

# Jewish Professor: Fascism Is 'Already There' in Israel

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime is hurtling towards fascism, historian Daniel Blatman has said in an interview with Haaretz.

Blatman is a professor at the Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University. His fields of interest are the Holocaust, Nazism, fascism, genocide and East European Jewry during the Holocaust.

Haaretz interviewed Blatman because of an article he had written in 2017 which predicted that the Zionist regime was heading for a collision of forces, the conclusion of which would be the rise of fascism. His prediction has more or less played out exactly as he described six years ago, which is why he was asked to comment on the ongoing turmoil in the occupied territories over prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the judiciary, and far-right politicians dominating the current Israeli cabinet.

Blatman spoke at length about the wave of populism around the world and said that Netanyahu possessed all the key traits of a populist leader. The radical transformation which has seen



A woman holds a placard with photos of Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu (C), minister of judiciary affairs Yariv Levin (L) and interior minister Arieh Derei during a protest in Habima Square in Tel Aviv, on 14 January 2023.

neo-Nazi ministers within the Zionist cabinet has been made possible because Israeli society is "ripe" to accept the likes of far-right minister Itamar Ben Gvir.

"Israeli society was ripe to receive the present cabinet. Not because of Likud's victory, but because the most extreme wing pulled everyone after it,"

said the professor. "What was once extreme right is today center. Ideas that were once on the fringes have become legitimate."

Alarmed by the rise of fascism in the occupied territories, Blatman went on to say: "As a historian whose field is the Holocaust and Nazism, it's hard for me to say this, but there are neo-

Nazi ministers in the cabinet today. You don't see that anywhere else – not in Hungary, not in Poland – ministers who, ideologically, are pure racists."

Populism has been on the ascendency in both Hungary and Poland but, according to Blatman, the drift towards fascism in the occupied territories is unique. He believes that society has undergone a process of radicalization.

"There is a large mass that does not sanctify democratic and liberal values," he said. Strengthening of religion and demonization of the Arab enemy were two of the reasons Blatman cited as being the cause of the radicalization of the society.

"What we are seeing today is a kind of genie that is bursting from the bottle, and I'm not sure it can be stopped," he warned. "I am not embarrassed to say that I am afraid. I think that a demonstration of 100,000 or 200,000 won't help. If two million people don't rise up now and fight for democracy, fight for liberalism, the conclusion must be that Israeli society accepts what's going on. That it [fascism] is already there.

## U.S.... (Continued From Page One)

as long and as fully as possible. But they warn that the political path will get tougher once Ukraine has exhausted the current congressional package, which could happen as early as this summer.

Some Western leaders have harbored reservations about sending certain types of heavy weaponry to Ukraine, worried about a direct confrontation with Russia, especially after Putin signaled a willingness to use nuclear weapons.

The frank discussions in Kyiv last month reflected an effort by the Biden administration to bring Ukraine's goals in line with what the West can sustain as the war approaches its one-year mark. Getting Ukraine on the same page has not always been easy, according to people familiar with the discussions, speaking on the condition of anonymity to describe private talks.

For months, Ukraine has expended significant resources and troops defending Bakhmut in the eastern Donbas region. American military analysts and planners have argued that it is unrealistic to simultaneously defend Bakhmut and launch a spring counteroffensive to retake what the United States views as more critical territory.

U.S. officials have expressed concerns that if Ukraine keeps fighting everywhere Russia sends troops, it will work to Moscow's advantage. Instead, they have urged Ukraine to prioritize the timing and execution of the spring counteroffensive, particularly as the United States and Europe train Ukrainian fighters on some of the more complex weaponry making its way to the battlefield.

Last month, Zelensky's top aide, Andriy Yermak, reiterated that victory against Russia means restoring Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, "including Donbas and Crimea." Anything less is "absolutely unacceptable," he said at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

U.S. intelligence officials have concluded, however, that retaking the heavily fortified peninsula is beyond the capability of Ukraine's army right now, according to officials familiar with the matter. That sobering assessment has been reiterated to multiple committees on Capitol Hill over the last several weeks.

That discrepancy between aims and capabilities has raised concerns in Europe that the Ukraine conflict will persist indefinitely, overburdening the West as it grapples with other challenges including stubbornly high inflation and unstable energy prices.

Even seasoned military experts see a wide range of possible outcomes in coming months, underscoring how tenuous the situation is.

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of the MKO," he said. "They killed 17,000 Iranian people and officials and embraced the Ba'athist party during the imposed war. They stood in the ranks of traitors to their nation and killed dozens of the country's youths with the help of Saddam Hussein."

The MKO organized a rally in Paris over the weekend, calling on the European Union to blacklist the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

The MKO terrorist group is responsible for causing the largest part of the 17,000-plus fatalities that have resulted from acts of terror since the 1979 victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

The terrorist group also fought alongside Iraqi forces in the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's war on Iran in the 1980s.

