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The Blogs - Why Israel Must Fight for Reality Itself | Mark Ginsberg | The Times of Israel



THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# Why Israel Must Fight for Reality Itself



AI, the Internet, and our New Reality

By the time Israel manages to refute a lie, the lie has often travelled the world, been translated into dozens of languages, cited by activists, repeated by journalists, adopted at the United Nations, absorbed into school curricula, embedded into Wikipedia entries, and fed into the large language models increasingly shaping how billions understand current events.


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Israel is fighting a cognitive war alongside its wars against Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. It may ultimately prove just as consequential.

For decades, Israel's enemies understood something that many Israelis dismissed as secondary: victory is not achieved only on the battlefield. It is achieved in the realm of perception, and by determining which facts people encounter, whose voices are considered authoritative, and which narratives become accepted truth.

The objective is not simply to persuade, it is to construct an alternative reality.

In that reality, Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, is no longer understood as the movement through which an indigenous people returned to its ancestral homeland after centuries of persecution and exile. Instead, it is recast as a uniquely illegitimate colonial enterprise.

In that reality, the world's only Jewish state is transformed from a nation defending itself against organizations openly committed to its destruction into the primary source of instability in the Middle East.

In that reality, claims of "genocide" and deliberate "starvation" are treated not as contested allegations requiring rigorous evidentiary standards, but as established facts repeated with increasing certainty.

None of this happened by accident.

The old propaganda model depended on newspapers, pamphlets, television broadcasts, and speeches. The new model is networked, decentralized, and self-reinforcing.

A report by a respected or even highly-suspect NGO is cited by journalists, journalists are citec by international organizations, international organizations are cited by Wikipedia editors, Wikipedia becomes a source for students, activists, and casual readers.

Large language models trained on publicly available material absorb these narratives as consensus, and future journalists then consult those same systems for background


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information.

The loop closes but has endless ramifications.

What begins as an allegation ends as accepted reality.

We have already witnessed how this process operates.

The controversy surrounding recent reporting on allegations of Israeli sexual abuse by Nicolas Kristoff of the New York Times offered a revealing case study.

Many of his sources can be traced back to one organization, the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, which is run by a virulently anti-Israel obsessive with ties to Hamas and a history of incendiary and false accusations against Israel.

These libels were then amplified through media reporting, echoed in international discourse, and entered broader public consciousness before underlying evidentiary standards had been fully scrutinized.

Nonetheless, the issue extends far beyond any single article or report.

Increasingly, a relatively small number of highly motivated activists understand that the architecture of knowledge itself has become contested territory.

Edit histories on online encyclopedias, search engine optimization strategies, coordinated social media campaigns, selective sourcing practices, and advocacy-driven reports all influenc how future generations understand today's events.

Wikipedia occupies a particularly important place in this ecosystem. For millions of people, it serves as the first stop for understanding complex topics. Researchers have demonstrated that organized groups of editors have systematically shaped entries relating to Israel, Zionism, terrorism, and the Israel-Palestinian conflict.


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This should alarm anyone committed to intellectual integrity: open knowledge platforms can be vulnerable to sustained ideological capture.

The consequences extend into artificial intelligence.

Large language models do not independently discover truth; they identify patterns within the information on which they are trained.

If the available corpus increasingly reflects distorted narratives, omissions, activist framing, or ideologically curated sourcing, those distortions risk becoming embedded into the next generation of digital knowledge tools.

Students asking basic questions about Zionism, the history of the conflict, or the nature of terrorist organizations such as Hamas may increasingly receive answers reflecting accumulated biases rather than balanced historical understanding.

The danger is not that technology becomes anti-Israel.

The danger is that technology mistakes activism for consensus.

Israel's adversaries grasp the significance of this shift.

Iran invests heavily in state media, influence operations, and digital manipulation. Hamas has long understood the value of imagery, symbolism, and emotional narratives. Hezbollah operates sophisticated media networks alongside its military infrastructure.

Meanwhile, many Israelis still cling to the comforting belief that facts speak for themselves.

They do not.

Facts require advocates, evidence requires distribution, and truth requires infrastructure.

This does not mean Israel should embrace disinformation, fabricate evidence, or abandon its democratic values. Quite the opposite. Democracies possess an enormous strategic advantage


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reality itself.

However, reality only matters if people encounter it.

Israel needs to invest seriously in the defense of truth. That means training a generation of editors, researchers, historians, technologists, and communicators capable of engaging where public understanding is actually formed.

It means ensuring that accurate information appears not merely in government archives but in search results, educational resources, encyclopedias, social media feeds, podcasts, documentaries, and AI training datasets.

It means recognizing that a press release issued in Jerusalem is not enough if millions encounter an opposing narrative first through TikTok, Wikipedia, Google, or ChatGPT.

Israel must compete in the marketplace of ideas with the same seriousness that it approaches missile defense.

The cognitive war will not end with a ceasefire in Gaza, a weakened Hezbollah, or a nuclear agreement with Iran. It is a long-term struggle over historical memory, moral legitimacy, and the boundaries of truth itself.

If others write the story of Zionism, of October 7, of Jewish indigeneity, and of Israel's right to defend itself, then military victories may prove temporary while narrative defeats become permanent.

The first responsibility of a free society is to defend its citizens.

The second is to defend reality.

Today, for Israel, the two have become inseparable.


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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# The Tyranny of Anonymous Sources




New York Times offices - Image from Shutterstock

There was a time when anonymous sources were journalism's last resort.

They were used sparingly, reserved for whistleblowers exposing corruption, officials revealing matters of overwhelming public interest, or individuals who genuinely faced serious repercussions if their identities became known. Editors treated such material with extreme


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caution. Multiple independent confirmations were required. Extraordinary claims demanded extraordinary evidence.

Today, something has changed.

Some of the world's most respected news organizations increasingly rely on anonymous sources to construct and reinforce narratives about Israel that quickly harden into accepted truth, regardless of whether the underlying allegations withstand scrutiny.

The result is not merely flawed reporting. It is the creation of a permanent digital record in which accusation becomes fact, suspicion becomes history, and correction, if it comes at all, arrives too late to matter.

The consequences extend far beyond a single news cycle.

Take the controversy surrounding a report by New York Times columnist and reporter Nicholas Kristof concerning allegations involving Israeli soldiers and Palestinian detainees.

The article amplified claims that Israeli soldiers had used dogs to sexually assault Palestinian prisoners, allegations so explosive that they immediately spread across social media, activist networks, and international commentary.

