



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on January 21, 2026

Josh Shapiro: Harris Team Asked If He Was a “Double Agent” for Israel. Critics: Question Was “Antisemitic.”

A new book reveals that one of Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris’ possible choices for a vice presidential running mate was mighty upset when asked whether he was a “double agent” for another country.

That choice: Far-left Democratic Governor Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania. The other country: Israel. Reason for the question: In high school, Shapiro served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

But now Shapiro and some allies are attempting to portray the question as “antisemitic” because Shapiro is Jewish. Doing its part in discussing Shapiro’s memoir, [Where We Keep the Light](#), *The Atlantic* discussed the kerfuffle without mentioning Shapiro’s IDF service.

In the long run, of course, Harris picked Minnesota’s far-left Democratic Governor Tim Walz, whose affair with the daughter of a top Chinese communist official raised eyebrows.

Podcaster Glenn Greenwald, also Jewish but no fan of Israel, zinged the critics. Of course, Harris’ team asked the question, Greenwald wrote on X. And they should have.



AP Images
Josh Shapiro



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In his new book, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro discusses the strange questions he received during vice-presidential vetting—and settles some scores, Toluse Olorunnipa reports:



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Josh Shapiro Settles Some Scores

The Pennsylvania governor discusses the strange questions he received in his vice-presidential vetting.

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Shapiro's Service for Israel

As The Times of Israel explained in August 2024, Shapiro addressed his service in the IDF when an op-ed he wrote in college resurfaced. The governor “sought to distance himself from a recently uncovered op-ed he wrote in college, in which he identified as a former volunteer in the IDF and argued that the Palestinians are too “battle-minded” to pursue peace with Israel,” the [website reported](#):

“While he was in high school, Josh Shapiro was required to do a service project, which he and several classmates completed through a program that took them to a kibbutz in Israel where he worked on a farm and at a fishery,” Shapiro’s spokesperson Manuel Bonder told The Times of Israel.



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“The program also included volunteering on service projects on an Israeli army base. At no time was he engaged in any military activities,” Bonder added in a statement responding to an inquiry regarding the nature of his volunteer work.

In the 1993 newspaper op-ed, which dismissed the recently signed Oslo Accords, Shapiro wrote, “Despite my skepticism as a Jew and a past volunteer in the Israeli army, I strongly hope and pray that this ‘peace plan’ will be successful.”

While Shapiro’s Jewish roots are well established — including his enrollment at the Akiba Hebrew Academy in Philadelphia — the op-ed from his time at the University of Rochester appeared to be the first revelation of such direct ties to the IDF.

“Palestinians will not coexist peacefully,” Shapiro also wrote in the op-ed titled “Peace Not Possible.”

As [Middle East Eye reported](#), “US: Josh Shapiro’s ‘volunteer’ work for Israeli army scrutinised as Harris eyes VP nod.”

So at the time, questions about Shapiro’s IDF service were widely, publicly discussed.

Book Complaint

But now, *The Atlantic* reported, Shapiro suggests that antisemitism among Harris’ vetters motivated the unwelcome questions about his loyalty.

“Shapiro, one of the most well-known Jewish elected officials in the country — and one of at least three Jewish politicians considering a run for the 2028 Democratic presidential nomination — says he took umbrage at the question,” the [magazine reported](#):

“Had I been a double agent for Israel? Was she kidding? I told her how offensive the question was,” Shapiro writes in his forthcoming book, *Where We Keep the Light*. ...

The exchange became even more tense, he writes, when [President Joe Biden’s former White House counsel Dana] Remus asked whether Shapiro had ever spoken with an undercover Israeli agent. The questions left the governor feeling uneasy about the prospect of being Harris’s No. 2, a role that ultimately went to Minnesota Governor Tim Walz. After Harris and Walz lost to Donald Trump, many Democrats were critical of her decision to bypass Shapiro, the popular governor of the nation’s largest swing state. In his book, Shapiro says that the decision may not have been fully hers; he says he had “a knot in my stomach” throughout a vetting process that was more combative than he had expected. Shapiro wrote that he decided to take his name out of the running after a one-on-one meeting with Harris that featured more clashes, including about Israel.

Nowhere does the story explain the obvious reason why Harris’ team asked the question: Shapiro *served in the military of a foreign country*.

Question Was Antisemitic

Though the reason for the question is obvious — Harris’ team wanted to know about any potential explosive devices that could cripple her campaign — critics say the question isn’t just inappropriate. It’s



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antisemitic.

“Reports that Gov. Josh Shapiro was asked if he was a ‘double agent for Israel’ during VP vetting are nothing short of outrageous, and, if true, demand an immediate explanation from the Harris campaign,” far-left Democratic Representative Josh Gottheimer of New Jersey [wrote on X](#):

That kind of insinuation and targeting is antisemitism, plain and simple. No one should be judged or discriminated against because of their faith. We must do better.

