

## Israel's Intelligence Failure Prior to 7 October 2023: A First Look

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On 7 October 2023 the Islamic Resistance Movement, known by its acronym, Hamas, launched a surprise attack on Israeli border positions around Gaza, breaching high-tech defences and then pouring into Israeli communities, a music festival, and an Israel Defence Forces (IDF) divisional headquarters, among other targets. Two months later authorities were still identifying the remains of the approximately 1400 dead. Some 129 Israelis, including about 30 to 50 soldiers and the remainder civilian men, women and children, are held captive in Gaza. In an effort to destroy Hamas, the IDF has occupied swathes of the Gaza Strip at the cost of tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians' lives. It is difficult to imagine what good news might come of all this.

This assault began when, for two days, security in the Gaza envelope had collapsed. Hamas overcame several layers of automated detection systems in the air, on the ground, and underground. These are monitored remotely and locally, passively and actively, and are defended with soldiers on the spot, from guard towers and remote-controlled machine-guns. Hamas planned the operation meticulously, reconnoitring and choosing targets and tactics carefully. It is clear that preparations lasted some two years.

Hamas may have chosen the date for its auspicious 50-year anniversary of Israel's last disaster, the surprise attack of the Yom Kippur War. It is more

likely, however, that the timing was chosen for tactical reasons. Guard duty on Saturday morning, especially on holidays (it was the end of the Sukkot festival), is generally seen by conscripts as likely to be quiet, and an undesirable obligation. The IDF garrison around Gaza had been weakened by events in the West Bank. Weeks prior, the 143 “Gaza” Division transferred three battalions to the West Bank to cover security during the holidays as Jewish settlers had planned provocative demonstrations. Left behind were three experienced but understrength battalions, the storied 51 and 13 battalions of the Golani Brigade, and Sayeret Nahal, each of which suffered substantial losses, and 33 “Caracal” Battalion, a new and experimental mixed-gendered armoured battalion of the border defence corps, which performed well. The rise of non-partisan Palestinian “brigade” units in the Nablus-Tulkarem-Jenin area of the West Bank had captured the attention of Israeli security since at least 2021. The government and the IDF considered Hamas to be a lower security risk.

The question nags: how did Israel’s security and intelligence services – with their legendary reputations – allow this to happen? How were the warning signs of a surprise attack missed? The events of 7 October 2023 resulted from a set of catastrophic failures of Israel’s intelligence services but also its political leadership. Intelligence failures affected analytic tradecraft, organisational structure and processes, approaches to briefing, sexism and rank bias, and a failure to disseminate. These are underpinned by very obvious and overarching

failures of leadership and policy. To date, no senior person in authority has resigned – and heads must roll to revive trust in the system.

It is vital that these failures are unpacked – even before a commission of inquiry has a chance to begin a formal process. What becomes apparent is that our idea of “intelligence failure” – in both scholarship and in the public sphere – is a woolly and analytically useless concept. It is important therefore that our examination of this case helps us to sharpen a concept which can be used to diagnose problems in the future. Intelligence professionals, I argue, need to be judged on their process more than on the result. Most scholarly approaches to failure depend on hindsight which is core to the historical craft but mostly worthless to organisational design. That said, there is emerging Israeli scholarship which suggests that Israeli defence intelligence – processed in the research and analysis department (RAD) of the intelligence branch of the general staff (AMAN) – is resistant to structuring its analytic craft or to align it with social scientific methodology. Likewise, Israel lacks some of the processes, structures and doctrines which would allow raw intelligence to be scrutinised and weighed independently. These shortcomings must change. What emerges is a razor, conceived around the notion of social-scientific replicability: an event is only considered “intelligence failure” when the intelligence community fails to meet professional standards. If a change of intelligence personnel or process might produce a different result, the case is

probably intelligence failure. If a change of leadership or policy could change the outcome, it's probably not intelligence failure.

