



A L E T H E A

One Network, Three Ballots:

*Fake Israeli And French Personas And Cloned News Sites Target
The U.S. Midterms, Israel's Election And France's 2027 Race*

October 2026

Operation Doppelgänger

Executive Summary

Alethea assesses with **high confidence** that Doppelgänger, the Russian state-backed influence operation run by the Social Design Agency (SDA) and Structura, is targeting the U.S. midterms, marking the second Russian influence operation identified as targeting the November 3 vote, after [Matryoshka](#).

The campaign, which appears to have launched on the third anniversary of the Hamas attack on Israel and Vladimir Putin's birthday, includes more than 50 fake personas on X that posted in three synchronized waves between October 7 and 9. More than 1,000 inauthentic accounts then pushed those posts into unrelated, high-traffic conversations, producing an estimated 150,000 or more quote-posts. The same infrastructure is also targeting Israel's October 27 election and France's 2027 presidential race. Links in many of the posts lead, through a multi-stage redirect chain, to fake articles on convincing clones of Israel's Walla! News and France's Le Parisien and Le Point.

The activity falls into three layers:

- **Fake personas:** Month-old accounts with Western, mostly female names pose as Israelis (in English, with Hebrew-language memes) and as French voters (in French). Each account posts once, in bursts timed to the second.
- **Hidden amplification:** Bulk-created accounts use the “Invisible Ink” technique Alethea first [documented](#) in Doppelgänger activity in 2024, quote-posting the seed content with no added text inside reply threads under politicians, news outlets and sports accounts, where keyword searches miss it.
- **Cloned news sites:** Three look-alike news domains, registered on the same day in May 2025 host fabricated articles under forged AFP and Walla! bylines.

For American and Israeli audiences, the message is that bipartisan U.S. support for Israel is collapsing and that Democrats have turned against Israel. For French audiences, it blames President Macron's defense spending and support for Ukraine for cuts at home. The risk is not any single post, which drew little authentic engagement, but a **durable, reusable infrastructure built to keep these narratives circulating through Election Day and beyond.**

Why It Matters:

Doppelgänger is back despite U.S. and EU sanctions and DOJ domain seizures. It held its cloned news sites in reserve for 17 months and deployed them in the final weeks before three elections. The message has shifted, too: in 2024 the network posed as conservative voters opposing Ukraine aid, and now it casts Israel as a partisan wedge to turn voters against Democrats. The fake news sites behind it were built and maintained for 17 months, and its amplification is designed to evade the tools that monitor for it. Its fabricated articles are already in Google's search index, where AI chatbots, especially Grok, risk citing them in answers about the election.

By the Numbers

- **50+ seed accounts**, created September 6–7, 2026, and posting in synchronized waves since October 7.
- **1,000+ amplifier accounts**, most created in bulk on October 5. Each posted only about once every 14 minutes, but together they produced about 80 quote-posts a minute, enough to give a single seed post a new amplification every ~5 seconds.
- **150,000 estimated quote-posts** across the October 7 to 9 waves. About 38,000 remained visible on the seed posts by October 10, as X suspensions removed the rest.
- **80 quote-posts per minute**, sustained across 15 French seed posts five hours after they were published.
- **16 throwaway link domains** funnel through one cloaking page and one redirect server to **3 cloned news sites**.
- **3 languages** (English, French, Hebrew) aimed at **3 elections** in the US, Israel and France.

Who Is Behind It

Alethea assesses with high confidence that the network is a new wave of Doppelgänger activity. It matches the operation's documented playbook at four layers:

- **Amplification:** The same Invisible Ink technique Alethea documented in 2024, with first-person “local” personas posting once each in tightly synchronized bursts.
- **Redirect infrastructure:** Seed-post links pass through a four-stage chain (posted link, cloaking page, redirect server, fake news site), the multi-stage redirect pattern repeatedly reported for Doppelgänger.
- **Cloned outlets:** Walla!, Le Parisien and Le Point have all been impersonated by Doppelgänger before; the operators simply swapped the domain extensions (walla[.]re and lepoint[.]foo [in 2024](#), walla[.]ist and lepoint[.]fyi now).
- **Coordinated domain registration:** leparisien[.]fans and lepoint[.]fyi were registered seven seconds apart on May 12, 2025, and walla[.]ist 90 minutes later, consistent with one operator building infrastructure in bulk ahead of use.