The reporting relied heavily on unverified testimony and lacked the evidentiary standards that would ordinarily accompany accusations of such gravity. The resulting backlash was significant enough to prompt legal threats and widespread protests from readers who believed the newspaper had abandoned its own standards.

Regardless of whether in the future there are ever edits, corrections or retraction, the allegation itself has already escaped into the information ecosystem.

For millions of readers, the impression was fixed. They would never see the subsequent debate over sourcing, the questions surrounding verification, or the responses challenging the claims. They would remember only that "The New York Times reported" that Israeli soldiers committed these atrocities.


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The Price of Anonymous Sources - Mark Ginsburg - The Times of Israel

That phrase carries enormous power.

It is the modern equivalent of an official seal of authenticity.

The same pattern can be seen elsewhere. Reports built around unnamed intelligence officials, anonymous humanitarian workers, unidentified diplomats, or undisclosed insiders increasingly shape coverage of Israel.

Often, these stories align neatly with a pre-existing narrative: Israel acts recklessly, Israel deceives, Israel targets civilians, Israel conceals wrongdoing.

Sometimes the allegations are later qualified. Sometimes they are contradicted by emerging evidence. Occasionally they quietly disappear from subsequent reporting altogether.

However, by then, the damage has already been done.

Recent reporting examined by Honest Reporting illustrates how weak sourcing can rapidly fue global narratives. Claims based substantially on anonymous assertions have circulated widely before independent verification could take place, influencing public opinion and generating headlines across the world. The original caveats disappear as the story travels. Nuance is stripped away. What began as an allegation from unnamed individuals becomes repeated as established fact.

The internet rewards certainty, not caution.

A headline based on anonymous sources is quoted by activists on social media, it is incorporated into Wikipedia entries, and appears in NGO reports.

Academics cite the media coverage. Bloggers reference the academics. Artificial intelligence models trained on publicly available information absorb the claims as part of the historical record.


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Months later, even if the original publication issues clarifications, updates, or partial corrections, the narrative has already calcified.

The accusation lives forever.

The correction dies in obscurity.

This phenomenon is especially dangerous when reporting on Israel because it intersects with one of humanity's oldest prejudices: the willingness to believe the worst about Jews.

History should make journalists particularly cautious.

Medieval Europe embraced blood libels accusing Jews of murdering Christian children for ritual purposes. These fabrications spread because they confirmed existing biases. The Dreyfus Affair succeeded because large sections of French society were predisposed to believe a Jewish officer capable of treachery. Soviet anti-Zionist propaganda portrayed Israel as uniquely malevolent and conspiratorial.

The language changes across generations, but the mechanism does not.

Stories that would demand overwhelming evidence if directed at almost any other democratic society are too often published about Israel based on anonymous testimony and limited corroboration because they fit an established framework. Israel becomes uniquely suspect. The burden of proof shifts and skepticism diminishes.

None of this means Israel should be immune from scrutiny.

It should not.

Israel is a democracy engaged in a prolonged and brutal conflict. Democracies require rigorous journalism. Governments must be investigated. Military conduct must be examined. Mistakes and wrongdoing should be exposed and addressed.

Nevertheless, scrutiny is not the same as credulity.


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The standards applied to allegations against Israel should be identical to those applied elsewhere. Anonymous sourcing should remain exceptional rather than routine. Editors should ask harder questions before publishing claims likely to inflame global opinion. Reporters should distinguish clearly between verified fact and unproven allegation.

Most importantly, readers deserve transparency.

How many anonymous sources support the claim? What are their possible interests? Were documentary records reviewed? Was independent corroboration obtained? What evidence contradicts the allegation? Why was anonymity granted?

These questions were once considered basic journalism.

Today, they are too often treated as obstacles to a compelling narrative.

The stakes could not be higher.

In the digital age, journalism does not simply describe reality. It creates the archive from which future generations understand reality. Search engines retrieve it. Students study it. Courts reference it. Artificial intelligence systems learn from it.

When serious institutions elevate poorly substantiated allegations into global headlines, they are not merely reporting the news.

They are manufacturing historical memory.

Long after the fighting ends, long after the clarifications are forgotten and the caveats buried, those allegations will remain online as permanent evidence of what the world believes happened.

That is why anonymous sourcing demands greater restraint, not less.


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Because when journalism abandons its traditional safeguards, it does not merely risk getting a story wrong.

It risks turning accusation into history.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# The Remarkable Story of Israel's Christian Citizen



Church in Nazareth - courtesy of Shutterstock

For decades, Christians in the United States have been among Israel's most steadfast friends. They have visited the country, supported Israeli communities and charities, defended the Jewish state in public life, challenged antisemitism and understood the Jewish return to the ancestral homeland as an event of profound historical and religious significance.


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Israel has long recognized and valued this friendship, building important relationships with churches, pastors, Christian organizations and faith leaders across the United States. Today, Israel's public diplomacy is increasingly highlighting another powerful dimension of that relationship: the remarkable success story of Christians in Israel itself.

This is both timely and necessary, because Israel's enemies understand the strategic importance of Christian support. Anti-Israel activists are making a concerted effort to penetrate churches, Christian universities, religious conferences and younger Christian audiences. Their aim is to turn a natural constituency of support for Israel into one that is divided, uncertain or even hostile.

They frequently employ the language of human rights, liberation theology and social justice tc present Israel as an enemy of Christianity. Some attempt to separate Christianity from its Jewish roots, portray Jesus as a "Palestinian," erase the Jewish history of the biblical landscape and suggest that Israel is responsible for the struggles of Christians throughout the region.

This is not merely a distortion of history and theology. It is a deliberate political strategy. Israel's opponents know that American Christians represent one of the strongest and most consistent sources of support for the Jewish state. Weakening that bond would be a significant victory for the international campaign to isolate and delegitimize Israel.

One of the most effective responses is to tell the truth about Christian life in Israel.

Israel is the only country in the Middle East in which Christians enjoy full civil, political and religious rights within a robust democratic system. Christian citizens vote, organize politically criticize the government, petition the courts, practice their religion openly and participate in every area of national life.

Christians serve as judges, diplomats, doctors, academics, business leaders, journalists, members of parliament and senior public officials. Christian schools are among the country's strongest educational institutions, while Christian communities make contributions to Israeli medicine, education, commerce, culture and public service far beyond their numerical size.


