



Lior Mizrahi/Getty Images

A view of the Western Wall and the golden Dome of the Rock Islamic shrine in Jerusalem, Dec. 6, 2017.

Jewish world celebrates US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital

By United with Israel Staff

Israel's leadership and Jews from around the world celebrated President Donald Trump's statement that the US officially recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and that plans to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem are in motion.

The US "finally acknowledge[s] the obvious: that Jerusalem is Israel's capital. This is nothing more, or less, than a recognition of reality. It is also the right thing to do. It's something that has to be done," Trump stated at the White House on Wednesday.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

stated that the statement was "historic," remarking that Jerusalem has "been the capital of Israel for nearly 70 years." Netanyahu added, "Jerusalem has been the focus of our hopes, our dreams, our prayers for three millennia. Jerusalem has been the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years."

Israel is "profoundly grateful for the President, for his courageous and just decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to prepare for the opening of the US embassy here. This decision reflects the President's commitment to an ancient but enduring truth, to fulfilling his promises and to advancing peace," Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu also underscored that

Trump's decision is "an important step towards peace, for there is no peace that doesn't include Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel."

Netanyahu reiterated Israel's commitment to advancing peace and to maintaining the status quo at the holy sites.

"Israel will always ensure freedom of worship for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike," the Israeli premier underscored.

"I call on all countries that seek peace to join the United States in recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and to move their embassies here," Netanyahu stated.

President Reuven Rivlin stated that

Jerusalem on page 15A

Winners and losers as the US recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital

By Michael J. Koplow

(JTA)—President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and his announcement that he will move the embassy there from Tel Aviv will have a number of consequences for Israelis, Palestinians and the wider region.

For Israel, it has finally received from an American president what it has long craved, which is righting the historic wrong of it being the only state whose self-declared capital is not recognized by the rest of the world.

Israel's government institutions are primarily in West Jerusalem in undisputed territory, and by formally recognizing this fact, Trump acknowledged what has been obvious to Israelis since the founding of the state 70 years ago. In using language that was not qualified and declaring "Jerusalem" to be the capital, some Israelis may interpret this to constitute an endorsement of Israeli claims to the entirety of the city, even though Trump explicitly ruled out this announcement as prejudging final status issues or the specific borders of Israeli sovereignty in the city.

Nevertheless, even a more appropriate interpretation that the U.S. has recognized only the undisputed sections of Jerusalem as Israel's capital is an enormously positive development for the Israeli government, and it will have cause to celebrate.



Yonatan Sindel/Flash90

A patron at a Jerusalem pub watches as President Donald Trump recognizes the city as Israel's capital, Dec. 6, 2017.

For the Palestinians, Trump's qualifier that his announcement does not prejudice final status issues and the president's extolling of the importance of peace will not eliminate the bitterness of this pill. Trump's lack of an explicit endorsement of an equal Palestinian claim to part of the city will be seen as a reversal of longstanding American policy and make it far more difficult for Palestinian Au-

thority President Mahmoud Abbas to continue to engage with Trump's emerging peace initiative. It will adversely affect Palestinian cooperation with the U.S. and Israel going forward, and is likely to lead to protests and violence.

While nothing that Trump said Wednesday has actually changed the situation on the ground, for the Palestinians

Winners on page 15A

Beth Chaim's new Oviedo location

By Christine DeSouza

Congregation Beth Chaim is back, but actually, it never really left. The small Reform congregation, which was located on 434 in Winter Springs, was struggling a few months ago. Funds were tight and its location was in a remote area. Rumors abounded that the congregation had closed its doors for good.

It had closed its doors—that is, the doors of the building in Winter Springs. Right after the High Holidays the group of faithful congregants opened a new door in Oviedo, thanks to its cantorial soloist and spiritual leader Jillian Marini.

"I did a lot of research for an area that was growing more," she said.

She found that location in Oviedo where Marini and her fiancé had just opened a new business, Songbirds Music, Art and Dance Center. Marini donated space in the building for Friday evening services.

"The real reason we chose Oviedo was because it is a family-friendly area, and that's what we are—family-friendly!" said Marini, who grew up at Beth Chaim. "We wanted to return to our roots, with lay-led services."

The seven-member board with co-presidents, Diane Langer and Mel Berger, also chose a donation-only structure rather than membership dues. With no monthly rent and no required dues, this



Cantor Jillian Marini

eased a financial burden for the congregants.

The services, led by Marini, are very interactive. She even created a new word to describe them—"voluntold," meaning that everyone actively participates.

Marini confessed though that she isn't sure if it's the interactive services or the best Challah ever that draws the more than 20 congregants to the synagogue.

"We have two of the best challah makers! Both challahs are different, and both taste wonderful!" she exclaimed with laughter.

Beth Chaim's new location is 181 E. Mitchell Hammock, Oviedo. Services are at 8 p.m. every Friday, and tonight, there will be a special Chanukah service and party. Marini stated that everyone is welcome, and bring latkes.

Trump delays moving embassy

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Hours after ordering preparations for a U.S. embassy in Jerusalem, President Donald Trump delayed moving the diplomatic mission to the city by another six months.

Trump signed a proclamation at the White House Wednesday saying the United States sees Jerusalem as Israel's capital and directing the State Department to start planning an embassy in the city. Soon thereafter, he signed another presidential waiver of a 1995 law requiring the embassy to be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Under U.S. President Bill Clinton, Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and stating that the embassy should be moved here. However, presidents ever since—from Clinton to George W. Bush to Barack Obama—have invoked a waiver written into the law that allows them to postpone the move for reasons of "national security." As a result, the law has never gone into effect.

Trump referred to this his-

tory in his speech announcing the historic shift in U.S. policy on Jerusalem on Wednesday.

"Presidents issued these waivers under the belief that delaying the recognition of Jerusalem would advance the cause of peace," he said. "Some say they lacked courage, but they made their best judgments based on facts as they understood them at the time."

"While previous presidents have made this a major campaign promise, they failed to deliver," Trump said. "Today, I am delivering."

According to the Guardian, White House officials said Trump signed the waiver to avoid a legally stipulated cut in State Department funding until the new embassy is actually opened. They told the newspaper that previous presidents used the waiver to avoid moving the embassy, whereas Trump instructed the start of practical work on the mission.



At a Jerusalem market, shrugs greet an announcement from President Trump



Andrew Tobin

Uzi Sharabi selling baked goods at the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem, Dec. 6, 2017.



Andrew Tobin

Hovav Landoy shopping at the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem, Dec. 6, 2017.



Andrew Tobin

Bassam Hoshiah selling nuts at the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem, Dec. 6, 2017.

By Andrew Tobin

JERUSALEM (JTA)—President Donald Trump's official recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital may have sent shockwaves across the Middle East. But here, in the epicenter of a city where fewer than a million people work, eat, pray and shop, the first day's reaction was muted.

The municipality projected images of the Israeli and American flags side by side on the Old City walls. But in Mahane Yehuda, the bustling produce and everything-else market a few miles into the city's western side, it was another working day.

Jews generally welcomed the development, while Arabs expressed anger. But nobody thought the U.S. president would fundamentally change the situation in Israel—for better or worse. A number of others had not even heard about it.

Shay, 40, a black kippah-wearing nut seller and long-time Jerusalem resident, said Trump had shown that he understood Israelis' national and religious ties to the city.

"After all these years, we finally have somebody who feels what the Israelis feel," he said. "Trump has a warm heart for Israel and he does what he says he is going to do.

"Here in Israel, we love him more than we love Bibi Netanyahu," he added, using Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu's nickname, "and we love Bibi a lot."

But Shay said the significance of Trump's announcement was mostly symbolic. Although some had warned of Palestinian violence, he said he was not worried because Arabs respect power.

"They know only one thing," he said. "When you are strong, they don't do anything. When you're a sissy, they are coming."

Asked why he did not want to use his last name, Shay explained, "I have many Arab customers. Better not to make them mad."

Bassam Hoshiah, a 36-year-old Arab Israeli who lives in a village near Jerusalem, was selling nuts, too, from a stall directly across from Shay's. While he agreed that Trump was siding with Israel on Jerusalem, he felt much differently about the significance.

Arguing that "Jerusalem is for everyone," Hoshiah predicted there would be a spike in terrorism in response to Trump's speech.

"There will be a 'balagan' in the Old City and the West Bank," he said, using Hebrew slang for "a chaotic mess."

But Hoshiah said he did not think the violence would spread across Jerusalem, let alone the country. As he loaded a large bag of nuts into an elderly Jewish woman's pushcart, he said he planned to show up for work the next day as usual.

There was not much support in the market for Netanyahu's interpretation of the U.S. policy shift as a step toward peace. But nor did anyone seem to think it would derail Trump's international diplomacy on behalf of the "ultimate deal," as he has called it, between the Israelis and Palestinians. The prevailing attitude was resignation to the status quo.

Uzi Sharabi, a 40-year-old baker from the West Bank settlement of Maale Adumim, said he was happy to have "the big man" on Israel's side, but that peace was not in the cards. He said Israel would be able to deal with any flare up in terrorism.

"It wasn't going to happen before Trump recognized Jerusalem as our capital, and it's not going to happen afterward," Sharabi said. "We just have to stay strong."

A recent survey by Israel's Maariv newspaper found that nearly 80 percent of Israelis believe peace is not possible, despite Trump's efforts.

A young soldier from Jerusalem, who asked to remain anonymous because the army forbids enlistees from discussing politics, said he of course agrees with Trump that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. But he questioned whether it was the right time to make the declaration. The soldier worried that the announcement would result in a Palestinian uprising that would put him

and his comrades at risk without any tangible reward.

"It's a fact that it will cause violence. Everything here causes violence, especially in Jerusalem," he said. "We already know this is our capital. So isn't peace more important?"

Hoshni Barazan, a 38-year-old fruit vendor who lives in the Mount of Olives neighborhood in mostly Palestinian eastern Jerusalem, said

Trump could not give away what did not belong to him, and that Israel would pay the price in bloodshed.

"You can give this to whoever you want?" he said, holding up a strawberry. "No. Because it's mine, not yours.

"It's the same with Al-Aqsa," he continued, referring to the mosque on the Temple Mount, which has long been a flashpoint in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When reminded that the city has a Jewish majority, Barazan said the whole country rightfully belonged to the Palestinians. But his heart did not seem to be in the conversation anymore.

"How are the strawberries selling today?" he shouted affectionately in Hebrew at a Jewish fellow vendor who was walking by.

"Better than yours," the man retorted, grinning.

Multi-Faith Program at the Jewish Academy of Orlando



Students from the Jewish Academy of Orlando, Leadership Preparatory School and Geneva School met at the Jewish Academy for the first Multi-Faith Education Program of the year.

On Tuesday, Dec. 5, fifth-grade Jewish students from the Jewish Academy of Orlando got together with Muslim students from Leadership Preparatory School and Christian students from Geneva School for a morning of learning and sharing. The Multi-Faith Education Program began 14 years ago when its founder, Louise Franklin Sheehy, worked to foster a climate of peace among the children of the different Abrahamic faiths. This was the first meeting between the three schools that will take place this year. At each meeting, students and

faculty will learn about each other's different faith traditions. At the Jewish Academy of Orlando, Head of School Alan Rusonik talked about the central role of Torah in Judaism and opened up the Sefer Torah (Torah scroll) for all the students to witness and behold. Additionally, the students learned a song of peace "Od Yavo Shalom Aleynu," which means "soon peace will come." Finally, the students from the Jewish Academy taught about the upcoming holiday of Chanukah, which ended in a lively and spirited game of Dreidel! The students learned that

ultimately, despite our different beliefs, customs and traditions, we all share the values of peace, love and mutual respect and we share a common desire to have peace in our world. At the Jewish Academy of Orlando, we believe that this is an important program to help promote peace, unity, love and understanding in our very complicated and fragmented world.

For more information about the Jewish Academy of Orlando or to arrange a visit to the school, please contact Amy Polacek, Admissions Coordinator, at apolacek@myjao.org or 407-647-0713.

Hamas: Trump's recognition of Jerusalem has 'opened the gates of hell'

By: World Israel News Staff

The Hamas terror organization said President Donald Trump's historic recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital "opens the gates of hell" and has called for another violent uprising against the Jewish state.

"Trump's decision on Jerusalem will not succeed in changing the fact that Jerusalem is Arab Muslim land," a Hamas spokesman said Wednesday following Trump's announcement at the White House.

Hamas called for Palestinians to take to the streets in a "Day of Rage" on Friday and "respond with all means available."

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh stated Thursday that the US intention to relocate the



Palestinians protest Trump's announcement on Jerusalem.

Abed Rahim Khatib/Flash90

US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem "will not change the history and geography of

Jerusalem, and Jerusalem will always remain the capital of Palestine."

He called Trump's decision "a gamble and an uncalculated risk."

He further called the decision "a blatant aggression" against the Palestinians, the Islamic nation "and free people of the world," threatening that the reaction of the Islamic people "will shock the US administration."

He further threatened that this decision "will spark the beginning of grave hostilities, not only at the Palestinian level, but also at the regional level."

The Palestinian people will strongly confront this decision and they will not surrender until this American attempt is foiled, he vowed, saying that the Palestinians "can ignite one Intifada [violent uprising] after the other."

Haniyeh stated that he phoned Palestinian Authority (PA) Mahmoud Abbas and

they agreed to mobilize the Palestinian masses to protest against the American decision.

He also called upon the Arab and Islamic nations to put aside their differences and to mobilize to support "their main battle: the Palestinian cause."

The IDF, anticipating a possible violent Palestinian outburst, said it has deployed additional troops to possible flashpoints ahead of Friday.

The IDF statement on Thursday said it has deployed several battalions while other units have been put on alert to address "possible developments."

Palestinians went on strike on Thursday and protests and sporadic violence at various points were reported throughout the day.

Amid global outcry over US recognition of Jerusalem, Israel sees other countries coming around

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Israel said it expects other countries to follow America's example and recognize Jerusalem as its capital, even as

much of the world decried the U.S. decision to move toward relocating its embassy to the city.

Speaking at a diplomatic

conference Thursday, a day after the historic shift in U.S. policy, which he welcomed, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was in contact

with countries interested in such actions.

"We are holding contacts with other countries who will also recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. I have no doubt that when the U.S. Embassy will move there, and even before that, many embassies will relocate to Jerusalem," he said at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. "It's about time."

Israeli officials who spoke anonymously on Thursday downplayed the threat of a diplomatic backlash to the American move. On Wednesday, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declared that the United States can no longer act as a mediator between Israel and the Palestinians. World leaders expressed concern and Arab and Muslim leaders warned of disaster.

On Thursday, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh called for Palestinians to launch a new intifada, and the Israeli army braced for violence by redeploying troops to the West Bank and putting more soldiers on standby.

The Israeli officials said they expect Czech President Milos Zeman to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital later in the day. They said both the Czech Republic and the Philippines were eager to move their embassies to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.

The Czech Republic's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday it considers Jerusalem to be "in fact the capital of Israel in the borders of the demarcation line from 1967," meaning only the city's western part. But the ministry said it would not move the embassy prior to a negotiated Israeli-Palestinian deal. Although the Czech parliament already recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital earlier this year, the country's embassy has remained in the Tel Aviv area.

Also Wednesday, Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte sent a message to Israel that he wanted to move his country's embassy to Jerusalem, Israel's Kan public broadcaster reported.

Jerusalem reportedly anticipates that Hungary may move its embassy to Jerusalem as well. According to The Times of Israel, citing unnamed European sources, Budapest blocked a joint European Union statement that would have opposed the historic change in the U.S. position.

U.S. President Donald Trump signed a proclamation at the White House Wednesday saying the United States sees Jerusalem as Israel's capital and directing the State Department to start planning an embassy in the city. Trump said the decision should not impinge on his administration's efforts to bring about a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians. He said the proclamation does not presume the outcome of Jerusalem's status in negotiations and he urged continued Muslim administration of the Temple Mount, a site holy to both Jews and Muslims and a flashpoint in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel conducts second strike within days in Syria

(JNS.org) The Israeli Air Force allegedly conducted an airstrike Monday night on a "military scientific research center" in the Jamraya area on the outskirts of Damascus, media affiliated with the Syrian regime reported.

"Our air defenses are confronting an Israeli missile attack on one of our sites in the Damascus suburbs and three of the targets were downed," reported the Syrian state news agency SANA.

The Hezbollah-affiliated media outlet Al Mayadeen stated that the Israeli military launched six missiles at the site, and that three of the missiles were intercepted by Syrian air defense systems.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that "violent explosions" were caused by Israeli jets that shook Damascus and the surrounding area.

