

The Minute Both Sides Agree On

Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren · 11 October 2026

Netanyahu's former military secretary breaks three years of silence. What he said, what the Prime Minister answered, and what is still only a claim.

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By Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren

For three years Maj. Gen. (res.) Avi Gil said nothing in public. He is Netanyahu's former military secretary, the man who woke the Prime Minister on the morning of 7 October 2023. On Thursday he spoke: on N12's main evening news with Dani Kushmaro and Yoav Limor, and at length to Limor in Israel Hayom's weekend magazine.

Start with what he said, and hold it as testimony, not as a finding.

Asked whether there was betrayal on 7 October, he answered: "In one word: no." There were failures, he said, and the system failed badly. But nothing was hidden. Intelligence flowed all night to the Military Secretariat's intelligence office. At 03:55 its duty officer was called to read a message that described the signs as "routine" more than once and said further assessments would follow later in the day. The officer decided not to wake him. Gil calls that a professional decision.

His timeline: woken at 06:12 by the head of the Shin Bet chief's bureau; on the red phone minutes later; calling the Chief of Staff's bureau at 06:22, as the rocket fire began; then calling the Prime Minister. At 06:40, by his N12 account, he told him on the red phone: "We are at war."

He went further. The Prime Minister's long account to the State Comptroller, he said, "reflects part" of what he saw and is "not even half the picture." He said the Shin Bet recommended preventive actions in Gaza "from time to time" and they were not approved, while adding that leaders weigh wider considerations and the decision was the Prime Minister's to make. And he agreed that some hostages could have come home earlier, with politics part of the reason.

The Prime Minister's response, broadcast with the interview: Gil, "like others," knew of the approaching attack and "chose not to wake the Prime Minister in time," and his interviews are an attempt to blur the truth about his own failure. Likud added that the Prime Minister had no advance warning, was first updated at 06:29, and called the interview part of a political campaign. The State Comptroller's office said its review did not rest on fragments of transcripts handed to it.

Now what is established. Both sides put the first call to the Prime Minister at about 06:29. That is the one minute everyone agrees on. What was known before it, and who should have woken whom, is exactly where the accounts split. No state commission of inquiry has weighed them. Until one does, Gil's account is the testimony of a senior insider, and the response is the response of the office he served. Readers deserve both, at full weight, and without labels.

“Ayeka,” G-d asks Adam (Bereishit 3:9). Where are you? The Master of the world knows where Adam is standing. The question is about his place, and it is asked of each person on his own. Gil at least answered it about himself: “I too was part of the system I served in for 35 years, and it failed,” he told Israel Hayom. “It comes back to me at night.” That is the beginning of an answer, not the end of one. Every office that stood near that morning owes the same.

May the L-rd comfort the bereaved, strengthen those who came home, and give this nation the courage to put the question to itself.

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