



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

**Political Priorities, Poor Intelligence  
Tradecraft, and the Suppression of Dissenting  
Views: Why Israel Failed to Warn of Hamas's  
October 7 Attack**

Larry Hanauer  
Michael P. Connell

September 2024

Approved for public release;  
distribution is unlimited.

IDA Product 3002823



The Institute for Defense Analyses is a nonprofit corporation that operates three Federally Funded Research and Development Centers. Its mission is to answer the most challenging U.S. security and science policy questions with objective analysis, leveraging extraordinary scientific, technical, and analytic expertise.

### **About This Publication**

This work was conducted under the IDA Systems and Analyses Center Central Research Program, Project C55CA, “Lessons from Israel’s Failure to Anticipate Hamas’s October 7 Attack: Fostering Effective Indications & Warning (I&W) Intelligence Capabilities.” The views, opinions, and findings should not be construed as representing the official position of either the Department of Defense or the sponsoring organization.

### **Acknowledgments**

The authors would like to thank Daniel Goldberg and Markus V. Garlauskas of the IDA Systems and Analyses Center, who served as technical reviewers on this report.

### **For More Information**

Larry Hanauer, Project Leader  
lhanauer@ida.org, 703-845-2377

James R. Marrs, Director, Global Dynamics and Intelligence Division  
jmarrs@ida.org, 703-845-6993

### **Copyright Notice**

© 2024 Institute for Defense Analyses  
730 East Glebe Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3086 • (703) 845-2000.

This material may be reproduced by or for the U.S. Government pursuant to the copyright license under the clause at DFARS 252.227-7013 (Feb. 2014).

INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

IDA Product 3002823

**Political Priorities, Poor Intelligence  
Tradecraft, and the Suppression of Dissenting  
Views: Why Israel Failed to Warn of Hamas's  
October 7 Attack**

Larry Hanauer  
Michael P. Connell



*Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying.... When I bring armed attackers upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among themselves and appoint him for them as a lookout, and he sees the army coming upon the land, and he sounds the shofar and warns the people, and whoever hears the sound of the shofar and does not take heed, and the army comes and takes him, his blood will be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the shofar and did not take heed.*

— Ezekiel 33:1–5

*Hamas’s training shows us that the ‘Jericho Wall’ plan is an operative, practiced plan, meaning that Hamas already has forces that have practiced these outlines and know how to implement when the order comes.... The other side is determined in its intentions to carry out its plan. If the plan is implemented—painful and difficult fighting is expected.... It is no longer a plan only on paper.... This email constitutes a blowing of the shofar, because the sword is coming—the hour is ripe to warn the nation.<sup>1</sup>*

— Sergeant “V,” a non-commissioned officer in Israeli military intelligence Unit 8200, in an e-mail to the intelligence director of the Israeli Defense Forces’ (IDF) Gaza Division and other senior intelligence officers, late September or early October 2023

*It sounds imaginary to me.*

— A senior intelligence officer (lieutenant colonel) in response to warnings from Sergeant “V”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “‘The Sword is Coming’: Biblical IDF Email Warned of Hamas Plans Days Before Oct.7,” *Times of Israel*, July 5, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/the-sword-is-coming-idf-email-warned-of-hamas-plans-days-before-oct-7-report/>.

<sup>2</sup> Amos Harel, “‘We Have Completed the Murder of All Residents of the Kibbutz’: Chilling Warnings Picked Up by Israeli Intelligence Months Before October 7 Massacre,” *Haaretz*, November 27, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-27/ty-article/.premium/chilling-warnings-picked-up-by-israeli-intelligence-months-before-october-7-massacre/0000018c-1261-dd2e-a5ae-d36ba6240000>. See also Yonah Jeremy Bob, “Insider Accounts of What Went Wrong in IDF Intel Before Oct. 7 – Analysis,” *The Jerusalem Post*, November 28, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-775597>.



## Executive Summary

---

On October 7, 2023, Hamas fighters from Gaza infiltrated southern Israel, killing 1,400 Israelis and taking more than 200 civilians hostage. Israeli military intelligence, known as Aman, had strategic and tactical warning that Hamas was planning a large-scale attack, and numerous junior analysts and border sentries raised the alarm on multiple occasions. Their warnings were ignored. If the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States were made possible in part by the U.S. intelligence community's failure to "connect the dots," then the October 7 attack was enabled by Israeli political and military leaders' unwillingness to see the connections that analysts made for them.

Many working-level intelligence analysts and Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) border sentries (*tatzpitaniyot*) correctly assessed—and reported to their superiors—that Hamas was preparing to launch a large-scale attack on Israeli territory. So, while the Israeli intelligence community did face institutional shortcomings that hindered its ability to collect and analyze intelligence effectively, October 7 was not entirely an *intelligence* failure. Instead, the roots of Israel's strategic surprise on October 7 stem from two leadership failures: civilian leaders' decisions to prioritize other threats and reallocate intelligence resources away from Gaza, and defense and intelligence leaders' failure to challenge their preconceived notions about Hamas and heed intelligence analysts' warnings.

Policymakers, military leaders, and even mid-level intelligence officers stuck to faulty assumptions that Hamas was content to preside over modest growth in economic activity in Gaza and was therefore unwilling to rock the boat, and also that Hamas lacked the military capabilities to launch a large-scale attack on Israel. Even when multiple sources of intelligence indicated that Hamas was making preparations for such an attack, Israeli leaders rejected reports that contradicted the conventional wisdom. Stubborn adherence to preconceived notions echoes the policy and intelligence failures that occurred prior to Egypt's and Syria's 1973 attack on Israel in what is known as the Yom Kippur War.

Senior civilian and military officials assessed that Iran, Hezbollah, and violence against settlers in the West Bank were higher priority threats than Hamas. In response to this prioritization, military and intelligence officials moved resources away from Gaza, limiting intelligence collection on Hamas.

Further, structural and organizational shortcomings prevented Israeli intelligence from making full use of the information it did possess. The failure to apply structured analytic techniques hindered the incorporation of alternative views into intelligence assessments, leaving dissenters outside of any formal analytic process. Informal dissemination processes limited the sharing of

information across agencies and up the chain of command. Decisions to highlight previously demonstrated adversary tactics demonstrated a reactive approach to analysis rather than a proactive or innovative one. Finally, Aman's overly hierarchical organizational culture led officials to stifle dissenting views, especially those of female sentries and analysts.

While the Israeli government appointed the independent Agranat Commission to examine Israeli intelligence failures preceding the 1973 war, the prime minister has to date refused to create an independent national commission of inquiry into Israel's inability to predict and prepare for an attack by Hamas. (The IDF is undertaking multiple reviews of its own failures.)

In the absence of an independent, comprehensive, authoritative review, this paper seeks to ascertain lessons learned from shortcomings in Israel's security posture before October 7. By identifying and assessing Israel's intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination deficiencies, the authors hope to help the U.S. intelligence community improve its own warning intelligence capabilities and practices. Evaluating Israel's missteps can help drive U.S. intelligence agencies to promote "outside the box" thinking, plan for unexpected events, and ensure that alternative interpretations and dissenting views are appropriately explored and considered. Because intelligence activities do not occur in a vacuum, however, this paper also assesses the impact of policy decisions, resource allocations, and institutional obstacles on Israel's intelligence capabilities, as such factors also affect U.S. intelligence agencies' ability to warn of potential threats.



# Contents

---

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	What is Warning Intelligence? .....	5
	A. Warning Intelligence Principles and Tradecraft.....	7
	B. Characteristics of U.S. Warning Intelligence.....	8
3.	Strategic Environment Driving Israeli Intelligence Priorities .....	11
	A. Policymakers’ Priorities Exclude Gaza.....	11
	B. Palestinian Threats: Israel’s Domestic Politics Drive Emphasis on West Bank.....	12
	C. The Netanyahu Government Actually <i>Supported</i> Hamas .....	14
	D. Domestic Political Distractions .....	15
4.	Israeli Collection Against Hamas.....	17
	A. Higher Priority Threats Took Precedence .....	17
	B. Israel Had Multiple Sources of Intelligence Indicating Hamas Attack Plans .....	18
	C. Collection Capabilities Were Either Limited or Under-Resourced.....	20
	1. SIGINT .....	21
	2. HUMINT .....	21
	3. OSINT .....	22
	D. Heavy reliance on technology for tactical warning.....	22
5.	Analytic Failures .....	25
	A. A Flawed <i>Conceptzia</i> .....	25
	B. Analytic Shortcomings.....	28
	1. Confirmation Bias .....	28
	2. Poor Application of Tactical Warning .....	31
	3. Limited Use of Structured Analytic Techniques.....	31
	4. Senior Leaders Considered Alternative Analysis Too Late .....	33
	5. Assign Standardized Likelihood and Confidence Levels to Analytic Conclusions .....	34
	6. Anchoring Bias: IDF Intelligence Planned to Fight the Last War .....	35
	7. Poor Understanding of Hamas Intelligence on Israel.....	36
	8. Hamas Succeeded at Denial & Deception.....	37
6.	Structural Intelligence Failures.....	39
	A. Failure to Insulate Intelligence from Politics .....	39
	B. Adherence to the <i>Conceptzia</i> .....	39
	C. Absence of Formal Analytic Processes .....	40
	D. Limited Dissemination of Intelligence Reports.....	40

E. Aman’s Rigid Military Hierarchy .....	41
F. Aman’s Undervaluing Women’s Contributions.....	42
7. Lessons Learned .....	45
8. Conclusion: Why Did Warning Fail?.....	51
A. Intelligence Consumers’ Failure to Consider Alternative Analyses .....	51
B. Shortcomings in Warning Analysis.....	52
References.....	A-1
Abbreviations.....	B-1

# 1. Introduction

---

On October 7, 2023, Hamas fighters from Gaza infiltrated southern Israel, killing 1,400 Israelis and taking more than 200 civilians hostage. The incident—which took Israel and the international community by surprise—created a series of political and military crises for Israel, the Middle East region, and the United States and its global allies and partners.

The Israeli government is undertaking multiple reviews of the Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) performance on October 7. While these assessments may assign responsibility to specific units or individuals, Israel's failure to prevent the October 7 attack was due to multiple systemic challenges over a long period of time, including policy decisions, political prioritization, resource allocation decisions, ineffective management, and a lack of attention at all levels of command—from the prime minister and other senior government officials to mid-level military intelligence officers, and many in between.

The IDF's military intelligence directorate, known by its Hebrew acronym Aman, had plenty of strategic and tactical warning that Hamas was planning a large-scale attack, and numerous junior analysts and border observers—many of whom were killed on October 7—raised the alarm on multiple occasions. Their warnings were ignored. (Israel's other two principal intelligence agencies—the foreign intelligence service Mossad and the domestic security service Shin Bet—collected little noteworthy intelligence on Hamas's plans and capabilities, and they provided little analysis of emerging threats from Gaza.) If the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States were made possible in part by the U.S. intelligence community's (IC) failure to “connect the dots,” then the October 7 attack was enabled by Israeli political and military leaders' unwillingness to see the connections that analysts made for them.

Among the key reasons for the failure:

- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other political and military leaders stuck to faulty assumptions that Hamas was content to preside over modest growth in economic activity in Gaza and therefore unwilling to rock the boat—even when multiple sources of intelligence indicated that Hamas was making preparations for a large-scale attack.
- Senior civilian and military officials assessed that Iran, Hezbollah, and violence in the West Bank were higher priority threats than Hamas; in response to this prioritization, military and intelligence officials moved resources away from Gaza, limiting intelligence collection on Hamas.
- Political, military, and intelligence leaders hewed to a faulty assumption that Hamas was interested in governing rather than causing conflict and that military activity was

therefore either “aspirational” or just for show; they rejected reports from low-level analysts and border sentries that contradicted this conventional wisdom.

- Israeli intelligence had few alternative analysis processes to credibly challenge established assumptions, and it had ineffective processes for ensuring that threat assessments would be widely disseminated.
- Israeli officials—including Prime Minister Netanyahu himself—ignored warnings from foreign counterparts that Hamas was planning “something big.”

Many working-level intelligence analysts and IDF border sentries (*tatzpitaniyot*) correctly assessed—and reported to their superiors—that Hamas was preparing to launch a large-scale attack on Israeli territory. So, while the Israeli IC faced institutional shortcomings that hindered its ability to collect and analyze intelligence effectively, October 7 was not entirely an *intelligence* failure. Instead, the roots of Israel’s strategic surprise on October 7 stem from two leadership failures: civilian leaders’ decisions to prioritize other threats and reallocate intelligence resources away from Gaza, and defense and intelligence leaders’ failure to challenge their preconceived notions about Hamas and heed intelligence analysts’ warnings.

Just as the Agranat Commission identified lessons learned from the intelligence failures preceding the 1973 war, intelligence professionals must examine the reasons why Israeli leaders and security institutions failed to warn of the October 7 attack in order to minimize the chance that any country might experience similar strategic surprises in the future. Such an assessment must address policy priorities, the allocation of resources to intelligence capabilities, and institutional obstacles to effective intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination. Assessing these missteps can help drive leaders to think “outside the box,” plan for unexpected events, mitigate intelligence shortfalls, and reform organizational cultures that permit dissenting views to be dismissed out of hand.

Senior Israeli officials have acknowledged the IC’s role in the failure. Major General Aharon Haliva, head of the IDF’s intelligence division (known as Aman), stated in an October 17, 2023, letter to the force that “the beginning of the war was an intelligence failure. The IDF under my command failed to warn of the terrorist attack carried out by Hamas. We failed in our most important mission, and as the head of Aman, I bear full responsibility for the failure.”<sup>3</sup>

The discipline of warning intelligence, also called indications and warning (I&W), has the potential to alert intelligence analysts, military leaders, and senior policymakers of significant events, but it is often set aside in favor of more “conventional” analytic efforts whose assessments become established over time as ground truth; warning intelligence’s focus on broader patterns, unexpected outliers, leadership intentions, and newly observed insights often challenge conventional wisdom. In the U.S. IC, warning intelligence has fallen out of favor; the Director of

---

<sup>3</sup> Major General Aharon Haliva, “A letter from the head of AMAN,” October 17, 2023, [www.idf.il](http://www.idf.il). Translation by Google Translate.

National Intelligence (DNI) eliminated the position of National Intelligence Officer for Warning in 2011, arguing that all analysts are responsible for strategic warning in their area of responsibility—yet IC analysts receive little to no training on this mission.

Most warning intelligence failures are a combination of faulty assumptions,<sup>4</sup> analytic missteps, dissemination obstacles, and policymakers' blindness. Israel's performance in the run-up to October 7 displayed all four. While Israel could likely have collected more intelligence if it hadn't prioritized other threats, the conflict would likely have been prevented or significantly contained if Israeli officials had thoroughly analyzed, disseminated, and acted upon the indications and warning (I&W) they had already collected. Lessons from an analysis of Israeli warning intelligence failures can inform future intelligence training, tradecraft, and analysis and thereby enhance both the United States' and Israel's ability to warn of strategically important events.

To understand Israel's warning intelligence failures, this paper will address several key questions:

1. What is warning intelligence and why is it important?
2. What domestic political factors made Israel's collection and analysis failures possible?
3. What intelligence about Hamas was Israel collecting, and why did it not collect other types of intelligence?
4. Why did Israel fail to properly interpret intelligence it had collected?
5. What lessons can be learned from these intelligence failures?

---

<sup>4</sup> Dror Michman and Yael Mizrahi-Arnaud, "The Fog of Certainty: Learning from Intelligence Failures of the 1973 War," commentary, Brookings Institution, October 23, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-fog-of-certainty-learning-from-the-intelligence-failures-of-the-1973-war/>.



## 2. What is Warning Intelligence?

---

Intelligence, broadly speaking, is intended to give policymakers and military commanders information that gives them a decision advantage.

Tactical intelligence provides information on small-scale adversary actions so decision-makers can develop appropriate tactical responses; as an example, intelligence that rocket launchers will be positioned at specific locations in Gaza at a specific time can help the IDF prepare plans to eliminate those threats. Although Israeli intelligence had many gaps in its understanding of Hamas, it had a great deal of tactical intelligence on Hamas activities and their evolution over time.

Strategic intelligence provides insights into an adversary's strategy, policy, plans, and intentions—what it hopes to accomplish rather than the specific actions it must take to achieve its objectives. Strategic intelligence also aims to assess an adversary's capabilities as a way to assess potential risk, evaluate whether the adversary has the means to pursue its goals, and identify ways to disrupt potential threats. Israel's limited understanding of Hamas's plans, intentions, and military capabilities meant that it was unable to develop an effective strategy of its own for preventing or responding to an attack from Gaza.

Warning intelligence is different; rather than simply report past developments, it is intended to be predictive. According to U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) warning expert Cynthia Grabo, the function of warning intelligence “is to anticipate, insofar as collection and analysis will permit, what potentially hostile entities are likely to do, and particularly whether they are preparing to initiate adverse action.” Warning intelligence must be continually updated, Grabo added, to capture new actions or preparations that threaten national interests.<sup>5</sup> Analysts must therefore reconsider assumptions and revise previous threat assessments to account for changes in an adversary's goals, ideologies, capabilities, and resources over time.

But warning intelligence differs from current intelligence in another significant way: It is intended to spur action. According to former Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Robert Gates, intelligence warning is not simply meant to inform, but rather “to sound an alarm, to give notice...to policymakers. It connotes urgency and implies the potential need for policy action in response.”<sup>6</sup> As a result, warning intelligence must also be timely enough that it provides decision-

---

<sup>5</sup> Cynthia M. Grabo, *Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning* (Washington, DC: Joint Military Intelligence College, December 2002), 1–2.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Gates, “Subject: Warning,” (official memorandum for National Foreign Intelligence Board, Washington, DC: Director of Central Intelligence, July 17, 1992).

makers sufficient time to develop and organize a plan of action;<sup>7</sup> a few hours' notice may enable some minor preparations, but it is typically insufficient to prevent a crisis or adequately mitigate it.

Strategic warning intelligence relies on indicators of an adversary's goals, objectives, and intentions, as these provide insights into the decision-making of key players and can thus warn of potential future actions. However, collecting on an adversary's intent—and especially *changes* in an adversary's intent—is very hard. An October 2023 report on the October 7 events by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) notes that “Accurately assessing intent requires regular access to the leaders' deliberations. And highly capable organizations are hard to infiltrate—they are savvy in their communications to avoid interception, and they employ denial and deception tactics.”<sup>8</sup> As will be shown later, Israeli intelligence was unable to infiltrate Hamas's leadership or its communications, and it fell victim to Hamas's use of denial and deception.

Tactical intelligence can sometimes warn of an adversary's strategic intentions. Observations that Hamas is frequently conducting military drills inside the Gaza fence, as Israeli border sentries reported to their superiors in the months before October 7, provide tactical intelligence on Hamas's capabilities while also serving as a strategic warning indicator that Hamas might be planning to attack.

Warning intelligence relies on a complex ecosystem that includes collection, analysis, production, and dissemination, as well as intelligence-sharing and coordination across intelligence organizations. These functions are highly interconnected; neither warning successes nor failures can be attributed to a single one of these disciplines. As the report of the DCI's 1992 Task Force on Improving Intelligence Warning stated, “All major intelligence warning failures of the past five decades have been the result of the Community's inability to consolidate and analyze diffuse raw intelligence successfully, and to extract a meaningful warning judgement; no such failure has been rooted in a simple dearth of information.”<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps most importantly, the most insightful intelligence warnings are useless unless they are communicated effectively. Grabo states emphatically, “Warning does not exist until it has been conveyed to the policymaker, and he must know that he has been warned.... It is essential that the possibility of [a crisis] be clearly, and often repeatedly, brought to the attention of the policy official as the situation develops and that he be left in no doubt as to the potential gravity of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Proctor, “(Re)defining Warning,” National Intelligence University Research Short, August 9, 2023, 5, <https://ni-u.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/redefining-warning-IC.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Tricia Bacon, “Missing Hamas's Intent,” Experts React: Assessing the Israeli Intelligence and Potential Policy Failure, commentary, Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 25, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/experts-react-assessing-israeli-intelligence-and-potential-policy-failure>.

<sup>9</sup> DCI Task Force, *Report: Improving Intelligence Warning* (Washington, DC: DCI Task Force, May 29, 1992), 2, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/document/24187-dci-task-force-report-improving-intelligence-warning> (Declassified on April 25, 2012).



situation or what it might entail for national policy.”<sup>10</sup> This criterion is particularly relevant to the October 7 events in Israel, as Israeli policymakers and military commanders rarely received analysts’ warnings about Hamas and refused to believe the messages when they did.

