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READER EDITION

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The Alliance Took Office

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

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IN THIS EDITION

The Alliance Took Office	3
Executive Summary	3
Day One Was the Whole Argument	4
A Scholarly Name With a Political Problem	5
The Reds, According to History, Will End Up in the Ground	6
The Arrest Was Never Available... Not That It Mattered	7
The Appointments Outlast the Administration	7
The Money Is the Statement	9
What the Numbers Carry	11
Sized for a Protest, Facing an Administration	11
Minnesota and Michigan Screened Two Seats	13
Somebody Has to Own the Docket	14
References	16

The Alliance Took Office

The red-green alliance stopped producing marches and started producing appointments. Sadly, Jewish institutions are still answering the marches.

Z OHRAN Mamdani's first executive order as mayor of New York revoked every mayoral order issued on or after 26 September 2024, unless somebody reissued it. The city's recognition of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism was in that pile. Unsurprisingly, nobody reissued it. Sixteen weeks later his antisemitism office told a City Council task force that city agencies work off no definition of antisemitism at all — and no, don't bother expecting one.

That's the current shape of things. The red-green alliance spent the last forty years or so bamboozling the public. It did that *really* well.

There is a cigar and whisky bar in Zichron Yaakov where I sat a few weeks ago drinking a beer with friends. Next time a cigar too, but time was shorter than we'd have liked. A friend of a friend, an American oleh, joined us. The red-green alliance came up she wasn't sure what it was. But her position was that they hate each other. The Islamists would throw that crowd off a roof, so surely they wouldn't work together. Right?

My response was something about the roof coming later — that every version of this ends with the reds in the ground, but that it does nothing to stop the thing from collaborating to our detriment as it goes.

Eighteen people took seats on the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary about a month ago now. That committee sounds unimportant to be sure, but it screens the candidates the mayor appoints to New York's Family and Criminal courts. Those judgeships run ten years. Which means the committee reaches well past Mamdani's current term (and let's hope *last* term).

Nary a one of those eighteen is Jewish — in a city where Jews absorbed 205 of the 360 confirmed hate crimes police logged in the first seven months of this year, and where Jews are about a tenth of the people. Four Jewish bar associations and the ADL wrote in disgust. City Hall? Couldn't care less.

A statement is answerable. You can condemn it. Or hold a meeting about it. Or ignore it. Regardless, it ends. An instrument doesn't need answering. It's a definition withdrawn, a panel seated, a screening rule written — and it sticks around long after the man who signed it has moved on to Albany or [better] to nothing. The alliance in office produces instruments. We are still, unfortunately, merely answering statements.

Executive Summary

New York is the first major American city where the coalition of the radical left and organized political Islam holds the executive instead of lobbying it.

In seven months the administration has: Withdrawn the city's working definition of antisemitism and declined to replace it. Vetoed the City Council's

protest limits around schools. Seated a judicial screening committee with no Jewish member on it (even though that is incredibly un-representative of the bar and the public. Oh, and they put the city's Law Department to work on whether police could detain a visiting Israeli prime minister.

Jewish communal institutions have answered all of it in the register of public statement — the condemnation, the letter, the requested meeting. The bar associations wrote a good letter about the judicial committee on 27 July. But of course the committee did not change.

Between February and June the committee logged fourteen outreach meetings across the city's district attorneys, defender organizations, and affinity bar associations. It published each on its site as it happened. No Jewish bar association appears on the list. The process was open — and the community that objected in July? Absent from it for the five months when membership was being decided.

UJA-Federation, JCRC-NY and Orthodox legislators took the governor's proposed 25-foot protest buffer around houses of worship and came out of the May budget with 50 feet and criminal penalties. That fight had a sponsor, a bill number, a vote, and a signing. The judicial committee had none of those.

The phenomenon has a name in the peer-reviewed literature — Emmanuel Karagiannis and Clark McCauley set out the red-green alliance in *Terrorism and Political Violence* in 2013. And it has a more political problem, because the popular vocabulary for it was coined in France in 2002 and has since been worked hard by people no federation director will cite in a board meeting.