Doppelgänger has been publicly [attributed](#) by the US Department of Justice, and sanctioned by the US and EU, as the work of the Social Design Agency and Structura acting at the direction of the Russian Presidential Administration. Leaked SDA documents analysed by [Sweden's Psychological Defence Agency](#) show Israel and France were standing SDA targets under its “FGIA” (France, Germany, Israel, America) campaign.

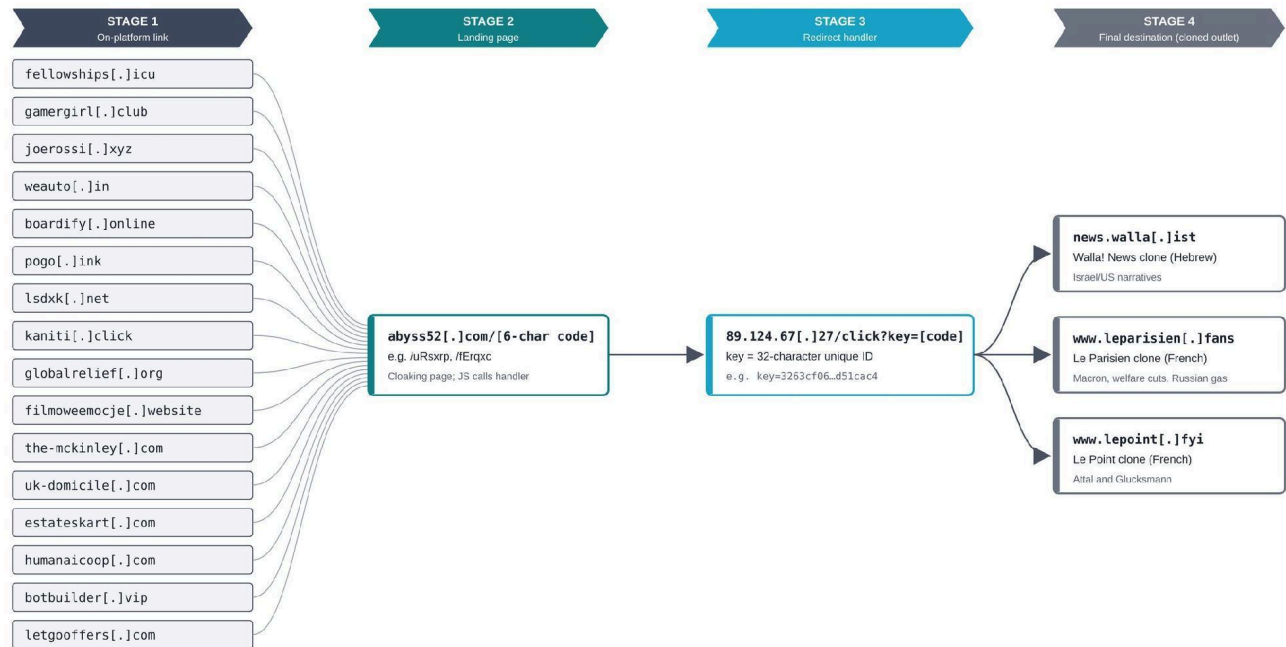
Parts of this playbook, including bulk accounts, cloaking redirects and cloned sites, are available from commercial vendors. Most of the amplifier accounts discovered here carry X location labels pointing to Turkey-based Android infrastructure, but those labels reflect connection points and can be masked; we found no evidence linking the accounts to Turkish actors, and the network's anti-Turkey content makes Turkish sponsorship highly unlikely.

