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'City without Jews

Hugo Bettauer's restored 1924 film to be screened with soundtrack Page 16



DARLING STARLINGS A murmuration of migrating starlings flies near the city of Rahat on Monday. (Ronen Zvulun/Reuters)

Majority of 2018's immigrants are not legally Jewish

• By JEREMY SHARON

More than half of all immigrants to Israel in 2018 under the Law of Return were not Jewish, figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics have shown.

According to the CBS, there were 30,300 immigrants who came to Israel under the Law of Return, of whom 12,600 were Jewish and 17,700 were not.

The Law of Return allows for any person who has one Jewish grandparent to immigrate to Israel and gain citizenship. Jewish law stipulates, however, that a person is Jewish only if their mother was Jewish.

According to the Jewish Agency, 17,000 immigrants came to Israel from Russia and Ukraine in 2018.

There are approximately 400,000 Israelis, mostly from the former Soviet Union, who immigrated to Israel under the Law of Return but who are not Jewish, and this number is growing every year, due to both natural growth and continued immigration.

Moshe Nissim, a former justice minister who authored proposals last year to change Israel's conversion authority in light of the challenge of the growing number of such citizens, said when publishing his recommendations that this population could grow to 500,000 in another 12 years.

According to a study in 2014 by Prof. Ze'ev Khanin, the chief scientist of the Aliyah and Integration Ministry and senior lecturer in political studies at Bar-Ilan University, approximately half of the immigrants coming to Israel from the states of the former Soviet Union aged 30 and above are not Jewish, along with 75% of younger immigrants from that region.

The growing number of such citizens – Zionist Israelis who are integrated into society but who are not Jewish according to Jewish law

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Trump: Iran 'can do what they want' in Syria

• By MICHAEL WILNER Jerusalem Post Correspondent

WASHINGTON - US

PM's campaign edge: Strutting on world stage

ANALYSIS • By HERB KEINON

After five days in Brazil, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu landed back in Israel on Wednesday evening – both

'Post's Caroline Glick runs for Knesset Joins Bennett and Shaked on Hayemin Hehadash 'dream team'

• By LAHAV HARKOV

Longtime *Jerusalem Post* columnist Caroline Glick is running on Hayemin Hehadash's list in the April elections, she announced on Wednesday.

"Caroline is a relentless Zionist fighter," party co-chairman Naftali Bennett said. "With her, we are building today the dream team of the Israeli Right in order to expand the right-wing block – so that Israel can be triumphant again."



President Donald Trump acknowledged on Wednesday that Iranian forces have been emboldened in Syria, amid widespread concern over his decision to hastily withdraw US troops from the battlefield there.

Blaming the balance of power in Syria on his predecessor, Barack Obama, Trump said the country was "lost long ago" and that he did not want the US military fighting there forever.

"We're talking about sand and death," he stated. "We're not talking about vast wealth."

Israeli officials have expressed alarm at the president's policy ever since he announced last month a rapid withdrawal of roughly 2,000 troops stationed in the country's eastern provinces. The move led to the resignations of Trump's defense secretary, James Mattis, and his top counter-Islamic State official, Brett McGurk.

Trump claimed that Iran has been suffering under renewed US sanctions since he withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal with international powers, but he did admit that it remains a powerful presence in Syria. He spoke in the Cabinet Room of the White House with a movie-style poster promoting his sanctions laid out before him on the conference table.

"They're pulling people out of Syria, but they can do what they want there, frankly," he said.

Israel worries that Iran is constructing a "land bridge" connecting resources and military forces from Tehran

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literally and metaphorically. Literally, in the sense that he physically returned to the country where he is prime minister, defense minister, foreign minister and health minister.

Metaphorically, for the last

More political coverage, Page 2

he five days he was far away, in ne Brazil – far away from Attorer, ney-General Avichai Mandelth blit, from Naftali Bennett and

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Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, the party's other leader, called Glick "a courageous fighter symbolizing the real, pure, conservative Right. She will be a great addition to the Knesset from our side." Glick expressed excitement in joining

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NAFTALI BENNETT, Ayelet Shaked and Caroline Glick form the backbone of the new Hayemin Hehadash Party. (Hayemin Hehadash)

Could a new documentary about Netanyahu swing the election?

