

Ellison, Israel, and Influence: Disentangling Fact from Speculation in the Oracle Media Nexus

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In an era marked by heightened geopolitical tension and media consolidation, questions surrounding billionaire influence on war, narrative control, and public discourse have become increasingly urgent. One such case centers on Larry Ellison—founder of Oracle Corporation—whose financial support for Israel and expanding media footprint has attracted both scrutiny and speculation. Reports confirm Ellison’s multi-million dollar donations to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), personal ties to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Oracle’s open alignment with pro-Israel positions. Meanwhile, his son David Ellison’s acquisition of Paramount, and thereby CBS News, has stirred further concerns about media independence. Yet while many claims swirl online—ranging from internal employee ultimatums to a proposed board seat for Netanyahu—verifiable documentation remains limited. This paper aims to draw a clear line between what is substantiated by credible sources and what remains unconfirmed. By methodically evaluating legal filings, corporate disclosures, journalistic reporting, and media commentary, we seek to assess the validity and implications of the Ellison-Israel-media connection. In doing so, we not only test the boundaries of public knowledge but also illuminate how influence, perception, and power converge in modern geopolitics.

Keywords: Larry Ellison, Israel, IDF, Oracle, Safra Catz, Netanyahu, David Ellison, CBS, Paramount, media consolidation, Friends of the IDF, TikTok, censorship, Bari Weiss, The Grayzone, narrative control, billionaire influence, pro-Israel bias, investigative journalism.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Context of Rising Concern About Billionaire Media Influence

In recent years, public trust in media institutions has declined in tandem with the consolidation of ownership under a small number of powerful individuals. Billionaires now control many of the largest platforms shaping news, entertainment, and political discourse—Jeff Bezos with *The Washington Post*, Elon Musk with X (formerly Twitter), and Rupert Murdoch with *Fox News* and other outlets. This concentration of influence has raised alarms about conflicts of interest, ideological filtering, and the erosion of editorial independence. These concerns are especially acute in the context of international conflict, where narrative control can directly affect public opinion, foreign policy, and the framing of humanitarian crises.

Against this backdrop, attention has increasingly turned to Larry Ellison, co-founder and chairman of Oracle Corporation. While not traditionally associated with the media sector, Ellison's financial ties to pro-Israel causes and the parallel rise of his son, David Ellison, as a media magnate have positioned the family at the nexus of war, politics, and public messaging. Claims of censorship, soft influence, and narrative steering are no longer limited to speculation—they now form a growing part of the investigative discourse around modern media power.

1.2 Why the Ellison Case Merits Investigation

What makes the Ellison case particularly noteworthy is the convergence of several powerful domains: tech infrastructure, political funding, and media acquisition. Larry Ellison is not only one of the world's richest individuals; he is also a major private donor to the Israel Defense Forces, with confirmed donations of up to \$16.6 million. Oracle, under his and Safra Catz's leadership, has openly supported Israeli military and political aims, even as internal dissent from employees has been quietly discouraged or suppressed, according to anecdotal reports.

Meanwhile, David Ellison's strategic merger with Paramount Global—placing him in effective control of CBS News—extends the family's influence directly into the heart of American media. While this by itself may not constitute wrongdoing, the overlap between their pro-Israel affiliations and their growing role in media has sparked widespread concern. Especially amid escalating violence in Gaza and the information wars surrounding it, the possibility that editorial lines may blur with political loyalty demands careful scrutiny. This paper aims to critically examine what is known, what is alleged, and what remains to be proven.

2. Documented Contributions and Corporate Alignments

2.1 Financial Donations to Friends of the IDF

Larry Ellison's financial support for Israel is not a matter of conjecture—it is a matter of public record. In 2014, Ellison donated **\$10 million** to *Friends of the Israel Defense Forces* (FIDF), a U.S.-based nonprofit organization that funds support programs and infrastructure for Israeli soldiers. Three years later, in 2017, he made headlines again with a **record-breaking \$16.6 million donation** to FIDF, earmarked for the construction of well-being facilities for IDF infantry brigades. These contributions rank among the largest known private donations to the IDF and have been reported by Israeli outlets such as *Ynet* and *Calcalist*, as well as confirmed by FIDF fundraising event summaries.

While donations to military-affiliated nonprofits are legal and protected under U.S. law, the scale of Ellison's giving raises questions about the blurred line between private philanthropy and geopolitical influence. Unlike political donations, which are subject to regulatory oversight and public accountability, these military-aligned contributions operate in a gray zone—leveraging soft power while avoiding the scrutiny often applied to defense contractors or foreign lobbyists.

