

THE WEEKLY PRINT

Pro-Israel groups grapple with the future of Israel funding • State Dept official Sarah Rogers urges protecting free speech while fighting antisemitism • Trump suggests he may not sign Iran deal without Abraham Accords commitments from Gulf countries • DSA quietly poised to make inroads in NYC's congressional delegation • In fiery address, Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch rails against HUC ordaining anti-Zionist rabbis • Inside The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation's big bet on Baltimore • The Dorot Foundation is shuttering; the anti-loneliness Dorot nonprofit is emphatically not • Jewish Insider's picks for your summer reading list

MAY 26, 2026

Pro-Israel groups grapple with the future of Israel funding

Jewish and pro-Israel groups seem at pains to clarify how they are now assessing an issue that has long been key to their advocacy — particularly as the conversation around funding and the possibility for a new MOU has rapidly evolved in recent months

By Matthew Kassel

Late last month, AIPAC circulated what seemed at first glance like a relatively anodyne memo stressing its support for the current 10-year memorandum of understanding between the United States and Israel, which guarantees \$3.8 billion in annual military aid and missile-defense funding to Israel through 2028.

“Congress must fulfill America’s commitment by providing full security assistance and missile defense funding to Israel for the remainder of the MOU,” the group wrote in its missive published on April 28.

The memo was notable, however, for what it left out: calling to negotiate a follow-up MOU — the future of which has been a topic of ongoing speculation among analysts and lawmakers beginning to think about the contours of a potential new agreement in a changing political landscape.

That AIPAC had only urged the implementation of the final two years of the current deal was in many ways a tacit acknowledgement of shifting attitudes against

U.S. military aid even among supporters of Israel.

The omission, intentional or not, was otherwise reflective of uncertainty around an agreement that has drawn scrutiny not only among Israel critics on the far left and right but also moderate defenders of Israel in both parties who are openly questioning the necessity of U.S. military assistance to a longstanding Middle East ally.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for winding down U.S. financial aid over the next decade, saying that the Jewish state has “come of age” and matured economically to continue on its own. In an interview with CBS’ “60 Minutes” earlier this month, he confirmed that he wanted to immediately begin the process of weaning Israel off of U.S. aid, noting the future of the U.S.-Israel alliance should be focused on joint projects equally funded by Israel and the United States.

Some pro-Israel Republican lawmakers — including Sens. Lindsey Graham (R-SC),

John Thune (R-SD), the Senate majority leader, and Roger Wicker (R-MS) — have welcomed the idea, even as the GOP has long touted its staunch support for such funding. Rahm Emanuel, the former Chicago mayor and Democratic presidential prospect who holds close personal ties to Israel, has advocated for immediately ending military aid to Israel, arguing it is not worth expending the “political capital” to promote spending that is facing mounting opposition in Congress and among voters.

But Jewish and pro-Israel groups seem at pains to clarify how they are now assessing an issue that has long been key to their advocacy — particularly as the conversation around such funding and the possibility for a new MOU, which remains an open question, has rapidly evolved in recent months.

“Each U.S.-Israel MOU to date — negotiated by Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama — has laid the framework for the decade ahead, strengthening an alliance that advances American interests, supports

a strong and capable ally in an unstable region, and drives a remarkable ecosystem of joint development and cooperation between two reliable allies,” Deryn Sousa, a spokesperson for AIPAC, told *Jewish Insider* in a recent statement.

She added, “We appreciate the Trump administration working closely with the Israeli government toward a new agreement that will strengthen and define the mutually beneficial partnership in the years ahead.”

“We’re figuring it out ourselves,” said Michael Makovsky, the president and CEO of the Jewish Institute for National Security of America, adding that he believed Israel “made a mistake” in choosing to forgo U.S. financial aid. He suggested that the U.S. sign “one more” MOU with Israel to cover the next 10 years and help Israel replenish its munitions stocks amid the war against Iran, which he believes is key to advancing American interests in the region. “It zeroes down at the very end,” he explained to JI.

In lieu of an agreement, Makovsky floated “non-monetary” alternatives, for instance, a U.S.-Israel mutual defense treaty — though he questioned whether such a pact could gain enough support in the Senate, where most Democrats recently voted in favor of resolutions to block arms sales to Israel.

Former U.S. and Israeli officials have also recently called for building closer technological ties between the two countries, in anticipation of an era in which financial aid is not a defining feature of the alliance.

“The model in which Israel is assisted by the United States and receives aid has a very small chance of continuing under any future administration,” former IDF intelligence chief Amos Yadlin said this month while promoting a new strategic technology alliance with Tom Nides, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel. “And perhaps even under the Trump administration, so we need to find a new basis for the relationship that is a transition from aid to partnership.”

Even as analysts had indicated last year that the U.S. should begin considering what the next MOU entails, it is unclear if the process is now seriously underway, as Netanyahu’s remarks have complicated the ef-

fort. One Hill staffer to a pro-Israel House member told JI he had no knowledge of discussions at the moment.

President Donald Trump was initially surprised when Netanyahu first proposed winding down U.S. funding late last year and did not immediately lend support to the move, JI has previously reported.

A White House spokesperson declined to comment on the prospects for a future MOU, the framework for which first went into effect in 1998 during the Clinton administration. The current agreement was finalized in 2016 near the end of the Obama administration — which touted the deal as “the largest single pledge of military assistance in U.S. history” at the time.

Tal Naim, a spokesperson for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, referred JI to Netanyahu’s comments to “60 Minutes” this month.

Looking ahead, Brian Romick, the president of Democratic Majority for Israel, said “there can and should be a discussion about how the U.S.-Israeli security relationship should change with the times, how our partnership must evolve as Israel’s own capabilities grow and its security needs change, and how we can align on a long-term vision for the region.”

But, he added, “that debate must bring a serious analysis grounded in prioritizing America’s interests and Israel’s security. It cannot shift with political changes or in the middle of a war, especially when American troops are actively deployed in the region. Ultimately this will be a negotiated agreement between two democratically elected governments.”

A spokesperson for the American Jewish Committee likewise used broad strokes to discuss a future MOU, saying it is “far more than a financial commitment.”

The agreement “is a cornerstone of a broader strategic relationship that advances both U.S. and Israeli national security interests, strengthens deterrence against shared adversaries, and reinforces America’s commitment to the security of its closest ally in the Middle East,” the spokesperson told JI. “At a time of growing regional volatility and evolving security threats, maintaining strong and sustained U.S.-Is-

rael security cooperation remains critically important.”

Justin Leopold-Cohen, a senior research analyst at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies’ Center on Military and Political Power who specializes in U.S.-Israel security cooperation, said that “there will likely be a new, heavily modified MOU following the current agreement’s expiration.”