ANALYSIS • By LAHAV HARKOV

It couldn't be better timing for director Dan Shadur. After working on King Bibi, his documentary about Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for three-and-a-half years, negotiating with distributors and showing it at film festivals, an election was called just a few weeks before it was set to be made available via the Yes Doco channel and Yes VOD. Surely the documentary will hold even more interest for viewers now than it would have even two months ago. And that begs the question of what kind of impression it will make on viewers.

Is the documentary's wide release perfect timing for Netanyahu, or for his opponents?

The answer is neither – or both.

Like so many other things related to Netanyahu, *King Bibi*, first airing on Yes Doco next Wednesday, is like a Rorschach test, the inkblots some psychologists use to get

inside a patient's head. If you like Netanyahu, you'll see one thing; if you don't like him, you'll see something else entirely. The film doesn't provide

any new information, but still manages to shed light on how Netanyahu became



A STILL from the new documentary 'King Bibi.' (Screenshot)

"King Bibi." It is made up of existing footage of the prime minister, spanning his entire life. The focus is mostly on how Netanyahu's rhetorical skills buoyed him to the premiership and how they have served him since. In fact, the only parts that don't consist of existing footage are clips of a tape playing advice by Lilyan Wilder, the public-speaking guru who trained Netanyahu. The prime minister's sup-

porters will see clip after clip of Netanyahu speaking in English from the 1980s through last year and be impressed with his rhetorical skill and ability to captivate audiences, whether they consist of Charlie Rose or both houses of the US Congress. They'll be impressed by for-

mer US president Ronald Reagan expressing admiration for Netanyahu's book on fighting terrorism and being invited to speak to a congressional committee on that same topic some 17 years later. They'll boo at the multiple instances of former US president Bill Clinton intervening on behalf of Netanyahu's competitors for the premiership.

In its attempt to tie Netanyahu to prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, they'll see echoes of what many in the media have been trying to do for 23 years, despite clear evidence to the contrary. Notably, this documentary does not include the clip of Netanyahu saying

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HSBC: 'We divested from Elbit over cluster bombs, not BDS'

• By TOVAH LAZAROFF

HSBC's decision to divest from Elbit Systems was a statement against the production of cluster bombs and had nothing to do with the BDS movement, the global banking giant said on Wednesday.

"HSBC's decision to divest from Elbit Systems was not the result of campaigning by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, and it is not indicative of support for the movement's objectives," Stuart Levey, HSBC's chief legal officer and group managing director, wrote to *The Jerusalem Post*, in response to its Tuesday editorial, "Bad banking."

"HSBC's decision was based on our long-standing defense policy whereby we do not invest in companies linked to the production or marketing of cluster munitions. We test our shareholdings against this policy, assisted by an external, evidence-based ratings provider," he wrote.

"Following a recent acquisition by Elbit Systems, our investment in the company is no longer consistent with our defense policy with respect to cluster munitions, and Elbit Systems joins a number of other companies, including some major US defense contractors, that are impacted by this policy," Levey explained. "This development is what prompted HSBC Asset Management to divest its shareholding in the company held t in a passively managed fund. It That shareholding was valued at approximately \$600k and represented 0.01% of the total issued share capital of the

company," Levey said.

"HSBC has a banking operation in Tel Aviv and provides banking services to numerous Israeli companies. We have every intention of continuing

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NEWS

Egyptian general apologizes for stray bullets hitting Nitzana Rounds found in empty trailer in youth village

• By ANNA AHRONHEIM

An Egyptian general visited the southern Israeli community of Nitzana on Sunday to apologize to residents for stray bullets fired by his troops which hit the youth village in late December.

