, the businessman, is looking at the total American budget, the deficit and America's debt, and concluded: A bankrupt "world policeman," is a defeated America that can't defend itself or anyone else. America's current military projection is financially unsustainable. The world had better quickly budget for its defense, because America can't continue to foot the bill.

Fifthly, President Trump's message to Turkey is: You've told me ISIS is defeated, America's allies are terrorists, and you were going to attack American forces in Syria; well, goodbye and good luck. Trump didn't believe a word Erdogan said, but Trump believed his intelligence that Turkey, an alleged NATO ally, was scheming with Russia behind America's back on Syria. Now, Erdogan will now have to deal with the Kurds, Russia, ISIS, and Iran all

by himself. Have fun. Without America propping up the Kurds, Turkey might actually realize the truth that the Kurds are Turkey's greatest natural ally against Iran and ISIS.

Sixthly, President Trump's unintended message to Israel: If you give up an inch of the Judea and Samaria aka "West Bank" under my crazy "Deal of the Century," you're stupider than a rock. Relying on a Trump "Peace" deal is like riding blindfolded on a Trump banana peel on an MBS/Saudi skate-board against traffic on a six-lane Iran super-highway. Syria isn't just Iran's pathway to Lebanon, but to any "West Bank" Palestinian Arab State. Israel better solidify its hold of the "West Bank" quickly because the next American President (either sooner or later) will likely be an Israel-hating BDS-supporting democrat who will overtly call Israel an Apartheid State.

In short, President Trump was faced with a no-win situation, and decided to be a modern-day American Samson, and knock everybody down.

## Violence During 2nd Amona Eviction

David Jablinowitz

Police arrived at the Amona outpost on the outskirts of Ofra in the southern Samaritan hills early Thursday morning and forcibly removed a few hundred Israelis, mostly youth, as well as the mobile homes that had been brought up to the hilltop 2 weeks ago.

According to the police, 200 youths who barricaded themselves in the structures poured oil on the road and threw objects in an attempt to prevent the evacuation. By the end of the three-hour eviction, 23 officers had been injured, primarily from stones thrown by the protesters, and at least four teenagers were hurt in the clashes. Police said that seven of the activists were detained for questioning.

Activists claimed that 55 people were hurt, including some who sustained serious blows to the head. They said that the security forces employed excessive force, firing rubber-coated bullets and stun grenades, dragging activists out of the two makeshift structures and throwing them into the buses that evacuated them.

Those behind the construction argue that the land was purchased legally and all that is missing is the authorization of the political echelon which is often delayed politically, and must ultimately come from Benjamin Netanyahu as he currently serves as both prime minister and defense minister and must authorize all construction in Judea and Samaria.

The structures were brought to the site as a sign of protest and solidarity in the immediate aftermath of two deadly terror attacks in the Ofra area. The legal establishment took just days to issue an ultimatum and send forces to destroy and remove them.

A spokesman for Binyamin Regional Council, chairman Yisrael Gantz, said Wednesday that there was no intention of adhering to the state's request to take down the structures, Thursday forces descended on them.

The National Union Party charged Thursday that Netanyahu had begun his campaign for the April Knesset election by uprooting Jews from their homes. The prime minister could have solved the bureaucratic problem with "one hand" and strengthened the settlements. Instead, he preferred to remain steadfast to his tradition of dismantling them, the party added.

The party noted that the illegal Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar is still standing despite a court order to demolish it months ago, and most Arab structures still stand years after such orders. Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel called on Netanyahu to stop the evacuation at Amona and reroute the forces to Khan Al-Ahmar.

World Israel News

## "Terror", Tigers and Tabby Cats...

Martin Sherman

*One cannot but think that if another country treated Jews, wearing "kipot" and "peyote", the way Jewish minors, accused of "terror" are treated in Israel, it would surely be engulfed in a wave of outrage and condemned for blatant anti-Semitism*

This was a week, in which there was much for the citizens of Israel to be concerned about.