No casualties were reported as a result of the alleged strike.

The Jamraya area is the site of numerous Syrian military facilities, including a potential chemical weapons production factory and storage unit. The facility was previously attacked in 2013 in what was believed to be an Israeli airstrike.

Reports of the airstrike near Damascus follow an alleged Israeli strike last Friday night on an Iranian military base in Syria.

War on Israel's northern border possibly 'weeks' away



An IDF soldier standing guard at a military base in Israel's northern Golan Heights region.

(JNS.org) A war along Israel's northern border could be just "weeks" away, according to Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Ron Dermer.

Dermer made the comments in a wide-ranging interview published by Politico on Monday, stating that the probability of direct conflict with the Iranian terror proxy

Hezbollah is "higher than people think because of Iran's continued push through the region."

"If Iran is not rolled back in Syria, then the chances of military confrontation are growing. I don't want to tell you by the year or by the month. I'd say even by the week," Dermer said.

The ambassador explained that as Iran continues to aggressively expand its military presence near Israel's border, the Jewish state is forced to enforce its "red lines," which risks an escalation in tension.

"The more they push, we have to enforce our red lines, and you always have the prospects of an escalation, even when parties don't want an escalation, because we will not allow Iran to establish that presence and establish another terror front against Israel in Syria," said Dermer. "So in taking action to defend ourselves, you don't know what could happen," he said.

In line with Dermer's comments, the Israeli Air Force allegedly conducted an airstrike Monday night on a "military scientific research center" on the outskirts of Damascus.

The purported strike followed an alleged Israeli airstrike last Friday on an Iranian military base in Syria.

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What Michael Flynn's plea could mean for Jared Kushner and Israel

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Michael Flynn, President Donald Trump's former national security adviser, pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI twice—both times about policy maneuvering with Sergey Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the United States, during the transition.

That last word is key: Flynn twice talked to Kislyak in December 2016 when Trump was president-elect, not president. That was still Barack Obama's job.

One of the things Flynn and Kislyak talked about was Israel. Flynn says that was at the behest of Trump's son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner, who has longstanding ties with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

What does that mean for special prosecutor Robert Mueller's investigation of ties between the Trump campaign and transition team and Russia? What are the implications for Kushner and for Israel?

Why does the timing matter?

The 1799 Logan Act calls for the prosecution of any U.S. person who "directly or indirectly commences or carries on any correspondence or intercourse with any foreign government or any officer or agent thereof, in relation to any disputes or controversies with the United States, or to defeat the measures of the United States."

Neither Flynn nor Trump were yet in government.

What did Flynn do?

According to court papers released Friday, Flynn on Dec. 29 asked Kislyak for assurances that Russia would not retaliate against the United States for sanctions Obama had just imposed for Russia's alleged interference in the 2016 U.S. election. On Dec. 22 he asked Kislyak to keep a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel's settlement policy from advancing. He lied about those conversations in a Jan. 24 interview with FBI agents.

The Obama administration was signaling that it would allow through the Security Council resolution—a move that would enrage Israel and its American supporters. It did and Russia did not intervene, in fact voting for the resolution. (Russia did heed the Trump team's request not to impose sanctions, however.)

Flynn's actions could suggest that he carried on "intercourse... in relation to "another country's controversies with the United States, as it's defined in the Logan Act. In the case of the Obama administration's decision to allow the U.N. Security Council resolution to advance, his action, had it been successful, would have "defeated" a U.S. measure.

So this is about the Logan Act?

Maybe not. There has not been a successful prosecution under the act since 1799; there seems to have been only two indictments.

One concern is the law's First Amendment implications. The Logan Act, were it ever to be applied broadly, would inhibit political speech. And a president-elect launching his foreign policy during a transition is not unprecedented. President-elect Dwight Eisenhower visited South Korea in November 1952 to lay the ground for his plan to end the war. During the 1968 transition Richard Nixon, through a top adviser, Henry Kissinger, secretly reached out to North Vietnam in a bid to restart peace talks.

So if it's not about the Logan Act, what is it about?

Maybe it is about the Logan Act. Although the act seems unprosecutable, the threat of its invocation almost since its inception has been a potent political cudgel. Even absent a prosecution, the notion that a political rival is actively undermining U.S. policy, and particularly with an adversary of the United States, can damage a reputation. Flynn may have lied to the FBI on Jan. 24 not because he feared prosecution, but because he feared for the credibility of the 4-day-old presidency he was serving.

Vice President Dick Cheney intimated that Nancy Pelosi, then the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, was in violation of the act in 2007 when she met with Syrian President Bashar Assad. Pelosi vigorously denied Cheney's charges that she was undercutting the Bush administration's isolation of Syria. She said the meeting was at Israel's behest, a bid by then-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to tamp down tensions.

Carter administration officials have said Ronald Reagan's campaign persuaded Iran to delay the release of Iranian hostages until after the 1980 election to wound incumbent President Jimmy Carter—a charge that

Reagan's aides hotly denied. Reagan in 1984 accused then presidential candidate Jesse Jackson of violating the Logan Act when he visited Syria and returned with an American airman who had been captured.

Lyndon Johnson considered invoking the Logan Act just before the 1968 election when he learned that Nixon was secretly working with the South Vietnamese to scuttle peace talks in order not to give the Democratic candidate, Johnson's vice president, Hubert Humphrey, a pre-election boost. (Saigon wanted Nixon to win.) Johnson in the end kept Nixon's secret.

So it's the cover-up, not the crime?

Perhaps. If Mueller establishes that the Trump transition team was intent on undercutting steps Obama had taken to protect American interests, the lying would become more consequential, even if the underlying act is not illegal.

So isn't it a wrap? Mueller's got Flynn's guilty plea, right?

Mueller has other game in mind, and Flynn apparently is cooperating. In his plea, Flynn said "a very senior member of the presidential transition team directed Flynn to contact officials from foreign governments, including Russia, to learn where each government stood on the [U.N Security Council] resolution and to influence those governments to delay the vote and defeat the resolution." That "very senior member," Bloomberg News reported over the weekend—and other media have confirmed—is Kushner. (Flynn's subsequent

appeal to Russia not to retaliate for Obama's sanctions was reportedly at the behest of another transition official, K.T. McFarland.)

So that's Kushner's role. What about Israel?
On the same day that Flynn was asking Kislyak to stop the resolution, Dec. 22, 2016, Trump put out a statement saying the Security Council resolution "should be defeated." Israeli officials at the time said they had asked Trump to make the statement.

"We did reach out to the president-elect and are deeply appreciative that he weighed in, which was not a simple thing to do," one told CNN.

All of this was aboveboard—Trump's transition team at the time said it had notified the Obama White House that Trump would make the statement, and the Israeli official told CNN it had warned the Obama team that it was turning to Trump for help. Mueller will want to know if Kushner, who pressed Flynn to make the call to the Russians, was taking directions from Israel.

But all this is taking place in the open. Why did Flynn lie about it a month later?

A statement from Trump is a wish and not much more. If Flynn, in his conversation with Kislyak, offered a quid pro quo, and with Kushner's blessing, it could be seen as a deal—an active effort to undermine Obama administration policy.

Flynn on page 15A

The gutting of the Taylor Force Act

By Stephen M. Flatow
JNS.org

The Taylor Force Act started out as a powerful and long-overdue tool for pressuring the Palestinian Authority to stop paying terrorists. But the legislation has been diluted, weakened and compromised in so many ways that it is now a pale shadow of its former self. The Taylor Force Act has been gutted.

Known in the Senate as S. 1697, the Taylor Force Act is named after a young Vanderbilt University student—and U.S. Army veteran—who was murdered by a Palestinian Arab knife-wielding terrorist in Jaffa in 2016. The lead Senate sponsor is Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.) initiated the House of Representatives version, H.R. 1164.

The idea behind the bill was to reduce U.S. aid to the Palestinians in proportion to the amount that the PA pays to terrorists.

Thanks to the good work of Israeli Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser and the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, we know that the PA has a precise and sophisticated system of providing financial incentives to murderers of Jews.

An Arab who is imprisoned for attacking (but not killing) Jews receives a monthly salary of \$400 from the PA. The amount goes up according to the length of the terrorist's prison sentence. An Arab who succeeds in killing a Jew receives a monthly salary of \$3,400.

The financial rewards don't stop there. After he completes his sentence, a terrorist receives a minimum additional grant of \$1,500. The size of the grant increases according to the length of his sentence. A murderer receives \$25,000.

Their families are rewarded, too. The family of an unmarried terrorist who is killed receives \$100 monthly. The widow of a terrorist receives \$250 each month, for life.

Stopping such payments is obviously a necessity. And the U.S. has the leverage to stop them—the hundreds of millions of dollars that America provides to the Palestinians each year. The original Taylor Force Act would have linked the two. But as the bill began working its way through the legislative process in recent months, the appeasers jumped in.

There are officials in the State Department and certain congressional offices who are deeply pro-Palestinian. They started pushing for all sorts of exceptions and loopholes. Unfortunately, some congressional staffers and Jewish leaders who support the bill got weak in the knees. They decided they had

to accept compromises in order to get more votes for the bill.

So they added language saying that U.S. funding for various Palestinian health and sanitation programs would not be affected. Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, warned that such exemptions would "basically gut the bill" and render the legislation "useless" because it would leave too few areas of funding for the U.S. to exercise leverage. He was right.

And it got worse. Next they added a one-year delay before the provisions of the bill go into effect. That gives the PA a year in which to come up with a phony new arrangement by which the payments are given to terrorists from some "private" group instead of the PA itself.

Then they stipulated that the money which is withheld must be put into a "Palestinian Authority Accountability Fund," which can then be given to the Palestinians if the State Department certifies that the PA is taking steps against terrorism.

We all know that for the past 24 years, the State Department has repeatedly "certified" that the PA was keeping its obligations in the Oslo Accords—even though that certification was a total lie. No matter how blatantly the PA violated the accords, the State Department always found some excuse to declare it to be "in compliance," so that U.S. money would keep flowing. There is every reason to believe that the State Department will do so again.

Sometimes, in politics, you have to compromise. I get that and have done it myself when advancing other terror victim legislation. Sometimes a flawed bill is better than no bill at all. But not always. Sometimes a bill is so deeply flawed that it is actually worse than no bill—because it will prevent any other action from being taken on the issue. This is one such bill.

If the Taylor Force Act passes in its current form, there will be no further congressional action on the issue for the foreseeable future. And we will be stuck with legislation that pretends to address the issue of paying terrorists, but really does nothing of the sort. That would deal a grievous blow to the memory of Taylor Force and the many other American victims of Palestinian terrorism.

Stephen M. Flatow, a vice president of the Religious Zionists of America, is an attorney in New Jersey. He is the father of Alisa Flatow, who was murdered in an Iranian-sponsored Palestinian terrorist attack in 1995. He may be contacted at sflatow@gmail.com.

Eternal we stand

By Chaya Kravetz

"This is nothing more and nothing less than recognition of reality. It is also the right thing to do." Announced President Trump in his monumental statement today, recognizing Jerusalem as "Israel's capital established in ancient times."

Jerusalem has been the eternal capital of the Jewish people since Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped on the Temple Mount. Jerusalem continued to be the eternal capital of the Jewish nation since King David brought the Holy Ark to rest on the Temple Mount.

This was further affirmed by King Solomon when he built the Temple on the Temple Mount.

Rabbi Steven Burg, CEO of Aish Global proclaimed, "I am proud that the Aish HaTorah Dan Family World Center stands directly across the Temple Mount (rising 7 stories high and encompassing 40 percent of the length of the Western Wall Plaza). Every Jew in the world knows that our heart and soul

belongs to Jerusalem and we are thankful to President Trump for his brave statement today. We are eternally grateful to the United States of America for its tremendous support of world Jewry and Israel in particular. Since the creation of the world, Jerusalem has been and will always be the center of the universe for all Jews. May the Almighty bless all of us with peace and happiness in a unified and strong Jerusalem."

Aish HaTorah is a global platform empowering Jews to discover their unlimited potential through Torah wisdom in an inspirational, meaningful and welcoming way, encouraging every Jew to fulfil his or her destiny. Founded by the late Rabbi Noah Weinberg, OBM, in 1974, today Aish HaTorah is a worldwide movement with 35 branches, engaging over 150,000 people per year and reaching over a million people online.

Chaya Kravetz is the director of Communications Aish Global, One Western Wall Plaza, Old City, Jerusalem, Israel.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ON THIS PAGE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE VIEWS OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT.

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ISSN 0199-0721 Winner of 46 Press Awards			
HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS		Editor/Publisher Jeffrey Gaeser	
HERITAGE Florida Jewish News (ISSN 0199-0721) is published weekly for \$37.95 per year to Florida addresses (\$46.95 for the rest of the U.S.) by HERITAGE Central Florida Jewish News, Inc., 207 O'Brien Road, Suite 101, Fern Park, FL 32730. Periodicals postage paid at Fern Park and additional mailing offices.	Editor Emeritus Gene Starn	Associate Editor Kim Fischer	News Editor Christine DeSouza
POSTMASTER: Send address changes and other correspondence to: HERITAGE, P.O. Box 300742, Fern Park, FL 32730.	Society Editor Gloria Yousha	Office Manager Paulette Alfonso	
MAILING ADDRESS P.O. Box 300742 Fern Park, FL 32730 email: news@orlandoheritage.com	Account Executives Kim Fischer • Marci Gaeser		
PHONE NUMBER (407) 834-8787 FAX (407) 831-0507	Contributing Columnists Jim Shipley • Ira Sharkansky David Bornstein • Ed Ziegler		
	Production Department David Lehman • Gil Dombrosky Joyce Gore		

Solidarity with terror and its enablers isn't social justice

By Charles Jacobs and Ilya Feoktistov
JNS.org

On July 25, 2017, in what appeared to be an unprecedented event in American Jewish history, a group that came into existence as a front for a terrorist organization that murders Jews was invited to solicit donations at a synagogue.

On that date, Rabbi Howard Jaffe of Temple Isaiah in Lexington, Mass., hosted three Muslim leaders, whom he presented to his congregation as wonderful people and friends of the Jewish community. The event was seductively titled "Out of Many, One," and was billed as an important interfaith bridge-building affair.

Yet video footage of the event (which has now been removed from YouTube) and printed materials handed out to attendees reveal that what the rabbi presided over was something quite different. It was a political rally where Islamist extremists pretending to be moderates sought to enlist Jews in their campaign to undermine U.S. government counter-terrorism efforts, while raising funds for a Hamas-connected group—all in the name of "social justice" and interfaith harmony.

The rabbi's Muslim guests were Nadeem Mazen, New England director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations; Stephanie Marzouk, founder of the Muslim Justice League; and Samer Nasereddin, director of youth programming at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, which is New England's largest mosque.

According to the Anti-Defamation League and the FBI, "CAIR and its founders were part of a group set up by the Muslim Brotherhood to support Hamas," an organization whose charter calls for the murder of every Jew on the planet including, presumably, all of Rabbi Jaffe's gathered flock. In 2009, a federal district judge ruled that prosecutors have established "at least a prima facie case as to CAIR's involvement in a conspiracy to support Hamas." Since then, CAIR has put itself forward to the public as a civil rights group. But even in that guise it has sought to persuade American Muslims to oppose the U.S. government's counter-terrorism efforts, and the ISBCC and MJL have recently joined its cause.

The rabbi presented his guests as people who are allied with the progressive values of his congregation.

The Islamist speakers tried to act the part. The ISBCC's Nasereddin, for example, claimed that he's as American as apple pie. In fact, the mosque's youth training curriculum is used to radicalize the historically moderate Boston Muslim community. It is therefore not a complete surprise that the ISBCC and its sister mosque in Cambridge, Mass., where Nadeem Mazen is a prominent member, have been home to at least 13 convicted, killed or fugitive terrorists, including the Boston Marathon bombers.

Many of these terrorists are still considered heroes by a significant fraction of the ISBCC's membership. A few years ago, the ISBCC held a pep rally in support of almost two-dozen convicted terrorists from around the country. During the rally, an ISBCC imam called America "the land of the coward, the home of the slave" and threatened that "this nation, by God, will be brought to its knees."

After the Boston Marathon bombing, President Barack Obama's Justice Department initiated a program called "Countering Violent Extremism" to deal with American-based terrorism. New England's ADL office became an integral part of this effort.

Its executive director, Robert Trestan, insists that CVE is vital to Jewish safety, telling the Boston-area Jewish Journal, "Islamic extremists are trying to recruit people for violence, particularly violence against Jews. We can't afford to waste time discussing any longer. We need to take action to prevent them from recruiting vulnerable people in our community."