Netanyahu, he told JI, “already revealed his desire to phase out American military aid, granted primarily as Foreign Military Financing,” which typically must be used to purchase U.S. defense products and services.

“While a new MOU should reflect that Israel’s economy has grown, it should also recognize that Israel’s defense requirements have too, and Israel may struggle to fill the gap in its defense budget that the loss of FMF would create,” Leopold-Cohen said.

Dan Shapiro, a U.S. ambassador to Israel in the Obama administration who served as a top defense official in the Biden administration, speculated that “the next MOU — if there is an MOU — will look very different from the current one.”

“It will likely phase out FMF, which both Prime Minister Netanyahu and Americans from the left and right are calling for,” Shapiro added. “It will likely emphasize joint research and development, sharing technological advances, and expanded co-production to answer President Trump’s question of what’s in it for the United States. To garner bipartisan support, it should include a consultative mechanism to ensure U.S. weapons are only used in ways consistent with American laws and values and that minimize civilian casualties.”

Daniel Silverberg, a former top foreign policy advisor to Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), characterized the MOU as “mutually beneficial,” saying that “it does not need to be exclusively assistance-based.”

“There are many ways to expand cooperation that involve more than giving aid,” he said. “The MOU is a key framework to do so, and it’s crucial to spell that out for a skeptical U.S. audience.”

But, he emphasized to JI, “We can’t want the MOU more than the Israelis want it.” ♦

MAY 27, 2026

State Dept official Sarah Rogers urges protecting free speech while fighting antisemitism

‘The Nazis may have the right to post, but also the Nazis are bad and sick and stupid,’ Rogers told JI

By Emily Jacobs

Sarah Rogers, the under secretary of state for public diplomacy, maintained that the Trump administration’s commitment to free speech, including for extreme views, does not take away from its opposition to antisemitism, telling *Jewish Insider* in a wide-ranging interview that “the Nazis may have the right to post, but also the Nazis are bad and sick and stupid.”

The senior U.S. diplomat acknowledged the tension between allowing hateful views on social platforms and concerns about rising rates of antisemitism globally, though she maintained that the path to successfully responding to Jew hatred requires support for free speech protections, and said that she looks forward to visiting Israel in the future.

This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Jewish Insider: *You have been unequivocal in your public statements about the rise of antisemitism globally being a serious problem, while also maintaining your position on free speech protections. How do you draw that line between promoting free speech culture while ensuring you have the tools to fight antisemitism?*

Sarah Rogers: I don’t see this as a line-drawing exercise between opposed priorities. There’s really no conflict between opposing antisemitism on the one hand and opposing censorship on the other. America has a proud history of opposing both. Censorship has not kept antisemites out of power, it has been deployed by antisemites who gain power.

[Supreme Court Justice] Oliver Wendell Holmes was the first to say that freedom of speech really means freedom for the thought that we hate. You can guard that principle while still saying, “Okay, there are some thoughts that we hate, and we’re going to speak against them, and we’re going

to explain why these people are wrong, and we’re going to fight that battle in the marketplace of ideas.” I think every free speech advocate makes normative judgments about the speech that’s on offer, and a normative judgment I’ve always made is that the Nazis may have the right to post, but also the Nazis are bad and sick and stupid.

JJ: *How do you, or the State Department more broadly, view efforts to counter foreign operations and propaganda campaigns, especially with regard to media where the location of origin is often hidden?*

SR: Countering what is called in the [State Department] statute “foreign malign influence” is part of my statutory mandate, and we take it seriously. There are a whole bunch of tools in what you might call the counter-propaganda toolbox.

This is an information environment where legitimacy and trust are more important than ever. Right now, we’re in this liminal zone. I think technology will refine this landscape a bit, but we’re in a zone where any image or any video can be fake, and so it is more important than ever if we were trying to persuade the global public that they can trust us.

What I’m looking for ways to do now, and what the State Department wants to do now, is to counter these kinds of influence operations chiefly through exposure and through counter speech. We can expose the foreign providence of a lot of information and the inauthentic nature of some of the behavior. That doesn’t mean we have to reach out behind closed doors to Twitter or Facebook and urge them to censor anyone concurring with a particular narrative. We don’t have to do that. It is not my job to dictate what Americans can say or see online, but I can tell Americans what we and

our partners are seeing online and let them make up their own minds.

One thing that my office has done in the past also is try to promote technologies that improve the information environment and make that environment one in which we can more easily communicate about American priorities.

I don’t want to fund tools that put a centralized thumb on the scale of permissible opinion, or that try to choke off permissible opinion before it gets to the public sphere. What I’d rather do is prospect and promote tools that respect and empower the audience to discern true and authentic information and have the kinds of conversations they want to have.

Both X, formerly Twitter, and Meta have started rolling out the “Grok, is this true?” feature. It’s kind of interesting. Everyone knows the LLMs are trained on a consensus model of available opinion. A lot of them have gobbled up like most books ever written. They’ve scoured social media. When these models first debuted, they were pretty clunky. There was a whole genre of AI discourse that just consisted of people making their LLM say insane, woke, Kafkaesque things, but the models have gotten better. They’ve gotten better to the point where most people, even people with unpopular opinions, trust them to kind of collate facts.

There are now some early scientific studies showing that, as a result, interacting with AI chatbots depolarizes people politically. It is conducive to lessened political extremism, and I think making that kind of tool available is an example of something we can do that doesn’t make people feel coerced or condescended to, it doesn’t spark that kind of oppositional, anti-institutional reflex, because you’re just letting them have access to something that they want and they enjoy. We’ve also seen those exact tools

used to push back on antisemitic propaganda online.

JJ: *Can you speak to how private industry and social media companies have responded to your engagement on these issues?*

SR: I've had a lot of congenial interactions with the tech sector. I've been accused by critics, including in Europe, of essentially being too staunch an advocate for the tech sector, which is ironic because I started my free speech activism career as a thorn on the side of Big Tech. When we're advocating for the freedom of our companies not to censor, then of course they're grateful. I also think, though, that within Silicon Valley, within the investor class and the executive class, and then the user bases of these companies, there is a real organic demand for ways to harness the powers of invention to make the information environment better.

I have intentionally avoided having any interactions with tech companies that could reasonably be expected to result in the removal of content. If I ever had reason to do that, like if there was a tweet with the nuclear codes in it or something like that, I would try to make sure that I disclosed that to the public, but I avoid it as a matter of practice. Still, I have conversations all the time with people in the tech industry who are interested in how we discern content provenance, how we can help people integrate AI in ways that are less conducive to kind of AI psychosis type outcomes, how we can promote truthful information.