According to a report by Hadashot News, the general who commands forces along the Israeli border crossed the border on a previously unpublicized visit and inspected the damage caused by the rounds of bullets which were fired during a live-fire drill on December 20

The bullets were found inside a trailer in Nitzana near the border with Egypt's restive Sinai Peninsula by a leader of one of the local youth groups. While there were no casualties or wounded in the incident, the bullets caused minor damage to the trailer.

Following the incident, OC Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Herzi Halevi met with the head of the Ramat Negev

Spokesperson's Unit stated that the incident would be investigated and that "the IDF sees such events seriously."

According to Hadashot News, the Egyptian general stated that the shooting was a result of an Egyptian Army drill next to the border, echoing the IDF investigation, which concluded that the fire was accidental.

Israel has a 240-kilometer border with Sinai, and Cairo and Jerusalem have been reported to have been closely cooperating in the Sinai Peninsula in the fight against ISIS terrorists since Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi rose to power.

Sisi has waged extensive military operations against ISIS in Sinai, and while the terrorist group has lost much of its strength, the group remains active and, despite its small size, continues to carry out deadly attacks on Egyptian security forces.

Drug smuggling from the Sinai Penin-

Regional Council, Eran Doron. The IDF sula into Israel is also a major concern for IDF troops who are stationed along the border.

> While rare, there have been three shooting incidents on the Israeli-Egyptian border since November, including an exchange of fire between drug traffickers and IDF troops.

> In late November an Egyptian policeman accidentally fired toward a military vehicle patrolling along the border. A senior officer in the Southern Command said that it is believed the officer shot toward the vehicle because of "heightened operational tension" that Egyptian policemen are facing in their fight against drug smugglers and terrorists in the restive peninsula.

> "We are two armies, and our countries have a peace agreement with a security attaché, and both armies are obligated to maintain it," the senior officer said, explaining that the Egyptian Army is thoroughly investigating the unusual incident.

Israeli prison standards to be lowered in effort to deter terrorism

Jerusalem Post Staff

Israel will lower the prison conditions for terrorists to make them as rigid as possible, while still respecting international law, in an effort to deter would-be terrorists from committing acts of violence.

"We will not be deterred by threats and hunger strikes," Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan announced on Wednesday at a press conference. "Making the terrorists' conditions worse is necessary both to create deterrence and to fulfill our moral duty to terrorism victims and their families."

Erdan explained that security and criminal prisoners should be treated differently. "When it comes to security prisoners, one of the

- rehabilitation – does not exist, because prisoners are infused with a terrorist ideology that does not regret their actions," Erdan said.

Prisoners from rival Hamas and Fatah factions will no longer be separated in jails, despite tensions between the groups.

The party is over," he said at the press conference.

Seven months ago, Erdan set up a committee to determine which steps could be taken to make incarceration conditions harsher for those who committed acts of terrorism. He decided to fully comply with the recommendations.

Some of the recommendations include reducing water consumption for prisoners, cutting canteen allotment

main goals of imprisonment in prison and mixing Hamas and Fatah prisoners in the same wing.

Convicted terrorists often keep the water faucets open at all times of the day as an act of defiance against the state, Erdan said, which at times means a Palestinian terrorist in prison wastes five times more water than the average citizen.

Erdan noted that convicted terrorists currently enjoy the right of cooking for themselves, a situation he admitted allows them to enjoy food that is "in some ways superior" to the meals given to criminal inmates. The new regulations will put an end to that.

The Palestinian Authority has repeatedly vowed to continue paying security prisoners jailed by Israel.

Kosher restaurant allows lesbian comic's act

• By AMY SPIRO

The Garden of Eat-In, a kosher restaurant in Brooklyn, hosted the comedian Leah Forster for a New Year's Eve comedy show on Monday night, a month after it originally canceled the show.

Forster, a stand-up comic who is a former member of the hassidic community, originally booked a show at

the restaurant in late November. But the owners of that restaurant, and then a second Brooklyn eatery – Orchidea - canceled the shows after saying that their kosher certifying agencies were pushing them to not host a lesbian

comic. "This really hurts," she said at the time. "It hurts me. I'm a resilient, strong person and I'm a good Jew... how is it

OK to hurt someone's business? I promoted it, I paid for advertising, I booked talent already."