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Their educational achievements are particularly impressive. According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, 87.7 percent of Christian 12th-grade students were eligible for a matriculation certificate in the 2023–24 school year. Arab Christian graduates continued to first-degree studies at a higher rate than graduates in both the wider Arab and even Jewish education systems.

Christian women are also especially prominent in higher education, accounting for more than 60 percent of Christian students.

On several important educational and social measures, Christians in Israel do not merely participate successfully. They outperform the Jewish majority.

This is a tremendous Israeli success story, and it deserves to be far better known.

This reality stands in sharp contrast with much of the surrounding region. Across the Middle East, ancient Christian communities have been devastated by war, political instability, Islamist extremism and religious persecution. In some countries, communities that survived for nearly 2,000 years have been reduced to a fraction of their former size.

In Israel, Christians can worship freely, receive an excellent education, build successful careers and participate fully in public life. Their achievements demonstrate not only their own determination and talent, but also what becomes possible when a religious minority is granted freedom, citizenship and democratic rights.

This story is starting to be at the center of official Israel's outreach to the Christian world. It is not being told merely by government spokespeople, but by Christian Israelis themselves. Christian educators, doctors, entrepreneurs, judges, students and community leaders are the most credible witnesses to their own experiences.

American Christian visitors should have opportunities to meet these communities directly. Christian universities and churches should hear from Israeli Christian speakers. Social media campaigns should introduce younger Christians to the people behind the statistics. Israel's


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Christian citizens should be presented not as symbols in a public relations campaign, but as proud and accomplished Israelis with their own voices, identities and stories.

This engagement is especially important for younger Christians, many of whom encounter Israel primarily through social media. They are frequently shown emotional images without context and slogans without history. They need more than political talking points. They need direct encounters, credible testimony and a deeper understanding of the realities of the Middl East.

The effort must also extend beyond the United States. Christian communities across Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia represent an enormous and diverse audience. In many of these regions, affection for Israel remains profound, but anti-Israel movements are working aggressively to undermine it.

Israel's expanding effort to highlight the success of its Christian citizens therefore comes at ar important moment. It strengthens the relationship between Israel and the Christian world while countering one of the most persistent falsehoods promoted by Israel's opponents.

The truth is powerful: in the Jewish state, Christians are free, fully enfranchised and increasingly successful. That is not a slogan or a public relations invention. It is a measurable reality and one of Israel's most compelling stories.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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**GardenFleur**
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Perhaps American support is fading because we don't like our churches bombed, our clergy spat upon or our Christian women harassed and called cruel and foul names.

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1 reply

**zoglmannnicole**
30 July, 2026

The social media platform "X" is responsible for very effective antisemitic content. It is responsible for some of the baseless comments made right here. These people take "X" as gospel truth. Perhaps they should lean on the Bible, if they are actually Christians. Instead, they lean on propaganda, ...

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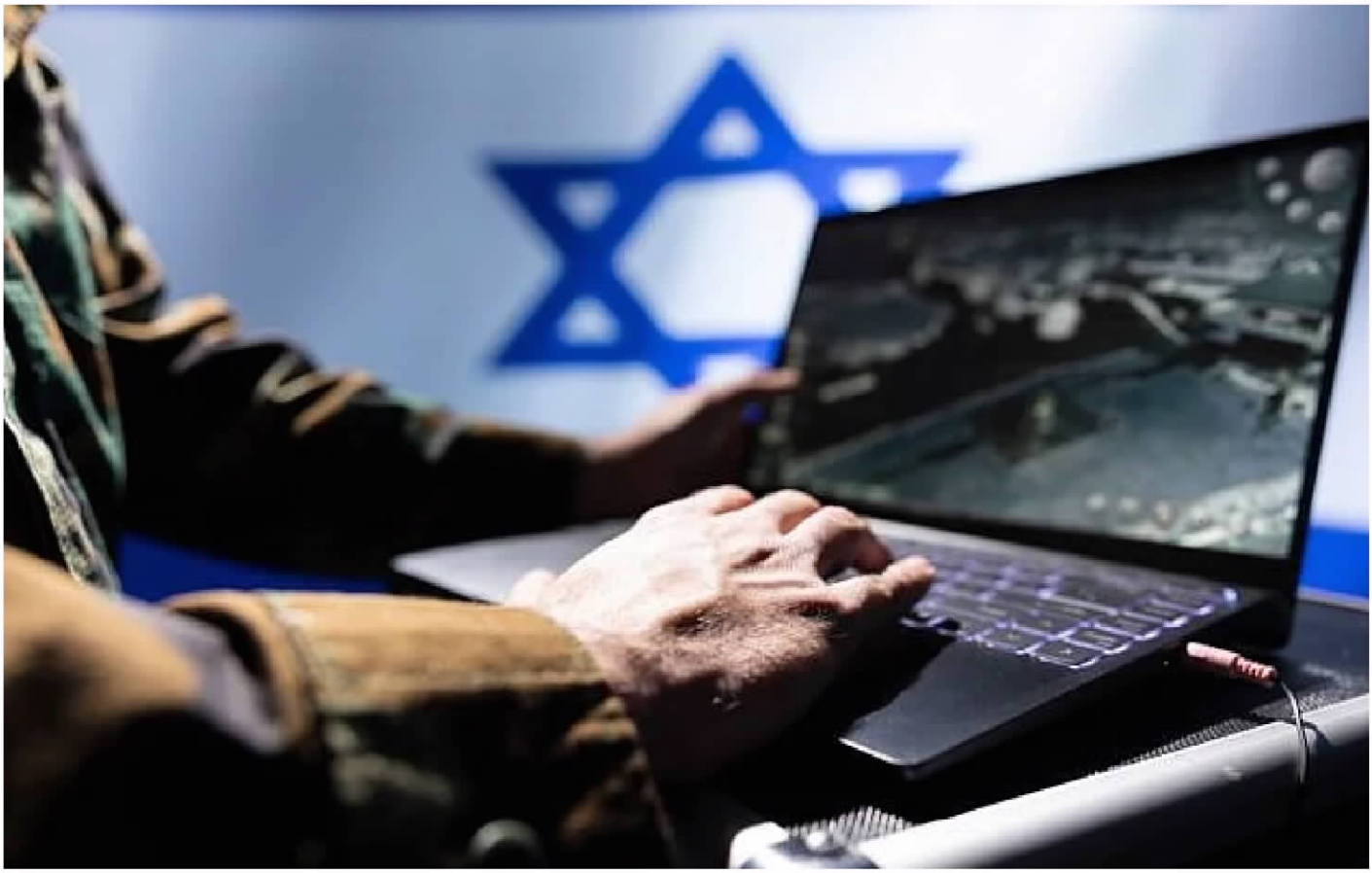
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THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# The Myth of Israel's Isolation is a Great Strategic Liability



Israeli military technology (courtesy of Shutterstock)

Ever since October 7, one narrative has become almost conventional wisdom: Israel is increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. It is repeated by international commentators, amplified on social media, cited by critics of Israel and, perhaps most surprisingly, echoed by many of Israel's own supporters.