Obviously, this too requires counterfactual thinking, but it shifts the conversation away from a well-trodden path of “blame” and toward diagnosis. There are also social-scientific solutions to these unknowable questions. War-gaming, modelling and simulation are promising examples of such solutions – these are incidentally also useful tools for intelligence analysts who need to perform counterfactual analysis. My goal, here, is to break a longstanding pattern where, after failure, leaders blame intelligence, and invest large sums of public money into reform designed to solve yesterday's problems instead of tomorrow's. Democratic accountability in Israel is already hanging by a thread following the Prime Minister's 10-month long attempt to weaken the judiciary. Therefore, in order to achieve any kind of accountability for failure, Israel's commissioners will require a clear and useful concept of intelligence failure. Before we examine the case and draw upon it for conceptual refinement, it is important to note that the evidence base for this case is fresh and incomplete. We rely almost exclusively on media reports from an environment with substantially more censorship and a more curated information environment than we are used to in the UK, EU, and North America. Moreover, there have been a substantial number of leaks about intelligence failure in AMAN. These need to be handled carefully. I do not believe in conspiracy theories. My sense, today, is that the data which have been leaked are genuine, but have been chosen to keep

Israeli media focused on the military's failure. It is possible that journalists simply got access to angry soldiers, but one would expect arrests and further scandal to follow unauthorised disclosure. It has not. We cannot know for sure, but healthy scepticism must join an understanding that the leaked information on intelligence failure on 7 October has been chosen for a reason.

### Warning signs

At the time of writing (January 2024) – there is already ample evidence that warning signs were missed. In the days following the massacre, Egypt's intelligence chief publicly announced that he had personally warned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ten days before the attack, that “something big was about to happen”.<sup>1</sup> Netanyahu's office denied this, although the story has been confirmed by multiple outlets. Likewise, American sources began to buzz about both the Egyptian angle, and their own intelligence community's evidence. Although American warning intelligence about Hamas does not seem to have risen to the national all-source assessment body, the National Intelligence Council (NIC), journalists cited specific evidence presented by senior intelligence officials. These warnings were raised with the White House, it would seem. One non-specific warning came from the CIA. The other American assessment, drawn from Israeli-shared source material, indicated ‘unusual activity’ by Hamas.<sup>2</sup> The general staff had offered a number of generic warnings that Israel's enemies were noting its internal strife and could choose to

exploit it. We can infer from the rapid and unprecedented American response that it was well-informed about the risk of escalation and spill-over. This, by the way, is surely an American intelligence success story. To be sure, the deployment of two carrier groups and additional forces to the region was not for Hamas, but for Iran and its regional partners, especially Hezbollah.

There is substantial information emerging from Israel too. Recently, the newspaper *Haaretz* reported on its interviews with surviving *tatzpitaniot* – women soldiers who serve as spotters on the Gaza border’s watch and command and control apparatus. These survivors of the onslaught – whose comrades were killed and taken captive – went to the press to detail the range of warnings they had provided since at least early 2023. They observed Hamas carrying out drills with drones, showing off their knowledge of Israeli camera positions, and drilling attacks on tanks, using paragliders, etc. Their warnings over these drills were especially salient over the four to six weeks before the attack. These women said that Hamas were the negligent ones: “It didn’t try to hide anything and its actions were out in the open.” These women argue that a mix of sexism, rankism and organisational dysfunction led their warnings to go unheeded. The best summary came from one interviewee, who concluded that a veteran spotter ‘does not need 8200 [Israel’s signals intelligence unit] in order to tell immediately whether her sector is operating unusually.’<sup>3</sup> Alas, senior officers in the Gaza division and military intelligence discounted their observations.

Information was also published showing that personnel within unit 8200 of AMAN, also warned of Hamas plans. It reported about Hamas drills and how they matched a document held by the unit, nicknamed “Walls of Jericho”, which outlined Hamas plans to strike Israeli border positions and civilian communities. The veteran analyst concluded, ‘it is a plan to start a war...it’s not just a raid on a village.’<sup>4</sup> The IDF held information that Hamas had been considering this kind of operation since 2016. The Gaza Division of the IDF, whose headquarters at Re’im were sacked on 7 October, believed the plan was aspirational but that Hamas lacked the capability. 8200 has completed its own classified post-mortem, reviewed by journalist Ben Caspit. The report describes personnel issues, heaping praise on a woman non-commissioned officer (NCO) known as V. whose warnings went unheeded, and couching criticism of her superiors in a broader description of structural problems. It describes the introduction of new technology which pools intelligence data for analysts but which removed an erstwhile practice of “pushing” assessments upon senior officers and decision-makers. Since data is pooled, analysts in AMAN, who often lack subject matter expertise, are required to “pull” data and to know intuitively what queries to make. A junior analyst, who has since offered to resign, did not even know the AMAN’s technical terminology for traffic analysis data, “contentless intelligence”, during the internal review. He thus missed key signals of unusual activity in Gaza before the attack.<sup>5</sup>