Last month, Forster told The Jerusalem Post she received "tons of support" after the story got national coverage. And the agencies involved apparently received enough backlash to relent and allow the event to go on as originally scheduled. According to

The New York Daily News, the Va'ad Harabanim of Flatbush denied ever trying to have the performance canceled.

According to social media images and video of the event, Forster started the evening in traditional hassidic garb, as she often does in her shows, and by the end had switched to a black T-shirt and black pants. The comedian cracked jokes about her

life - and the controversy at the packed restaurant for a mostly-female crowd of around 120.

Taking to Instagram on Tuesday, Forster said the evening was "an awesome and positive nite [sic]!! Nothing like making da people laugh.'



IMMIGRANTS

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- has raised concerns in Orthodox circles that intermarriage and longterm partnerships between Jews and non-Jews will increase significantly in future generations.

One approach to solve the problem of Jewish intermarriage has been to push for a higher rate of conversion and to make conversion easier, especially for those descended from Jews, for whom Jewish law provides certain leniencies.

An independent Orthodox sys-

"Together we will work to protect Israel, to increase its security and to enact truly right-wing policies," Glick stated. "This is an emotional day for me. I call on all those whose hearts beat with a Zionist spirit, secular and religious, to join us. This is your home.'

Bennett and Shaked founded Hayemin Hehadash this week, breaking off from Bayit Yehudi. The party is meant to be solidly right-wing, with a mix of religious, secular and traditional candidates. Glick has been a columnist for the *Post* since 2002, and in recent years began writing for Maariv and Amer-

In communications with the *Post*, HSBC stressed that the issue had nothing to do with Israel and was instead specifically connected to its objection to the production of cluster bombs.

It made the decision one month after Elbit acquired the arms company IMI Systems Ltd., formerly known as Israel Military Industries. It has a history of producing cluster bombs.

"The action by HSBC does not appear to be a concession or adoption of BDS policy but rather a universally applied restriction against investing in companies that produce cluster munitions, including US defense related corporations,' said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "They are continuing all of their operations, including banking, in Israel, and have stated that they reject boycotts of Israel. We have known Stuart Levey for many years, and worked closely with him in his position of under-secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the Treasury Department, where he was responsible for implementing sanctions on Iran.' According to the Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor website, "Israel has not used cluster munitions since 2006, but it has continued to acquire, produce and export them. It possesses cluster munition stocks and hosts stockpile of United States cluster munitions, but has never provided information on the quantities or types."

tion. But there are some on the Left who feel otherwise – like Labor MK Leah Fadida, who has called Netanyahu "Benjamin" in recent months, as though there's something inherently wrong with having an English name. It is implied that he's an American interloper this is clearly the subtext.

Those who don't like Netanyahu will sneer at the various millionaires and billionaires - Lauder, Milchan, Adelson, Kushner and more - who support him. Even US President Donald Trump makes an early appearance, over a decade before becoming president; he appears fixated as Netanyahu gives an address about the Israeli economy at the New York Stock Exchange. There's a quick mention of his current corruption issues at the end, but it's clear that this film was made before the police recommendations emerged to indict Netanyahu.

channel on Wednesday, January 9, at 9 p.m. and will be available on the Yes VOD service.

TRUMP

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all the way to the Mediterranean Sea through Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, taking advantage of broken local governments and American retreats.

Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, who has claimed that ejecting Iran from Syria is a top administration priority, sat behind

macy is something that Netanyahu believes sets him apart from rivals such as Yair Lapid, Avi Gabbay and – especially – Benny Gantz.

He said as much during a press conference on Monday in Rio de Janeiro, when he was asked about Gantz, who 28% of the population said in a Hadashot News poll on Wednesday is fittest to be prime minister, just seven points behind the 35% who said Netanyahu is most suited for the role.

