

Israel's assets buy CBS, install Bari Weiss

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate on the open Israeli plot to buy as many media outlets as it can to stop its public relations disaster. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

#Aaron

Well, congratulations to Bari Weiss and all of her new employees at CBS News. Bari Weiss, for those who don't know, is a pro-Israel activist and opinion columnist who left The New York Times a few years ago. She made a big deal out of it because she felt the Times newsroom was too woke and hostile toward her. She then founded The Free Press, which she presented as a heterodox website, but really it was just there to mock so-called wokeness and promote Israel. And ever since the genocide in Gaza began, that's what The Free Press has done.

Most recently, they went out of their way to try to deny the famine in Gaza with multiple posts. The point is, they're an opinion site — it's not journalism. They don't really do reporting. But because of the magic of our free market system, the so-called marketplace of ideas, the new owners of CBS News, the Ellisons — some of the richest people in the world and avowed pro-Israel fanatics — basically handed over CBS News to Bari Weiss. And on Monday, after buying The Free Press for \$150 million, the Ellisons also made Bari Weiss the new editor-in-chief of CBS News.

#Max

The new editor-in-chief of CBS News, Bari Weiss, introduced herself to the staff in a way that Aaron said felt like the plot of a horror movie. She said she wants to win and restore trust, that she's excited for the staff to get to know The Free Press, and she ended her remarks by saying, "Let's do the effing news." There was also a letter sent to all employees. Do we have that letter?

#Aaron

Yeah, well, here's a screenshot. What's so funny about this is she claims to be a reporter, which she's just objectively not. Like, "I'm going to approach my new job the way any reporter would — with an open mind, a notebook, and an urgent deadline." I'm paraphrasing there. But basically, it's the most unbelievable spectacle — someone with no experience, A, in broadcast news, which is what CBS News is, and B, in actual journalism, because she's never been a reporter. She's an opinion columnist who then founded a website, The Free Press.

Yes, it attracted a sizable number of subscribers, but its main source of support was a cabal of pro-Israel billionaires who gave Bari Weiss a lot of money. And she's now been rewarded handsomely by the Ellisons, presiding over an entire news organization and presenting herself as some sort of objective truth-teller, when she's a pro-Israel activist slash opinion journalist whose college years were spent trying to get Palestinian professors at Columbia University fired because she felt unsafe as a Jewish person on campus — thereby embodying the very same identitarian, so-called woke politics that she became famous for mocking.

#Max

Do we have that screenshot yet?

#Aaron

Well, I showed the screenshot of her saying, "I'm going to approach this as a reporter."

#Max

Yeah, yeah — as a reporter.

#Aaron

And here is—yeah, I mean, here's more from her memo to colleagues today. Just imagine going into work and finding out this is your new boss, and then having to write something like this. This is from media reporter Max Tani. I just read it. Okay, well, she says—just to reiterate—she wants to win, and she says, "Let's do the effing news." It's just like... it's like something from Aaron Sorkin. Yeah, yeah.

#Max

Combined with Ken Kesey's **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**, it's like Nurse Ratched showing up in an Aaron Sorkin newsroom.

#Aaron

I'm thinking of that Tom Hanks movie **Big**, where he's a kid who suddenly becomes an adult and ends up an executive at a toy company. This feels kind of the same. You've got someone with an infantile mindset, whose identity is built around Jewish supremacy and Israel, and now—oh, I'm a media executive! Let's do this. It's like being handed the keys to the kingdom just by virtue of being a pro-Israel activist.

#Max

Let's just pan out a little bit and put this into a broader context. Sumner Redstone was a big media tycoon in the U.S. He owned BET, even though he was a white Jewish man, for years, and turned it into a trash den—got rid of the news. I mean, he clearly seemed to be trying to poison Black culture, it felt like. He owned Paramount, and he died. He was a big donor to Israel—one of that old generation of Zionist billionaires. His wife, Shari Redstone, she's getting old. She's an ultra-Zionist. She passes on Paramount to David Ellison through his company, Skydance. David Ellison is the son and heir to the fortune of Larry Ellison, who's on the board of the Friends of the IDF and runs Oracle, which is planting data centers all around the country and got its start as a CIA contractor. Larry Ellison—if anyone could be called a friend of Netanyahu—has hosted him on his private island in Hawaii.