The only reason the information environment feels so new and different is because Americans are so good at innovating things that spread like wildfire and change the world. That's fundamentally good. Now we're in this new information environment, and you've probably heard me say this before, that this is on par with the invention of the telegraph or the film strip, and so there's going to be some shudders and spasms as we adjust, but we can use the power of innovation and invention to make our environment better, not worse. I think tech is very receptive to that, especially because there's all this kind of almost superstitious anti-tech discourse right now, and so there's a natural appetite to prove that chorus wrong.

JJ: *With that in mind, how would you describe your role in terms of responding to this growing threat of foreign disinformation and the outgrowth of antisemitism that such propaganda efforts cause? Do you see your role as more of a behind the scenes dealmaker or something else?*

SR: I would not say my role principally consists of brokering informal understandings with tech companies. I think because my role has a tech component of its portfolio, it's just natural that I have some conversations and relationships with tech companies, but zooming out, my role is public diplomacy. That includes civil society grant making, it includes a lot of public advocacy, it oversees educational and cultural affairs, so I have a really broad umbrella of stuff I can do to interact with the information environment generally.

On antisemitism, we have funded interfaith cultural restoration projects and educational projects to promote cross-cultural understanding and diffuse hatred. We are trying to promote tools like AI to rationalize and depolarize the information environment. We're doing all that stuff, but the information environment part is only part of it.

We are looking for more opportunities to publicly and candidly communicate on trends we're seeing in the information environment, and we want to do it in a way where it doesn't sound like we're scolding the audience and telling them what not to believe. We just want to credibly share aggregated statistics and facts about what we've observed, and I want to make sure that we get that right.

That means number one, I've actually instructed my staff, like whenever we operate on this issue, we need to literally or figuratively make a commitment to not censor American speech or censor anybody. We want to do the counter speech and exposure, and I think you're going to see more of that.

I've collaborated a lot on the antisemitism issue with Rabbi [Yehuda] Kaploun, who's our special envoy to monitor and combat antisemitism. We have participated in the Shabbat dinners with him. We had Rabbi Kaploun organize a Shabbat with of-

ficials from Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, and with a bunch of members of the administration. It was a really powerful coming together around this issue, and I think you're gonna see more of those kinds of activities that my office is proud to be involved with, too.

JJ: *Do you coordinate with other agencies and other departments to ensure that these efforts don't overlap or contradict each other, be it about antisemitism or free speech or anything else that you're doing?*

SR: So one thing that I've done is I've encouraged my public diplomacy staff, who do kind of overt messaging for the State Department, to make sure that they are coordinated with other parts of the government, including, for example, the Department of War, who are engaged in messaging activities of overlapping topics in the same region. That's just common sense, so we want to make sure that all of our messaging activities are aligned, or at least not at odds with each other.

I think a great thing about this administration compared to the first one is that when President Trump staffed his first administration, he was kind of newly triumphant and his coalition was still consolidating, so there wasn't this existing infrastructure and existing talent pool of people who were aligned with the administration's foreign policy vision, and now there are. Because of that, I have great relationships with counterparts at other agencies, and it's very easy for us to have these conversations, though all conversations you have in the government take longer and are more kind of bureaucratically ritualized than they should be.

JJ: *Have you made any efforts in your role promoting public diplomacy to highlight the U.S.-Israel relationship?*

SR: The answer is yes. I was actually just in close touch with the Israeli Embassy about some America 250 commemorative activities that we were going to undertake, including "America Day" celebrations at three university campuses in Israel. We've done a lot of interfaith and church restoration activities in the Middle East that Israel is very supportive of.

I also hope to visit Israel when scheduling considerations permit.

JJ: *Looking toward Europe, you and Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-MO) both spoke at the Hudson Institute last week about the free speech conversations we're seeing across the Atlantic. What we're also seeing are sharp rises in antisemitism across the continent. Do you connect the two? And if so, what do you see as the prescription for solving both issues?*

SR: I absolutely connect the two. It's interesting, another thing I always say when people ask me about this sort of tension between antisemitism and free speech is that I had my staff run numbers on this. When it comes to actual antisemitic hate crimes, not speech crimes, but crimes where someone gets hit or synagogues vandalized, the per capita rate of those in continental Europe and elsewhere in the Anglosphere is much higher by orders of magnitude than it is the United States, even though we have open season free speech, and they all reportedly have laws against antisemitism.

There was this incident in London a few years ago where a caravan of pro-Palestine protesters drove through a reputedly Jewish neighborhood in London, screaming through a megaphone, "F*** Jews. Rape their daughters. Free Palestine." There were no hate crime charges. I think London police claimed there wasn't enough evidence that they'd done it, even though it's on video. So who does get prosecuted under these hate crime laws?

There is this famous Nazi hunter in France, Serge Klarsfeld. He's one of the most famous Nazi hunters. He has a son, Arno Klarsfeld, who's a well-regarded French jurist who actually helped prosecute some of the Nazi collaborators. Arno Klarsfeld was pursued by French authorities under French hate speech laws for basically saying that France should do mass deporta-

tions of people who'd already had their asylum hearings and were adjudicated as deportable. He was basically advocating for the same kind of policy that President Trump has tried to use to mitigate antisemitism in the United States.

You have this decorated French Jewish antisemitism jurist being threatened with legal punishment just for advocating a deportation policy, so that's an obvious nexus, and I'm not saying it's the only one, but it's an obvious nexus between censorship law and antisemitism.

After the Bondi Beach massacre in Australia, you had a proposed hate speech law in response that would have had an exemption for any speech that's religious. Well, if you were an ISIS jihadist, your speech was religious, so you're basically carving out the exact ideology that appeared to have motivated that attack. So that's how I see these issues in relation to one another.

JJ: *Is there anything else about Europe's broader handling of antisemitism that concerns you?*

SR: I think often there's a sense that if you ban antisemitism legally then you have done the work required to oppose it, and I don't think that is the story that the crime statistics tell. I don't think it is the story that the political landscape tells. I've had many conversations with earnest European interlocutors who genuinely oppose antisemitism and want the best for the Jewish people in their countries, and so I don't think bad faith is to blame. I just think that these laws are not the answer.

JJ: *One last question. I want to ask about Germany, specifically the far-right Alternative for Germany party. You've met with some of their officials and praised them specifically on free speech issues. AfD is a far-right ultra-nationalist party whose leaders have espoused antisemitic and pro-Nazi sentiments. Do you see these parties as antisemit-*

ic, and do you think the same free speech principles should apply to them despite their historical legacy?

SR: I had one meeting with one AfD official and immediately was lambasted for purportedly being pro-Russia. The point I made at the time was that if this guy were really a Russian asset, he's a pretty bad Russian asset, because he condemned censorship in that meeting and Russia's a big fan of censorship. I also stand by what I also said at the Hudson Institute, which is that European policymakers don't need to give right-wing parties a monopoly on common sense when it comes to mass migration or things like internet regulation. In fact, it would be healthy to have a democracy where multiple parties are against destructive mass migration, for example.

