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*Participants in the 2017 BBYO International Convention held in Dallas, Texas.*

## BBYO hosts International Convention in Orlando

ORLANDO—At a time when young people are socializing more online and interacting less in person, thousands of teens converged on Orlando Thursday, Feb. 15 for the BBYO International Convention, which goes through Monday, Feb. 19. With over 3,000 teens from 36 countries, and thousands of educators, thought and business leaders, celebrities, political figures and philanthropists coming together for BBYO International Convention over Presidents Weekend, this epic event will offer opportunities for Jewish teens to connect with their peers and consider how to make the future

their own. IC is one of the largest Jewish communal leadership events in North America and the single-largest gathering of Jewish teen leaders worldwide.

Among the many slated to address the crowd at BBYO International Convention 2018 are Aly Raisman, World Champion gymnast and best-selling author; Jason Kander, CNN & Crooked Media contributor, and Missouri's 39th secretary of state; Caryl Stern, president and CEO of UNICEFUSA; Josh Peck, actor and social media influencer; Susan Bro, mother of Heather Heyer and co-founder of The Heather Heyer Foundation; Abby

Wambach, Olympic Gold medalist and FIFA Women's World Cup champion; and MK Omer Barlev, member of the Israeli Knesset. There will also be video addresses from Nikki Haley, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and Justin Trudeau, Canadian prime minister.

As attendance at IC skyrockets each year, the event is a case study for teens showing increased demand for high-quality Jewish experiences with their peers. This year's convention theme, "Together We Will," speaks to today's

**BBYO** on page 15A

## Orlando Hadassah presents ‘Un après-midi à Paris’

The Orlando Chapter of Hadassah presents “An afternoon in Paris,” the annual Bunny Rosen Women’s Heart Health Luncheon and Fashion Show, on Sunday, March 4, 2018.

The Bunny Rosen Women’s Heart Health Endowment was established to honor the memory of Bunny Rosen for

her tireless efforts on behalf of Orlando Hadassah. This annual charity event is a permanent memorial to Rosen and her endeavors in support of Hadassah’s good works for Jews in Israel and worldwide and in particular all women at home and abroad.

The Luncheon and Fashion Show will be held at The Alfond Inn with apparel provided by Evelyn and Arthur Boutique of Palm Beach and Winter Park.

Everything about this venue would have delighted Rosen, who gave this event her highest priority and worked tirelessly to make it the happening of the year.

Every Beat Counts TM is Hadassah’s Women’s Heart Health program and was founded to educate women about the risks, detection and prevention of heart disease, the No.1 cause of death among women in the U.S. and worldwide. One in three women over the age of 20 has some form of cardiovascular disease. Here’s an alarming reality: 500,000 women in the US die of heart disease every year. Heart disease kills more women than stroke, lung

cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and breast cancer combined. Although women share many of the same risk factors as men, at-risk women are less likely to be tested or treated in a timely manner. And when presenting with the same symptoms or risk factors, women are less likely to be referred for diagnostic testing that would be standard for men.

Hadassah promotes Every Beat Counts TM to get the word out to women that cardiac screenings are a key factor in heart disease prevention. The program pioneers in teaching women how to prevent heart disease through heart health programs, educational materials, a walking program and an awareness campaign about this No.1 killer of women.

Orlando Hadassah is committed to promoting heart disease awareness through EveryBeatCounts in coordination with the chapter’s “Saving Heartbeats” program which prepares women to perform CPR until the Paramedics arrive.” The Bunny Rosen Luncheon and Fashion show contributes charitable funds to



**Bunny Rosen, Z'L**

promote women’s heart health in the greater Orlando Area.

The luncheon and fashion show is open to the public. The menu offers a choice of Pan Seared Snapper or Wild Mushroom Ravioli. The couvert is \$45 per person and tables of 10 are available. Make Checks payable to Hadassah. Send checks, meal selections and table reservations to:

Orlando Hadassah, 1253 Eggleston Drive, DeLand, FL 32724

For more information, call 407-415-6892.

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## The truth behind the Pulse massacre



*Shown here (l-r): Yasmine Mohammed, Asra Q. Nomani and Orli Peter, Ph.D.*

Twenty months after the terrorist attack at Pulse Nightclub, three courageous women—a Muslim reformer, a Jewish feminist and an ex-Muslim—each of whom have first-hand experience with the trauma resulting from these attacks, will hold an honest, responsible and long overdue discussion about the causes of bigotry and terrorism.

This Women’s interfaith

panel discussion—titled Three women, One world, One peace—will be held Sunday, Feb. 18, at the American Legion Post 53, 2874 Sanford Ave in Sanford. A coffee/pastry reception till be held at 11 a.m., and the panel discussion will be from noon to 1:30 p.m.

They will discuss how the Pulse massacre came to hap-

**Pulse** on page 15A

## Annual J Ball will be rockin’

On March 14, The Roth Family JCC will host the biggest party of the year—its annual JBall. Rock the night away from 6:30-9:30 p.m. to the music of Michael Andrew and the J Life Magazine Swing Band at the Orlando Science.

This year’s honoree to receive the Harriet Weiss JCC Legacy Award is Carol McNally, who has inspired countless children as the director of the Richard S. Adler Early Childhood Learning Center for 29 years.

While tripping the light fantastic, chomp on heavy hors d’oeuvres, conquer the open bar, sift through the silent auction, and play at the gaming tables.

The attire is dressy casual or business-casual clothes—even though it is called a Ball, this isn’t a formal event.

General admission is \$100; preschool and J University parents, JAO families and senior citizens (65+), \$75.

If you require babysitting,



*Jazz singer, bandleader and actor Michael Andrew.*

please e-mail register@orlandojcc.org with the names & ages of your children. The \$15 fee includes activities and pizza at the science center.

All proceeds benefit The Roth Family JCC.

The Science Center is located at 777 E. Princeton Street, Orlando. For more information, call 407-645-5933.

## New entrance at JCC

Beginning Monday, Feb. 12, The Roth Family JCC’s preschool entrance was permanently relocated to within the JCC, no longer allowing for direct access from the parking lot. The exterior facing preschool doors that open to the parking lot will become emergency exit only doors for the preschool.

The new preschool entrance is across from the sports and fitness hallway. It will be the only entrance and exit from the preschool. With nearly 300 children in the school, this will create additional foot (and stroller) traffic and

possible logjams through our main entrance and lobby. This is a complication the staff purposefully chose to take on in order to create a safer JCC.

“We ask that everyone please be patient as we all get used to the new normal. Please remember to scan your JCC membership card even when there’s a line,” said Robby Etzkin, executive director.

# Mossad agent tells story of capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann



*Avner Avraham, former Israeli Mossad agent and curator of "Operation Finale: The Capture & Trial of Adolf Eichmann."*

## Congregation Sinai annual golf tournament

Congregation Sinai, a nonprofit organization serving the community in and around Clermont, often holds food drives to help those in need and interfaith services and activities to promote better understanding among different cultures. The annual golf tournament helps grow the congregation and further community activities.

Open to all golfers, the

tournament will be held at Green Valley Golf Course in Clermont on Saturday, March 3. Registration is at 8 a.m.; shotgun start is 8:30 a.m.; and lunch and award will follow the game.

The tournament will be played as a scramble with 4-person teams. Proper golf attire is required.

The cost is \$55 per golfer. This includes 18 holes of golf, range balls, lunch

after the round, on-course contests, prizes and awards. Contests include "Closest to the Pin" and "Closest to the Line."

Payments are due by March 1, payable to Congregation Sinai GT, and send to Congregation Sinai, 303A US 27N, Minneola, FL 34715.

For more information, contact Peter Sobel at 352-989-4900 or email petesobel@gmail.com.

The Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida, in partnership with the Florida Holocaust Museum, will sponsor a conversation with Mossad agent Avner Avraham on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 6 p.m.

Avraham curated the exhibit titled Operation Finale: The Capture & Trial of Adolf Eichmann, which is on exhibit at the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg, Fla. His talk will feature "behind the scenes" stories of the capture of Adolph Eichmann and the importance of his trial.

Fifty-six years ago, Adolf Eichmann, who had been in charge of transporting millions of European Jews to

death camps, sat in a courtroom for a trial that would be among the first in history to be completely televised. The trial captivated millions of people across the globe and it was the first time many of the details of the Holocaust were revealed.

The dramatic story behind one of the world's most notorious escaped Nazi war criminals being brought to justice is told using recently declassified artifacts from the Mossad, Israel's Secret Intelligence Service. Operation Finale: The Capture & Trial of Adolf Eichmann opened to the public on Saturday, Feb. 10, and is on display through July 15, 2018 at The Florida Holocaust Museum, located

at 55 Fifth Street South in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Avraham is a world-renowned expert in Mossad operations, lecturer, writer, exhibition and film producer, and curator. He is currently a senior advisor to the Hollywood film "Operation Finale." In the past, Avraham served as a major in the Israel Defense Forces, an intelligence officer, and a detective in the Israel Police.

There will be a short Q&A following his presentation.

This program is generously sponsored by Patti and Roy Ambinder.

For more information regarding the Holocaust Center's programs and exhibits, see [www.holocaustedu.org](http://www.holocaustedu.org).

## Rollins College presents a lecture on legacies of Jewish women

The Jewish Studies Program at Rollins College is pleased to announce a lecture by Professor Laura Levitt of Temple University titled "Jewish Women, American Feminism: Political, Religious, and Cultural Legacies." The lecture is in honor of Dr. Rita Bornstein, President Emerita, Rollins College and will be held Wednesday, March 7 at 7 p.m. in the Galloway Room, Mills Building.

Laura Levitt is professor of Religion, Jewish Studies and Gender at Temple University where she has chaired the religion department and directed both the Jewish studies and the Gender, Sexuality and Women's

studies programs. She is the author of "American Jewish Loss after the Holocaust" (2007) and "Jews and Feminism: The Ambivalent Search for Home" (1997) and an editor of "Judaism Since Gender" (1997). She is completing a book, titled "Tainted Objects: Holocaust Evidence and Criminal Archives," about trauma and loss and how material artifacts make these painful legacies manifest.

This lecture is free of charge and open to the community. For further information, please contact Dr. Yudit Greenberg, director of the Jewish Studies Program, Rollins College at [ygreenberg@rollins.edu](mailto:ygreenberg@rollins.edu) or call the



*Professor Laura Levitt*

office of the Department of Philosophy and Religion 407 646-2139.

## Kids Mega Babka-llah Bake braids together fun and tradition

Jewish children from across Orlando are joining together with the task of mixing, kneading and making blessings at Orlando's first-ever Mega Babka-llah Bake on Sunday, Feb. 18, at 2 p.m., at the Chabad of Greater Orlando, located at 708 Lake Howell Rd., Maitland.

Organized by Chabad of Greater Orlando, participants will learn how to mix, knead and shape their own traditional challah and twist together delicious chocolate babka, a traditional Eastern-European Jewish sweet cake.

Challah, considered one of the most famous Jewish foods, often refers to a braided bread traditionally eaten on Shabbat and other holidays. However, in its more basic and biblical meaning, challah is the piece of dough that is traditionally separated and consecrated to God while baking bread, a mitzvah that has been performed by Jews for more than 100 generations.

"Baking challah is a time-honored mitzvah (commandment) dating back to our matriarchs," says Esther Hoffer, co-director of CKids and one of the event organizers. "This

is a great opportunity for so many Jewish children from all different backgrounds, to come together and celebrate our heritage in a fun and hands-on manner."

This year brings added significance as the world marks 50 years since the Rebbe—Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous

memory—initiated the Mitzvah Campaigns, a historic undertaking that lowered the barriers to religious engagement and emphasized the infinite potential within every individual.

This event is open to children ages 5-12. For more information and to RSVP, visit [www.ChabadOrlando.org](http://www.ChabadOrlando.org).

## Tot Shabbat at Beth Am

*Join Cantor Nina Fine as she leads a Tot Shabbat and Family Shabbat service on Friday, Feb. 23, at Congregation Beth Am in Longwood.*

*The Tot Shabbat begins at 5:30 p.m. and is followed by dinner at 6 p.m. The evening then continues with a Family Shabbat service for all at 7 p.m. All are invited to attend Shabbat services Saturday at 9:30 a.m.*

*Dinner is only \$5 per person with no charge for children 5 and under. Contact the CBA office at 407-862-3505 or [shalom@congbetham.org](mailto:shalom@congbetham.org) to make payment or for more information.*



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# Poland defies US, Israel by signing law ‘whitewashing’ Holocaust

(JTA)—Polish President Andrzej Duda signed and finalized a law limiting rhetoric about the Holocaust, leading to a rebuke from U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

The United States is “disappointed,” Tillerson said Tuesday, following Duda’s final approval of a law introduced on Jan 26 in the Polish parliament. It prescribes up to six years in prison to anyone who blames the Polish state or nation for crimes the law says were perpetrated exclusively by Nazi Germany during World War II.

The “enactment of this law adversely affects freedom of

speech and academic inquiry,” Reuters reported Tillerson as saying.

In announcing that he would sign the legislation, Duda added that he would send it to Poland’s Constitutional Tribunal for review. Ukraine, Lithuania and Latvia have passed similar laws since 2010.

The State Department, in an unusual statement last week, said the law could have “repercussions” for U.S.-Polish relations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he opposed the law, which he called “baseless.” Yad Vashem,

Israel’s state authority on the Holocaust, said it understands the frustration in Poland with “misleading” terms like “Polish death camps” but added it opposed the law because it would stifle historical research and debate about the Holocaust.

Unlike most European nations under Nazi occupation, Poles were not allowed any degree of self rule and none of the Polish state’s organs were integrated into the Nazi-led genocide. In addition to 3 million Polish Jews, the Nazis killed 1.9 million Polish non-Jews, whom they classified as racially inferior to Aryans.

Nonetheless, Polish individuals, including fighters in resistance militias, killed thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, according to Holocaust historian Efraim Zuroff of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. Many other Jews were betrayed to the Nazis by non-Jewish Poles.

However, Poland and the Netherlands are the only countries in Europe where resistance groups were formed exclusively to save Jews from the Holocaust. Poland has the highest number of Righteous among the Nations—individuals recognized by Yad Vashem and Israel for risking



**Polish President Andrzej Duda**

their lives to save Jews from the Holocaust. Its tally of more than 6,700 Righteous

is followed by the Netherlands’ 5,595 recipients of that honor.

## Debate over Polish Holocaust law prompts an anti-Semitic media backlash

**By Katarzyna Markusz**

WARSAW, Poland (JTA)—Debate over a Polish law that proposes to outlaw rhetoric blaming Poland for Nazi crimes has prompted a wave of anti-Semitic comments in the Polish media.

RMF, one of the largest Polish commercial radio stations, suspended a journalist who wrote about the “war with the Jews.” Poland’s state-owned television station apologized to the Israeli ambassador for a tweet alleging that the Jewish opposition to the law was part of an attempt to seize Polish property.

Also, a former priest began selling T-shirts denying Polish responsibility for a pogrom against Jews by their non-Jewish neighbors during the Nazi occupation.

All three events came after the Polish Senate approved an amendment to the National Remembrance Act levying a penalty of up to three years in prison for those who blame the Polish nation for the crimes of Germany committed during World War II.

It also outlawed the phrase “Polish death camps.” The bill must still be signed by the president.