## A. Warning Intelligence Principles and Tradecraft

Although warning intelligence tradecraft is complex, warning analysts generally approach challenges in four broad steps.

1. First, analysts must identify relevant indicators that suggest something of critical interest is afoot. While an indicator can be any development or piece of information, the critical factor, according to Grabo, is that it “provide some insight into the enemy’s likely course of action.”<sup>11</sup> However, particularly key pieces of information, according to the CIA’s Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, are ones that indicate deviations from the norm—“changes in the level of likelihood that an enemy will strike or that a development harmful to U.S. interests will take place and changes in his mechanisms for inflicting damage.”<sup>12</sup> To remain attuned to potential changes, warning analysts must be careful to avoid anchoring bias, the tendency to rely on old data about patterns and behavior in shaping forecasts of the future.
2. Second, analysts must separate critical pieces of information from background “chatter.” Given the immense amount of data intelligence agencies collect, separating the signal from the noise is a significant challenge. As renowned military intelligence historian Roberta Wohlstetter wrote in her landmark book regarding U.S. intelligence failures in the Pacific in 1941, “We failed to anticipate Pearl Harbor not for want of the relevant materials, but because of a plethora of irrelevant ones.”<sup>13</sup>
3. Third, analysts must put tactical intelligence into a strategic context. Highly specific and detailed tactical intelligence is likely to be more convincing,<sup>14</sup> but tactical reports only capture a snapshot of particular actors or dynamics in a specific time and place. A report that Hamas fighters are conducting drills at the Gaza fence is alarming, and a report that they have a shortage of ammunition is reassuring. By themselves, the first suggests action is warranted, while the second argues it is unnecessary; it is even possible that both reports are accurate. These individual reports must be interpreted in a broader

---

<sup>10</sup> Grabo, *Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning*, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Grabo, *Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning*, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Jack Davis, “Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Strategic Warning,” Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis Occasional Papers, Vol. 1, No. 1, September 2002, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Strategic-Warning-1.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962), 387.

<sup>14</sup> Erik J. Dahl, *Intelligence and surprise attack: failure and success from Pearl Harbor to 9/11 and beyond* (Washington DC, Georgetown University Press, 2013), 2–3.

context and in light of other reports that may indicate, for example, whether fighters have drilled previously, whether they are likely to be deterred by a shortage of ammunition, who commands these fighters, and whether the political or economic situation (in both Gaza and Israel) has evolved in ways that might make Hamas leaders change their goals.

4. Fourth, warning must be communicated up the chain of command in a way that clearly presents the significance of the threat and the need for action. To do so, the warning must have three traits: timeliness, credibility, and persuasiveness.
  - a. As noted earlier, policymakers must receive warning alerts early enough to make and implement a decision, but actionable intelligence is often not available far in advance. As a result, timeliness and credibility can be tough to achieve together; Jack Davis, writing for the CIA's Sherman Kent school, notes that "waiting for evidence the enemy is at the gate usually fails the timeliness test; prediction of potential crises without hard evidence can fail the credibility test."<sup>15</sup>
  - b. To be persuasive, analysts must overcome established judgements and widely held conventional wisdom. However, given individuals' tendency to believe information that supports their pre-existing beliefs, a phenomenon known as confirmation bias, policymakers must be open-minded enough to consider alternative views.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, analysts' warning products must somehow manage to grab senior officials' attention—a difficult task, according to former National Intelligence Council chair Harold P. Ford, because senior officials value current intelligence much more highly than strategic estimates or long-term warning products; they have to deal with current crises every day, while the events described in long-term assessments may never come to pass.<sup>17</sup>

## **B. Characteristics of U.S. Warning Intelligence**

The U.S. IC has, over time, variously elevated and diminished the standing of warning intelligence. Its current approach to warning is somewhere between the late Cold War period, when strategic warning of a Soviet nuclear launch or invasion of Europe was seen as an existential priority, and the 2010s, when dedicated warning positions were eliminated.

In 1979, Director of Central Intelligence Directive (DCID) 1/5 established the position of National Intelligence Officer for Warning (NIO/W) along with the National Intelligence Warning

---

<sup>15</sup> Davis, "Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Strategic Warning."

<sup>16</sup> Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack: Failure and Success from Pearl Harbor to 9/11 and Beyond*, 2–3.

<sup>17</sup> Harold Ford, *Estimative Intelligence*, Intelligence Profession Series Monograph No. 10 (McLean, VA: Association of Former Intelligence Officer, 1993), 38, <https://www.afio.com/publications/monographs/FORD%20Hal%20Estimative%20Intelligence%20-%20AFIO%20Monograph%2010.pdf>.

System, which was an infrastructure of warning staff and interagency working groups. The NIO/W was given a mandate “to advise and assist the Director and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence on all matters relating to warning, to coordinate national intelligence warning activities, and to serve as a focal point for warning in the Community.”<sup>18</sup> The DCI appointed the NIO.<sup>19</sup> As of 1982, the NIO reported directly to the DCI, making him/her personally accountable to the IC’s most senior leader.<sup>20</sup>

Warning functions and performance were assessed periodically in response to failures. For example, a DCI Task Force on Improving Intelligence Warning, established by DCI Gates in 1992 after the failure to warn of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990,<sup>21</sup> found the IC’s warning capability “sparse and unfocused.” The Task Force reported that “the business of warning, while important, is essentially underdeveloped, under-funded, unprofessionalized and surprisingly under-defined, especially analysis.”<sup>22</sup> The Task Force recommended warning training for line analysts to enhance capabilities and awareness, improved sharing of alternative assessments across agencies, and the establishment of dedicated warning staffs at each intelligence agency.<sup>23</sup> The Task Force found that the NIO/W was never given sufficient support or operational responsibilities for warning, and it recommended that the DCI make the NIO/W unambiguously accountable for the warning function.<sup>24</sup> This recommendation was not fully implemented until 2006, when Director of National Intelligence (DNI) John Negroponte placed the NIO/W under the authority of the DNI and made the position “the DNI’s primary executive agent for foreign intelligence warning” and the overseer of the newly established National Foreign Intelligence Warning System.<sup>25</sup>

A Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-commissioned report on the IC’s failure to warn of India’s nuclear test in May 1998, led by former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral David Jeremiah, recommended two changes to IC analytic practices. One was to apply structured analytic techniques to challenge assumptions, biases, and established views. The second was to bring in

---

<sup>18</sup> Director of Central Intelligence Directive 5/1, “National Intelligence Warning,” revision effective May 23, 1979, para 5(a). Declassified May 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Director of Central Intelligence Directive 5/1, “National Intelligence Warning.”

<sup>20</sup> William J. Casey, “National Intelligence Officer for Warning,” (official memorandum for the National Foreign Intelligence Board, Washington, DC: Director of Central Intelligence, July 22, 1982). See Attachment D: “Concept Paper,” July 14 1982. Declassified on June 19, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> Mary McCarthy, “The National Warning System: Striving for an Elusive Goal,” *Defense Intelligence Journal* 3 (1994), 5–19, <https://cryptome.org/mccarthy-nws.htm>.

<sup>22</sup> DCI Task Force, *Report: Improving Intelligence Warning*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> DCI Task Force, *Report: Improving Intelligence Warning*, 9–10.

<sup>24</sup> DCI Task Force, *Report: Improving Intelligence Warning*, 6.

<sup>25</sup> “Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 201: National Foreign Intelligence Warning System” (redacted), June 6, 2006, <https://irp.fas.org/dni/icd/icd-201.pdf>.

outside experts to challenge the conventional wisdom with independent views. DCI George Tenet agreed to do both.<sup>26</sup>

Warning intelligence was weakened in 2010, when DNI James Clapper eliminated the NIO/W position, claiming that “every officer is a warning officer.”<sup>27</sup> Former National Intelligence Council (NIC) chairs Robert Hutchings and Gregory Treverton write that it is unrealistic for line analysts, who are focused on current intelligence and daily policymaker requirements (and who aren’t generally trained to do warning) to effectively identify and assess longer-term dynamics as well.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Hutchings and Treverton note the bureaucratic truth that if a task is everyone’s job, no one is held accountable for it—a dynamic that contravened the 1992 DCI Task Force’s recommendation that a single official be responsible for warning.<sup>29</sup> Several years later, ICD 900 (2013) diluted warning accountability further by assigning warning to National Intelligence Managers (NIMs), who also have responsibility for collection, analysis, and counterintelligence, as well as planning, programming, and budgeting.<sup>30</sup>

Currently, warning is undertaken by a diffuse set of components within U.S. intelligence agencies, with little coordination at the national level. The DNI now oversees a Senior Advisor for Warning, which appears to be a recreation of the NIO/W with another name and few staff. The NIC, which is part of the ODNI, includes a Strategic Futures Group to undertake long-range strategic analysis, though it is not specifically focused on warning of potential crises; its principal product is a quadrennial “Global Trends” report that assesses drivers of the strategic environment over the subsequent 20 years. The Department of Defense (DOD) established a Defense Warning Network in 2013 comprised of DOD intelligence organizations but not ODNI or CIA;<sup>31</sup> this network, which is overseen by a council of senior defense officials and military commanders, is principally intended to warn of developments that affect U.S. military equities.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> “Recommendations of the Jeremiah Report,” June 22, 1998, 1. See also DCI George Tenet, Testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, June 2, 1998, 2. Both documents approved for public release November 2006. Both documents at [https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0001380715.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0001380715.pdf). See also transcript of Jeremiah news conference, June 4, 1998, <https://irp.fas.org/cia/product/jeremiah.html>.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Hutchings and Gregory F. Treverton, eds., *Truth to Power: A History of the U.S. National Intelligence Council* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 164.

<sup>28</sup> Hutchings and Treverton, eds., *Truth to Power: A History of the U.S. National Intelligence Council*, 164.

<sup>29</sup> Hutchings and Treverton, eds., *Truth to Power: A History of the U.S. National Intelligence Council*, 191.

<sup>30</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Intelligence Community Directive 900: Integrated Mission Management*, May 6, 2013, sections D(1)(a) and F(3)(b), <https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-900-Integrated-Mission-Management.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> Dan Verton, “Pentagon Outlines Defense Warning Network,” *FedScoop*, December 9, 2013, <https://fedscoop.com/pentagon-outlines-defense-warning-network/>.

<sup>32</sup> Department of Defense, *The Defense Warning Network*, Directive 3115.16 (incorporating Change 2) (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, August 10, 2020), <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/311516e.pdf?ver=2020-08-10-145143-097>.

### 3. Strategic Environment Driving Israeli Intelligence Priorities

---

Israel faces, as it has for decades, threats that range from serious to existential. Iran has pledged to eliminate the “Zionist Entity,” and Israel sees Tehran’s efforts to develop a nuclear weapons capability as a threat to its very existence. Iran also works through regional proxies—including Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Houthis in Yemen—to keep Israel under constant pressure; periodic rocket attacks from Lebanon and Gaza, as well as violence against (and by) Israeli settlers in the West Bank, keep Israel on a constant war footing. With finite resources and capabilities, Israeli political leaders chose to prioritize threats from Iran, from Hezbollah, and in the West Bank, which left a dwindling set of resources and capabilities to understand Hamas’s activities in Gaza.

At the same time, domestic political disputes fractured Israeli society and made Israel appear weak to its adversaries. The prime minister’s increasing dependence on right-wing parties to maintain his coalition (and thereby delay three separate trials he faces for corruption), combined with proposed judicial reforms that would undermine the courts’ authority to act as a check on government powers, led to mass protests throughout 2023.

When Hamas decided to launch its attack on October 7, the Israeli government and security services were distracted by frequent violence to its north and east, the threat of Iranian missiles, and internal strife. In comparison, Hamas appeared less menacing, and Gaza was a low priority.

#### A. Policymakers’ Priorities Exclude Gaza

Setting priorities are the responsibility of senior government officials, and defense and intelligence agencies implement the guidance they receive. As Middle East expert Daniel Byman writes, “policymakers determine what a state’s priorities are and the resources given to intelligence agencies, among many other roles.”<sup>33</sup>

Since his first term as prime minister in the late 1990s, Prime Minister Netanyahu has considered Iran to be the most significant threat to Israel’s security, stating as recently as May 2023 that “95% of Israel’s security problems come from Iran.”<sup>34</sup> Not only do Iran’s leaders

---

<sup>33</sup> Dan Byman, “How Policy Failures Overlap with Intelligence Failures,” *Experts React: Assessing the Israeli Intelligence and Potential Policy Failure*, commentary, Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 25, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/experts-react-assessing-israeli-intelligence-and-potential-policy-failure>.

<sup>34</sup> “Netanyahu: Israel ready for multi-front war against Iran and terror proxies,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, May 9, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/netanyahu-israel-ready-for-multi-front-war-against-iran-and-terror-proxies/>.

frequently call for Israel to be wiped off the map, but Netanyahu saw Iran’s nascent nuclear weapons program, its extensive ballistic missile capabilities, and its support for anti-Israel proxies in Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, and Yemen as tools for Tehran to carry out its threats.<sup>35</sup> Netanyahu has viewed this combination of Iranian leadership intent and diversified military capabilities as posing an existential threat to Israel.

Of the Iranian-backed militias that periodically attack Israel, Netanyahu and senior Israeli leaders viewed Lebanese Hezbollah as the most capable and thus of greatest concern. As a result, Israeli intelligence agencies devoted significant resources and capabilities to address Iran and Hezbollah as opposed to threats emerging from Gaza.<sup>36</sup>

## **B. Palestinian Threats: Israel’s Domestic Politics Drive Emphasis on West Bank**

When addressing Palestinian unrest, Israeli leaders directed the security forces to prioritize efforts to counter violence in the West Bank at the expense of understanding and containing threats from Hamas. Two dynamics underpinned this policy choice. One was the increase of violence between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the West Bank in 2022 and early 2023. In October 2022, the IDF doubled its presence in the West Bank from 13 battalions to 26.<sup>37</sup> On October 5—just 2 days before Hamas’s attack—the IDF redeployed two commando companies (about 100 soldiers) from Gaza to the West Bank to protect Israeli settlers, a higher priority mission than protecting the southern border.<sup>38</sup> On October 7, the IDF had 35 battalions in the West Bank but left just 3 at the Gaza border.<sup>39</sup>

The second driver was that Israel settlers are a critical constituency of the more conservative and religious nationalist parties in Netanyahu’s coalition government, whose leaders have assumed greater authority over West Bank policy as the prime minister became more dependent on right-wing support. Domestic political dynamics thus made settlers’ security a particularly high

---

<sup>35</sup> Steven R. David, “Coping with an Existential Threat,” in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Israel Under Netanyahu: Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2020), 197–215.

<sup>36</sup> Ronen Bergman, Mark Mazzetti, and Maria Abi-Habib, “How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack,” *New York Times*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/29/world/middleeast/israel-intelligence-hamas-attack.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Emanuel Fabian, “IDF Sends 2 More Battalions to West Bank After Series of Settler Attacks,” *Times of Israel*, June 25, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-to-send-2-more-battalions-to-west-bank-after-series-of-settler-attacks/>.

<sup>38</sup> Emanuel Fabian, “2 Commando Companies Said Diverted from Gaza Border to West Bank Days Before Oct. 7,” *Times of Israel*, December 5, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-commando-companies-said-diverted-from-gaza-border-to-west-bank-days-before-oct-7/>. See also Samia Nakhoul and Jonathan Saul, “How Hamas Duped Israel as it Planned Devastating Attack,” *Reuters*, October 10, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-israel-was-duped-hamas-planned-devastating-assault-2023-10-08/>.

<sup>39</sup> Zehava Galon, “Members of Israel’s Peace Camp Need to Wake Up Now,” *Haaretz*, June 30, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-06-30/ty-article-opinion/.premium/members-of-israels-peace-camp-need-to-wake-up-now/00000190-651f-d367-abbc-6f1feca70000>.

priority.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the small-scale assaults occurring in the West Bank necessitated interventions from ground troops and police, whereas the threats emerging from Gaza—principally periodic rocket fire—could be handled by Israel’s Iron Dome anti-missile system.

Even so, officials at the highest levels of government believed that the threat from Hamas was not significant and that it could be managed. The conventional wisdom among Israeli policymakers and security officials was that Hamas was willing to compromise on its anti-Israel ideology in exchange for retaining the modest economic benefits that it had gained from Israel, such as economic assistance provided via Qatar and an increased number of jobs in Israel for Gazans.<sup>41</sup>

Israeli officials held this belief firmly for several years before October 7. Since at least May 2021, Israeli intelligence assessments supported the belief that Hamas had no interest in attacking Israel and limited ability to do so, other than by launching an occasional limited rocket attack to bolster its legitimacy among Gazans.<sup>42</sup> In a senior-level Defense Ministry planning meeting in December 2021, Major General Tamir Hayman, then head of military intelligence, stated that Hamas has “a growing commitment to governing.”<sup>43</sup> At the same meeting, IDF Chief of Staff LTG Herzl Halevi (then deputy chief of staff) stated, “Hamas has gone in the direction of an arrangement and calm.”<sup>44</sup> In June 2023, Prime Minister Netanyahu told party leaders that he was convinced Hamas was deterred from undertaking a significant attack.<sup>45</sup> And in a discussion of recent protests in Gaza just 10 days before the October 7 attack, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, IDF Chief of Staff Halevi, Shin Bet director Ronen Bar, and

---

<sup>40</sup> Amos Harel, “Israeli Settlers Get the Message: They Have Support in the Netanyahu Gov’t,” *Haaretz*, June 25, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-06-25/ty-article/.premium/israeli-settlers-get-the-message-the-netanyahu-govt-has-their-backs/00000188-f37d-db86-a3f9-fbff036d0000>.

<sup>41</sup> David Makovsky, “The Collapse of Israel’s Hamas ‘Conceptzia,’” *National Interest*, October 26, 2023, <https://nationalinterest.org/print/feature/collapse-israel%E2%80%99s-hamas-conceptzia-207058>.

<sup>42</sup> Mark Mazzetti and Ronen Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas,” *New York Times*, December 10, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/10/world/middleeast/israel-qatar-money-prop-up-hamas.html>. See also Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, “How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack.”

<sup>43</sup> Yaniv Kubovich, “Bloody Arrogance: How Israel’s Top Brass Misjudged Hamas Before October 7,” *Haaretz*, March 14, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-14/ty-article-magazine/.premium/costly-arrogance-how-israels-top-brass-underestimated-hamas-before-oct-7/0000018e-3ccb-d670-a5be-fdcf13d60000>.

<sup>44</sup> Kubovich, “Bloody Arrogance: How Israel’s Top Brass Misjudged Hamas Before October 7.”

<sup>45</sup> Avner Barnea, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023 – A Preliminary Analysis,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, March 26, 2024, 14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08850607.2024.2315546>.

National Security Council (NSC) director Tzachi Hanegbi agreed that “the intelligence revealed that Hamas doesn’t want an escalation” of violence<sup>46</sup> and that it was content with the status quo.<sup>47</sup>

This conventional wisdom shaped Israeli intelligence services’ views on Hamas and led senior intelligence officers to silence analysts who warned of a mounting threat. In this respect, as will be described later, Israeli officials blinded themselves to evolving dynamics in Gaza much as previous Israeli leaders ignored developments in Egypt and Syria prior to the 1973 Yom Kippur War—a stunning intelligence failure that led to a similar lack of political and military preparedness for an invasion.

### **C. The Netanyahu Government Actually *Supported* Hamas**

Not only did the Israeli establishment view Hamas as posing little threat, but the Netanyahu government’s strategy was actually to *support* Hamas—both to enable it to govern and to drive a wedge between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA). To help Hamas administer the territory, the Netanyahu government supported transfers of billions of dollars via Qatar.<sup>48</sup> But even Mossad director David Barnea expressed concern in 2021 that Hamas was diverting money to military capabilities,<sup>49</sup> and his predecessor acknowledged Israel had few insights into how Hamas actually used the funds.<sup>50</sup> Since Hamas was believed to be uninterested in conflict, however, these observations did not seem to cause policymakers to reassess the threat.

Propping up Hamas helped Israel split Palestinian voices by undermining the PA. Exacerbating the intra-Palestinian divide, explained retired General Shlomo Brom, former deputy to Israel’s national security adviser, prevented the emergence of an empowered negotiating partner and thus enabled Netanyahu to disengage from peace talks.<sup>51</sup> In comments to Likud Party Knesset members in 2019, Netanyahu said, “Anyone who wants to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state has to support bolstering Hamas and transferring money to Hamas. This is part of our strategy—to isolate the Palestinians in Gaza from the Palestinians in the West Bank.”<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> “Israel Doesn’t Want Escalation in Gaza,” *Asharq al-Aswat*, September 29, 2023, <https://english.aawsat.com/arab-world/4574846-israel-doesn%E2%80%99t-want-escalation-gaza>.

