



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

April 12, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Sunday, April 12

Two walk-outs in one weekend: Vance from Islamabad, Hamas from the deadline.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE This is the cluster we've writing under different headlines for a year, and really, it's just a single phenomenon. The UNHRC bypassing its own selection committee to install Jallad — the Council telling its members and the world that the rules do not apply when the question is Israel. Vanier cancelling a Holocaust commemoration the week after it ran a Palestinian-themed event without security. It's all the same mechanism with identical logic even if the venue is larger or smaller. The NYC numbers are the consequence. A 10% population absorbing 55% of confirmed hate crimes in a city run by a mayor who, at the press conference where the data was released, declined to name the targeted population. J Street's "pivot" on Iron Dome is the most consequential item in the cluster, because J Street is the institution whose entire brand was the claim that pro-Israel and pro-peace could be combined inside the Democratic mainstream. Whatever mask they had, has dropped. That institution has now publicly endorsed defunding the missile defense system that has saved hundreds of thousands of Israeli civilian lives. While a war is ongoing. The brand is not pro-Israel. It is Iron Dome-neutral, which in the operational arithmetic of a multi-front Iranian missile campaign is anti-Israel with extra steps. The Bilzerian candidacy is the canary on the Republican side. The same syndrome — Carlson, MTG, Fuentes, Bilzerian — that has been building since 2024 is now generating actual congressional candidates with thirty million followers. The Harvard 25%-to-7% number shows the American institutional pipeline that produces journalists, foreign service officers, Senate staff, and policy minds has, over twenty years, deliberately reduced its Jewish intake while increasing exposure to faculty who will not condemn the Hamas attack and student bodies who will.

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WE'RE back. I hope you had a Pesach as full of family and friends as we were fortunate enough to enjoy. The first night was at my rabbi's table — twenty around it, mostly his family, the kind of warm crowded seder where the Haggadah comes to life. The second night was at a friend's house, where we sat with a Holocaust survivor whose dignity through the seder was undisturbed by the political shouting that arrived with the meal [the Haggadah always was a political document — just usually different politics]. Shabbat dinner Friday with friends in Alpharetta ended past midnight at their Israeli neighbors' down the street — Hebrew and English crossing the table for hours, in suburban Georgia, in the kind of community the long arc of this history was supposed to make impossible. That said, the news did not take the break.

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The campaign that opened in the days before Purim closed its sixth week into the seder's recitation of *b'chol dor vador omdim aleinu lechaloteinu* — in every generation they rise against us to destroy us, and HaShem saves us from their hand. One war paused. Two others did not. And the monthly Vantage publishes later this morning, so today's brief is the situation report. We'll take it up to altitude in an hour or so to dig in further.

Flash Brief

- **Lebanon as central front:** IDF executes Operation Eternal Darkness — 50 jets, 100 targets, 203 killed in the heaviest Beirut bombardment since 1983. *See The War Today.*
- **Lifshiz z"l falls in Lebanon:** Staff Sgt. Touvel Yosef Lifshiz of Beit She'an killed in a Golani firefight April 8 — twelfth Israeli soldier of the renewed offensive. *See The War Today.*
- **Hormuz mine-clearing flashpoint:** First US Navy strait transit since the war began; Iran has reportedly lost the maps to its own minefield; IRGC warns military passage will be met with force. *See The War Today.*
- **Islamabad talks collapse:** Vance walks after twenty-one hours; Iran rejects US terms; \$27 billion, Hormuz, and the uranium stockpile remain the wall. *See The War Today.*
- **Hamas disarmament deadline expires:** Framework collapses without compliance; Mladenov's parallel deadline arrives this week; renewed Gaza operations in preparation. *See The War Today.*
- **Cabinet approves 34 new Judea and Samaria communities:** Largest single approval in Israeli history brings the total from 69 to 103. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Iran recruits inside the IDF:** Four active-duty combat soldiers in custody on Iran-spying suspicion; Bennett assassination plot foiled in Haifa; Halevi's phone hacked. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Zamir warns the IDF will collapse:** Chief of staff tells cabinet the army cannot sustain operations without three laws; Bismuth's "conscription" bill exempts the population the IDF needs. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Pakistan's "mediator" curses Israel:** Defense Minister Asif posts that Israel is "evil and a curse for humanity" while hosting the US-Iran trilateral talks in Islamabad. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Russia hands Iran a 55-target Israeli energy list:** Moscow delivers a working strike package against Israeli infrastructure; China stages MANPADs for delivery via cutouts. *See Israel and the World.*

BELOW: why the Iran truce moved the war to Lebanon rather than ending it, what Vance's walkout in Islamabad reveals about a regime that still negotiates like it has cards, the cabinet vote that expanded Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria by half in a single afternoon while no one was watching, what four IDF combat soldiers spying for Iran means for the counterintelligence doctrine that has not caught up to the threat, and the institutional cluster — UNHRC, J Street, a cancelled Holocaust commemoration — that sounds like four, but is really one story.

A ceasefire is supposed to mean fewer wars, not more places to fight one. What the truce actually bought was permission for the wars Iran was not directly running to accelerate without an audience — the kinetic phases moved to where the diplomatic frame did not reach, and the political phases moved to where attention had cleared. Twenty-one hours in Islamabad earlier today with Vance walking out, no deal, no follow-up scheduled — which means the diplomatic frame now does not reach Hormuz either. The arithmetic of the past two weeks is that Israel traded one paused front for several active ones, the regimes that lost the Iran round are reading the same arithmetic and reloading on the same clock, and the only negotiation that survived the weekend is the one where Hezbollah is the subject. What looks like a pause from a thousand miles away is, on the ground, the moment the war learned to move sideways.