"The State of Israel needs a leader who operates at a world level. You need to be able to talk to Trump, and able to talk to [Russian Presi-

LEAH FORSTER (Courtesy) he was appalled by Michaeli's ques-

tem of rabbinical courts called Givur K'Halacha was established in 2015 to take on this challenge, with a view in particular for converting minors (with parental consent), for which Jewish law provides even greater leniencies.

Others have called for passing legislation so that only Jews according to Jewish law could gain access to citizenship through the Law of Return.

Rabbi Seth Farber, head of the ITIM religious services organization and a key figure behind the establishment of Givur K'Halacha, argued that increased conversion is the better answer.

"These people are part of the body of the Jewish people around the world, and the Jewish people have a responsibility to provide them with a homeland for historical reasons; this is part of the justification for the State of Israel," said Farber.

"Instead of trying to tamper with moral, historical and political realities, we should spend time trying to encourage conversion and not eliminate it," he added.

However, Chief Rabbi of Kiev and Ukraine Rabbi Yaakov Bleich described the numbers as "a disaster" and said ongoing immigration to Israel of non-Jews under the Law of Return would lead to assimilation in Israel.

"We, with our [own] hands, are facilitating intermarriage and assimilation in the State of Israel," said Bleich.

The rabbi said that legislative changes to the Law of Return should be considered, especially regarding the ability of the grandchildren of Jews, who are themselves not Jewish, to gain citizenship under the law.

"I understand it's not popular, but the issue is the future of the Jewish people in the home of the Jewish people," he said.

GLICK

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Hayemin Hehadash, and would "join forces with people entirely committed to Zionism and love of Israel.

ican far-right website Breitbart.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu considered Glick to be one of his appointees to the Likud list in 2015, but decided against it because, Likud sources say, she harshly criticized him in some of her columns.

Meretz came out against Glick, saying "Hayemin Hehadash [the New Right] proved that it is the same old, inciting Right. She who leads wild incitement on social media and on every other stage joins he who tried to destroy secularism and she who tried to destroy the judiciary.'

Also on Wednesday, the National Union, a party that ran with Bayit Yehudi in the last Knesset, began a negative campaign against Bennett and Shaked. The party called the ministers' political maneuver a "dangerous turn" that divided religious Zionists and the Right "for petty politics and personal promotion.'

HSBC

Continued from Page 1

to do so," wrote Levey. He wrote to the *Post* a week after the Palestine Solidarity Campaign linked HSBC's divestment decision, which went into effect on December 20, to PSC's long-standing BDS campaign against the company. The pro-Palestinian British group had written to BDS about its campaign and had been told over email that the company had divested from Elbit.

PSC targeted the bank, claiming it had shareholdings in companies that sold supplies to the Israel Defense Forces.

With regard to Elbit, PSC charged that it manufactured "deadly drones," provided equipment to help build the West Bank security barrier and had "also manufactured white phosphorous and artillery systems that can be used for cluster munitions."

PSC said that in supporting an arms company like Elbit that dealt with cluster munitions, the bank had violated its policy against financing such companies.

DOCUMENTARY

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at a rally that Rabin "is not a traitor, he is mistaken."

They may see a tragic arc in Sara Netanyahu's life. From being Netanyahu's young, third wife - looking shy and naïve, and sweetly trying to keep sons Avner and Yair out of trouble in a clip from the Prime Minister's Residence – she becomes hardened over time, as news coverage of her grows more negative and accusatory.

They'll watch one of Netanyahu's first interviews as a politician, after his return from being ambassador to the UN; see comedian Rivka Michaeli, who's known to be leftwing, ask on her talk show how he thinks he can be a politician if his only work experience in Israel is as a furniture salesman; and be appalled by the media's elitism. The press has been out to get Netanyahu from day one, is what they'd likely think.

And then, some of Netanyahu's opponents may take Michaeli's side. The director, Shadur, said he considers himself a leftist, but that

And there is Sara with Yair, their oldest son, who chats with Trump and first lady Melania Trump when they visit the Prime Minister's Residence, shouting at a photographer not to film him when he's around five years old.