## Analytic failures

Many of the problems identified during the Agranat Commission, which investigated the problems leading to Egypt and Syria's surprise attack on Israel 50 years earlier, seem to persist today. The quote above, about 8200, indicates that the Israelis are still overly dependent upon high-grade positive confirmation of a threat, rather than using structured analytic methods and a range of sources, to assess a threat with measured confidence. This dependence leaves advanced states vulnerable: if all you are looking for is positive proof – often an impossible task – you are bound to be surprised. Likewise, Israel's enemies understand its technological advantages. Why would they leave breadcrumbs there if not only to deceive? This was as true in 1972–3 as it was in 2023.

There is also evidence of a new Israeli “conception” or preconception. In 1973, the conception was an Israeli assumption or paradigm, that if Egypt were to attack, it would seek to regain all territory lost in 1967. Israel's defence intelligence therefore concluded that since Egypt lacked the means to do this, it would not dare to try. This caused Israeli analysts to discount evidence that Egypt was preparing an offensive.<sup>6</sup> More recently, Israelis had assumed that Hamas preferred to avoid direct confrontation, and instead wished to deal with economic problems and its own administrative interests rather than risk its destruction. This notion had been fostered, it is now obvious, by Hamas's seemingly timid responses to clashes between Israel and Palestinian Islamic



Jihad in the previous two years. This thinking made Israeli decision-makers even more likely to discount contrary evidence.

Compounding this conception were Israeli political exigencies. Having pursued a carrot-and-stick strategy of deterrence and collaboration with Hamas, Israeli leaders believed they could continue to transfer finance to Hamas and that it would continue to behave as though it was anything other than a resistance movement. Israel's hard-line, right-wing government has been intent on cracking down on Palestinians in the West Bank while giving the settler movement a freer hand to expand, even violently. So, any discussion which was held about the removal of troops from Gaza fuelled this political self-interest. It made sense to keep this government's radical base happy in the West Bank – far more sense than believing that you were being fooled by Hamas. The chief of AMAN nourished this conception: his briefings confirmed, despite evidence to the contrary, that warnings from Gaza were nothing to worry about compared to the security needs in the West Bank.

In the Israeli system, the head of RAD reports to the head of AMAN. This assessment is carried forward to both the Defence Minister, Yoav Gallant, and Prime Minister Netanyahu. The latter two have been political enemies since Netanyahu attempted to sack Gallant in March, 2023. The week before 7 October, 'senior IDF and Defence Ministry personnel estimated...that Hamas is not interested in, or preparing for war.'<sup>7</sup> Hamas would not risk the gains it had secured for Gazans during its indirect talks with Israel, the thinking ran. Israel's

national security advisor argued that Hamas was ‘very, very restrained’. It is procedurally likely that the Prime Minister was at this meeting, or at least privy to the assessment briefing. That same week Netanyahu led a security meeting focused on Iran, not Hamas. These meetings sanctioned the transfer of Israeli troops away from Gaza.

When the warning finally arrived, it left only a few hours to respond, and still does not seem to have been taken seriously. *Haaretz* describes a meeting with the IDF and Shin Bet (Israel’s internal security service, also known as *Sherut HaBitachon HaKlali* or Shabak) on the night before the surprise attack. They discussed warnings of a terrorist infiltration. They clearly did not appreciate the potential scale: they decided to deploy a few specialist counter-terrorist units to the area, just in case. They did not redeploy troops from elsewhere or call reserves. Nobody in the security apparatus decided to inform the troops, recall soldiers on leave, or to inform border installations.<sup>8</sup> This decision, as it happens, led to disastrous losses for Israeli special forces who cannot substitute line infantry.

These are the facts which have been published to date. Besides the anecdote above about late-notice warning, up until late December 2023 we heard barely a whisper about the Shin Bet’s role in the debacle. Then, Israel’s Channel 12 reported that the security service had indeed been handling a human source within Hamas which, two months prior to 7 October, delivered accurate

information about Hamas's plans, including the date of the attack. The source, codenamed "*mavo 'ah*", Hebrew for "fountain", had passed on intelligence which they had received from an insider. The Shin Bet concluded the information was "not meaningful" – the source was relatively new and inexperienced, and their reliability was not yet clearly established. The Shin Bet, like the army, is promising its own internal investigation.<sup>9</sup>

In this context, it is worth noting that the Shin Bet, like Mossad, is a branch of the Prime Minister's Office (not the Interior and Foreign Ministries, as in other countries). We will only develop a clear understanding of what went wrong following an independent, public investigation.