In terms of Germany and its specific legacy on Holocaust denial laws, what I would say is this: I come from an American First Amendment tradition, so I would not want to see laws in the United States like that, but if the only thing these European countries were prohibiting was actual Holocaust denial or actual rank incitement of genocide against Jews, then I don't think you'd be seeing as many arguments between, for example, European authorities and American internet platforms.

We didn't sanction [Former European Commissioner] Thierry Breton for asking that X take down a Holocaust denial post — that post would be protected under the First Amendment, but that didn't lead to the sanctions. What we sanctioned Thierry Breton for doing was threatening an American company with European regulatory penalties for allowing an American politician, President Trump, to speak on an American platform, so our laws do differ there, but if that were the only difference, I don't think you'd be seeing these flare-ups. The differences are far greater than that. ♦

MAY 27, 2026

Trump suggests he may not sign Iran deal without Abraham Accords commitments from Gulf countries

'I'm not sure we should make the deal if they don't sign,' the president said at a Cabinet meeting

By Emily Jacobs

President Donald Trump signaled on Wednesday that he may not agree to a deal to end the war with Iran if Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other countries in the region do not join the Abraham Accords, arguing that the Gulf nations “owe that to us.”

The president made the comments while taking questions from reporters during a Cabinet meeting at the White House, where he was asked if he would accept a peace agreement with Iran that did not address uranium enrichment. Trump responded that he would agree to a deal that allows for continued negotiations on some issues, though he repeatedly said he would not allow for “a crummy agreement.”

He expressed hesitation about moving forward with any peace deal with Iran that did not include commitments from Saudi

Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and others to normalize relations with Israel.

“I would like to have the countries we were talking about — Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and the others — we’d like to have them immediately join, and [White House Special Envoy] Steve Witkoff is working on that with Jared [Kushner] and some others, but I would like to have them join the Abraham Accords,” Trump said. “It would be historic if they do it. I think they owe that to us, to be honest, because that really would be a tremendous sign. I think those countries owe it to us.”

Addressing Witkoff, the president said, “I’m not sure we should make the deal if they don’t sign, if you want to know the truth. If they don’t sign to join the Abraham Accords, I don’t know.”

When pressed if that meant he viewed an Iran deal as contingent on those countries joining the Abraham Accords, Trump responded: “I don’t know. I don’t want to say that. I’m not going to give you what’s contingent, what’s not. I can say that we can make a good deal right now, but maybe not a great deal, and if it’s not a great deal, we’re not making it.”

“We can make a great deal with this guy right here,” he continued, pointing to Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth. “But that’s a lot nastier, probably wouldn’t go as quickly ... but it would be foolproof.”

Addressing reports from Iranian state media that Oman may assist Iran in overseeing the Strait of Hormuz once the war is over, Trump later said, “Oman will behave just like everybody else or we’ll have to blow them up.” ♦

MAY 28, 2026

DSA quietly poised to make inroads in NYC’s congressional delegation

Two DSA-backed challengers have a credible shot at winning seats, while Rep. Dan Goldman is down in polls against Brad Lander

By Matthew Kassel

As an emboldened socialist wing of the Democratic Party gains traction across New York City in the aftermath of Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s victory, Jewish leaders and moderate officials are bracing for the possibility of multiple upsets in key House races that could reshape the ideological orientation of the state’s congressional delegation.

Three races have drawn heightened attention in recent weeks, including a marquee House contest playing out largely in progressive Brooklyn where Rep. Dan Gold-

man (D-NY) is seeking to fend off a serious challenge from former New York City Comptroller Brad Lander. Meanwhile, in upper Manhattan and the Bronx, Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY) is facing what looks like an increasingly credible challenge from an anti-Israel organizer. And in the race to replace retiring Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), her favored primary candidate is struggling to compete against a democratic socialist endorsed by Mamdani.

“If you have two socialists and Brad Lander” who are elected, “that’s a real move to the left — and it’s a lot of people who are

bringing down the seniority of the congressional delegation,” said Chris Coffey, a New York City Democratic strategist not involved in the races. “That is probably the biggest shift we’ve seen at the congressional level in generations,” he told *Jewish Insider*, adding that there are “a lot of ifs baked into that.”

A recent public poll showing Goldman trailing badly behind Lander underscored how an emboldened far left is asserting itself in a race that is hinging in large part on the candidates’ differences over Israel. The independent survey, released last week by

Emerson College, strongly indicated that Goldman is in serious trouble in the closely watched June 23 primary, lagging badly behind Lander, who held a commanding 57% of the vote.

Goldman, a pro-Israel Democrat who gained prominence as an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump, touts a relatively progressive record on domestic issues like healthcare, climate policy and immigration. But as he seeks a third term, Goldman has faced backlash from left-wing activists over his continued support for U.S. funding to Israel, which Lander, notably endorsed by Mamdani, has vowed to end, even for missile defense.

In a rare convergence on Middle East-related issues, the candidates opposed a successful effort this week to implement a boycott of Israeli products at a high-profile local food cooperative in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn, which sits in the district. (In a sign of the times, the boycott vote passed by a 2-to-1 margin.) But they otherwise disagreed on whether the measure was antisemitic, as Goldman and other Jewish community activists, including an influential rabbi in the district, had described the divisive effort.

Both Goldman and Lander are slated to address Jewish community concerns on June 7 during off-the-record town hall events at Congregation Beth Elohim, a Reform synagogue in Park Slope that is led by that rabbi, Rachel Timoner, according to an email recently sent to members. They will answer questions from congregants independently in the back-to-back, hour-long forums.

Despite tensions over Israel, some strategists note that Lander's dominance in the progressive district covering sections of Brownstone Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan can be attributed to his standing as a popular former councilman and citywide elected official who also ran for mayor last cycle — a level of name ID that marks him as a sort of de facto incumbent.

But other races have also sharply demonstrated how anti-Israel sentiment is fueling the rise of candidates endorsed by the Democratic Socialists America's New York City chapter. The group, which has championed anti-Zionism as a core element

of its platform, is now backing challengers in two high-profile congressional primaries as well as some down-ballot races for seats in the state Legislature.

The closest race, for an open House seat spanning parts of Brooklyn and Queens, pits Claire Valdez, a democratic socialist assemblymember who is known for her anti-Israel activism, against Antonio Reynoso, the progressive Brooklyn borough president boasting establishment support from the outgoing incumbent, Velazquez, and the state attorney general, Letitia James, among other elected officials and groups.

But even as Reynoso entered the race in a favorable position, well-known to voters for his reputation as a more traditional progressive, he has struggled in his campaign to gain traction, recently calling himself an underdog, thanks to Valdez's support from Mamdani paired with the grassroots organizational muscle of a resurgent DSA. A recent poll showed Valdez narrowly leading Reynoso by two points, with 23% of the vote, even while she is comparatively new to the district as a first-term state lawmaker.