Historians of the era, Jewish groups, the U.S. State Department and the Israeli government are all critical of the law, which they said could inhibit academic freedom and distort the historical record of World War II.

“Poles, we are at war! We are at war with the Jews! Not for the first time in our history,” wrote Bogdan Zalewski, an RMF journalist, on his Facebook page on Thursday. “We can find ourselves in a state of absolute isolation that completely exhausts us down to annihilation. In my opinion, it is necessary for Poles to be aware and to work on the development of the national spirit.”

His statement appeared just after the Senate approved the amendment.

He went on to blame Jews for the “iron fist” of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe, and accused the Jews of a reign of terror against the British and Arabs in prestate Israel.

“The U.S. authorities were full of Jews in many key positions. Many of these Jews have been actively engaged in espionage in favor of the Soviets,” he said.

An RMF colleague denounced Zalewski’s statements.

“I can only condemn these words,” said Bogdan Frymorgen, a producer and journalist. “I can only show contempt for a man who in the 21st century, with full awareness of the horrors of the previous century, goes to ‘war with the Jews,’ regardless of being a public figure. Virtually, I can spit in his face.”

The radio station suspended Zalewski, who apologized and deleted his post.

On Feb. 2, the Israeli Embassy in Warsaw condemned a tweet from the state-owned TVP Info Channel claiming that Israel’s reaction to the new law was part of an attempt to reclaim properties in Poland.

“It’s hard to find a brighter example of an anti-Semitic fake news,” the embassy statement read.



Flickr Commons/Piotr Drabik

**TVP, the state-owned television station in Poland, apologized to an Israeli ambassador for a tweet accusing Israel of ulterior motives in objecting to a new law regulating how Poles may discuss the Holocaust.**

The public television station apologized to Israeli Ambassador Anna Azari, saying that the tweet “was a mistake” and relied on an unverified source of information.

“Disciplinary consequences will be drawn against this person,” TVP said in a statement.

Last week, a TVP host and a guest mocked critics of the legislation, suggesting that Jews were in part responsible for their own slaughter during the Holocaust and joking that the death camps should be referred to as “Jewish death camps.” The host apologized, but the guest, Rafal Ziemi-

kiewicz, said he didn’t regret using the term “Jewish death camps.”

Ziemkiewicz, a writer and journalist, also demanded the resumption of the exhumation of victims’ remains in Jedwabne, the site of the 1941

**Debate** on page 15A

## NASCAR’s first Israeli driver



**Alon Day at the NASCAR finales.**

Israeli native Alon Day was recognized by The Algemeiner newspaper as among “The Top 100 People Positively Influencing Jewish Life, 2017.” The accolade caps an incredible year for Day, which included being named “Israel’s Athlete of the Year”; debuting as a driver for BK Racing against the world’s top stock car drivers in NASCAR’s highest level, the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series; and earning the

title champion of the NASCAR Whelen Euro Series.

Day shares the Top 100 list with luminaries that include Ron Dermer, Israeli ambassador to the US; Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer; Vice President Mike Pence; Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook; Lillian Pinkus, president of AIPAC; Sheldon Adelson; Bob Dylan; and Gal Gadot.

When notified of his selection, Day said he was “really

excited and honored to be part of a list that included such well-known and great names.” Day, who regularly waves the Israeli flag in victory lane, further said, “Wherever I go and race, I am proud to represent the Jewish community and Israel, that will always be a part of me.”

Born in Ashdod, Israel, Day now lives in Tel Aviv. Currently 26, he began his motorsports career at the age of nine.

was chased for a short time, tackled and then returned to custody.

Kadar was charged in Israel in April 2017 with thousands of counts on offenses that include publishing false information, causing panic, computer hacking and money laundering. He was arrested in Israel in March in a joint operation with the FBI.

According to the indictment Kadar, who has dual U.S. and Israeli citizenship, made threats to 2,000 institutions around the world, including the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., and other Israeli diplomatic missions, schools, malls, police stations, hospitals and airlines.

Threats to three airlines, including Israel’s national carrier El Al, led to planes making emergency landings,

dumping fuel and requiring military escorts, according to the indictment.

His parents and attorney have said he has a benign brain tumor that affects his behavior, as well as a very low IQ.

The Jerusalem Post reported on Monday that the United States has backed away from seeking the hoaxter’s extradition, but may seek to have him extradited and tried in the United States after he finished his trial in Israel.

The U.S. Justice Department in April 2017 charged him with making threatening calls to JCCs in Florida, conveying false information to the police and cyberstalking. The U.S. reportedly made an informal request for his extradition at the time, which was rebuffed by Israel.

## JCC bomb hoaxter briefly escapes Israeli police custody

(JTA)—The American-Israeli man charged with making hundreds of bomb threats to Jewish community centers in the United States, including The Roth Family JCC in Maitland, and elsewhere briefly escaped from police custody in Israel.

The computer hacker, 19, from Ashkelon in southern Israel, attended a hearing in Jerusalem District Court on Monday. Following the hearing, Michael Kadar was taken to an interrogation and detention center in Jerusalem before being transferred to the Nitzan Prison and Detention Center in Ramla, where he is being held.

After exiting a police car, Kadar, who managed to loosen a leg shackle, pushed away the security officer accompanying him and made a run for it, according to reports. He

# Israel built a ‘wall’ and is deporting illegal aliens—America can learn

**By Caroline Glick**

A decade ago, Israelis gave little thought to the issue of illegal immigration.

In 2006, there were 2,766 illegal migrants in Israel, nearly all of them from Eritrea and Sudan, who had entered Israel through its then-open, 150-mile border with Egypt.

In 2007, the dam of illegal immigration burst.

According to Israel's Immigration and Population Authority, 5,179 African migrants—predominantly from Eritrea and Sudan—entered Israel from Egypt in 2007. The illegal migration reached its peak in 2011, when 17,281 arrived.

When you consider that in 2011, Israel's total

population stood at 7.7 million, that means that as a portion of its total population, Israel absorbed 95 times more illegal aliens that year than Spain did.

The illegal aliens settled overwhelmingly in poor neighborhoods in Tel Aviv. Violent crime in the areas skyrocketed with their arrival. Sexual offenses in neighborhoods with high percentages of African migrants were 3.5 times higher than in their rates in the general population. Violent crime was 2.5 times higher. Robberies occurred six times more often.

A survey of area residents taken by the Israeli police in 2015 showed that only 38 percent felt secure outside their homes after dark. Only 43 percent felt safe in their homes after dark.

Israel's parliament, the Knesset, began passing laws to provide negative incentives to illegal aliens. One law required migrants' employers to set aside 20 percent of their wages, which the migrants would receive only upon leaving the country.

Most importantly, in 2012, Israel began building a “wall”—an impenetrable fence—along its border with Egypt. It was completed in 2013. The results were dramatic. Illegal immigration fell immediately by 98 percent.

In 2013, 123 African migrants entered the country. In 2017, no one arrived.

Today, among the 68,000 illegal migrants from Africa who have entered Israel in the past decade, 40,000 still remain in the country. And so last month, the Knesset passed a law enjoining the government to deport them either to their countries of origin or to willing third countries.

Rwanda and Uganda reportedly signed secret agreements with Israel permitting the migrants to relocate to their countries. Open-borders champions leaked the deals to the media, hoping to force the Rwandan and Ugandan governments to cancel the deals. This month, both governments denied ever signing such agreements, although migrants are being sent to both countries.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees deems both countries safe. And, for that matter, in February 2017, the Swiss Administrative Court determined that illegal migrants from Eritrea will not be in danger if they are deported back to Eritrea. That court ruling followed a report issued a month before by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), an

EU think tank that helps Brussels determine immigration policy. EASO concluded that Eritrean asylum seekers are not eligible for asylum or refugee status because they face no danger from repatriation.