The War Today

Catch-up since our last edition: The two-week US-Iran ceasefire took effect at 3 a.m. April 8, conditioned on Iran reopening the Strait of Hormuz [a condition Iran has not met and reportedly cannot meet, theoretically having lost track of some of the mines it laid]. Israel's PMO endorsed the pause but stated explicitly that Lebanon is excluded. Before the truce landed, the closing 36 hours included US strikes on more than fifty targets at Kharg Island, IDF strikes on eight bridge segments and ~10 rail sections across Tehran, Karaj, Tabriz, Kashan, Qom, and the destruction of the Asaluyeh and Mahshahr petrochemical complexes — together responsible for some 85% of Iranian petrochemical exports, both now offline. The IDF eliminated IRGC Intelligence Chief Maj. Gen. Majid Khademi in Tehran on April 6 and Quds Force Unit 840 commander Asghar Bagheri ("Yazdan Mir") on April 7. A US F-15E went down over southeastern Iran on April 3rd. Both crew were rescued by the 5th in a 155-aircraft operation, with the CIA running a parallel deception campaign telling Iran the second pilot had already been moved. CENTCOM confirms "Operation Epic Fury" (in the US parlance), in under forty days, led to 13,000 strikes on the Iranian terror regime and its infrastructure. Iran intensified its cluster-warhead ballistic missile campaign in the final week, hitting Petah Tikva, Bnei Brak, Ramat Gan, Givatayim, Haifa, and Kiryat Ata. The April 5th Haifa strike was the result of a missile breaking up mid-air, defeating interception, and a warhead failing to detonate — the residential building collapse killed Lena Gershbitz, Dmitri Gershbitz, Vladimir Gershbitz, and Lucille Jean ז"ל. The 60-day Hamas disarmament deadline announced on Feb. 16 expired the night of April 10. As we've expected, Hamas did not disarm.

Eternal Darkness Makes Lebanon the Central Front the Iran Truce Was Supposed to Quiet

The IDF launched Operation Eternal Darkness at the moment the Iran cease-fire took hold on April 8 — 50 fighter jets, approximately 160 munitions, 100 Hezbollah targets across Beirut, the Beqaa, and the south, executed inside ten minutes. The Lebanese Health Ministry claims the toll reached 203 killed and roughly 1,000 wounded, calling it the heaviest bombardment of Beirut since 1983. The strike package was pre-planned, not a closing blow. A sixth division — the 98th (paratroopers and commandos) — joined the 91st, 36th, 146th, 162nd, and the 210th Bashan in active operations. The IDF describes “five divisions in ground offensive” while six are operating in the theater. As of April 10 the IDF puts Hezbollah losses since Operation Roaring Lion began at approximately 1,400 operatives killed, including hundreds from the Radwan Force, ~250 artillery operators, fifteen artillery sector commanders, more than 200 launchers and ~1,300 launch tubes destroyed, and 4,200+ infrastructure sites dismantled. Since our last briefings, there have been many senior eliminations: Hajj Youssef Ismail Hashem (Southern Front commander, Beirut, March 31); Mahdi Vafaei (Quds Force Lebanon Corps engineering chief); Maher Qassem Hamdan (Lebanese Resistance Brigades commander in Shebaa, killed in Sidon with eight others); Ali Yusuf Harshi (Naim Qassem’s nephew and personal secretary, Beirut); and the three Hezbollah operatives directly responsible for the Beit Lif killings of Capt. Madmoni, SSgts. Cohen, Antis, and Harel ז”ל, eliminated by IDF troops in close-quarters combat April 7. Staff Sgt. Touvel Yosef Lifshiz ז”ל, 20, of Beit She’an, Golani 13th Battalion, was killed in a Golani firefight April 8th — the twelfth Israeli soldier to fall since the Lebanon offensive resumed. A failed strike near Beirut on the 7th missed its Hezbollah target and killed Pierre Moawad, a senior Lebanese Forces (anti-Hezbollah) official, and his wife. Eight bridges across the Litani including the Sahmar and Qasimiyah crossings were struck to cut Hezbollah resupply. IDF troops completed deployment of an anti-tank missile defense line several kilometers inside Lebanon. Northern Command now describes earlier estimates of Hezbollah’s degradation as “overly optimistic” — Hezbollah retains hundreds of launch platforms north of the Litani and capacity for ~200 attacks per day for up to five months. On April 10, Bibi announced direct Israeli-Lebanese negotiations at Lebanese request, focused on disarming Hezbollah and a peace agreement. Israel refused French inclusion in the talks, citing France’s “conduct over the past year — including initiatives aimed at limiting Israel’s ability to fight in Iran, and a complete lack of willingness to take concrete steps to help Lebanon disarm Hezbollah.” Negotiations open under fire. Fully disarming Hezbollah in the current ground offensive is “unrealistic” because most launches originate north of the Litani, though complete disarmament remains a “long-term objective.”