Valdez's favorable position has come as she has made opposition to Israel a primary focus of her campaign, while facing some scrutiny over her decision to sit for a friendly discussion earlier this month with a Twitch streamer who was once suspended from the platform for calling Jews a "demonic ethnicity." Her campaign did not respond to a request for comment concerning the interview.

In a separate House primary in upper Manhattan as well as parts of the Bronx, Jewish leaders have begun to raise alarms about an insurgent challenger to Espaillat, a veteran incumbent who, like Goldman, is backed by the pro-Israel group AIPAC. In the final weeks of the race, he is now facing what Democratic strategists say is an increasingly serious threat from Darializa Avila Chevalier, a DSA-endorsed organizer who helped lead campus anti-Israel demonstrations at Columbia University.

"Folks seem to be getting very nervous," one Jewish leader following the race told JI, echoing others who relayed similar concerns about the contest as it enters its closing stretch.

An internal campaign poll conducted in March, for instance, put Avila Chevalier at 28% among primary voters, with Espaillat at 42%, a poor showing for an incumbent who has held office for close to a decade. Political observers suggested the race could be closer as the primary nears and Avila Chevalier rides a wave of anti-establishment, leftist sentiment now shaping several races across the country where the DSA is involved.

In addition to backing an arms embargo on Israel and efforts to boycott the Jewish state, both Avila Chevalier and Valdez pledged to "refrain from any affiliation with the Israeli government and Zionist lobby groups, including but not limited to AIPAC, J Street, or DMFI," according to DSA questionnaires reviewed by JI.

Justice Democrats, the far-left group that has frequently targeted incumbents, has also endorsed both candidates and is now spending to boost their campaigns. On Wednesday, it dropped \$260,000 on ads to help boost Avila Chevalier — suggesting it sees the race as in play. The group also made its first foray into Valdez's primary this week, according to filings, spending \$11,000 on digital ads to prop up her bid.

Reynoso and Espaillat, meanwhile, can expect seven figures spent independently on their behalf in the coming weeks, a Democratic operative familiar with the matter told JI, but did not disclose the source of such funding.

The upcoming expenditures foreshadow what is shaping up to be a bitterly contested fight between the Democratic establishment and the far left now seeking to supplant it.

Still, there are signs that the far left is struggling to gain traction outside of deeply progressive districts. For example, Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-NY), a pro-Israel stalwart facing a challenge from former state lawmaker Michael Blake, who has made opposition to AIPAC a key part of his messaging, is expected to prevail. A recent poll showed Torres with a commanding 60% of the vote share, far outpacing Blake, who held just 15% in the Bronx-based district.

Torres' position "shows that if you are actually working hard in your district and are there and present and delivering, then

you should be OK,” Coffey, the Democratic strategist, told JI, noting that the congressman also developed a positive relationship with Mamdani, despite their disagreements on Middle East policy.

Hank Sheinkopf, a veteran Democratic strategist in New York City, characterized the DSA’s strategy as part of a “long-term plan” to “take over legislatures” across the country and influence foreign policy at the

congressional level, as other far-left candidates have made inroads in key House races in Philadelphia and Denver. “New York is just the beginning,” he told JI. ♦

MAY 27, 2026

In fiery address, Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch rails against HUC ordaining anti-Zionist rabbis

Speaking at the third Re-Charging Reform Judaism conference at the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, Hirsch stressed the centrality of Zionism, while also condemning parts of the Israeli government for ‘closed-minded chauvinistic particularism’

By Nira Dayanim

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

In a fiery keynote address opening the Re-Charging Reform Judaism conference on Wednesday morning, Ammiel Hirsch, Stephen Wise Free Synagogue’s senior rabbi, denounced Reform religious seminaries that ordain anti-Zionist clergy members and doubled down on the importance of Jewish particularism.

“We cannot succumb to those who preach a false philosophy of Jewish universalism that camouflages disdain for Jewish particularism under the guise of a sometimes sweeping, self-righteous, sanctimonious and suffocating misunderstanding of *tikkun olam*,” said Hirsch, to wide applause.

He warned against the possibility of the movement becoming isolated from the broader Jewish community, mentioning the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC)’s inclusion of anti-Zionist students within its rabbinical programs, despite the Reform movement’s flagship seminary’s official standing as a Zionist institution.

“Any seminary that either in word or deed, in principle or impression, acquires the reputation of being hostile to Zionism – a seminary that ordains anti-Zionist clergy – has no future in America,” he said, also to wide applause.

In recent years, HUC has faced questions about its commitments to Zionism as several of its students have identified as anti-Zionist and signed onto letters that are highly critic-

al of the State of Israel. Representatives of the seminary have insisted that the school maintains its commitments to Israel but does not demand a “loyalty oath” of its students.

The two-day conference, now in its third year, drew over 300 lay leaders, rabbis and educators to the Upper West Side’s Stephen Wise Free Synagogue. Founded shortly before Hamas terrorists attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, the Re-Charging Reform Judaism conference operates independently of the official Reform movement.

In the years since the Hamas attacks, Hirsch has often criticized his co-denominationalists for not establishing a firm enough bulwark against anti-Zionism.

“Over the course of the past three years, I have received queries regarding the authority of the

Re-Charging conference: “On whose authority,” I am asked, “do we even convene, let alone, write papers, and now pass resolutions?” said Hirsch. “I would reverse the question and ask: ‘On whose authority does our seminary change decades of Reform theology, as expressed in numerous platforms and resolutions that do have constitutional authority, accepting, let alone, ordaining, anti-Zionists?’”

Hirsch’s prominence, coupled with his vocal stance on Israel and Zionism, has been met with some pushback from other members of the Reform movement, who view him as deprioritizing a “big tent” approach, a dynamic Hirsch appeared to address in his

address, saying, “If you believe everything, you believe nothing.”

On Tuesday night, Rabbis Jonah Dov Pesner and Josh Weinberg penned a blog post on the Union for Reform Judaism’s website, titled “Stop Asking Us to Choose,” arguing that members of the Reform movement should not be asked to choose between their commitments to Zionism, fighting anti-semitism, democracy, and social justice.

“Some tell us, now is not the time for social justice or to concern ourselves with the fate of the Other. Now is not the time for public critique, however nuanced. With anti-semitism on the rise, now is the time to circle the wagons, to stand with our people, full stop. We respectfully, but firmly, disagree,” wrote Pesner and Weinberg. “We are proud Jews, Zionists, and North Americans who fight for social justice. Not only do we think those identities are inseparable, we believe they are complementary. As Reform movement luminary Rabbi Dick Hirsch always taught us, ‘Zionism is a Social Justice Movement!’”