The bulk of the headlines was taken up by reports of the appalling behavior of the nation's elected politicians, proving beyond doubt that few—if any—

are deserving of the public's confidence in their ability to lead the country—and probably raising once heretical doubts in the minds of more than a few young Israelis, on the eve of their induction into the IDF.

But that was not the only thing that should have perturbed the public.

### **Detained without access to counsel**

On Sunday, three Jewish minors were arrested on unspecified charges of terror and detained without access to counsel. The initial court proceedings were not open to the public and a gag order was imposed on the investigation. Accordingly, we do not know what transgressions the detainees are alleged to have perpetrated—other than, according to incessant media reports, they are purportedly "grave".

However, one thing we do know. There has been no largescale attack by Jewish "terrorists" that has caused any multiple loss of life or wide-scale damage to property. So that cannot be the reason for their incarceration. Most of the rumored misdeeds seem to range from scrawling offensive graffiti, through damaging property of non-Jews, to the puncturing tyres of Arab vehicles. However deplorable such acts might be, even if motivated by ideological fervor, none of these seem to rise above the level of vandalism.

There is of course one tragic case of loss of life, in which Aisha al-Rawbi, a 47 year old Palestinian-Arab woman, was killed when her car was hit by stones, thrown—according to reports, as yet unsubstantiated—by "settlers". But if there was credible evidence that the detainees were complicit in this admittedly grave misdeed, why were they not charged with homicide, and allowed access to defense counsel?

### **"Terror is terror. Whether...from Arabs or Jews"**

So perhaps the detainees are being held in "preventative detention" in order to preempt some future planned offenses—rather than on suspicion of those already committed. But accepted legal practice does not usually allow incarceration for yet-to-be-committed crimes.

After all, there are many malignant phenomena that might threaten the fabric of Israeli society, most of them far more prevalent and tangible than any alleged menace supposedly posed by Jewish ideological extremists—for example: organized crime, drug trafficking, high-level corruption, to name a few. But, as a general rule, one cannot be arrested for contemplating the commission of a crime.

Accordingly, if extra-judicial measures are considered acceptable for dealing with teenage Jewish zealots to prevent the commission of a possible offense, why not for suspected crime bosses, drug traffickers or senior officials suspected of being prone to corruption? Or potential rapists? Or known pedophiles? Or abusive husbands?

In Israel, the use of such detention without trial is almost universally limited to security-related offenses—particularly, terrorism.

Indeed, that this was the rationale for the incarceration of the minors this week was confirmed by State Prosecutor, Shai Nitzan, just after an Israeli district court extended the remand of the three Jewish minors on suspicion of involvement in a Jewish terror plot. Addressing a conference following the court decision, Nitzan proclaimed: "Terror is terror. Whether it comes from Arabs or Jews".

### **Misplaced evenhandedness:**

#### **Stray tabbies are not Bengal tigers**

In his misplaced endeavor at evenhandedness, Nitzan—together with most of the Israeli political Establishment, including much of the "Right-wing"—has apparently fallen prey to the mendacious mantra of political correctness that Jewish hate crimes, vandalism and hooliganism are the equivalent of Arab terrorism—and hence equivalent extrajudicial measures must be used to combat them.

Indeed, even if one accepts the loosely framed definition of "terror" as "the use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims", any attempt to draw a semblance of equivalence between the two—and the appropriate measures to deal with them—is wildly misguided and misconceived.

Moreover, to attempt to lump together the actions of scrawny, ideologically-driven Jewish teenagers, on the one hand, and the activities of Arab/Muslim terrorist organizations on the other, under the same

undifferentiated heading is no less misleading than claiming that because stray tabby cats and man-eating Bengal tigers are both undomesticated, striped feline carnivores, they pose similar threats and must be dealt with in the same manner.