However, the U.S. and the European Union removed the MKO from their lists of terrorist organizations in order to use them as proxies against Iran.

Iranian officials have condemned the "shameless hypocrisy" of the U.S. and its European allies in supporting a terrorist cult that has Iranian blood on its hands.

## Bavar... (Continued From Page 2)

Iran unveiled the state-of-the-art surface-to-air Bavar 373 (Belief-373) air defense system, designed and manufactured by the country's experts, in August 2019.

Iranian military officials said the Bavar 373 air defense system is one of the most important defense achievements

of the country after the victory of the Islamic Revolution. They believe Bavar-373 missile system is much better than the U.S. Patriot system and its Russian counterpart S-300.

In November 2022, Iran's Defense Ministry showcased the upgraded version of the domestically-designed and manufactured Bavar-373.

It is a mobile missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy incoming hostile targets. The system employs missiles that have a maximum range of 300 kilometers. The system is capable of simultaneously detecting up to 300 targets, tracking 60 targets at once and engaging six targets at a time.

According to a report in the long range test of the Bavar-373 system a stationary target was detected at a range of more than 450 kilometers by the optimized radar of the Bavar 373 system, and it was tracked at a range of about 405 kilometers and was hit and destroyed at a range of over 300 kilometers.

The Bavar-373 system detection radar was said to have increased from 350 to 450 kilometers, and the range of its engagement range has risen from 260 to 400 kilometers, the report added.

It also noted that the missile range has gone from 200 to 300 kilometers, and its engagement altitude has increased from 27 to 32 kilometers.

The Islamic Republic's military doctrine holds that the country's armed capability solely serves defensive purposes.

Military officials say the military power of Iran is strong, extraordinary and deterrent despite enemy sanctions and pressures, and hail the country's defense sector for its remarkable developments in the recent decades. They stress the Iranian Armed Forces' deterrent power dissuades the United States and Israel from implementing its threats against the country.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made substantial headway in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the weaponry sphere.

Iranian officials have repeatedly stressed that the country will not hesitate to boost its military capabilities, including its missile and drone power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will never be subject to negotiation.

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expansion of bilateral cooperation, first and foremost, in the trade-and-economic sphere," the spokeswoman pointed out.

She emphasized that the two countries are moving in the path of safeguarding the interests of their peoples.

Iran and Russia both have been targeted with U.S.-led sanctions in recent years, but the sanctions have failed to secure Western countries' interests.

Russia has been targeted with draconian sanctions following its February "special military operation" in neighboring Ukraine. The U.S. has also tightened its sanctions on Iran since 2018, when Washington unilaterally withdrew from the Iran nuclear accord, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in pursuit of a more confrontational policy toward Tehran.

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all masterminds and perpetrators behind the Shiraz terror attack.

In early November, Iran's Intelligence Ministry confirmed that security agents have arrested 26 Takfiri terrorists involved in the fatal shooting in Shah Cheragh holy shrine, and added that the militants are non-Iranians from Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

The terrorists have been arrested in the provinces of Fars, Tehran, Alborz, Kerman, Qom and Khorasan Razavi, the statement added, noting that a number of others have been caught as they were trying to flee the country from the Eastern borders.

The ministry also stated that a number of those terrorists were planning another terrorist attack in the southeastern city of Zahedan.

Tehran has denounced the silence of the so-called Western advocates of human rights over terror attacks in Iran which led to the martyrdom and injury of several civilians, and further blasted them for inciting and encouraging terrorism in the country.

# Zionists Demolish More Palestinian Houses

ACRE, West Bank (Dispatches) – Zionist regime authorities demolished several Palestinian houses this morning in the city of Acre, a city that acquired large Zionist populations through the forced expulsion of its Palestinian population in 1948.

According to Arab48, the houses, which were built before the occupation of Palestinian territories, were home to 20 Palestinian residents.

The regime claims the homes were built without planning permissions.

In recent years, the occupation has demolished hundreds of homes on the grounds that they lack construction and renovation permits, which are almost impossible to obtain for Palestinians.

Palestinians and human rights organizations say the policy is part of a larger Zionist strategy to gradually expel Palestinians from their historic homes.

The Zionist troops closed the northern

entrance to the city of Acre after military bulldozers and machinery entered the area and prevented journalists from approaching and photographing the demolition site.

After the arrest of three family members, Noura Abu Eish said: "Police closed the city of Acre from all its entrances to demolish our homes as if we were criminals. The police do not fight drugs and crime, but rather raid our homes and prevent us from taking any items from our homes. But I will take a picture of my late father."

A panel of United Nations experts has called on the international community to take action to stop systematic housing demolition, arbitrary displacement and forced evictions of Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank.

Palestine's official Wafa news agency cited the experts as making the plea in a statement on Monday, after media re-

ports said the occupying regime demolished 132 Palestinian structures across 38 communities in the occupied West Bank in January 2023, a 135-percent increase compared to the same period in 2022.