<sup>47</sup> Barnea, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023 – A Preliminary Analysis,” 14.

<sup>48</sup> Mazzetti and Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas.”

<sup>49</sup> Mazzetti and Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas.”

<sup>50</sup> Mazzetti and Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas.”

<sup>51</sup> Mazzetti and Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas.” See also Shay HersHKovitz, “Intelligence Overshadowed: Israel’s Grand Strategy in the Face of Hamas’s Unexpected Assault,” *The Cipher Brief*, October 16, 2023, [https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column\\_article/intelligence-overshadowed-israels-grand-strategy-in-the-face-of-hamass-unexpected-assault](https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/intelligence-overshadowed-israels-grand-strategy-in-the-face-of-hamass-unexpected-assault).

<sup>52</sup> Gidi Weitz, “Another Concept Implodes: Israel Can’t Be Managed by a Criminal Defendant,” *Haaretz*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-09/ty-article/.premium/another-concept-implodes-israel-cant-be-managed-by-a-criminal-defendant/0000018b-1382-d2fc-a59f-d39b5dbf0000>.



## D. Domestic Political Distractions

Internal political disputes made Israel seem weak in the eyes of its adversaries, thereby increasing the likelihood of a foreign attack. After 3 years of investigations, Prime Minister Netanyahu was indicted on three separate charges of corruption in 2019, and his trial has lasted from 2020 until the present.<sup>53</sup> In an effort to secure enough allied Knesset members to keep him in office and delay conviction in his ongoing trials, Netanyahu empowered far-right and ultra-orthodox parties in his coalition.<sup>54</sup> In part to appease these allies, and in part to undercut efforts to remove him from office, Netanyahu embarked upon a campaign to undermine the authorities and independence of Israel's judiciary and weaken its ability to oversee government decisions, ministerial appointments, and legislation.<sup>55</sup> Opponents, concerned that these measures would undermine the checks and balances that underpin Israel's democratic system, participated in months of protests across the country. More than 10,000 military reservists<sup>56</sup>—including 1,100 in the Air Force alone<sup>57</sup>—threatened to stop reporting for duty, potentially endangering Israeli military capabilities.<sup>58</sup>

The decision to challenge the Supreme Court and the domestic unrest that followed distracted the Netanyahu government from other matters.<sup>59</sup> Numerous security officials warned Prime Minister Netanyahu that Iran, Hezbollah, and other adversaries believed intense societal divisions were undermining Israeli deterrence and making adversaries more likely to attack.<sup>60</sup> An IDF intelligence report presented to Netanyahu declared, “The enemy perceives the summer of 2023

---

<sup>53</sup> Yonette Joseph and Patrick Kingsley, “Netanyahu Will Return with Corruption Charges Unresolved. Here’s Where the Case Stands,” *New York Times*, November 3, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/world/middleeast/netanyahu-corruption-charges-israel.html>.

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan Rynhold, “Could Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Indictment End Israel’s Political Stalemate?” *Washington Post*, November 23, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/11/23/could-prime-minister-benjamin-netanyahus-indictment-end-israels-political-stalemate/>.

<sup>55</sup> Rafi Berg, “Israeli Judicial Reform Explained: What is the Crisis About?” BBC News, September 11, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-65086871>. See also Jay Michaelson, “To Save Israel, Give Netanyahu a Plea Deal,” *Forward*, June 19, 2024, <https://forward.com/opinion/624952/to-save-israel-give-netanyahu-a-plea-deal/>.

<sup>56</sup> “Judicial Reform Enters Crunch Time as Protests Pick Up, More Reservists Join,” *Israel Hayom*, July 22, 2023, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/07/22/judicial-reform-enters-crunch-time-as-pressure-picks-up-more-reservists-say-they-will-no-longer-volunteer/>.

<sup>57</sup> “Israel Military Reservists Threaten Over Judicial Revamp,” France 24, July 22, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230722-israel-military-reservists-threaten-over-judicial-revamp>

<sup>58</sup> Ronen Bergman and Patrick Kingsley, “Israeli Reservists Threaten Mass Resignations if Judicial Plan Proceeds,” *New York Times*, July 15, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/15/world/middleeast/israel-reservists-resignations-judiciary.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, “From Gaza to Iran, the Netanyahu Government Is Endangering Israel's Survival,” *Haaretz*, April 18, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-04-18/ty-article-magazine/from-gaza-to-iran-the-netanyahu-government-is-endangering-israels-survival/0000018e-f25f-daad-a3de-fe7ff5790000>.

<sup>60</sup> Yonah Jeremy Bob, “IDF Intel. Analysis Chief from Oct. 7 Resigning Due to Cancer Diagnosis,” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 4, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-795292>.

as a historic weak point for Israel.”<sup>61</sup> Some senior security officials opined that Hamas chose to attack in October 2023 specifically because political infighting and reservists’ defiance were clear signs of political and military weakness.<sup>62</sup>

These were prescient warnings, but Israeli leaders held fast to their assumptions about Hamas. After years of declining intelligence collection in Gaza and inadequate strategic analysis of Hamas’s intentions and capabilities, Israeli intelligence was poorly positioned to convince decision-makers to take a different view.

---

<sup>61</sup> “IDF Intel Warns Netanyahu of Israel's 'Historic Weakness' Seen by Iran and Hezbollah, Report Says,” *Haaretz*, July 28, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-07-28/ty-article/.premium/idf-intel-warns-netanyahu-of-historic-weakness-seen-by-iran-and-hezbollah-report-says/00000189-9b09-d00f-a7db-bb9bbd0e0000>.

<sup>62</sup> Yonah Jeremy Bob, “Has Everyone Misunderstood Israel’s Failures on October 7?” *The Jerusalem Post*, February 14, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-786890>.

## 4. Israeli Collection Against Hamas

---

Israeli intelligence collection capabilities are widely considered to be among the best in the world. If Israel can clandestinely track a target in hostile territory and drop a precision bomb on his vehicle, how could it miss signs that a sworn adversary on its border was planning a significant attack on its territory?

Among the contributing factors were a prioritization of threats other than those emanating from Gaza, such as Iran, Hezbollah, and Palestinian violence in the West Bank; an over-reliance on (and over-confidence in) technical collection and technological border defenses; the lack of human intelligence (HUMINT) sources in Gaza who could report on Hamas leaders' plans and intentions; the closure of the IDF's open source intelligence (OSINT) unit, which might have picked up public statements and social media posts; the lack of credence given to intelligence shared by foreign counterparts; and the downplaying of reports by junior analysts and female border sentries who repeatedly warned that a changing pattern of Palestinian activities along the border indicated preparations consistent with previously known Hamas attack plans.

### A. Higher Priority Threats Took Precedence

As noted earlier, Israeli policymakers focused their attention and the Israeli IC's collection resources on threats deemed to be higher priorities, such as Iran's nuclear program and domestic politics, Iran's presence in Syria, Hezbollah, and anti-settler violence in the West Bank.<sup>63</sup> The decision to prioritize targets other than Hamas was, intentionally or not, a decision to take additional risks on the southern border. As former CIA Deputy Director for Analysis John Kringen wrote, "A decision to allocate fewer resources is fundamentally a decision to accept risk.... Surprise is more likely in areas in which fewer resources have been applied."<sup>64</sup>

Much of what Israel did collect in Gaza focused on support to offensive military operations rather than strategic threats. Israel had extensive intelligence on Hamas's military infrastructure, including the locations of bases, tunnels, rocket launch sites, and key facilities and the weapons in its arsenal. But this tactical intelligence was valuable principally to support kinetic targeting by the IDF and Israeli Air Force (IAF).<sup>65</sup> It could not provide insights into the plans and intentions of

---

<sup>63</sup> Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, "How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack."

<sup>64</sup> John A. Kringen, "Rethinking the Concept of Global Coverage in the U.S. Intelligence Community," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (September 2015), 5, 8, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Rethinking-Concept-of-Global.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> Shay HersHKovitz, "More Than Merely an Intelligence Failure," *The Cipher Brief*, October 17, 2023, [https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column\\_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure](https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure). For prioritization of rockets over people, see Yaniv Kubovich, "Disdain, Denial, Neglect: The Deep Roots of Israel's Devastating

Hamas's leadership, nor did it indicate when and how Hamas might employ its military capabilities—traits critical to provide strategic warning of an attack.

## **B. Israel Had Multiple Sources of Intelligence Indicating Hamas Attack Plans**

Israel certainly missed opportunities to collect additional information on Hamas's plans, intentions, and capabilities, but October 7 did not represent a systemic intelligence collection failure. During the year before October 7, Israel had acquired reliable intelligence from multiple sources indicating that Hamas was planning a large-scale attack.

Most notably, more than a year before October 7, Israel had acquired a comprehensive plan that Hamas had developed for a multi-pronged cross-border attack. The 40-page plan—which the IDF code named “Jericho Wall”—indicated, among other things, that the attack would take place on a Jewish holiday or on the sabbath, and that Hamas would use drones to knock out security cameras and communications equipment before attacking kibbutzim and military bases.<sup>66</sup> The attack on October 7—which was both a Saturday and a religious holiday—unfolded almost exactly as outlined in this document. The plan was well-known in military intelligence circles. It was briefed in May 2022 to the commanders of IDF intelligence and the IDF Southern Command.<sup>67</sup> In July 2022, the Gaza Division's intelligence officer gave a briefing to senior IDF leaders entitled, “The Mass Invasion Plan of Hamas.” The presentation laid out a plan of attack exactly like the one Hamas launched on October 7 and assessed, “This invasion constitutes the gravest threat that IDF forces are facing in the defense [of Israel].”<sup>68</sup> Senior officials considered Hamas incapable of carrying out such an operation and took no action.<sup>69</sup>

Israel had a single HUMINT report indicating an attack was imminent. A Shin Bet human source from Gaza warned of attack in the week after Yom Kippur (the last week in September) but was ignored. Although the source was deemed credible, Shin Bet managers saw the report as

---

Intelligence Failure on Hamas and October 7,” *Haaretz*, May 9, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-05-09/ty-article/.premium/disdain-denial-neglect-the-roots-of-israels-intelligence-failure-on-hamas-and-oct-7/0000018f-5811-d348-a7bf-feb907a80000>.

<sup>66</sup> Shira Rubin, “As It Planned for Oct. 7, Hamas Lulled Israel into A False Sense of Calm,” *Washington Post*, December 6, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/12/06/israel-knew-hamas-attack-oct-7/>.

<sup>67</sup> Rubin, “As It Planned for Oct. 7, Hamas Lulled Israel into A False Sense of Calm.”

<sup>68</sup> “More details unveiled of IDF Intel on Oct. 7 Plans, Consults Hours Before Hamas Attack,” *Times of Israel*, December 5, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/more-details-unveiled-of-idf-intel-on-oct-7-plans-consults-hours-before-hamas-attack/>.

<sup>69</sup> Ronen Bergman and Adam Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas's Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago,” *New York Times*, November 30, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.

unimportant, assessing that “if this really nears implementation, we’ll receive additional intelligence” that corroborates it. The report was not passed up the chain of command.<sup>70</sup>

Foreign partners also shared warnings of a pending event. Israeli press reporting, confirmed by the chair of the U.S. House of Representatives’ Foreign Affairs Committee,<sup>71</sup> asserted that Abbas Kamel, the director of Egypt’s General Intelligence Directorate, personally called Prime Minister Netanyahu in late September to warn that Hamas would undertake “something unusual, a terrible operation.”<sup>72</sup> An Egyptian intelligence official reported that Netanyahu was not much interested in the report, stating that the IDF was focused principally on violence in the West Bank.<sup>73</sup>

IDF sentries (*tatzpitaniyot*) provided detailed tactical reports of Hamas activities on the Gaza side of the border fence. In the weeks before October 7, sentries saw near-daily drilling and surveillance activities at the border by Palestinians wearing the uniforms of the *Nukhba* Force,<sup>74</sup> Hamas’s most elite combat unit.<sup>75</sup> Sentries reported that Hamas practiced attacking replicas of kibbutzim, observation posts, and a Merkava tank; that they flew drones daily along the fence; that they demonstrated knowledge of camera locations; and that the number of people participating in these activities was increasing.<sup>76</sup> Another sentry told Israeli TV that “she and dozens of fellow soldiers had repeatedly reported suspicious activity: people approaching the fence with maps, appearing to study it for its weak spots, getting closer every week.”<sup>77</sup> These reports were not heeded or factored into broader intelligence assessments.

---

<sup>70</sup> Michael Bachner, “Report: Shin Bet Dismissed Gaza Source’s Tip on Plans, Timing of Major Hamas Attack,” *Times of Israel*, December 27, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/report-shin-bet-dismissed-tip-on-hamas-plans-timing-for-major-attack/>.

<sup>71</sup> Jacob Magid, “Top U.S. Lawmaker Affirms Cairo Warned Israel Days Before Onslaught,” *Times of Israel*, October 11, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/top-us-lawmaker-affirms-cairo-warned-israel-days-before-onslaught/>.

<sup>72</sup> “Egypt Intelligence Official Says Israel Ignored Repeated Warnings of ‘Something Big’,” *Times of Israel*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egypt-intelligence-official-says-israel-ignored-repeated-warnings-of-something-big/>.

<sup>73</sup> Smadar Perry, “Egyptian General Intelligence Director Supposedly Warned Netanyahu About ‘Something Fierce from Gaza’,” *Ynet News*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hyjgqqz11a>.

<sup>74</sup> Alice Cuddy, “They Were Israel’s ‘Eyes on the Border’ - but their Hamas warnings went unheard,” BBC, January 14, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67958260>.

<sup>75</sup> “Nukhba Force: All You Need to Know About Hamas’ Lethal Military Unit in Target of Israel Army,” CNBC TV18, October 13, 2023, <https://www.cnbc.tv18.com/world/israel-hamas-war-who-are-nukhba-force-military-unit-palestine-army-gaza-idf-18042121.htm>.

<sup>76</sup> Yaniv Kubovich, “The Women Soldiers Who Warned of a Pending Hamas Attack – and Were Ignored,” *Haaretz*, November 20, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-20/ty-article-magazine/.premium/the-women-soldiers-who-warned-of-a-pending-hamas-attack-and-were-ignored/0000018bed76-d4f0-affb-eff740150000>.

<sup>77</sup> Shira Rubin and Loveday Morris, “How Hamas Broke Through Israel’s Border Defenses During Oct. 7 Attack,” *Washington Post*, October 27, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/27/hamas-attack-israel-october-7-hostages/>.

The sentries' reports were validated by signals intelligence (SIGINT) reports. In July 2023, a non-commissioned officer (NCO) in Unit 8200,<sup>78</sup> Aman's SIGINT and cyber warfare unit, reported that multiple Hamas *Nukhba* battalions were conducting drills twice a week, apparently with the objective of seizing kibbutzim across the border. She was crystal clear in her assessment, writing, "This is a plan designed to start a war.... They are training, with large forces, for a big event. This is preparation for the real thing."<sup>79</sup> Other 8200 personnel reported on additional Hamas exercises, and several colleagues agreed with their assessments that a Hamas attack was in the works and potentially imminent. Nevertheless, their warnings were neither taken seriously nor communicated up the chain of command.

Just 6 hours before the October 7 attack started, Israeli intelligence learned that several dozen Hamas members activated Israeli SIM cards for their cell phones, a step which would have given them more reliable communications inside Israeli territory.<sup>80</sup> IDF chief of staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi held an early morning call with senior Southern Command and Shin Bet officials to discuss this activity. But because Hamas members had previously activated Israeli SIM cards during multiple exercises, the officials assessed that Hamas was merely conducting exercises and decided to revisit the issue later without changing the security posture at the border.<sup>81</sup>

### **C. Collection Capabilities Were Either Limited or Under-Resourced**

The information Israel had collected—particularly signs that Hamas was undertaking activities consistent with the Jericho Wall attack plan—should have been sufficient to merit a more in-depth and comprehensive assessment of Hamas's willingness and ability to stage an attack. But Israeli intelligence entities missed even more opportunities to collect warning intelligence regarding Hamas because they cut critical collection programs.

Decisions to under-resource or reallocate resources across intelligence disciplines contributed to Israel's intelligence failure by making individual intelligence entities less capable of understanding and addressing the Hamas threat.

---

<sup>78</sup> Unit 8200's missions include SIGINT collection and analysis and cyber operations. See "Deputy Commander of Elite Intelligence Unit 8200 Reveals Its Secret Weapon," *Forbes Israel*, June 30, 2022, <https://forbes.co.il/deputy-commander-of-elite-intelligence-unit-8200-reveals-its-secret-weapon/>.

<sup>79</sup> "Intelligence Soldier's Warning of Invasion in July Dismissed as 'Imaginary'," *The Jerusalem Post*, November 28, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-775570>.

<sup>80</sup> Emanuel Fabian, "Hours Before Hamas Attack, IDF Noticed Dozens of Terrorists Activating Israeli SIMs," *Times of Israel*, February 26, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hours-before-hamas-attack-idf-noticed-hundreds-of-terrorists-activating-israeli-sims/>.

<sup>81</sup> Emanuel Fabian and Amy Spiro, "Security Chiefs Got Wind of Something Amiss in Gaza, Thought It Was a Drill – Reports," *Times of Israel*, October 12, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/security-chiefs-got-wind-of-something-amiss-in-gaza-thought-it-was-a-drill-reports/>. See also Fabian, "Hours Before Hamas Attack, IDF Noticed Dozens of Terrorists Activating Israeli SIMs."

## 1. SIGINT

- Unit 8200, Israel’s SIGINT unit and the largest unit in the IDF,<sup>82</sup> is widely seen as Israel’s magic silver bullet. Its technical skills are widely lauded, and many of its personnel have gone on to found leading Israeli technology companies. However, it is increasingly focused on strategic targets like Iran and on cyber threats, thereby missing communications intercepts that might provide insights into plans of lower priority targets like Hamas. Indeed, IDF intelligence officials decided in 2021 to downgrade its coverage of Gaza by reducing personnel focused on the target and pausing collection overnight and on weekends.<sup>83</sup> Convinced that tactical SIGINT would not provide useful warning of a Hamas attack,<sup>84</sup> the *New York Times* reported, 8200 stopped intercepting communications from Hamas walkie-talkies “because they saw it as a waste of effort.”<sup>85</sup> Yet dead Hamas attackers were found on October 7 with handheld radios used to coordinate the assault.<sup>86</sup>

## 2. HUMINT

- Shin Bet (also known as Shabak) is the HUMINT agency responsible for Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.<sup>87</sup> But former Shin Bet director Ami Ayalon told the Israeli media outlet *Globes* that “HUMINT sources did not deliver the goods” necessary to warn of the October 7 attack.<sup>88</sup> Israeli intelligence has fewer human sources than ever in Gaza due to both a shift in priorities and reduced physical access. After Israeli settlers were evacuated from Gaza in 2005—and especially after Hamas took over in 2007<sup>89</sup>—Shin

---

<sup>82</sup> Katrina Manson, “Israel’s Massive Failure Perplexes Ex-U.S. Intelligence Officials,” *Bloomberg*, October 10, 2023, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2023-10-10/israel-s-massive-failure-perplexes-ex-us-intelligence-officials?embedded-checkout=true>.

<sup>83</sup> “Top Israeli Intel Unit Wasn’t Operational on October 7 Due to Personnel Decision,” *Times of Israel*, November 28, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/top-israeli-intel-unit-wasnt-operational-on-october-7-due-to-personnel-decision/>.

<sup>84</sup> *Times of Israel*, “Top Israeli intel unit.”

<sup>85</sup> Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, “How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack.”

<sup>86</sup> Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, “How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack.”

<sup>87</sup> Mossad, Israel’s foreign intelligence agency, is not responsible for Gaza and the West Bank, though it has taken part in operations targeting Hamas in other countries. Nevertheless, a Mossad statement in May 2024 acknowledged that it was “surprised” by the October 7 attack. See Yossi Melman, “Israel’s Mossad Admits for the First Time: We Were Surprised on October 7,” *Haaretz*, May 9, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-05-09/ty-article/.premium/israels-mossad-admits-for-the-first-time-we-were-surprised-on-october-7/0000018f-573f-d6a5-a5ff-d73f93e20000>.

<sup>88</sup> Ariel Whitman, “The Former Head of Shin Bet Reveals, ‘We Warned All Along the Way to the Political Echelon’,” *Globes*, October 27, 2023, <https://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1001460912>. Translation by Google Translate. See also Barnea, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023—A Preliminary Analysis,” 15.