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It was made most recently by potential US presidential candidate Rahm Emanuel.

The daily news cycle, dominated by hostile demonstrations, condemnatory UN resolutions and public disagreements with some Western governments, reinforces the impression that Israel is rapidly becoming a diplomatic pariah.

It is an understandable conclusion; it is also an incomplete one.

The danger is not merely that this narrative is inaccurate. It is that it has become so widely accepted that it is beginning to shape perceptions of reality. Those perceptions matter. They affect deterrence, embolden Israel's enemies, influence investors, discourage potential partners and undermine the confidence of Israelis themselves. When even well-meaning friends repeat that Israel stands alone, they unintentionally strengthen one of the central messages promoted by Hamas, Iran and their allies.

The reality is considerably more nuanced.

Behind the headlines, governments across the world are quietly moving closer to Israel, not further away. While criticism over the war in Gaza has undoubtedly intensified in many diplomatic forums, an entirely different story is unfolding in cabinet rooms, defense ministries and boardrooms.

Countries continue to buy Israeli defense systems. Intelligence cooperation is expanding. Trade is growing. New technological partnerships are being signed. Governments are increasingly separating disagreements over the Gaza conflict from their own long-term national interests.

International politics has always been driven less by rhetoric than by interests.

One of the greatest mistakes in analysing foreign policy is assuming that today's headlines represent permanent diplomatic realities. Governments change. Elections alter priorities. Public opinion shifts. Strategic interests endure.


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Recent political developments illustrate precisely this point. Several governments that adopted some of the world's strongest anti-Israel positions have either lost power or suffered significant electoral setbacks. Slovenia, Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador have all experienced political changes that weakened governments whose foreign policies had become among the most hostile towards Israel. Meanwhile, governments in Spain and Norway, two of Israel's sharpest European critics, now trail in opinion polls.

Perhaps the clearest contradiction to the narrative of isolation can be found in defense cooperation.

Countries do not entrust their national security to partners they believe are isolated or strategically irrelevant. Across Europe, governments continue investing heavily in Israeli defense technology because they view it as among the most advanced in the world.

Germany, Romania and Slovakia have all expanded major defense cooperation with Israel. Greece and Cyprus continue strengthening strategic partnerships that have become central pillars of Eastern Mediterranean security. These are not symbolic gestures designed for favourable headlines. They are long-term commitments involving billions of dollars, decades of cooperation and extraordinary levels of political trust.

Governments may criticise Israeli policies while simultaneously deciding that Israel is indispensable to their own national security. Those positions are not contradictory. They reflect how states actually make decisions.

The same distinction has become increasingly evident in the Middle East.

Following October 7, many predicted the Abraham Accords would collapse under the pressure of public opinion. Instead, the opposite has largely occurred. The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco have continued expanding economic, technological and security cooperation with Israel despite enormous regional pressure.

Business delegations continue travelling. Investment continues flowing. Security dialogue continues expanding. Tourism has resumed. While official rhetoric has sometimes become


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more cautious, the underlying strategic logic has remained intact.

This represents one of the most significant transformations in modern Middle Eastern politics For decades, Arab-Israeli relations were largely held hostage to the Palestinian issue. Increasingly, regional governments are pursuing foreign policies based upon their own national interests, economic development and security concerns. That shift appears far more durable than many observers appreciate.

The story extends well beyond Europe and the Middle East.

India continues deepening strategic cooperation with Israel across defense, technology and innovation. Nigeria has expanded important areas of collaboration. Across Africa, countries increasingly view Israeli expertise in agriculture, water management, healthcare and cybersecurity as essential tools for their own development. Meanwhile, Latin America is experiencing its own political evolution. Argentina has become one of Israel's closest international partners, while electoral changes elsewhere have weakened several governments that built much of their foreign policy around hostility towards Israel.

Increasingly, governments are evaluating Israel not solely through the prism of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but through the practical lens of what Israel contributes to solving 21st-century challenges.

Artificial intelligence. Cybersecurity. Missile defense. Emergency medicine. Precision agriculture. Water scarcity. Intelligence cooperation. Energy resilience.

These are areas where Israel is not simply competitive. In many cases, it is a global leader.

None of this should minimise Israel's genuine diplomatic challenges. International criticism remains intense. Public opinion has shifted in parts of Europe and North America. Israel continues to face hostile majorities in many United Nations bodies, and some bilateral relationships have become more strained.

Ignoring those realities would be just as misleading as ignoring Israel's growing partnerships.


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But neither should we ignore what governments are actually doing. The distinction between public rhetoric and private policy has rarely been greater.

Diplomatic actions often reveal priorities far more accurately than diplomatic statements.

This is why the myth of Israel's isolation deserves to be challenged. Not because everything is going well, but because a distorted picture carries real strategic consequences.

Israel's enemies seek to portray it as abandoned because isolation weakens deterrence and encourages further aggression. If they can convince Israelis that they are alone, and persuade the wider world that partnership with Israel carries unacceptable costs, they achieve an important psychological victory regardless of events on the battlefield.

Israel's friends should be careful not to reinforce that narrative unintentionally.

The truth is more encouraging, and more useful. Israel is neither universally embraced nor universally condemned. Like every country confronting a major conflict, it faces criticism alongside cooperation. Yet beneath the daily headlines, governments across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America continue making decisions based on enduring national interests rather than passing political controversies.

Those decisions increasingly point in one direction.

Despite the noise, Israel remains one of the world's most valuable strategic, technological and security partners. The headlines often suggest isolation. The diplomacy tells a very different story.


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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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**williamkeenan**
23 July, 2026

Opposition to Israel is largely opposition to Netanyahu and his Smotrich and Ben Gvir controlled coalition. The US has a similar reputational problem with Trump. Both carry enormous strategic risk as evidenced by the debacle with Iran.