But Rabbi Jaffe's second guest, Marzouk, told the congregation that she founded the Muslim Justice League to fight against the very CVE effort that ADL considers vital to the safety of New England's—including Rabbi Jaffe's—Jews.

Marzouk argued that American Muslims should refuse to give aid to law enforcement officials investigating Islamist terror plots against their fellow Americans. She handed out flyers that alleged, without evidence, a widespread conspiracy of "targeting Muslims through U.S. government policy" that "has occurred for many decades." Her fliers cited the case of Tarek Mehanna, an ISBCC member and hero among the Massachusetts Islamist community, whom she portrayed as unfairly prosecuted and stripped of his liberties by an

Obama administration anti-Muslim witch hunt.

What Marzouk's fliers didn't mention was that Mehanna had pledged his loyalty to Al-Qaeda in Iraq, the forerunner of Islamic State, and that he had plotted a machine gun massacre at a Massachusetts shopping mall. According to the Department of Justice, "Mehanna and his coconspirators, who shared videos of the deaths of American servicemen, seemed to delight in the most horrific atrocities." (The videos included American soldiers having their rib cages ripped open and set on fire with gasoline. "[N]ice juicy BBQ," Mehanna gloated. "Texas BBQ is the way to go...I want more BBQ sauce videos.") None of this was presented to the congregation, but Rabbi Jaffe cannot claim he didn't know about it because we had previously shared the information with him.

Another of the rabbi's guests, CAIR's Mazen, complained to the gathered Jews that New York cops embedded informants within MIT's Muslim Students Association when he was its president. But Mazen did not disclose any of the obvious reasons for them to do so. During the time Mazen attended MIT, for

example, his spiritual leader, MIT Muslim chaplain Suheil Laher, happened to run Al-Qaeda's main fundraising base in the U.S. and was linked by the FBI to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. The MIT Muslim chaplain openly called for jihad against non-Muslims on his MIT website, and under his influence, another MIT graduate became Al-Qaeda's most notorious female leader, at one point being the most wanted and dangerous woman in the world. Boston's Islamist leaders consider her "Lady Al-Qaeda," a hero.

The three honored guests seemed to count on the ignorance of Temple Isaiah's Jews. Mazen unleashed a string of howlers. "Of course, 0 percent of Muslims are doing violence in the Greater Boston area," he insisted. "I would argue that 0 percent Muslims are doing violence in America at large." According to Mazen, "It turns out that CAIR isn't Muslim Brotherhood."

"I mean the Muslim brotherhood doesn't really exist in this country," Mazen told the congregation. "There's no political Islam," he said.

The falsity of such claims has been made clear by federal

Solidarity on page 15A

The method to Trump's madness on Jerusalem may make sense

By Jonathan S. Tobin
JNS.org

In the end, perhaps only a president so completely divorced from diplomatic reality and utterly indifferent to international opinion could do it. Despite the difficulties and the manifest dangers involved with keeping America's promise—enshrined in U.S. law passed by Congress—to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, President Donald Trump may actually do it sometime in the next week.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the State Department had informed U.S. embassies around the world about a plan to make the move and to begin planning for how to deal with the protests that would inevitably follow.

For U.S. diplomats living abroad—especially those in the Middle East or working in any Muslim-majority coun-

try—this is no joke. If Trump makes good on the pledge, the response from the Arab street will likely be nasty and might rival or even exceed the destruction, violence and even murder that resulted when a Danish newspaper published a few satirical cartoons about the Prophet Mohammed. Egged on by Iran and other radical Islamists, protests will be massive and will carry a hefty price tag.

This is why most observers, including those sympathetic to Israel, have been skeptical about talk of an embassy move. Few thought even a president as unconventional as Trump would do something that virtually everyone in the foreign policy establishment as well as moderate Arab nations thinks would not only create a crisis, but also preclude any progress toward a two-state solution or peace.

Why then is Trump con-

templating something the smart people are convinced is foolish? The answer from his critics—whose numbers increase every time he lets loose with an ill-considered tweet or statement—is that he is an ignorant fool. Yet, as with those obnoxious tweets, which distract his foes from policy issues and amuse his fans, there may be a method to the madness. It's entirely possible that Trump is either being guided to or is stumbling along a path that could be saner than the supposedly safer course steered by his predecessors on Jerusalem.

According to The Wall Street Journal, what Trump might do is to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announce plans for the embassy move, but make it clear that won't happen for several years. In the interim, the U.S. ambassador could work in Jerusalem and peace talks could resume.

This would merely recognize reality. Jerusalem has been Israel's capital since 1949. The map put forward by the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan resolution that set aside the holy city as an international zone, apart from proposed Jewish and Arab states, has been a dead letter for 70 years. Moreover, even if a two-state solution were possible, calling the city Israel's capital wouldn't preclude a compromise that might cede its Arab neighborhoods to be the capital of a Palestinian state.

But what Trump's potential move would do is put the Palestinians on notice that their decades of denial of the legitimacy of a Jewish state and its historic ties to Jerusalem will no longer be tolerated. It would be a symbolic gesture aimed at reminding them that their century-long war on Zionism

that is still inextricably tied to Palestinian national identity must end. The conflict will only really cease when the Palestinians get the message from an international community that has enabled their rejectionism that it is no longer willing to keep playing the same game. If they really want an independent state and peace—something the propaganda still emanating from both Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah and his Hamas rivals continues to make impossible—they will have to do it with an Israel whose capital happens to be in Jerusalem.

If this is Trump's gambit, it may well come back to bite him if Muslim riots exact a high cost. It will be easy for some to lump this decision in with his often-irresponsible statements that have undermined the credibility of his administration.

In the end, Trump may be persuaded by the "adults" in his administration to not do it. But peace will never come except by jolting the Palestinians into accepting reality. That's something more judicious presidents have failed to do. It may be that only a president who doesn't care about flouting the normal rules of conduct and policy would even contemplate something so radical, yet so important. In this case, a potential switch of U.S. policy on Jerusalem might constitute one of the best arguments that can be made for Trump not being as bad a president as his Twitter account might lead us to believe.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor-in-chief of JNS.org and a contributor to National Review. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathans_tobin.

Letters To The Editor

We are a diverse community and we welcome your letters and viewpoints. The views and opinions expressed in the opinion pieces and letters published in The Heritage are the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Heritage Florida Jewish News or its staff. The Heritage reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, content, and accuracy. And respectful of lashon hara, we will not print derogatory statements against any individual.

Please limit letters to 250 words. Send letters to P.O. Box 300742, Fern Park, FL 32730. Or e-mail to news@orlandoheritage.com.

Thank you, Mr. President!

Dear Editor:

The Zionists thank President Trump for boldly recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, thus beginning the process of moving our embassy there.

Since 1995, when Congress

passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act for the purpose of initiating the relocation of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama have consistently waived enacting this law, citing national secu-

rity interests. But President Trump made the decision to do the right thing and kept his campaign promise, taking steps to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

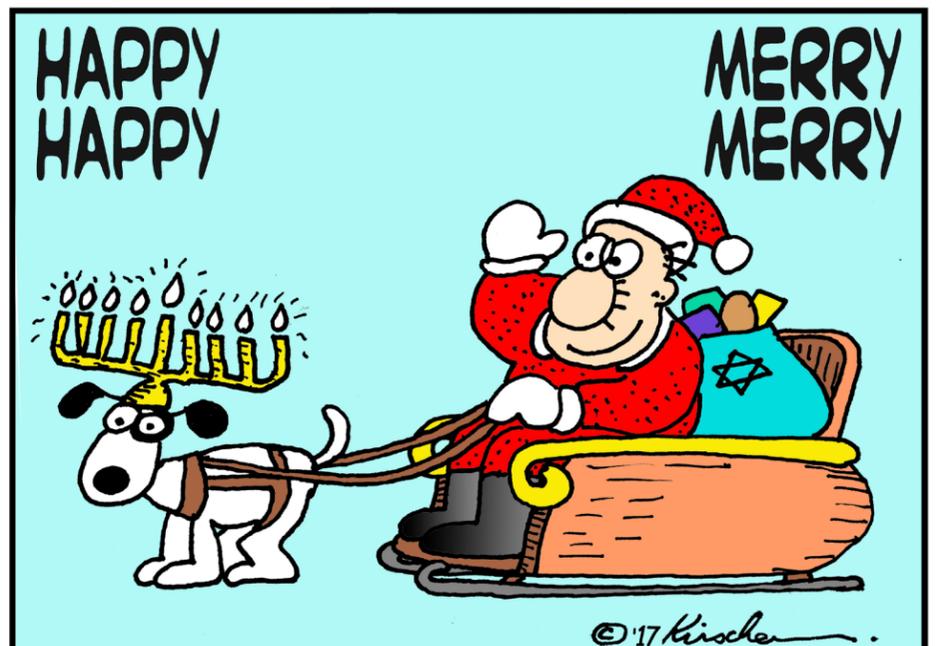
We know that many have and continue to criticize his decision, and that's why we are taking this moment to express our thanks and appreciation for his faithfulness and courage.

We also would like to thank Christians United for Israel and the many Christian and Jewish organizations who have supported the president.

The Zionists urge Heritage readers to send their own and/or their organization's letter of thanks the President.

The Zionistas Board—Sandi Solomon, Eva Ritt, David and Harriet Moldau and Judy Shujman.

Dry Bones



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What's Happening

A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT

DEC. 15
5:12 p.m.
DEC. 22
5:16 p.m.

For inclusion in the What's Happening Calendar, copy must be sent on separate sheet and clearly marked for Calendar. Submit copy via: e-mail (news@orlandoheritage.com); mail (P.O. Box 300742, Fern Park, FL 32730-0742); fax (407-831-0507); or drop it by the office (207 O'Brien Rd., Ste. 101, Fern Park) Deadline is Wednesday noon, 10 days prior to publication.

MORNING AND EVENING MINYANS (Call synagogue to confirm time.)

Chabad of South Orlando—Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. and 10 minutes before sunset; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 8:15 a.m., 407-354-3660.
 Congregation Ahavas Yisrael—Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-644-2500.
 Congregation Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Daytona—Monday, 8 a.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m., 904-672-9300.
 Congregation Ohev Shalom—Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-298-4650.
 GOBOR Community Minyan at Jewish Academy of Orlando—Monday—Friday, 7:45 a.m.—8:30 a.m.
 Temple Israel—Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-647-3055.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15 Fourth night of Chanukah Light fourth candle

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 Sixth night of Chanukah Light the sixth candle

Kehillah: A History of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando—Ongoing exhibit at the Orange County Regional History Center, 65 E. Central Blvd., Orlando, and will continue through Feb. 20, 2018.
 Chanukah Community Festival and Menorah Lighting—Held at Chabad of South Orlando, 7347 W. Sand Lake Rd., 4 p.m., activities and food, 5:30 p.m. World famous Wallendas perform on the high wire; 6 p.m. Grand menorah lighting; 6:15 p.m., live music and concert. Admission is free. Info, 407-354-3660 or visit www.jewishorlando.com
 Chanukah on the Park—Join Orlando Chabad at Central Park, 251 S. Park Ave., Winter Park,

from 4—6 p.m. Grand menorah lighting at 5:30 p.m. Open to the public, admission is free. Info: 407-644-2500 or visit www.chabadorlando.org
 JCC39ers—Cinema Sunday, 2 p.m. The movie "The Accountant" will be shown. Refreshments available.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18 Seventh night of Chanukah Light the seventh candle

Israeli Folk Dancing—7:30-8:15 p.m. instruction, 8:15-10 p.m., requests. Cost: Free for JCC members, \$5 nonmembers. Info: 407-645-5933.
 JCC 39ers—Meet & Mingle Mondays, Chanukah party, 1 p.m. Refreshments.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19 Eighth night of Chanukah

Car Menorah Parade—Chabad of South Orlando hosts starting at 6 p.m. at 7347 W. Sand Lake Rd., Finishes with Menorah lighting celebration at 5135 International Drive. RSVP www.jewishorlando.com/joinparade
 Chanukah on Ice—Chabad Centers of Metro Orlando host ice skating at the RDV Sportsplex Ice Den, 8701 Maitland Summit Blvd. 5:45-7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

Temple Israel—Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Neely, noon—1 p.m. A parashat discussion class. Open to the public, no RSVP needed. Info: 407-647-3055.
 A Nosh of Yiddish—Classes in Yiddish the third Wednesday of each month led by Joan Pohl and sponsored by the Jewish Pavilion, held at Oakmonte Village, Royal Gardens Cir., Lake Mary (Valencia Building), 1 p.m. Info: 407-678-9363. Coffee and refreshments served.
 The Roth Family JCC—Lunch and Learn, 12:30 -1:30 p.m. RSVP requested to register@orlandojcc.org Cost: \$5, free for JCC members.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 21

A Nosh of Yiddish—Classes in Yiddish the third Thursday of each month led by Elliot Davis and sponsored by the Jewish Pavilion, held at Brookdale Island Lake, 160 Islander Circle in Longwood 10:30 a.m. Info: 407-678-9363. Coffee and refreshments served.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

Correction

In the From the Editor's Desk column of Dec. 8, while clarifying the truth about Haym Solomon, the topic of Murray Toborowsky's talk on Feb. 25, 2018 was incorrect (see last paragraph). Toborowsky will be talking on "What affect the Hebrew Bible had on the early Puritans and our founding fathers, and how did Hebrew come to Yale and Harvard."

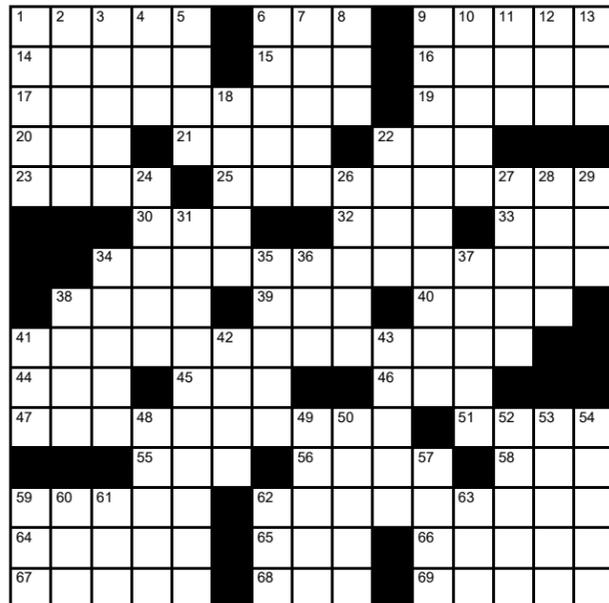
Quote of the Week

"In the Jewish tradition, there is at the same time Jerusalem in the heavens and Jerusalem on the ground. Jerusalem is a living city, but also the heart, the soul of the Jewish people and the state of Israel."

— Yitzhak Rabin

Medium puzzle "I Had a Little Dreidel" by Yoni Glatt koshercrosswords@gmail.com

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Across</p> <p>1. Move like Jagger
 6. James Franco's degree from Columbia U.
 9. Hot or hard drink
 14. Joel's instrument
 15. Koufax's gift
 16. Make like Jacob to Joseph
 17. Mercy, Jewishly
 19. Used a stopwatch
 20. "Unclean though we ____" (Numbers 9:7)
 21. Freebies from Seasons or Winn Dixie
 22. Funny Stiller
 23. Place for a sukkah, for some
 25. Job for Pinchas or Eli
 30. Start of a famous Tevye song
 32. Indochinese language
 33. Isaac's final one was 180
 34. With 41-Across, what the ends of 17, 25, 47, and 62-Across translate to
 38. "Those who remain ____ to G-d..." Daniel 12:12
 39. Executive Moonves
 40. Words that follow "How Will I Know" (Whitney Houston)
 41. See 34-Across
 44. Elvis Presley's "____ Lost You"
 45. (Code of) Kiryas Joel's is 10950
 46. Ashdod to Hebron dir.
 47. Real wild one, in Yiddish
 51. ____ Hara
 55. Simeon was full of it in the Bible
 56. They may say "Shalom"
 58. Gasteyer of "Mean Girls"
 59. Amy Winehouse hit
 62. What some mistakenly think Noah does at the end of Genesis chapter 9
 64. "Gladiator" setting
 65. Troop grp. The Marx Brothers performed for
 66. Like Elijah when he wandered the desert
 67. ____ Nahash
 68. Where Daniel prevailed
 69. Bellowed, as a bovine</p> | <p>1. Spritz
 2. Gadot's Wonder Woman wears one
 3. Jeff Gordon or Alon Day, e.g.
 4. New Eng. school
 5. Rachel's is believed to be by Bethlehem
 6. Sushi fruit
 7. Like Marzipan rugelach out of the oven
 8. Tefillin hrs.
 9. Divisions
 10. Menzel with a great set of pipes
 11. DeLuise in "History of the World Part I"
 12. Poet's palindromic preposition
 13. Like a soup made in Genesis
 18. "The Great Dictator" Oscar nominee Jack
 22. Word before Brith or Yisrael
 24. Unearth, in the City of David
 26. Locale of a film "Nightmare": Abbr.
 27. Golden age of Hollywood designer Lilly
 28. Stare at</p> | <p>29. Rush rocker Geddy
 31. Ziploc preservation product
 34. Adrien ____ skin care products
 35. Hebrew leader
 36. Mosby played by Josh Radnor in a sitcom
 37. "It's ____ country!"
 38. Kipling's Rikki-Tikki
 41. Virus researched at Hebrew U
 42. "Yafeh"
 43. Warms
 48. Ross of song
 49. Emulate a jester
 50. Violinist Yuval or sports writer Weitzman
 52. Google competitor
 53. Like the Three Stooges, perhaps
 54. Called, at a bris
 57. Tailor's line
 59. Levi's Stadium sound
 60. Hellenistic or Elizabethan
 61. "____ love to spend the night in Zion" (Rush)
 62. Something to chew, to be kosher
 63. ____mo (replay feature)</p> |
|---|--|--|



See answers on page 14.