The Atlantic’s Jeffrey Goldberg [offered this take on X](#), although he didn’t write the story about Shapiro’s book:

Josh Shapiro on his VP vetting: “‘Had I been a double agent for Israel?’ Was she kidding? I told her how offensive the question was...”

Some conservatives agreed.

“Josh Shapiro seems like a broadly decent person & one of the country’s more capable Democratic executives,” the Manhattan Institute’s [Jesse Arm wrote](#):

But it’s disappointing that he’s only now spilling the beans about the rank antisemitism he faced from the Kamala Harris team — long after he aggressively campaigned for her.

Podcaster Glenn Greenwald, a strong America First critic of Israel, isn’t buying it.

“This is the most absurd, whiny, self-victimizing campaign,” [he wrote](#) about Gottheimer’s post:

Of course someone who wants to be Vice President should be asked about his association with a foreign country if he described himself as “a past volunteer” in its foreign army and worked for that foreign government.

Nor should *Atlantic* scribe Goldberg complain, Greenwald added:

Also, if I were Josh Shapiro, [I] wouldn’t want Jeffrey Goldberg defending me, given that Goldberg never volunteered to serve in the US military, but did [in Israel’s military](#).

Shapiro wasn’t asked about Israel because he’s Jewish, but because of his affinity to work for Israel.

Walz Picked

Whatever Harris’ concerns about Shapiro, in the end, she picked Walz, whose ties to China’s political party came under heavy scrutiny.

Indeed, government documents obtained by Judicial Watch showed that Walz was likely compromised.

“[The Department of Homeland Security, (DHS)] and the FBI counter-intelligence investigation into Walz’s [Chinese Communist Party (CCP)] connections determined that ‘China is happy’ with Walz ... on the 2024 Democratic presidential ticket,” [Judicial Watch reported](#) of the documents:



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Walz's connections to the CCP were extensive and a concern to the intelligence community, according to the documents produced.

DHS personnel, Judicial Watch reported about the documents, discussed "how they were aware communist China had a plan to target politicians likely to end up in DC, specifically Walz and Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo."

"[Walz has] got the Vp," a [DHS official wrote](#) on August 6, 2024:

You all have no idea how this feeds into what prc [People's Republic of China] has been doing here with him and local gov. It's seriously a line of the intel. Target someone who is perceived they can get to DC.



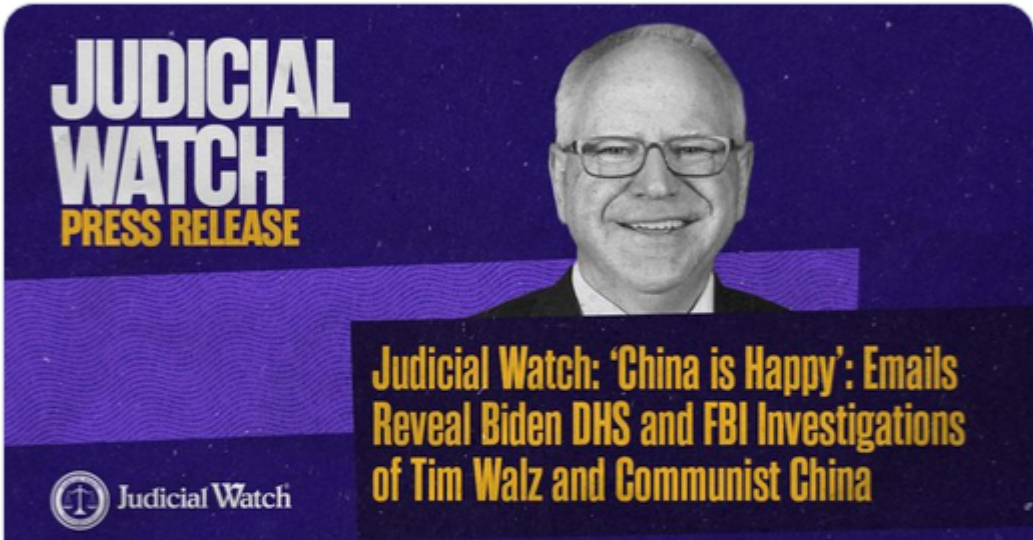
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Judicial Watch received 47 pages of records from the DHS in a lawsuit about Gov. Tim Walz's connections to the Chinese Communist Party.



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Walz's weird affair with a Chinese woman whose father was a top Communist Party official [nearly drove](#) the woman to suicide. Whether that problem was linked to Walz's being a "knucklehead," as [he admitted](#) in his vice presidential debate with J.D. Vance, is unclear.

Amusingly, [The Atlantic reported](#), "Harris later wrote that her first choice for vice president was actually Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, but felt it was 'too big of a risk' to add a gay man to a ticket led by a Black woman with a Jewish husband."



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