EXHIBIT 1

Multi-stage redirect chain: on-platform links to cloned news sites

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16 first-stage domains posted by seed accounts on X funnel through one landing page and one redirect handler to three cloned news outlets



What the Network Is Saying

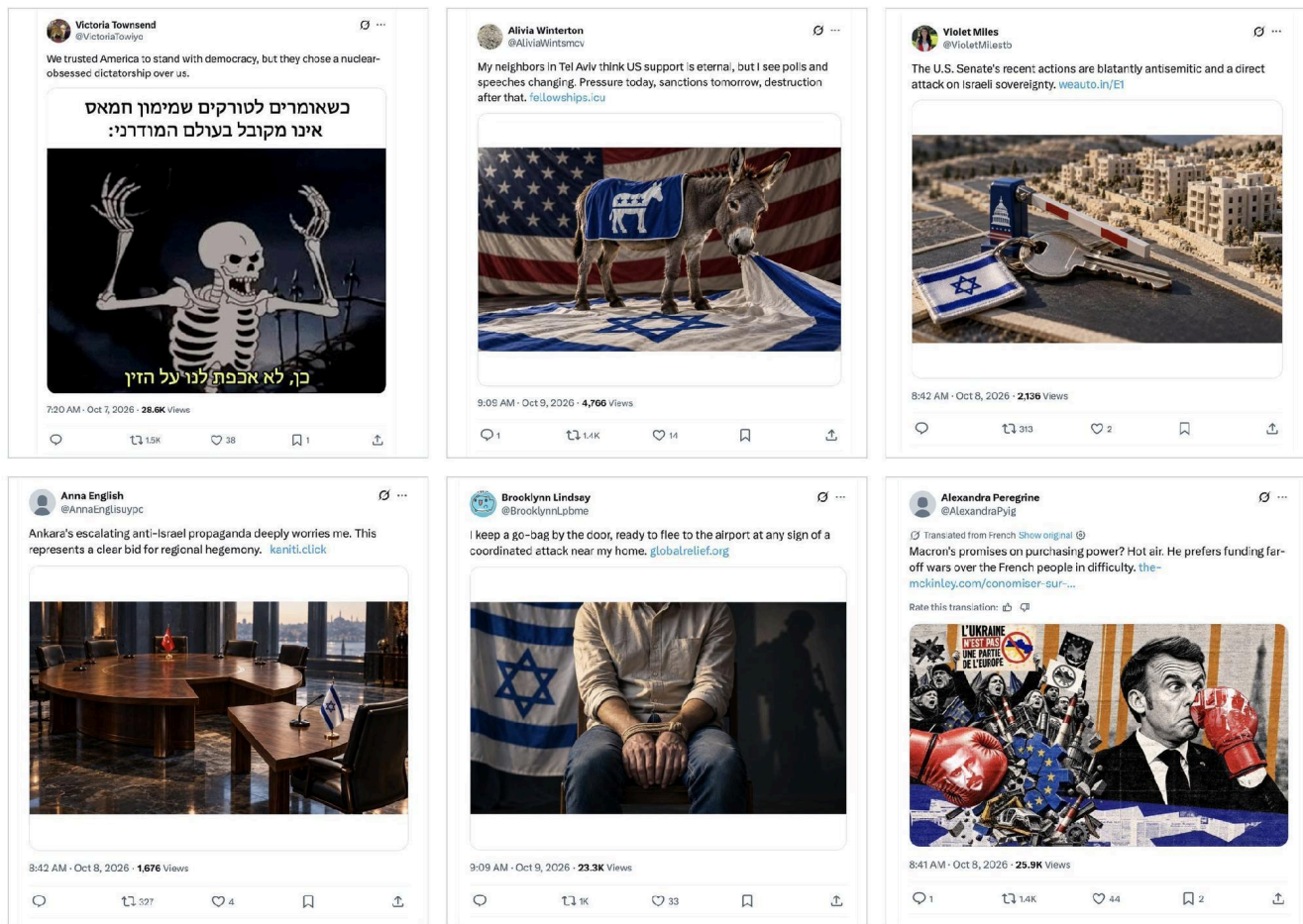
Seed posts are short, first-person and written to provoke fear, anger or a sense of betrayal. Six narratives dominate. The first three are aimed at U.S. politics.