"I'm lost without it!"

"It's inexcusable!"

"My week is not complete without it!"

"I can't live without it!"

"How in the world am I supposed to know what's going on?"

These are some of the comments we receive from readers when they miss an issue of *Heritage Florida Jewish News*.

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Connecting through the gift of generosity

By Marilyn Shapiro

Larry and I have many “pets” in our home. A butterfly rests outside our front door, and two larger ones fly on our lanai wall. A two-foot bear clutching his “Bear Feet Only” sign greets visitors on the front porch. Pedro the Parrot hangs on a curtain rod. And various bulldogs—stuffed, ceramic, and metal, are stationed around the house in honor of the nickname my boss gave me when I moved from the classroom to an administrative office.

However, I would have to say my favorite animals in our menagerie are three turtles and a pelican. These metal copper sculptures are the creative work of a talented Albuquerque, New Mexico, artist who made last year’s Chanukah very special.

In July 2015, Larry and I were spending the summer in Frisco, Colorado, with our daughter Julie, her husband Sam, and their newborn daughter, Sylvie Rose. We had arrived in the Rocky Mountains less than a month after we had moved into our new home in Florida. We had brought several pieces of art for our walls, but many other spaces were empty by choice. We knew that much of the art work that was on the walls from our Upstate New York home—reflective of the Adirondack Mountains fall scenes, Early American ac-

cents—would not work in Florida.

One area that was tricky for us to decorate was a shadow box effect in the living room. We needed to find something to fill a recessed space in a hallway that would reflect our now Southern address. In August, we were at an art show in downtown Frisco when we noticed some colorful, unique pieces in copper. Many of the objects were reflective of the Southwest: lizards, snakes, kokopelli. We introduced ourselves to Greg Gowen, the artist manning the outdoor booth.

Greg, a native of Texas, was born in 1968 and began welding at age eight under the guidance of his father and mother, Mike and Martha Gowen, both well known artists and gallery owners.

“My daddy showed me how to sculpt,” he wrote on his webpage, “and my mother taught me to make it beautiful.” At the age of 18 Greg turned to the art world for his career. He began participating in art shows around the Southwest. Galleries quickly became aware of his talent and began exhibiting and selling his work. Today, Greg’s sculptures are displayed in private collections, galleries, and museums throughout the United States and abroad. We were lucky to happen upon his beautiful copper sculptures. We were especially attracted to his turtle design.

After we emailed the di-



The family of turtles in the Shapiro’s shadow box.

mensions of the shadowbox when we returned home, Greg suggested we purchase three turtles, a “mother” and two “babies,” to fill the space.

The family of turtles arrived as ordered within the next few weeks. The colors, the size, the way they fit into the space were perfect. We named them Mother Turtle Tessie and her two children Tommy and Tillie, and posted a picture on Facebook announcing their arrival. The three turtles were a conversation piece when we showed people our new home.

It was time to fill more walls. We found a photo of a beach scene mounted on wood that fit over our couch. We added a palm tree clock to the laundry room and a fish clock onto the lanai. In Key West, we found two signs for our guest bedroom: One

read, “Honestly now. What’s Your Hurry? You’re here!” The second was a colorful road sign showing the mileage to Boston, New York City, and San Francisco.

What was missing was a piece for our guest bathroom. I was the butterfly lover and bulldog-moniker nickname bearer of the family, but Larry loved pelicans. I knew from his website that Greg had not done pelicans before. In May 2016, I contacted Greg via email to see if he could work his magic in creating a version of Larry’s favorite bird to hang over the toilet. Greg responded a couple of days later with his answer. Yes, he would love to create the figure. As I had already missed the deadline for Larry’s May birthday, he promised to have completed by Chanukah.

Greg and I were in touch over the summer. In late October, however, I realized I hadn’t heard from him, nor had any pelicans flown our way via UPS. When he failed to respond to an email, I sent him one more. If he couldn’t get it to us in time for Chanukah, I understood. I’d give it to Larry for his May birthday.

On Dec. 24, Greg emailed me his apologies. He wanted to surprise Larry and me with the pelican in time for Christmas but mailed it to the wrong address. He felt terrible as it won’t be under our Christmas tree.

I wrote him back immediately with the good news

that we were Jewish. Dec. 24 was not only Christmas Eve, but also the first night of Chanukah. Getting it on the third or fourth day of our holiday would be fine.

True to his word, the pelican arrived on the following Tuesday. “Peter the Pelican fits perfectly in our bathroom,” I wrote. “Larry and I are very happy with the newest member of our menagerie. How much do I owe you?”

“Nothing,” Greg wrote back. “I was late in getting it to you. It is my gift for the aggravation I caused.”

Larry and I were grateful for Greg’s generous offer, but we couldn’t accept. I wrote him a note thanking him but telling him we were very aware of the time he had taken to design and craft our pelican and ship Peter to his new home. I enclosed a check for \$180. “The number 18 has special significance in Judaism,” I told Greg. “It signifies life. Use the money to do something special for you or your grandchildren.”

A couple of months later, Greg emailed me to tell me that he had used our money to treat himself, his wife Debbie, and Martha and Del Pettigrew, two fellow artists, to dinner at a lovely restaurant in Scottsdale, Arizona. The four of them raised their wine glasses in a toast to the Shapiro’s. “I love creating metal works for patrons like you!” wrote Greg in his thank you. “May God richly bless you.”



Peter the Pelican who graces the Shapiro’s bathroom.

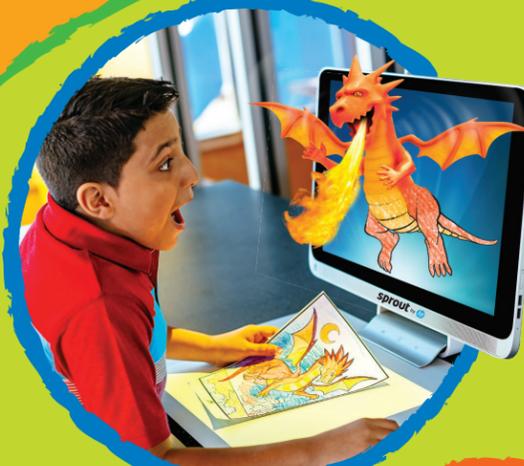
I was happy to learn that our gift to him had created wonderful memories with his friends—memories that were more poignant when Del passed away a few months later. That special dinner was the last time they saw their dear friend.

“What a profound effect your generosity has had,” Greg wrote recently. “I will never forget!”

Greg continues to sculpt, drawing inspiration from all over. He carries around a sketchpad in case something sparks an idea. “My favorite part of my art is when I see a customer connect with a piece,” he wrote on another art gallery website. And through his turtles, his pelican, and mutual generosity, we have connected with Greg.



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Scene Around

By Gloria Yousha—Call 407-657-9405 or gloriayousha@gmail.com

Israel does it again...

When it comes to science and technology, Israel is leading the field! I read this recently in the World Jewish Congress digest and pass it along:

"As highlighted in NoCamels, (the leading news website covering the startup nation, with a focus on Israel innovation in technology, science, design, medicine and cyber) more than 23 million people worldwide suffer from diastolic heart failure, a condition in which the heart fails to pump sufficient oxygenated blood to meet the body's needs. Scientists have long been looking for an effective treatment for this condition.

A unique device developed by Israeli company CorAssist offers new hope. CORolla, an elastic device that is implanted inside the left ventricle of the heart by a minimally invasive procedure on a beating heart, can improve cardiac diastolic function by applying direct expansion force on the ventricle wall to help the heart fill with blood.

Heart failure symptoms include shortness of breath, tiredness, swollen legs and limited ability to exercise or perform simple physical tasks. The prognosis of heart failure is poor; more than 40 percent of heart failure patients die within five years of diagnosis. Approximately half of heart failure patients suffer from diastolic heart failure. The incidence of diastolic heart failure increases with age, and is common among women with hypertension, obesity and diabetes.

(Oy vay! I have diabetes!!)

We lost a fabulous musician...

We also lost a fabulous, kind human being. I'm referring to Syl LaFata, the very best clarinet player I have ever worked with. He was on a par with the great Benny Goodman. (Some even said that Syl resembled Benny.)

The last time Syl performed with me was on Oct. 4, 2015, along with MICHAEL and BEN KRAMER and EDDIE VAZZ at Congregation Ohev Shalom.

He will be sorely missed. **On the subject of fabulous musicians...**

I just came from a C.O.S. Seniors meeting at the syna-



Syl LaFata

gogue. The entertainment was supplied by SCOTT BERRY on keyboard and vocals.

He performed the music of George Gershwin and others. (Gershwin... it just doesn't get better than that!)

Everyone who attended loved Scott's performance. I could hear them kvelling as they were leaving. Hopefully Scott will return soon.

(I especially love my cookies that are part of the refreshments at Ohev after the show. Thanks to DAVID MOLDAU, I always get my favorites! David gets to them before they are gone and what's more, THEY DON'T HAVE ANY CALORIES!) **39'ers Cinema Sundays...**

On Sunday, Dec. 17th, the movie in the senior lounge will be "The Accountant" starring BEN AFFLECK. Refreshments are available.



Ben Affleck

And more 39'ers...

On "Meet & Mingle Monday, Dec. 18th, a Chanukah party will take place at the Maitland JCC.

Come! Smile! Rejoice!

Shout Out...

Have you ever shopped at Aldi? I have many times, especially because the prices are right. But most of all, because of an absolute sweetheart who works there. Her name is JAHLIL BEYMUHAMMED. She is kind, patient and truly a doll! And she is a great worker!!

One for the road...

Moishe was sitting at the breakfast table one Sunday morning reading the News of the World. He had just read an article about a beautiful film star who had announced that she was going to marry a football player who was famous not only for his aggression on and off the field, but also for his lack of IQ and common sense. In fact he was 'thick as two planks'. Like many men, Moishe loved hearing his own voice and liked to report aloud stories he read from the paper. So he turned to his wife Sadie and said, "I'll never understand why the biggest schmucks get the most attractive wives." Sadie replied, "Why thank you, darling!"

How a kids' book on Palestine ensnared Manhattan store in a political crossfire

By Ben Sales

NEW YORK (JTA)—When Chris Doeblin agreed to buy 100 copies of a children's book to help an author friend, he didn't expect to become enmeshed in a controversy over international relations and free speech.

But that's what happened after Doeblin, the co-owner of Book Culture, a chain of independent bookstores in New York City, purchased and held a reading of "P is for Palestine," which came out last month. Written by Golbarg Bashi, an Iranian-born author who has held Persian-language readings of children's books at Book Culture for three years, it is subtitled "A Palestine ABC Book." The bookstore chain also donated \$650 to a crowd-funding campaign for "P is for Palestine."

But that angered another partner of Book Culture's: the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue. This week, Book Culture is set to provide books and toys for a book fair at the large Reform congregation in Manhattan. But after discovering the bookstore's work with Bashi, the synagogue threatened to pull out, charging that

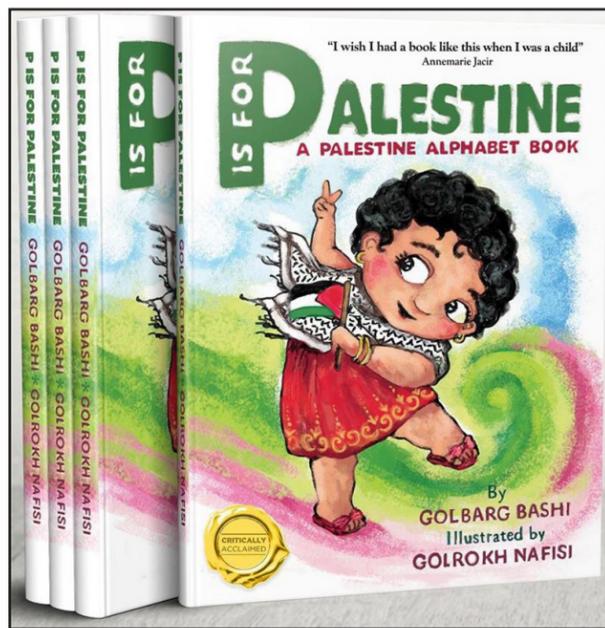
the book—especially a page on "intifada"—"glorifies" violence against Israelis.

In the end, the synagogue withdrew the threat, but not before putting an independent bookstore chain in the unusual position of having to make a string of statements on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict -- including supporting Israel's right to exist and opposing the boycott movement against it.

"So many people were incensed and took offense and were hurt by this book's publication," Doeblin told JTA. "I can honestly say I'm sorry. As we try and reach out to people, we have to do it with enough respect so that we don't hurt and cause these violent reactions."

This is just the latest ripple effect of controversy that has surrounded "P is for Palestine" since it was published on Nov. 11. The picture book dedicates pages to each letter of the alphabet, along with a corresponding word—"A is for Arabic," for example.

The main reason for the conflict wasn't the book's title or concept—rather it was the two-page spread featuring the letter I, which states "I is for Intifada, Intifada is Arabic for



rising up for what is right, if you are a kid or a grownup!" The accompanying illustration shows a father and child waving peace signs next to barbed wire.

The synagogue, along with plenty of other critics, charged that the book obscured the violent nature of the two Palestinian intifadas, or uprisings, which occurred over a span of years in the late 1980s and again in the early

2000s. More than 1,000 Israelis died in attacks perpetrated by Palestinian terror groups that targeted civilians. Thousands of Palestinians died in clashes with Israeli security forces.

"Of particular concern to me is the glorification of the Palestinian intifada—a cruel, murderous and terroristic campaign that purposely

Book on page 15A

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Sudoku (see page 14 for solution)

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Sufganiyot get all the hype—but this humble Moroccan doughnut is Israel's Chanukah staple



The *sfinj* hails from North Africa.

By Andrew Tobin

TEL AVIV (JTA)—The sufganiyah is the plump, shining star of Chanukah in Israel.

During the holiday season, the famed jelly doughnut poses in the windows of cafés and bakeries across the country. It sparkles with oil and sugar, and shows just enough filling to keep fans interested.

Every year, top chefs compete to give the sufganiyah an edgy new twist, whether its cheesecake filling, mascarpone topping or a chocolate-filled squeeze tube accessory. Israeli TV channels, newspapers and social media are filled with

close-up shots and reviews of the most enticing innovations.

Meanwhile, in homes across the country, Israelis quietly fry up a humbler doughnut called the *sfinj*. The confection hails from North Africa, and is a favorite of Jews whose families came to Israel from the region. But even European Jews have adopted the *sfinj* and helped push it toward the limelight.

Part of the appeal of *sfinjim*, the plural for *sfinj*, is that they are easy to make. Simply take a dollop of dough, poke a hole in the middle and deep fry in vegetable oil. The doughnuts can then be dipped in honey

and coated in sugar, usually of the powdered variety.

Israelis of North African descent prepare *sfinjim* for holidays and special occasions. Dan Illouz grew up in Montreal, where his family ate the doughnuts during the eight nights of Chanukah. When he immigrated to Israel eight years ago, he was dismayed that he could only find sufganiyot, so he began making *sfinjim* in his kitchen to celebrate the holiday.