Mamdani raised the city's hate-crime prevention budget from roughly \$3 million to \$26 million, an increase north of 800 percent. And the ADL made noises of approval. Read as hypocrisy that is a column. Read as design? It is this Dossier. The money is announceable and the definition was operative. How it will be spent? Don't expect much for the Jews outside of what the law requires.

Anti-Jewish hate crimes in NYC rose across the first seven months of this year, 57 percent of the confirmed total.

None of this is confined to New York. Peggy Flanagan won Minnesota's Democratic Senate nomination on August 11th against a four-term congresswoman (who outspent her roughly four to one on media buys), in a primary whose loudest argument was whether a Democrat may be associated with AIPAC at all. Eight days earlier Michigan's Democrats picked Abdul El-Sayed over a congresswoman who allowed herself to be associated with AIPAC. Four months before that, forty of the Senate's forty-seven Democrats voted to block an arms sale to Israel.

DAY ONE WAS THE WHOLE ARGUMENT

As we mentioned earlier, Mamdani revoked every mayoral executive order issued on or after 26 September 2024 and reissued the ones he wanted. Fine. That's a normal thing for a new administration to do. Part of the problem, for Mamdani, was that his predecessor Eric Adams had recognized the IHRA

working definition of antisemitism by executive order in June. He had signed a second order barring city agencies from discriminating against Israel or Israeli entities. Needless to say, Mamdani didn't bring those protections back.

Israel's Foreign Ministry called it antisemitic gasoline on an open fire. True. But that really didn't change anything. Senator Bill Cassidy, who chairs the Senate HELP Committee, did something more interesting. On February 4th, he wrote asking what the city intended to put in the definition's place, whether the administration had consulted the Education and Justice departments about federal funding exposure, and whether the city's Department of Education had been given any guidance on how antisemitism complaints would now be identified, investigated and remedied. He gave the mayor until February 19th to respond.

The answer arrived in April. Phylisa Wisdom, the [oh-so-aptly named] executive director of the Mayor's Office to Combat Antisemitism, appeared before the City Council's task force on antisemitism alongside NYPD officials and said the city would adopt no replacement. In her words: "We don't believe that there needs to be a codified definition at all."

Fortunately, we still get some numbers. The NYPD classifies under Article 485 of the New York Penal Law, which designates 53 offenses as hate crimes, and a bias determination is made by the commanding officer of the Hate Crimes Task Force. Of course, discretion for a position susceptible (rightly or wrongly) to political pressure, is less than ideal.

A definition of antisemitism in a city's hands is what a school administrator reaches for when a complaint lands, what a human rights commission applies when it decides whether a matter is within its remit, what a training curriculum is written against, and what a federal agency looks for when it asks whether a grantee has a policy.

Wisdom's answer was that none of those will now have one, by design. A city that codifies nothing has nothing to be measured against. A complaint that cannot be classified cannot be counted, escalated, or lost — because it was never in a category to begin with.

Adams needed an executive order to put the standard in. Mamdani decided to keep it out.

A SCHOLARLY NAME WITH A POLITICAL PROBLEM

"The Emerging Red-Green Alliance: Where Political Islam Meets the Radical Left" was published in *Terrorism and Political Violence* in 2013. It is peer-reviewed, thirteen years old, and it predates nearly every American argument now being had about it. Then there is the *other* name, and it is the reason you probably haven't heard it in a board meeting.

Islamogauchisme was coined by the French sociologist Pierre-Andre Taguieff in 2002, in *La Nouvelle Judeophobie*, to describe what he read as a working alignment between parts of the French far left and Islamist currents around a shared cause. Taguieff meant it descriptively.

What happened though is that the French right took it up as an all-purpose accusation against academics, a French education minister used it to announce an inquiry into university scholarship, and a body of critical work now argues the term functions as a political nudge — threatening enough and self-explanatory enough to be taken seriously, elastic enough to mean whoever the speaker dislikes. Taguieff has said he regrets what was done with his formula.