<sup>89</sup> Barnea, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023—A Preliminary Analysis,” 17.

Bet lost easy access to the territory and thus had limited ability to recruit human sources. Furthermore, sharp limits on the number of Gazans allowed to work in Israel limited Shin Bet's access to potential informants. According to the *Washington Post*, multiple Israeli intelligence officials asserted that “the paucity of human intelligence, in part, was responsible for Israel's failure to detect and understand Hamas's planning for the Oct. 7 attacks.”<sup>90</sup> These dynamics led Israel to rely increasingly on technical intelligence collection to understand Gaza, but, as noted, these capabilities were reallocated to higher priorities.<sup>91</sup>

### 3. OSINT

- With the enormous amount of data publicly available on the internet and social media, open source intelligence (OSINT) can provide valuable insights into peoples' plans, activities, and sentiments. However, during a period when the U.S. IC had greatly expanded its OSINT capabilities,<sup>92</sup> Israeli intelligence increasingly devalued them.<sup>93</sup> In 2016, the IDF downgraded its *Hatzav* OSINT unit, which monitored Arabic-language social media (and, to a lesser extent, official state media), by lowering the rank of its commander.<sup>94</sup> The IDF closed the unit entirely in late December 2021.<sup>95</sup>

### D. Heavy reliance on technology for tactical warning

Israel depended heavily on technical collection at the border for early warning of an attack. The six-meter-high reinforced concrete wall that Israel built at the Gaza border—at a cost of \$1.5 billion—had numerous sensors designed to detect movement and penetrations (as well as remote-controlled machine guns to repel an attack, theoretically reducing the number of soldiers needed

---

<sup>90</sup> Shane Harris, “In the Search for Hostages, U.S. is Israel's Key Intelligence Partner,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2024, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2024/06/14/us-israel-intelligence-cia-hostages/>.

<sup>91</sup> *Times of Israel*, “More Details unveiled.”

<sup>92</sup> In an effort to improve acquisition and analysis of OSINT, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director released an OSINT strategy for the U.S. Intelligence Community in March 2024. See *The IC OSINT Strategy 2024-2026*, March 8, 2024, [https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/IC\\_OSINT\\_Strategy.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/IC_OSINT_Strategy.pdf).

<sup>93</sup> Barnea, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023—A Preliminary Analysis,” 20.

<sup>94</sup> Gili Cohen, “Israel Downgrades its Open Source Military Intelligence Unit,” *Haaretz*, October 30, 2016, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2016-10-30/ty-article/israel-downgrades-its-open-source-military-intelligence-unit/0000017f-e351-d75c-a7ff-ffddb17b0000>. See also “The IDF's Not-So-Secret Secret Unit,” *Israel Hayom*, August 14, 2015, <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/306247>.

<sup>95</sup> “Israel Army Dissolves Intelligence Unit Monitoring Arab Media,” *Sawt Beirut International*, January 1, 2022, <https://english.sawtbeirut.com/world/israel-army-dissolves-intelligence-unit-monitoring-arab-media/>.



at the Gaza border).<sup>96</sup> Even had these worked, they would only have provided several minutes' of advance notice that something was going on, making it a last-resort alarm system. As it turned out, however, Hamas—having collected accurate intelligence on the border sensors' capabilities—immediately cut the sensors' power or destroyed them, rendering them useless.<sup>97</sup> It's unclear whether the IDF had conducted an assessment of the vulnerability of the border wall's sensors and developed a plan for operating in the event that they were to fail.

---

<sup>96</sup> Shay Hershkovitz, "More Than Merely an Intelligence Failure," *The Cipher Brief*, October 17, 2023, [https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column\\_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure](https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure). Also Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, "How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack."

<sup>97</sup> Bergman, Mazzetti, and Abi-Habib, "How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack."



## 5. Analytic Failures

---

Just as collection shortfalls contributed to Israel's limited understanding of Hamas, analytic deficits prevented Israeli intelligence from making effective use of the information it did have. The widespread acceptance of flawed assumptions and the absence of structured analytic techniques that would identify and challenge such biases prevented analysts from approaching the Hamas problem more critically and imaginatively. In such an environment, the individual reports filed by analysts and sentries who tried to raise a red flag were treated as implausible and unconvincing outliers rather than as a collection of data points that indicated the threat was evolving.

### A. A Flawed *Conceptzia*

Most strategic warning failures are not due to a lack of intelligence; rather, they are due to an inability to correctly process, interpret, and disseminate in a timely manner the intelligence that is available and a failure to challenge assumptions.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, Cynthia Grabo, author of the U.S. IC's handbook on warning intelligence, wrote, "The inadequate examination of available evidence has been a contributing cause to nearly every warning failure."<sup>99</sup>

This was true of most of the major strategic surprises of the 20th century, including Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 (Operation Barbarossa), the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that same year, and the Tet Offensive by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese People's Army in 1968. In each of these instances, intelligence that an adversary would attack was either ignored or rationalized by policymakers to support a status quo interpretation of events.

The latter appeared to be the case in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, arguably Israel's worst military intelligence failure. The Agranat Commission, the official committee of inquiry established after the war to determine how Israel had been surprised by the Egyptian and Syrian invasion, determined that the root cause of the failure lay with Aman's flawed analytical paradigm, known as the "*conceptzia*," or "concept."<sup>100</sup> According to this paradigm, which was the dominant view within the IDF and forcefully advocated by the Aman commander at the time, Major General Eliyahu Zeira, Egypt would not attempt to recapture the Sinai Peninsula until it had achieved

---

<sup>98</sup> Michael I. Handel, "Intelligence and the Problem of Strategic Surprise," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 7:3 (1984): 235.

<sup>99</sup> Cynthia Grabo, *Handbook of Warning Intelligence* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015), 408, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tiso-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4085976>.

<sup>100</sup> Itai Shapira, "The Yom Kippur Intelligence Failure After Fifty Years: What Lessons Can Be Learned?" *Intelligence and National Security*, 38:6 (2023), 980–982. See also Eyal Pascovich, "The Devil's Advocate in Intelligence: The Israeli Experience," *Intelligence and National Security*, 33:6 (2023), 856–857.

sufficient air power to support a major ground incursion. Syria, according to the conception, would not attack Israel without Egypt's help. Aman therefore concluded, in the face of contrary evidence, that Egypt and Syria would not attack for at least the next several years.

The Agranat Commission concluded that the information available to Aman provided ample warning of Egypt's and Syria's impending attack, but that it was ignored until the morning of the attack because it diverged from the IDI's strongly held beliefs (its *conceptzia*) about the Egyptian leadership's unwillingness to go to war without sufficient air cover.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, Israeli intelligence assessed that Egypt would not invade because it could not "win" a conflict. They could not conceive that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's goal was not to recapture territory and defeat Israeli forces, but rather to trap Israel in an unsustainable war of attrition and force it to negotiate the return of the Sinai Peninsula.<sup>102</sup>

Israeli security expert Ephraim Kam, who later served as the head of analysis in Israeli military intelligence, explained the surprise by saying that Israel's "error began with a basic concept that the Arabs would not attack during the next 2–3 years, and every new development was adopted to this concept."<sup>103</sup> Bruce Riedel, a former Defense Department policymaker and intelligence analyst now at the Brookings Institution, noted that the flawed *conceptzia* represented a failure not just by intelligence officials, but also by Israeli policymakers. Riedel wrote, "Israeli intelligence failed to see war coming in 1973 because it was wedded to a concept ... that the Arabs would not go to war because they would lose, therefore the danger of war was minimal. All indicators of war preparations and any warnings of war were fed into the concept and then explained away. But the concept was not just an intelligence concept, it was a policy concept that the Israeli political leadership at the top deeply believed."<sup>104</sup>

Fifty years later, Israeli intelligence experienced another strategic surprise, for similar reasons, when it failed to interpret the signs that Hamas was planning a major attack into Israel. In this instance, the Israeli leadership's *conceptzia* was the steadfast belief that Hamas lacked both the capability to launch a large-scale ground incursion across the heavily monitored border and the will to forgo the economic benefits that it derived from worker remittances in Israel and investments from the Gulf. The Israeli *conceptzia* did not envision a situation in which Hamas's ideology and commitment to resistance would trump its interest in continued economic benefits and local governance. Just days after the invasion, an Israeli army spokesperson captured the

---

<sup>101</sup> Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel: Vol. I*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979, 803. See also David Makovsky, "The Collapse of Israel's Hamas 'Conceptzia'," *National Interest*, October 26, 2023, <https://nationalinterest.org/print/feature/collapse-israel%E2%80%99s-hamas-conceptzia-207058>.

<sup>102</sup> Steven R. Meek, "The Illusion of Defeat: Egyptian Strategic Thinking and the 1973 Yom Kippur War," United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2016, 8–9, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/AD1022141.pdf>.

<sup>103</sup> Bruce Riedel, "Enigma: The Anatomy of Israel's Intelligence Failure Almost 45 Years Ago," Brookings Institution, September 25, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/enigma-the-anatomy-of-israels-intelligence-failure-almost-45-years-ago/>.

<sup>104</sup> Riedel, "Enigma: The Anatomy of Israel's Intelligence Failure Almost 45 Years Ago."

analytic failure succinctly: “We believed that the fact that they were coming in to work and bringing money into Gaza would create a certain level of calm. We were wrong.”<sup>105</sup>

The *conceptzia* was an article of faith among senior political and military leaders, according to Michael Milshtein, head of Aman’s Department for Palestinian Affairs, who said it was supported not only by Prime Minister Netanyahu, but also by civilian leaders from across the political spectrum, the IDF, and Shin Bet. “The narrative become entrenched in the upper echelons of Israeli politics and was subscribed to by top military and intelligence chiefs. Governing was meant to moderate Hamas.... But it was all wishful thinking.”<sup>106</sup>

Belief in the *conceptzia* also reached far down into the ranks of the IDF and Aman. For example, after the IDF deployed troops and attacked Hamas sites in response to Palestinian protests at the border in late September 2023,<sup>107</sup> the commander of the Gaza Division requested a border security analysis, which reported weekly drills by six Hamas battalions.<sup>108</sup> But the division’s intelligence officer downplayed this evidence of military planning, instead highlighting the ways in which Hamas benefitted economically from calm at the border and concluding that Hamas would keep the peace.<sup>109</sup>

Adherence to the flawed *conceptzia* meant that few officials were looking for outliers or seeking alternative assessments. As *New York Times* reporters Ronan Bergman and Adam Goldman write, Israeli failures to predict the October 7 attacks were rooted in “a single, fatally inaccurate belief that Hamas lacked the capability to attack and would not dare to do so. That belief was so ingrained in the Israeli government, officials said, that they disregarded growing evidence to the contrary.”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Beth Sanner, who served as President Trump’s daily intelligence

---

<sup>105</sup> Samia Nakhoul and Jonathan Saul, “How Hamas Duped Israel as it Planned Devastating Attack,” Reuters, October 10, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-israel-was-duped-hamas-planned-devastating-assault-2023-10-08/>.

<sup>106</sup> Jamie Dettmer, “Our Warnings on Hamas Were Ignored, Israel’s Women Border Troops Say,” *Politico*, November 21, 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/israel-border-troops-women-hamas-warnings-war-october-7-benjamin-netanyahu/>.

<sup>107</sup> See Associated Press, “Israel Shuts Down Main Crossing with Gaza After Outbreak of Border Violence,” September 19, 2023, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2023-09-19/israel-shuts-down-main-crossing-with-gaza-after-outbreak-of-border-violence>. See also “IDF strikes Hamas post in retaliation after Gaza border riots,” i24News, September 23, 2023, <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/defense/1695478516-palestinians-report-2-hurt-in-gaza-border-rioting>. See also “Escalation on Gaza Border: IDF strikes Hamas post amid border riots,” i24News, September 26, 2023, <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/defense/1695742380-escalation-on-the-gaza-border-explosive-balloon-starts-fire-in-kfar-aza>.

<sup>108</sup> Fabian, “2 Commando Companies Said Diverted from Gaza Border to West Bank Days Before October 7.” See also *Times of Israel*, “More Details unveiled.”

<sup>109</sup> *Times of Israel*, “More Details Unveiled.” See also Mordechai de Haas, “Israel Didn’t Predict the October 7 Massacre. The Reasons Why Are Important,” *Fair Observer*, February 5, 2024, <https://www.fairobserver.com/world-news/israel-didnt-predict-the-october-7-massacre-the-reasons-why-are-important/#>.

<sup>110</sup> Bergman and Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago.”

briefers, said simply that the Israeli government “fundamentally misunderstood the goals, objectives and capabilities of Hamas.”<sup>111</sup>

Intelligence that contradicted the *conceptzia*, no matter how compelling and widely reported, was dismissed. For example, when border sentries reported in real-time clear signs that Hamas was rehearsing for an attack, analysts and superiors assessed that Hamas was merely conducting exercises for show.<sup>112</sup> Aman’s Michael Milshtein asserted that the sentries’ reports were set aside because they “did not fit into the narrative that Hamas had evolved from being a revolutionary movement and had moderated and become more institutionalized and pragmatic.”<sup>113</sup>

Ignoring evidence of military buildup because it doesn’t comport with widely held opinions is a significant source of warning failure, according to U.S. warning intelligence expert Cynthia Grabo. As she wrote in her warning intelligence for the U.S. IC, “It is essential that the buildup of military capability be analyzed and reported objectively and independently of political considerations or opinions as to the likelihood of military action.... So-called ‘negative political indications’ should never be permitted to override a realistic reporting of the military evidence.”<sup>114</sup>

## **B. Analytic Shortcomings**

As noted, Aman had the intelligence it needed to warn that Hamas intended to launch an attack on Israeli territory. But senior political, military, and intelligence officials failed to take the information seriously for two principal reasons. First, the *conceptzia* caused them to fall victim to confirmation bias; their pre-existing assumptions about Hamas’s limited capabilities served their political and strategic goals, so they continued to believe and advance them even in the face of contradictory evidence. Second, however, Israel lacked intelligence about Hamas’s underlying capabilities—information that might have helped convince more senior officials to question their preconceived notions. And no analysts appear to have assessed whether changes in Hamas’s capabilities, such as the improvement of assault tactics through observed training, might have been an indicator of corresponding changes in leadership intent.

### **1. Confirmation Bias**

Except for the small handful of lower-level observers and analysts who raised red flags, virtually all senior political and intelligence officials rejected intelligence reports about Hamas’s activities because they were inconsistent with the *conceptzia* that Hamas lacked the will and ability to undertake a major attack (e.g., something more significant than a small number of rocket launches designed to bolster the group’s legitimacy). This approach to information represents

---

<sup>111</sup> Manson, “Israel’s Massive Failure Perplexes Ex-U.S. Intelligence Officials.”

<sup>112</sup> Ariel Levite, “How Was Israel Caught Off-Guard?” *War On The Rocks*, February 22, 2024, <https://warontherocks.com/2024/02/how-was-israel-caught-off-guard/>.

<sup>113</sup> Dettmer, “Our Warnings on Hamas Were Ignored, Israel’s Women Border Troops Say.”

<sup>114</sup> Grabo, *Handbook of Warning Intelligence*, 408.

classic confirmation bias, which Kings College London intelligence analysis expert Martha Whitesmith defines as “the tendency to search for evidence that supports a preconceived or favoured theory, to interpret information to confirm a preconceived or favoured theory, or to ignore or unfairly discredit information that would disprove a preconceived or favoured theory.”<sup>115</sup> In essence, officials discredited any information that was inconsistent with their pre-existing beliefs.

This confirmation bias led officials to reject or disregard a range of intelligence indicators that Hamas had a big plan in the works. Among them:

- Believing Hamas’s capabilities to be limited, Aman officials derided the captured Jericho Wall plan, which was startling in its scale and detail, as aspirational rather than as an indication of intent.<sup>116</sup> As a result, no one ordered analysts to examine future Hamas activities with an eye to collecting indicators that Hamas was putting the plan in motion.<sup>117</sup>
- SIGINT reports from Unit 8200 noted combat drills taking part on the Gaza side of the border fence. Equally as important, sentries reported that these activities were becoming more intense, indicating an evolution from previously noted “routine” behavior. Nevertheless, a senior intelligence officer in the unit dismissed their concerns as reflecting neither intent nor capability, noting, “The scenario of the exercise described according to what the NCO wrote at the beginning is completely imaginary. And we need to see where we filter between what is intended for the purpose of ‘posing’...and what is realistic.”<sup>118</sup>
- In summer 2023, an increase in protests along the border fence led low-ranking intelligence officers from Southern Command and Gaza Division to note that Hamas was testing Israel by permitting unusually violent activity to take place at the border. In early September 2023, mid-ranking analysts briefed senior officers from Southern Command and Gaza Division that recent attempts to breach the border fence indicated that Hamas was willing to escalate. In both cases, the top Southern Command intelligence officer disagreed, stating, “It’s not going to happen.”<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> Martha Whitesmith, *Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis: Testing the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses Method* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 184, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tiso-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6369546>.

<sup>116</sup> Cuddy, “They Were Israel’s ‘Eyes on the Border’ – But Their Hamas Warnings Went Unheard.”

<sup>117</sup> Yoav Limor, “Israel Had Slam Dunk Intelligence on the Oct. 7 Attack; What Went Wrong?” *Israel Hayom*, December 4, 2023, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/12/04/israel-had-a-slam-dunk-intelligence-on-the-oct-7-attack-what-went-wrong/>.

<sup>118</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, “Intelligence Soldier’s Warning.”

<sup>119</sup> Yaniv Kubovich, “Israeli Army Braced for a Yom Kippur Attack. A Month Later, Hamas Found a Defenseless Gaza Border,” *Haaretz*, March 21, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-21/ty-article-magazine/.premium/idf-braced-for-a-yom-kippur-attack-a-month-later-hamas-found-a-defenseless-gaza-border/0000018e-6225-d507-a1cf-62f7f0a10000>.

- *Tatzpitaniyot*—sentries assigned to monitor the border with Gaza—provided corroborating evidence of an imminent Hamas attack, which they collected from various cameras and sensors situated along the border. According to their reports, individuals dressed in civilian clothing routinely approached the border fence with maps, examining the ground around it and digging holes. At first, this activity was occurring once or twice a week. But in the period leading up to October 7, it began to occur on a daily basis, and then, in the words of one report, “nearly constantly.”<sup>120</sup> When the *tatzpitaniyot* reported the incidents to their superiors, their reports were ignored or dismissed as inconsequential.<sup>121</sup> In one instance, they were told that the Gazans at the fence were just farmers and there was nothing to worry about.<sup>122</sup> In another, a senior commander threatened a sentry with court-martial if she continued to talk about “nonsense.”<sup>123</sup>

Limited collection on Hamas meant that Israeli officials greatly underestimated Hamas’s operational capabilities. As Amos Harel of *Haaretz* claimed, senior leaders viewed Hamas fighters “as a barefoot militia whose ability to inflict harm was limited and mainly amounted to inaccurate rocket fire.”<sup>124</sup> As a result, the military did not see fit to prepare for a large-scale assault. Israel also underestimated Hamas’s force strength, assessing that any invasion Hamas might manage to organize would consist of only a few dozen fighters.<sup>125</sup> Dependence on such assessments likely underpinned Israeli analysts’ and officials’ derision of the captured Hamas attack plan (Jericho Wall) as aspirational rather than feasible.<sup>126</sup> When Israeli intelligence did consider Gaza, it principally focused on Iran’s actions in the enclave, such as the provision of rockets and funding, instead of developing insights into political, economic, and security conditions that could serve as indicators of social change or potential unrest.

---

<sup>120</sup> Shira Silkoff, “Surveillance Soldiers Warned of Hamas Activity on Gaza Border for Months before Oct. 7,” *The Times of Israel*, October 26, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/surveillance-soldiers-warned-of-hamas-activity-on-gaza-border-for-months-before-oct-7/>.

<sup>121</sup> Some have suggested that the reports might have been ignored by senior Aman leadership because the *tatzpitaniyot* were predominantly female junior conscripts. Most of the *tatzpitaniyot* were subsequently killed or captured in the Hamas assault. See, for instance, Eetta Prince-Gibson, “IDF Spotters: ‘The Men Ignored Us, and We All Paid Dearly,’” *Moment Magazine*, 15 December 2023, <https://momentmag.com/idf-spotters-the-men-ignored-us-and-we-all-paid-dearly/>.

<sup>122</sup> Silkoff, “Surveillance Soldiers Warned of Hamas Activity on Gaza Border for Months before Oct. 7.”

<sup>123</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, “Intelligence Soldier’s Warning.”