Following the Knesset move, the Israeli government decided that all illegal migrants who agree to leave Israel by the end of March will be paid \$3500 and receive a free one-way ticket, either to third countries which have agreed to accept them, or to their countries of origin, whichever they prefer. Those who refuse to leave Israel by the end of March will be incarcerated pending deportation, and Israel will pay them a substantially smaller amount for leaving the country.

But according to the U.S.-based Atlantic, “For the Jewish activists who believe that Israel should be built on what they see as Jewish values, the next few weeks will be a crucial test of its identity as a nation and how it is perceived by the world.”

This claim—that Israel's policy is at odds with Jewish values—was made by the Atlantic's Emma Green in a long article criticizing the new Knesset law.

Green's article is part of a massive campaign being waged by Israel's far left, with massive support from liberal American Jewish groups. The campaign's purpose is to demonize the law, and coerce Israel's government into not enforcing it.

The left's campaign against Israel bears notable similarities to the campaign being waged by leftist activists and Democratic politicians in

**Israel** on page 15A

## Everywhere

### Preserving the integrity of our Jewish institutions

**By Mel Pearlman**

Not everyone in the Jewish community is happy with two recent announcements concerning respectively, the Jewish Academy of Orlando and the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center.

I participated in the organizational meetings back in the 1970s for what was then designated to be the Hebrew Day School of Central Florida. I also served on the board for a number of years. The original intention of the school was to furnish a learning institution of excellence in both secular and Judaic studies. It was built with Jewish money for Jewish students.

During the course of its history, the school had many challenges, including finding the appropriate level and intensity of the Judaic studies curriculum that would satisfy the parents who came from various Jewish backgrounds and levels of observance. The excellence of the secular curriculum was never in doubt. Parental intervention created tension with the faculty and the several successive directors, all of whom ended up with short-term tenures because of these difficulties.

After a crisis in the early '90s, which saw many students withdraw from the school for one or two academic years, the school regained its footing. Many, but not all of the students who had sought alternative schools (including Chabad's Torah Academy in Longwood) returned to the school on the Jewish campus in Maitland. The school ultimately found its equilibrium in the years following the crisis of the '90s, and has provided excellent secular and Jewish studies to our Jewish community up to this point.

The recent announcement that the school will now open its doors to the general community raises serious doubt whether long term the school can maintain the high quality of its Judaic studies curriculum. Suppose the number of non-Jewish students becomes a significant portion of the student body and non-Jewish parental and financial pressure is exerted to weaken the Judaic part of the daily curriculum. If that occurs it will be a setback for the Jewish community and a blow to Jewish continuity.

The recent announcement that the Holocaust Center will be moving to a location far removed from the Jewish campus in Maitland to a new and expansive home in Orlando,

although heralded by Federation and Holocaust Center leadership, also raises serious questions about the status of the Maitland campus and the Holocaust Center's mission in the years ahead.

With the diminished presence of the Jewish Academy of Orlando from the sale of one of its buildings (with no guarantee that the new owners will restrict the building's use for a Jewish purpose), its announcement that it is opening up its enrollment to the general community, and now the ultimate abandonment of the Holocaust Center facilities on the Jewish campus in Maitland, the JCC will be the only other constituent agency, along with Federation offices, as occupants of the once thriving Maitland campus. What is to become of the campus which has served as an important center for Jewish life in Central Florida? Will other parts of it also be sold off?

The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center has done great work in teaching tolerance and mutual respect to the diverse communities in Central Florida, but its heart and soul is to remember the Holocaust as a unique Jewish experience from which the community can learn these lessons of tolerance, respect and other aspects of human relations. Will the Holocaust as a unique Jewish experience be lost and the Holocaust Center, founded by Jewish survivors, lose its Jewish character in future generations by removing itself from the Jewish campus in Maitland?

In you wish to comment or respond to any of the contents herein you can reach me at melpearlman322@gmail.com. Please do so in a rational, thoughtful, respectful and civil manner. If you wish to respond by ranting and raving, please go into your bathroom, lock the door and shout your brains out.

*Mel Pearlman has been practicing law in Central Florida for the past 45 years. He has served as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando; on the District VII Mental Health Board, as Special Prosecutor for the City of Winter Park, Florida; and on the Board of Directors of the Central Florida Research and Development Authority. He was a charter member of the Board of Directors and served as the first Vice President of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida, as well as its first pro-bono legal counsel.*

## Letter from Israel

### Palestine?

**By Ira Sharkansky**

There's a question mark alongside the title of this note, insofar as the issues involved in assessing what is described as Palestine raise a host of questions and few clear answers. The problems are normative, i.e., what should be, as well as practical, i.e., what is and what is likely. Even what is, with respect to Palestine, opens us to arguments on several points.

The history of Palestinians is as confused as that of any people. And while the designation of Palestinians is problematic, so is that of any nationality.

Jews are as much of a mixture as any other ethnic, religious, or nationality group. However, we came into existence, and have been arguing about ourselves for something like 3,000 years.

Palestinians is a designation for a people is newer than many, perhaps traceable to the 1920s with a name much older assigned to a fuzzily defined territory. Many who call themselves Palestinians have ancestors who migrated from elsewhere within the most recent century.

The designation of land and boundaries is confused by what is, and is not, written in the Balfour Declaration and what came after it in the Peel Commission, the 1948 war and Jordan's occupation of the West Bank, the 1967 war and subsequent events in the West Bank and Gaza.

Also in the picture is the Palestinians' role as the darling of Muslim politics, the unusual status of those claiming refugee status (including descendants to the third of later generations), and the troubled history, along with individual accomplishments, of Palestinians in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gulf, and elsewhere.

The boundaries and status of Gaza have been stable for more than a decade. It's been left to fester in the morass of Palestinian politics, supplied and closed off as hostile by Israel and Egypt. Overall, its people don't seem worse off than the average among African countries, but it gets more attention and concern than anything to the south by virtue of being Palestinian. The West Bank is better off, and gets even more attention. Israeli settlement and the sensitivities of Jerusalem are seldom far from headlines or the agendas of the United Nations and several national governments. The area is widely perceived as Palestinian, but the details are less than certain.

History is one of the problems. The name “Palestine” goes back to Rome, but there has never been an independent country or state of Palestinians widely recognized. The lack of international recognition for Jordan's occupation (1948-67) is part of the muddle. Only Britain and Pakistan saw it as kosher.

Whose land is it? Whose was it? There's no answer that is not a muddle. It's possible to find in Israeli opinions and official actions that the entire West Bank is “disputed” due to the lack of international recognition of the Jordanian occupation. But there is also Israeli acceptance of a Palestinian National Authority and reservations about Israeli rights in the area beyond the 1967 lines. And there are religious and nationalist Jews who are convinced that it's all ours, given by God prior to the appearance of any Empire.

The muddle continues in confusion about Israeli policy with respect to settlements. There is restraint against new construction outside of established settlement blocs, along with a tolerance of “piratical” settlements, wherever, by small groups of highly motivated activists. The courts and government agencies have removed settlements or neighborhoods judged to have been built on private Palestinian land, but the process has taken years and in some cases remains incomplete.

Involved in the muddle are repeated Palestinian rejections of opportunities to acquire firm title over substantial territory, presumably acquiring recognition as a Palestinian state. Their record of rejection goes back to British efforts in the 1930s and continues through prominent instances in 2000 and again a half decade later.

There have been several waves of Palestinian violence, continuing until now with individual attacks from the West Bank and missiles from Gaza. Israeli analysts detect an uptick in Palestinian violence since Trump's announcement about the status of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Two of the most terror attacks killed young rabbis, the fathers of large families, who lived in West Bank settlements not formally recognized by Israel. Both events produced waves of reaction, with rightists demanding that their settlements be recognized as proper responses to Palestinian terror. We also heard reservations from the left, with people saying

**Palestine** on page 15A



Although heralded by Federation and Holocaust Center leadership, also raises serious questions about the status of the Maitland campus and the Holocaust Center's mission in the years ahead.