EXHIBIT 2

Representative seed posts by narrative, 7–9 October 2026

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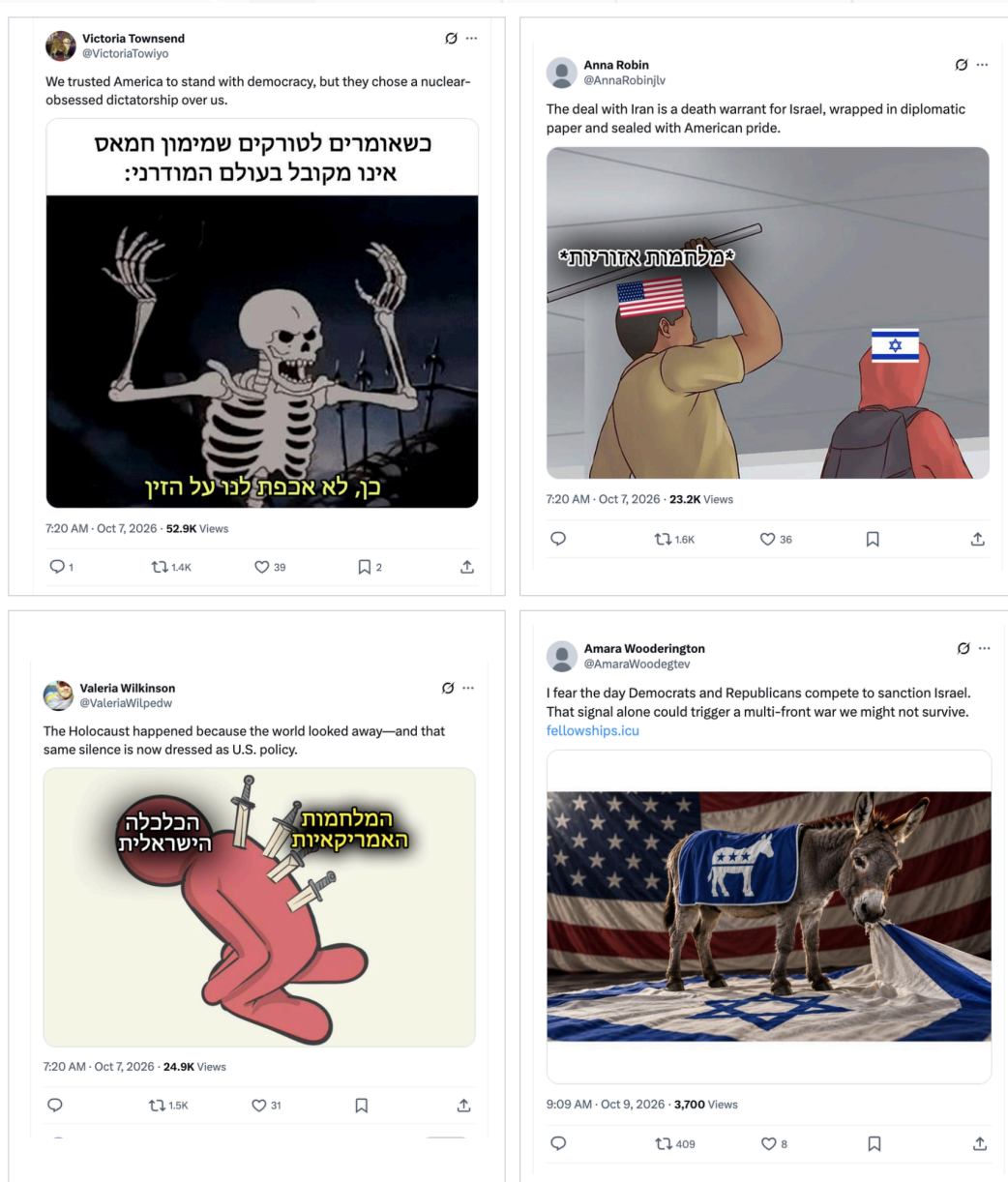
One seed post per narrative; each drew 300–1,500 bot quote-posts or reposts against 2–44 likes