2.2 Safra Catz's Public Pro-Israel Statements

As Oracle's Chief Executive Officer and a longtime confidant of Ellison, **Safra Catz** has been a vocal supporter of Israel's military and political aims. In a 2021 interview with Israeli tech outlet *Calcalistech*, Catz stated:

"If Oracle employees don't agree with our mission to support Israel, maybe we aren't the right company for them."

This comment—though framed diplomatically—suggests an ideological litmus test embedded within Oracle's corporate culture. While not an explicit threat, Catz's remark implies that support for Israel is not merely a personal conviction, but a core tenet of Oracle's organizational identity. It reflects an increasingly common alignment between tech firms and foreign policy agendas, particularly in regions where those firms have strategic partnerships, data centers, or cybersecurity contracts.

Catz's history of political alignment is also notable. In 2016, she joined then-President-elect Donald Trump's transition team, triggering the resignation of an Oracle executive who objected to the move. These developments further signal that Oracle's executive leadership is willing to intertwine corporate governance with political advocacy in ways that directly affect internal cohesion and external partnerships.

2.3 Oracle's Documented Corporate Policies and Press Releases

Oracle's pro-Israel alignment is not limited to executive statements—it is also reflected in the company's official communications. During the October 2023 Hamas attacks and subsequent Israeli military campaigns in Gaza, Oracle's Israeli website posted an unequivocal message of support for the Israeli government, including a condemnation of terrorism and a pledge to assist "in every way we can." The company also announced contributions to Israeli emergency relief organizations and encouraged employee donations, matching them through Oracle Giving.

Furthermore, Oracle operates a major cloud infrastructure presence in Israel, including a local data center launched in 2021 as part of Israel's Nimbus government cloud project. These technical investments reinforce the company's long-term strategic commitment to the region and help explain the political alignment voiced by leadership. In an industry where cloud providers often distance themselves from politically charged engagements, Oracle has taken a rare and public stance—aligning its infrastructure, financial support, and leadership rhetoric with the Israeli state.

3. Ellison–Netanyahu Connection

3.1 Personal Ties: Vacations and Legal Defense Lobbying

Larry Ellison's relationship with Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** extends beyond political alignment into the realm of close personal association. One of the most publicly visible indicators of this relationship was Netanyahu's **vacation on the private Hawaiian island of Lānaʻi**, which Ellison owns almost in its entirety. As reported by *The Times of Israel*, Netanyahu and his wife Sara vacationed there in August 2021, during which time he is said to have dined with Ellison and other guests. The former prime minister's office insisted the trip was private and self-funded, but the choice of destination speaks volumes about the depth of Ellison's access to Netanyahu during a period of high legal and political volatility.

Even more consequential is Ellison's **reported role in Netanyahu's legal defense strategy**. According to *The Times of Israel* and *Haaretz*, Ellison allegedly lobbied Israeli billionaire **Arnon Milchan** to relinquish the services of prominent attorney **Boaz Ben Tzur**—who was then representing Milchan in a separate matter—so that Ben Tzur could become Netanyahu's defense lawyer. Though no legal violation is alleged, this behind-the-scenes maneuver suggests that Ellison's involvement in Netanyahu's affairs may have extended into efforts to influence the outcome of his corruption trials.

3.2 Reporting on the Board Seat Offer: Haaretz and Others

In September 2021, the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that Ellison had **offered Netanyahu a seat on Oracle’s board of directors**, with an annual compensation estimated at **\$450,000**. According to the article, the offer was made while Netanyahu was still a sitting member of the Israeli Knesset, meaning that he would have been required to resign from office to accept the role. The report cited unnamed sources and noted that it was unclear whether Netanyahu formally accepted or even responded to the offer.

Though widely cited in follow-up commentary—including by *The Jewish Independent* and *Benzinga*—this claim **has never been corroborated by official Oracle documents**, SEC filings, or U.S. corporate disclosures. Ellison himself reportedly denied the claim, and no mention of Netanyahu appears in Oracle’s public proxy statements or board nomination records from the relevant time. While the offer, if true, would have significant ethical and political implications, its lack of verifiable paper trail leaves it in a journalistic gray zone: plausible, reported, but unconfirmed.

3.3 Role as a Named Witness in Netanyahu’s Trials

Ellison’s proximity to Netanyahu is further underscored by his inclusion on the **Israeli Attorney General’s list of 333 potential witnesses** in the corruption trials against the former prime minister. While this designation does not imply wrongdoing on Ellison’s part, it is a legal acknowledgment of his **relevance to the proceedings**, likely due to his communications with Netanyahu and involvement in events surrounding the charges.