The claim is not that there is a command structure, a treaty, or a shared theology. It's simply that there are two movements with irreconcilable ultimate aims which cooperate durably where their near-term aims converge. Primarily because each supplies what the other lacks.

The left supplies institutional legitimacy, organizational capacity, and the vocabulary of rights that makes the coalition broadly palatable in the West.

The Islamist side supplies numbers, discipline, currency, and a moral absolutism that the left's own internal fights cannot generate.

Incredibly, the convergence point in *every* documented case has been the same one. Namely, opposition to Israel as the organizing universal cause. It acts as the load-bearing beam supporting the whole thing — without it, there isn't a coalition. Wild.

That communal institutions have no words for this is not truly squeamishness about a French neologism. It is more that the available vocabulary describes the wrong layer.

"Antisemitism" describes a sentiment and points you toward education and dialogue. "Anti-Israel activism" describes a campaign and points you toward communications. "Extremism" describes a fringe and points you toward security.

A political coalition currently holding the executive of New York City has an interest in withdrawing the standards by which anti-Jewish conduct gets identified. And it has acted on that interest three times in seven months.

Don't be shocked though, the coalition has Jews in it. Not as decoration and not in trivial numbers — a real progressive Jewish organization (historically illiterate and overwhelmingly illogical and with a warped idea of morals) campaigned for this mayor and opposed the protective measures the rest of the community fought for.

THE REDS, ACCORDING TO HISTORY, WILL END UP IN THE GROUND

In 1979 the Tudeh party — Iran's communists, with real organizational depth and decades of underground experience — backed Khomeini's revolution. And went on backing it. Supporting the new government against the liberals and the nationalists through the consolidation. It was a strategy. They believed the clerics were a transitional formation and that the organized left would inherit what the mosque had mobilized. It didn't work out well for them.

By 1983 the party's leadership was in prison or dead. The party's most senior intellectuals were broken into public recantations. Ehsan Tabari — the Tudeh's leading theorist, then in his seventies — producing the most extensive of them, a conversion to Islam extracted under duress and broadcast. Tabari died in prison of heart failure. A hundred and sixty-three of his colleagues were killed. Many under torture. Many by hanging. The mass prison executions of 1988 finished the job on what little remained of the Iranian left.

The Iranian left did not see it coming. They were not naive people. They had a theory of who was using whom. They were just completely wrong as to their suppositions.

Fortunately, there is no documented American instance of the Islamist-aligned side of this coalition taking anything from the socialist side. Yet.

The template, however, gives a narrow answer to the specific objection you will hear every time you raise any of this — that these are progressives with a coalition partner, that the Jewish community is being paranoid about an alliance that is really just ordinary urban politics. The Iranian record establishes that the objection has been made before, by sophisticated people, with their own survival riding on it, and that it was wrong then.

THE ARREST WAS NEVER AVAILABLE... NOT THAT IT MATTERED

Last month, the mayor of New York told the *New York Times* he was in “an active conversation” with the city's Law Department about whether he could direct the police to detain a visiting foreign leader — specifically Benjamin Netanyahu, against the International Criminal Court warrant issued in November 2024. Trump pushed back publicly. Mamdani doubled down.

On July 22nd, his administration produced its answer. It had reviewed every avenue available under applicable law and concluded, in the mayor's words, “It is clear that we do not have the independent legal authority to enforce this warrant.” He called on the federal government to join the ICC and execute it, and described Netanyahu as the architect of a horrific genocide while doing so.

The legal question had an obvious answer before the review started. A city has no role in executing an international warrant. The United States is not a party to the Rome Statute. No municipal police department has ever had authority of this kind.

The city's lawyers cannot have been surprised by where they landed. The process simply gave the mayor's office several weeks of grandstanding and publicly weighing the arrest of a sitting Israeli prime minister.

The review was real. Lawyers were assigned. Avenues were examined. A determination issued. And all of that landed in the city's book keeping office. So the cost is both literal in figurative in myriad ways.