After all, unlike Arab terrorist organizations, alleged Jewish "extremists" have no equivalent of Iran to equip them or Qatar to finance them; they have no international offices with communications and supply infrastructures spanning the globe. Accordingly, the security forces need to be provided with powers to deal with Arab/Muslim terrorist organizations that they do not (or at least, should not) require to contend with Jewish radicals.

#### **Tabbies and tigers (cont.)**

Indeed, to adopt this "even-handed" approach is both a dangerous and detrimental distortion—for the issue is one that goes beyond mere semantic sophistry.

It blurs what should be a crucial qualitative distinction between two very different manifestations of "the use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims":

- The one, blatantly conducted by the Arab and Muslim world against Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people; the other, purportedly conducted by a handful of Jewish fringe elements, against a hostile Arab population, largely supportive of the violence conducted against Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people.

- The one, overtly conducted by non-state actors with quasi-state capabilities, supported, equipped and funded by sovereign governments, with communications, supply and financial infrastructures deployed across international borders; the other, allegedly conducted without any backing from foreign states, with no international infrastructure to provide it with ordnance or finance;

- The one, conducted with the virtually unanimous endorsement of the society within which it operates, the other, with virtually unanimous condemnation.

To suggest that any two phenomena, so starkly different, should be considered even vaguely similar, let alone identical, that they both constitute a similar danger to Israel, and that they should therefore be combated by means that are commensurately similar, is wildly disingenuous by any objective criterion.

#### **Counterproductive "evenhandedness"**

But there is another caveat which those hand-wringing, moralistic mea culpa circles should heed. For although they may think that mindlessly reciting "terror is terror is..." somehow affords them the moral high ground and that their "even-handed" outrage enhances Israel's standing abroad—quite the opposite is true.

Indeed, those who strive to equate Arab terrorism, and the terrorist organizations that perpetrate and propagate it, on the one hand, and the ideologically motivated crimes of renegade radical Jews, on the other, do a massive disservice to the country and its international standing.

By blurring the qualitative difference between the two, they gravely undermine Israel's ability to accurately convey to the world the nature, scale and scope of the threat it faces and the danger the Arab terrorist organizations pose. By so doing, they severely sabotage Israel's efforts to generate international understanding for the policies it needs to adopt to contend with them—precisely because of the nature, scope and scale of the peril one poses and the other does not.

So, whether motivated by genuine, but misguided, concern for Israel's international image; or by visceral opprobrium for strange-looking fellow Jews, the attempt to equate Arab terrorism against Jews with Jewish "terror" against Arabs is playing right into the hands of Israel's most vehement detractors.

#### **Cause for concern**

But there is an additional, and possibly sinister, cause for concern.

Since the 2015 arson in the Palestinian-Arab village of Duma, in which three members of the Dawabshe family were burnt to death, there has been a series of extra-judicial incarceration of Jews, including minors. These have raised considerable doubts as to the integrity of the investigative process and the conduct of the security services and police.

The arson was attributed to "Jewish terrorists"—despite the fact that there have been numerous other

(previous and subsequent) cases of arson in the same village, attributed to inter-clan feuding. After about six months, it was announced that arrests of several Jews had been made—including the alleged adult perpetrator, Aviram Ben-Uliel, and several minors, as alleged accomplices. A gag order was placed on the investigation. Subsequently, it was reported that Ben-Uliel had confessed to the arson. However, not only was his confession highly improbable, it was totally incompatible with all the eye-witness accounts given at the scene of crime.

Unsurprisingly, Ben-Uliel later retracted the confession, claiming it was extracted under physical duress—a claim the court partially accepted.

Moreover, the court also nullified confessions from the minor, accused of being Ben-Uliel's accomplice in planning the Duma attack.

#### **Concern (cont.)**

Significantly, two and a half years after the defendant's arrest and an extended period of "enhanced interrogation", the Supreme Court ordered him to be released to house arrest—despite an appeal by the prosecution, which claimed that he was still dangerous and should not be released before the end of the trial.