Inclusion on the witness list carries both symbolic and practical implications. It publicly affirms that Ellison is not merely a passive supporter or donor but someone with potentially material knowledge of the interpersonal, political, or financial dynamics at play. At the very least, it places Ellison in the broader legal landscape surrounding Netanyahu’s embattled leadership—further connecting his philanthropic and business dealings to one of the most controversial political figures of the 21st century.

4. David Ellison and the Paramount Takeover

4.1 The Skydance–Paramount Merger and Board Structure

In July 2025, the long-anticipated **Skydance–Paramount merger** was finalized, positioning **David Ellison**—son of Oracle founder Larry Ellison—as one of the most powerful figures in American media. Under the terms of the deal, Skydance acquired controlling interest in **Paramount Global**, home to media brands including **CBS News, MTV, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central**, and Paramount Pictures.

The new entity, **Paramount Skydance**, is now chaired by David Ellison, who oversees the post-merger strategic direction. Notably, the **board of directors includes Oracle CEO Safra Catz**, reinforcing the bridge between the Ellison family's tech and media ventures. SEC filings from the merger confirm both the leadership composition and governance restructuring, with Ellison allies now holding majority influence over programming and news infrastructure that reaches hundreds of millions of people.

While David Ellison has built a reputation as a Hollywood producer (via Skydance's past work on franchises like *Mission: Impossible*, *Top Gun*, and *Jack Ryan*), his newly acquired role in news broadcasting represents a significant expansion of influence beyond entertainment and into **editorial authority**—especially through CBS, one of the “Big Three” American television news networks.

4.2 Media Implications of CBS Oversight

The merger's most profound implications may lie not in blockbuster film production, but in **day-to-day editorial control over CBS News**, one of the most trusted legacy media institutions in the United States. The power to shape news coverage—directly or indirectly—has always been a concern when large-scale mergers place journalism under private ownership. In this case, scrutiny is magnified due to the Ellison family's **documented political affiliations**, particularly their overt support for Israel.

Critics have raised alarm that the consolidation of CBS under David Ellison's control could lead to **editorial shifts, personnel changes, and narrative realignments** that reflect the ideological leanings of Oracle's leadership. This concern is intensified by the concurrent geopolitical crises—most notably the war in Gaza—and the growing tendency of media owners to involve themselves in news coverage either through formal policy or informal influence.

While no censorship or directive bias has yet been publicly documented, the merger has prompted media watchdogs and advocacy groups to **closely monitor changes in CBS's reporting on foreign policy, national security, and Middle East coverage**, especially any coverage involving Israel or American arms policy. The structural potential for influence is now undeniable, even if its practical exercise remains to be proven.

4.3 Rumored Plans to Install Bari Weiss

Adding to the controversy are **persistent rumors that Bari Weiss**, a former *New York Times* opinion editor and the founder of the *Free Press*, may be tapped for a senior editorial role at CBS News under the new Skydance leadership. While no official appointment has been confirmed, credible outlets including *The Guardian* and *The Independent* have reported on **internal CBS staff concerns** about the possibility.

Weiss is a prominent and polarizing media figure known for her outspoken **pro-Israel advocacy**, critiques of progressive orthodoxy, and emphasis on “free speech” culture within journalism. Installing her in a decision-making role at CBS would symbolize a major shift in editorial direction, likely tilting coverage toward the ideological preferences of her backers. Even without formal appointment, the rumored move has already stirred internal dissent among CBS staff, some of whom have expressed concern about the **erosion of journalistic neutrality**.

If implemented, such an appointment would mark a highly symbolic alignment between Oracle-linked media ownership and the most vocal voices in American Zionist advocacy—raising difficult questions about whether **media consolidation is being leveraged to narrow the spectrum of acceptable debate** on complex geopolitical issues.

5. Speculative and Unverified Claims

5.1 “Quit If You Disagree” Directive: Fact or Myth?

One of the most widely circulated but poorly documented claims concerns a supposed directive from Oracle CEO **Safra Catz**, allegedly telling employees who disagreed with the company’s support for Israel to “quit.” Versions of this claim appear across advocacy journalism, social media posts, and activist commentary, often without sourcing or attribution to specific internal documents.

The **closest verifiable quote** comes from a 2021 interview Catz gave to the Israeli tech outlet *Calcalistech*, where she stated:

“If Oracle employees don’t agree with our mission to support Israel, maybe we aren’t the right company for them.”

This remark—delivered publicly, not internally—can be interpreted as strong encouragement for ideological alignment, but falls short of an ultimatum. No internal memos, meeting transcripts, or leaked HR directives have surfaced to corroborate a more forceful version of the claim. Additionally, while **anecdotal employee complaints** about Oracle’s political culture have been reported (notably in *The Intercept* and *Business & Human Rights*), they are not accompanied by documentation.