ASSESSMENT

The Iran truce did move the war. As the Pentagon began drafting a maritime corridor through Hormuz, Israel fired 160 munitions into Beirut in ten minutes — the largest single strike wave of the war, planned in advance, executed at the precise moment Trump's pause took hold. Two governments, two wars, an inordinate number of phone lines between them. The IDF has internalized that the buffer-zone-and-raids doctrine is the plan going forward (and the disarmament language is the diplomatic packaging). Northern Command's "overly optimistic" line is the closest the IDF will come to publicly acknowledging that the November 2024 ceasefire was a mistake the army has now spent fourteen months reversing. Pierre Moawad's death is a failure that will compound politically. An anti-Hezbollah figure inadvertently killed in an Israeli strike (aimed at Hezbollah), as Netanyahu opens direct talks with Beirut. Lebanon's government will pocket the regret, demand a price, and continue not disarming Hezbollah. Israel will continue not ending operations.

Vance Walks Out of Islamabad After Twenty-One Hours

The Islamabad trilateral collapsed Sunday morning after just twenty-one hours of direct talks. Vance, flanked by Witkoff and Kushner, told reporters Iran had "chosen not to accept our terms" and the US delegation was leaving without an agreement, declining to answer whether the failure would lead back to war. Qalibaf — who led the Iranian side with Araghchi and Ali Bagheri — blamed Washington on X for failing to "gain the trust" of Iran's team. The three sticking points: reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, the fate of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile, and Tehran's demand for the release of approximately \$27 billion in frozen assets held abroad. Iran's broader red lines included full operational control of the strait, payment of war reparations, sanctions relief, and a "stable and genuine ceasefire" that explicitly folded Lebanon into the agreement. Vance described the US position as "quite flexible" and "quite accommodating," said the negotiators consulted Trump "a half dozen times, a dozen times over the past 21 hours," and confirmed the United States left "a very simple proposal, a method of understanding, that is our final and best offer." Iran declined. Iranian officials have stated Hormuz will not reopen until a final peace deal is signed, and that any unauthorized military transit will be met with force. Trump on April 11 said the strait will reopen "in the not-too-distant future" and confirmed US mine-clearing operations are underway. USS Frank E. Peterson and USS Michael Murphy transited the strait — the first US Navy passage since the war began — and a new maritime corridor is being established. Two China-linked tankers also crossed. Iran claims to have lost track of some of the mines it laid and currently cannot reopen the strait even if it wanted to. Which isn't stopping Iran from charging transit fees in cryptocurrency and yuan, capping traffic at fifteen vessels per day. Trump on the record: "Warships are being supplied with the best ammunition to resume strikes in case the Pakistan talks fail. We are in the process of reequipping our ships with the best weapons, even better than what we used previously when we destroyed them." CIA assessments determine roughly half of Iran's missile launchers remain intact, along with thousands of drones and a large number of coastal cruise missiles. Meanwhile, China is preparing to deliver shoulder-fired anti-aircraft (MANPADs) to Iran within the next few weeks, with Beijing attempting to route the shipments through

third countries to conceal their origin. The ceasefire is being violated left and right: April 9, Iran-backed Iraqi militias launched a massive drone attack on Kuwait, the UAE, and US bases. Kuwait intercepted 28 drones. The IRGC followed through on its threatened US-corporate target list and damaged Amazon's cloud infrastructure in Bahrain with a drone strike — the first publicly acknowledged Iranian retaliation against a US tech company. Russia and China vetoed a Bahrain-sponsored UN Security Council resolution seeking international support for reopening the strait. Hundreds of thousands of diaspora Iranians rallied outside US embassies and consulates across thirty-four cities Saturday at Reza Pahlavi's call, demanding Washington not cut a deal with the Islamic Republic and warning that any easing of pressure would let the regime regroup. The rallies overlapped the negotiations almost exactly. The demand was answered, by accident, through Iran's own intransigence. And reports from Dehdasht in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province during the F-15E search-and-rescue operation described residents physically blocking roads to prevent IRGC units from reaching the downed pilot's location.

ASSESSMENT

Twenty-one hours, three negotiators, no deal — and the Iranian delegation flew home to a regime that has lost half its launchers, its top petrochemical revenue, its intelligence chief, and the medical chart on Mojtaba Khamenei, while demanding \$27 billion and sovereign control of a strait it cannot demine. The regime has internalized that the only card left is the one it never quite played: pretend the war can resume on its terms. Vance's "final and best offer" line is a door closing. The reloading bit, however, is what matters for the next phase. Half the launchers intact, thousands of drones, MANPADs being staged out of China through cutouts, Russia handing target packages over to a wartime Iranian general staff [more on that in Israel and the World]. The remaining question is whether Israel and the US grant Iran the months required to reconstitute — the same conditional posture that produced four decades of sanctions evasion and the IRGC nuclear timeline. The Pahlavi rallies are the data point Western capitals will continue to ignore: hundreds of thousands of Iranians outside US embassies asking Washington not to save the regime that is killing them, and the only government that has heard them this weekend is the one in Tehran, which heard them by failing.