During Chanukah in 2010, Illouz, 31, who lives and does public relations in Jerusalem, invited a handful of friends over to enjoy the doughnuts with him. Word spread quickly: Last year, about 400 people showed up at his three-bedroom apartment for what has become an annual “*sfinge party*” (as he spells it) Illouz expects at least as large a crowd for the third night of this Chanukah, Dec. 14.

To feed the masses that show up throughout the night and spill into the street, Illouz begins preparing at around 7 a.m., 12 hours ahead of time. He estimated that he fries up about 150 of the doughnuts. It's first come, first serve.

Illouz puts on Moroccan music, and when the sun sets, he and his guests light the menorah candles. While *sfinj* are of course at the center of the celebration, Illouz

also serves sweet couscous and store-bought Moroccan cookies and beverages. Needless to say, sufganiyot, plural for sufganiyah, are not on the menu.

“I'm not ideologically opposed to sufganiyot,” he explained, “but I do prefer *sfinjim*. They're just simpler, and they're not quite as unhealthy.”

Illouz said his *sfinj party* is an expression of both Moroccan and Israeli pride, a duality that has become easier to reconcile in recent years. While Mizrahi Jews, or those with roots in North Africa and the Middle East, were long a socioeconomic underclass that faced systemic discrimination in Israel, their culture has lately experienced something of a renaissance.

Illouz said the new hipness of Moroccan traditions is probably part of what draws so many people to his *sfinj parties*.

“There's definitely an element of that in the fact that people get excited about the party. People want to have a taste of this culture,” he said. “What I think is really beautiful is that all Israelis are able to enjoy it.”

About half of Israelis are now of Mizrahi descent, though the numbers are becoming blurred by marriage with Ashkenazi, or European Jews, and others. Mizrahi music dominates

the Israeli airwaves, with some musicians even singing in Arabic. Mizrahi cuisine is not only popular street food, but is also celebrated at high-end restaurants and on popular cooking TV shows. And Mizrahi celebrations, like the post-Passover Mimmouna feast and the henna pre-wedding bridal shower, have been embraced by the mainstream.

Of course, Mizrahi Jews have been contributing to Israeli culture for decades, whether or not it was always appreciated. Some credit them with bringing the tradition of Chanukah doughnuts to the Jews of Palestine in the first place. According to this theory, *sfinjim* were then largely superseded by deep-fried Eastern European jelly doughnuts similar to today's sufganiyot. (The oil is a nod to the Chanukah legend in which the ancient Temple's menorah stayed lit for eight days on a one-day supply of lamp oil.) The Arabic word “*sfinj*,” meaning sponge, was replaced by “*sufganiyah*,” a Hebrew word sharing the same root.

Some Ashkenazi Jews have also started making *sfinjim* at home, often inspired by Mizrahi friends and family.

Uri Scheft, a co-owner and chef at the high-end bakery chain Lehamim, learned to make the doughnuts from his wife, whose mother immigrated to Israel from

Morocco. He included a *sfinj* recipe in his 2016 cookbook “*Breaking Breads: A New World of Israeli Baking*,” which celebrates the cuisines produced by the “melting pot” of Israeli society.

Scheft said he has planned for many years to serve *sfinjim* at his bakeries. But he would first want to set up a prep area so he could serve them fresh to customers.

“The character and the structure of *sfinjim* is very light, which make them very tasty, but only if they are eaten right away,” he said. “I think this is why bakeries shy away from serving them.”

While it is hard to find a hot *sfinj* for sale in Israel, it is not impossible.

Keren Kadosh, a pastry chef with a Moroccan background, occasionally serves them at her bustling downtown Jerusalem bakery, Café Kadosh—often in response to requests. At the same time, her lifetime of eating the doughnuts has shaped the way her bakery prepares sufganiyot, which it serves at a rate of a 1,000 a day during Chanukah.

“When the sufganiyot come out of the fryer, we role it in sugar, and we get that exact same crunch, sweetness and texture,” she explained. “So in a way, we're participating in the Moroccan culture of blessing each other, which has also become Israeli culture.”

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47 out of 54 countries benefit from ties with Israel

Israel's Foreign Ministry recently carried out a comprehensive survey of the citizens of 54 countries about their country's relations with Israel. The main finding is that in a vast majority of those countries, 47 of 54 of them, most of the people surveyed believe that their country would benefit from links with Israel.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu referred to these findings on Sunday as a "gigantic change."

"What is also interesting is that half of the public in the countries in the Middle East that were reviewed, the assets and strength of Israel are appreciated and they believe that their country could benefit by links with Israel," Netanyahu said

during the weekly Cabinet meeting.

"When I say again and again that Israel is a rising global power—I know what I am talking about. Today Israel is a sought-after country," Netanyahu underscored.

He pointed to his 12-hour visit in Kenya last week, during which he met presidents of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Rwanda, Togo, Botswana and Namibia, as well as the Ethiopian prime minister and other leaders.

Over the past year, Netanyahu has visited Kazakhstan, Singapore, Australia, Azerbaijan and several countries in Latin America. For the first three countries, it was the first visit by an Israeli premier. He also hosted India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an historic visit.

In August, Senegal and Guinea, two Muslim-majority West African nations, sent their first-ever full-time ambassadors to Israel.

"Israel is a sought-after, developed and strong country that even the citizens of countries with which we do not have official relations understand the benefit of relations with Israel. We are going from strength to strength and developing even more links," the Israeli premier stated,

"The major diplomatic blossoming of the State of Israel is based—among other things—on a dynamic economy, initiatives, and the development of businesses and technology. This is at the root of our strength," he declared.

OBITUARIES

JULIUS A. HABERMAN

Julius A. Haberman, Yehudah Aharon ben Itzhak v'Kayla, age 92, of Summerfield, Fla., passed away on Thursday, Nov. 30, 2017, at his residence. A native of Milton, Massachusetts, he was born on April 22, 1925, to the late Irving and Kate Schoolman Haberman. He was a college graduate and served in the United States Army during World War II.

Mr. Haberman was a successful shoe importer and salesman. He was a past president of Congregation Ohev Shalom and active in B'nai B'rith and the Jewish War Veterans. In 1999, he and his wife, Barbara, who survives him, relocated to Summerfield.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son, Robb; and daughters Sherri, Lisa and Stacy; and four grandchildren. A graveside service was held at Ohev Shalom Cemetery with Rabbi Arnold Siegel officiating.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando, 32810. 407-599-1180.

MAXINE LESLIE HAYT

Maxine Hayt, age 80, of Lake Mary, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2017, at Florida Health-South Seminole Hospital in Longwood. A Brooklyn native, she was born on Jan. 3, 1937, to the late Julius and Alice Tamres Tarr. She received her Bachelor in Fine Arts and her Master in Fine Arts degrees from Columbia University.

Maxine was a highly regarded artist creating large highly detailed works of New York City's downtrodden and elderly. Her works were shown in numerous single and mixed shows and she was represented by several New York Galleries. She and her husband, David, who survives her, lived in New York before relocating to the Orlando area three years ago.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by her daughter, Elizabeth (Robert) Atkins of New York; and her sons, Dr. Michael (Nancy) Hayt of Longwood and Paul (Jacque) Hayt of Port

Washington, N.Y. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Hunter, Juliette, Ben, Brian and Jessica; and her brother, Kenneth (Charlotte) of Naples, Fla.

A funeral service was held at Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel with Rabbi David Kay of Congregation Ohev Shalom officiating. Interment took place at Beth David Cemetery in Elmont, N.Y. In memory of Maxine L. Hayt, the family requests contributions to the New Museum, 235 Bowery, New York, N.Y. 10002 or the North Shore Animal League America, 25 Davis Avenue, Port Washington, N.Y. 11050.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando, 32810. 407-599-1180.

ALAN BRUCE MOGUL

Alan B. Mogul, age 62, of Maitland, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2017, at Winter Park Memorial Hospital. He was born on Sept. 13, 1955, in Boston, Mass., to Max and Ruth Mogul.

In 1959, the family relocated to the Orlando area and joined Congregation Ohev Shalom. Alan attended school in Orlando and received his bachelor's degree from UCF. He worked in the banking industry.

Alan is survived by his parents, Max and Ruth Mogul of Maitland; his daughter, Alexis; and his sisters, Janet (Tracy) King of Orlando and Lynda Mogul of Winter Park. He is also survived by his nephews, Miles and Jason.

A memorial service was held at Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel with Rabbi David Kay of Congregation Ohev Shalom officiating. In memory of Alan Bruce Mogul, the family requests contributions to Con-

gregation Ohev Shalom, 613 Concourse Parkway South, Maitland 32751.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando, 32810. 407-599-1180.

BERNARD RUBIN

Bernard Rubin, Baruch ben Yosef, age 95, of Longwood, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, at Hospice of the Comforter in Altamonte Springs. He was born in New York on July 15, 1922, to the late Joseph and Sarah Goldblatt Rubin. He was a high school graduate and enlisted in the armed forces serving in the US Army and Navy during World War II.

He was the husband of the late Kate Rubin who passed away in 1994. During his career, Mr. Rubin worked in retail doing window displays. They relocated to the Orlando area in 1985 to be closer to their daughter and were affiliated with Congregation Ohev Shalom.

Mr. Rubin is survived by his sons, Dr. Martin (Ellen) Rubin of Maryland and Robert Rubin of New York; and his daughter, Rita (Jon) Rose of Winter Park. He is also survived by his grandchildren—Laura, Brett (Emily), Jed and Chad; and his great-granddaughter, Maya Kate.

A graveside service, with military honors, was held at Ohev Shalom Cemetery with Rabbi Arnold Siegel officiating. In memory of Bernard Rubin, the family requests contributions to Congregation Ohev Shalom, 613 Concourse Parkway South, Maitland 32751.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando, 32810. 407-599-1180.

Central Florida Synagogues

Orlando Weekday Morning Minyan (Conservative/Egalitarian), services Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m. (9 a.m.—national holidays); 2nd floor Chapel—Jewish Academy of Orlando; 851 N. Maitland Ave., Maitland. For information call 407-298-4650.

Celebration Jewish Congregation (R), services and holiday schedules shown at www.JewishCelebration.org; 407-566-9792.

Chabad Lubavitch of North Orlando (O), 1701 Markham Woods Road, Longwood, 407-636-5994, www.jewishorlando.com; services: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Chabad of Altamonte Springs (O), 414 Spring Valley Lane, Altamonte Springs, 407-280-0535; www.jewishaltamonte.com.

Chabad of South Orlando (O), 7347 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, 407-354-3660; www.jewishorlando.com; Shabbat services: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. and 10 minutes before sunset; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 8:15 a.m.

Chabad of the Space & Treasure Coasts (O), 1190 Highway A1A, Satellite Beach, 321-777-2770.

Congregation Ahavas Yisrael/Chabad (O), 708 Lake Howell Rd., Maitland, 407-644-2500; www.chabadorlando.org; services: Sunday, 9 a.m.; Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.; Shabbat services: Friday, 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Family service, 4th Friday of the month.

Congregation Bet Chaim (R), 301 West State Road 434, Unit 319, Winter Springs, 407-830-7211; www.betchaim.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Am (C), 3899 Sand Lake Road, Longwood, 407-862-3505; www.congbetham.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Beth El (C), 2185 Meadowlane Ave., West Melbourne, 321-779-0740; Shabbat services, 1st & 3rd Friday, 8 p.m.; 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Beth Emeth (R), 2205 Blue Sapphire Circle, Orlando, 407-222-6393; Shabbat service: monthly, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Israel (Rec), Collins Resource Center, Suite 303, 9401 S.R. 200, Ocala, 352-237-8277; bethisraelocala.org; Shabbat service, second Friday of the month, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Shalom (R-C), 315 North 13th St., Leesburg, 352-326-3692; www.bethsholomflorida.org; schedule of services on website.

Congregation Beth Shalom (Progressive Conservative), Orange City congregation holds services at 1308 E. Normandy Blvd., Deltona; 386-804-8283; www.mybethshalom.com; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation B'nai Torah (C), 403 N. Nova Rd., Ormond Beach, 32174, 386-672-1174; www.mybnaitorah.com; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Daytona (O), 1079 W. Granada Blvd., Ormond Beach, 386-672-9300; Shabbat services Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation of Reform Judaism (R), 928 Malone Dr., Orlando, 407-645-0444; www.crjorlando.org; Shabbat services, 7 p.m. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Fridays; 6 p.m., 4th and 5th Fridays; Saturday: 10 a.m.

Congregation Mateh Chaim (R), P.O. Box 060847, Palm Bay, 32906, 321-768-6722.

Congregation Ohev Shalom (C), 613 Concourse Parkway South, Maitland, 407-298-4650; www.ohvshalom.org; Shabbat service, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Or Chayim (Rec), Leesburg, 352-326-8745; egrae@hotmail.com; services 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at Providence Independence of Wildwood.

Congregation Shalom Aleichem (R), 3501 Oak Pointe Blvd., Kissimmee, 407-935-0064; www.shalomaleichem.com; Shabbat service, 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, 8 p.m.

Congregation Shomer Yisrael (C), 5382 Hoffner Ave., Orlando, 407-227-1258, call for services and holiday schedules.

Congregation Sinai (C/R), 303A N. S.R. 27, Minneola; 352-243-5353; congregation-sinai.org; services: every Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Shabbat Service every Saturday, 10 a.m.

Orlando Torah Center (O), 8591 Banyan Blvd., Orlando; 347-456-6485; Shacharis-Shabbos 9 a.m.; Mon.—Thurs. 6:45 a.m.; Sun. and Legal Holidays 8 a.m.; Mincha/Maariv Please call for times.

Southwest Orlando Jewish Congregation/Ohalei Rivka (C), 11200 S. Apopka-Vineland Rd., Orlando, 407-239-5444; Shabbat service, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Temple Beth El (R), 579 N. Nova Rd., Ormond Beach, 386-677-2484.

Temple Beth Shalom (R), P.O. Box 031233, Winter Haven, 813-324-2882.

Temple Beth Shalom (C), 40 Wellington Drive, Palm Coast, 386-445-3006; Shabbat service, Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.

Temple Beth Shalom (C), 5995 N. Wickham Rd. Melbourne, 321-254-6333; www.mytbs.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday: 9:30 a.m. Minyan, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

Temple Beth Shalom (R), 1109 N.E. 8th Ave., Ocala, 352-629-3587; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.; Torah study: Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

Temple B'nai Darom (R), 49 Banyan Course, Ocala, 352-624-0380; Friday Services 8 p.m.

Temple Israel (C), 50 S. Moss Rd., Winter Springs, 407-647-3055; www.tiflorida.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Temple Israel (R), 7350 Lake Andrew Drive, Melbourne, 321-631-9494.

Temple Israel (C), 579 N. Nova Road, Ormond Beach, 386-252-3097; Shabbat service, Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday: 10:30 a.m.

Temple Israel of DeLand (R), 1001 E. New York Ave., DeLand, 386-736-1646; www.templeisraelofdeland.org; Friday Shabbat service, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m. followed by Torah study.

Temple Shalom (formerly New Jewish Congregation) (R), 13563 Country Road 101, Oxford, 352-748-1800; www.templeshalomcentralfl.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; last Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m.

Temple Shalom of Deltona (R/C), 1785 Elkcam Blvd., Deltona, 386-789-2202; www.shalomdeltona.org; Shabbat service; Saturday: 10 a.m.

Temple Shir Shalom (R) Services held at Temple Israel, 50 S. Moss Rd., Winter Springs, 407-366-3556, www.templeshirshalom.org; Shabbat services: three Fridays each month, 7:30 p.m.

Traditional Congregation of Mount Dora (T) Mount Dora, 352-735-4774; www.tcomd.org; Shabbat services: Saturday, 9:30 a.m. sharp.

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Jared Kushner talks about his peace plan, and leaves everyone guessing



Drew Angerer/Getty Images

Haim Saban (r) interviewing Jared Kushner at a forum on Israeli affairs he hosts each year in Washington, D.C., Dec. 3, 2017.

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians will be comprehensive and pave the way for stability in the region.

That's about all we know concerning Jared Kushner's plan, and he's happy to keep it that way, President Donald Trump's son-in-law and senior policy adviser said this weekend at a gathering of scholars and policy mavens who deal with the U.S.-Israel relationship.

"The best thing about the team is that there's a lot of trust within the team," Kushner said at the Saban Forum, speaking with Haim Saban, the Israeli American entertainment mogul who is the main benefactor of an event organized by the Brookings Institution. "The fact that we're so close there's been no leaks on the process to date has enabled a lot of the sides we work with to be able to work with us in a more open format than they would."

Veteran peace negotiators are giving the Kushner team—the others are Jason Greenblatt, Trump's top negotiator; David Friedman,

the ambassador to Israel; and Dina Powell, a senior adviser on the National Security Council—high marks for keeping the plan close to their vests.