And this is all part of a Netanyahu-directed Israeli takeover of as many media assets as they can grab—along with TikTok, which has been purchased by Larry Ellison and Andreessen Horowitz, venture capitalists who have also supported and invested in Bari Weiss and her career, basically using her as a vehicle for their agenda. Through *The Free Press*, Bari Weiss constantly promotes Marc Andreessen as some kind of genius, when he himself turns to people like Curtis Yarvin for insights on how to establish a techno-dictatorship in the U.S. Ben Horowitz, his partner, is the son of David Horowitz—the former Trotskyist, fanatical anti-Palestinian agitator who was an early mentor to Charlie Kirk. So this is the takeover. They're going to make a bid, as we said last week, on CNN.

#Aaron

Yep.

#Max

And so now it's all going into—it's being implemented. Bari Weiss has been installed in the newsroom. Someone who's 41 years old, runs *The Free Press*, completely lies about *The Free Press* audience to justify the artificial valuation of *The Free Press* at \$150 million. I mean, go to their YouTube channel right now and compare it to our YouTube channel—nobody's watching their content. And their studio—like, look at our studio. I got these shelves from, like, I don't know, Walmart or something. And, uh, look at Aaron's background, and then go look at their studios. That shelf looks like you found it on the street. I mean, you can find some good stuff.

#Aaron

I'm being offended—you're dissing my background.

#Max

No, I mean, it's good. It's fine. I'm down with it. This shows that we're real—this is a real independent outlet, and we're heavily suppressed on YouTube. We're closing in on half a million

viewers. I mean, we're doing real grassroots work. When we go out and report, I'm holding my phone and a Bluetooth mic, while *The Free Press* has CBS-level production. That guy—the token guy they have, Coleman... what's his name? Coleman Hughes. Mini Van Jones, I call him.

Look at his studio—*Conversations with Coleman*. His studio is elaborate. They have tons of money, and they can't even get anywhere near the number of subscribers we have. And then Bari Weiss is running around saying, "We have 1.5 million subscribers," and then, "No, 150 million subscribers," and then, "No, we have 6 billion subscribers, and that's why we're valued at \$150 million." What should the value of *The Grayzone* be, based on that? Because it turns out they don't have that many paid subscribers. How much should we get? Can some VCs buy *The Grayzone*?

#Aaron

No, but it's not just about buying *The Grayzone*. It's about installing the editor—the founder of *The Free Press*—as the head of CBS News, one of the biggest news corporations in the world. They have teams of reporters not just in the U.S. but around the world—freelancers, producers. This is a real operation. And Bari Weiss, opinion columnist and pro-Israel activist, is now like, "Okay, I'm the new editor-in-chief. Let's do this." And just to illustrate your point about the lack of audience—Glenn Greenwald pointed this out. He posted a screenshot of Bari Weiss's announcement video: *The Free Press* is joining Paramount. And Glenn points out that after eight hours, the video only had 16,000 views, which is basically nothing.

I think a recent video I did on Syria—which is a pretty niche topic, not even all of our audience wants to watch videos about Syria—probably had more views after eight hours than Bari Weiss announcing that her outlet is joining this giant media conglomerate and that she's the editor-in-chief of CBS News. So, I mean, that just shows where things are at. But you know who was definitely very excited about this, who was definitely tuning in, was Israeli officials. Glenn also pointed this out. Here's Michael Oren, the former Israeli ambassador to the U.S.: "My most heartfelt mazel tov to Bari Weiss, the embodiment of an *Eshet Chayil*, a woman of valor, on her appointment as editor-in-chief of CBS News."

#Max

Where's the tweet?

#Aaron

She will bring—oh, I'm sorry—there it is. She will bring journalism back from the brink and set renewed media standards of bipartisanship, excellence, and the relentless search for truth. And there he is, the former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Here's one more. These are very indigenous-looking people to the region, by the way. Yes. This is Tal Heinrich: "Thank you, Bari. This is a win for common sense, a win for intellectual discourse over an activist one. It's a win for a society that

wants to be healthier.” And who is Tal Heinrich? Spokesperson for the Israeli government. She's the one who spread the lie about beheaded babies. There you go. There you go. So, yeah.