### Anatomy of intelligence failure

Journalists and scholars have already pounced on some standard comparisons for the failure of Israeli intelligence to "connect the dots" of the warning signs.<sup>10</sup> This is a reference to the 9/11 Commission Report, which itself was addressing Roberta Wohlstetter's 1962 study of the intelligence failure leading to the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.<sup>11</sup> In that text, Wohlstetter describes the difficulty in discerning "signals" from "noise" from among a vast pool of data. Richard Betts, perhaps reacting to the obvious impossibility of remediating such a problem, argued that failure was inevitable and the best decision would be to prepare contingencies.<sup>12</sup> Erik Dahl's book, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack*, attempts to harmonise a range of approaches toward intelligence failure and

surprise attack. In it, Dahl offers a “theory of preventative action” – intelligence must provide specific, tactical and actionable warning to a receptive audience.<sup>13</sup>

This theory is useful: it helps us understand that, in the case of 7 October, there was clearly specific, tactical and actionable warning which was disregarded.

Dahl’s theory provides a reasonable answer to the counterfactual question: what could have been done? It is safe to say in the current case, there was enough specific, tactical and actionable warning evidence available to maintain a higher level of readiness. However, like Wohlstetter, Dahl demands too much of the intelligence services. Is it really intelligence failure when the audience for a briefing is not receptive? This is too convenient for the political leadership.

When are they accountable, if not in this case?

In *Why Intelligence Fails*, Robert Jervis presents a model which does not require hindsight to reform the way intelligence is organised and created. Jervis describes two overarching categories. The first is that intelligence can be wrong. I am not convinced this should always be judged as failure, especially since our working definition permits error when professional standards are upheld. The second is about the process: how do we rate the analytic craft and its product? Have analysts examined the full range of evidence and alternate hypotheses? Have they used structured analytic techniques (SATs) to bring their conclusions away from intuition and toward something more social-scientific? Have staff attempted to wrestle with their biases, their language, and the consequences of getting it wrong?<sup>14</sup> This is a helpful model for both reformers of today and

historians like me. Often, we try not to judge the past by contemporary standards but by its own: this gives us a model for looking backward at cases such as Pearl Harbor, when SATs did not exist. It also helps us diagnose contemporary issues such as the case of 7 October.

Recent scholarship on Israeli intelligence illuminates a few salient problems. Israeli intelligence generally eschews SATs and defence intelligence doctrine, suggesting they limit creative thinking and restrain analysts.<sup>15</sup> They prefer an “artistic” approach to analysis, ‘underpinned by intuition, creativity, imagination and inductive reasoning. Instinct and experience are perceived as crucial skills. Inductive reasoning based on recognizing patterns in past experiences...places more emphasis on tacit knowledge.’<sup>16</sup> Given the evidence available about warning failure, described above, the danger of these attitudes becomes apparent. For his PhD research on Israel’s intelligence culture, Itai Shapira’s interviewees from AMAN described its un-corporate culture. Their evidence reveals a systemic misunderstanding of SATs, doctrine and analytic craft. A system which emphasises intuition and inductive reasoning based on experience is bound to fall victim to “WYSIATI” bias: “What I see is all there is.” They would be prone to ignoring young women whose observations led to a different, and incidentally more accurate, analysis than the intuitions of their superior officers.

There is a misconception in the scholarship and some quarters of the profession – clearly in Israel too – that SATs create conformity and that they falsely claim

to eliminate certain biases. In fact, new research shows that although SATs are not useful for eliminating two specific types of bias, they are still valuable as a means to move analysts away from their fallible intuitions (incidentally, intuition-based reasoning is also a common problem in my own profession of history).<sup>17</sup> As a history instructor on a Master of Arts in Intelligence and Security Studies programme which teaches these methods, I must note here that watching our students use these techniques has changed my mind about them. I have seen how, by forcing analysts to challenge their way of thinking, and to create an auditable record of their process, they learn to hold themselves to account for their product.

In short, the fundamental problems leading to intelligence failure in Israel may well have been both doctrinal and methodological. Warning from the *tatzpitaniot* or from a cell within 8200 needs to be worked into the analytic process and accounted for. That is, any analytic product which is going to discount such warnings needs to show the process of why: what competing hypotheses can be eliminated? What is the impact if we are right or wrong? What key assumptions about Hamas require re-examination and on what schedule? In the absence of positive proof, what other indicators might support the minority view that Hamas was preparing an attack?