Though Pesner and Weinberg’s piece did not mention Hirsch or the conference, a URJ spokesperson told *eJewishPhilanthropy* that the blog post was connected to them, saying that it offered “useful context” for the “themes expected to be discussed at the conference.”

While Hirsch was adamant about the importance of Zionism, he also railed against the current Israeli government and the “closed-minded chauvinistic particularism”

demonstrated by “elements” of it, which he described as “an embarrassment to Israel and world Jewry.” The Reform movement, he said, walks a fine line between particularism and “an expanding universalism threatening to eclipse Judaism’s fundamental command of *ahavat Yisrael* – love for the Jewish People.”

“It is true that we are seeing worrying signs of a narrowing particularism in some quarters of the Jewish world and the Jewish state... the hooligans who violently assault Palestinians on the West Bank are a disgrace. It is Israel’s responsibility to thwart them, on

pain of imprisonment, and it is our responsibility to say so,” he said, to wide applause.

Hirsch’s address is among a growing number delivered by prominent pulpit rabbis in an effort to redraw lines or expand the “big tent” to include, or preclude shifting opinions on Israel and Zionism in the years since the Oct. 7 terror attacks, as consensus on Israel and Zionism has morphed and splintered since the war in Gaza began, particularly among young Jews. In an address at the American Zionist Movement’s Biennial National Assembly in December, Park Avenue Synagogue’s Elliot Cosgrove, a leading voice in the Conservative movement,

warned that communal “orthodoxies” on Israel and Zionism could isolate young Jews.

Hirsch also warned that the Reform movement risks being severed from the broader community if its relationship with Israel deteriorates.

“If the North American Reform movement, in word or in deed, by action or silence, becomes, in fact, or even in perception, an anti-Zionist, anti-particularistic movement that cares only, or mostly, about universal concerns, unanchored in, and unmoored from, the centrality of Jewish peoplehood, most American Jews will abandon us,” he said. ♦

MAY 26, 2026

Inside The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation’s big bet on Baltimore

Sarah Manekin, head of the foundation’s Baltimore grantmaking, hails drop in the city’s murder rate, an effort that her organization helped support

By Jay Deitcher

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

The Baltimore-based Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation is one of many large Jewish foundations with local footprints. Last month, the foundation participated in “Big Bets for America: Baltimore,” a conference hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation that rallied 250 changemakers from the city to plan for its future — and celebrate their accomplishments, including the city’s plummeting homicide rate.

“We are really proud of some of the great work that has happened in Baltimore, and that is getting recognition,” Sarah Manekin, the foundation’s managing director for Baltimore grantmaking, told *eJewishPhilanthropy*. “There’s no reason for us to try to reinvent the wheel,” she said about learning from partners in the field.

During Harry Weinberg’s 82 years on earth, he journeyed from the Austro-Hungarian empire to Baltimore, made stops in Israel and Northeastern Pennsylvania and

eventually settled in Hawaii, where he lived for the final 22 years of his life.

A blunt businessman who went from slinging newspapers to making millions in transportation and real estate, Weinberg, who died in 1990, left his entire estate — minus \$3 million for his grandchildren — to a \$1 billion family trust investing in the people and places that shaped him.

Baltimore particularly shaped Weinberg, who moved to the city in 1911 after his family immigrated to America from Galicia, in what is now Ukraine. Today, Baltimore is home to the foundation’s headquarters, with a second office in Honolulu. Twenty-five percent of the foundation’s \$140 million annual giving is invested in combating poverty in Baltimore by supporting housing, health, jobs, education and community services.

Manekin spoke with eJP about the foundation keeping its ears to the ground locally, changes in Baltimore’s philanthropic world after the 2015 Freddie Gray riots, combating generational poverty and TEN: Together Ending Need’s impact in the city.

The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Jay Deitcher: *In Judaism, there’s a theory that people should give tzedakah based on concentric circles where individuals support one’s immediate family, then one’s extended, then one’s community, other communities, one’s country and then the world. In the diaspora, Jews exist within so many communities. How does the Weinberg Foundation weigh the communities it exists within and where to focus its giving?*

Sarah Manekin: I love that Torah. We’ve been around for a while, and we’ve funded in Baltimore since the beginning and also in Israel, [Hawaii, New York City and Northeastern Pennsylvania,] but as the foundation has grown over time, we’ve engaged other priority communities, and we’ve funded some work nationally.

At our core, we also understand that we have the opportunity, the responsibility, to be as deep and as connected to the communities where we live and where we serve as possible. Baltimore is my home. It’s been my family’s home, and I think that the op-

portunity to really listen closely and be part of and be connected to that community is really important to how we think about our opportunity for impact and supporting people in our community.

JD: *How do you, as a large foundation, keep your ears close to the ground to find local partnerships in the communities you serve?*

SM: We've been here for a long time. We have a lot of longstanding, deep relationships with organizations and organizational leaders. The Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore, for example, we've been in partnership for a very long time. Some of it is staff-to-staff — that's one way that we kind of keep abreast of what challenges their clients are seeing, what the community is facing.

As we develop our refresh of a Baltimore strategy, we are doing two community listening campaigns, where we work with consultants around trying to make sure that we are proactively connecting with neighborhood leaders and community activists around things that matter to them.

There are a couple of organizations that we partner with [such as GreenLight Fund and The Baltimore Children and Youth Fund] that do really community-led grant making, and they have in-depth processes of how they [hold listening campaigns] and how they develop strategy. So we partner with them, and they share some of what they hear so that we are able to support them and their work, but also not overburden, overtax [community leaders who are speaking out].

We talk with our grantees a lot, whether it's through the reports that they submit or the applications they submit. We go to celebrations and graduations of programs that we've supported. We hear from young people about their experiences in the program. There's a lot of ways that we try to show up and be a part of the community.

JD: *In 2022, Baltimore had the second-highest murder rate in the country, and since then, that murder rate has plummeted at a faster rate than the rest of the country. What interventions do you see that are making an impact?*

SM: There's been a tremendous effort on the part of countless people in Baltimore from the active community activists on the

streets to the violence interrupters who are going out in neighborhoods to the folks who are visiting the [The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland] and doing interventions there to organizations that are providing wrap-around supports to the state's attorney's office to the mayor's office to the gun violence reduction strategy to the change in how the police are policing.

All of these things have made a profound impact. I'm not a criminologist to know which one of those things is causal the most, but we are deeply grateful and thankful that they've succeeded in saving lives to the extent they have.

JD: *It's also been a decade since the killing of Freddie Gray and the riots after. How have you seen the Baltimore philanthropic world change in that time?*

SM: It had a profound impact on all of us in Baltimore and other places. George Floyd, five years later, also had an impact on how folks thought about opportunity and who had access to opportunity and who didn't and some of the structural and systemic barriers to opportunity.