With the diminished presence of the Jewish Academy of Orlando from the sale of one of its buildings (with no guarantee that the new owners will restrict the building's use for a Jewish purpose), its announcement that it is opening up its enrollment to the general community, and now the ultimate abandonment of the Holocaust Center facilities on the Jewish campus in Maitland, the JCC will be the only other constituent agency, along with Federation offices, as occupants of the once thriving Maitland campus. What is to become of the campus which has served as an important center for Jewish life in Central Florida? Will other parts of it also be sold off?

The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center has done great work in teaching tolerance and mutual respect to the diverse communities in Central Florida, but its heart and soul is to remember the Holocaust as a unique Jewish experience from which the community can learn these lessons of tolerance, respect and other aspects of human relations. Will the Holocaust as a unique Jewish experience be lost and the Holocaust Center, founded by Jewish survivors, lose its Jewish character in future generations by removing itself from the Jewish campus in Maitland?

If you wish to comment or respond to any of the contents herein you can reach me at melpearlman322@gmail.com. Please do so in a rational, thoughtful, respectful and civil manner. If you wish to respond by ranting and raving, please go into your bathroom, lock the door and shout your brains out.

*Mel Pearlman has been practicing law in Central Florida for the past 45 years. He has served as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando; on the District VII Mental Health Board, as Special Prosecutor for the City of Winter Park, Florida; and on the Board of Directors of the Central Florida Research and Development Authority. He was a charter member of the Board of Directors and served as the first Vice President of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida, as well as its first pro-bono legal counsel.*

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

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# Why everyone should care about the fate of Z Street

**By Jonathan Tobin**

(JNS)—Justice was finally done last week for a Jewish activist organization. After nearly eight years of stalling, disingenuous excuses and outright lies, the Internal Revenue Service finally admitted wrongdoing in preventing Z Street—a pro-Israel group—from obtaining nonprofit status when it applied for it back in 2010. Z Street's story is unique in some ways in that it ended in the group's vindication. Its founder, lawyer and journalist Lori Lowenthal Marcus, proved that contrary to the old saying, you can fight city hall and win.

But there's more to the lawsuit, which she pursued with her husband, Jerome,

than a happy ending. What happened to Z Street should scare everyone, no matter where they stand on the political spectrum. The fact that so few seem to care about it tells us a lot about what's wrong with contemporary politics.

The Z Street case must be viewed in the context of what came to be known as the IRS scandal. During the first term of the Obama administration, the IRS began subjecting conservative groups that applied for nonprofit 501(c)(4) status as education organizations to the sort of special scrutiny not applied to liberal groups. This policy

was the result of the dismay felt by the administration and many Democrats about the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, which stopped the government from interfering with political speech made by nonprofit groups. While no direct link between the White House and IRS decisions was ever produced, what followed was very much in line with the administration's desire to prevent conservatives from taking advantage of the law. But it was not until after the 2010 midterms and Obama's re-election in 2012—when the work of those nonprofits might have impacted public opinion—that the controversy was aired and the policy reversed.

That's where Z Street comes in. It was applying for 501(c)(3) status as a group that sought to educate the public about Israel. But its support for Jewish settlements put it in the cross hairs of federal bureaucrats, who apparently got the message from on high that such an organization was to be put through the wringer.

As was the case with the concerted process slowdown of some conservative groups, the attention given to Z Street was not about whether it was actually eligible for nonprofit status under the law. Rather, it was a function of the Obama administration's dislike of their particular politics. Z

Street was a supporter of the settlement movement at a time when Obama was determined to force the Israeli government to stop building in Judea and Samaria. That's why Z Street suddenly found itself having to answer questions about its beliefs. Even worse, it was flagged for

a terrorist organization by the U.S. government, yet somehow, contributions to a group that supported Jews were deemed a possible threat while those who distributed funds in a place where involvement with actual terrorists was inevitable seemed of no interest to the IRS.

**Rather than being filed away as old news, the Z Street case should be setting off alarm bells since it sounds an alert as to how a president can use the enormous power of the federal government to settle political scores and hamstring opponents**

determination as to whether or not it supported terrorism simply because its mission was concerned with the state of Israel.

What makes that even more outrageous is that during the period from 2010 to 2016 when Z Street's application was held up, the IRS granted numerous applications for nonprofit status from groups that were raising money in the United States to spend in Gaza, which was governed as a terrorist state by Hamas. Hamas was designated as

This was not an inadvertent error. During the course of their lawsuit, the Marcuses' discovery uncovered the fact that the IRS was drawing up lists of groups that opposed the Obama administration's policy toward Israel by drawing upon information from viciously anti-Zionist websites like MondoWeiss and Electronic Intifada. The bureaucrats seeking to mold tax policy to fit Obama's opinions about the Middle East were not only brazenly seeking to politicize something that

should be above politics, but were also aware that doing so in this manner was wrong since they wrote to each other about avoiding an email trail that could document their intentions.

The good news is that the government's attempt to politicize the tax code in this manner flopped. Though it took six years, Z Street got its nonprofit status, and a year later, the Marcuses prevailed in their lawsuit against the IRS. But theirs might be considered a Pyrrhic victory. The six-year wait made it impossible for the group to raise money; it was virtually shut down during this period. Its future is uncertain. The Marcuses beat the government, but only because unlike most other activists, they are both lawyers, and could devote the time and resources to a battle most people could never think about fighting, let alone winning.

That's why what happened with the IRS in the last administration isn't, as the 44th president's apologists insist, a faux scandal ginned up by his political opponents. Rather than being filed away as old news, the Z Street case should be setting off alarm bells since it sounds an alert as to how a president can use the enormous power of the federal government to settle political scores and hamstring opponents.

The irony here is that right

now, opponents of the Trump administration are loudly voicing their fears that the current White House intends to overturn the justice system or otherwise interfere with the functioning of democratic government. But many of the same people either ignored or winked at genuine—and now documented—abuses carried out by an administration they liked.

In this sense, what happened with the IRS is very much like the current dispute about the origins of the Russia investigation. Where you stand on it depends on which party you support. That spirit of rabid partisanship, coupled with the sense of self-righteous entitlement to use the bureaucracy in this manner, motivates administrations to play fast and loose with the rules to gain a political advantage. That is always the most potent threat to democracy. The Marcuses happen to be people I'm proud to call dear friends. But even if you disagree with them about everything, the price they paid to prevail against an arrogant federal government ought to worry you. The fact that so few were willing to back them in their struggle or care about its outcome is what really worries me.

*Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathan\_tobin.*

It may not be too late to influence the outcome.

If you'd like to express your thoughts on the matter to one of hundreds of Polish diplomatic offices around the world, please email me for a complete list of their emails.

*Jonathan Feldstein was born and educated in the U.S. and immigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. He has a three-decade career in nonprofit fundraising and marketing and throughout his life and career, he has become a respected bridge between Jews and Christians. He writes regularly on major Christian web sites about Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He can be reached at FirstPersonIsrael@gmail.com.*

## A very bad Polish joke

**By Jonathan Feldstein**

It's like the beginning of a bad Polish joke: A group of Polish politicians go into a room to debate their role in the Holocaust... The problem is there's no funny punch line, except to underscore all the other funny punch lines of many more Polish jokes before.

The bill that was approved by the Polish lower house of parliament this past week (giving new meaning to the term "lower house"), and now this week by the Polish Senate, makes it a criminal offense to mention Polish complicity in crimes committed during the Holocaust. If enacted, the law would fine or jail people who blame Poland or Poles for Nazi atrocities committed on its soil during World War II, including the genocide of millions of Jews.