As a result, the narrative of a company-wide “quit if you disagree” mandate remains **plausible in tone**, but **unverified in substance**. It reflects a broader cultural tension inside tech firms navigating identity, values, and geopolitical engagement—but lacks hard evidence.

5.2 Board Seat: Unconfirmed Acceptance

The alleged **board seat offer from Larry Ellison to Benjamin Netanyahu** is among the most explosive claims in this entire constellation of concerns. In a September 2021 report, *Haaretz* stated that Ellison offered Netanyahu a lucrative \$450,000/year seat on Oracle's board. Acceptance of this role would have required Netanyahu to resign from the Israeli Knesset, as serving on a foreign corporate board while holding office would violate Israeli law.

Despite wide circulation of the story, including reprints and commentaries by *Benzinga*, *The Jewish Independent*, and others, the claim has **never been verified through official channels**. No Oracle SEC filings, board nominations, or annual proxy statements mention Netanyahu's name. Ellison has reportedly **denied** the story, though details of that denial remain off the record.

Netanyahu's office has never acknowledged the report directly. There is also **no documentation**—emails, letters, board meeting minutes—available in the public domain to confirm the offer was formalized or that any decision was made.

Therefore, while the claim comes from a respected publication and is not easily dismissed, the **lack of corroboration from corporate or legal records** means the offer—and especially any acceptance—remains **in the realm of high-profile speculation**.

5.3 Media Censorship Motives in TikTok Negotiations

Another point of contention is Oracle's potential role in **TikTok negotiations**, particularly under the premise that U.S. lawmakers and corporate actors sought to curb TikTok's alleged "pro-Palestinian bias" or influence during periods of geopolitical sensitivity. Oracle already plays a central role in **Project Texas**, the U.S.-mandated plan to house TikTok user data domestically on Oracle servers to reduce Chinese influence.

Reports from activist media and investigative sites such as *FAIR* and *The Intercept* have suggested that **anger over TikTok's failure to suppress pro-Palestinian content** was a motivating factor in calls for a forced sale. The theory follows that a TikTok acquisition by a pro-Israel consortium—potentially including Ellison—would align editorial moderation policies with U.S. geopolitical interests.

However, this claim remains **entirely speculative**. No leaked communications, lobbying memos, or internal statements confirm that censorship concerns over Palestine were a primary driver of Oracle's involvement. The U.S. government's justification has consistently centered on **national security** and **data sovereignty**—not content moderation.

Until direct evidence surfaces—such as emails between lobbyists, policymakers, and Oracle leadership—the claim of **narrative-control motives behind TikTok negotiations** is

circumstantial at best. It is a compelling theory in the context of other media control concerns but currently **unsupported by documentation.**

6. Grayzone, Advocacy Media, and Alternative Narratives

6.1 Max Blumenthal and The Grayzone's Framing

Among the most vocal sources amplifying concerns about Larry Ellison's influence over pro-Israel media narratives is **The Grayzone**, a self-described investigative journalism outlet founded by **Max Blumenthal**. Known for its adversarial stance toward U.S. foreign policy, corporate power, and Western media orthodoxy, The Grayzone has published or promoted commentary framing Ellison as a central node in a larger geopolitical project—one that spans Silicon Valley, Israel, and the global information architecture.

Blumenthal and The Grayzone frequently present **Ellison, Oracle, and David Ellison** as actors in a coordinated effort to “control the narrative” regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In live events, livestreams, and interviews, they have described efforts by Ellison and his affiliates as an “information war” that parallels and reinforces Israel's military campaigns. The framing casts Oracle's cloud infrastructure, TikTok negotiations, and CBS editorial shifts not as independent events, but as components of a single ideological project.

However, this framing is largely **synthetic**—it draws together threads from public donations, known alliances, and corporate acquisitions, and weaves them into a theory of narrative control. While parts of the narrative are well-sourced, others rely on inference, repetition, or assumption rather than proof.

6.2 Distinguishing Commentary from Evidence

The line between journalism, advocacy, and speculation is often blurred in alternative media. The Grayzone has made serious allegations—some echoing those in mainstream Israeli press (e.g., the *Haaretz* board seat report), others extending into assertions for which **no public documents exist**. Examples include the claim that **Oracle employees were told to resign** if they questioned support for Israel, or that **the TikTok forced sale was driven primarily by Palestinian content visibility**.

Critically, many of these claims are **not accompanied by primary sources** such as leaked memos, whistleblower testimony, or internal records. Instead, they emerge as statements within commentary, livestreams, or interviews, then circulate widely on social media and aligned advocacy channels. This blending of editorializing and reporting creates a potent mix—but one that can mislead if not properly qualified.