Hamas Disarm Deadline Expires, Gaza Reload Window Opens

The Feb. 16 framework gave Hamas until April 10 to fully disarm, including handover of approximately 60,000 AK-47s and the destruction of the Strip's tunnel network. Hamas did not disarm. [Shocking, right?] Israel is preparing for renewed military operations in Gaza. Separately, the Gaza Board of Peace has given Hamas until the end of this week to accept a parallel disarmament proposal under Trump's "Steps to Complete the Implementation" framework — a five-stage, eight-month timeline that begins with the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) taking security control and ends with Israeli withdrawal upon "verification that Gaza is free of weaponry." Some 20,000 armed Hamas operatives remain active in Gaza. Hamas controls approximately 50% of the territory of the Strip (mainly beyond the Yellow Line). And command-and-control capabilities are being gradually restored. The IDF has not eliminated all "encircled operatives" in Rafah. Hamas's newest

tactic for intelligence-gathering on IDF forces, is diabolical. Kites carrying small cameras are being flown by small children directly in front of IDF positions. The use of kids is designed to prevent strikes against the operators by exploiting the ethics and morals of the IDF to say nothing of the international-incident risk of harming them. Smuggling continues via humanitarian aid convoys. Hamas drone use for both smuggling and intelligence has expanded. IDF eliminations have recently included Mohammed Wishah (“Muhammad Samir Muhammad Washah”), head of Hamas weapons production HQ for drones, rockets and transfer operations — eliminated April 8 in central Gaza, operating under cover of an Al Jazeera journalist (Al Jazeera publicly condemned the strike and called him a civilian reporter); Abd al-Rahman Ammar Hassan Khudari of Islamic Jihad, who took part in the October 7 Nir Oz infiltration; Ali Ahmad Ali Amrain, Hamas weapons smuggling; and several others.

ASSESSMENT

Two parallel disarmament tracks, two missed deadlines, and one ceasefire that exists mostly on the letterhead of a body called the Board of Peace. The 60-day deadline was the one negotiated directly with the US and announced cleanly to the Israeli public. The Board of Peace track is a slower, multilateral version of the same demand and will reach the same wall, because the actor it is being made of has structural reasons not to comply. Namely, Hamas survives by keeping weapons. Translation: the disarmament framework is a face-saving instrument for Trump and an ineffective pressure instrument for Hamas. And neither side believes the eight-month timeline is real. The ground truth is unchanged. Hamas is rebuilding.

Inside Israel

Catch-up since our last edition: The reserve call-up ceiling was raised to 400,000 by government approval. Tel Aviv Stock Exchange broke its all-time record for the 24th time this year on April 10, and the shekel hit 3.05 to the dollar — a thirty-year high, as markets price in the Iran ceasefire holding. Ben Gurion is fully reopening. Outbound passenger caps lifted from midnight April 5–6, El Al announced ~30 destinations, with Wizz Air, Etihad, and Blue Bird returning while Air France remains suspended through May 3 and Air India through summer. Holy sites reopened in Jerusalem’s Old City for the first time in over a month after the Iran ceasefire. Netanyahu requested to postpone trial testimony for two weeks citing the security situation. Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Chairman Boaz Bismuth confirmed the coalition will advance the conscription law, mandatory-service extension, and reserve duty law as a single package in the Knesset’s summer session beginning May 10 — though the IDF has clarified that Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir has not endorsed the specific text Bismuth is pushing.

Cabinet Approves Thirty-Four New Judea and Samaria Communities in One Session

The security cabinet approved 34 new communities in Judea and Samaria — the largest single approval in Israeli history, raising the total of state-approved communities from 69 to 103 and effectively expanding the state’s residential footprint by half in one vote. Additionally, today, the Interior Ministry granted formal locality designations to eight additional communities — including the reestablishment of Ganim and Kadim in northern Samaria, evacuated in the 2005 Disengagement and now restored on the same map from which they were erased — bringing the four-month total of designations to thirty-three. Smotrich’s framing was unambiguous: “We are advancing de facto sovereignty on the ground in order to prevent any possibility of establishing an Arab state in Judea and Samaria.” Several of the approved sites sit in northern Samaria areas the IDF rarely reaches. Separately, the Tayaseer incident in the northern Jordan Valley on April 8/9: Palestinians threw stones at Israeli civilians, seriously wounding one; gunfire was returned, killing one Palestinian. The Yesha Council described the incident as a severe terror attack and attributed incitement to the Palestinian Authority with backing from Iran. Police are investigating. Western and so-called “progressive” outlets are already framing the incident under the “settler violence” template — a framing that, as the brief has documented at length in *Judea’s Settlers* and on prior coverage, inverts the actor sequence (stones first, then return fire) and erases the PA’s incitement architecture and the IRGC’s documented funding of Judea-and-Samaria terror cells.

ASSESSMENT

Thirty-four communities, in one session, under the cover of a war that absorbed every microphone in Washington. The Oslo-era ceiling on residential approvals — where each new community required its own diplomatic incident, each minor expansion triggered an EU démarche, each Area C move produced a State Department phone call — is the ceiling this cabinet just stopped pretending exists. Sovereignty by accumulation is the doctrine Annexation on the Table sketched in October. The cabinet has now executed it at scale and, for now, avoiding much of the diplomatic bill. Ganim and Kadim are the symbolic punctuation. Twenty years to undo a strategic blunder, and the headline ran below the fold of a war. The Tayaseer incident is the test case the framing wars need: one wounded Israeli civilian, one dead Palestinian, gunfire returned in sequence, and a Western press already drafting the “settler violence” lede before the police investigation has started.