"I'm stunned by the degree with which this administration has managed to pose a degree of discipline on this process," said Aaron David Miller, a veteran of peacemaking under Republican and Democratic presidents who is now vice president of the Wilson Center foreign policy think tank.

"Either there's nothing there or there's something worth protecting," Miller said.

So which is it? The team's discipline notwithstanding, it's possible to glean some information from the recent events.

A one-state solution?

The New York Times reported Monday that the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Sultan, had summoned Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas two weeks ago and presented him with the outline of a final status solution that included a Palestinian state with limited sovereignty, patches of non-contiguous

territory in the West Bank, no stake in Jerusalem and most Israeli settlements remaining in place.

That's not a solution the Palestinians will abide, said Miller.

"It's more like a script from a Marx Brothers movie rather than a serious proposal," he said.

The Times said the Palestinians were deeply unhappy with the proposal, and accepting the plan would mean the likely ruination of the Palestinian Authority. Miller said a proposal seen as killing off the idea of a viable Palestinian state would make the United States "look really bad."

How the United States looks internationally, however, has been perhaps the least of the concerns of Trump, who thumbs his nose at allies on a daily basis. Trump said at the outset of his presidency that he is not married to the idea of two states. Kushner did not mention two states in his remarks on Sunday, and Israeli and Palestinian officials who have interacted with Kushner and his team have said that "two states" never comes up in private conversations.

That doesn't mean it's

off the table: Greenblatt, in encouraging the Palestinian Authority to ease out Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, has said that any Palestinian government must abide by "previous agreements." Those include the 2003 Road Map brokered by the George W. Bush administration, which explicitly envisions a two-state solution.

Ori Nir, the spokesman for Americans for Peace Now, a pro-Israel group that favors the two-state solution, praised Kushner's team for staying mum, but said it didn't make sense not to be explicit that two states was the outcome.

"There has to be a political horizon and, at the moment, there isn't one," he said.

Are the Palestinians in the loop?

The leaks to The Times, from Palestinian sources, suggest that the Palestinians are scrambling to figure out what happens next. In August, Husam Zomlot, the Palestine Liberation Organization envoy to Washington, said, "We need them to tell us where the hell they are going."

The Palestinians have been knocked for a loop by reports that Trump plans to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital as early as this week; the Trump administration will back a congressional bill, the Taylor Force Act, to cut funding to the Palestinians as long as the Palestinian Authority continues to subsidize the families of Palestinians who have killed Israelis; and by new strictures on the PLO office.

Shoshana Bryen, a Middle East specialist at the conservative Jewish Policy Center, said the Palestinians were posturing. She said the Trump administration was likely relaying a message to the Palestinians that they had to give in order to get.

"The Taylor Force Act, the PLO mission, the Jerusalem

embassy, if it happens," she said. "The thread running through these is you have to pay something."

That something, she said, would be full-fledged recognition of Israel as a permanent part of the region—removing any ambiguity suggesting that Palestinians believe Israel will one day disappear.

"If Israel gets that, everything else is negotiable," she said.

Are the Israelis in the loop?

If Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is concerned about Kushner's plan, he isn't showing it. Kushner and his family have been close to Netanyahu for years, and Netanyahu has been effusive about his closeness to Trump.

On Monday, Politico ran an extensive and rare interview with Ron Dermer, Israel's ambassador to the United States and one of Netanyahu's most trusted advisers. He sounded confident of his government's closeness to the Trump administration, a sharp contrast with the fraught relations Netanyahu had with Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama.

"I think the way this administration has gone about this, very quietly. I think it's a sign of great seriousness," Dermer said.

Miller said Netanyahu may have good reason to be pleased.

"I have to assume that due to Mr. Netanyahu's relaxed reaction, he is aware of what's in this thing," he said.

Nonetheless, the only news Kushner made at the forum is that he is hewing to time-honored conventions of Middle East peacemaking: solve Israel-Palestinians first, and everything will fall into place; score the big overarching peace deal, and the troublesome issues that have shattered peace talks in the past will take care of themselves.

"If we're going to try and create more stability in the region as a whole, you have to solve [the Israeli-Palestinian] issue," he said.

Israelis are not fans of either of those formulas. Netanyahu clashed repeatedly with Obama over what he saw as Obama's attempts to link Israeli-Palestinian peace to broader regional policies. Additionally, Israelis have long rejected the premise that Israeli-Palestinian peace would necessarily ameliorate any of the other problems afflicting the region.

"That to me was jarring," Bryen said.

Jerusalem? Wednesday. Or not.

There has been a slew of reports that on Wednesday, Trump will in some capacity recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. How that will be expressed is not clear: Trump failed to meet a deadline of Dec. 1 to waive the 1995 law that mandates moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.

Trump can still waive the law—a Republican Congress is unlikely to challenge him for being late by a few days. But will he recognize all of Jerusalem as the capital? Or just its western sector? Will he move the embassy? Will there be a quid pro quo for the Palestinians?

Or will anything at all happen on Wednesday? Trump is famous—or notorious—for changing his mind at the last moment. He pledged during the campaign to move the embassy; he reneged in his first weeks as president, saying he was still considering the matter.

On Monday, all a White House official would say was "The president has always said it is a matter of when, not if. The president is still considering options and we have nothing to announce."

Hungary says it keeps Jews safe by keeping out Muslim immigrants

By Cnaan Liphshiz

BUDAPEST (JTA)—At a conference about anti-Semitism in Europe, senior Hungarian officials said the absence of violence against Jews in their country owed to its refusal to admit Muslim immigrants.

The assertion, which at least one Jewish expert on anti-Semitism disputed, came amid criticism of Prime Minister Viktor Orban's right-wing government by other European leaders of his immigration policy, and a dispute between the Hungarian leader and some Jewish community leaders who accuse Orban of encouraging or tolerating anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Whereas other European countries have seen jihadist terrorist attacks against Jews and others in recent years, "Hungary has been consistently able to protect its citizens and residents, its borders and its fundamental elements of statehood from mass immigration and international ter-

rorism," Minister of State for Security Policy István Mikola said Wednesday at an event in Budapest titled "Are Europe's Jews Safe?" and organized by the Hungarian Jewry's watchdog on anti-Semitism, the Action and Protection Foundation.

Csaba Latorkai, deputy state secretary for priority social affairs, noted the 2015 killing of a Jewish security guard in Denmark by an Islamist along with other attacks, including the murder of 137 people in Paris by other Islamists later that year.

"Taking security and administrative measures to prevent such acts, the Hungarian government acted, and so in the autumn of 2015 it decided to set up a border fence, introduced a legal closing of borders," Latorkai said in his speech, adding it was "in order to protect citizens and make Hungary one of the most secure places in world. No one should be afraid that there may be attacks on our streets."

The arrival of at least 2

million immigrants in Europe since 2015 from Iraq, Syria and other parts of the Middle East has pitted Western European governments that resolved to absorb the newcomers against eastern EU member states that shut down their borders, including Hungary.

Rabbi Andrew Baker, director of international Jewish affairs at the American Jewish Committee, told JTA at the event that the link made by Mikola owed to how Hungary, which will have a general election next year, "wants to say that this [its immigration policy] is yet another aspect of taking care of its Jewish community, even if it's probably a bit of a stretch to see it as a threat to the Jewish community."

Jewish community leaders across Europe are divided on the arrival of Middle East immigrants, with some citing Jewish values in urging generosity toward the newcomers and others warning that the influx of Muslims from countries where anti-Semitism is a social

norm will exacerbate Europe's anti-Semitism problem.

"The large number of refugees who entered Europe have obviously raised special concerns," Baker said, but he urged listeners of his address to "resist the temptation of pointing the finger" at that population in identifying the causes of anti-Semitism.

Focusing on Muslim immigration "is an easy thing for people here in Hungary and the Hungarian government," he told JTA, unlike other issues connected to anti-Semitism—including the government-led campaign this year against George Soros, the liberal Jewish-American billionaire, that some observers consider anti-Semitic.

The Mazsihisz umbrella of Jewish communities in Hungary has accused Orban since 2013 of whitewashing Hungary's role in the murder of Jews in the Holocaust and mounting the campaign against Soros, a Holocaust survivor who was born in Hungary.

"The sad thing is, it works," Baker said. "Under the current government, there are efforts at kind of rewriting Hungary's 'clear narrative on the Holocaust.'"

He noted the "famous or infamous" memorial statue in Budapest for the Nazi occupation, which the Jewish community in 2014 said whitewashes Hungary's complicity in the Holocaust, and "speaking in positive ways about Miklos Horthy, Hungary's wartime quisling."

Orban earlier this year called Horthy, who helped the Nazis kill many thousands of Jews, an "exceptional statesman."

The chairman of the Action and Protection Foundation, Daniel Bodnar, said at the conference that while anti-Semitic violence remains extremely rare in Hungary, the country has seen anti-Semitic rhetoric proliferate over the past decade, notably through the far-right Jobbik party and its affiliated media.

In 2016 and 2015, his foundation recorded 23 and 53



Attila Kisbenedek/AFP/Getty Images
Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban speaking in Budapest, Nov. 12, 2017.

incidents in Hungary, which has approximately 100,000 Jews, with no physical assaults of individuals. It has initiated dozens of criminal cases since its establishment in 2012.

Hundreds of incidents, with many assaults, were recorded in those years in Britain and France.

Weekly roundup of world briefs from JTA

Roy Moore's wife on anti-Semitism charge: 'One of our attorneys is a Jew'

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Roy Moore's wife said she and her husband, the controversial Senate candidate in Alabama, could not be anti-Semitic because they employ a Jewish lawyer.

"Fake news will tell you that we don't care for Jews," Kayla Moore, her husband, Roy, standing behind her, said Monday night at Moore's final campaign rally in Midland City, Alabama.

"I tell you all this because I've seen it all, so I just want to set the record straight while they're here," she said, waving at the media and grinning. "One of our attorneys is a Jew."

Kayla Moore, wife of Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore, accuses media of painting couple as anti-Semitic. pic.twitter.com/Vcczj6pNPv

—NBC News (@NBCNews) December 12, 2017

Kayla Moore did not name the attorney.

"We have very close friends that are Jewish and are rabbis and we also fellowship with them," she said.

"Fellowship" used as a verb generally refers to Christians joining together. It's not clear what Kayla Moore, who is a Baptist, meant in applying the term to encounters with Jews.

Kayla Moore also did not make clear what she was referring to when she said the media portrayed her and her husband as not caring for Jews, but the candidate came under fire last week for attacking the liberal billionaire philanthropist and hedge fund manager George Soros, suggesting that he was headed for hell because he did not accept God's salvation. Soros is Jewish.

Moore, the Republican candidate in the Alabama Senate race who is favored by President Donald Trump, is in an unexpectedly tight race with Doug Jones, a former prosecutor and the Democratic candidate, in the special election Tuesday.

A former Alabama chief justice twice removed from the bench for defying federal rulings that countered his religious beliefs, Moore has been beset during this campaign by allegations that he wooed teenage girls when he was in his 30s. Two of his accusers have alleged that he sexually assaulted them, one of them describing an encounter she said took place when she was 14.

Moore's candidacy is backed by Steve Bannon, a former top adviser to Trump who helps the Breitbart News website. Bannon, who remains close to Trump, spoke at the Moore rally Monday night and appeared to take a shot at Trump's daughter Ivanka, who said recently that she does not doubt Moore's accusers, adding that there's a "special place in hell" for child predators.

"There's a special place in hell for Republicans who should know better," said Bannon, who feuded during his White House tenure with Ivanka Trump and her husband, Jared Kushner, who are both top aides to the president.

NY Port Authority suspect charged with supporting terrorism

(JTA)—The suspect in a pipe bomb attack on the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York City has been charged with supporting an act of terrorism and making terrorist threats.

Akayed Ullah, 27, of Brooklyn, also was charged with criminal possession of a weapon, the New York Police Department said Tuesday morning. Federal terrorism charges are expected next week, according to reports.

Ullah, who is said to be of Bangladeshi origin and reportedly worked as a cab driver, spoke with authorities at Bellevue Hospital after suffering injuries when the homemade pipe bomb strapped to his body detonated early during Monday's morning rush hour. The bomb exploded in a tunnel connecting the Times Square subway station with the Midtown Manhattan transit hub.

CNN cited an unnamed law enforcement source who said Ullah said he was upset with an unspecified "incursion into Gaza." The New York Times reported that he told investigators that he set off the bomb in retaliation for U.S. airstrikes on ISIS targets in Syria and elsewhere, while NBC cited law enforcement officials as saying he did it in the name of ISIS to avenge the deaths of Muslims around the world.

The Washington Post reported that a pro-Islamic State media group, Maqdisi Media, publicized that the attack was carried out in response to President Donald Trump's announcement last week that the United States recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital, citing the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors extremist activity.

Ullah has lived in the United States for seven years after entering as part of a visa program available to those with relatives who are U.S. citizens. He reportedly has never appeared on a terror watchlist in Bangladesh.

Police on Monday raided the family home and questioned Ullah's wife, Jannatul Ferdous Piya, 25, and her father. Investigators believe he acted alone, however.

At a news conference Monday, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio called the attack on the subway system "incredibly upsetting."

"And let's also be clear," he said, "this was an attempted terrorist attack. Thank God the perpetrator did not achieve his ultimate goals."

Trump delivers Chanukah wishes to 'Jewish brothers and sisters'

WASHINGTON (JTA)—President Donald Trump said he was "proud to stand with the Jewish people" on Chanukah.

"Melania and I wish all of our Jewish brothers and sisters celebrating this meaningful holiday a happy and healthy eight nights in the company of those they love," Trump said in a message Tuesday evening, the first night of the eight-day holiday, and naming the first lady.

"On this holiday, we are proud to stand with the Jewish people who shine as a light to all nations. We also stand with the people of Israel, the Jewish State, which has itself

a miraculous history of overcoming the tallest of odds," the statement said.

Trump's director of the National Economic Council, Gary Cohn, lit the "national menorah" on the National Mall, an event organized by American Friends of Lubavitch. He noted that Trump last week recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, breaking with predecessors who held back from full recognition.

"President Trump delivered on a promise to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel," said Cohn, who clashed with Trump this summer over Trump's equivocal remarks after white supremacists and anti-Semites marched in Charlottesville, Virginia.

"The president made the right decision and it makes these year's celebration of Chanukah particularly meaningful," he said. There were strong winds in Washington, and Cohn's kippah flew off his head at least once.

Trump's re-election campaign also sent out Chanukah greetings, as did the chairwoman of the Republican National Committee, Ronna Romney McDaniel. So did Tom Perez, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Trump continued the tradition established by President George W. Bush and carried on by President Barack Obama, and had a Chanukah party at the White House last week, where he noted his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Later this week, Jewish members of Congress will host a Chanukah party at the Library of Congress. In previous years, the congressional party has been hosted only by Democrats, led by Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla. This year for the first time, Wasserman Schultz is co-hosting the party with a Jewish Republican, Rep. Lee Zeldin, R-N.Y.

The Conservative movement supported Trump's Jerusalem recognition. Hundreds of its members disagree.

(JTA)—Hundreds of Conservative Jews have signed an open letter opposing their movement's support for U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The letter, first published Sunday night, has garnered some 250 signatures in its first 36 hours online. All of the signatories are affiliates or alumni of the Jewish Theological Seminary, the movement's leading educational institution, or the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the movement's umbrella organization. Dozens of the signatories are rabbis.

After President Donald Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital last week, the Conservative movement's institutions released at least three statements, all of which supported the move. The JTS statement said it was "heartened" by the recognition. A movement-wide statement, signed by those institutions and 11 more, said the movement was "pleased" with the decision.

"The status of Jerusalem is a matter to be settled in direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians," the

movement-wide statement said. "But in recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and planning to move the American embassy to a location under uncontested Israeli sovereignty, the U.S. government acknowledges the age-old connection that Israel and the Jewish people maintain with the holy city."

The only note of criticism appeared in the USCJ's statement. While saying "Israel, like all nations, must be free to determine its capital," it added, "we question the purpose of the recognition at this time." All three Conservative statements make extended reference to the need for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"What's to be gained by doing it now at this moment?" USCJ CEO Rabbi Steve Wernick told JTA on Tuesday, adding that recognizing Jerusalem was "always viewed as something the U.S. could do to leverage the parties to move toward peace. That's the context that's missing."

But, he continued, "how can we as a people who understand that Jerusalem has been the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years, and of the State of Israel for 70 years, not welcome the decision?"

The letter from dissenters opposes U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, which was signed Dec. 6, on the grounds that it will inflame tensions in the city, risking lives, and will reduce prospects for peace.