- **America betrayed Israel over Iran.** [@VictoriaTowiyo](#): "We trusted America to stand with democracy, but they chose a nuclear-obsessed dictatorship over us." The takeaway for any US ally, Ukraine included, is that Washington can't be trusted, which is exactly what Moscow wants them to believe.
- **Losing bipartisan support means Israel's destruction.** The October 9 wave, built around an AI-generated image of a Democratic donkey tearing an Israeli flag, recasts Israel as a partisan wedge issue less than 30 days before the midterms. [@AmaraWoodegtev](#): "I fear the day Democrats and Republicans compete to sanction Israel."

EXHIBIT 3

Additional seed-post examples across narratives



- US institutions are hostile to Israel.** [@VioletMilestb](#) calls the Senate's actions "blatantly antisemitic"; the linked fake Walla! article claims 19 Democratic senators propose sanctions over settlement construction in the E1 zone of the West Bank.
- Turkey is an aggressor.** [@AnnaEnglisuyyc](#) warns of Ankara's "bid for regional hegemony," and fake articles claim Turkey is building a "bridgehead" in Iraq and heading toward war, stoking tension between a US ally and a NATO member that is also Russia's rival in Syria and the Black Sea, straining NATO unity.
- Israel is becoming unlivable.** [@BrooklynnLpbme](#): "I keep a go-bag by the door, ready to flee to the airport." Fake articles cite rising housing costs, shrinking pensions and a claimed Shin Bet kidnapping warning to cast emigration as the sensible choice.

- **Macron is destroying France.** [@AlexandraPuig](#): “Il préfère financer des guerres lointaines que les Français en difficulté” (“He would rather fund distant wars than French people in difficulty”). A cloned Le Parisien article claims Macron “admitted” that losing cheap Russian gas cost Europe its industrial edge, a message that serves Russia directly.

How the Operation Works

Invisible Ink: Rather than reposting seed content openly, amplifier accounts quote-post it with no text of their own and drop it as a reply beneath high-engagement posts, from celebrity news to posts from politicians. Each individual reply draws minimal views, but the content is scattered across thousands of conversations and stays invisible to many monitoring tools that search for keywords. The amplification layer consists of roughly 1,000 accounts running on a shared posting schedule. Nearly all of them (>99% of those identified) have bare, default-avatar profiles with handles built from a common first name and US surname plus four random characters (e.g., @JamesWrihgnkuuy), and every one we sampled was created within the same 8.5-hour window on October 5. A small number of older accounts with more developed personas (custom photos, bios and varied handles), created in late September and registered in India, Singapore and Hong Kong, amplified the same content on the same schedule, suggesting the operator supplemented the pool with purchased or previously owned accounts.

EXHIBIT 4

Amplifier accounts quote-posting @AliviaWintsmcv (9 Oct 2026)

Amplifier accounts quote-posting @AliviaWintsmcv (9 Oct 2026)

Amplifiers quote the seed post with no added text, as replies under unrelated high-engagement posts ("Invisible Ink"), and draw almost no views



Fake news sites: Readers who click a seed-post link are bounced through a throwaway domain, a cloaking page and a redirect server before landing on a cloned article. The Hebrew Walla! clone carries stories on Democrats pressuring Israel, Turkey's military ambitions and Israelis priced out of their own country. The French clones attack Macron and the likely 2027 candidates by name. The seed posts and fake articles tend to be built as matched pairs. Across many posts on different topics, the image