In addition to method there seems to be an issue with process. Israel lacks an all-source intelligence analysis body comprised of its own professional analytic

staff. That is, it has nothing like the UK's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) or the American National Intelligence Council.<sup>18</sup> Shapira's Israeli interviewees largely rejected these ideas as well – suggesting that these were foreign solutions which do not fit Israel's informal, “bottom-up” culture. The evidence emerging since 7 October perhaps illustrates that this bottom-up culture exists in myth alone. Amos Gil'ad, former director of AMAN's research and analysis department, stood apart, arguing that a formal statutory structure to coordinate defence, security and foreign intelligence was needed. Most interviewees agreed Israel had no intelligence “community” as such – that with Shin Bet and Mossad reporting to the Prime Minister and AMAN a branch of the army, there was no impetus for a coordinating body. Perhaps it could not work – but the evidence available about how leaders were briefed before 7 October certainly suggests that the current system is not good enough. Who is responsible for warning intelligence from Gaza? From Lebanon? Iran? The answer is not obvious and leaves room for overlap, competition, and waste. Moreover, this structureless process sets no expectations for how confidence in assessment, or the lack thereof, is communicated to decision-makers. It depends entirely on the relationship between AMAN's chief, the defence minister and the prime minister.

New evidence has emerged on what the “devil's advocate” department of AMAN had to say before 7 October. This department is a legacy of the Agranat Commission which reformed the system following the failures of 1973. The

department produces assessments which are meant to highlight some of the SAT-like questions discussed above. It tends to focus on issues of methodology and philosophy which RAD lacks.<sup>19</sup> Little is known about its process, although there is some research emerging which shows it has impacted decisions positively.<sup>20</sup> Yet, this structure forces the analysis to take place at a very high level – it is left up to the chief of AMAN’s own judgement (and his inner circle). This would be considered unusual, even unprofessional, in other Western settings. I don’t think this is a good way to communicate confidence, or a lack thereof, in one’s judgement.

In early 2024, a senior officer of AMAN discussed the problem with Channel 12. The officer, “A”, incidentally also a woman, reported that the “devil’s advocate” department is not really a department, but a single officer. There are not typically serious discussions about this officer’s work. They lack the resources to perform the kind of in-depth research undertaken by RAD. “A” stated that there are no other one-man departments. The chief of AMAN, Major General Aharon Haliva, was inclined to red-team issues, but, according to A, ‘there was supposed to be a devil’s advocate department. It is clear to everyone that these statements are lip-service.’ The assessment was already determined by that stage – a red-team exercise is pointless and unlikely to change minds. Indeed, A said that Haliva tends to resist opinions which go against his judgement. His staff, according to this one source, challenge him cautiously, and seemingly rarely. This problem of structure, process and personality



manifested a week before 7 October. The heads of the devil's advocate department and RAD discussed with Haliva an assessment which contradicted his premise: that Hamas was interested in quiet. Hamas, it was argued, needed to act against normalisation with Saudi Arabia and the recovery of the Palestinian Authority from its near collapse since 2021. The warning included the likelihood of shooting and kidnapping attempts – not an operation on the scale of 7 October. It is unclear whether it was informed by real-time access to the data produced by the NCO, V., in 8200, or by the border spotters. This view was widely disseminated, to no effect.<sup>21</sup> It would seem that a myth of a bottom-up, creative culture in Israeli intelligence persists; recent events should dispel the notion entirely.

When Israel convenes a commission of inquiry, one hopes that organisational design will be part of its remit. Likewise, the issues of methodology and responsibility discussed above. We would naturally expect it to look at what evidence was available, and how and why it was missed. Or how and why, when positive warning arrived with hours to go, the response was so weak. However, above all, I would expect that the relationship with the political level would be scrutinised. The issue that continues to nag at me is the briefing in September which led to the withdrawal of IDF battalions to the West Bank from Gaza. What standard of evidence could have convinced the army that this was unadvisable? What about the politicians?