"The systematic demolition of Palestinian homes, erection of illegal Israeli settlements and systematic denial of building permits for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank amounts to 'domicide,'" the statement said.

The experts reiterated their concern over the situation in Masafer Yatta area, where over 1,100 Palestinian residents remain at imminent risk of forced eviction, arbitrary displacement and demolitions of their homes, livelihood, water and sanitation structures.

"Direct attacks on the Palestinian people's homes, schools, livelihoods and water sources are nothing but Israel's attempts to curtail the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to threaten their

very existence," the experts said.

"Israel's tactics of forcibly displacing and evicting the Palestinian population appear to have no limits. In occupied East Al-Quds, tens of Palestinian families also face imminent risks of forced evictions and displacement, due to discriminatory zoning and planning regimes that favor Israeli settlement expansion – the act that is illegal under international law and amounts to a war crime," they said.

The Zionist regime occupied the West Bank, including East Al-Quds, in a Western-backed war in 1967. Ever since, it has been dotting the territory with hundreds of settlements that house thousands of settlers. All the settlements are illegal under international law. The UN Security Council has condemned the occupying regime's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

# Hezbollah Pushes for Dialogue Among Politicians to Fill Presidential Vacuum

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – A high-ranking official from the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement has lashed out at some politicians and political groups over the ongoing power vacuum in the crisis-hit country, as authorities have failed over the past few months to elect a new president after the term of former President Michel Aoun ended on October 31 last year.

"The appropriate way out of the lingering political and economic crises is to elect a new president for the country. Those who insist on a certain candidate and reject any form of talks and negotiations are liable for the prolongation of the status quo," Vice President of the Executive Council of Hezbollah Sheikh Ali Damoush said.

"Election of a new head of state is a national and domestic issue. Reliance on foreign powers will not resolve the matter, but would rather complicate the situation. We, therefore, do not count on outsiders to pick a new president and instead rely on national consensus as the most practical solution to complete the task," he said.

The official said that his movement has been demanding dialogue and understanding ever since Aoun's mandate expired without a successor, and called upon other politicians and factions in the legislature to reach an agreement.

"No contender has managed to secure a two-thirds majority in the first session of the parliament, with an absolute majority in subsequent rounds. If no modification is made, we would not

be able to break the deadlock," Sheikh Damoush noted.

"The logical solution to end the deadlock is national consensus," the senior Hezbollah official said.

The remarks come as Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has called for the election of "a brave [Lebanese] president who is willing to sacrifice."

"We want the election of a president, the formation of a government and the salvation of the country," the Hezbollah leader said.

"We want a brave president who is willing to sacrifice and does not care about the threats of the Americans. There are such examples and we must look for a government of this type and ministers of this type."

# UN Report: Sayf al-'Adl Widely Seen as New Al-Qaeda Leader

UNITED NATIONS (AP) – UN experts say the predominant view among member nations is that the leadership of Al-Qaeda has passed to Sayf al-'Adl, who was responsible for Osama bin Laden's security and trained some of the hijackers involved in the 9/11 attack on the U.S.

The panel of experts said in a report to the UN Security Council that no announcement has been made of Sayf al-'Adl replacing Ayman al-Zawahiri, who was allegedly killed by a U.S. drone strike in Kabul last August.

"But in discussions in November and December many UN member states took the view that Sayf al-'Adl is already operating as the de facto and uncontested leader of the group," the report says.

Assessments vary as to why al-'Adl's leadership hasn't been declared, it said.

Some countries feel that al-Zawahiri's presence in Kabul embarrassed the country's Taliban rulers who are seeking legitimacy "and that Al-Qaeda chose not to exacerbate this by acknowledging the death," the experts said.

The panel said that the location of Sayf al-'Adl "raises questions that have a bearing on Al-Qaeda's ambitions to assert leadership of a global movement in the face of challenges" from the Daesh extremist group.

Sayf al-'Adl has been listed on the UN sanctions blacklist as Egyptian-born Mohammed Salahuddin Abd El Halim Zidan since January 2001, the panel said. He is described in the UN listing as taking over as military commander of Al-Qaeda following the death of Mohammed Atef — one of bin Laden's top aides — in a U.S. attack in November 2001.

In addition to being bin Laden's security chief, the UN says, Sayf al-'Adl taught militants to use explosives and trained some of the hijackers involved in the attack in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. It says he also trained Somali militants who killed 18 U.S. servicemen in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1993.

Sayf al-'Adl is wanted by U.S. authorities in connection with the August 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya.

According to the report, the threat from Al-Qaeda, the Daesh terrorist group and their affiliates "remains high in conflict zones and neighboring countries," with Africa emerging in recent years "as the continent where the harm done by terrorism is developing most rapidly and extensively."