Indeed, adding to the sense of unease is the fact that several other youths detained without trial and access to counsel were also later released without charge—see here, here, here, and here—raising grave questions as to why they were incarcerated for months in the first place.

And just this week, a district court threw out a confession given by an Israeli minor, detained as part of a far-reaching investigation into Jewish terrorism, on the grounds that it was extracted by unlawful means and under duress. In dismissing the confession, the judge described the behavior of the police as "unfair, to say the least, as well as offensive and threatening".

In light of the harsh treatment and long periods of detention without trial or access to counsel, this series of judicial censure cannot but arouse a sense of acute apprehension as to the impartiality and equity meted out to certain sectors of the population.

Indeed, one cannot but think that if another country treated Jews, wearing "kipot" and "peyote", the way the Jewish minors, accused of "terror" are treated in Israel, it would surely be engulfed in a wave of outrage and condemned for blatant anti-Semitism.

#### **Full disclosure: My personal bias**

I confess that I have a strong personal bias in favor of Israel's security forces and little empathy for the "hilltop" youth, neither for their theocratic political doctrine, nor their purported modus operandi for its implementation.

I would like nothing better than to feel I could place blind faith in the Shin Bet's determination of guilt and the authenticity of the case brought against Jewish detainees.

Sadly this is not the case.

Martin Sherman is the founder and executive director of the Israel Institute for Strategic Studies.

### **Behind the Left's War on Jewish Schools**

Daniel Greenfield

In 2016, a poll showed Trump beating Hillary Clinton 66% to 22% among Orthodox Jews. This wasn't as unusual as it sounds. In New York City, Orthodox Jewish neighborhoods light up as islands in a lefty sea.

Romney won over 90% of the vote in some Orthodox Jewish areas.

Traditional religious beliefs are associated with conservative politics among Jews the same way that they are among Christians. 60% of Jews who attended weekly religious services disapproved of Obama while those who didn't, mostly supported him. Why do American Jews lean much more to the left? Because only 11% of American Jews attend weekly synagogue services. Well below the 40% national average.

Only 34% of American Jews are certain that they believe in G-d. What do they believe in? When asked what it means to be Jewish, 56% mentioned social justice, 42% comedy and only 19% percent mentioned anything involving religion. Meanwhile 63% of Israeli Jews believe "completely" in G-d.

Last year, Trump's approval rating among Orthodox Jews was at 71%. The American Jewish

Committee's Survey wrote the results up glumly as "We have seen the future, and it looks Orthodox".

Establishment Jewish groups, which suddenly woke up and realized that the majority of Jewish children in New York City were Orthodox Jews, are preparing to fight that future. If those children are allowed to grow up Orthodox, the end of the Jewish Left will have arrived. And so they came after the children.

The New York State Department of Education now threatens to shut down Jewish schools and report parents who refuse to send their children to leftist government schools to child protection authorities. As in the Soviet Union, giving a child a Jewish education would be treated as evidence of child abuse. The government would be able to abduct children for the crime of receiving a Jewish education.

The new "Indian Residential Schools" had arrived. Jewish schools aren't the only targets of this discriminatory campaign by the educational establishment. Catholic schools have also come under attack with the Archdiocese of New York posting an editorial that declares, "Leviathan has now focused its attention on religious schools here in New York, with the clear intention of either forcing them to submit to its authority or face destruction."

The public face of the campaign against Jewish schools is YAFFED or Young Advocates for Fair Education. Its members claim to be the products of Orthodox Jewish schools whose poor education left them so unprepared for the real world that all they were able to do was launch an extremely effective statewide campaign whose press releases and talking points are quoted verbatim in every single media outlet.

As in March for Our Lives, young faces are used to hide the agendas of the old lefties behind the curtain.