An air-gap between intelligence collection agencies and decision-makers is essential. Analysis within each agency remains important, but an intermediary level must address major strategic insights, bridging the gap between intelligence services and political leadership. If true, it is shocking that senior officers of AMAN did not have access to the whole pool of data. Similarly, assessments often bypass Mossad and Shin Bet data and remain confined within military boundaries, not reaching a national level. Even in recent reporting, we see that this structureless system encourages blame and makes accountability difficult to achieve. The Channel 12 piece on the devil's advocate department wrote, "In Haliva's defence", that the head of RAD is not subordinate to the chief of AMAN but is the national assessor of intelligence who disseminates his work to the entire political and military bodies. Shapira's work – it should be noted – shows it is in fact a dual role. Likewise, '...the Shin Bet and Mossad see and analyse the same raw material and independently agreed that Hamas was deterred.'<sup>22</sup> This is perhaps the clearest sign of a broken process, and illustrates the need for a national assessment staff which draws upon all collection services and reports to a broader range of stakeholders at the political level. An Israeli-style JIC would be a cultural shift – Israel's founding prime minister David Ben-Gurion centralised control of the Shin Bet and Mossad within the Prime Minister's Office to force rival ministers (especially his foreign minister) from these discussions. Nonetheless, reform is imperative. The current structure fails to serve its purpose if leaders cannot ask basic questions and receive reliable

answers. The intelligence community must undergo a redesign, holding itself to high professional and social-scientific standards, challenging perspectives, maximising collaboration, and detaching national assessment from the discrete interests of each agency and politicians.

## Conclusion

Having looked at all of these factors, it is worth returning to the question of intelligence failure. Did Israeli intelligence fail because disaster struck, or because it failed to warn? Did it fail to warn because it ignored good evidence and lacked a methodology, or because the professional staff agreed that the risk from Hamas was low? Would changing the way these assessments took place, separating them from the politicians, have changed the outcome? It is hard to know, but this kind of counterfactual would be simple enough to wargame in order to reach a plausible answer. This sort of social-scientific approach to analysis ought to be embraced by Israel's intelligence services as they turn to some soul-searching. It will only be possible to answer these questions in full following an independent inquiry, with full access to the evidence.

The lessons we learn from this case should also help us develop clearer ideas about the phenomenon of failure. We see that there were competent staff who got it right, but could not convince commanders or more senior staff. Albeit the evidence available remains limited, it is still safe to say that failure lay in a system which could not give these soldiers' perspectives a chance to have an

impact. Despite what its members say, Israel does create an institutional assessment in the person of the senior leaders of RAD and AMAN – whatever persuades them becomes the army's point of view. This approach might work routinely, and even lead to excellent results, but it falls apart under the pressures of uncertainty, political tension, and a structure which favours stovepipes over collaboration.

The definition of intelligence failure I have offered admittedly complicates the case for failure on 7 October. Since AMAN's professional standards are woolly, diffuse and variable, it may be impossible to measure a failure to meet them. Equally, it will be difficult to hold such a system accountable. This further highlights the importance for an investigation into the structures and processes which contributed to error and failure. Israel clearly needs an independent analytic body with access to all sources and able to answer any cabinet minister's request for information. Such a staff could view warning evidence without the baggage and biases of having produced it. They could track it without being distracted by the opinions of local generals or institutional pressures. This is especially important in a political landscape where senior and retired generals often lead successful political careers.

An Israeli-style JIC would create a national-level assessment for policy-makers to consume, underpinned by professional analysts held to a consistent doctrine. Their product must be available to all stakeholders, not just two cabinet members. Analysts must be drawn away from their intuition in such a system,

and forced to systematically challenge their grasp of a problem as evidence emerges and perspectives evolve. One would expect that such a system would remediate the current lack of accountability which prevails between the general staff and the cabinet. Israel needs an intelligence process which offers military and political leaders something useful, while holding them all accountable to their roles and for their responsibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> AGENCIES, 'Egypt Intelligence Official Says Israel Ignored Repeated Warnings of "Something Big"', *Times of Israel* (9 October 2023) <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/egypt-intelligence-official-says-israel-ignored-repeated-warnings-of-something-big/>> [accessed 23 November 2023].

<sup>2</sup> Katie Bo Lillis, Zachary Cohen, Alex Marquardt, and Natasha Bertrand, 'US Intelligence Warned of the Potential for Violence Days before Hamas Attack | CNN Politics', *CNN*, 2023 <<https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/13/politics/us-intelligence-warnings-potential-gaza-clash-days-before-attack/index.html>> [accessed 20 November 2023].

<sup>3</sup> Yaniv Kubovich, 'The Women Soldiers Who Warned of a Pending Hamas Attack – and Were Ignored', *Haaretz*, 20 November 2023, section Israel News <<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>> [accessed 23 November 2023].