THE APPOINTMENTS OUTLAST THE ADMINISTRATION

Lets dig into the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary refill a bit more — eighteen members onto a panel that had been nearly vacant. Joining

chair Ali Najmi, the mayor's former election attorney, who had been installed in January. The committee evaluates and recommends candidates for New York City's Family and Criminal Court judgeships and for interim Civil Court appointments.

To be clear, the eighteen were not all the mayor's picks. Four came from Chief Judge Rowan Wilson, four from the presiding justices of the Appellate Division's First and Second Departments, and two from local law schools. However, nine of the nineteen people on that committee are the mayor's — eight nominees plus Najmi in the chair. And Ramzi Kassem, his chief counsel at City Hall, supervises the committee's work. More to the point, the administration demonstrably holds a veto over the nominees it did not choose (and it did use it on one).

There were no Jewish members among the eighteen, on a panel his administration had described as one that would be truly reflective of New York City. Four Jewish bar associations, joined by the Anti-Defamation League, wrote on 27 July asking him to correct the exclusion and to reaffirm that Jewish New Yorkers are entitled to the same representation, respect and protection as every other community.

The mayor's press secretary, Joe Calvello, said Mamdani had appointed a dozen qualified judges from a range of backgrounds including Jewish judges, and that any suggestion the MACJ decision was motivated by religion is false. Nobody had to prove motive. The panel is the fact.

John Leventhal, a retired Appellate Division justice, Jewish, recommended to the committee by the Chief Judge. And that recommendation was vetoed by the Mamdani administration. On the stated ground that he had served on Ghislaine Maxwell's legal team and the mayor wanted no association between a judge-selecting committee and, in his phrase, the Epstein world. The one Jewish name the judiciary put up was the one name City Hall returned. Sure, the reason stated is palatable, but it does show a pattern nonetheless. And they do care about representation.

The MACJ ran a months-long outreach campaign across the city's legal community. Its chair and executive director met the district attorneys of Queens, Kings, Bronx and Richmond counties, the Legal Aid Society, the Bronx Defenders, New York County Defender Services, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, the Assigned Counsel Association, the New York City Bar's children and family court committees, and the affinity bars — the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, the Macon B. Allen Black Bar Association, the Dominican Bar Association, the Latino Lawyers Association of Queens, the Puerto Rican Bar Association. Not the Jewish affinity bars though.

The outreach was systematic, recorded, and affinity bar associations were specifically and repeatedly included in it. However, an entire community was excluded.

A body like the MACJ decides who is eligible before anyone votes on anything. It never appears on a ballot, it produces no public moment, and its output is a list of names that look like the product of ordinary professional judgment by

the time anyone outside sees them. Licensing boards do this. Accreditation bodies do this. Professional-standards panels and eligibility commissions do this. A coalition that controls who is certified as qualified does not need to win an argument about any individual afterward, and it does not need a majority anywhere. It just needs the seats on the panel, and the panels are filled in July when nobody is looking.

THE MONEY IS THE STATEMENT

In what *seemed* like good news, in May, Mamdani announced \$26 million for the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes in the fiscal 2027 budget. The office had been running on roughly \$3 million. That is an increase past 800 percent — the ADL put it at 866. Mamdani cited concern about Jew-hatred specifically in announcing it.

Twenty-six million dollars funds staff, programs, security infrastructure, and outreach. It's welcome. And a reasonable person can hold that the IHRA definition was a symbolic gesture that chilled speech without protecting anybody, that the administration replaced a symbol with a budget line, and that Jewish institutions being handed an eightfold funding increase should bank it and stop complaining. The argument is coherent. But it's wrong.

In April the City Council sent this mayor two companion bills on protests. One required the NYPD to produce a plan within 45 days for managing demonstrations at the entrances to houses of worship. The other set protest limits around schools. He let the houses-of-worship bill become law without signing it, and he vetoed the schools bill — his first veto in office. Then in May came the \$26 million.

