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Israel Update: November 25, 2012

Today, after two weeks crowding in shelters and safe rooms, waiting for rocket and mortar fire, Israelis are returning to school and work – and the campaign trail. But the inevitable finger-pointing, scrambling for narratives, and self-reflection has filled the airwaves, blogosphere and imaginations of pundits across the globe. The three perspectives below may shed some light.

After the Ceasefire: Iran Rearming

Israeli intelligence satellites have spied the loading of Iranian rockets and other materiel believed to be destined for the Gaza Strip. [Click here](#) to read more.

Are you concerned about a nuclear-armed Iran? Join us Thursday night to hear from Bob Feferman from UANI (United Against Nuclear Iran). [Click here](#) for more information.

Gaza Body Counts and the Numbers Game

How is it that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is seemingly the only battle where the casualties are tallied like a football game? The casualty count is lopsided, but why? Journalists Adam Chandler and Jeffrey Goldberg expose the double standard. [Click here](#) to read more.

Israel Elections -- An Analysis

During the recent conflict, all campaigning was put on hold. Here's a quick update from the Israeli office of the Jewish Federations of North America on Israel's election campaign, now less than three months away:

Likud - Beitenu

The Likud party primaries are being held today, Sunday. The results, due tonight, will determine which candidates will appear on the Likud list, and crucially, in what order. Netanyahu (who is guaranteed the no.1 spot), is hopeful that those elected will not include more radical candidates like Moshe Feiglin, but will incorporate his own closest allies in the party.

Once the Likud list is known, Avigdor Lieberman will personally decide the make-up of Yisrael Beteinu's list. The two lists will then be combined according to a pre-agreed formula.

In all polls, the Netanyahu-led block shows a considerable - and probably insurmountable- lead.

Center - Left

In the coming two days, Ehud Olmert is widely expected to announce that he will not run in

these elections. The assessment is that Olmert believes he has little chance of beating the Netanyahu, so will not return to politics at this stage.

At the same time, Tzippi Livni is expected to announce that she will return to politics, at the head of a newly created party. Apparently there were significant talks between Livni and Labor Party leader, Shelly Yacimovich, to discuss Livni joining Labor, but ultimately these talks failed. Polls show that Livni's party could win up to 10 seats; enough to make her an important player, but a far cry from winning the premiership.

The Labor Party, that continues to poll well, will hold its own primaries on Tuesday. Polls show that Kadima, under Shaul Mofaz, will not reach the electoral threshold and will thus, effectively, disappear as a party.

Yair Lapid's "Yesh Atid" party, has crashed in post-conflict polls, from a high of around 18 seats to its current showing of just 4. This is probably a result of a refocus on security issues, and Lapid's inexperience in security/ foreign affairs matters.

Right

Naftali Bennet has won the Bayit Hayehudi primaries and is the party's new leader. Bennet, a young, dynamic former high-tech success, made some [impressive appearances on CNN](#) during the conflict and is polling significantly higher results than his party has seen in many years.

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