<sup>4</sup> Ronen Bergman and Adam Goldman, 'Israel Knew Hamas's Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago', *The New York Times*, 1 December 2023, section World <<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>> [accessed 15 December 2023].

<sup>5</sup> Ben Caspit, 'Disclosure: the shelved report of 8200 on the negligence that led to the massacre in the South', *Maariv* (24 February 2024), web edition <<https://www.maariv.co.il/journalists/Article-1078519>> [accessed 7 March 2024].

<sup>6</sup> Itai Shapira, 'The Yom Kippur Intelligence Failure after Fifty Years: What Lessons Can Be Learned?', *Intelligence and National Security*, 0/0 (2023), 1–25.

<sup>7</sup> Yaniv Kubovich and Jonathan Lis, 'Why Israel's Defenses Crumbled in Face of Hamas' Assault', *Haaretz*, 8 October 2023, section Israel News <<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-08/ty-article/.premium/six-significant-failures-that-lead-to-one-point-collapse-vs-hamas/0000018b-0f15-dfff-a7eb-afdd0bb80000>> [accessed 13 November 2023].

<sup>8</sup> Kubovich, 'The Women Soldiers Who Warned of a Pending Hamas Attack – and Were Ignored'.

<sup>9</sup> Elana Dayan and Sarit Magen, 'Uvda Exposé: Warning Which Reached Shabak', *Keshet 12* (27 December 2023), The Main Edition edition, section 'Uvda' <<https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/6361323ddea5a810/Article-0a034bff26cac81026.htm>> [accessed 11 January 2024].

<sup>10</sup> Bergman and Goldman, 'Israel Knew Hamas's Attack Plan More Than a Year Ago'; Uri Bar-Joseph and Avner Cohen, 'How Israel's Spies Failed—and Why Escalation Could Be Catastrophic', *Foreign Policy*, 2023 <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/10/19/israel-intelligence-gaza-nuclear-weapons-hezbollah-iran-escalation-could-be-catastrophic/>> [accessed 15 December 2023].

<sup>11</sup> Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (1962).

<sup>12</sup> Richard K. Betts, 'Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures Are Inevitable', *World Politics*, 31/1 (1978), 61–89.

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<sup>13</sup> Erik J. Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack: Failure and Success from Pearl Harbor to 9/11 and Beyond* (Washington, D.C., 2013) <<https://press.georgetown.edu/Book/Intelligence-and-Surprise-Attack>> [accessed 25 June 2020].

<sup>14</sup> Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, Ithaca, N.Y. ; London, 2010)

<<https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9780801478062/why-intelligence-fails/#bookTabs=1>>.

<sup>15</sup> Itai Shapira, 'The Israeli Idea of Intelligence: Anatomy of the Israeli National Intelligence Culture' (unpublished thesis, University of Leicester, 2023), 108, 217

<[https://figshare.le.ac.uk/articles/thesis/The\\_Israeli\\_Idea\\_of\\_Intelligence\\_Anatomy\\_of\\_the\\_Israeli\\_National\\_Intelligence\\_Culture/24204042/1](https://figshare.le.ac.uk/articles/thesis/The_Israeli_Idea_of_Intelligence_Anatomy_of_the_Israeli_National_Intelligence_Culture/24204042/1)> [accessed 13 November 2023].

<sup>16</sup> Shapira, 'The Israeli Idea of Intelligence', 150.

<sup>17</sup> Martha Whitesmith, *Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis: Testing the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses Method* (2020).

<sup>18</sup> Shapira, 'The Israeli Idea of Intelligence', 101.

<sup>19</sup> Shapira, 'The Israeli Idea of Intelligence', 59.

<sup>20</sup> Good research is emerging though, see Eyal Pascovich, 'The Devil's Advocate in Intelligence: The Israeli Experience', *Intelligence and National Security*, 33/6 (2018), 854–65.

<sup>21</sup> Danny Hecht, 'N12: Warning of the head of the Devil's Advocate Department one week before the War', *N12* (7 January 2024), Weekend edition, section Defence <[https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024\\_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm](https://www.mako.co.il/news-military/2024_q1/Article-c07831ec3b0ec81027.htm)> [accessed 11 January 2024].

<sup>22</sup> Danny Hecht, 'N12: Warning of the head of the Devil's Advocate Department one week before the War'.