To be sure, the houses-of-worship bill passed the Council with a veto-proof majority. Letting a bill you cannot beat become law without your signature is not a concession, it is a count of votes. The definitional vacuum in January, a veto in April, a judicial screening panel with no Jewish member and a Jewish nominee vetoed in July. And a Law Department review of whether the NYPD could arrest an Israeli prime minister.

A budget line is renewable annually, reviewable by the next mayor, and spendable at the administration's *discretion* on programs the administration designs. We already know that its interest in protect Jews is to the exact limits set by legislation. Ten-year judgeships and an agency-wide policy vacuum tell how the actual interest. Whatever the \$26 million buys, it is the most reversible thing on the list.

Note also that the increase does not supply a standard for the office to work against. An Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes with nine times its former budget and no codified definition of any form of hate is an agency with more staff and no benchmark against which its own performance can be scored. Which is what the two decisions produce when you set them beside each other — which few in the Jewish communal world did in May, because the money arrived through a channel we watch.

And there is a piece of the money's history that has gone almost entirely unremarked. In March a progressive Jewish organization called Jews

for Racial and Economic Justice published a seventy-four-page plan for addressing hate violence in New York without policing. Its premise is that enforcement has failed and cannot succeed. Audrey Sasson, its executive director, put it this way: “Our traditional responses — policing, and prosecution and arrest — have not reversed the trend of rising hate violence, because they can’t.” The plan proposes intergroup projects, playground renovations, soup kitchens, street fairs, diversity education, bystander training. It grants that armed guards have saved Jewish lives and argues they leave communities in perpetual fear. Its proposed annual budget is twenty-six to thirty million dollars. Hmm.

On 20 March, the day JFREJ published, the mayor announced a complementary Mayor’s Office of Community Safety and pledged the eight-hundred-percent increase. The figure he landed on in May was twenty-six million.

JFREJ is not a bystander to this administration. Its electoral arm, The Jewish Vote, endorsed Mamdani, and it was the main multi-issue Jewish organization working his campaign. In April it publicly celebrated his veto of the schools buffer-zone bill and urged the Council to uphold the veto.

In May, when the legislature passed the state buffer zone anyway, its spokesperson Sophie Ellman-Golan called the law disgraceful and an astonishingly irresponsible course of action, and said it was outrageous and dangerous to criminalize protest in the name of Jewish safety.

In other words, the organization that campaigned for the mayor proposed a twenty-six-million-dollar program built on the premise that enforcement cannot work. The mayor funded twenty-six million dollars. That organization opposed, and celebrated the veto of, the enforcement measures the rest of the community was fighting for. And the ADL, in its wisdom read a large number as well, a large number and welcomed the money.

I cannot show you forensic evidence beyond all doubt that the mayor’s budget line was written to JFREJ’s specification. But sometimes circumstantial evidence is what is available. The announcements were same-day. The city described its own office as complementary. And the numbers match. That is the record. The money buys a model of antisemitism in which the problem is intergroup unfamiliarity and the answer is a street fair, funded generously, inside a city that has withdrawn its definition of antisemitism, seated a judicial screening panel without a Jew on it, and declined to say what standard the newly funded office will apply.

This is also where the alliance stops being an abstraction — which is also exactly where many of organizations flinch.

The coalition does not need Jewish participation to function. It is, however, enormously strengthened by it. A Jewish organization arguing against protection for synagogues answers the only charge that can cost the coalition anything.

When the objection is that this politics leaves Jews less safe, the reply is that these Jews disagree. Chickens for KFC. The objection is supplied, sincerely and at no charge, by people who naively believe they are protecting us.

Our own institutions saw the money, assumed politics were what they were used to, and moved on. A failure.

WHAT THE NUMBERS CARRY

NYPD recorded 205 confirmed hate crimes against Jews in the first seven months of 2026, up from 189 a year earlier, an increase of 8.5 percent. Bias crimes overall came to 360. Jews were the targets in 57 percent of them, at roughly 10 percent of the city's population.