In Baltimore, what we've seen in the past decade [is] more public funding [for] out-of-school-time programs [including] summer programs. But I also know from the dates of that support that most of the public funding actually came through [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief] as a COVID response measure more than a response to Freddie Gray.

You have a lot of more attention [on] trying to create opportunities and on-ramps for young people, and some of the ways in which some neighborhoods have experienced such deep generational disinvestment, wealth extraction, and thinking about how communities can help lead some of the efforts around development of their communities and how public and private dollars can come alongside to accelerate some of those efforts without displacing existing residents.

JD: *I know you've worked in Baltimore nonprofits for that entire time. Do you think it changed how the Weinberg Foundation works with the community?*

SM: One of the things that the Weinberg Foundation did right before Freddie Gray,

but then it really accelerated that summer after, was the summer funding collaborative. The Weinberg Foundation was really at the core, working with the Casey Foundation and the Family League of Baltimore at the time, to really try to create a mechanism that many different kinds of funders could use to put money into summer programming.

This summer, we're going to have the most private dollars supporting summer opportunities that we've had, around \$5 million.

JD: *If you could give other nonprofits one lesson from what you learned from supporting Baltimore, what would it be?*

SM: We still have a lot to learn. We've made great strides. It's really powerful when you can listen to what communities need, what they want to see, and then there is this alignment in public, private funders that they can help accelerate some of that.

There'[re] still generations of poverty and disinvestment and trauma and, yes, there's tremendous resilience and there's tremendous grit, and there are tremendous leaders who have stuck it out. It's generational work and our hope is to support the people doing the hard work on the ground and try to accelerate good solutions, where we can try to catalyze other investment and just be in partnership with our community.

JD: *Talk about how TEN: Together Ending Need, which was founded by the Jewish Funders Network and the Weinberg Foundation and supports financially vulnerable Jews, impacts Baltimore.*

SM: It created awareness that there were economically vulnerable Jews, which isn't always something people know. By creating that awareness, it also helped shine a light on opportunities and ways to support them. That's some of what we're seeing play out in Baltimore in how agencies within the Associated [Jewish Federation of Baltimore], for example, are paying more attention to how they're supporting economically vulnerable Jews and also thinking about cultural competence across different elements of the social services infrastructure.

One of the things that I think about in particular are older Jewish adults who are economically vulnerable, who are living on fixed income and who are worried about

their apartment communities or they own their homes, and they're worried about their ability to sustain changes in taxes, changes in heating bills. [I think] about how we can support a safety net for them, just as we think about supporting a safety net for people across Baltimore who have different religious and racial backgrounds.

JD: *What do you think other nonprofits could learn from your experiences dealing with generational poverty?*

SM: We've learned over the years that workforce training programs can be wonderful, and they can have the right curriculum, the right teachers, the aligned skills to industry, but the two biggest barriers in Baltimore to

successful workforce completion programs are childcare and transportation costs.

We[ve] learn[ed] that from people who've gone through the programs and say, 'I want to do this, but I don't have a place to take my kid.' As foundations and public systems listen to those experiences and can help solve those barriers, we will all be more successful. ♦

MAY 18, 2026

The Dorot Foundation is shuttering; the anti-loneliness Dorot nonprofit is emphatically not

Despite operating in different fields and performing different functions, sharing a name with a shuttering organization has caused this N.Y.-based nonprofit a major headache

By Judah Ari Gross

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

There's Jeffrey R. Solomon, the former president of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, who's not to be confused with Jeffrey M. Solomon, board chair of the Foundation for Jewish Camp. There's David A. Harris, the former CEO of the American Jewish Committee, who's not to be confused with the other David A. Harris, the former CEO of the National Jewish Democratic Council.

There's also Daniel Septimus, the outgoing CEO of Sefaria, who's not to be confused with Rabbi Daniel Septimus, the inaugural director of the Center for Jewish Peoplehood of the JCC Association of North America. And for that matter, there's also the JCC Association, which is not to be confused with the *other* JCCA, the nonprofit formerly known as the Jewish Child Care Association.

This reporter is even aware of an insurance outfit based out of New Jersey run by brothers Judah and Ari Gross.

Ordinarily, these kinds of duplicate names and abbreviations are good for a chuckle or an easily rectified miscommunication, but for Dorot, a New York-based nonprofit focused on combating loneliness through cross-generational programs

(hence the name, which means "generations" in Hebrew), sharing a name with another North American Jewish organization has been something of a nightmare over the past few weeks.

Last month, the Rhode Island-based Dorot Foundation — a grantmaker focused on social justice — announced that it was shuttering, spending down its endowment by 2034.

Soon after *eJewishPhilanthropy* reported on the Dorot Foundation's plans to "sunset," people began to reach out to the New York nonprofit Dorot, believing that it was the one closing down (never mind that it is not a foundation and operates in a different sector entirely). To clarify the matter, eJP added a note explicitly saying that the shuttering foundation had "no connection to the New York-based social service agency of the same name."

But alas, even with this note, the calls kept coming, Mark Meridy, Dorot's executive director, told eJP.

"We are still getting a disconcerting number of phone calls," Meridy said last week. "So we're just looking to try to alleviate some of the concerns, particularly with our vulnerable older adults, that we're not going anywhere. We're financially strong, we've got great programming, and we're not phasing out."

According to Meridy, it started with calls from clients and participants, concerned that they would soon no longer be able to access the organization's programs.

"So that was the first alarm bell that went off, of people who were really concerned that the rug is being pulled out from under them," he said.

"And then I literally had a number of foundations who said, 'Well, I'm not sure we want to fund you because you're spending down.' And we're not spending down because we're not a foundation. We're not giving grants. We are the recipient of grants," Meridy said.

Finally, he said, other organizations in the field started reaching out to poach Dorot's employees. "Staff members started to get calls from other organizations. 'I heard you're going out of business, do you want to come work for us?'" Meridy said. "And it was just like, no, no, no, no, no, you can't steal any of my staff. We have an outstanding staff, highly dedicated. Obviously, the staff internally knows that we're not [shutting] down."

According to Meridy, there have been mix-ups with the Dorot Foundation in the past, but never at this level.

In addition to sharing a name, the two Dorots also started around the same time

— the foundation in 1972 and the social service agency in 1976.

“We were started by recent graduates of Columbia University who literally saw older adults sitting on the park benches on Broadway and on the campus, and it was around the [High Holy Days], so they started by delivering food packages to older adults in the community,” Meridy said. “From there, they developed the ‘friendly visit’ program where volunteers would go out into the community and visit with older adults in their homes. And over the years, we have grown exponentially.”