<sup>124</sup> Amos Harel, “Half a Year Later, Parts of the October 7 Puzzle are Still Coming Together,” *Haaretz*, March 29, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-29/ty-article/.premium/parts-of-oct-7-puzzle-coming-together-half-year-later/0000018e-869e-d0d3-a98e-d6ffa4d00000>.

<sup>125</sup> Bergman and Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago.”

<sup>126</sup> Bergman and Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago.”



## 2. Poor Application of Tactical Warning

Aman failed to see the tactical intelligence it collected as indicators that could warn of future strategic threats. Because senior and mid-level officials adhered to the flawed *conceptzia*, they refused to see *tatzpitaniyot*'s tactical reports about Hamas exercises as indicators that Hamas might be planning to use improved military capabilities in a new or unexpected way.

Similarly, although Israeli intelligence learned that several dozen Hamas members activated Israeli SIM cards in the early hours of October 7, no one in a senior position—including IDF chief of staff Herzi Halevi and senior officials from Southern Command and Shin Bet, who discussed this intelligence on a phone call—saw this development as a warning indicator that Hamas was mobilizing at that very moment.

Even that limited tactical warning could have saved lives, according to Lt. Col. Meir Ohayon, commander of the 51st Battalion, one of the first units to respond on October 7. Ohayon told Israeli news outlet Yedioth Ahronoth, “If I had one hour's warning, only one hour, everything would have looked different. . . . The surprise element was so major here. With an hour's warning, I would have already placed the security squads in the settlements [on alert], closed all the arrival axes, [and ensured] all the fighters were already outside and properly equipped. That's all I needed to prepare. One hour.”<sup>127</sup>

## 3. Limited Use of Structured Analytic Techniques

Structured analytic techniques (SATs) can enable intelligence analysts to “think outside the box” and consider alternative scenarios and outcomes. SATs, according to a RAND Corporation analysis, “specifically address cognitive pitfalls that have been associated with recurrent intelligence failures” and enhance analytic quality by drawing on analysts with different expertise and viewpoints. Indeed, RAND found that intelligence reports using SATs “addressed a broader range of potential outcomes and implications than did other analyses.”<sup>128</sup> Such tools also help prevent analysts from assuming that their adversary would approach a problem with the same values and cost/benefit calculus as they would, a dynamic referred to as “mirror imaging.” In the U.S. IC, mandated analytic standards require the analysis of plausible alternative hypotheses,<sup>129</sup> which means that analysts all receive training in these analytic techniques.

If Israeli intelligence analysts had been trained in structured analytic techniques, they would have had tools to avoid—and even argue against—instinctive adherence to conventional wisdom.

---

<sup>127</sup> Yossi Yehoshua and Reuven Weiss, “Had I Received a Warning One Hour Earlier, Everything Would Have Looked Different,” *Ynet News*, June 11, 2024, <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/rkd7iahha>.

<sup>128</sup> Stephen Artner, Richard S. Girven, and James B. Bruce, *Assessing the Value of Structured Analytic Techniques in the U.S. Intelligence Community*, RAND Corporation report RR-1408-OSD, January 9, 2017, 3, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1400/RR1408/RAND\\_RR1408.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1400/RR1408/RAND_RR1408.pdf).

<sup>129</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Analytic Standards,” Intelligence Community Directive 203 Technical Amendment, Sec. 6(e)(4), December 21, 2022, [https://www.odni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-203\\_TA\\_Analytic\\_Standards\\_21\\_Dec\\_2022.pdf](https://www.odni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-203_TA_Analytic_Standards_21_Dec_2022.pdf).

Indeed, Knesset member Benny Gantz, then the IDF Chief of Staff, noted the need for this advanced analytic tradecraft when he said, “We need an organizational structure that encourages all ranks to be critical, to cast doubt, to re-examine basic assumptions, to get outside the framework.”<sup>130</sup>

Just to consider a few such techniques that might have been useful in evaluating the situation before October 7:

- Red teaming has analysts play the role of their adversary and look at the world from their point of view. Red team analysis informed by the adversary’s values and worldview—and developed by studying Hamas’s actions and statements—might have provided Aman analysts with a better understanding of the goals, priorities, and mindsets of Hamas’s leadership. Such an exercise could also have examined whether Hamas intended to provoke Israel to lash out with a disproportionate response, weighing, from Hamas leaders’ perspective, whether causing Israel to become mired in an internally and internationally controversial war might advance Hamas’s interests enough to justify the destruction an Israeli military response would cause.
- A technique called “What If?” plans backwards from a hypothetical unexpected event, assessing how such an outcome could have occurred. Such a technique requires analysts to brainstorm crisis events (itself an exercise that requires creative thinking) and identify the milestones or indicators that would lead up to that outcome. If Israeli analysts had gamed out the events that would presage a large-scale Hamas attack, they might have identified warning signs that matched Hamas’s real-world actions.<sup>131</sup>
- Wargaming potential crisis scenarios could have enabled Aman to play out an unlikely event like a large-scale Hamas ground invasion. Indeed, since Israel already possessed the Hamas’s Jericho Wall attack plan, analysts could have wargamed the plan to test whether it was indeed beyond the group’s capabilities, as intelligence leaders believed. Players could have considered what Hamas would want to achieve, how it might prepare, and how it might execute an attack, as well as how Israeli security forces would respond. The insights could have led to a reassessment of Hamas’s intent and capabilities, identified ways to deter an attack, and enhanced defensive preparations.
- In the “Devil’s Advocate” technique, colleagues prompt analysts to re-evaluate their positions by challenging the validity and persuasiveness of their assumptions and assertions and building a case for an alternative explanation. This technique is particularly useful, according to a U.S. Army handbook on intelligence analysis, “when

---

<sup>130</sup> “How Israeli Intelligence Failures Led to a ‘Devil’s Advocate’ Role,” *Toronto Star*, May 21, 2017, [https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/how-israeli-intelligence-failures-led-to-a-devils-advocate-role/article\\_2189cca3-c059-5608-a666-40656f907534.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/how-israeli-intelligence-failures-led-to-a-devils-advocate-role/article_2189cca3-c059-5608-a666-40656f907534.html).

<sup>131</sup> See Richards J. Heuer, Jr., “Improving Intelligence Analysis with ACH,” <https://pherson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Improving-Intelligence-Analysis-with-ACH.pdf>.

there is concern about seemingly widespread unanimity amongst analysts on a critical issue”<sup>132</sup>—such as a widely held *conceptzia*.

Israeli military intelligence does have a Devil’s Advocate unit—created after intelligence failures in the lead-up to the 1973 Yom Kippur War—to challenge assumptions and present alternative analyses.<sup>133</sup> The Devil’s Advocate function has been greatly diminished since the Agranat Commission recommended its establishment 50 years ago; the unit responsible for it now consists only of an IDF civilian and a small number of reservists,<sup>134</sup> a staffing level inadequate to stress-test assessments of the many threats Israel faces.

Despite the small staff, the head of the Devil’s Advocate unit identified the likelihood of a Hamas attack from Gaza just weeks before it occurred, but no one appeared to take heed. The unit chief tried “to challenge our fundamental basic assessment, which held that Hamas was interested in maintaining quiet in the Gaza Strip,” the officer told Israel’s Channel 12. “My central claim was that Hamas would soon launch a confrontation with Israel, because it identified deep processes that were fundamentally changing the strategic situation”<sup>135</sup>—a challenge to the prevailing *conceptzia*. He argued his case to senior policy and military officials in writing on September 21 and 26, as well as in a September 26 speech at an IDF intelligence branch meeting and on September 27 in a presentation to the head of Israeli military intelligence,<sup>136</sup> but his multiple warnings went unheeded.

Given the reluctance of senior military leaders to believe anything that challenged the *conceptzia*, it’s not clear that any level of resourcing for the Devil’s Advocate function could have convinced them that the situation in Gaza had changed. Although Israel’s political and military leaders were warned, they were unwilling to be persuaded.

#### 4. Senior Leaders Considered Alternative Analysis Too Late

The first cracks in conception of the IDF’s leadership that Hamas was unwilling to challenge the status quo began to appear shortly before the attack on October 7. The head of the IDI’s research division, Brigadier General Amit Saar, claimed that he drafted an emergency warning

---

<sup>132</sup> Department of the Army, “Intelligence Analysis,” Army Techniques Publication ATP-2-33.4, 6-3, January 10, 2020, <https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/atp2-33-4.pdf>.

<sup>133</sup> *Toronto Star*, “How Israeli Intelligence Failures Led to a ‘Devil’s Advocate’ Role.”

<sup>134</sup> Danny Hecht, “I Tried to Challenge, I Imagined ‘Terrorist Attacks and Kidnapping Attempts’: The Warning of The Head of the Control Department at Aman a Week Before the War,” N12, January 7, 2024, [https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024\\_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm](https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm). Translation by Google Translate.

<sup>135</sup> “Head of IDF Devil’s Advocate Unit Tried Repeatedly in September to Warn of Possible Hamas Attack,” *Times of Israel*, January 6, 2024, [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/head-of-idf-devils-advocate-unit-tried-repeatedly-in-september-to-warn-of-possible-hamas-attack/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/head-of-idf-devils-advocate-unit-tried-repeatedly-in-september-to-warn-of-possible-hamas-attack/).

<sup>136</sup> *Times of Israel*, “Head of IDF Devil’s Advocate Unit Tried Repeatedly in September to Warn of Possible Hamas Attack”

letter, which noted that Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah had concluded that the time to attack Israeli was opportune due to Israeli political divisions and the IDF's low level of readiness.<sup>137</sup> Saar intended to send the warning letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu and members of the national security cabinet after Simchat Torah, the day on which Hamas launched its attack, and he was given permission to do so by the IDF chief of staff and the director of military intelligence.<sup>138</sup> Before he could send the letter, however, the matter was overtaken by events. That said, the fact that a general officer needed permission to write a letter on an urgent national security issue suggests that warning intelligence took a back seat to bureaucratic procedures and a fear of being punished for being either insubordinate or alarmist.

Around 1:30 a.m. on the morning of the attack, the office manager for General Herzi Halevi, the IDF's Chief of Staff, received an alert almost simultaneously from Shin Bet and from the general in charge of the IDF's Southern Command. Halevi was awakened at 3:30 a.m. and was briefed along with the head of IDF operations and the head of Southern Command.<sup>139</sup> Halevi ordered Aman to review its information, according to one report, "from a perspective skeptical of the prevailing assumption that Hamas was not interested in war."<sup>140</sup> This request—on the morning of the attack—is the first known senior-level request for an alternative analysis of intelligence related to Gaza.

## 5. Assign Standardized Likelihood and Confidence Levels to Analytic Conclusions

As *tatzpitaniyot*, collectors, and analysts highlighted indicators that Hamas's posture was evolving, they seemed to have expressed their concerns in varying ways. Some simply reported what they collected; some communicated, in essence, that the situation appeared to be changing but that they weren't sure of the implications; others attached significance to reports, arguing with some conviction that observed changes suggested Hamas might be up to something; others rang alarm bells with confident assertions that an invasion was coming. Such different ways of presenting information make it difficult to convey either the likelihood of a potential outcome or analysts' confidence in both the credibility of the intelligence and the analytic assessment. As a result, senior officials could easily dismiss individual reports as not credible or alarmist.

The U.S. IC uses standardized terms, linked to percentages, to characterize its judgement of the likelihood that an event will take place. Intelligence consumers therefore know that when the IC says something "highly probable" or "very likely," it means there is roughly an 80 percent

---

<sup>137</sup> "Could October 7 Have Been Prevented? IDF General's Urgent Warning to Military Chief – Report," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 5, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-790374>.

<sup>138</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, "Could October 7 Have Been Prevented?"

<sup>139</sup> The IDF Chief of Operations received his own separate briefing prior to that with Halevi. According to a news report, he sought "explanations as to whether it was a drill or a strategic operation against Israel in the coming hours. That consultation concluded that no definitive explanation could be reached, and sought additional intelligence from the IDF's 8200 signal intelligence unit." See *Times of Israel*, "More Details Unveiled."

<sup>140</sup> *Times of Israel*, "More Details Unveiled."

chance that the development will occur. Similarly, the U.S. IC uses standardized terms (low, medium, and high) to assess its confidence in its judgements, which includes assessments of the credibility of intelligence and the extent of intelligence gaps. Readers therefore know that when analysts express “medium confidence” in their assessment, it means that the information is credibly sourced and plausible, but might be based on some assumptions and suffer from some intelligence gaps.<sup>141</sup>

## 6. Anchoring Bias: IDF Intelligence Planned to Fight the Last War

The IDF seems to have assumed that future threats would manifest themselves in the same way as past ones, preparing, metaphorically, to fight the last war rather than the next one. For example, in an assessment of the 2014 Gaza war, Israel’s state comptroller found that the IDF was poorly prepared for Hamas’s extensive use of cross-border tunnels.<sup>142</sup> In the aftermath, according to former IDF intelligence commander Amos Malka, Israeli security forces became overly focused on the threat from tunnels, concluding that Hamas would again launch any attack through tunnels rather than through an assault above ground.<sup>143</sup> Similarly, after Hamas launched 4,300 rockets into Israel over 11 days in 2021 (almost twice as many per day as in previous conflicts), Israel stopped collecting and analyzing information about Hamas fighters and shifted its intelligence resources to rockets.<sup>144</sup> As a result, Aman and Southern Command ceased assessing the possibility of a Hamas invasion, leaving only three people in the Gaza Division to collect and analyze information on the intent and capabilities of Hamas’s ground fighting units.<sup>145</sup>

Focusing on old data to forecast the future is a classic case of anchoring bias, which often leads analysts to assess that the future will resemble the past. Structured analytic techniques that identify and challenge such biases could have helped analysts think more imaginatively about alternative futures worth bringing to the attention of senior officials.

---

<sup>141</sup> Unclassified or declassified National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) typically explain the IC’s estimative terms. See, for example, National Intelligence Council, “Foreign Threats to the 2020 Federal elections,” March 10, 2021, 10, <https://www.intelligence.gov/assets/documents/702%20Documents/declassified/ICA-declass-16MAR21.pdf>. See also Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “U.S. National Intelligence: An Overview,” 2011, 59–60, [https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/IC\\_Consumers\\_Guide\\_2011.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/IC_Consumers_Guide_2011.pdf). See also Corey Flintoff, “Breaking Down the National Intelligence Estimate,” NPR, December 6, 2007, <https://www.npr.org/2007/12/06/16989979/breaking-down-the-national-intelligence-estimate>.

<sup>142</sup> Aron Heller, “Watchdog: Tunnels Caught Israel Off-Guard in 2014 Gaza War,” Associated Press, February 28, 2017, <https://apnews.com/international-news-general-news-49982d220135419d952fce0e6ada9005>.

<sup>143</sup> Yonah Jeremy Bob, “Ex-IDF Intel. Chief: These Are the Failures That Led to October 7,” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 2, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-794932>.

<sup>144</sup> For shift, see Kubovich, “Disdain, Denial, Neglect: The Deep Roots of Israel’s Devastating Intelligence Failure on Hamas and October 7.” For 2021 rocket numbers, see Sebastien Roblin, “How Hamas’s Arsenal Shaped the Gaza War of May 2021,” *Forbes*, May 25, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sebastienroblin/2021/05/25/how-hamass-arsenal-shaped-the-gaza-war-of-may-2021/?sh=783349b479df>.

<sup>145</sup> Kubovich, “Disdain, Denial, Neglect: The Deep Roots of Israel’s Devastating Intelligence Failure on Hamas and October 7.”

## 7. Poor Understanding of Hamas Intelligence on Israel

Israel had limited understanding of the quality of Hamas’s intelligence collection and how well Hamas understood the vulnerabilities of Israeli border posts, towns, and kibbutzim. According to *The Jerusalem Post*, Hamas recruited Bedouins, Arab-Israelis, and some of the 17,000<sup>146</sup> Palestinians working in Israel and ran them as HUMINT sources to report on the locations of civilian and military infrastructure,<sup>147</sup> including border communities’ layouts and security measures.<sup>148</sup> Hamas fighters even knew where kibbutzim armories were and ambushed residents as they ran to retrieve weapons.<sup>149</sup> Shin Bet—the agency responsible for vetting Palestinians seeking work permits<sup>150</sup>—claims to have ruled out the possibility that such workers spied for Hamas, but its investigation only considered 16 percent of Gazan workers with permits.<sup>151</sup>

There is no question that Hamas made extensive use of OSINT. Documents captured from attackers slain on October 7 showed that Hamas used maps from Google Earth to show roads, layouts of kibbutzim, and locations of observation towers and military bases. Had Israel increased SIGINT collection targeting Hamas, including the interception and analysis of web traffic emanating from Gaza, it might have noticed repeated visits to IDF web pages and to Israeli soldiers’ social media profiles—an intelligence indicator of Hamas’s interest in IDF units’ capabilities and individual soldiers’ activities and locations.<sup>152</sup> (As a counterintelligence matter, Israel could have hindered Hamas’s gathering of such information by limiting publicly available operational information and ensuring troops exercise better communications security.)

It is likely that Hamas received intelligence from Iran or Hezbollah, as captured documents included analyses of Israeli tanks’ and weapons systems’ weaknesses.<sup>153</sup> It is notable that early in the assault, Hamas attacked a SIGINT facility with an extensive intelligence presence—indicating it knew about a sensitive intelligence collection site.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup> Amos Harel, “Half a Year Later, Parts of the October 7 Puzzle are Still Coming Together,” *Haaretz*, March 29, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-29/ty-article/.premium/parts-of-oct-7-puzzle-coming-together-half-year-later/0000018e-869e-d0d3-a98e-d6ffa4d00000>.

<sup>147</sup> “Hamas Broke Into Dozens of Cameras in the Surrounding Settlements Before October 7,” *The Jerusalem Post*, March 15, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-792074>.

<sup>148</sup> Eyal Pinko, “This Is How Hamas Gathered Intelligence on Israel in Preparation for the October 2023 War,” *Israel Defense*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.israeldefense.co.il/node/60112>. Translation by Google Translate.

<sup>149</sup> Harel, “Half a Year Later, Parts of the October 7 Puzzle are Still Coming Together.”

<sup>150</sup> “Government To Mull Plan to Replace Palestinian Laborers With 80,000 Foreign Workers,” *Times of Israel*, January 1, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/government-to-mull-plan-to-replace-palestinian-laborers-with-80000-foreign-workers/>.

<sup>151</sup> “Report: Shin Bet Debunks Idea That Gazan Workers Spied En Masse for Hamas Pre-Oct. 7,” *Times of Israel*, March 7, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/report-shin-bet-debunks-idea-that-gazan-workers-spied-en-masse-for-hamas-pre-oct-7/>.

<sup>152</sup> Pinko, “This Is How Hamas Gathered Intelligence on Israel in Preparation for the October 2023 War.”

<sup>153</sup> Pinko, “This Is How Hamas Gathered Intelligence on Israel in Preparation for the October 2023 War.”

<sup>154</sup> Rubin and Morris, “How Hamas Broke Through Israel’s Border Defenses During Oct. 7 Attack.”

Hamas also gathered a significant amount of information through hacking and cyber collection. For example, Hamas used cyber tools to hack into the cell phones of Israeli soldiers, which likely provided information about troop locations, movements, and routines. Hamas also hacked into civilian facilities' security cameras, including some in *kibbutzim* in southern Israel. The IDF knew of both cyberattacks, but it was not aware of the scale until after it had a chance to examine captured systems in Gaza.<sup>155</sup> According to *The Jerusalem Post*, "The army now admits that the camera issue was identified in advance but was not dealt with appropriately."<sup>156</sup>

## 8. Hamas Succeeded at Denial & Deception

Hamas successfully denied Israeli efforts to collect on its attack planning and deceived Israel of its intentions. Hamas exercised excellent operational security (OPSEC), as Hamas leaders were aware of Israeli intelligence collection and took steps to avoid being monitored.<sup>157</sup> The invasion plan was highly compartmented, known only to a limited number of senior leaders.<sup>158</sup> To evade Israeli SIGINT collection, Hamas passed orders in-person and through couriers, avoided using computers and cell phones, and relied on point-to-point hard-wired phone lines to communicate.<sup>159</sup> The security measures Hamas took to deny Israeli SIGINT greatly complicated Israeli efforts to collect indicators of an attack.<sup>160</sup>

Aman also failed to identify Hamas's deception activities, which were intended to reinforce Israel's view that the group was more committed to cooperation than conflict. DIA's Cynthia Grabo, in a seminal book on strategic warning, wrote that "the most successful of all deception plans and operations are those which capitalize on and actively encourage the enemy to believe

---

<sup>155</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, "Hamas Broke Into Dozens of Cameras."