In some cases, The Grayzone has cited mainstream journalism (e.g. *Reuters*, *The Guardian*, *Haaretz*) when it supports its thesis, while ignoring or discrediting those same outlets when they present contradictory information. This **selective sourcing** complicates the outlet's credibility and underscores the need to treat its reporting with caution—not as inherently false, but as often **contextually motivated**.

6.3 Risks and Responsibilities in Investigative Journalism

Investigative journalism plays a vital role in exposing corruption, challenging official narratives, and holding powerful entities accountable. However, when reporting verges into **allegation without evidence**, it risks eroding public trust—especially when the subjects are already polarizing. In the Ellison case, claims that are repeated widely in activist circles can become accepted as fact, even in the absence of documentation.

The risk is twofold: **overreach** may discredit valid criticism, while **incomplete verification** may obscure meaningful distinctions between support, influence, and direct control. Ellison's documented donations, political ties, and media reach are all **worthy of scrutiny**. But to leap from correlation to conspiracy without evidentiary grounding invites counterclaims of bias or fabrication, weakening the broader case for media accountability.

Responsible investigative work must therefore maintain a strict divide between **provable fact, plausible inference, and editorial speculation**. Even urgent topics—especially urgent topics—require methodological discipline. The Ellison–Israel–media nexus offers a cautionary example of what happens when that discipline is relaxed, and how quickly a truth-adjacent narrative can metastasize into an untestable belief system.

7. Conclusion: Influence Without Transparency

7.1 What Is Clearly Proven

A careful review of publicly available information confirms several indisputable facts. Larry Ellison has donated **tens of millions of dollars** to *Friends of the Israel Defense Forces*, making him one of the most significant known private contributors to Israeli military causes. Oracle CEO **Safra Catz** has publicly declared that the company aligns with support for Israel—statements made in interviews that suggest ideological expectations for corporate culture. Oracle's **public press releases and philanthropy** further reinforce its explicit identification with Israel during periods of armed conflict, especially in response to events in Gaza.

Beyond philanthropy, Ellison's influence extends into the media sphere through his son, **David Ellison**, whose acquisition of **Paramount Global** has placed the family at the center of a vast content and news empire, including **CBS News**. Board appointments from Oracle's leadership—

particularly Safra Catz—further signal ideological continuity and possible strategic alignment between Oracle’s corporate ethos and the newly acquired media infrastructure. These developments are not speculative; they are documented through SEC filings, mainstream reporting, and company statements.

7.2 What Remains Unanswered

Yet much of the more provocative narrative remains **unverified**. The oft-cited claim that Ellison offered Netanyahu a seat on Oracle’s board comes solely from a *Haaretz* report and lacks corroboration in public filings or corporate minutes. Similarly, the alleged **employee ultimatum**—that those who disagree with Oracle’s support for Israel should resign—has not been substantiated through leaked documents or internal communications. These ideas persist largely through repetition in alternative media ecosystems rather than through formal discovery or primary evidence.

Additionally, the claim that Oracle’s interest in acquiring or partnering with TikTok was **motivated by a desire to suppress pro-Palestinian content** lacks documented support. U.S. government concerns regarding TikTok have consistently focused on **national security and data privacy**, and while alternative interpretations exist, no direct evidence has surfaced proving political content control was a core objective.

Thus, **key questions remain**: Was influence exerted behind closed doors that has simply not been documented? Or are these claims the product of pattern-seeking in an opaque but legal convergence of ideology and capital?

7.3 Why Discernment Between Fact and Speculation Matters

In an era of information warfare, disinformation campaigns, and systemic mistrust of institutions, distinguishing **what is proven from what is persuasive** has never been more urgent. The Ellison-Israel-media narrative encapsulates this challenge. The risk is not simply one of misinformation—it is the collapse of public capacity to differentiate between credible reporting and compelling storytelling.

When fact and speculation are blended without distinction, two dangerous outcomes emerge. First, legitimate scrutiny of power—especially involving war, media, and geopolitics—can be undermined by association with conspiracy. Second, the accused—however powerful—may escape accountability by simply pointing to the speculative nature of the criticism against them.

To hold billionaires, media empires, and governments accountable, investigative journalism and public discourse must be built not on rhetorical velocity but on **documented truth**. The Ellison case exemplifies how real influence can thrive in the shadows—not necessarily through illegal acts, but through opaque alliances that **shape perception without triggering formal oversight**.

Transparency, not hyperbole, is the strongest antidote to concentrated power. And discernment—not silence—is the only way forward.

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