Even foreigners would be subject to as much as three years in prison under the law. This leads me to wonder whether they would try to enforce the law overseas, or create a black list of people who have violated the law and would be rounded up upon arriving in Poland. Will the Poles arrest my daughter when she arrives on her class trip there?

Poles may be offended by the use of the term "Polish death camp" (Polski obóz zagłady) but the reality is, that that was the reality. The Nazis didn't want the dirty business of mass murder to be overwhelmingly in their country. Poland was a good choice both because anti-Semitism was inbred among a population of accomplices, and because it had the highest concentration of Jews in Europe.

Pretending it weren't the

case, or sanitizing it to create an image of how they would like to be perceived, is not just fake history, it's an offense to the reality of the Holocaust in which Poles were willing partners.

Maybe it offends Polish historical revisionism that they (too) were victims. Maybe their "valiant" struggle over the few weeks it took before Nazi Germany to conquered Poland is somehow a source of Polish pride.

Maybe it's uncomfortable and inconvenient for the Poles to admit that for centuries, Poles tolerated their Jewish neighbors, but did so with pogroms punctuating anti-Semitism with which the Jews existed daily.

Maybe it's unpleasant that so many Poles willingly and even gleefully lined up to participate in the genocide of their neighbors, as they did with my relatives. And though maybe it wasn't their plan, with few notable exceptions, they followed orders and were active participants and partners in the Nazi mass murders.

I'm reminded of the time, after learning that we were expecting our sixth child and only had a seven-person van, while looking for a larger vehicle I happened into a Jerusalem Volkswagen dealer. They made an eight-passenger car that was reputed to be reliable and a good value. Trying to sell me the car, the salesman noted that this model was built in Poland. I commented, "Then it must be good, because we all know how well the Poles follow German orders."

Either the salesman didn't get it, or didn't think it was so funny. But it is true.

Adding insult to stupidity, the timing of the Polish vote last week took place on the eve of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, specifically designated as such on the day that Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland's most infamous death camp, was liberated. Israel's Foreign Ministry commented, diplomatically, that the timing was "particularly surprising and miserable."

Justifying the law, Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party, claimed this is part of an effort to prevent the "slanderous" good name of Poland." The irony and oxymorons abound.

When I mentioned once to my Polish-born grandmother of my interest to go to Poland one day, she broke down in tears, pleading for me not to go. "The ground is soaked in our blood," she cried. By "our" she didn't mean generically the Jewish people, which is true. She meant her parents, siblings, nieces and nephews, friends and neighbors who weren't as lucky to get out as she had been. In fact, so inbred was Jew-hatred that the difference between just "plain" Jew hatred and murder was like the difference in baseball of a batter connecting, and following through. And with the Nazis calling the plays, the Poles excelled at their "follow through."

If my grandmother were alive, I suspect she'd go a step further than calling them Polish death camps. She'd probably refer to Polish death culture, or Poland as a death country.

In fairness, Poland had come to terms with its role in the Holocaust, a little.

The fact is that Polish death camps existed. Even if "Polish" is only used as an adjective to describe the location of the death camps, it's historically accurate. Denying that is absurd and covers up their guilt. Guilt is uncomfortable. But too bad.

I'm reminded of a joke kids used to tell when I was growing up. "Why does the new Polish navy have glass-bottom boats?" one would ask. Answer: "To see the old Polish navy." In the context of this law, it's also probably to see any semblance of Polish integrity, far beneath the old Polish navy.

The law still needs final approval from the country's president. Maybe smarter minds will prevail over those in the "lower house."



# What's Happening

## A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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](mailto: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.

### LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT

FEB. 16  
5:58 p.m.  
FEB. 23  
6:03 p.m.

### 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, FEBRUARY 16

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

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. JFS Orlando—Friends of JFS Orlando Brunch, 11 a.m. at the Heathrow Country Club. Tickets: \$118 Info: 407-644-7593

# HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

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"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?"

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Chabad of Greater Orlando—Kids Mega Babka-llah Bake, 2 p.m. at Chabad of Greater Orlando, 708 Lake Howell Rd., Maitland. Open to children 5-12. Info and to RSVP, [www.chabadorlando.org](http://www.chabadorlando.org).

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

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.

Congregation Beth Am—Mommy and Me class with Cantor Nina Fine, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. \$7 per family; free for CBA members. Info: 407-862-3505.

JCC 39ers—Meet & Mingle in the Senior Lounge, 1 p.m. Subject is Up to Date Medicare with Ashley Liebowitz.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

JLI Teens—Course on 'Living your Dreams,' 7 p.m.—8 p.m. at the Roth Family JCC Youth Room. Second session: Family and Relationships. Info: Rabbi Eddy, 407-435-6950.

Congregation Beth Am—Pages & Pastries Book Club, 7 p.m. at Panera Bread on 434 across from Publix at Springs Plaza. Info: 407-862-3505.

Jewish Pavilion—Pearls of the Pavilion luncheon at the home of Jewelry designer Gay Harrison. Info about time and place: 407-678-9363.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

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 Thursday of each month 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.

Lunch & Learn—Pillars of the Past, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m., Lunch and in-depth discussion about patriarchs and matriarchs with Rabbi Michoel Rennert of Orlando Torah Academy, RSVP requested, [register2orlandojcc.org](http://register2orlandojcc.org). Held at the Roth Family JCC.

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

A Nosh of Yiddish—Classes in Yiddish the third Wednesday of each month 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.

JFS Orlando—Ribbon cutting for new wing, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

Congregation Beth Shalom—Tot Shabbat with Cantor Nina Fine, 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner, 6 p.m.; Family Shabbat service, 7 p.m. Dinner, \$5 per person with no charge for children.

### Quote of the Week

"I think that life in Israel is sometimes bigger than the movies."

— Yitzhak Rabin

### Medium puzzle

"President's Day" by Yoni Glatt  
[koshercrosswords@gmail.com](mailto:koshercrosswords@gmail.com)

#### Across

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69. Antonym for "absorb"  
70. F.B.I. operative  
71. Post (mishloach manot)  
72. "...just as a man \_\_\_ up..." (Duet. 22:26)  
73. Many a posted pic of Obama or Trump  
Down  
1. Adds a patch to an IDF uniform, perhaps  
2. One in a million, in Israel  
3. Those saying lashon hara  
4. Volcano output  
5. What Jews do after blessings on wine and challah  
6. Moses displayed it at the Sin of the Golden Calf  
7. Moshe's father-in-law  
8. Back then  
9. Cobwebs may be a sign of it  
10. Solve, as a mystery  
11. The Lubavitcher  
12. "It's \_\_\_ Rock and Roll to Me" (Billy Joel)  
13. An Israel bond, e.g.  
18. As a sluggard would  
23. Weeks between Pesach and Shavuot  
25. Part of U.N.L.V.  
27. Cholent ingredient, some-  
times  
41. Larry David's (almost) "Fatwa" star Miranda's favorite President?  
43. Network of "Curb..."  
44. Gadot uses one in film, at times  
46. It's worth about 1/25 of a Shekel  
47. Work by Judah Halevi  
48. Boat in "Jaws"  
50. What a dentist does, sometimes  
52. Comic Stewart's favorite President?  
57. Play for a yutz  
58. Grande of song  
59. "As Time \_\_\_ By"  
61. Wilt  
64. TV's Hoda  
65. Where to see the Presidents in this puz.  
68. Falco who had her first film role in Allen's "Bullets Over Broadway"

See answers on page 14.

# L'Oréal's boundary-breaking Muslim model steps aside



Amena Khan

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA)—L'Oréal made history last week when it became the first major cosmetics firm to feature a Muslim woman wearing a head covering in a mainstream international ad campaign for hair products.