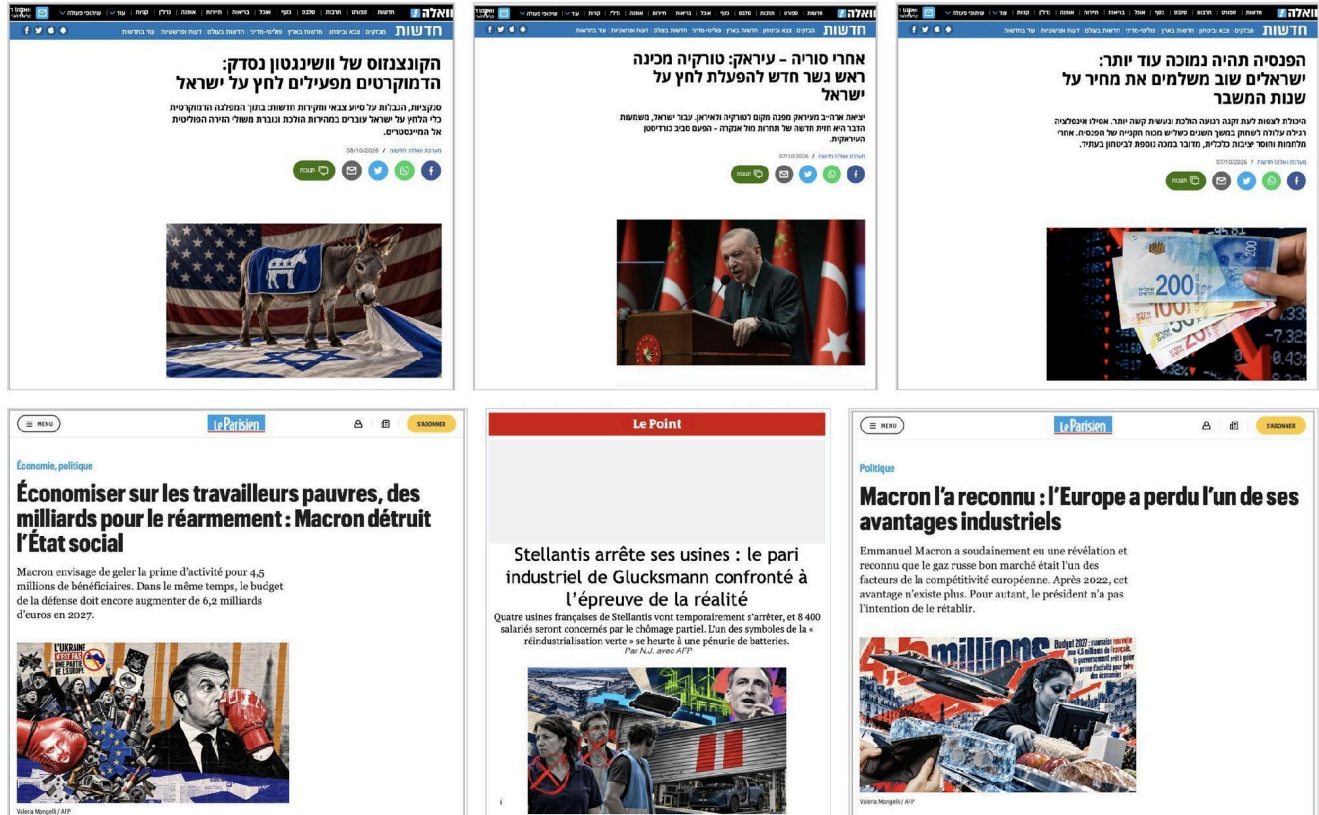
attached to a seed post on X is the same feature image image used on the cloned article it links to. In the donkey example, the Walla! clone article on Democratic pressure, dated October 8, carries the same AI-generated image as the October 9 seed post that links to it. The Le Parisien clone article on Macron's welfare cuts likewise reuses the boxing-glove collage from @AlexandraPyig's post. This suggests the articles and social posts were produced together as ready-made content packages.