And just one more word before we move on too far about Shari Redstone, who sold CBS News and Paramount to the Ellisons. She said the reason she sold CBS was that she wanted to focus her life now on Israel activism. And this is her post-sale—this is a headline from **Jewish Insider**:

“Post-Paramount sale, Shari Redstone is full speed ahead on addressing antisemitism.” So the money she got from selling her father’s news outlet to the pro-Israel oligarchs, to the Ellisons, she’ll now use to spread more Israeli propaganda on her own and hand over the reins to the Ellisons and Bari Weiss. And what is Bari Weiss going to do as the editor-in-chief of CBS News? I mean, they already have a president. She’s reporting directly to Larry Ellison—uh, to David Ellison. To David Ellison, sorry.

#Max

And therefore, Larry Ellison.

#Aaron

Yes. So what does that mean? She's just going to be there to enforce the narrative—the Zionist narrative—and to root out any employee who has critical thinking skills and isn’t willing to go along with the prevailing Hasbara.

#Max

Well, there’s this whole mask to the Zionist propaganda, which is “common sense” and “just the news.” Like, we’re just Walter Cronkite. We’re not pushing woke propaganda—the corporate media is supposedly too woke—and we’re just going to speak to common-sense Americans. Because it’s crazy. We’re not going to, you know, tell you that we’re not going to be reporting on trans kids and, you know, girls—like men with penises going into women’s locker rooms. They’re going to be against that, basking three-year-olds. They’re going to be against that. And then they’re going to tell you there aren’t enough Jews being given special protections at Ivy League colleges, that there isn’t a Jews-only DEI. And they’re just going to take off the table any coverage of even the humanitarian situation in Gaza. It’s going to become, eventually, too obvious.

Also, what they're going to do is degrade the newsroom and turn it into a bunch of podcasts and viral posts that make it impossible for any actual news to get through. And they're going to push on race—kind of an anti-BLM, you know, “large Black men are stabbing our women on public transportation” agenda. It’s going to be that. It’s going to be moderately pro-Trump. But behind that, there’s a deeper scandal here that ties into Zionism. I tried to address that in a reply to Bari Weiss, because she’s making it too obvious what’s going on—the conflict of interest. There’s a massive conflict of interest happening here, where she’s still maintaining an editorial role at The Free

Press, which is a partisan neocon website, while also controlling a legacy media asset that's supposed to be objective.

And we know the corporate media—we always say it's an enemy of the people—that they're not objective. They support the rich. They support war. They support Israel, but in a more insidious way than Bari Weiss will. But now the conflict of interest is out, editorially but also financially, because who has backed Bari Weiss as she made her comeback after the New York Times? It's been the AI warlords. It's the Palantir mafia that has backed Bari Weiss. Joe Lonsdale, Palantir co-founder, is the chairman of her organization—the weird anti-woke University of Austin diploma mill, where they study Plato alongside *The Technological Republic* by Palantir CEO Alex Karp, who is a trustee of this university, therefore a supporter—and who is a, who is a sociopath. I mean, sociopath.

#Aaron

We played the video earlier of Alex Karp, where a Palestinian woman confronts him and says, "Your technology is killing my family in Gaza."

#Max

And he laughs at her and says, "No, it's actually Hamas that's killing them." Then there's another tech millionaire—a billionaire—who's in charge of steering AI and crypto policy in Trump's favor, as Trump launches various meme coin rug pulls on his suggestible base. She's been backed by Marc Andreessen, as I said before, and she's promoted these figures on her podcast. So let me just spell this out, because this is a corruption scandal that goes beyond the ideological component of installing a voice of Likudnik Zionism as editor. So Bari Weiss says, "So much gratitude and love for so many today," as she's installed as editor. Joe Lonsdale is at the top of the list. Joe Lonsdale, as I said, was one of the original three founders of Palantir, and he's backed her.