Iran Recruits Inside the IDF Combat Ranks

The Shin Bet revealed that four active-duty IDF soldiers are in custody on suspicion of spying for Iran. Authorities cleared additional information from a separate investigation last week, also described as exceptional in severity: a joint Lahav 433 investigation is examining “security-related aspects involving several suspects who allegedly provided various services to Iranian elements,” including the manufacture of explosives and experimental detonation by Israeli citizens during the war on Iranian instructions. A 21-year-old Jerusalem resident is facing prosecution for establishing contact with

an Iranian intelligence operative via social media in 2025, gathering intelligence and documenting locations across Israel, and receiving payment in cryptocurrency. Separately, the Haifa-bay cell of five was arrested April 9, with lead defendant Ami Gaidarov, 22 — recruited by an IRGC officer in August 2025 — alleged to have produced a quantity of highly sensitive explosive material approximately thirty times the size of the devices that detonated on the Bat Yam buses in 2024. The intended target: former Prime Minister Naftali Bennett. Gaidarov directed his four friends — including a survivor of the Nova festival massacre — and paid them from funds the Iranian handler transferred. The Iran-linked Handala group, affiliated with the Iranian Intelligence Ministry, claimed it breached the phone of former IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi, publishing photos and video including images from a secret visit to Jordan where Halevi was presented with a dagger from a Jordanian soldier killed in 1967.

ASSESSMENT

Iran has been running social-media-and-crypto recruitment of Israeli civilians for at least two years. We have tracked the pattern through myriad iterations of these sorts of arrests. What changed in early April is that the model breached the active-duty conscript pipeline. A major operational counterintelligence failure — and the IDF's response, which has been to gag-order the case for weeks, suggests the damage assessment is still being run. Gaidarov's thirty-times-Bat-Yam explosive payload is the closest a publicly documented Iranian-directed operation has come to mass-casualty attempt on Israeli soil since Hamas-in-Lebanon was running cells in the early 2000s. That the target was Bennett — out of office, retired, traveling without state security, surrounded by people who voted for him? Iran is trying to demonstrate that no one is beyond its reach. The Halevi phone hack is the same play in cyberspace: not exposing the army's secrets, exposing that the army's most senior figure is a phone-hack away from public humiliation.

Zamir Warns the Cabinet the IDF Will Collapse Without Three Laws

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir warned the cabinet — and the warning continues to reverberate — that without three pieces of legislation (a reserve service law, a law extending mandatory service, and a law that brings ultra-Orthodox men into military service), “the IDF will collapse and will not be fit to carry out its routine and security missions, certainly not in wartime.” Zamir described his comments as a formal warning regarding the reserve force structure and urged immediate action. Brig. Gen. Shay Tayeb, head of the IDF Personnel Directorate's Planning and Force Buildup Division, told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the immediate need for fighters is “critical” and the current situation cannot continue. Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin estimated the military needs about 15,000 additional personnel, including at least 7,000 to 8,000 combat soldiers. Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Chairman Boaz Bismuth confirmed he intends to advance the three laws as a single package when the Knesset summer session opens May 10 — but the bill the coalition refers to as the “conscription law” would in practice exempt tens of thousands of ultra-Orthodox men: enlistment targets could be met by “former ultra-Orthodox” recruits, alternative service in ZAKA, MDA and United Hatzalah would qualify, and criminal sanctions would be

imposed only after two years of failing to meet enlistment targets. The IDF clarified Zamir has not endorsed Bismuth's specific text — only the general need for effective legislation. [The Foreign and Defense Committee chairman has constructed a bill that exempts the people the army needs while passing legislation the chief of staff refuses to endorse — and is calling it the chief of staff's bill.]

ASSESSMENT

The cabinet's response to what is an unmistakably urgent issue — produced through the chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee — is a "conscription law" that exempts the population the IDF needs from conscription, then attaches penalties that take two years to even possibly coerce compliance, and is being marketed as having been requested by the chief of staff—though Zamir clarified he did not request this one. From Deferment to Duty mapped this exact pattern in October: the legal architecture of the Tal Law crisis was rebuilt under wartime conditions, the framing was inverted (the exemption became the "conscription law"), and the political logic survives because the coalition's survival depends on protecting the people the army cannot afford to keep exempt. The 15,000-soldier shortfall is the gap between a wartime army's actual reserve and combat needs and the political price the coalition has refused to pay. Northern Command is already running operations in Lebanon with five divisions on the ground. The math does not math without competent legislation. The coalition gets its exemption. The haredim get their funding. The army runs five Lebanon divisions on a force structure that cannot sustain it. The Northern Israelis are right: what they call "decisions, not fate" is exactly the dynamic that produced the March 2 Hezbollah resumption. The cabinet that cannot find 7,000 combat soldiers cannot deliver the security architecture the north needs.

Israel and the World

Catch-up since our last edition: Argentina formally designated the IRGC as a terrorist organization and expelled Iranian chargé d'affaires Mohsen Tehrani. Russia provided Iran with a list of 55 critical Israeli energy infrastructure targets including Orot Rabin power station, divided into critical production facilities, urban/industrial energy hubs, and local infrastructure. UK Defence Secretary Healey separately confirmed Russia has shared intelligence with Iran and provided drone-tactics and electronic-warfare training. Trump publicly threatened to withdraw the US from NATO over the alliance's refusal to support the Iran campaign. The administration is considering withdrawing US troops from non-supporting NATO countries, with Germany and Spain mentioned by administration officials. Trump publicly criticized Spain over its refusal to allow US overflight. Netanyahu separately ordered Spanish representatives removed from the CMCC in Kyriat Gat. A 35-state French-led maritime escort initiative for Hormuz is in active coordination with ~15 states, with France pushing for India and China inclusion while excluding the US. Macron called any military operation to liberate Hormuz "unrealistic." A French-led Gaza flotilla departed Marseille April 10 (~20 boats), heading to Italy to merge with a Sumud flotilla from Barcelona. A shooting attack at the Israeli

Consulate in Istanbul on April 7: three armed attackers neutralized by Turkish police, two Turkish officers wounded. Fortunately, the consulate was unstaffed at the time. Turkish authorities identified two of the attackers as brothers, one with ties to “an organization that exploits religion.” [I wonder what the motivation could have been?]