EXHIBIT 5

Fake articles on cloned news sites reached through the seed-post links

Fake articles on cloned news sites reached through the seed-post links

Top: Walla! News clone (news.walla[.il]st), Hebrew. Bottom: Le Parisien (leparisien[.fr]ans) and Le Point (lepoint[.fr]yi) clones, French



Impact: Low Engagement, High Persistence

Measured post by post, the campaign had little visible impact. The seed posts we analyzed averaged about 1,160 quote-posts (all from the network's own amplifiers), no reposts, fewer than one reply and about 22 likes, against roughly 14,000 impressions. Those figures overstate real reach: most impressions likely came from the bot network itself, and the amplifier replies we sampled drew between zero and three views each. X does not show who liked a post, so we cannot verify whether the likes are authentic.

The significance lies in persistence and scale rather than in any single day's engagement. The amplification ran at a steady machine pace: one seed post on immigration drew a new quote-post every five seconds, hours after publication. Low-engagement, high-volume repetition is cheap to sustain, and its likely effect is cumulative and corrosive: normalizing the narratives, polluting reply threads and search results, and building reusable infrastructure. It only takes one influencer picking up a post for the content to break into authentic conversation.

EXHIBIT 6

Rapid amplification of a French seed post by bot accounts, 8 Oct 2026

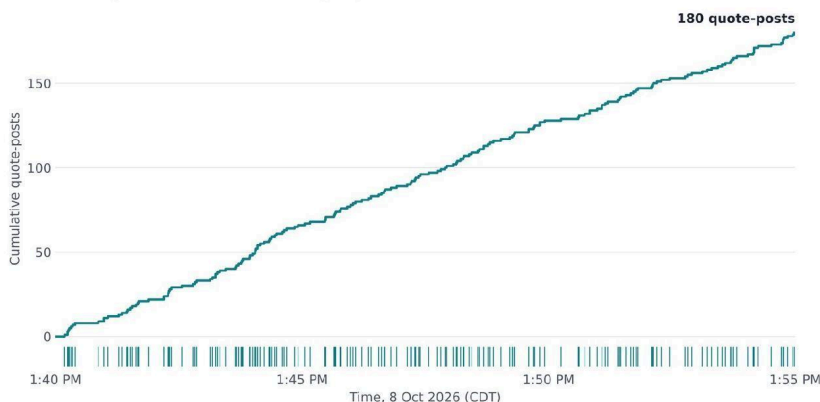
Rapid amplification of a French seed post by bot accounts, 8 Oct 2026

15-minute Meltwater sample taken five hours after the seed was posted (8:41 AM CDT). Most amplifier accounts are now suspended.



@wefinabihosi seed post: a new amplifier quote-post every ~5 seconds

Caption on crime and immigration, linking to an [estateskart\[.\]com](#) article on deportation orders (OQTF) and Le Pen. Ticks along the bottom mark each individual quote-post.



Doppelgänger clone sites are usually short-lived and hidden behind redirects, so their content rarely surfaces in search. These three are an exception: online for 17 months, they have hosted content for earlier campaigns, and as of October 12, 2026, twelve of their articles were indexed by Google. AI assistants that search the web could therefore retrieve them, and the content may also reach training data for models built on recent web crawls.

Why It Matters Now

The network launched on a date chosen for emotional impact, the anniversary of October 7, and is active in the final weeks before the US midterms and Israel's election. Its narratives are tailored to each audience, but they share one goal: weakening trust between the United States and its allies and eroding European support for defence spending in Ukraine. The infrastructure remains online and reusable, and Alethea expects further waves.

Methodology

Alethea's SID team identified the network and, using Alethea's AI-powered Artemis platform, expanded out the size and scope of the network and generated the narrative data. Social listening data, OSINT, X account metadata, archived captures of the redirect chain and landing pages, and domain registration records were also utilized. Figures are current as of October 10, 2026. Total quote-post volume is an estimate based on sampled amplifier timelines; visible counts are lower because suspended accounts' posts are removed. Seed-post links in this briefing point to inauthentic accounts and fake-site domains are defanged.