*(Edited)*

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The Blogs: The Battle for Truth: The Fight to Reclaim Facts | Mark Ginsberg | The Times of Israel



THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# The Battle for Truth: The Fight to Reclaim Facts




Illustration of fake news, disinformation and online propaganda - Shutterstock

The old adage “a lie can travel halfway around the world before the truth puts on its shoes” was coniured in a time before social media. Today, the lie can travel multiple times around the

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place Jewish communities and the State of Israel under sustained pressure.

At the same time, a parallel struggle is unfolding: a battle for public opinion in the United States, where support for Israel, once a bipartisan cornerstone, is eroding at an unprecedented pace.

The numbers are stark. A recent Pew Research Center survey found that 60% of Americans now hold an unfavorable view of Israel, compared to just 37% with a favorable view, a dramatic reversal from just a few years ago. Even more telling is where this shift is happening, with majorities of Americans under 50, across both political parties, now viewing Israel negatively.

This is not a marginal fluctuation. It is a generational realignment, and it is not occurring in a vacuum.

On the far-Right, antisemitism remains rooted in traditional tropes, like conspiracy theories about Jewish control, financial manipulation, and dual loyalty. These narratives, once largely confined to extremist circles, have found renewed life online. They're amplified by algorithm-driven ecosystems that reward outrage and radicalization.

On the far-Left, the language is different, but the effect can be similar. There, antisemitism, often reframed as anti-Zionism, casts Israel not merely as a criticizable state, but as a uniquely illegitimate and evil one.

In this worldview, the Jewish right to self-determination is singled out for rejection, and complex geopolitical realities are reduced to simplistic binaries of oppressor and oppressed. The line between criticism of Israeli policy and the delegitimization of Jewish identity is frequently blurred.

The convergence of these forces, old hatred on the Right, new ideological hostility on the Left, creates a potent and dangerous environment. It is one in which misinformation spreads

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The Blogs: The Battle for Truth: The Fight to Reclaim Facts | Blog | The Times of Israel

In today's online landscape, perception is often shaped less by verified information than by repetition, virality, and emotional resonance.

Social media platforms, while democratizing access to information, have also enabled the rapi spread of distortion. Images stripped of context, misleading statistics, and outright falsehoods can travel faster and further than carefully sourced reporting.

The consequences are tangible. Polling trends suggest that younger Americans are not only more critical of Israel, but also more susceptible to narratives that frame the conflict in absolutist terms.

As one analysis noted, Israel is "losing America's youth," reflecting a deeper shift in how the next generation interprets the Middle East and the role of the US within it .

If public opinion continues to move in this direction, the implications will extend beyond discourse. They will shape policy, influence elections, and redefine alliances.

Recognizing this challenge, new initiatives have emerged to rebalance the information environment. Platforms such as Jewish Onliner, Allyvia, and Paxpoint represent a strategic response to the digital battlefield.

Their premise is straightforward but essential. Misinformation must be countered not only with rebuttals, but with accessible, credible, and timely facts.

These initiatives reflect an understanding that the fight against antisemitism today is inseparable from the fight for informational integrity. It is not enough to condemn hatred; it must also be confronted at its source, where it is produced, amplified, and consumed.

Yet these efforts, while vital, cannot operate in isolation. They require broader engagement,

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This is particularly urgent in the American context. The US has long been Israel's most important ally, not only strategically but culturally and politically. That relationship has been underpinned by shared values and a broad base of public support.

As that base fractures, the alliance itself becomes more vulnerable to political shifts and ideological swings.

The stakes, therefore, are high.

What is at issue is not merely Israel's image, but the resilience of democratic discourse in the face of polarization and disinformation. Antisemitism, in its modern forms, often serves as a warning signal, an early indicator of deeper societal fractures. Addressing it requires more than reactive measures. It demands a **proactive commitment to truth, to complexity, and to the difficult work of engaging across divides**.

The battle for public opinion is already underway. The question is whether those committed to facts, nuance, and fairness are prepared to fight it with the same intensity as those who seek to distort them.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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THE BLOGS

Mark Ginsberg

# Israel's AI Ambitions Can Become a Strategic Asse for the United States




AI innovation - image courtesy of Shutterstock

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming one of the defining measures of national power. The countries that control advanced computing, AI models, semiconductors, robotics, data infrastructure and the talent required to develop them will enjoy significant economic and military advantages in the decades ahead.


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Israel has concluded that it cannot afford to remain merely a successful participant in this transformation. It wants to become one of the countries shaping it.

The scale of that ambition became clearer in 2026. Israel's National Artificial Intelligence Directorate has presented plans that include building infrastructure incorporating as many as **100,000 advanced AI processors**, establishing a National AI Institute, developing an Israeli quantum computer and expanding the country's AI workforce and research capabilities. Israel's parliament is also moving to classify AI server farms as national infrastructure, potentially accelerating the construction of the computing capacity necessary to train and operate advanced AI systems.

For the United States, this ambition should be welcomed.

Israel is unlikely to challenge America's position at the center of the global AI ecosystem. Instead, a technologically stronger Israel could become an important extension of that ecosystem—a trusted center for AI research, cybersecurity, semiconductors, defense technology and advanced computing at precisely the moment Washington is competing to maintain its technological advantage over China.

## Israel Is Starting From an Unusually Strong Position

Israel's ambitions are significant because it is not starting from scratch.

According to Israel's national AI program, an analysis by the RISE Institute found approximately **2,300 operational AI companies in Israel**, representing roughly one-quarter of the country's technology industry. More than 60% of Israeli software companies use AI technology in some form. The same national program noted that Israel had previously ranked among the world's leaders in the number of AI startups created over the preceding decade.

The country's generative-AI sector alone included **233 companies** by late 2025, according to Startup Nation Central, with those companies having raised more than **$10 billion in private funding**.

More broadly, Israel's technology economy remains disproportionately large for a country of roughly ten million people.


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Israeli technology companies raised approximately **$14.6 billion in 2025**, according to the Israel Innovation Authority, an increase of roughly 30% from the previous year. Israel ranked as the **fourth-largest startup funding hub in the world**, behind only San Francisco, New York and Boston—and ahead of London, Paris and Singapore.

AI is increasingly driving that investment.

In 2025, approximately **35% of all investment in Israeli technology companies went to Core AI companies** developing models, infrastructure, computing technology, chips or other foundational AI capabilities. If Core AI were treated as a standalone industry category, it would have been the largest technology investment segment in Israel that year.

This matters because Israel's AI ecosystem is developing alongside an already formidable deep-tech sector. Roughly **1,500 deep-tech companies** operate in Israel. Since 2019, they have raised approximately **$28.6 billion**, with AI infrastructure accounting for nearly 12% of that investment and semiconductors another 9.8%.