Anti-Jewish hate crime in New York was rising before this mayoralty and rose across the West after October 7. Seven months is a short window. And the reporting basis moved inside it. In March the department changed its practice to count hate crimes only after the Hate Crimes Task Force confirms them. Instead of on initial report. A change critics including Elisha Wiesel and Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz correctly argued would deflate the antisemitism figures.

The test that would actually distinguish a mayoral effect is not in the incident count at all. It is downstream — whether the share of anti-Jewish complaints that produce an arrest moves in a way the national trend does not explain.

Jews in New York are absorbing a majority of its confirmed bias crime while the city gets dramatically safer by every other measure — which means the general improvement in public safety is not reaching us. And the administration governing that city has spent its first seven months removing the standard by which such conduct is identified, seating the panel that screens the judges who will hear the cases, and litigating internally about arresting an Israeli head of government.

SIZED FOR A PROTEST, FACING AN ADMINISTRATION

Ask what a communal security director or a community-relations professional actually does in a week and the answer will be organized around events.

Monitor a planned demonstration. Coordinate with precinct liaisons for a holiday. Draft a statement. Convene a coalition call after an incident. Take a meeting at City Hall.

It's real work and most of it is done well by people who are underpaid for it. Fine. But... all of it is triggered by something. It's reactionary to events.

The apparatus we built has no receptor for dealing with *fait accompli* from press releases. That is a design property, not a personal failure.

The evidence is in how we found out. The judicial committee slate was public on 22 July. The Jewish bar associations — lawyers, professionally obligated to watch the courts, reading the material because it is their working world — noticed and wrote on 27 July. Federations and community-relations councils did not surface it independently. They joined an objection that the bar

had already raised. Nobody, understandably, in the communal apparatus was reading judicial appointment notices, because nobody in the communal apparatus is reading judicial appointment notices. The ADL signed the letter. The ADL had also welcomed the budget increase two months earlier. Both were correct, or at least defensible, responses to items that arrived. Neither was the product of anyone watching.

The five months of bar-association outreach make the point — it was not a closed process. The committee was actively looking for organizations to talk to. It was publishing where it went as it went. Where were our organizations in April? Or May? The page was there the whole time. The absence of a Jewish bar association from a list that long is a failure with two parents.

The comfortable story is that we were shut out. We were, to an extent. But we were also simply not watching. Being shut out is answered by protest. Not watching is answered by assigning somebody. Taking responsibility though also has the dual disadvantage of carrying a funding cost and being nobody else's fault. Which is probably why it is the version that does not get told at conferences.

It's not that our organizations aren't doing anything — they are. In January the governor put a 25-foot protest buffer around houses of worship into her State of the State. UJA-Federation of New York ran a campaign on it. JCRC-NY pushed. Orthodox legislators pushed harder. And when this mayor vetoed the schools half of the city's version in April, Simcha Eichenstein's response was that if the city would not act the state would. On 26 May the legislature passed a 50-foot buffer as part of the state budget, with criminal penalties, covering houses of worship and educational centers, and authorizing police to extend the perimeter further. **They did not merely win. They came out at double the governor's opening offer.**

That is the instrument layer, worked expertly, by mainstream communal institutions, in New York, four months before the judicial slate went out, against this administration.

The buffer zone had a sponsor, a bill number, a budget negotiation, a floor vote, a margin and a signing. Every one of those is a public event and our institutions are superb at public events with dates. That is precisely the muscle the last century built.

The judicial committee had none of them. No sponsor, no vote, no margin, nothing to whip, nothing to attend, and no moment at which the decision was visibly being made.

Same organizations, same competence, same eight months, and the difference in outcome tracks one variable: whether the thing announced itself. Unfortunately, Google Alerts aren't enough.

When the State Education Department put its substantial-equivalency regulations out for comment in the summer of 2019, the filing drew more than 140,000 comments, a record for the department (largely pushed by the Yeshiva World), and the department withdrew the regulations and started

again — a revised proposal did not reappear until March 2022. That was a rule-making docket and a part of our community read the register, found the window and filed inside it. I raise it knowing that a federation professional is not in the habit of taking organizational lessons from Borough Park. Take this one.