<sup>156</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, "Hamas Broke Into Dozens of Cameras."

<sup>157</sup> Amir Bohbot, "'Hamas Exercised the Perfect Deception Before October 7' – Defense Official," *The Jerusalem Post*, December 1, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/gaza-news/article-776080>. See also Ronan Bergman and Patrick Kingsley, "How Israel's Feared Security Services Failed to Stop Hamas's Attack," *New York Times*, October 10, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/10/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-security-failure.html>.

<sup>158</sup> Calder Walton, "Four Paths to Israel's Intelligence Failure," *Engelsburg Ideas*, October 12, 2023, <https://engelsbergideas.com/notebook/four-paths-to-israels-intelligence-failure/>.

<sup>159</sup> Tia Goldenberg, "What Went Wrong? Questions Emerge Over Israel's Intelligence Prowess After Hamas Attack," Associated Press, October 9, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-gaza-attack-intel-a5287a18773232f26ca171233be01721>. See also Pamela Brown and Zachery Cohen, "Hamas operatives used phone lines installed in tunnels under Gaza to plan Israel attack over 2 years, sources familiar with intelligence say," CNN.com, October 25, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/24/politics/intelligence-hamas-israel-attack-tunnels-phone-lines/index.html>.

<sup>160</sup> Uzi Rubin, "Has the IDF and Israel's Security Concept Over-Relied on Innovation and Technology at the Expense of Basic Military Principles," Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security position paper, November 2, 2023, <https://jiss.org.il/he/rubin-did-idf-rely-excessively-on-innovation-and-technology/>. Translation by Google Translate.

his own preconceptions.”<sup>161</sup> For example, Hamas reinforced the prevailing Israeli *conceptzia* in May 2023 by providing Israel with intelligence on Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) at a time when it was exchanging fire with the IDF; Hamas provided such help to bolster the perception that it could be a partner in governing Gaza.<sup>162</sup> Similarly, Hamas encouraged demonstrations at the border to normalize the presence of large numbers of people so the eventual massing of attackers would seem routine.<sup>163</sup>

Israel’s susceptibility to Hamas’s denial and deception seems surprising given that Israeli intelligence already possessed Hamas’s Jericho Wall attack plan. However, because Aman saw few indicators of Hamas attack planning, analysts could only point to a handful of incidents indicating that the Jericho Wall plan was being put in motion. Had Israel collected more intelligence on Hamas’s preparatory activities, analysts might have been able to present a more convincing argument that Hamas was engaging in a pattern of increasingly aggressive activity.

---

<sup>161</sup> Cynthia M. Grabo, *A Handbook of Warning Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence Agency, July 1972), 29-4. Approved for public release August 21, 2002.

<sup>162</sup> Rubin, “As It Planned For Oct. 7, Hamas Lulled Israel Into A False Sense of Calm.”

<sup>163</sup> Rubin, “As It Planned For Oct. 7, Hamas Lulled Israel Into A False Sense of Calm.”



## 6. Structural Intelligence Failures

---

The inability to warn of the October 7 attack was not due merely to the sum of multiple individual shortcomings, such as a dearth of HUMINT sources in Gaza and poor analytic tradecraft. Israeli intelligence also suffered from a number of structural deficits that emboldened mid-level and senior officials to dismiss analyses that contradicted the prevailing conventional wisdom.

### A. Failure to Insulate Intelligence from Politics

First, and perhaps foremost, the Israeli intelligence establishment is not insulated from political influence. The government uses the IDF to pursue its security policies and priorities, and the role of military intelligence is to support military decisions and operations that seek to advance them. External threats and violent internal political divisions have made the IDF integral to the execution of both foreign and domestic policy.

Israel's leaders viewed violence in the West Bank as a higher priority than a seemingly calm Gaza. Not only have increased numbers of settlers required more troops to protect them, but West Bank settler advocates hold positions of influence in the Cabinet and have the ability to bring down the prime minister's parliamentary majority. As a result, the IDF and Aman shifted resources and capabilities to reflect those priorities. It is very difficult for analysts who are low in a hierarchical organization to challenge arguments and assumptions underlying senior leaders' policy and operational decisions. Although some analysts did speak truth to power, senior and mid-ranking officers quashed their dissenting interpretations.

### B. Adherence to the *Conceptzia*

Secondly, Israeli intelligence bought into political leaders' *conceptzia* that Hamas was content with modest progress and continued governance. Evidence to the contrary—such as red flags raised by *tatzpitaniyot* who warned that Hamas activities increasingly mirrored the captured Jericho Wall plan—were dismissed because they did not comport with widely held conventional wisdom. Indeed, as late as the week before the attack, intelligence briefers told senior leaders that Hamas was deterred from launching a significant attack on Israel. No mention was made of the sentries' warnings, the Unit 8200 assessments, the Jericho Wall plan, or other pieces of information that could have supported alternative conclusions.<sup>164</sup>

---

<sup>164</sup> Bergman and Kingsley, "How Israel's Feared Security Services Failed to Stop Hamas's Attack."

### C. Absence of Formal Analytic Processes

Israeli intelligence organizations lacked formal analytic processes. Agencies drowned in data that they couldn't analyze effectively.<sup>165</sup> Tactical reports were shared without context. To be credible, intelligence analyses must be critiqued, coordinated with other agencies' experts, and annotated with known information gaps and alternative interpretations.

The IDF's use of "red teaming" to challenge analytic assumptions seems to have been confined to a small "Devil's Advocate" staff that operated separately from mainstream analysts,<sup>166</sup> ensuring that contrarian views would be offered only in specific assessments rather than integrated into all analytic products. Although the office's assessments went directly to top officials, they lacked context because they were developed separate and apart from the rest of the IC.

The performance of the Devil's Advocate team is noteworthy for what it says about Aman's bureaucracy. A civilian leading a small team of reservists was able to develop innovative, insightful, and accurate assessments in part because it operated outside of the usual organizational constraints, personal biases, and tendency toward "groupthink." Yet while its bureaucratic isolation boosted the quality of the office's analysis, it proved to be an obstacle to getting its analysis heeded by others in the organization. The solution is to encourage collaboration and exchanges of views between the staff performing current intelligence and those conducting strategic assessments.

### D. Limited Dissemination of Intelligence Reports

Intelligence reports were not formally disseminated up and across the national security enterprise; a Unit 8200 analyst had identified and reported the similarities between Jericho Wall and observed Hamas activities, but her warnings never got disseminated above mid-level officials.<sup>167</sup> Reports are even disseminated haphazardly within individual organizations. Warnings about Hamas exercises from a Unit 8200 NCO were sent by email, limiting the ability to disseminate the assessment beyond her immediate team.<sup>168</sup> On October 7, the commander of Unit 8200 (according to a former commander) had no knowledge of Hamas's Jericho Wall plan—even though his unit was the one that acquired it.<sup>169</sup> Such field reports should have been disseminated in raw form through a universally accessible network or database, which would have enabled analysts to integrate them into "finished" intelligence reports—comprehensive, rigorous, and peer-

---

<sup>165</sup> Harris, "In the Search for Hostages, U.S. is Israel's Key Intelligence Partner."

<sup>166</sup> *Toronto Star*, "How Israeli Intelligence Failures." See also Hecht, "I Tried to Challenge, I Imagined 'Terrorist Attacks and Kidnapping Attempts': The Warning of The Head of the Control Department at Aman a Week Before the War."

<sup>167</sup> Ben Caspit, "Exposure: The Shelved Report of 8200 on the Omissions That Led to the Massacre in the South," *Maariv*, February 24, 2024, <https://www.maariv.co.il/journalists/Article-1078519>. Translation by Google Translate.

<sup>168</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, "Intelligence Soldier's Warning."

<sup>169</sup> Caspit, "Exposure: The Shelved Report of 8200 on the Omissions That Led to the Massacre in the South."

reviewed assessments written to provide an identified customer set of senior officials with nuanced interpretations of evolving dynamics in Gaza that address the recipients' specific needs.

Finger-pointing and infighting within Aman after the attack highlights that unclear and overlapping roles within the Israeli IC hinder the effective dissemination of reporting. As reported by *The Jerusalem Post*,

The military's intelligence analysis division and Unit 8200 are currently at war to lay more blame on each other for failing to foresee the invasion. Intelligence analysis is slamming Unit 8200 for not passing on, or being loud about, all of its findings, such as the hundreds of Israeli SIM cards that lit up in Gaza on October 6. Unit 8200 is blasting intelligence analysis, saying it is a data-collecting unit, not the one responsible for drawing conclusions about whether or not war is coming. It also says that the tone set by intelligence analysis was to be dismissive of any evidence that Hamas could pose a threat.<sup>170</sup>

Collection units can and should disseminate their information widely, whether they objectively report what they collected ("fact of" reporting) or augment it with tactical analysis that provides context or ascribes possible meaning; analysts need all available information to develop comprehensive and credible assessments.

Prime Minister Netanyahu himself acknowledged that intelligence was not effectively disseminated during a meeting with the families of the *tatzpitaniyot* who were killed or kidnapped on October 7. After family members complained that the sentries had reported their concerns, Netanyahu stated, "All of this material was supposed to have reached someplace that operates the systems, and it didn't happen." He also claimed that his son Avner, who served in combat intelligence, told him that the *tatzpitaniyot* reports were "pure gold" but were "not going into a database."<sup>171</sup>

## E. Aman's Rigid Military Hierarchy

For a number of reasons—most notably that the principal threats to Israel since its founding were the possibility of military attack—Israel's military intelligence directorate (Aman) assumed the role of the Israeli IC's primary provider of strategic intelligence estimates. But while Aman's organizational culture and operational expertise make it well suited to analyze military capabilities, these factors may undermine its ability to assess the often unclear plans and intentions of enemy leaders.

---

<sup>170</sup> Yonah Jeremy Bob, "IDF Internal Mess Over October 7 Probes Erupts into Chaos – Analysis," *The Jerusalem Post*, July 15, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-810439>.

<sup>171</sup> "That Amazes Me, I Didn't Know": Netanyahu 'Surprised' to Hear What Happened at Israeli Army Base on October 7," *Haaretz*, July 17, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-07-17/ty-article/.premium/netanyahu-surprised-to-hear-what-happened-at-israeli-army-base-on-october-7/00000190-bfd0-d2f8-abdb-bff421df0000>.

In a study of Aman’s effectiveness, Israeli academic Uri Bar-Joseph asserts that civilian analysts may be more effective at strategic assessments. He writes, “core military values, such as stiff discipline, conformity, and clear hierarchy, conflict with the basic values of high-quality intelligence-making, which involves openness, original thinking, and, sometimes, informal discussions...” Noting that Aman analysts’ warnings before the Yom Kippur failed to reach policymakers, Bar-Joseph adds, “rigid hierarchy and discipline prevented any assessment other than the “official” theory from being mentioned outside the organization. Such a pattern of behavior can take place in civilian intelligence organizations as well, but it is more likely to occur in a military environment.”<sup>172</sup> In evaluating assessments of increased threats from Hamas, Aman mid- and senior-level officials demonstrated an adherence to hierarchy, as hostility to open discussion, and a refusal to deviate from the prevailing conventional wisdom.

## F. Aman’s Undervaluing Women’s Contributions

The fact that female sentries’ and analysts’ reports were universally dismissed suggests that intelligence officials saw women’s contributions as less credible and valuable. The *tatzpitaniyot* jobs are very low status, and units are almost entirely female<sup>173</sup>—and unarmed.<sup>174</sup> (Fifteen *tatzpitaniyot* were killed on October 7, and an additional seven were kidnapped and brought to Gaza.<sup>175</sup>) The role is so undesirable that it is the only function that the IDF has trouble filling, with more than 100 female draftees refusing to serve in the position even at the cost of being imprisoned.<sup>176</sup> When such low-status personnel reported Hamas activities that contradicted widely held views, they were threatened with punishment rather than heeded.<sup>177</sup> Not surprisingly, multiple sentries who survived the October 7 attack expressed beliefs that their reports were ignored because they were women who challenged the conventional wisdom.<sup>178</sup>

Female analysts also reported not being taken seriously when they voiced their concerns about Hamas. A junior officer and a career military intelligence NCO in 8200—both female—told a senior officer they saw signs of Hamas preparing to attack kibbutzim and military posts but were

---

<sup>172</sup> Uri Bar-Joseph, “Military Intelligence as the National Intelligence Estimator,” *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (April 2010), 518, 520.

<sup>173</sup> “Surveillance Soldiers Charge Sexism A Factor in Their Oct. 7 Warnings Being Ignored,” *The Times of Israel*, November 19, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/surveillance-soldiers-say-oct-7-warnings-ignored-charge-sexism-played-a-role/>.

<sup>174</sup> Cuddy, “They Were Israel’s ‘Eyes On The Border’ - But Their Hamas Warnings Went Unheard.”

<sup>175</sup> *Haaretz*, “That Amazes Me, I Didn’t Know’: Netanyahu ‘Surprised’.”

<sup>176</sup> Yaniv Kubovich, “The Female-Only Israeli Army Role Leading Too Many to Suicide,” *Haaretz*, December 7, 2022, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-12-07/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/the-female-only-israeli-army-role-leading-too-many-to-suicide/00000184-ec31-d9f1-a9e6-edf39bb60000>.

<sup>177</sup> “IDF Surveillance Posts Warned About Impending Invasion,” Israel National News – Arutz Sheva, November 19, 2023, <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/380538>.

<sup>178</sup> Kubovich, “The Women Soldiers Who Warned of a Pending Hamas Attack – and Were Ignored.” See also Prince-Gibson, “IDF Spotters: ‘The Men Ignored Us, and We All Paid Dearly’.”

ignored.<sup>179</sup> Three months before the attack, an experienced female analyst in 8200 “warned that Hamas had conducted an intense, daylong training exercise that appeared similar to what was outlined in the blueprint. But a colonel in the Gaza Division brushed off her concerns,”<sup>180</sup> and it appears that her analyses of the similarities between the captured Jericho Wall plan and observed Hamas activities were not disseminated beyond the Gaza Division.<sup>181</sup> On October 3, Unit 8200 gave a 90-minute briefing to IDF intelligence chief MG Aharon Haliva but failed to mention any of the warnings about Gaza provided by the female analysts.<sup>182</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> *Times of Israel*, “Top Israeli intel unit.” See also Peter Beaumont, “Israeli Intelligence Leak Details Extent of Warnings Over Hamas Attack,” *Guardian*, November 28, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/28/israeli-military-had-warning-of-hamas-training-for-attack-reports-say>.

<sup>180</sup> Bergman and Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago.”

<sup>181</sup> Caspit, “Exposure: The Shelved Report of 8200 on the Omissions That Led to the Massacre in the South.”

<sup>182</sup> Bob, “Insider Accounts of What Went Wrong in IDF Intel Before October 7 – Analysis.”



## 7. Lessons Learned

---

The only upside of a significant intelligence failure is that it offers the opportunity to learn lessons and improve future performance—beginning now. Intelligence leaders owe it to their current and future teammates to learn from the past so they don't repeat history. Based on lessons learned from the October 7 calamity, all intelligence services should assess whether they (and their countries' civilian leaders) are making the same mistakes regarding threats to their national security.

The political and national security leadership of Israel, the United States, and any other country with a professional intelligence service can learn a wide range of lessons from Israel's warning intelligence failures.

1. Always question assumptions. Politicians' and national security leaders' blind adherence to the *conceptzia* lies at the root of Israel's intelligence failure. Convinced that Hamas posed no threat, policymakers diverted defense and intelligence resources elsewhere, and intelligence officials stifled dissenting views. In such an environment, it was difficult to collect intelligence that might cast doubt on the prevailing belief, and it was impossible for alternative analyses to be heard.
2. Employ structured analytic techniques. The most credible way to challenge assumptions, as Israel's Agranat Commission and the U.S. Jeremiah report recognized, is to apply red teaming, devil's advocate analysis, and other structured analytic techniques to counter biases, identify alternative assessments, and otherwise "think outside the box." U.S. analysts are trained in a wide range of such techniques and employ them regularly.

To prevent any future *conceptzias* from taking hold, all analysts and analytic managers should be trained in a wide range of structured analytic techniques designed to "help one challenge judgments, identify mental mindsets, stimulate creativity, and manage uncertainty."<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, clear analytic tradecraft standards should be taught to all intelligence analysts.<sup>184</sup> Training to common standards would raise the rigor of analysts' critical thinking and also empower analysts to challenge assumptions and propose competing interpretations.

---

<sup>183</sup> U.S. Government, "A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques for Improving Intelligence Analysis," March 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Tradecraft-Primer-apr09.pdf>.

<sup>184</sup> See, for example, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Analytic Standards."

3. Politicians and senior intelligence officials must be willing (or pushed) to hear intelligence that neither conforms to their beliefs nor supports their policy objectives. Toward this end, intelligence organizations must support analysts who challenge conventional wisdom. Establishment of a formal “dissent channel” like one in the U.S. Foreign Service would provide an institutionalized process for disseminating alternative views by rank-and-file analysts to higher-level officials, without creating a fear of retaliation. Such a channel would not necessarily make leaders more receptive to alternative assessments, but it would ensure that such perspectives reach them.

It goes without saying that agency leaders must ensure that every team member has a chance to be heard. When Israeli intelligence officials dismissed information from female analysts and *tatzpitanivot*, they judged the reports based on who provided them rather than on the quality of their sourcing and tradecraft. A more productive (and gender-neutral) approach to intelligence would be the U.S. Army’s concept that “Every soldier is a sensor,” which then-Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence LTG William Boykin explained in 2007 as meaning that “every soldier on the street has something to add or something to contribute to the intelligence picture.”<sup>185</sup> Every observation and assessment must be added to the pool of knowledge if analysts are to develop a credible intelligence picture.

4. Warning requires all-source intelligence, with an emphasis on adversary plans and intentions. Sometimes it’s possible to gather intelligence on a hard target only with one set of tools or sources; if this narrow approach manages to tap into a rich vein of information, it can provide unique insights into a threat. However, whenever possible, strategic warning, according to the former head of the IDF’s Devil’s Advocate unit, should be based on all-source analysis rather than selected raw intelligence reports or individual intelligence disciplines (INTs).<sup>186</sup> Aman relied too heavily on SIGINT to understand developments in Gaza, even though it had drastically scaled back its collection there. It also placed excessive confidence in the border fence’s myriad sensors to provide early warning, even though Hamas would already have launched an attack by the time the sensors picked up signs of activity.<sup>187</sup>

Israel received alerts from foreign intelligence services, but it failed to attribute significance (or perhaps credibility) to these liaison partners’ reports. It also had visible

---

<sup>185</sup> Stew Magnuson, “Army Wants to Make ‘Every Soldier a Sensor,’” *National Defense*, May 1, 2007, <https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2007/5/1/2007may-army-wants-to-make-every-soldier-a-sensor>.

<sup>186</sup> Pascovich, “The Devil’s Advocate in Intelligence: The Israeli Experience,” 854–865.

<sup>187</sup> Ariel Levite, “How Was Israel Caught Off-Guard?” *War On The Rocks*, February 22, 2024, <https://warontherocks.com/2024/02/how-was-israel-caught-off-guard/>.



intelligence (VISINT) in the form of sentries' repeated accounts of observable Hamas drills and exercises, but senior officials dismissed these reports as not credible.

Unfortunately, Israel lacked reliable HUMINT, which would have likely provided the most authoritative insights to Hamas's plans and intentions. Gaza is certainly a difficult environment in which to run human sources, but their absence prevented Israel from gaining strategic insights into its adversary's evolving strategy.

5. Assessing trends over time is critical to warning. Without insights into what Hamas leaders were thinking, it was certainly difficult to know that they were plotting to overturn the status quo. But signs were evident—not just in individual intelligence reports, but in the changes that multiple such reports indicated over time. Analysts and *tatzpitaniyot* noted, for example, that Hamas drills became more frequent and more tactically focused; any one day's report might not have seemed concerning, but repeated changes in adversary behavior over time indicated a potential evolution of Hamas's intentions.
6. Despite finite resources, intelligence agencies must deploy sufficient collection and analysis resources against all likely threats to manage the risk of surprise—particularly those that threaten the security of the homeland and core national security interests. Lower priority countries—often called “global coverage” countries in the U.S. IC—receive less attention and fewer resources, or sometimes none at all. Israeli leaders' decision to prioritize threats other than Gaza increased vulnerabilities on its southern border. As former CIA Deputy Director for Analysis John Kringen wrote, “A decision to allocate fewer resources is fundamentally a decision to accept risk.... Surprise is more likely in areas in which fewer resources have been applied.”<sup>188</sup>

In the early 2000s, DIA created a “Master, Measure, Monitor” (M3) methodology, which then-Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence Letitia A. Long described as “a way of trying to allocate the resources against the toughest problems while not having too many resources on those problems that are deemed lower priority.”<sup>189</sup> The goal, according to Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence Stephen Cambone, was to “*reduce as far as possible* the likelihood that we would be surprised.”<sup>190</sup> Critically, M3 gave responsibility for monitoring the lowest priority

---

<sup>188</sup> Kringen, “Rethinking the Concept of Global Coverage in the U.S. Intelligence Community,” 5, 8.