The signing of Amena

Khan, a British blogger on beauty, as the newest face of L'Oréal Paris generated a lot of positive publicity for the French firm, with CNN lauding the company for “breaking barriers” and “becoming more diverse” in an article that also flattered Khan for “empowering women.”

But the response was less enthusiastic in some French Jewish media like JSSNews, where Khan was denounced as “an anti-Semite of the worst kind” for her remarks on Twitter in 2014 calling Israel an “illegal and sinister state.” She also labeled Israel a “child murderer” that Allah will ultimately defeat.

According to the British government’s 2016 definition of anti-Semitism, “claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” and “applying double standards by requiring of it [Israel] a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation” are examples of the phenomenon.

On Monday, Khan said she is stepping down from the L'Oréal Paris Elvive World of Care campaign because “the current conversations surrounding it detract from the positive and inclusive sentiment that it set out to deliver.”

“I deeply regret the content of the tweets I made in

2014, and sincerely apologize for the upset and hurt they have caused,” she wrote on Instagram.

A spokesperson for L'Oréal Paris told the BBC, “We agree with her decision to step down from the campaign.”

“We have recently been made aware of a series of tweets posted in 2014 by Amena Kahn, who was featured in a UK advertising campaign,” the company’s statement to the BBC reads. “We appreciate that Amena has since apologized for the content of these tweets and the offense they have caused.

“L'Oréal Paris is committed to tolerance and respect towards all people.”

It wasn’t the first time that a recruit who was celebrated for a contribution to diversity put L'Oréal on the spot.

Only in September, the brand dropped the British model, DJ and transgender activist Munroe Bergdorf for racist comments against white people just one week after she was hired as part of the

brand’s #allworthit campaign intended to promote diversity and appeal to its wide and varied consumer base.

Following last year’s far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, Bergdorf said that “All white people are racist,” adding: “Honestly I don’t have the energy to talk about the racial violence of white people any more. Yes ALL white people ... Most of ya’ll don’t even realize or refuse to acknowledge that your existence, privilege and success as a race is built on the backs, blood and death of people of color.”

Nor is the Khan incident the first L'Oréal scandal involving Israel, either. In 1995, the American affiliates of L'Oréal agreed to pay \$1.4 million to settle an investigation by the U.S. Department of Commerce looking into complaints that the company was complying with the Arab boycott against the Jewish state.

But to many French Jews, the hiring of Khan recalled a far larger and older scan-

dal involving the firm’s ties to the Nazi occupation of France.

The founder of the L'Oréal cosmetics company, Eugene Schueller, was a Nazi sympathizer who helped bankroll and offered office space in the 1930s to La Cagoule, a violent far-right organization that was virulently anti-Semitic. Its members planned to overthrow the French government and attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Leon Blum, the country’s first Jewish and socialist leader.

After the war, many supporters of the collaborationist Vichy government found employment and refuge at L'Oréal. Schueller’s daughter, Lillianne, married André Bettencourt, a French politician who was a member of La Cagoule.

“What a regression for a company whose director, André Bettencourt, published anti-Semitic articles in the collaborationist weekly *The French Soil*,” JSSNews wrote.

## Trump's Mar-A-Lago resort to host gala for Israel's 70th

(JTA)—An event marking Israel’s 70th year will be held at President Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida.

The event scheduled for late March is organized by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, which is selling tickets for \$1,000 per table, Haaretz first reported.

Speakers at the event will include the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley; Israel’s ambassador to the U.N., Danny Danon; and former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

In August, nine groups canceled planned galas at the Florida resort owned by

Trump. Among the cancellations were American Friends of Magen David Adom, the U.S. fundraising arm of the Israeli Red Cross organization. Some of the groups that canceled their events in August cited Trump’s response to the far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, as the reason. In other cases,

groups said the venue was detracting from the message of their events.

The Boca Raton, Florida-based group The Truth About Israel is scheduled to hold its gala at Mar-A-Lago on Feb. 25. Among the speakers will be former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Danny Ayalon, three Republican members

of Congress, including Rep. Ron DeSantis, who is running for Florida governor; and Jewish Olympic gold medalist swimmer Mark Spitz.

The group says on its website that The Truth About Israel is a not-for-profit company formed “to educate and train the public about

the facts of Israel in today’s world. Our mission is to advocate for Israel, covering the core values of the state of Israel, and the fundamental rights and justice for the Jewish people.”

The club makes \$100,000 to \$275,000 for such events, according to the Washington Post.

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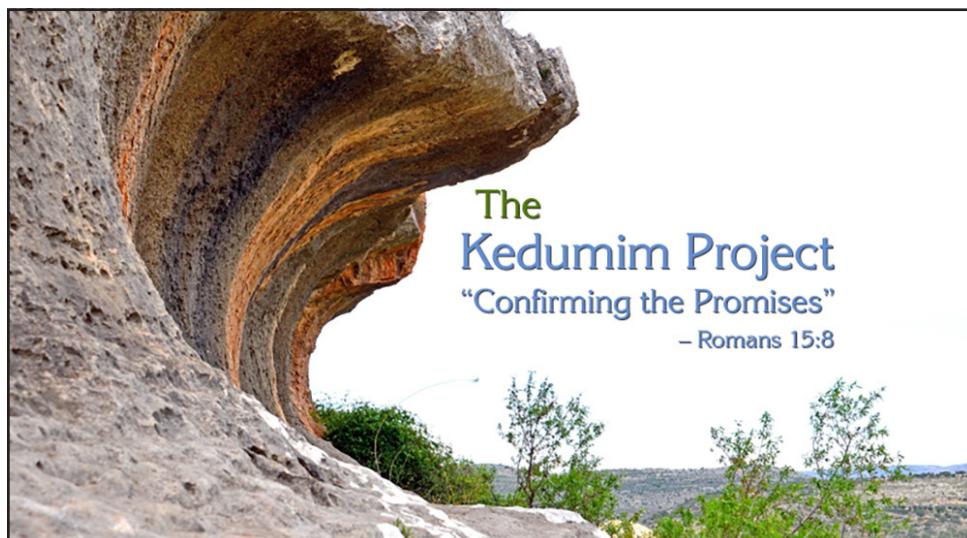
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# A nature park in Kedumim built by Jews and Christians



Just after Passover last year, Fellowship Church in Winter Springs began fundraising for its annual work trip to Israel. Since 2006, members of the congregation have spent a week or more each year working on a nature park in Samaria while staying in the homes of Israeli families. Working and living together for a week at a time each year has served to bring down some of the traditional barriers between Christians and Jews and, because of those barriers, has not been without its challenges. As those challenges have been met, the members of Fellowship grow increasingly excited about the small but meaningful opportunity to encourage the People of Israel to fulfill its destiny as stewards of the Land of Israel. They are also excited about the

potential in local churches to similarly encourage Israel; to move past being mere "supporters of Israel" politically or financially, but to stand shoulder-to-shoulder alongside Israel.

With that in mind, Fellowship has produced a documentary of the project, titled "The Kedumim Project: Confirming the Promises," that seeks to share the Christian duty to support the People and Land of Israel.

Tzirim (tz-near-eem) Park, located in the town of Kedumim in Samaria, takes its name from the peculiar and rare "half-pipe" geological formation at the base of the park. When the first group started work in 2006, the location stood on the outskirts of the community, adjacent to olive groves in the valley

between Kedumim and the Arab village of Qusin, a suburb of Shechem. Word about the park has gotten out and people from all over Samaria and beyond come to relax there. Once-empty streets that led to the park from the rest of Kedumim are now lined with new houses.

The barriers that stand between Christians and Jews working together have been in place for a long time and they can be slow to come down. One major barrier on the Christian side is the thought that Christianity has replaced Israel as God's covenant people. It is not a new doctrine, originating in the first few centuries of the modern era. Some of the early Christian leaders looked around at the condition of the Jewish people in dispersion and concluded that the God

of Israel had abandoned the People of Israel. Christians operating under "replacement theology" will understandably find themselves at odds with Jews who view God's covenant with Israel as everlasting, as Scriptures repeatedly state.