Israel therefore possesses something relatively few American allies can offer: a dense concentration of AI, cybersecurity, semiconductor and deep-tech expertise within a small geographic area.

## Israel Is Building the Infrastructure to Compete

Israel nevertheless has an important weakness.

It produces considerable intellectual property but lacks the massive computing infrastructure available to American companies.

The government is attempting to change that.

In January 2026, the Israel Innovation Authority opened access to the country's national AI supercomputer infrastructure. The project includes **1,000 Nvidia B200 accelerators** allocated for use by Israeli companies and researchers over the coming years, with subsidized access intended to make advanced model training more affordable.


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That is only an initial step.

The much larger national strategy envisions eventually reaching **100,000 AI processors** while developing sovereign computing capacity and reducing Israel's vulnerability to interruptions in foreign computing services.

Israel had already committed approximately **NIS 500 million** to the second phase of its national AI program through 2027, including research infrastructure, a national AI institute, human-capital development and integration of AI into government operations.

The strategy represents an important change in Israeli technology policy. Israel historically relied heavily on private entrepreneurship while government provided support for research and development. AI requires something different because frontier computing infrastructure can cost billions of dollars.

Computing power itself is becoming strategic infrastructure.

## Why This Matters to Washington

The United States possesses advantages Israel cannot realistically reproduce.

America has the world's deepest technology capital markets, leading hyperscale cloud providers, frontier AI laboratories, enormous data centers and semiconductor companies capable of supporting AI development at extraordinary scale.

Israel offers something different: an unusually concentrated ecosystem connecting academic research, entrepreneurship, military technology, cybersecurity, intelligence and multinational R&D.

The two systems are already deeply interconnected.

More than **500 multinational companies have established operations in Israel since 2000**, with 35 additional multinationals entering during 2025 alone. The United States has also become increasingly important as the operational center for Israeli technology companies expanding abroad.


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Capital flows tell a similar story.

Approximately **70% of venture-capital investment in Israel in 2025 came from foreign sources**, while foreign funding accounts for approximately **47% of business R&D financing in Israel**, compared with an OECD average of only about 9%.

This means the American and Israeli technology ecosystems are already intertwined economically.

AI provides an opportunity to make that integration strategically deliberate.

## From Military Alliance to Technology Alliance

That evolution has already begun.

In January 2026, the United States and Israel announced a strategic partnership covering artificial intelligence and other critical technologies following Israel's participation in the U.S. led Pax Silica initiative.

The partnership is broader than AI. It encompasses advanced computing, robotics, space, new energy technologies and advanced semiconductor manufacturing. American and Israeli officials described the objective as strengthening the technology value chain from research and development through advanced manufacturing.

That is significant because the geopolitical AI competition will not be determined by algorithms alone.

AI leadership depends upon semiconductors, computing infrastructure, data centers, energy, critical minerals, cybersecurity, communications networks and advanced manufacturing.

China has spent years attempting to strengthen its position across these layers.

The United States therefore needs more than domestic technological strength. It needs a network of trusted countries capable of contributing different pieces of the AI supply chain.


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Israel can become one of those countries.

## Israel as a Real-World AI Laboratory

Israel offers another advantage that is difficult to measure purely through investment statistics: technologies developed there frequently move rapidly from experimentation to deployment.

That pattern helped create Israel's cybersecurity industry and has increasingly appeared in defense technology, drones, autonomous systems and computer vision.

The country's military requirements create intense demand for technologies capable of processing enormous quantities of information from satellites, drones, sensors and intelligence networks. AI can help identify patterns, prioritize information, improve logistics, detect cyberattacks and accelerate decision-making.

But the opportunity extends well beyond defense.

Israel has sophisticated healthcare systems, medical research institutions, agricultural technology, autonomous-vehicle expertise, water-management technology and one of the world's most developed cybersecurity ecosystems.

Those industries create environments where specialized AI systems can be developed and tested before being commercialized in much larger markets.

America provides scale.

Israel provides concentrated experimentation and specialization.

## The Economic Relationship Works Both Ways

There is another reason Washington should view Israeli AI development as an opportunity rather than competition.


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Successful Israeli technology companies frequently become deeply integrated into the American economy.

Israeli companies raise American capital, establish American headquarters, hire American employees, list on American stock exchanges and are acquired by American technology companies.

That integration is increasing. By March 2026, only **62% of employees at private Israeli technology companies were located inside Israel**, down from 69% in 2019. The United States has been one of the principal beneficiaries of that expansion, particularly in management, sales, support and increasingly R&D.

The relationship is therefore not a simple competition over which country captures technological growth.

Israeli innovation often becomes American economic activity.

The reverse is also true. American investment, computing infrastructure and technology platforms allow Israeli companies to develop and scale far faster than Israel's domestic market would permit.

AI could deepen that symbiotic relationship.

## Building an Allied AI Ecosystem

The larger strategic opportunity is to think beyond bilateral cooperation.

The geopolitical competition surrounding artificial intelligence increasingly involves technological ecosystems rather than individual countries.

One is forming around China and countries willing to depend heavily on Chinese telecommunications equipment, infrastructure, semiconductors and technology platforms.


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The United States has an opportunity to build an alternative network centered on trusted technology partners.

Israel can occupy an important position within that network alongside countries with complementary strengths in semiconductor manufacturing, critical minerals, energy, advanced manufacturing and research.

That could eventually include shared computing infrastructure, joint AI research programs, semiconductor development, cybersecurity cooperation, defense AI projects and coordinated protection of critical technologies and intellectual property.

Israel does not need to duplicate America's AI infrastructure.

Instead, it can specialize in areas where it possesses comparative advantages while remaining deeply connected to an American-led technology ecosystem.

## A New Strategic Pillar of the U.S.-Israel Relationship

For decades, discussions about the strategic relationship between the United States and Israel have largely centered on military cooperation, intelligence sharing and American security assistance.

Artificial intelligence creates an opportunity to broaden that framework.

The numbers already demonstrate the potential.

Israel has approximately **2,300 AI companies**, roughly **1,500 deep-tech companies**, more than **500 multinational technology companies operating in the country**, and a technology industry that generated approximately **$85 billion in exports in 2025**. Core AI companies captured **35% of Israeli technology investment** that year. Israel is now planning computing infrastructure incorporating as many as **100,000 AI processors**.

For a country of Israel's size, those figures are remarkable.