Pakistan’s “Mediator” Calls Israel a Curse for Humanity

Pakistan’s Defense Minister Khawaja Asif posted to X that Israel is “evil and a curse for humanity” and that he hoped the founders of “this cancerous state” would “burn in hell” — while Pakistan was hosting the US-Iran trilateral talks in Islamabad. Asif previously called Netanyahu “the biggest criminal of humanity,” urged that he be “kidnapped” and brought to court, suggested that Turkey could abduct him, and in March wrote that “Zionism is a threat to humanity,” Israeli Ambassador to Washington Yechiel Leiter on X: “The Ayatollahs chanted ‘Death to Israel’ — and now a so-called ‘mediator’ is echoing the same language. Even if it is to your dismay, Israel is here to stay. That’s not for negotiation.” US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee condemned Asif separately. The Pakistani Foreign Ministry, in a more formal register, called Israel’s actions in Lebanon “a blatant violation of international law and fundamental humanitarian principles.” A Pakistani official confirmed “Pakistan will stand with Saudi Arabia under defense pact if conflict escalates” — the country brokering the talks has just publicly committed itself, in a binding security framework, to the Gulf state most exposed to Iranian retaliation. In parallel, the Ugandan army chief issued an ultimatum to Turkey demanding \$1 billion and the “most beautiful woman in the country” as a wife or the closure of the Turkish embassy, declared that 100,000 Ugandan soldiers were ready to fight against Iran in defense of Israel, and announced he was on his way to “Tel Aviv” [some allies are subtle, some are Ugandan].

ASSESSMENT

Pakistan is the country brokering the deal that ends the Iran war. Pakistan’s defense minister is willing to publicly admit that he hopes that Zionists, Jews, and Israelis all burn in Hell. His is the government holding the pen on the trilateral framework. So much for neutrality. Though, in truth, Pakistan does not need to be neutral, because the United States no longer requires neutrality from its mediators. Trump needs a venue, a Sunni-majority state that can host Iranians without provoking the Saudis, and a government that will not embarrass him too much for two weeks. Pakistan is not a neutral broker. It is the southern flank of the anti-Iran coalition, briefly cosplaying as a stabilizer because the Trump administration needed somewhere to put the talks. But Asif makes the cosplay impossible to maintain. The Ugandan tangent is comic relief — but the comedic figure is doing what nobody in Brussels or Berlin is doing, which is volunteering soldiers.

Western Institutions Cancel Themselves on Israel and the Jews

The UN Human Rights Council bypassed its top-ranked candidate and appointed Zeina Jallad as Special Rapporteur — an academic who has publicly justified the October 7 massacre and called for suspending Israel from international organizations. The appointment was made over the objection of the

council's own selection committee. In Montreal, Vanier College cancelled its 34th annual Holocaust and Genocide Symposium commemoration service — citing security concerns the school would not specify, restricting the entire week's programming to current Vanier students and staff after originally advertising it as free and open to the public. The Israeli Consulate, scheduled to attend, called the cancellation “alarming.” Holocaust survivor Eva Kuper, who was scheduled to speak: “I don't think that when you're being bullied by people who have other views that the answer is to kowtow and to cancel.” Three weeks earlier, Vanier's International Women's Week — featuring a day-long Palestinian-themed roster co-sponsored by Quebec's Ministry of Higher Education and Vanier's teachers' union — ran with no security presence. In New York, NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch announced that 55% of all confirmed hate crimes in the first quarter of 2026 were antisemitic — a population that is approximately 10% of the city — and confirmed hate crimes increased citywide. The figure follows the 182% spike in antisemitic hate crimes in January, Mayor Mamdani's first month in office. Mamdani's response in the same press conference avoided naming Jews. J Street publicly endorsed far-left calls to end US missile defense aid to Israel including Iron Dome — a position that contradicts J Street PAC's own published endorsement criteria, which require candidates to support “sustained support for vital systems like Iron Dome.” [But anyone paying attention would understand that J Street, regardless of its glossy statements is not pro-Israel. At all.] Josh Shapiro (D-PA) accused Trump of being “bullied” into the Iran war by Israel. In Florida, Dan Bilzerian — who has said he would “go put boots on the ground and kill Israelis,” described Judaism as “terrible,” and bet his entire net worth that fewer than six million Jews died in the Holocaust — registered to run in the GOP primary against Rep. Randy Fine. The House Education and Workforce Committee report released in March documented Qatar Foundation officials dictating terms to Northwestern University on the institution's response to October 7, including pressuring the university not to censure faculty member Khaled Al-Hroub for denying that Hamas committed rape. Harvard reduced its Jewish student population from approximately 25% in 2004 to 7% today, and Columbia from approximately 19% to 9%.