We do not need an entirely new capability. We mostly just need to point an existing one at the things that never send an invitation.

Ask a community-relations council what counts as a win in its own annual report and you will find statements issued, meetings convened, coalitions joined, incidents responded to, elected officials engaged. I have not seen one that counts an appointment tracked or a rule commented on, and what an organizations counts is what it staffs. We are, collectively, extremely good at something that is over in three days and structurally blind to the thing that lasts ten years. Time to reorganization our budgets accordingly.

MINNESOTA AND MICHIGAN SCREENED TWO SEATS

Peggy Flanagan beat Angie Craig for Minnesota's Democratic Senate nomination. Sixty to forty with almost all of the vote counted.

On 15 April the Senate voted on two joint resolutions of disapproval — the mechanism Congress holds under the Arms Export Control Act to stop a foreign military sale. Both failed. Forty of the forty-seven Senate Democrats voted to block one of the two sales anyway. Nineteen Democrats voted that way in 2024, twenty-four in 2025, forty this April.

Adam Schiff, Ron Wyden, Jon Ossoff and Elissa Slotkin were among the new names. Slotkin said in a statement that she had struggled with the vote as much as any she had cast since entering Congress. That is a live lever on the US-Israel relationship and it moved a long way in just two years. And the seat Flanagan is running for lasts six.

Flanagan ran hard against AIPAC and called Craig AIPAC's candidate. AIPAC never endorsed in that race — at least according to available records and its statement to the Star Tribune so.

Craig took more than \$550,000 from AIPAC across her past congressional runs and appears on the group's donor portal, and in a June debate she said the PAC had given her Senate campaign nothing and that the reports of fundraisers were untrue. A Star Tribune reporter went looking for the group's footprint in the race and came back with the finding that it is difficult to measure.

The money ran the other way in any case. Craig and the groups backing her put close to twenty million dollars on the air. Flanagan and hers put up four point seven, and the super PAC set up to counter AIPAC in Democratic primaries spent about fifty-four thousand of it. She won by twenty points. Down the ballot, in the primary for the House seat Craig was vacating, Matt Little beat Matt Klein forty-seven to thirty on a platform of ending American military aid and weapons sales to Israel altogether.

Michigan had already run the harder version of that experiment. Abdul El-Sayed beat Haley Stevens for the Democratic Senate nomination there on August fourth — eight days before Minnesota voted. AIPAC and its affiliated groups put close to thirty million dollars behind Stevens, their largest investment in a single race ever, inside an outside-money wave of about sixty-five million. Stevens and her allies outspent El-Sayed's side nearly nine to one. Gretchen Whitmer endorsed her, and so did Gary Peters, the retiring senator whose seat it is. She lost anyway. El-Sayed, who calls Israel's campaign in Gaza a genocide, now goes to a November race that could decide which party holds the Senate.

Most Michigan voters had no way to know who was paying for what they were watching. AIPAC's ads there never mentioned Israel. They ran on manufacturing and featured Barack Obama. Andy Levin, a Jewish former congressman whom Stevens beat in a 2022 primary after AIPAC spent millions against him, told the Associated Press how it works. "AIPAC never runs on AIPAC," he said. "They never even talk about Israel and Palestine. If you're just a voter and you see a million ads, you don't know who paid for it."

So the loudest argument in Democratic politics about a Jewish organization was conducted, on the spending side. Thirty million dollars of persuasion, and neither Israel nor AIPAC appeared in it.

Both women back two states. They split on one arms vote. What they argued about in public was whether a Democrat can be associated with the largest pro-Israel organization in American politics at all — and Craig answered that charge by shedding the association instead of defending it. She stopped taking the money, told a debate audience the PAC had given her nothing, and lost regardless.

Ilhan Omar, who endorsed Flanagan, said that she has never met AIPAC, that she does not think other Democrats should either, and that the group should become for Democrats what the National Rifle Association became. Regardless of one's righteous views of Omar's odious politics — she isn't the fringe on this in the Democratic party. Not by a long shot.