<sup>189</sup> Letitia A. Long, cited in Joint Military Intelligence College, *Managing the Future During a Time of Change: A Conference on Intelligence Reform*, Conference Proceedings, September 29, 2005, 52, [https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh\\_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiAoYiq1peEAXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiAoYiq1peEAXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false).

<sup>190</sup> Stephen Cambone, cited in Joint Military Intelligence College, *Managing the Future During a Time of Change: A Conference on Intelligence Reform*, Conference Proceedings, September 29, 2005, 69 (Emphasis in the original),

countries and issues to the Combatant Commands rather than to national agencies.<sup>191</sup> As a result, the focus for Monitor activities was on security developments with military implications rather than political and economic warning signs. In designating Hamas as a lower priority than other threats, Israeli policymakers essentially made Hamas into a “global coverage” target—worthy of monitoring but not of mastering.

7. Focus on internal affairs, not outside involvement. A particular characteristic of “global coverage” countries is that intelligence collectors and analysts tend to be more interested in what priority targets are doing there than in understanding the country itself. For example, in many countries in Africa and Latin America, the U.S. IC places a higher priority on understanding the actions of China, Russia, and terrorist groups in the regions than on understanding countries’ domestic dynamics, making it more likely that analysts will be surprised by internal instability and unrest. Similarly, when Israeli intelligence considered Gaza, it principally focused on what Iran was doing there—providing funds, missile components, etc.—and neglected to build a deep understanding of local sentiment, economic conditions, and the plans and intentions of the territory’s political leaders.

8. Implement a formal dissemination system so intelligence gets to the right people. Israel’s intelligence dissemination system appears to be highly personalized, and information is not routinely shared across agencies or up analysts’ chains of command. As Israeli journalist Ben Caspit wrote in *The Jerusalem Post*, the intelligence failure “highlights the urgent need for a more integrated approach to intelligence handling, where insights are not just collected but are effectively communicated and heeded.”<sup>192</sup>

Before the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. 9/11 Commission reported U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies failed to share information that, if compiled together, might have “connected the dots” and portrayed a clearer picture of emerging threats. It seems as if Israel’s intelligence apparatus also failed to “connect the dots” in a way that might have presented a more convincing case for a revised assessment of Hamas’s intentions and capabilities.

Since 9/11, the U.S. IC makes both raw and finished intelligence widely available on a classified network (consistent with individuals’ clearances and need-to-know). While a deluge of information can hinder analysts as much as a dearth of it, artificial

---

[https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh\\_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false)

<sup>191</sup> Cambone, cited in Joint Military Intelligence College, *Managing the Future During a Time of Change: A Conference on Intelligence Reform*, 69.

<sup>192</sup> Ben Caspit, “Inside Unit 8200: Moving Forward After the October 7 Intelligence Failure,” *The Jerusalem Post*, February 25, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-788828>.

intelligence and dedicated software tools now help them separate the wheat from the chaff and identify previously unknown connections. Particularly with such resources, analysts are far better able to understand their targets when they have more information rather than less.

9. Add standardized likelihood and confidence levels to analytic reports, as the U.S. intelligence community does in Intelligence Community Directive 203.<sup>193</sup> Rather than issue assessments that simply warn of a potential event, intelligence agencies should develop standard terms to communicate how likely something is and how confident analysts are in their assessments. Such labels will communicate more clearly to intelligence consumers when an assessment is worth considering and when it demands action or decisions.
10. HUMINT requires access to people. Shin Bet's ability to recruit and run HUMINT sources in Gaza was severely limited by Israel's lack of access to the territory. It presumably managed to recruit as assets some of the Gazans who entered Israel for work—but the extent of intelligence Hamas collected on villages and kibbutzim in southern Israel makes clear that Hamas recruited them as well. One of the elements that makes so-called “hard targets” difficult to penetrate is the lack of access—whether clandestine or overt—to people from those countries. As a result, declining diplomatic relations with adversary nations limit the ability to interact with the others' citizens, resulting in reduced insights into these nations' internal dynamics.
11. Remember that intelligence partners have their own interests. Israel was not the only one surprised on October 7; the United States, which relies on Israel for much of its intelligence on the West Bank and Gaza given its greater access and expertise, was as well.<sup>194</sup> Similarly, 50 years ago the United States was surprised by Egypt's and Syria's 1973 attack because it deferred to Israel's expertise. As Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger said, “The Israeli mind set was that the Arabs would not attack until they had air superiority. The U.S. mind set was the Israelis know best.”<sup>195</sup>

Countries need to maintain their own intelligence collection and analysis expertise even when they share responsibility with an ally or partner. Those nations have their own interests that divert intelligence resources to other priorities and biases that may lead to misinterpretation of indicators and warnings. Countries must maintain their own

---

<sup>193</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Analytic Standards,” Intelligence Community Directive 203, Sec. (D)(6)(e)(2)(a), January 2, 2015, <https://irp.fas.org/dni/icd/icd-203.pdf>.

<sup>194</sup> Katie Bo Lillis, Zachary Cohen, Alex Marquardt, and Natasha Bertrand, “U.S. Intelligence Warned of the Potential for Violence Days Before Hamas Attack,” CNN.com, October 13, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/13/politics/us-intelligence-warnings-potential-gaza-clash-days-before-attack/index.html>.

<sup>195</sup> Riedel, “Enigma: The Anatomy of Israel's Intelligence Failure Almost 45 Years Ago.”

capability to warn of significant developments that affect their interests even when doing so will add cost and appear to some as a duplication of efforts.

## 8. Conclusion: Why Did Warning Fail?

---

Israeli intelligence services cannot be blamed for having failed to predict the future. But they, along with the civilian policymakers who set their priorities, can certainly be faulted for years of decisions that undermined the IDF's and intelligence services' ability to understand the evolving threat from Hamas—and for creating an organizational culture that stifled dissenting views.

### A. Intelligence Consumers' Failure to Consider Alternative Analyses

First and foremost, the flawed *conceptzia* that Hamas was unwilling and unable to mount a large-scale attack on Israel convinced civilian and military leaders alike that Hamas was not a worrisome threat. More importantly, however, leaders' failure to adapt their preconceived notion to account for new intelligence amounted to a self-inflicted blindness regarding an evolving—and increasingly obvious—threat.

Unwilling to reconsider the *conceptzia*, policymakers determined that Iran, Hezbollah, and anti-settler violence in the West Bank were higher priority threats than Hamas. This drove defense and intelligence officials to redirect troops and intelligence collection capabilities away from Gaza, which reduced analysts' understanding of Hamas's plans, intentions, and capabilities. These decisions to shift resources amounted to a tacit acceptance of greater risk from Hamas, which turned out to be a bad bet.

Structural and organizational shortcomings prevented Israeli intelligence from making full use of the information it did have. The failure to apply structured analytic techniques hindered the incorporation of alternative views into intelligence assessments, leaving dissenters outside of any formal analytic process. Informal dissemination processes limited the sharing of information across agencies and up the chain of command; decisions to focus on previously demonstrated adversary tactics demonstrated a reactive approach to analysis rather than a proactive or innovative one. Finally, an overly hierarchical organizational culture that devalued women's contributions stifled dissenting views—not based on the arguments' merits, but rather because of who voiced them.

Ultimately, according to futurist and former strategic intelligence officer Zachery Tyson Brown, intelligence failures “are quite often failures of delivery, communication, and trust—and only rarely failures of access, collection, or analysis.”<sup>196</sup> The intelligence failures leading up to October 7, unfortunately, include all of the above.

---

<sup>196</sup> Zachery Tyson Brown, LinkedIn post, February 8, 2024, <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7161322949331836928/>.

## B. Shortcomings in Warning Analysis

As we evaluate performance of officials throughout the Israeli government, it's clear that senior political, defense, and intelligence leaders increased the likelihood that Israeli intelligence would miss signs of an impending attack from Gaza. But how did the working-level analysts perform?

Returning to the principal criteria of warning intelligence described earlier, it is clear that analysts performed very well on what they could control. They were unable to succeed, however, in persuading their superiors to listen, as senior officials were too wedded to the *conceptzia* to consider other possibilities.

The first warning intelligence criterion is the ability to identify critical indicators of a crisis. Junior analysts and border sentries performed very well. They reported frequent Hamas military drills at the border and noted that these drills included practice assaults on Israeli tanks and mockups of kibbutzim—a sign that Hamas was practicing attacking specific targets rather than just marching around. Crucially, they noted deviations from the norm, reporting that the number and intensity of Hamas drills had increased and that Hamas's elite *Nukhba* fighters had begun to take part.

The second criterion is to separate critical information from background noise. Here, too, analysts and sentries performed well. They asserted that the changes in Hamas behavior were notable. They made strong cases that the Jericho Wall attack plan was real. In summer 2023, analysts from Southern Command and Gaza Division correctly interpreted an increase in protests along the border fence as an effort by Hamas to test Israel's tolerance for allowing disruptive activity at the border. It's true that the relevance of information appears more obvious in hindsight, but analysts were flagging developments as worthy of attention, only to be ignored.

The third criterion is to put tactical information into strategic context. Analysts argued that the developments seen along the border reflected an evolution of Hamas's intentions—a critically important strategic change. Similarly, they argued that observed Hamas activities reflected preparations for the captured Jericho Wall attack plan, demonstrating an ability to show how individual indicators fit into a strategic warning picture. Here, too, the analysts were dismissed.

The fourth criterion is to communicate warning that clearly presents the threat and the need to take action, which requires timeliness, credibility, and persuasiveness. Analysts certainly provided warnings in a timely fashion, claiming as far back as the capture of the Jericho Wall plan in May 2022 that Hamas was planning a large-scale attack. The indicators they reported in September and early October 2024, along with admonitions to take action, were also timely enough for policymakers and security leaders to redeploy collection assets and troops.

Systemic failures made it impossible for analysts to succeed. Analysts were unable to present credible intelligence warnings—not because their work wasn't credible, but because mid-level managers and senior leaders did not see junior personnel and female sentries as sufficiently credible to take heed. Analysts were also unable to persuade their superiors of the seriousness of

the threat because senior officials were too wedded to the *conceptzia* to consider alternative assessments, particularly coming from people far down in the hierarchy. These failures were unequivocally the fault of the mid-level managers and senior leaders in the IDF and Aman, who were unreceptive to views that contradicted their firmly held assumptions, particularly when they came from personnel far down the organization's hierarchy.

The failures of October 7 stem, in large part, from Israeli policy decisions, resource allocations, and organizational dynamics that were instituted long before Hamas crossed the border. By studying the impact of these factors on intelligence capabilities, countries can enhance their warning intelligence tradecraft and, hopefully, prevent future incidents like the tragedy of October 7.





## References

---

- Artner, Stephen, Richard S. Girven, and James B. Bruce, “Assessing the Value of Structured Analytic Techniques in the U.S. Intelligence Community,” RAND Corporation report RR-1408-OSD, January 9, 2017, 3, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1400/RR1408/RAND\\_RR1408.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1400/RR1408/RAND_RR1408.pdf).
- Asharq al-Aswat*, “Israel Doesn’t Want Escalation in Gaza,” September 29, 2023, <https://english.aawsat.com/arab-world/4574846-israel-doesn%E2%80%99t-want-escalation-gaza>.
- Bachner, Michael, “Report: Shin Bet Dismissed Gaza Source’s Tip on Plans, Timing of Major Hamas Attack,” *Times of Israel*, December 27, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/report-shin-bet-dismissed-tip-on-hamas-plans-timing-for-major-attack/>.
- Bacon, Tricia, “Missing Hamas’s Intent,” Experts React: Assessing the Israeli Intelligence and Potential Policy Failure, commentary, Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 25, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/experts-react-assessing-israeli-intelligence-and-potential-policy-failure>.
- Bar-Joseph, Uri, “Military Intelligence as the National Intelligence Estimator,” *Armed Forces & Society*, 36:3 (April 2010), 505–525.
- Barnea, Avner, “Israeli Intelligence Was Caught Off Guard: The Hamas Attack on 7 October 2023 – A Preliminary Analysis,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, March 26, 2024, 14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08850607.2024.2315546>.
- Berg, Rafi, “Israeli Judicial Reform Explained: What is the Crisis About?” BBC News, September 11, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-65086871>.
- Bergman and Kingsley, “How Israel’s Feared Security Services Failed to Stop Hamas’s Attack.”
- Bergman, Ronen and Adam Goldman, “Israel Knew Hamas’s Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago,” *New York Times*, November 30, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.
- Bergman, Ronen and Patrick Kingsley, “Israeli Reservists Threaten Mass Resignations if Judicial Plan Proceeds,” *New York Times*, July 15, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/15/world/middleeast/israel-reservists-resignations-judiciary.html>.
- Bergman, Ronen, Mark Mazzetti, and Maria Abi-Habib, “How Years of Israeli Failures on Hamas Led to a Devastating Attack,” *New York Times*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/29/world/middleeast/israel-intelligence-hamas-attack.html>.

- Bob, Yonah Jeremy, “Insider Accounts of What Went Wrong in IDF Intel Before October 7 – Analysis.”
- Bob, Yonah Jeremy, “Ex-IDF intel. chief: These are the failures that led to October 7,” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 2, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-794932>.
- Bob, Yonah Jeremy, “Has Everyone Misunderstood Israel’s Failures on October 7?,” *The Jerusalem Post*, February 14, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-786890>.
- Bob, Yonah Jeremy, “IDF Intel. Analysis Chief From Oct. 7 Resigning Due to Cancer Diagnosis,” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 4, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-795292>.
- Bob, Yonah Jeremy, “IDF Internal Mess Over October 7 Probes Erupts into Chaos – Analysis,” *The Jerusalem Post*, July 15, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-810439>.
- Bohbot, Amir, “‘‘ Hamas Exercised the Perfect Deception Before October 7’ – Defense Official,” *The Jerusalem Post*, December 1, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/gaza-news/article-776080>.
- Brown, Pamela and Zachery Cohen, “ Hamas Operatives Used Phone Lines Installed in Tunnels Under Gaza to Plan Israel Attack Over 2 Years, Sources Familiar With Intelligence Say,” CNN.com, October 25, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/24/politics/intelligence-hamas-israel-attack-tunnels-phone-lines/index.html>.
- Brown, Zachery Tyson, LinkedIn post, February 8, 2024, <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7161322949331836928/>.
- Byman, Dan, “How Policy Failures Overlap with Intelligence Failures,” Experts React: Assessing the Israeli Intelligence and Potential Policy Failure, commentary, Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 25, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/experts-react-assessing-israeli-intelligence-and-potential-policy-failure>.
- Cambone, Stephen, cited in Joint Military Intelligence College, *Managing the Future During a Time of Change: A Conference on Intelligence Reform*, Conference Proceedings, September 29, 2005, 69 (Emphasis in the original), [https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCodNywuDVU7SmBSh\\_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAxXgFFkFHeiT DY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=dia+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCodNywuDVU7SmBSh_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAxXgFFkFHeiT DY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=dia%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false).
- Casey, William J., “National Intelligence Officer for Warning,” (official memorandum for the National Foreign Intelligence Board, Washington, DC: Director of Central Intelligence, July 22, 1982).
- Caspit, Ben, “Exposure: The Shelved Report of 8200 on the Omissions That Led to the Massacre in the South,” *Maariv*, February 24, 2024, <https://www.maariv.co.il/journalists/Article-1078519>. Translation by Google Translate.

- Caspit, Ben, "Inside Unit 8200: Moving Forward After the October 7 Intelligence failure," *The Jerusalem Post*, February 25, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-788828>.
- Central Intelligence Agency, "Recommendations of the Jeremiah Report," June 22, 1998, 1. Approved for public release November 2006, [https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0001380715.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0001380715.pdf). See also transcript of Jeremiah news conference, June 4, 1998, <https://irp.fas.org/cia/product/jeremiah.html>.
- CNBC TV18, "Nukhba Force: All You Need To Know About Hamas' Lethal Military Unit in Target of Israel Army," October 13, 2023, <https://www.cnbctv18.com/world/israel-hamas-war-who-are-nukhba-force-military-unit-palestine-army-gaza-idf-18042121.htm>.
- Cohen, Gili, "Israel Downgrades its Open Source Military Intelligence Unit," *Haaretz*, October 30, 2016, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2016-10-30/ty-article/israel-downgrades-its-open-source-military-intelligence-unit/0000017f-e351-d75c-a7ff-ffddb17b0000>.
- Cuddy, Alice, "They Were Israel's 'Eyes on the Border' - But Their Hamas Warnings Went Unheard," BBC, January 14, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67958260>.
- Cynthia M. Grabo, *A Handbook of Warning Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence Agency, July 1972), 29-4. Approved for public release August 21, 2002.
- Dahl, Erik J., *Intelligence and Surprise Attack: Failure and Success From Pearl Harbor to 9/11 and Beyond* (Washington DC, Georgetown University Press, 2013), 2-3.
- David, Steven R., "Coping with an Existential Threat," in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Israel Under Netanyahu: Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2020), 197-215.
- Davis, Jack, "Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Strategic Warning," Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis Occasional Papers, Vol. 1, No. 1, September 2002, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Strategic-Warning-1.pdf>.
- DCI Task Force, *Report: Improving Intelligence Warning* (Washington, DC: DCI Task Force, May 29, 1992), 2, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/document/24187-dci-task-force-report-improving-intelligence-warning> (Declassified on April 25, 2012).
- DCID 1/5, National Intelligence Warning, May 23, 1979, <https://irp.fas.org/offdocs/dcid1-5.html>.
- de Haas, Mordechai, "Israel Didn't Predict the October 7 Massacre. The Reasons Why Are Important," *Fair Observer*, February 5, 2024, <https://www.fairobserver.com/world-news/israel-didnt-predict-the-october-7-massacre-the-reasons-why-are-important/#>.
- Department of Defense, *The Defense Warning Network*, Directive 3115.16 (incorporating Change 2) (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, August 10, 2020), <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/311516e.pdf?ver=2020-08-10-145143-097>.
- Department of the Army, "Intelligence Analysis," Army Techniques Publication ATP-2-33.4, 6-3, January 10, 2020, <https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/atp2-33-4.pdf>.

- Dettmer, Jamie, “Our Warnings on Hamas Were Ignored, Israel’s Women Border Troops Say,” *Politico*, November 21, 2003, <https://www.politico.eu/article/israel-border-troops-women-hamas-warnings-war-october-7-benjamin-netanyahu/>.
- Director of Central Intelligence Directive 5/1, “National Intelligence Warning,” revision effective May 23, 1979, para 5(a). Declassified May 2001.
- Director of National Intelligence, “Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 201: National Foreign Intelligence Warning System” (redacted), June 6, 2006, <https://irp.fas.org/dni/icd/icd-201.pdf>.
- Fabian, Emanuel and Amy Spiro, “Security Chiefs Got Wind of Something Amiss in Gaza, Thought It Was a Drill – Reports,” *Times of Israel*, October 12, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/security-chiefs-got-wind-of-something-amiss-in-gaza-thought-it-was-a-drill-reports/>.
- Fabian, Emanuel, “2 Commando Companies Said Diverted from Gaza Border to West Bank Days Before Oct. 7,” *Times of Israel*, December 5, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-commando-companies-said-diverted-from-gaza-border-to-west-bank-days-before-oct-7/>.
- Fabian, Emanuel, “Hours Before Hamas Attack, IDF Noticed Dozens of Terrorists Activating Israeli SIMs,” *Times of Israel*, February 26, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hours-before-hamas-attack-idf-noticed-hundreds-of-terrorists-activating-israeli-sims/>.
- Fabian, Emanuel, “IDF Sends 2 More Battalions to West Bank After Series of Settler Attacks,” *Times of Israel*, June 25, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-to-send-2-more-battalions-to-west-bank-after-series-of-settler-attacks/>.
- Forbes Israel*, “Deputy Commander of Elite Intelligence Unit 8200 Reveals Its Secret Weapon,” June 30, 2022, <https://forbes.co.il/e/deputy-commander-of-elite-intelligence-unit-8200-reveals-its-secret-weapon/>.
- Ford, Harold, *Estimative Intelligence, Intelligence Profession Series Monograph No. 10* (McLean, VA: Association of Former Intelligence Officer, 1993), 38, <https://www.afio.com/publications/monographs/FORD%20Hal%20Estimative%20Intelligence%20-%20AFIO%20Monograph%2010.pdf>.
- France 24, “Israel Military Reservists Threaten Over Judicial Revamp,” July 22, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230722-israel-military-reservists-threaten-over-judicial-revamp>
- Galon, Zehava, “Members of Israel’s Peace Camp Need to Wake Up Now,” *Haaretz*, June 30, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-06-30/ty-article-opinion/.premium/members-of-israels-peace-camp-need-to-wake-up-now/00000190-651f-d367-abb6-6f1feca70000>.
- Gates, Robert, “Subject: Warning,” (official memorandum for National Foreign Intelligence Board, Washington, DC: Director of Central Intelligence, July 17, 1992).
- Goldenberg, Tia, “What Went wrong? Questions Emerge Over Israel’s Intelligence Prowess After Hamas Attack,” Associated Press, October 9, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-gaza-attack-intel-a5287a18773232f26ca171233be01721>.
- Grabo, Cynthia M., *Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning* (Washington, DC: Joint Military Intelligence College, December 2002).