ASSESSMENT

This is the cluster we've writing under different headlines for a year, and really, it's just a single phenomenon. The UNHRC bypassing its own selection committee to install Jallad — the Council telling its members and the world that the rules do not apply when the question is Israel. Vanier cancelling a Holocaust commemoration the week after it ran a Palestinian-themed event without security. It's all the same mechanism with identical logic even if the venue is larger or smaller. The NYC numbers are the consequence. A 10% population absorbing 55% of confirmed hate crimes in a city run by a mayor who, at the press conference where the data was released, declined to name the targeted population. J Street's "pivot" on Iron Dome is the most consequential item in the cluster, because J Street is the institution whose entire brand was the claim that pro-Israel and pro-peace could be combined inside the Democratic mainstream. Whatever mask they had, has dropped. That institution has now publicly endorsed defunding the missile defense system that has saved hundreds of thousands of Israeli civilian lives. While a war is ongoing. The brand is not pro-Israel. It is Iron Dome-neutral, which in the operational arithmetic of a multi-front Iranian missile campaign is anti-Israel with extra steps. The Bilzerian candidacy is the canary on the Republican side. The same syndrome — Carlson, MTG, Fuentes, Bilzerian — that has been building since 2024 is now generating actual congressional candidates with thirty million followers. The Harvard 25%-to-7% number shows the American institutional pipeline that produces journalists, foreign service officers, Senate staff, and policy minds has, over twenty years, deliberately reduced its Jewish intake while increasing exposure to faculty who will not condemn the Hamas attack and student bodies who will.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Times of Israel*: US-Israeli intelligence shared with Gulf allies says Mojtaba Khamenei is unconscious in Qom in "severe" condition and unable to participate in any decision-making, while preparations are underway for a multi-grave mausoleum next to his father in the same city. The man inheriting the regime cannot run it, the regime is publishing AI-generated video of him surveying a map of Dimona to fake the line of succession, and the burial preparations suggest the family knows what the medical staff has not yet announced.
- *JNS*: IDF soldiers dismantled an explosives manufacturing lab in Tulkarrem over the weekend, recovering roughly 200 pipe bombs, over fifty kilograms of explosive material, fire extinguishers rigged as IEDs, and large gas cylinders prepared as vehicle-borne charges built specifically to target IDF armor. The lab predates the IDF's counterterrorism campaign in northern Samaria — a reminder of what the framing wars over "settler violence" insist does not exist on the other side of the line.
- *JNS*: Israel's Communications Ministry, the Negev and Galilee Ministry, and the National Emergency Authority announced a joint program to extend internet connectivity to public shelters on the front lines, adding NIS 1 million to an existing NIS 10 million budget.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *Jewish Chronicle*: A cluster of Wikipedia editors aligned with Iranian state interests — Ashley Rindsberg’s “Gang of 40” — has produced more than one million edits across 10,000+ articles touching Israel and the Jewish people, including the captured lead of the Zionism entry, while Wikipedia’s article corpus now hosts 29,000+ citations to IRGC-linked media and 8,400+ to Hamas, Hezbollah, and PIJ-linked sources. Wikipedia is the upstream layer feeding Google knowledge panels and every commercial LLM in production — which means the Islamic Republic is now editing the source material the next decade of Western policy minds will treat as verified truth.
- *Ynetnews*: ECOSOC recommended Iran for the UN Committee for Programme and Coordination — the body that influences policymaking on human rights, women’s rights, disarmament, and counterterrorism — and elected China, Cuba, Nicaragua, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan to the NGO Committee that controls accreditation and access for civil society organizations across the UN system. The United States was the only country to vote no; UN Watch’s Hillel Neuer compared the appointments to “putting Al Capone in charge of fighting organized crime” [generous to Capone, who was at least convicted].
- *Jerusalem Post*: Hundreds of thousands of Iranians rallied outside US embassies and consulates in thirty-four cities across Europe, Asia, and North America at Reza Pahlavi’s call, demanding Washington not cut a deal with the Islamic Republic and warning that any easing of pressure would let the regime regroup and intensify domestic repression. Tehran’s internet blackout passed forty days the same weekend the talks collapsed — which is the answer the regime is giving to the population the West is being asked to spare.
- *Jerusalem Post*: London’s Metropolitan Police arrested 523 people at a Trafalgar Square rally supporting Palestine Action — the proscribed group banned after members broke into an RAF base — the first such gathering since a February High Court ruling that the ban was unlawful, which Interior Minister Shabana Mahmood is now appealing. The number of Britons willing to be arrested in public on behalf of a proscribed terror-adjacent organization is itself the data point.
- *Algemeiner*: French far-left MEP Rima Hassan will face trial on July 7 in Paris on charges of online “terrorism apology” over an X post that quoted Kozo Okamoto — the sole surviving Japanese Red Army attacker from the 1972 Lod airport massacre that killed 26 people — citing “the oppression of people in the Palestinian territories” as justification. Hassan is under investigation in six other cases for hate speech, and the willingness of a French criminal court to actually try her is a rare instance of a European institution treating the line between criticism and incitement as something other than rhetorical decoration.
- *Jewish News (UK)*: The UK government released “Protecting What Matters,” a counter-extremism plan built around community resilience, university

and NHS reform, expanded visa-revocation powers for extremist preachers, and Charity Commission strengthening — produced after sustained pressure from the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester and other community bodies.

- *Jewish Insider*: New Jersey 12th District Democratic primary candidate Adam Hamawy — a Gaza-deployed trauma surgeon whose campaign cleared \$550,000 in Q1 — has now been endorsed by Justice Democrats, CAIR, the new IMEU-affiliated PAL PAC, and former Rep. Jamaal Bowman. To be clear, this is the new mainstream. [Dems, get your act together and read some history books!]
- *Jewish Insider*: Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro told the All-In Podcast that the US “should never, ever be bullied, as maybe President Trump was, by any other world leader” into the Iran war and called the campaign “a war of choice” Trump “doesn’t know how the hell to get out of.” Shapiro is the highest-profile “pro-Israel” Democrat to publicly recycle the “Israel pressured America into the war” framing — it puts a 2028 contender on record with the Democratic primary base’s preferred origin story for the war.