#Aaron

Max, try to zoom in on your screen if you can, so we can all read it.

#Max

And so I responded this way: even though no critical thinker trusts you or expects an ounce of accountability, some questions are in order. These are the questions. Was Palantir co-founder Joe Lonsdale one of the investors who profited from the sale of *The Free Press* to Paramount Skydance? What about David Sachs, a White House official who helped steer AI and crypto policy at the direction of Trump? Who are the investors who profited from the sale? How much did they earn? And will they continue to play a role now that you're at CBS? What sort of favors will they call in? Basically, you have an editor who's been backed by a Trump official and is continuing to be backed through *The Free Press*. And that Trump official may have actually made money off the sale. I

would like to know if David Sachs was one of the investors who profited from the sale. That would be a direct violation.

#Aaron

Yeah, well, how would they not profit if they're the investors and the company gets sold for \$150 million?

#Max

Right. I mean, their investment must have been pretty small compared to that.

#Aaron

Of course. Of course. Because there's no way they're worth \$150 million. A site with a few thousand subscribers is not worth \$150 million. I mean, again, as we talked about, there are podcasts—there are leftist podcasts with way bigger paying audiences than *The Free Press* has.

#Max

Yeah, *Chapo Trap House* dwarfs their audience.

#Aaron

Yeah, they'd be worth maybe ten times that amount.

#Max

Even though they've never hosted us, will *60 Minutes* become a vehicle to propagandize for the ultra-Zionist AI warlords who astroturfed your career and artificially manufactured the \$150 million valuation of *The Free Press*, whose middling YouTube viewership pales in comparison to the organic audience of actually independent news outlets and podcasts? Your conflicts of interest are off the charts. In fact, they seem to clearly violate the publishing principles of CBS News, which state the following: a conflict of interest exists when a CBS News and Stations employee is in a position to make a business or news decision that might appear to result in some personal gain or advantage to them.

It's clear you were installed at CBS not to restore public trust in the failing and odious corporate media, but to take these inconvenient issues off the table for the techno-feudal oligarchy and to shut down coverage of that nasty little Gaza holocaust in which you helped get our friend Rifat Alareer killed. Many understandably lament your promotion, but I view it as a welcome mask-off moment. And I really do welcome this, because now we can see corporate media for what it really is and always has been. And I don't think it's going to work out. I don't think these will be happy times

down the road for Bari Weiss and her ideological cabal. I think she's going to be exposed, and it's going to be a rough go.

#Aaron

I mean, imagine working for her. There's going to be a rebellion from at least some people who still have some dignity and respect for the profession of journalism. There are a lot of people who work at CBS News. Not everyone's going to want to work for someone who's devoted her life to serving crypto billionaires, smearing critics of Israel, and denying genocide and famine inside Gaza—and yes, inciting the murder of people like Rifat Alareer. I also want to say a few words about comparing your response—not just talking about the Gaza genocide, but actually raising legitimate questions about a conflict of interest with Bari Weiss and her investors, who are profiting off the sale to the Ellisons. So compare your reaction to how corporate media handled that comparison.

The same corporate media that Bari Weiss built her name around mocking and claiming to be different from—she was going to fight all the woke culture, she was going to be heterodox, she was going to fight the corporate media. That same corporate media that Bari Weiss made her name off of, distancing herself from ostensibly, turned around and did everything it could to kiss her feet upon this announcement, even though she mocked them. There's still ultimately so much class solidarity in serving Israel and serving the oligarchs. If you read the coverage in The New York Times—which Bari Weiss publicly denounced, saying she had to leave that outlet—they presented her as this feisty, scrappy entrepreneur who made her name.

And like, you know, CBS News is shaking things up by bringing her in—Brian Stelter of CBS News, similar thing. This is risky, but they're shaking it up. No, all they're doing here is trying to consolidate support for Israel because people are so repelled by it—and the tech oligarchs. And the tech oligarchs, exactly. So even the outlets that Bari Weiss tried to distance herself from and mocked as being too woke, they have so much ultimate class solidarity with the tech overlords, with the pro-Israel billionaires, that even they feel compelled to kiss the ring of Bari Weiss, even though she mocked them. Whereas with people, independent journalists like us, they won't even acknowledge that we exist. You know what I mean?