For Washington, they represent an opportunity.


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The United States does not need every major technological breakthrough of the 21st century t originate within its borders. It needs as many of those breakthroughs as possible to emerge within an ecosystem of countries aligned with American economic and security interests.

Israel's AI ambitions can help accomplish that.

America brings capital, computing power, semiconductor leadership, enormous markets and global scale. Israel brings a concentrated pool of engineers, entrepreneurs, cybersecurity specialists, defense technologists and researchers accustomed to transforming difficult problems into commercially viable technologies.

The next phase of the U.S.-Israel relationship therefore could be defined not only by weapons systems and intelligence cooperation, but by algorithms, chips, data centers, robotics, quantur computing and joint technological development.

If Washington and Jerusalem build the right framework around that opportunity, Israel's attempt to become a global AI power will not simply strengthen Israel.

It could strengthen America's position in the technological competition that will shape the 21st century.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

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**williamkeenan**
15 August, 2026

Israel unquestionably has a lot to offer. However, the AI industry is becoming an increasingly politicized issue and Israel is currently politically toxic with American voters. That would be especially true in the area of AI military technology cooperation.

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OPINION

SAFETY FIRST

# Your rabbi's voice on the phone is not always your rabbi

By Mark Ginsberg · August 26, 2026

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The call sounds exactly right. The rabbi's voice, the cadence, the little verbal habits everyone knows from Shabbat *drashot*. There is an emergency, the voice says. A family in the congregation needs help tonight. Could you please send gift cards right away?

Congregants at synagogues in multiple states have received versions of that call over the past year. Every one of them was fake. Voice-cloning tools that once required studio equipment now need 30 seconds of audio pulled from a public sermon recording and a few dollars a month.


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*Illustrative.*

I write about AI and cybersecurity from Israel, and the gap I keep running into is this: the technology producing convincing fake voices, faces and emails went mainstream, while the security practices of most Jewish institutions did not move at all. The people running our federations, synagogues, schools and camps are facing adversaries with industrial-grade tools, and they are defending themselves with advice written for a threat that no longer exists.

The threat is not hypothetical. The Secure Community Network documented 190 cyberattacks against synagogues and Jewish organizations across 16 states between January and mid-April of this year alone, a tally cybersecurity experts laid out in these pages. Phishing, fraud, data exposure, doxxing. The criminals are not only after money. Some campaigns harvest membership lists and donor records to map who in the community can be targeted next.

The fakes are getting harder to spot. Israeli security researchers have tracked online campaigns built on fabricated outrage and invented victims for years, and the same machinery now powers scams aimed directly at Jewish donors: fake charity sites after every disaster, AI-written appeals that mirror the language of real organizations, and manipulated video. In May, Israel's National Cyber Directorate flagged deepfake videos of Chief Rabbi David Yosef apparently endorsing a


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medical product he had never seen. If the chief rabbi can be convincingly faked from a public clip, so can your executive director from last month's federation gala.

What actually works? I put that question to security practitioners in Israel, where defending civilian institutions against sophisticated adversaries is a national specialty. Their answers were strikingly unglamorous.

**Kill the assumption that voice proves identity**

First, no financial request, credential change or sensitive data transfer happens on the strength of a call or video alone, no matter who appears to be asking. Call back on a known number. This costs nothing and defeats most voice-clone scams instantly.

**Treat email as hostile until verified**

Second, AI writes flawless, personalized phishing now, free of the grammar errors people were trained to spot. An email from your board president asking for a wire transfer gets the same callback treatment as the phone call. Multi-factor authentication on every account, especially email, blocks the majority of account takeovers even when a password is stolen.

**Rehearse the human moment**

Third, the Israeli approach to institutional security runs on drills, not documents. Run one tabletop exercise: the executive director's email asks finance staff to move funds Friday afternoon before a deadline. Do staff verify? Who calls whom? A community that has practiced saying no politely is a community a scammer cannot script against.

**Small does not mean safe**

Fourth, security experts repeatedly note that attackers look for the path of least resistance, and smaller organizations with older systems and thinner training get hit precisely because they assume they are beneath notice. The hostage-taking of a small congregation's donor database is just as damaging to that congregation as a larger breach would be to a federation.

There is a positive here worth naming: The same country that built a civilian cyber defense ecosystem out of necessity, and whose technology sector now underpins security tools used far beyond its borders, has made much of this expertise publicly accessible. Israeli-developed threat intelligence, training curricula and hardened communications tools are within reach of a mid-sized federation's budget. A closer look at Israel's technology sector shows how much of the world's


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defensive capability now flows from institutions built to protect a small, persistently targeted society.

Jewish organizations have rewritten their physical security playbooks since Oct. 7, 2023. The digital playbook needs the same urgency, the same budget line and the same assumption that someone is actively planning for the next attempt. Because someone is.

*Mark Ginsberg writes about AI, cybersecurity and Israel. His work has appeared in* The Times of Israel *and* WGI World.

## Your Daily Phil



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**Your Daily Phil: Inside Robert Kraft's big, blue square gala**

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## Opinion




A VIEW OF THE FIELD

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SUSPICIOUS MINDS

**Keep the armor, but facing outward**



A DIFFERENT APPROACH

**Why should anyone love Judaism?**




CALL TO ACTION

**Democracy doesn't need grand gestures. It needs us to show up, together.**



A 'REVERSE BIRTHRIGHT' EXPERIENCE

**Jewish peoplehood is a two-way street**


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THE BLOGS

# Mark Ginsberg

# Israel Must Win the Story Before the Question Is Asked



Online global access to information - courtesy of Shutterstock

For decades, Israel's public advocacy has largely operated in reactive mode. A war begins, a terrorist attack takes place or an accusation is leveled, and Israel scrambles to respond. Officials appear on television to explain military operations, rebut allegations and provide context that should have been established long before the crisis erupted.


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By then, much of the damage has already been done.

The encouraging development is that Israeli public advocacy is beginning to recognize this fundamental weakness. The discussion is gradually moving beyond defending the latest action towards addressing the deeper questions that determine how Israel is perceived: Who are the Jewish people? Why are they in this land? What rights do they possess? What does Israel represent, not only for Jews, but for the wider world?

This is a necessary strategic shift. Israel cannot successfully explain each individual battle if it has already lost the argument over why it has the right to exist and defend itself.

For too long, Israel's advocates have relied on a narrow set of messages. Israel is a democracy. Israel contributes technology to the world. Israel seeks peace. All are true and important, but none adequately answers the ideological campaign that presents Jews as foreign colonizers who arrived in someone else's country.