Domestic & Law

- *Israel National News*: The Southern District Prosecutor indicted Nasser Mustafa of Rahat for conspiring with two IDF reservists — a major and a lieutenant colonel — to smuggle cigarettes and iPhones into Gaza by hiding them in Gazan aid trucks the soldiers had located on operational routes, across at least six incidents totaling hundreds of thousands of shekels.
- *Israel National News*: Netanyahu submitted his response to the Supreme Court ahead of an expanded-panel hearing on petitions seeking the removal of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, arguing the court has no constitutional authority to dismiss a sitting minister and that the reasonableness doctrine does not apply to the composition of the cabinet. The same High Court that the coalition tried to constrain through the reasonableness amendment is now being asked to use reasonableness as the tool for removing an elected minister mid-war — the architecture *The Unfinished State* mapped in December, executed in real time.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Times of Israel*: Thousands of Muslim worshipers streamed through Al-Aqsa before dawn Thursday for the first public prayer at the site in over a month, Jewish worshipers returned to the Western Wall plaza after wartime caps had limited the site to fifty at a time, and the extended Temple Mount visitation hours introduced during Ramadan now appear to remain in place after the holy month ended.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Al Jazeera English pulled within striking distance of CNN on YouTube during the Iran war — 17.9 million subscribers to CNN’s 19.2 million, closing the gap at half a million per month — while Fox News lost 19% of its web traffic in March, Al Jazeera gained 30% in the American market, and the New York Times had eight named correspondents

in Israel and zero inside Iran. Qatar now funds the most-watched English-language network covering the Middle East, and it got there because the West stopped showing up for the journalism the rest of the world was reading.

- *Algemeiner*: Drop Site News contributor Abubaker Abed posted that “wiping out Israel off the planet is not enough revenge,” called for Israelis to be “removed from our planet,” and previously justified the attempted mass-casualty attack on Michigan’s largest Jewish temple by arguing the assailant was “defending himself” — and Drop Site co-founder Ryan Grim said he would not “police the language of anyone who survived a genocide.” Drop Site is the new media operation positioning itself for the post-NYT progressive prestige slot, its contributors are openly calling for the killing of Jews, and the establishment liberals subscribing to it (Ben Rhodes among them) have decided this is a tier they can publicly endorse.
- *Commentary*: The New York Times Book Review published a starstruck review of Molly Crabapple’s forthcoming book framing the Jewish Labor Bund as a forgotten anti-Zionist alternative, and Seth Mandel walked through what the actual Bundist program required — tax-funded Jewish governing bodies running Yiddish schools, cultural institutions, and what amounted to Zionism-lite for the diaspora. The current vogue for Bundist nostalgia among anti-Zionist Jews absurd. Its modern proponents would refuse to live under the system they claim to admire, because the system was a Jewish autonomy framework and not the universalist one they have retrofitted onto it.
- *JNS*: Chabad’s annual Vanderbilt seder filled FirstBank Stadium with 600 students at 50 tables on the football field this Pesach, and the University of Florida Lubavitch Chabad center moved its seder into the Stephen C. O’Connell Center for more than 1,000.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Bint Jbeil encirclement ready for seizure** — The IDF is surrounding Bint Jbeil with intent to seize, and Zamir conducted his “central arena” assessment from the area April 10.
- **Naim Qassem in the IDF’s crosshairs** — Katz, after Hezbollah’s Pesach Seder fire: “you will be deep in hell with Nasrallah, Khamenei, and Sinwar.” Hezbollah’s general secretary is now publicly named as a target, with the IDF in active offensive operations across the theater and Lebanese negotiations opening at the State Department this week.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Iran fiscal wall meets the ceasefire window** — Pezeshkian’s three-to-four-week clock from late March now overlaps directly with the two-week ceasefire window; Asaluyeh and Mahshahr (together responsible for roughly

85% of petrochemical exports) are offline; Katz puts IRGC petrochemical revenue at approximately \$18 billion over the past two years. The fiscal collapse and the diplomatic deadline are scheduled for the same week, and the regime has no spreadsheet that solves both at once.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Wishah, the Tehran synagogue, and the lawfare reload** — Al Jazeera publicly disputes the IDF's identification of Mohammed Wishah as a Hamas weapons-production commander operating under Mubasher journalist cover, and the April 8 IDF strike on a Khatam al-Anbiya commander caused heavy damage to the Rafi Niya synagogue in Tehran. Both incidents are being staged for international amplification — expect coordinated NGO and UNHRC reactivation around them inside the week.

Home Front & Politics

- **Hiddush petition April 15 court deadline** — The Finance Committee must report to the High Court this week on the frozen NIS 98 million Haredi education allocation; Hiddush has argued the NIS 800 million budget maneuver may exceed lawful entitlements and could require partial claw-back. The judicial confrontation over wartime coalition spending arrives the same week the AG's amendment warning is being tested in real time.

The campaign opened in the shadow of Purim and closed its first phase under the wing of Pesach — bookends the Megillah and the Hagadah have been writing into Jewish memory for two thousand years, except this time the deliverance came from a thousand-aircraft strike package. The truce is the pause between phases, not the end of one. Lebanon is the active war. Hormuz is the lever Iran tried to play in Islamabad this weekend and just discovered it does not have.

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