Grabo, Cynthia, *Handbook of Warning Intelligence* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015), 408, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tiso-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4085976>.

*Haaretz*, “IDF Intel Warns Netanyahu of Israel's 'Historic Weakness' Seen by Iran and Hezbollah, Report Says,” July 28, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-07-28/ty-article/.premium/idf-intel-warns-netanyahu-of-historic-weakness-seen-by-iran-and-hezbollah-report-says/00000189-9b09-d00f-a7db-bb9bbd0e0000>.

*Haaretz*, 'That Amazes Me, I Didn't Know': Netanyahu 'Surprised' to Hear What Happened at Israeli Army Base on October 7,” July 17, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-07-17/ty-article/.premium/netanyahu-surprised-to-hear-what-happened-at-israeli-army-base-on-october-7/00000190-bfd0-d2f8-abdb-bff421df0000>.

Haliva, Major General Aharon, “A letter from the head of AMAN,” October 17, 2023, [www.idf.il](http://www.idf.il). Translation by Google Translate.

Handel, Michael I., “Intelligence and the Problem of Strategic Surprise,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 7:3 (1984): 235.

Harari, Yuval Noah, “From Gaza to Iran, the Netanyahu Government Is Endangering Israel's Survival,” *Haaretz*, April 18, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-04-18/ty-article-magazine/from-gaza-to-iran-the-netanyahu-government-is-endangering-israels-survival/0000018e-f25f-daad-a3de-fe7ff5790000>.

Harel, Amos, “Half a Year Later, Parts of the October 7 Puzzle are Still Coming Together,” *Haaretz*, March 29, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-29/ty-article/.premium/parts-of-oct-7-puzzle-coming-together-half-year-later/0000018e-869e-d0d3-a98e-d6ffa4d00000>.

Harel, Amos, “Israeli Settlers Get the Message: They Have Support in the Netanyahu Gov't,” *Haaretz*, June 25, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-06-25/ty-article/.premium/israeli-settlers-get-the-message-the-netanyahu-govt-has-their-backs/00000188-f37d-db86-a3f9-fbff036d0000>.

Harel, Amos, “‘We Have Completed the Murder of All Residents of the Kibbutz': Chilling Warnings Picked Up by Israeli Intelligence Months Before October 7 Massacre,” *Haaretz*, November 27, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-27/ty-article/.premium/chilling-warnings-picked-up-by-israeli-intelligence-months-before-october-7-massacre/0000018c-1261-dd2e-a5ae-d36ba6240000>.

Harris, Shane, “In the Search for Hostages, U.S. is Israel's Key Intelligence Partner,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2024, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2024/06/14/us-israel-intelligence-cia-hostages/>.

Hecht, Danny, “I Tried to Challenge, I Imagined ‘Terrorist Attacks and Kidnapping Attempts’: The Warning of The Head of the Control Department at Aman a Week Before the War,” N12, January 7, 2024, [https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024\\_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm](https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm). Translation by Google Translate.

Heller, Aron, “Watchdog: Tunnels Caught Israel Off-Guard in 2014 Gaza War,” Associated Press, February 28, 2017, <https://apnews.com/international-news-general-news-49982d220135419d952fce0e6ada9005>.

- Hershkovitz, Shay, “More Than Merely an Intelligence Failure,” *The Cipher Brief*, October 17, 2023, [https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column\\_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure](https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/more-than-merely-an-intelligence-failure).
- Hutchings, Robert and Gregory F. Treverton, eds., *Truth to Power: A History of the U.S. National Intelligence Council* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 164.
- Israel Hayom*, “Judicial Reform Enters Crunch Time as Protests Pick Up, More Reservists Join,” July 22, 2023, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/07/22/judicial-reform-enters-crunch-time-as-pressure-picks-up-more-reservists-say-they-will-no-longer-volunteer/>.
- Israel Hayom*, “The IDF’s Not-So-Secret Secret Un it,” August 14, 2015, <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/306247>.
- Israel National News – Arutz Sheva, “IDF Surveillance Posts Warned About Impending Invasion,” November 19, 2023, <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/380538>.
- Jewish News Syndicate*, “Netanyahu: Israel Ready for Multi-Front War Against Iran and Terror Proxies,” May 9, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/netanyahu-israel-ready-for-multi-front-war-against-iran-and-terror-proxies/>.
- Joseph, Yonette and Patrick Kingsley, “Netanyahu Will Return with Corruption Charges Unresolved. Here’s Where the Case Stands,” *New York Times*, November 3, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/world/middleeast/netanyahu-corruption-charges-israel.html>.
- Kringen, John A., “Rethinking the Concept of Global Coverage in the U.S. Intelligence Community,” *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (September 2015), 5, 8, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Rethinking-Concept-of-Global.pdf>.
- Kubovich, Yaniv, “Disdain, Denial, Neglect: The Deep Roots of Israel’s Devastating Intelligence Failure on Hamas and October 7,” *Haaretz*, May 9, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-05-09/ty-article/.premium/disdain-denial-neglect-the-roots-of-israels-intelligence-failure-on-hamas-and-oct-7/0000018f-5811-d348-a7bf-feb907a80000>.
- Kubovich, Yaniv, “Bloody Arrogance: How Israel’s Top Brass Misjudged Hamas Before October 7,” *Haaretz*, March 14, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-14/ty-article-magazine/.premium/costly-arrogance-how-israels-top-brass-underestimated-hamas-before-oct-7/0000018e-3ccb-d670-a5be-fdcf13d60000>.
- Kubovich, Yaniv, “Israeli Army Braced for a Yom Kippur Attack. A Month Later, Hamas Found a Defenseless Gaza Border,” *Haaretz*, March 21, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-21/ty-article-magazine/.premium/idf-braced-for-a-yom-kippur-attack-a-month-later-hamas-found-a-defenseless-gaza-border/0000018e-6225-d507-a1cf-62f7f0a10000>.
- Kubovich, Yaniv, “The Female-Only Israeli Army Role Leading Too Many to Suicide,” *Haaretz*, December 7, 2022, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-12-07/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/the-female-only-israeli-army-role-leading-too-many-to-suicide/00000184-ec31-d9f1-a9e6-edf39bb60000>.
- Kubovich, Yaniv, “The Women Soldiers Who Warned of a Pending Hamas Attack – and Were Ignored,” *Haaretz*, November 20, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11->

20/ty-article-magazine/.premium/the-women-soldiers-who-warned-of-a-pending-hamas-attack-and-were-ignored/0000018b-ed76-d4f0-affb-eff740150000.

Levite, Ariel, “How Was Israel Caught Off-Guard?” *War On The Rocks*, February 22, 2024, <https://warontherocks.com/2024/02/how-was-israel-caught-off-guard/>.

Lillis, Katie Bo, Zachary Cohen, Alex Marquardt, and Natasha Bertrand, “U.S. Intelligence Warned of the Potential For Violence Days Before Hamas Attack,” CNN.com, October 13, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/13/politics/us-intelligence-warnings-potential-gaza-clash-days-before-attack/index.html>.

Limor, Yoav, “Israel Had Slam Dunk Intelligence on the Oct. 7 Attack; What Went Wrong?,” *Israel Hayom*, December 4, 2023, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/12/04/israel-had-a-slum-dunk-intelligence-on-the-oct-7-attack-what-went-wrong/>.

Long, Letitia A., cited in Joint Military Intelligence College, *Managing the Future During a Time of Change: A Conference on Intelligence Reform*, Conference Proceedings, September 29, 2005, 52, [https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=di+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh\\_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAxXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=di%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=dqsgAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=di+and+%22master+measure+monitor%22&source=bl&ots=7yLII8C3yz&sig=ACfU3U02ovBmFMCo-dNywuDVU7SmBSh_WA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiAoYiq1peEAxXgFFkFHeiTDY0Q6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=di%20and%20%22master%20measure%20monitor%22&f=false).

Magid, Jacob, “Top U.S. Lawmaker Affirms Cairo Warned Israel Days Before Onslaught,” *Times of Israel*, October 11, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/top-us-lawmaker-affirms-cairo-warned-israel-days-before-onslaught/>.

Magnuson, Stew, “Army Wants to Make ‘Every Soldier a Sensor’,” *National Defense*, May 1, 2007, <https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2007/5/1/2007may-army-wants-to-make-every-soldier-a-sensor>.

Makovsky, David, “The Collapse of Israel’s Hamas ‘Conceptzia’,” *National Interest*, October 26, 2023, <https://nationalinterest.org/print/feature/collapse-israel%E2%80%99s-hamas-conceptzia-207058>.

Manson, Katrina, “Israel’s Massive Failure Perplexes Ex-U.S. Intelligence Officials,” Bloomberg, October 10, 2023, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2023-10-10/israel-s-massive-failure-perplexes-ex-us-intelligence-officials?embedded-checkout=true>.

Mazzetti, Mark and Ronen Bergman, “‘Buying Quiet’: Inside the Israeli Plan That Propped Up Hamas,” *New York Times*, December 10, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/10/world/middleeast/israel-qatar-money-prop-up-hamas.html>.

McCarthy, Mary, “The National Warning System: Striving for an Elusive Goal,” *Defense Intelligence Journal* 3 (1994), 5–19, <https://cryptome.org/mccarthy-nws.htm>.

Meek, Steven R., “The Illusion of Defeat: Egyptian Strategic Thinking and the 1973 Yom Kippur War,” United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2016, 8–9, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/AD1022141.pdf>.

- Melman, Yossi, “Israel’s Mossad Admits for the First Time: We Were Surprised on October 7,” *Haaretz*, May 9, 2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-05-09/ty-article/.premium/israels-mossad-admits-for-the-first-time-we-were-surprised-on-october-7/0000018f-573f-d6a5-a5ff-d73f93e20000>.
- Michman, Dror and Yael Mizrahi-Arnaud, “The Fog of Certainty: Learning from Intelligence Failures of the 1973 War,” commentary, Brookings Institution, October 23, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-fog-of-certainty-learning-from-the-intelligence-failures-of-the-1973-war/>.
- Nakhoul, Samia and Jonathan Saul, “How Hamas Duped Israel as it Planned Devastating Attack,” Reuters, October 10, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-israel-was-duped-hamas-planned-devastating-assault-2023-10-08/>.
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Analytic Standards,” Intelligence Community Directive 203, Sec. (D)(6)(e)(2)(a), January 2, 2015, <https://irp.fas.org/dni/icd/icd-203.pdf>.
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Analytic Standards,” Intelligence Community Directive 203 Technical Amendment, Sec. 6(e)(4), December 21, 2022, [https://www.odni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-203\\_TA\\_Analytic\\_Standards\\_21\\_Dec\\_2022.pdf](https://www.odni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-203_TA_Analytic_Standards_21_Dec_2022.pdf).
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Intelligence Community Directive 900: Integrated Mission Management*, May 6, 2013, sections D(1)(a) and F(3)(b), <https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD-900-Integrated-Mission-Management.pdf>.
- Pascovich, Eyal, “The Devil’s Advocate in Intelligence: The Israeli Experience,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 33:6 (2023), 854–865.
- Perry, Smadar, “Egyptian General Intelligence Director Supposedly Warned Netanyahu About ‘Something Fierce from Gaza’,” *Ynet News*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hyjqz11a>.
- Pinko, Eyal, “This Is How Hamas Gathered Intelligence on Israel in Preparation for the October 2023 War,” *Israel Defense*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.israeldefense.co.il/node/60112>. Translation by Google Translate.
- Prince-Gibson, Eetta, “IDF Spotters: ‘The Men Ignored Us, and We All Paid Dearly’,” *Moment Magazine*, 15 December 2023, <https://momentmag.com/idf-spotters-the-men-ignored-us-and-we-all-paid-dearly/>.
- Proctor, Jonathan, “(Re)defining Warning,” National Intelligence University Research Short, August 9, 2023, 5, <https://ni-u.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/redefining-warning-IC.pdf>.
- Riedel, Bruce, “Enigma: The Anatomy of Israel’s Intelligence Failure Almost 45 Years Ago,” Brookings Institution, September 25, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/enigma-the-anatomy-of-israels-intelligence-failure-almost-45-years-ago/>.
- Roblin, Sebastien, “How Hamas’s Arsenal Shaped the Gaza War of May 2021,” *Forbes*, May 25, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sebastienroblin/2021/05/25/how-hamass-arsenal-shaped-the-gaza-war-of-may-2021/?sh=783349b479df>.



- Rubin, Shira and Loveday Morris, “How Hamas broke through Israel’s border defenses during Oct. 7 attack,” *Washington Post*, October 27, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/27/hamas-attack-israel-october-7-hostages/>.
- Rubin, Shira, “As It Planned for Oct. 7, Hamas Lulled Israel into A False Sense of Calm,” *Washington Post*, December 6, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/12/06/israel-knew-hamas-attack-oct-7/>.
- Rubin, Uzi, “Has the IDF and Israel's Security Concept Over-Relied on Innovation and Technology at the Expense of Basic Military Principles,” Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security position paper, November 2, 2023, <https://jiss.org.il/he/rubin-did-idf-rely-excessively-on-innovation-and-technology/>. Translation by Google Translate.
- Rynhold, Jonathan, “Could Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Indictment End Israel’s Political Stalemate?” *Washington Post*, November 23, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/11/23/could-prime-minister-benjamin-netanyahus-indictment-end-israels-political-stalemate/>.
- Sachar, Howard M., *A History of Israel: Vol. I*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979, 803.
- Sawt Beirut International*, “Israel Army Dissolves Intelligence Unit Monitoring Arab Media,” January 1, 2022, <https://english.sawtbeirut.com/world/israel-army-dissolves-intelligence-unit-monitoring-arab-media/>.
- Shapira, Itai, “The Yom Kippur Intelligence Failure after Fifty Years: What Lessons Can Be Learned?,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 38:6 (2023), 980–982.
- Silkoff, Shira, “Surveillance Soldiers Warned of Hamas Activity on Gaza Border for Months before Oct. 7,” *The Times of Israel*, October 26, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/surveillance-soldiers-warned-of-hamas-activity-on-gaza-border-for-months-before-oct-7/>.
- Tenet, George, Testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, June 2, 1998, 2. Approved for public release November 2006, [https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0001380715.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0001380715.pdf).
- The Jerusalem Post*, “Intelligence Soldier's Warning of Invasion in July Dismissed as 'Imaginary,’” November 28, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-775570>.
- The Jerusalem Post*, “Could October 7 have been prevented? IDF general's urgent warning to military chief – report,” March 5, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-790374>.
- The Jerusalem Post*, “Hamas Broke Into Dozens of Cameras in the Surrounding Settlements Before October 7,” March 15, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-792074>.
- Times of Israel*, “‘The Sword is Coming’: Biblical IDF Email Warned of Hamas Plans Days Before Oct.7,” July 5, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/the-sword-is-coming-idf-email-warned-of-hamas-plans-days-before-oct-7-report/>.

- Times of Israel*, “Egypt Intelligence Official Says Israel Ignored Repeated Warnings of ‘Something Big’,” October 9, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egypt-intelligence-official-says-israel-ignored-repeated-warnings-of-something-big/>.
- Times of Israel*, “Government to Mull Plan to Replace Palestinian Laborers With 80,000 Foreign Workers,” January 1, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/government-to-mull-plan-to-replace-palestinian-laborers-with-80000-foreign-workers/>.
- Times of Israel*, “Head of IDF Devil’s Advocate Unit Tried Repeatedly in September to Warn of Possible Hamas Attack,” January 6, 2024, [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/head-of-idf-devils-advocate-unit-tried-repeatedly-in-september-to-warn-of-possible-hamas-attack/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/head-of-idf-devils-advocate-unit-tried-repeatedly-in-september-to-warn-of-possible-hamas-attack/).
- Times of Israel*, “More Details Unveiled of IDF Intel on Oct. 7 Plans, Consults Hours Before Hamas Attack,” December 5, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/more-details-unveiled-of-idf-intel-on-oct-7-plans-consults-hours-before-hamas-attack/>.
- Times of Israel*, “Report: Shin Bet Debunks Idea That Gazan Workers Spied En Masse for Hamas Pre-Oct. 7,” March 7, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/report-shin-bet-debunks-idea-that-gazan-workers-spied-en-masse-for-hamas-pre-oct-7/>.
- Times of Israel*, “Surveillance Soldiers Charge Sexism a Factor in Their Oct. 7 Warnings Being Ignored,” *The November* 19, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/surveillance-soldiers-say-oct-7-warnings-ignored-charge-sexism-played-a-role/>.
- Times of Israel*, “Top Israeli Intel Unit Wasn’t Operational On October 7 Due to Personnel Decision,” November 28, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/top-israeli-intel-unit-wasnt-operational-on-october-7-due-to-personnel-decision/>.
- Toronto Star*, “How Israeli intelligence failures led to a ‘devil’s advocate’ role,” May 21, 2017, [https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/how-israeli-intelligence-failures-led-to-a-devils-advocate-role/article\\_2189cca3-c059-5608-a666-40656f907534.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/how-israeli-intelligence-failures-led-to-a-devils-advocate-role/article_2189cca3-c059-5608-a666-40656f907534.html).
- U.S. Government, “A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques for Improving Intelligence Analysis,” March 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/Tradecraft-Primer-apr09.pdf>.
- Verton, Dan, “Pentagon Outlines Defense Warning Network,” *FedScoop*, December 9, 2013, <https://fedscoop.com/pentagon-outlines-defense-warning-network/>.
- Walton, Calder, “Four Paths to Israel’s Intelligence Failure,” *Engelsburg Ideas*, October 12, 2023, <https://engelsbergideas.com/notebook/four-paths-to-israels-intelligence-failure/>.
- Weitz, Gidi, “Another Concept Implodes: Israel Can’t Be Managed by a Criminal Defendant,” *Haaretz*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-09/ty-article/.premium/another-concept-implodes-israel-cant-be-managed-by-a-criminal-defendant/0000018b-1382-d2fc-a59f-d39b5dbf0000>.
- Whitesmith, Martha, *Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis: Testing the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses Method* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 184, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tiso-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6369546>.
- Whitman, Ariel, “The Former Head of Shin Bet Reveals, ‘We Warned All Along the Way to the Political Echelon,’” *Globes*, October 27, 2023,

<https://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1001460912>. Translation by Google Translate.

Wohlstetter, Roberta, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962), 387.

Yehoshua, Yossi and Reuven Weiss, “Had I Received a Warning One Hour Earlier, Everything Would Have Looked Different!” *Ynet News*, June 11, 2024, <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/rkd7iahha>.



## Abbreviations

---

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DCID	Director of Central Intelligence Directive
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DNI	Director of National Intelligence
DOD	Department of Defense
HUMINT	human intelligence
I&W	indications and warning
IAF	Israeli Air Force
IC	Intelligence Community
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
INTs	intelligence disciplines
M3	Master, Measure, Monitor
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NIMs	National Intelligence Managers
NIO/W	National Intelligence Officer for Warning
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OPSEC	operational security
OSINT	open source intelligence
PA	Palestinian Authority
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
SATs	structured analytic techniques
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
VISINT	visible intelligence



**REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE**

*Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188*

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

**PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b>		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b>		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b>				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b>				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b>					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b>					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b>
<b>a. REPORT</b>	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b>	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b>			<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)</b>