The answer must begin with Jewish history and indigeneity.

The Jewish people did not select the Land of Israel as a convenient refuge in the twentieth century. Jewish identity, language, faith, calendar, collective memory and national consciousness were formed in this land. Jerusalem is not merely Israel's capital. It has been the spiritual and national center of the Jewish people for three thousand years.

Even in exile, Jews prayed towards Jerusalem, mourned the destruction of their Temple, celebrated agricultural festivals tied to the seasons of Israel and ended the Passover Seder with the words, "Next year in Jerusalem." Hebrew was revived as a spoken national language because it had never ceased to be the language of Jewish prayer, scholarship and memory.

This is not the behavior of a foreign colonial population. It is the story of an indigenous people returning to its ancestral homeland.

Jewish rights in the Land of Israel are not dependent solely on the Holocaust, the United Nations Partition Plan or international sympathy. They are rooted in history, continuous


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Jewish presence, religious and cultural attachment, and modern international recognition, including the decisions at San Remo and the League of Nations Mandate.

This does not erase the rights, dignity or aspirations of others. Rights are not a finite resource. But any serious discussion must begin by acknowledging that Jewish national rights are not inventions and Jewish sovereignty is not an historical accident.

Israel must also speak more confidently about its relationship with the Christian world. Christianity was born in the Land of Israel from within Jewish civilization. Its foundational places, figures and texts cannot be understood without the geography and history of the Jewish homeland.

Today, Israel is the only country in the Middle East where the Christian population has grown substantially over the decades and where Christian holy places are protected by a sovereign government committed to freedom of worship. At a time when ancient Christian communities have been devastated across parts of the region, Israel stands as a guardian of a shared biblical inheritance.

This connection is not merely theological. Israel and much of the Christian world share a civilizational challenge. The assault on Israel is part of a wider confrontation between democratic societies and Islamist movements that reject religious freedom, pluralism and the sovereignty of non-Muslim peoples in the Middle East.

Israel is not fighting Islam, nor are Muslims collectively its enemy. The threat is Islamism: a political ideology that seeks to impose religious supremacy through coercion, terrorism and, where possible, state power. Hamas, Hezbollah, the Iranian regime and their allies may focus their violence on Israel, but their ambitions extend far beyond it.

Israel is on the front line, but it is not the final destination.

The next arena in this struggle is artificial intelligence. Increasingly, people will not learn about Israel by reading books, visiting museums or even searching traditional websites. They


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will ask large language models to explain Zionism, the origins of the conflict, Jewish indigeneity or the status of Jerusalem.

The answers they receive will be shaped by the material on which those systems were trained and the sources they retrieve. If the digital information environment is dominated by decades of anti-Israel activism, distorted terminology and endlessly repeated falsehoods, AI models may reproduce those prejudices with the appearance of neutral authority.

This means Israel's advocacy organizations must do more than publish responses on social media. They must create authoritative, well-sourced and digitally accessible bodies of knowledge about Jewish history, archaeology, law, religion and national rights.

Primary documents should be translated, indexed and placed online in formats that AI system can recognize and use. Hebrew sources must become accessible in multiple languages. Organizations should test major AI models for recurring distortions, publicly document their findings and engage technology companies with evidence-based requests for greater accuracy.

Most importantly, Israel must flood the digital public square with substance rather than slogans. Artificial intelligence cannot draw upon historical evidence that has never been digitized, translated or presented clearly.

Israel's advocacy challenge is therefore no longer simply to respond faster. It is to shape the intellectual foundations upon which future answers will be built.

The battle for Israel's legitimacy will increasingly be decided before a spokesperson enters a television studio and even before a user types a question. Getting ahead of the game means ensuring that when the world asks who the Jewish people are and why Israel exists, the truth is already there.


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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mark Ginsberg is an Israel-based digital marketer and commentator on technology and artificial intelligence, with over two decades of firsthand perspective on the country's innovation economy. Originally from South Florida and now based in Efrat, he analyzes the growth of Israel's tech ecosystem and the broader implications of AI on business, policy, and society.

## Conversation

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# WHAT DO WE TELL THE CHILDREN?

Guest September 14, 2026 Jewish Life

**By Mark Ginsberg**

Your reporting on the Boulder Valley School District settlement, concrete measures after real harm, arrives at the question every Jewish parent now meets sooner or later: what do we tell the children? I write from Efrat, where my children practice walking to the shelter alongside their math lessons, and where that question stopped being hypothetical two years ago. Israeli families have been forced to develop scripts for these conversations, and the ones that work may be worth trading across the water.

## The Lessons That Arrive Early

Israeli schools teach the siren the way American schools teach the fire drill, as routine rather than alarm, and the routine is the first lesson for parents too. Fear with a procedure attached becomes a task; fear without one becomes a mood that follows a child home. When the war began, the guidance that circulated among parents here was to answer the question asked and not the question feared. A child who asks whether the sirens will come tonight wants to know about tonight, not about the region's future. Short true answers, calibrated to the age in front of you, beat thorough ones every time.

The second lesson took longer to learn. Children absorb far more from what we do than from what we say, and a parent who checks the phone with clenched shoulders is teaching a class of one. The families I know


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who have held up best gave their children jobs: packing the shelter bag, learning the neighbor's name, being the one who reminds everyone where the flashlight lives. Psychologists who study communities under rocket fire keep finding the same pattern, that belonging and usefulness are the armor, and the pattern works in ordinary hard times as much as in wartime.

### The Dinner-Table Version

The hardest conversations are not about the sirens at all. They are about the hatred behind them, the ones a child hears about from a classmate or sees on a screen. Here the Israeli instinct is to name the thing plainly and then widen the frame: some people hate us for what we are, and what we are is a family with a table, a holiday coming, a history we love telling. The hate gets one sentence. The table gets the rest of the evening. That ratio, one part naming to five parts living, is the closest thing to a vaccine we have found.

### What Travels to Boulder

What would I offer a Boulder family reading about the settlement and wondering what to say at dinner? The same blueprint with local materials. Name what happened honestly, since children will hear it anyway and secrets teach shame. Give them a role, since a child who helps make the household ready stands a little straighter. And keep the ratio: one sentence for the harm, the rest of the evening for the joy, which is the family's own and cannot be settled away. The measures your district agreed to matter, and the belonging you build at the table matters more. Our two communities are proof of the same sentence: children do not need the danger hidden. They need the love to be visible.


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