Dorot now works with close to 7,000 older adults, and deploys more than 8,000

volunteers, who make home visits, phone calls, provide technology assistance or make and send birthday cards, according to Meridy. “For many older adults, that’s the only person who’s acknowledged their birthday, so we’re providing really important work. We have social work services. We have a kosher home meals delivery program. We have programming that’s on-site [at the group’s Upper West Side headquarters,] and we have an office in Westchester [N.Y.]. We also do programming on Zoom,” he said.

In line with its name, Dorot also has programs for younger generations, including a

teen program that Meridy said recently received a “major endowment” and is now “called the Anita K. Hersh Jewish Summer Teen Internship,” as well as programs for pre-bar and bat mitzvah children.

“We’re celebrating our 50th year. Our mission of addressing social isolation and loneliness is more important than ever — we know that for people who are isolated, who are lonely, there are increased health risks,” Meridy said. “As a result of that, we’re providing meaningful ways for people to stay engaged and connected. ... So we’re alive, we’re strong, and we’re looking ahead to the next 50 years.” ♦

MAY 21, 2026

Jewish Insider’s picks for your summer reading list

Take a look at the banner new releases we’re recommending from this spring, as well as books we’re looking forward to in the coming months

By Gabby Deutch

Memorial Day Weekend marks the unofficial summer kickoff, and for observant Jews, the long weekend is made even longer with the two-day holiday of Shavuot, starting Thursday evening, which commemorates the day the Jews received the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Jews mark the day by studying at all-night learning sessions at synagogues and JCCs around the country. We know that many will also use the occasion to jumpstart summer reading goals, so the *Jewish Insider* team has compiled our summer reading list — beginning with some banner new releases from this spring, and looking towards books coming out this summer.

Allegra Goodman, *This Is Not About Us* (February)

The author of several novels with heavily Jewish themes, Goodman returns to Jewish characters in this novel about a decades-long feud between two Jewish sisters that started with a misunderstanding about apple cake.

Mark Oppenheimer, *Judy Blume: A Life* (March)

The journalist published the definitive biography of beloved YA author Judy Blume, based on more than 100 interviews with Blume and her inner circle — though she disapproved of the finished product.

Nicholas Lemann, *Returning: A Search for Home Across Three Centuries* (March)

The longtime *New Yorker* staff writer traces his family’s history from Germany to New Orleans, recounting the ways they reckoned with religion, race and belonging.

Matti Friedman, *Out of the Sky: Heroism and Rebirth in Nazi Europe* (March)

One of Israel’s most celebrated English-language writers tells the story of the young Jews who had made it to Mandate Palestine but chose to parachute into Nazi Europe to try to rescue their Jewish brethren — ultimately failing in their mission — and examines what motivated them.

Daniela Gerson, *The Wanderers: A Story of Exile, Survival, and Unexpected Love in the Shadow of World War II* (March)

The journalist recounts the story of how she and her wife discovered that decades before the two of them met, their grandparents had escaped the Nazis through Soviet Russia on the same route.

Judy Batalion, *The Last Woman of Warsaw: A Novel* (April)

Better known for her nonfiction work, including a 2021 bestseller about Jewish female resistance fighters in the ghettos of Poland, Judy Batalion released her debut novel about the intersecting lives of Jewish women in Warsaw in the late 1930s.

Rachel Goldberg-Polin, *When We See You Again* (April)

The world got to know Goldberg-Polin when she became a tireless advocate on the global stage for her son, Hersh, who was kidnapped by Hamas on Oct. 7, and killed almost a year later. Her book chronicling

her grief, which was published last month, soared to the top of the best-seller list.

Theo Baker, *How to Rule the World: An Education in Power at Stanford University* (May)

The Stanford student, who chronicled the campus chaos of 2023-2024 with a crucial article in *The Atlantic*, investigates the ways that Stanford undergrads, located just miles from the tech billionaires of Silicon Valley, are seeking out power, influence and money in place of an education.

Rabbi Eli Schlanger and Nikki Goldstein, *Conversations With My Rabbi: Timeless Teachings for a Fractured World* (May 26)

Three years before the rabbi was murdered in the Hanukkah terror attack at Bondi Beach in Australia last year, he got to know Goldstein after praying by her bedside as she recovered from a near-death experience that brought her to the ICU three years earlier. Goldstein, a secular Jew, and Schlanger, a Chabad rabbi, recorded their conversations about faith in the hope of writing a book together. She finished the project after Schlanger's death.

Batya Ungar-Sargon, *The Jews and the Left* (June 2)

The conservative journalist examines American Jews' historic ties to liberal politics and argues that their alliance has been fundamentally broken in the aftermath of the Oct. 7 attacks and the war in Gaza.

Marc David Baer, *Children of Abraham: The 1,400-Year History of Jewish-Muslim Relations* (June 9)

The professor of history at the London School of Economics and Political Science looks at the centuries of cooperation and coexistence between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East that predated the current regional conflicts.

Stephan Talty, *The American School of Spies: The Archaeologists Who Fought the Nazis and Saved the Treasures of Ancient Greece* (June 9)

The journalist and novelist recounts the true story of a group of American archaeologists who trained as spies during World War II in order to go undercover and protect Greek artifacts that were at risk during the war.

JD Vance, *Communion: Finding My Way Back to Faith* (June 16)

The vice president's forthcoming book — his second memoir, to be published nine years and a political lifetime after the release of *Hillbilly Elegy*, about his childhood growing up poor in Appalachia — will discuss his connection to Christianity and his decision to convert to Catholicism.

Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan, *Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump* (June 23)

Two of America's top White House reporters tell the story of the first year of President Donald Trump's second term, and how he learned to use political power more effectively than in his first term.

Dara Horn, *The Final Solution to the Jewish Question: A Love Story for the Living* (Sept. 1)

Her 2021 book of essays reckoning with the curiosities of modern antisemitism, *People Love Dead Jews*, went about as viral as a book possibly could. She published a children's book in 2025, but this will be her first book for adults in years. Aside from announcing its scheduled release, her publisher has not shared any information about the project.

Simon Sebag Montefiore, *The Cauldron: The Making of the Modern Middle East* (Sept. 8)

The British historian presents a history of the last 125 years of the modern Middle Eastern, surveying the key events and narratives — both accurate and misguided — that led to the current state of the region.

Barney Frank, *The Hard Path to Unity: Why We Must Reform the Left to Rescue Democracy* (Sept. 15)

The trailblazing politician served in Congress for 32 years, representing suburban Boston. The Jewish Democratic lawmaker, who was also the first openly gay member of Congress, died this week at 86. His upcoming book argues that the political left must reform itself so it does not cater to its most extreme adherents.

Evan Gershkovich, *This Cursed Beautiful Land: A Russian-American Story* (Sept. 29)

The *Wall Street Journal* journalist who spent over a year wrongly imprisoned in Russia details his harrowing experience in the Russian carceral system against the backdrop of the country's history and culture. ♦