Like, as you saw recently with your reporting on Charlie Kirk—which The New York Times, even while confirming some of the stuff you reported, won't even acknowledge you for. And I've had similar experiences with Russiagate, where they won't even say my name. But with Bari Weiss, who openly mocks them and built her whole brand on distancing herself from them, they have to kiss the ring because ultimately they serve the same people. "Well, you're just jealous," according to Matt Taibbi. Unfortunately, Matt Taibbi did say that—the people who are critical of Bari Weiss are jealous losers. I don't know if I'd want to be in the position she's in. "You wouldn't want to be the head of CBS News?" Yeah, I don't think that would be very comfortable for you.

#Max

I'm actually doing what I want to do. Good luck. Bari will be watching. No one will be watching CBS News, though.

#Aaron

Well, listen, just a few more revelations about who the people are who brought in Bari Weiss to CBS News. It's the Ellisons, right? At times, the richest people in the world. Their company, Oracle—check out what's been happening there. This is from Eli Clifton of Responsible Statecraft. He says executives at Oracle, which is also the new owner of TikTok under the forced sale by Trump—but again, the Ellisons, who founded Oracle, now own CBS News—they're very outspoken in Israeli media about the company's mission to support the state of Israel. Right. And this is what Eli Clifton also says: insufficiently pro-Israel Oracle staff are sent for mental health counseling. OK, so if you work at Oracle and you're deemed to be insufficiently supportive of Israel, they're going to send you to HR for mental health counseling.

So is that ethos now going to be the norm at CBS News under Bari Weiss's reign? That if you don't support Israel—like, say, the journalist in Gaza that CBS News employs—they have a producer actually in Gaza who's filed some reports. Are they going to refer him now, if they haven't already fired him, for mental health counseling? You get a "Zio lobotomy." It's a cult, and we're ruled by it. And they're not only very influential—they literally now control major elements of our media. They control TikTok. And they control TikTok because both of our ruling parties couldn't handle young people being shown images of the carnage in Gaza that our rulers were supporting. So they forced the sale of TikTok to pro-Israel oligarchs who send people for mental health counseling if they don't support Israel enough.

#Max

Maybe they'll pass a law and we'll finally get free mental health counseling in this country—where if you're an Israel critic, you have to go get Oracle-provided electroshock therapy. It really is like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.*

#Aaron

Here's another one from former Oracle CEO Safra Katz—which sounds like an Israeli name. "We believe we have to embed the love and respect for Israel in American culture," according to former Oracle CEO Safra Katz. That's a refreshing admission from a tech overlord—that the only way to get people to love and respect Israel is to brainwash them. That's what she's talking about.

#Max

These emails are a treasure trove. We reported on some leaks that journalist Jack Poulson found online. At The Grayzone, we reported that David Ellison was basically collaborating with Benny

Gantz, the former Israeli defense minister, on a plan to spy on Americans involved in Palestine solidarity activism. This is the owner of CBS News. He's an Israeli spy, basically. You can read the article. It just doesn't get more blatant than this. That's the post-October 7th world we're living in, where everything is just blatant. The mask is off. There's no rules-based order anymore to conceal the jackboot in your face and the cold, dead hand of a rapacious empire. It's all just there for us to see. And in some ways, as unpleasant and alienating as it is, it's welcome to just see the world we live in as it is.

The question is, as they buy one media property after another—including social media—you see this happening in Ecuador, where billionaire president, Miami-born Daniel Noboa, is buying up all the critical media. We've seen Erdoğan and his AKP do the same in Turkey. It's kind of a strategy. As they do that, where do we go? I mean, YouTube is controlled by a military contractor—Google. Twitter, or X, is Elon Musk. A couple of months ago—yeah, I think it was two months ago—he launched an Israeli spy satellite into space through SpaceX. He's a defense contractor. We depend on those as platforms. So where do we go? That's the question. And the only answer I have right now is that people will leave TikTok and go somewhere else, and TikTok will suffer, and these properties will become toxic. They won't be revitalized.