While Naftuli Moster, YAFFED's executive director, plays its equivalent of David Hogg, speaking to media outlets and appearing at forums to discuss the incredible intellectual disadvantage that the same educational system that produced generations of visionary thinkers and geniuses burdened him with, Hannah Rothstein, a not remotely "young" Baruch College prof, serves as its president. Hannah Rothstein also serves on the board of Footsteps, an organization working to secularize Orthodox Jews and transition them to an irreligious lifestyle. She's a Trump critic and an Obama supporter.

She has also donated to Barack Obama, Nancy Pelosi, Al Franken, Beto O'Rourke and Cory Booker. Her repeated out of state donations, some through ActBlue, show a woman passionate about the Left. And the growing Orthodox Jewish population poses a threat to everything that Rothstein has been funding.

Moster, YAFFED's public face, is also a Footsteps graduate. Pesach Eisen, a Yaffed member who testified in its cause, is a Footsteps member and a fellow with the radical leftist Jews for Racial & Economic Justice which denies the existence of lefty anti-Semitism even as it defends leftist anti-Semites. Eisen demonstrates how Footsteps and YAFFED act as arms of the broader anti-Jewish Left.

And Moster has, in turn, defended the anti-Semitic Women's March.

Anita Altman serves on the Board of Directors of YAFFED and her bio boasts of helping numerous Footsteps clients. In 2014, she had signed an angry letter, declaring, "AIPAC speaks for Israel's hard-line government and its right-wing supporters, and for them alone; it does not speak for us." The signatories included a range of anti-Israel activists, supporters of BDS and defenders of anti-Semitic terrorism.

Altman has also signed a letter backing anti-Semitic Farrakhan supporter Linda Sarsour.

Altman is, unsurprisingly, no fan of religious Jews. In a bizarre interview, which repeatedly warns of a "khasidic takeover", she complained that there is "fear" when "it comes to government dealing with these fundamentalist communities." Then she compared Orthodox Jews to Iran.

That's the medieval bigotry behind YAFFED and the war on Orthodox Jewish schools.

YAFFED's bid is all about lefties using the government to deal with "fundamentalists" under the guise of helping the few formerly Orthodox members

of Footsteps being used as fronts for the hateful operation.

Altman isn't the only anti-Israel activist in YAFFED. Its communications director, Abigail Beatty, also allegedly works for the anti-Israel NIF, an organization notorious for its funding of leftist and BDS group.

YAFFED claims to advocate for "the rights of Hasidic and ultra-Orthodox children". But it appears to be another face of Footsteps: an organization advocating against the traditional religious practices of Orthodox Judaism.

The people behind YAFFED have the right to advocate for discriminatory policies targeting the Orthodox Jewish community, in order to force Jewish parents to take their children out of Jewish schools.

They have the right to do so in the name of their radical leftist politics and hatred of religion.

But they have no right to masquerade as an organization fighting for the rights of the very people they are persecuting. Instead of highlighting these obvious connections, the media has chosen to act as the echo chamber for YAFFED while denying the Jewish communities targeted by Altman and her ilk, a voice.

Anonymous stories and bots have been used to manufacture a group of Orthodox Jewish parents and children who are "suffering" in the Jewish school system, but oddly, choose not to leave it.

These astroturf tactics are being used to justify discrimination and harassment of a religious community.

It's about more than just the bigotry of Anita Altman, obsessed with recreating Philip Roth's Eli the Fanatic. Behind the fresh young faces, there are elderly veterans of the lefty political establishment, many with backgrounds in education and academia, who see religious Jewish education as a threat.

An economic threat and also a political threat.

In a letter to a Democrat councilmember, David Bloomfield, claimed that the war on Jewish schools would enable their students to "vote outside the confines of their deterministic communities".

Bloomfield has written a number of articles and appeared at Yaffed forums attempting to pressure the government into cracking down on Jewish schools.

At stake are two very different visions of education and the future.

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recently visited Orthodox Jewish schools and touted them as models of school choice. There is no word in the English language that the Left hates more than "choice".

The education lobby has gone to war against charter schools. And Orthodox Jewish schools are seen as even worse than charter schools. They don't bow to the teachers' unions. The money their parents spend on education doesn't end up in the pockets of union bosses and their Democrat political allies.