Of course there's the narrative about Rabin. And there's Netanyahu showing up at the scene of a bus bombing in Tel Aviv shortly before the assassination; they'll side with the media figures asking him if he's not inappropriately politicizing a terrorist attack. They'll see how even many on the Right didn't want Netanyahu anymore in 1999 - though for entirely different reasons than the Left.

Shadur said that he received many positive responses from Netanyahu supporters, and that at least one journalist who attended Wednesday's special screening lamented that the film is too "pro-Bibi."

"I don't think it shows him positively," he said. "I think we're used to seeing him either glorified or totally negative, and this is something different."

Asked if his opinion about Netanyahu changed, Shadur said it became more nuanced with time.

"My worldview is different from his, so my opinion did not change in that way - but I have more respect for him. As a left-wing person, you have certain ideas about him, and I learned that they're not accurate," he said.

In a way, the film is the most accurate picture one can get of Netanyahu, because since he is a politician whose detractors and supporters seem to see him so differently, it often appears as if they are describing two different people.

Like a Rorschach test, how people view the documentary says more about the beholder than the inkblot - or the film - itself.

the president stone-faced as he spoke.

CAMPAIGN

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Tzipi Livni, and from the regular dose of criticism on the evening news.

He was off kicking soccer balls with admiring passersby on the beach in Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana, and waving from his motorcade to thousands shouting his name in Brasilia. He was up in the clouds doing what he does best: meeting presidents and prime ministers and selling the virtues of Israel to adoring Jewish and Evangelical crowds.

And now it is back to the grind: politics and possible indictments; possible indictments and politics. That will be his bread and butter for the next three months.

But Netanyahu will make sure that this will not be the only staple of his diet. To the best of his ability, he will try to cram in as many high-profile diplomatic events as he can in this short period, working on the assumption that Israelis like to see their leaders strutting proudly, forcefully and unapologetically on the world stage.

And that Netanyahu does well. So far he is talking about going to Davos at the end of the month to attend the annual World Economic Forum, where he may meet US President Donald Trump and other world leaders. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko will come to Israel later this month as well, providing ample photo opportunities.

In addition, Brazil's new President Jair Bolsonaro said he will visit Israel by March, giving Netanyahu the opportunity to highlight on his home turf, just prior to the election, the dramatic change that has come about in relations with Brazil. And then, at the end of March, comes the icing on the cake, a trip to Washington for the annual AIPAC Policy Conference and another meeting in the White House with Trump.

King Bibi airs on the Yes Doco THIS TYPE of high-profile diplo-

dent Vladimir] Putin," he said, his unstated subtext being: "Do you really see Gantz being able to do this?'

Netanyahu quoted Putin as saying that "without the connection between us, who knows if we would not already have been in a confrontation?"

An Israeli leader needs to be able to talk with the world's leaders, and Netanyahu said he finds himself in situations where the leaders of world powers come to him and ask him to mediate for them between Trump and Putin.

"Can they operate at this level?" He asked of his opponents. "If you ask me, unfortunately, no."

There is also something else he can do that he doubts his opponents can, he said: Stand up to the rest of the world.

"What the Israeli prime minister needs to be able to do is one thing, this is the test - the ability to say one word, and to stand by it, and that word is 'no," he said.

His opposition to the Iranian nuclear deal, even when six of the world's greatest powers signed it, is an indication of his ability to say that little word and mean it, he continued.

And this is exactly what Netanyahu, as much as he can, will strive to underline in the campaign: that he has the ability to play on equal terms with the "big boys" at the highest level.

He will be dogged throughout the campaign with questions about free champagne and favorable news coverage in return for favors, about allegations of bribery and breach of trust, and his response will be to highlight his profile as an experienced world leader who has brought Israel international stature and whom other leaders seek out for guidance, friendship and favors.

"Can Gantz do that?" he will ask the country, both directly and indirectly. Is all that worth throwing away because of allegations of gifts from a friend and trying to get some positive stories on Walla and in Yediot? Do you want to lose all this, he will ask over the next three months, for something as inconsequential and silly as all of that?