"We believe that support for President Trump's announcement is both politically shortsighted and morally unsound," the letter reads. "It has already cost the lives of several Palestinians and will surely cost more. As institutions committed to *Kevod HaBriyot*, human dignity for all peoples, JTS and USCJ should neither be 'heartened' by nor 'applaud' a decision that will lead to violence, further entrench the occupation, and damage prospects for peace."

The Reform movement called the decision "ill-timed" and said it could not support the decision absent a comprehensive plan for a peace process, while Orthodox organizations enthusiastically supported it.

Senate unanimously passes bill to help Holocaust survivors obtain restitution, seized assets

(JTA)—The Senate unanimously passed a bill to help Holocaust survivors and the families of victims obtain restitution or the return of Holocaust-era assets.

The Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today, or JUST Act, which was introduced in February by Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisc., and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., received unanimous approval on Tuesday.

The measure requires the State Department to report on the progress of certain European countries toward the return of or restitution for wrongfully confiscated or transferred Holocaust-era assets, including property, art and other movable property. It also requires a report specifically on progress on the resolution of claims for U.S. citizen Holocaust survivors and family members.

The World Jewish Restitution Organization praised the bill's passage, urging that it be signed into law this year.

"Through this legislation, the United States will help survivors achieve a small measure of justice for the wrongful seizure of their property during the Holocaust," the organization's chair of operations, Gideon Taylor, said Tuesday in a statement. "Now is the time—while the remaining survivors are alive—for countries to provide restitution."

The JUST Act is designed to build on the international Terezin Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets and Related Issues of 2009, which affirms the protection of property rights and recognizes the importance of restituting or compensating Holocaust-related confiscations.

Several nations that endorsed the Terezin Declaration have not fully addressed the restitution of Jewish communal, private and heirless property, co-sponsors Baldwin and Rubio have said.

A companion bill was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in February by Reps. Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., and Christopher Smith, R-N.J.

House passes bill to protect religious institutions sparked by wave of JCC threats

(JTA)—The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan bill that increases the federal penalties for bomb threats and other credible threats of violence against religious institutions.

The bill, sponsored by Reps. David Kustoff, R-Tenn., and Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., passed Monday by a vote of 402 to 2. It was co-sponsored by more than 40 other lawmakers.

The Protecting Religiously Affiliated Institutions Act was sparked by a wave of threats against JCCs and other Jewish institutions earlier this year.

It would prosecute threats of violence against religious institutions as hate crimes and increase the penalty for destruction of the institutions' property caused by fire or explosives from one year to three years. It amends the Church Arson Prevention Act to include community religious centers such as Jewish community centers.

In 2017, more than 160 bomb threats and other threats of violence have been made against Jewish community centers across the United States. Most of them came from a young Israeli man.

"The dramatic rise in threats against religious institutions is deeply disturbing and makes it clear that existing federal laws do not suitably deter these acts of hate," Kustoff said in a statement. "We must stand united against acts of hate and protect the rights of all Americans to worship freely and without fear."

The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council praised the House's passage of the bill.

"Crimes against religious institutions are intended to create an atmosphere of fear that deters community members from attending worship services and social involvement," Stanley Bergman, the council's co-chair, said in a

statement. "These hate crimes pose a danger to the religious freedom and security of all Americans."

Sens. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., have sponsored an identical bill being considered in the Senate.

Federation of Argentine Jewish centers elects its first female president

BUENOSAIRES, Argentina (JTA)—The Jewish Argentine federation for sports and social community centers, or FACCOMA, for the first time has elected a female president.

Monica Sucari of Hacoaj, a sports and cultural club with 7,800 members north of Buenos Aires, was elected Monday to lead FACCOMA, a Spanish acronym that stands for Argentine Federation of Maccabiah Community Centers. She is vice president of the umbrella group for Argentine-style Jewish community centers, one of the main umbrella organizations in the country.

FACCOMA, the largest member of the Latin American branch of the Maccabi World Union, has 55 affiliates and a network of 50,000 members.

"It was a huge honor that my institution, Hacoaj, nominated me as the candidate for the presidency," Sucari told JTA just after the assembly. "I hope that more women will be increasingly encouraged to participate in major roles" such as this one.

Sucari, who has 10 years of experience with FACCOMA, will serve until 2019 while reinforcing the role of Hacoaj at the Global JCC network to raise other women to leadership positions. Hacoaj has 7,800 members.

Last month, the female presence in JCC leadership positions was discussed at the JCC Global World Conference in Tarrytown, New York.

"Although the objective of each of the JCCs was to meet other JCCs and associate in projects of social impact, each and every one of them was surprisingly interested in the topic of female leadership in the organizations of the Jewish community" Patricia Manusovich, who attended the global event representing Hacoaj, told JTA.

Manusovich is a member of a network of JCCs worldwide that will begin to raise the issue of female leadership in Jewish organizations.

The issue of female leadership is under debate with no women on the shortlist to replace the chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

"In an age in which the #metoo campaign is radically changing old concepts of male-female power relations, how could the American heads of the agency and its associated institutions fail to include at least one female among the six candidates they deem worthy to succeed [Natan] Sharansky," asked an editorial appearing in The Jerusalem Post on Nov 28.

NY Jewish Museum suspends projects with senior curator in wake of sexual harassment allegations

(JTA)—New York's Jewish Museum has suspended all current projects with senior

Reform rabbis are finding it tough to love Israel



Noam Rivkin Fenton/Flash90

Members of the Reform movement and Hebrew Union College reading from the Torah at the public square in front of the Western Wall in Jerusalem, Nov. 16, 2017.

By Ben Sales

(JTA)—When Israeli security guards roughed up the head rabbi of the Reform movement at the Western Wall, ripping his suit jacket and shoving a can of mace in his face, Rabbi Jen Lader had a dilemma: How could she talk about the violence without being boring?

Lader, a spiritual leader at Temple Israel in suburban Detroit, had already preached about the Israeli government's apparent disdain for Reform Jews. She had spoken about how Reform Jews cannot marry or perform conversions as they choose in Israel. She had decried the government's abandonment of the Western Wall deal, an agreement to provide space at the holy site for non-Orthodox prayer.

Wasn't this latest incident at the Western Wall just more of the same?

"I gave this sermon a year ago, and two years ago, and

three years ago," said Lader, who runs youth programming at the 3,400-family Reform congregation, one of the country's largest. "It's not shocking anymore. It's not surprising anymore. That fact is part of the reason it's so difficult for me to talk about it all the time."

Lader's problems stretch across Reform Jewry, the largest Jewish denomination in the United States. The liberal movement self-defines as staunchly pro-Israel but has found itself at odds with many of its government's policies, from West Bank settlement expansion to the preservation of Orthodox hegemony in the state.

That's why, leading up to the movement's biennial conference next week in Boston, Reform rabbis and leaders sounded upset but unsurprised by the clashes on Nov. 16 at the Western Wall. For years they have found themselves distinguishing

between loving Israel as a country while criticizing its government.

"I think there's some difference between supporting the project and supporting the government," said Peter Knobel, rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth Emet in suburban Chicago. "I will always stay involved in the Zionist project. I believe it's important for the Jewish people. I'm not prepared to give up and to draw a red line and say 'if Israel does X, I'm out of there.'"

Lader also feels invested in Israel education. She pointed out that her synagogue was founded specifically as a Zionist breakaway from a non-Zionist congregation. But connecting young Reform Jews to Israel isn't easy, she said, when Israeli guards are manhandling Reform rabbis.

In the episode nearly two weeks ago, guards and haredi Orthodox onlookers tussled with Jacobs and other Reform officials as they tried to enter the main entrance to the Western Wall plaza carrying Torah scrolls. The guards said it was illegal to bring the scrolls into the main plaza,

where the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, the haredi Orthodox organization that runs the site, forbids men and women from praying together. The foundation characterized the clashes as a provocation by the Reform delegation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has yet to make a statement on the incident.

Recruitment for a biannual Detroit teen summer trip to Israel is also getting harder. Last year, Lader and her colleagues changed the itinerary to include a talk by Anat Hoffman, who chairs Women of the Wall, a feminist Western Wall prayer group that has pushed for reforms at the site.

"It's really challenging working with millennials and young people who see these things in the news and then hear 'this is your home, this is where you belong,'" she said. "They're hearing two different messages from us at the same time."

The same problem exists among young professionals, said Rabbi Jen Gubit, who works with that cohort at Temple Israel in Boston.

Gubit has not planned any programming around Israel yet because no one has asked for it, and because it's become such a fraught topic. She said young people are upset both about Israeli policy in the West Bank—the Reform movement regularly urges curbs on settlement growth—and the country's Orthodox monopoly on religious affairs.

"The way that millennials approach Israel and approach talking about the land and the people and the occupation is a really big tapestry with lots of threads, and I haven't yet moved forward with that avenue because I'm not totally sure how," she said. "I always ask people 'what do you want,' and that's not one of the things that comes up."

The movement has grown more outspoken recently in its criticism of the Israeli government. After Deputy Foreign

Minister Tzipi Hotovely said last week that American Jews are growing distant from Israel because they don't send their children to the military and lead "quite convenient lives," Jacobs called for her dismissal, a perhaps unprecedented move.

"The Deputy Foreign Minister has a right to her ill-informed and insulting views," Jacobs said in a statement. "But such views disqualify her holding such an important role in Israel's diplomatic corps. Her comments serve to underscore how the Israeli government disdains the majority of North American Jews."

Hotovely later apologized for her comments, and Netanyahu condemned her remarks publicly.

Some Reform rabbis still feel an obligation to act as traditional Israel advocates despite these differences.

Jeffrey Salkin, senior rabbi of Temple Solel in Hollywood, Florida, disagrees with some of the Israeli government's actions, but says blame lies on both sides. Liberal Jews in America, he said, have been distancing themselves from Israel for a while.

"My job is to make the best possible case for Israel that I can and to interpret Israel as broadly and generously as I can," said Salkin, who is also a columnist for the Religion News Service. "The danger is that the encounter with this significant religious flaw in Israel's system can and does serve to alienate Jews from Israel more than they already are."

Reform leaders are also opting for positive engagement with Reform and progressive Israeli organizations. Earlier this year, in response to the cancellation of the Western Wall deal, several Reform donors upped their commitments to the Reform movement in Israel, where only 3 percent of Jews identify with the movement, compared to 35 percent in the United States. Reform leaders noted

that Jacobs was roughed up while celebrating the ordination of the 100th Reform rabbi in Israel—a positive sign.

At Congregation Beth Or in suburban Philadelphia, Hebrew school kids spend time studying the history of the Israeli Reform movement and Women of the Wall. Other rabbis say the best way to foster a complex and authentic connection to the country is to visit and view its pros and cons firsthand.

"While you're there, you can experience the wonderful successes of Israel, the creativity, the energy, and also be honest about the social justice issues," said Rabbi Steve Fox, CEO of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the movement's rabbinical association. The association leads a trip to Israel that teaches congregational rabbis how to lead their own trips and navigate difficult questions.

Reform clergy may be outspoken in their criticism of Israel's religious policies because it's easier to engage on those than on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, said Rabbi Judy Schindler, co-chair of the Association of Reform Zionists of America's clergy council. Western Wall policy is more of an internal Jewish issue, she said, while opposing Israel's control of the West Bank could "fuel the flames of anti-Semitism."

Like other Reform rabbis who spoke to JTA, Schindler opposed ending or withholding support of Israel -- through philanthropy, travel, activism or otherwise. But she feels frustrated.

"We work very hard to be strong partners with Israel, and it is disappointing and even devastating when incidents happen such as what happened at the Western Wall," Schindler said. "We would expect that the Israeli government would be in an authentic relationship with us. It seems to be a one-sided relationship."

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Jerusalem

From page 1A

“there is no more fitting or beautiful gift, as we approach 70 years of the State of Israel’s independence.”

After the 50th anniversary of the reunification of the city “the time has come to bring tranquility to Jerusalem, and to see hope blossom in the

capital of Israel, the place where pilgrims come from around the world,” Rivlin stated.

“The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and the relocation of all embassies to the city, is a landmark in the recognition of the right of the Jewish people to our land, and a milestone on our road to peace—peace for all the

residents of Jerusalem, and the whole region,” he said.

Israel’s Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Danny Danon welcomed Trump’s announcement, calling it “courageous” and similar to the one made by President Harry Truman in 1948 when he became the first world leader to recognize the State of Israel.

“Today President Trump

righted an historic wrong by recognizing Jerusalem as our capital,” said Danon.

He called on all UN member-states “to follow the lead of our American friends and recognize our ancient capital of Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel.”

Just hours after President Trump’s speech, the Czech Republic issued a statement saying it recognizes the pre-

1967 west Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, but that it will only consider moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to the city after talks with regional partners.

World Jewish Congress (WJC) President Ronald Lauder said Trump’s announcement is a “critical and courageous step.”

“Jerusalem is the indisputable capital of Israel and

the historic capital of the Jewish people. We hope that the US’ clear declaration to this effect, and its reiteration that this has long been its policy, sends a strong message to the international community of this truth,” Lauder stated.

In honor of the event, the flags of Israel and the US were projected on the walls of Jerusalem’s Old City.

Winners

From page 1A

this is an extremely significant symbolic loss.

The announcement will also make it more difficult for Sunni Arab states to be seen as publicly backing a Trump peace initiative, as Jerusalem

remains one of the most sensitive issues among Arab publics. Serving as boosters for the Trump peace plan or being seen as heading toward normalization with Israel following this announcement will put Arab governments in a political bind, and despite

the president’s prediction that this move will make a peace agreement easier, the opposite is likely to be the case. Public opinion serves as a heavy brake even in authoritarian states, and while the importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

has subsided for many Arabs in recent years, any changes in Jerusalem’s status quo have the ability to reverse that trend given the unique sensitivity surrounding the city.

While the Trump announcement will change nothing on the ground itself, as Israel’s

capital was Jerusalem even before Trump acknowledged it and moving the embassy will take years, the symbolism should not be understated. In declaring Jerusalem as Israel’s capital without making a clear statement that the U.S. does not recognize unhindered

Israeli sovereignty in eastern Jerusalem, Trump may end up killing his own peace initiative in the cradle for the sake of an announcement whose timing was unnecessary now.

Michael J. Koplow is the policy director of the Israel Policy Forum.

Flynn

From page 4A

Is Kushner in trouble?

What that deal would involve would deeply interest Mueller, partly if it involves benefits that would not merely accrue to Trump’s presidency, but to Kushner’s personal fortune.

Writing for Bloomberg

News, Timothy O’Brien, a Trump biographer, said Kushner’s interests with Russia and Israel may extend well beyond his father-in-law’s foreign policy considerations. Kushner’s family is in debt because of its ownership of a Manhattan office tower, and Mueller is intrigued about a meeting Kushner took with

a banker during the transition. (Kushner has said he met with the banker because of his close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and for no other reason.) In his real estate dealings, Kushner has also partnered with one of Israel’s wealthiest families.

There’s more: Kushner reportedly pressed his father-in-

law to sack then-FBI Director James Comey in May. Comey was investigating the very events that have entangled Flynn—and, we now know, Kushner. Kushner also has spoken to congressional committees and with Mueller’s investigators. Whether Flynn’s revelations of the conversations with Kislyak came

up—and whether Kushner was truthful about what he knew—we don’t know.

So we’re back to the Logan Act. Have the Democrats noticed?

You bet.

“This shows a Trump associate negotiating with the Russians against U.S. policy and interests before Donald

Trump took office, and after it was announced that Russia had interfered in our election,” Bloomberg quoted Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., as saying. “That’s a stunning revelation and could be a violation of the Logan Act, which forbids unauthorized U.S. citizens from negotiating with a foreign power.”

Solidarity

From page 5A

trial evidence and academic research on radical Islam in this country.

Mazen then blasted Israel and the U.S. He suggested that the congregation should “engage in difficult conversations” about the supposed “maleficence” of both Israel and the U.S., whose govern-

ments “often subvert the will of the people and the natural democracy that it is owed.”

As the program came to a close, the Islamists asked the Lexington Jews for money. “My project this year is I have to raise a million dollars,” Mazen announced. “Don’t send clothes, send money. I’m not afraid to say it anymore.”

“Go out and donate to any

Muslim organization, ISBCC, CAIR, Jetpac, Muslim Justice League, come on, donate to us,” urged Marzouk.