The Orthodox Jewish community has helped drive the expansion of voucher programs. And school choice is an existential threat to the educational establishment and the political power of the Left.

Orthodox Jewish communities have fueled support for school choice not only in New York, but in swing states like Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida, endangering presidential elections.

Something had to be done about those pesky Jews. Now something is being done.

The Left's vision of the educational system is Footsteps and Yaffed writ large, a machine for destroying communities, undermining their traditions, and crushing parental authority so that academics can reinvent the children in their own cultural and political image. That's what happened to American Jews.

Now the same people who a century ago turned a generation of immigrants from believers in G-d to believers in social justice see another Jewish demographic threat and want to do it all over again.

On Sabbath, hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Jews will read the story of how an ancient Egyptian leader grew disgusted with rising Jewish demographics. "Behold, the numbers of the children of Israel are too many," he tells his political allies. "Come, let us deal cunningly with them, lest they multiply."

On Fifth Avenue, the establishment pharaohs, whose faith is not in Isis or Hathor, but in progressive

social justice, look at the children in Jewish schools across New York City and bitterly echo his words.

Daniel Greenfield, a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the Freedom Center, is an investigative journalist and writer focusing on the radical Left and Islamic terrorism.

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## In Other News...

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### The Loss of a Haredi Soldier Yossi Cohen's family embraced their haredi son serving in the IDF.

Dov Lipman

The revolutionary change following the loss of a haredi soldier

It was a shiva house like none other. The ultra-Orthodox Mekor Baruch neighborhood of Jerusalem was lined with white posters with black letters, announcing the tragic passing of "the holy soldier," Yossi Cohen, killed by a Palestinian terrorist in the line of duty.

"Holy soldier."

Those are not words one ever sees in a public forum in an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood. But Yossi's family embraced their haredi son serving in the IDF. Yossi's step-father, Rabbi Eliyahu Meirav, with his long white beard and black hat, spoke on television about how he and his wife sent Yossi to the army "with love." At the shiva, he related how he and his wife escorted Yossi to the enlistment center and made a party celebrating his serving as an Israeli soldier.

While the ultra-Orthodox newspapers did not reference that Yossi was haredi, the ultra-Orthodox news websites covered this extensively. The tone of both Kikar Hashabbat and B'Hadrei Hadarim, the most prominent of haredi sites, was one of pride: Yossi was a haredi soldier.

It is clear that a transformative experience took place in the haredi community since Yossi was killed two weeks ago. And the positive vibe surrounding this haredi soldier's death has led to an additional surprising development: Yossi's friends are strongly considering enlisting as a result of his death.

The number of haredim serving in the IDF has been surging for years. In 2007, just 290 haredim enlisted. Ten years later, more than 3,000 haredim joined. An even bigger change than the 1,000% increase is the age at which ultra-Orthodox youth are entering in the army. Whereas most of the haredi enlistees were once in their 20s and married, today 70% of them are in the 18-20 age range, with 20% enlisting between 20 and 23. Only 15% are married. As the small sample of Yossi's friends indicated, these numbers are likely to grow in the months ahead.

Another significant change in recent years has been the units in which haredim serve. While in past years they tended to serve in computer, engineering and other non-combat areas, today, of the 7,000 haredim serving, approximately 3,000 are in the haredi combat unit Netzach Yehuda, 420 serve in all-haredi elite combat units and 1,350 serve in regular army units. Yossi's friends and the many others who will join the army because of the pride being expressed in the haredi community over IDF service will most likely follow Yossi's example and join combat units as well.

Remembrance Day has always been a complicated day for the ultra-Orthodox population. During the last few years, there have been gatherings among moderate haredi communities to honor soldiers from broader society who have fallen.

Now for the first time in years, the upcoming memorial day will include mourning for a fallen haredi soldier. And this too will no doubt transform the day for a much larger percentage of the haredi community.