Ben Weisbuch, who chairs a Jewish community group in Michigan, said AIPAC has stopped being treated by many Jewish Democrats as one political organization among others and has become a proxy for broader narratives about Jewish power and influence. A woman who went to a candidate forum to ask Flanagan about it directly came away thinking the attacks demonize Jewish Minnesotans. Neither of them was forecasting anything. They were describing an affiliation turning into a disqualification, from inside the community it disqualifies.

SOMEBODY HAS TO OWN THE DOCKET

One individual in your organization must own the docket. Not a committee, not a working group, not a line in somebody's job description that gets deferred when an incident happens — one person who reads four things on a schedule and reports what moved. In a federation this is a portion of an existing analyst's week. In a synagogue with nobody spare it is an hour a

month and a congregant who happens to be a lawyer. Even just an hour a month (done every month) beats a task force convened after the fact every time.

The five things, all free and all public. **The City Record Online** at a856-cityrecord.nyc.gov carries every official notice the city publishes — proposed and adopted agency rules, public hearings, meetings. It is searchable (and the official record). **The NYC rules portal** at rules.cityofnewyork.us carries proposed rules open for public comment and is the place a comment is actually filed. Agencies run these hearings online now, and any member of the public may submit. **Mayoral press releases and appointment announcements** on nyc.gov, which is where the July slate appeared and where the next one will. **NYPD's quarterly hate-crime tables**, for the arrest-rate series described above — and the only measure on this list that tells you whether the system is doing anything with what it confirms.

And **the MACJ's own pages**, which repay a visit more than anything else here. The committee publishes its outreach log, its press releases and its hearing notices, and that log is how you get invited to a process instead of objecting to its output. It is also where a promise is sitting unkept: the January executive order directs the committee to publish demographic data on the judicial applicant pool and to build a searchable public database through which New Yorkers can monitor upcoming appointments. Neither exists on the site at the time I am typing this — I checked the navigation, and there is no such page.

The committee said that it expects to send its first slate of judicial recommendations to the mayor **by the beginning of October, with a public hearing to follow that month**. A public hearing on a matter this community cares about. It is about six weeks out. Somebody should be in that room having had read the recommendations before walking in. And if the demographic data the executive order promised still does not exist by then, you should ask why.

This isn't really a reading list — you're meant to act when you find something. The bar associations wrote a letter and yet the eighteen are still the eighteen. Ranked by what actually tends to move the needle: file comments during a rule's open comment period because the agency has to respond. Get a name in front of a screening body before the slate closes, which means knowing the vacancy exists in the first place and not reading about the appointments later. Ask a City Council member to raise it in a committee hearing, where an agency has to defend its position — the Council's task force on antisemitism is where Wisdom's answer about the definition came out. Ask, in writing, for whatever an executive order already promised and has not been delivered.

And set the trigger conditions now, while nothing is happening, because the whole failure mode of the last seven months is that each item looked minor in isolation.

That is the whole ballgame and it will never produce a photo op for your annual report or a moment anyone thanks you for. But it is what works.

The alliance in office is not a communications problem. Your press officer is not the answer. Every reflex our institutions have — the statement, the coalition letter, the requested meeting, the vigil — was built for an adversary who needed public attention to accomplish anything. This one does not. It has the appointment power, the rule-making authority and the calendar. And it has already used all three while we were reading its Twitter feed.

New York is the first place this has happened in America and it will not be the last. Two things arrive before the year turns. In September the General Assembly brings foreign heads of government to New York, and the Law Department's July conclusion about what the NYPD may and may not do meets its first real occasion. In October the judicial committee sends its first slate to the mayor and holds a public hearing on it. One of those will be covered wall to wall and change nothing. The other will be attended by about nine people and set who hears criminal and family cases in this city for the next ten years.

Somebody in your institution should already know what is on the docket for next month. If you have finished this and cannot name that person, you have found something to urgently fix, and you can fix it before Rosh Hashanah.

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