Lexington’s citizens have the right to support any cause they like, but the notion that Jewish institutions should be used to promote fundraising for groups such as these is appalling. Organizations that are either linked to terror-

ism or that seek to impede law enforcement efforts to prevent slaughter should not be confused with those that advance social justice. Nor should sympathy with Muslims that are wrongly associated with support for terror lead well-meaning Jews to aid groups that pose as defenders of civil rights, but are on the wrong side of

the argument about preventing radical Islamist violence and hate.

Yet it appears that Boston’s Islamists are planning more “Out of Many, One” events at other synagogues—Temple Beth Zion in Brookline, Mass., is next.

We can only hope that congregants there and throughout the U.S. wake up and

understand what is at stake when groups that spew hatred against Israel (not just settlements), and rationalize terror rather than confronting it, are given a misguided seal of approval from Jewish communities.

Dr. Charles Jacobs is president and Ilya Feoktistov is a board member of Americans for Peace and Tolerance.

Book

From page 9A

targeted innocent Israelis, including children, in restaurants, buses, hospitals, schools and shopping malls,” Ammiel Hirsch, the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue’s senior rabbi, said in a statement. “The intifada was not a ‘rising up for what is right.’ It was a mass descent into immorality.”

Bashi, however, says “intifada” encompasses a broader and largely nonviolent Palestinian cultural resistance.

“P is for Palestine” has sold out its initial print run of 2,000 copies. And the controversies have continued: Last month, a 28,000-member Facebook group for mothers on the Upper East Side of

Manhattan was wracked by vitriolic debate over the book.

The dust-up between the synagogue and Book Culture began on Nov. 21, when Hirsch put out a statement demanding Book Culture “publicly rescind their support of ‘P Is for Palestine,’ a book by Golbarg Bashi that glorifies the Palestinian intifada—or Stephen Wise will cancel its upcoming book fair featuring Book Culture.”

Since then, the synagogue and bookstore have come to an agreement: Book Culture’s owners have publicly repudiated Bashi’s views but will keep selling her book. Hirsch told JTA that the synagogue is happy to partner with Book Culture as long as the bookstore chain makes clear

that it does not oppose Israel. The book fair will proceed as planned.

The sides collectively issued a statement Wednesday in which the Book Culture’s owners regretted that they “did not fully appreciate the political or communal ramifications of the children’s book.” They also stated their support for Israel’s right to exist and their opposition to terrorism and to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, or BDS, against Israel.

The synagogue did not demand that the store pull the book from its shelves.

“We are fierce believers in the right of free expression,” a statement signed by the synagogue clergy said. “Book-

stores have a critical role to play in free societies, and in particular, in our increasingly polarized country. If Book Culture wants to carry and promote Dr. Bashi’s book, it is for them to decide.”

“This is also not about Palestinian national culture or rights. We support a two-state solution,” the statement continued. “We believe that it is important for American Jews to hear the views of Palestinians.”

Hirsch, the former executive director of the Association of Reform Zionists of America, told JTA: “We do not want to host people who have anti-Israel, anti-Zionist views. I don’t know what the current or future relationship of the store is to the book. We didn’t

want to get into the business of telling the bookstore what books to carry.”

Bashi, however, who lives in New York, feels the synagogue inappropriately pressured the bookstore to take a position, and that the incident could have a chilling effect on other bookstores, which could become scared to carry the book. She called the synagogue’s opposition to the book, and its initial criticism of Book Culture, “mob-like behavior.”

“By doing so, you’re basically saying don’t you dare hold a reading, don’t you dare stock this book,” she said. “I’m an Upper West Side mother myself, and I find it dismaying that a religious institution can force businesses in that manner.”

For her part, Bashi rejects the idea that the word “intifada” refers primarily to terror attacks. She told JTA that she sees intifada as referring to a broader cultural and nonviolent Palestinian resistance to Israel’s occupation. Western media, she said, tend to emphasize Palestinian violence while not covering peaceful protest.

“Of course, absolutely, violence is wrong,” the author told JTA, emphasizing her opposition to terrorism. “I think that when you’re talking about an occupied people and you have an alphabetical book about that people, intifada is part of Palestinian life, to resist occupation. That resistance is overwhelmingly peaceful.”

JTA

From page 13A

curator Jens Hoffman following sexual harassment allegations by several museum staff members.

Hoffman was suspended on Dec. 4, less than a week after the staffers came forward, the ARTnews website reported, citing a statement sent to the publication by the museum. The museum said it is reviewing the allegations.

Hoffmann served four years as the Jewish Museum’s deputy director for exhibitions and programs beginning in 2012, and then as director of special exhibitions and public programs.

His suspension comes after the announcement late last month that Hoffmann

was leaving his position as co-artistic director of Front International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art.

Since his suspension from the Jewish Museum, several other institutions also have suspended or fired Hoffmann, including the Honolulu Biennial, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Detroit, Kadist, an international foundation, and the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art’s upcoming People’s Biennial.

He also was suspended as editor-at-large by the Milan-based Mousse Magazine art publication and from his position as artistic director of Fundación Arte, a Buenos Aires-based foundation, ARTnews reported.

Meanwhile, three editors of the Exhibitionist, a journal about curatorial practices that Hoffmann founded in 2009, have resigned.

Hoffmann’s attorney, Lance Gotko, told ARTnews in response to the allegations, “He can firmly say he has never subjected anyone at the museum to sexual harassment.”

Gotko said he has not heard from the Jewish Museum since the suspension and that he regretted that other institutions also cut ties with Hoffmann.

“He’s obviously very disappointed with the actions taken by those institutions,” the attorney said.

Most Jewish institutions

resume operations after Skirball Fire

(JTA)—Most of the Jewish institutions that had been threatened by the so-called Skirball Fire in Los Angeles have resumed normal operations.

All evacuation orders, road closures and restrictions due to the fire in the Bel Air area were lifted Sunday afternoon, the Los Angeles Daily News reported. The fire remained at 85 percent containment on Tuesday following the calming of the Santa Ana winds beginning Sunday.

The Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue in Encino, California, which took in about 25 Torah scrolls from area synagogues and schools for safekeeping,

announced Friday that it would resume normal operations. The same day, the Stephen Wise Temple was cleared to hold Shabbat services and brought its Torah scrolls back from Valley Beth Shalom in time for the services.

The Leo Baeck Temple announced Monday that while its buildings and grounds were not burned, they suffered significant smoke damage and the temple would not be able to reopen its facilities right away. Many of the Leo Baeck events were moved to Stephen Wise, which also invited the members of the smoke-damaged temple to join it for Shabbat services.

The Milken Community Schools reopened Monday for

regular classes. The Los Angeles eruv remained undamaged by the fire and was available for Shabbat.

The Skirball Cultural Center reopened Friday and held a Chanukah festival two days later that was moved indoors due to air quality concerns.

The Skirball Fire broke out on Dec. 6, one of several wildfires blanketing the area. It destroyed six homes and damaged 12 others, and required the evacuation of about 700 homes as well as an apartment building. It damaged 475 acres.

On Tuesday, the Los Angeles Fire Department said the blaze was caused by an illegal cooking fire at an area encampment.

Japanese-Style Latkes for Chanukah

By Sonya Sanford

(The Noshers via JTA)—The Japanese word okonomiyaki is derived from two words: okonomi “how you like it” and yaki “grill.” Okonomiyaki is a customizable Japanese savory vegetable pancake. Like a latke, it gets cooked in oil in a fritter formation. Unlike a latke, it’s usually made into a large plate-sized pancake comprising mainly cabbage.

Food historians have linked the rise in popularity of okonomiyaki in Japan to World War II, when rice was more scarce and this recipe offered a filling meal or snack with a wheat-based starch. Throughout Japan there are regional differences and countless variations of okonomiyaki, but the most common form of the dish involves a batter made of flour, a variety of mountain yam, eggs, shredded cabbage, green onion, dashi and often the addition of pork belly. It gets topped with its own tangy sweet sauce, Japanese mayonnaise and bonito flakes (katsuobushi).

I first fell in love with okonomiyaki on a trip to Japan. You can find it there in restaurants that specialize in the dish, but it’s also something that is prepared in home kitchens. The cabbage gets slightly crisp, tender and sweet when seared in oil on a flattop or skillet, and then it gets generously slathered with an umami-rich sauce, along with a welcome drizzle of creamy mayo. The richness, sweetness and tanginess of these components all work perfectly together.

A few months after I returned from Japan, I ended up eating at Brooklyn’s Japanese Jewish restaurant, Shalom Japan. I didn’t hesitate to order its Jewish-influenced spin on okonomiyaki. Shalom Japan is known to top the dish with pastrami, or even corned lamb tongue and sauerkraut. It became clear there that okonomiyaki, with its base of humble cabbage and onion, is a perfect fit on a Jewish table. The fried pancake part of it all called out Chanukah.

I am a fan of all pancakes and fritters, and I set out to modify the classic Japanese version for a recipe that didn’t require access to a specialty food store and could be made with kosher ingredients.

Full disclosure: My version lacks authenticity. If you’re going for the real deal, you’ll need a batter made with an okonomiyaki flour mix or nagaimo yam. This special kind of yam is added in powdered form to the flour mix or is grated fresh into the batter. The toppings should include bonito flakes, and the batter should be made with dashi. These ingredients can be found at most Japanese markets. Instead of nagaimo yam, my version uses a batter of flour and potato starch, and instead of dashi I use water.



I’ve also included a recipe for homemade traditional okonomiyaki sauce that can be made simply with easy-to-find ingredients, but you can also buy a pre-made bottled sauce. You can make these pancakes large-sized and cut into wedges like the Japanese do, or slightly smaller a la a large latke. I wouldn’t go too small, as the vegetables tend to hold together better en masse.

This recipe doesn’t need to be too exact, and it works as a blank canvas for additional vegetables like kale, mushrooms and/or daikon. In the spirit of Chanukah, these okonomiyaki get cooked in oil, but they are not heavily fried. The oil used to fry the okonomiyaki gives a loving nod to the miracle of the oil glowing in the Temple for eight days instead of one, but the heap of vegetables and addictive sauce make this a nutritious and satisfying addition to any Chanukah meal.

Ingredients:

For the pancakes:

- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour or gluten free all-purpose mix
- 1/4 cup potato starch or cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 shredded green cabbage, about 4 1/2 packed cups
- 3 green onions, sliced thin, plus more for garnish if desired
- 1 carrot, peeled and shredded
- 4-5 inches daikon, peeled and shredded (optional)
- Oil as needed (i.e. sunflower, canola or peanut)
- Sesame seeds, for topping (optional)
- Mayonnaise, for topping (optional)

For the okonomiyaki sauce:

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey or agave syrup, or to taste

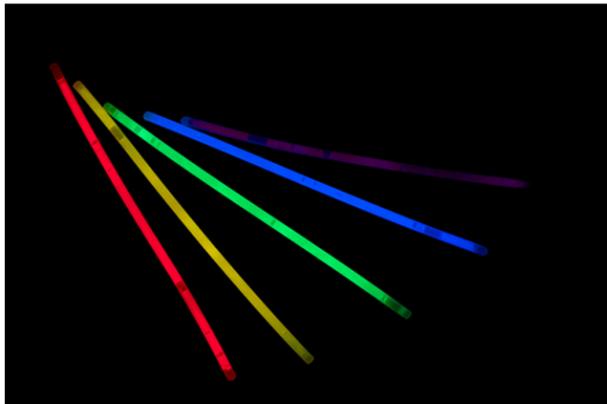
Directions:

1. Start by making the batter. Whisk together the flour, starch, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.
2. In a separate bowl beat the eggs. Add the eggs and 1/2 cup of water to the flour mixture. Whisk until smooth. You want a fairly thin, crepe batter-like consistency. If you find it too thick, add another 1/4 cup of water. Try not to over-mix; you do not want to overdevelop the gluten. Allow the batter to rest in the fridge for 30 minutes to an hour.
3. While the batter is resting, prepare the vegetables. Remove the thick core from the cabbage half, then cut the halved cabbage in two. Thinly slice or shred the cabbage. Thinly slice the green onions. Grate the carrot and daikon if using.
4. Make the okonomiyaki sauce: Combine the ketchup, Worcestershire, soy sauce and honey/agave in a bowl. Taste and adjust to your liking. The sauce should be tangy, savory and a little sweet.
5. Combine the batter with the vegetable mixture.
6. Heat a cast-iron skillet or a nonstick skillet with about 3 tablespoons of oil over high heat. Once the oil is glistening and hot, lower the heat to medium low and add some of the cabbage mixture to the pan, gently nudging it into a circle shape. I like to make each pancake with about 2 cups of the mixture. For me, that makes an ideal-sized pancake that isn’t too hard to flip and one that will hold together. Cover the skillet with a lid for 3-4 minutes. Carefully flip over the pancake, and cover it with a lid for an additional 3-4 minutes, or until browned on both sides and cooked through. Make sure not to cook on too high of a heat or the pancake might burn on the outside while remaining raw in the center.
7. Serve hot topped with a generous spread of the okonomiyaki sauce, mayo if desired, sliced green onions and sesame seeds.
8. Slice and serve!

Sonya Sanford is a chef, food stylist and writer based out of Los Angeles who specializes in modern Jewish cooking. Follow Sanford at www.sonyasanford.com or on Instagram @sonyamichellesanford.

The Noshers food blog offers a dazzling array of new and classic Jewish recipes and food news, from Europe to Yemen, from challah to shakshuka and beyond. Check it out at www.TheNoshers.com.

Eight de-‘light’-ful gifts for eight Chanukah nights



Glow sticks.

Phil Shirley via Flickr

By Alina Dain Sharon
JNS.org

Chanukah is known as the Festival of Lights. On each night we light one more candle to remember the victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks and the rededication of the Second Temple. But there are more ways to create light than using Chanukah menorah candles. JNS.org offers a list of eight gifts, one for each night of the holiday, that are guaranteed to light up your friend or loved-one’s Chanukah.

Night 1: Lantern

Lanterns can make won-

derful gifts. Consider buying a unique, decorative lantern like this example from Etsy.com, or if you’re on a budget or feeling crafty, make it yourself. A gift can be much more meaningful when you try to make it more personal. Check out the instructions for these 11 DIY lanterns from Country Living that you can customize for in-door use during Chanukah.

Night 2: Chanukah Tree Topper

This Christmas tree topper, which gained publicity with an appearance on the “Shark Tank” reality TV show, might just be the thing for



The GummyLamp Gummy Bear Nightlight.

interfaith families. Celebrate Christmas and Chanukah together—Chrismukkah, as it’s become known—with this sparkling Star of David on top of your tree. Your tree’s lights will make the Chanukah tree topper shine even more.

Night 3: Glow Sticks

Kids love these on the 4th of July and New Year’s Eve, so why not on Chanukah? Get a bunch of these and distribute them to your family. Turn off the lights and have them wave these as you light your candles for an extra-glowing pizzazz.

Night 4: Night Light

For kids who don’t like the dark, a night light is a must. Make it a fun gift by picking a light with a cute design, such as the GummyLamp Gummy Bear Nightlight. Not only is the light fun and friendly, but kids will be reassured that they won’t have to fear the dark after the Chanukah lights go out. For a more adult-appropriate, decorative gift that is also Chanukah-themed, consider something like this Chanukah Glass Block Night Light on Etsy.com.

Night 5: Flashlight or Headlamp

For the gadget or camping enthusiast, a wearable headlamp will make a cool gift. Besthiking.net surveyed the best headlamps of 2015 here. A favorite of mine, which I purchased as a gift, is the Petzl Tikka headlamp. It is available at a number of sporting stores or on Amazon.com.

Night 6: Donate, Be Social, Be Creative

Use Chanukah as an occasion to help your local Jewish community. For instance, host a menorah or candle-donation drive, and use the items to “light up” the holiday for those in need. Alternatively, contribute to a drive already being run by your local synagogue. As part of this, you can even get your community in the creative mood by organizing an event to make your own Chanukah candles, which can then be donated. Here are candle-making instructions from Chabad.org.

Night 7: Unique Menorah

If you’re choosing to gift someone a menorah, pick something quirky and fun. The International Business Times compiled some examples in 2014. Additional



Alina Dain Sharon

Alina Dain Sharon’s unique Chanukah menorah.

Internet research will surely yield a multitude of options. Pictured is one that I received as a gift some time ago.

Night 8: Diamonds

What special someone doesn’t like diamonds? Whether or not you have an additional reason to splurge, or just because, a shining piece of jewelry will surely make her smile this Chanukah. While you can gift this

on any night, waiting until the eighth night of Chanukah could make this gift extra special. And if she wears the piece next to the menorah candles, she will sparkle with light like the beautiful lady she is.

Honorary mentions: The Glow in the Dark Dreidel Glasses or the LED Light-Up Chanukah Menorah Necklaces for some extra humor and fun!



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