The headlines this week are all about the election, and the issue of the haredi draft law will now be pushed off for the 21st Knesset to address. But regardless of elections and Knesset laws, progress is happening on its own.

So while we mourn the loss of Yossi Cohen, let us honor this young man who courageously chose to defend the people of Israel as a proud haredi combat soldier, and applaud his family who have inspired even more haredi enlistment, respect for the IDF and greater unity in Israel.

The author served as a member of the 19th Knesset.

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## 150 Haredi Soldiers Sworn In

Eliran Aharon

150 fighters from the haredi Netzach Yehuda Battalion swore allegiance to the IDF at the Western Wall plaza on Thursday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

This is the first swearing-in ceremony that has taken place since the two soldiers from the battalion were murdered in a shooting attack in Givat Assaf.

The fighters proved that despite the loss, many young haredim wanted to enlist in the battalion.

During the swearing-in ceremony, the soldiers said "I declare" instead of "I swear" as is customary in the swearing-in ceremonies. The ceremony concluded with the soldiers singing "Am Hanetzach".

The condition of another battalion fighter who was wounded in the attack at Givat Assaf, Netanel Felber, remains serious and doctors are fighting for his life.

Last week, a prayer vigil for Felber was held at the Western Wall plaza at the initiative of the battalion's graduates.

Arutz7

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## "The Bodies Were Still Warm, People Were Already Hurling Blame"

Hezki Baruch

Itzhak Whisky, a young businessman, told Arutz Sheva about the path he followed from a family with deep roots in haredi society, to Netzach Yehuda, the haredi battalion within the Nahal infantry brigade, also known as "Nahal Haredi".

We met Whisky in the Jerusalem home of Los Angeles-based businessman David Hager, a founder of the Nahal Haredi battalion.

Whisky is the great grandson of the former leader of the Eida Haredit, Rabbi Moshe Blau. He grew up in the Me'ah She'arim neighborhood in Jerusalem, and remembers his childhood as a good and happy one.

Whisky told us that he opted for military combat service because he simply did not fit in to the life of Torah study. "I figured it would be better to do something with my life, rather than bluff the whole world into believing I was actually doing something." The service in Nahal Haredi challenged and developed him, he said.

We asked him about the criticism recently leveled by media and parts of the public at the battalion's soldierly skills, after two of its men were killed in a terror attack at Givat Assaf.

"I heard the criticism and I responded to it," he stated. "These days, everyone thinks he can be the judge and the executioner, and believes he is an expert on security. Everyone has an opinion because we are all keyboard warriors."

"This is unfair criticism," he explained. "There have been similar incidents involving the Golani Brigade, which lost a soldier – Elichai Tahar-Lev of blessed memory – at the Ofra Junction. These are events that cannot be foreseen. They surprise you."

Whisky referred to the eyewitness testimony of a woman who said that the soldiers had sacrificed their own lives to protect the civilians who were present at the scene. "That was their role. The event ended with the death of two soldiers and another soldier is fighting for his life now, so with the bodies still warm and the soldier who is unable to give his version of what happened, everyone is analyzing what happened and reaching conclusions?"

In situations like these, said Whisky, "we can only sanctify the names" of the soldiers, "and see them as heroes who paid the dearest price, the price of life, for protecting Israel. No one can judge them. They fought, they protected and they paid with their lives."

As for Whisky himself – after completing his military service, he and another former Netzach Yehuda soldier set up a company that provides accessibility solutions for its clients. Its employees include former Netzach Yehuda soldiers and clients include large entities such as IMI Systems, Kupat Holim Clalit, Dan Hotels and more.

He believes that his chosen path can and should serve as a model for haredi society in general: A young man who is unable to find his place in the yeshiva should opt for military service and employment. "If you are not into the Shas with your heart and mind, and you are not studying seriously, the only alternative is to take personal responsibility for yourself and your family, and the society you live in."