Fortunately, the barrier of replacement theology continues to crumble under the light of Israel's modern-day regathering to the Land. At Fellowship Church, the congregants enjoyed the advantage of having dealt with these errors before they stepped foot in Kedumim. Their intentions, however, still had to be proven. There were people in Kedumim who understandably—given the above history—strongly expressed doubts about the wisdom of inviting Christians into the homes of community members. What were their intentions? Did they have hidden motives? The whole concept of Jews and Christians living and working together with the common goal of building up The Land of Israel was novel enough that questioning Fellowship Church's motives was natural.

"Why are you here?" Was a common enough question in the early years of the project. Genuine curiosity mingled with genuine concern.

Fellowship's answer, spoken by one church member after another followed the simple line, "To encourage you to believe that God is with you as you redeem The Land."

More importantly, their actions proved their words. Day after day each year, the Fellowship members got their hands dirty in the soil of Samaria: moving rocks, pulling weeds, planting grass and trees, and mixing and pouring concrete to construct a water system for upper and lower pools and the wonderful waterfall in between.

"By day we worked with our Jewish friends, in the evening Jews and Christians sat side-by-side around tables at the dining hall, eating and singing heartily, with the joy that comes from the sweat of a hard day's work together," said Fellowship Church Pastor Roger Diaz.

"Hineh mah tov u-m'naim." (Behold how good and pleasant, Psalms 133)

Eventually, over a decade, the walls of suspicion have crumbled. Make no mistake, each year the project presents unique challenges to members of both communities, but they are challenges that are tackled together, including finances, logistics and what seems to be inevitable and usually anonymous opposition to Christians and Jews working shoulder-to-shoulder with a common goal.

Today in the United States, there is a strong support for Israel. A majority of Americans are more-or-less pro-Israel and the Israel-focused Christians United for Israel boasts over three million members. CUFI members provide finan-

cial and political support for Israel within the United States and in Israel. Such support for Israel is laudable. While such groups will always provide greater financial support than local churches, congregations possess a qualitative ability in building on-the-ground relationships in Israel and Fellowship Church believes that such relationships, though small and typically invisible, present an important opportunity for congregations to fulfill their own call to encourage Israel to believe God's promises to the Patriarchs.

In the documentary, Diaz stands with Kedumim Mayor Hananel Dorani at the park. Acknowledging the past and looking to the future of the Church and Israel working together, Pastor Diaz says, "This is where we were supposed to be from the beginning: to complement each other, to work alongside each other; not to oppose each other. We have 2,000 years of that. Enough of that! Let's work together, let's be one."

As a congregation, Fellowship Church wants to share their story of the Kedumim Nature Park Project and to challenge other local churches to step into the adventure of standing with the People of Israel at this time. Please contact Fellowship Church at project@fcws.us to request a copy of the documentary.

Fellowship's next work trip to Israel is scheduled for Feb. 24- March 10.

## Kinneret Council on Aging Readies for the 8 over 80 Gala

The Kinneret Council on Aging is in final preparation to be held on Sunday, Feb. 25th, 2018. Committee members

Lynn Fenster, Carol Feuerman, Phyllis Kamanoff, Molie Savage and Geanne Share along with Kinneret Director of Programming and Development Sharon Weil are hard at work finalizing what will be a grand evening. The event recognizes active, inspiring people who continue to make a difference through volunteerism and philanthropy to their community and family.

The honorees for the 2018 event are: Lillian Berkowitz,

Doris Gilbert, Bette Ann Leider, Rosalind Levitt, Eva Ritt, Gerald Robison, Charles Schulman and Dick Weiner.

The 8 over 80 honorary dinner will be held in the Delaney Dining Room at Kinneret Apartments and will benefit KCOA, which provides programs for residents that are not included in the resident's monthly rent. These programs include onsite weekly exercise classes, cultural activities

and holiday celebrations as well as excursions including trips to Publix, Walmart and area restaurants. KCOA also continues to fund the popular twice-monthly food pantry, which provides a bountiful grocery bag to residents at no cost. This program offers an array of healthy foods to residents, many who enjoy cooking their own meals. Currently over 120 residents are participating in this program. For ticket and sponsor-

ship information, contact Sharon Weil at 407-425-4537, ext. 211. KCOA is a nonprofit agency that provides ongoing programs and services to residents of Kinneret Apartments, a limited income independent living senior facility located in downtown Orlando. For information on the facility or to find out how you can donate to KCOA, please go to www.kinneretapartments.com or contact Sharon Weil.

## Need Senior advice? Call the Orlando Senior Help Desk



Jewish Pavilion CEO Nancy Ludin with Lilly, a resident at Life Care of Altamonte Springs.

The Jewish Pavilion's Orlando Senior Help Desk is a free information and referral service for seniors of all faiths and their family members.

"When family members call us, they are often in a crisis;

someone fell or was hospitalized and they need immediate help," Pavilion CEO Nancy Ludin explained. "We answer their questions, offer advice, suggest resources and refer them to our website for more information."

The Jewish Pavilion website contains a wealth of information, but what it wants most is to provide personal service. When you call the office, 407-678-9363, there is an experienced social worker who can listen and answer your questions.

Because Jewish Pavilion staff and volunteers visit hundreds of residents in over 70 retirement communities, assisted-living residences and nursing homes in Orange and Seminole counties, the Jewish Pavilion can share its knowledge of these communities. When the Jewish Pavilion first started in 2001, all questions posed pertained to residential care settings. Over the years, the Jewish Pavilion staff has expanded their networking and can share what they have learned and the resources pertaining to the following and more:

- Selecting an assisted-living community
- Selecting a nursing home
- Medicaid planning
- Finding the right physician
- Choosing a hospice provider
- What to look for in a professional guardian
- How to know when it's time for Elder Care
- Criteria for choosing a rehabilitation program
- How to select a home-care provider
- How to find the right Elder Care law attorney
- What health and long-term care plans are available
- Options for Seniors with dementia

Visit [www.OrlandoSeniorHelpDesk.com](http://www.OrlandoSeniorHelpDesk.com) for more information about the Senior Help Desk and [www.jewishpavilion.org](http://www.jewishpavilion.org) for more information about the Jewish Pavilion.

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# Scene Around

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

## Very Disturbing...

I recently received a letter from ALAN KORNMAN about (I repeat) a very disturbing happening at Lake Eola in downtown Orlando. I pass it along:

"The Young Democrats of Orange County and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) were having a rally at Lake Eola on Dec 8, 2017 concerning the moving of our embassy to Jerusalem. My friend and I went to attend and film the rally.

The volume of anti-Semitism filmed is troubling—but once you get past that fact, I was most disturbed by the 100+ people who did nothing.

It was in the rally attendees' eyes, who did nothing, that still troubles me to this day, because I know if harm had come to me that day, they would be silent and inwardly cheer.

Next, I think about how many friends and family members these 100+ people have who share identical anti-Semitic worldviews—all of whom are our neighbors.

More troubling than all this is that nobody from the Holocaust Center, Orlando Jewish Federation, or local rabbis found this video compelling enough to speak out publicly.

Why do you think no one from our Jewish community leadership finds this level of anti-Semitism troubling—when it's in our own backyard? Why do you think our community is silent in the face of hate?"

(I really have no answer. But my heart hurts to see this. Why not watch it for yourself? Click on <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkR1v0d0UA>> and see if you, also, find it disturbing.

I faced anti-Semitism and received beatings for being Jewish when I was only age five, living in the Red Hook Welfare Projects in Brooklyn, New York. We can't let it happen again. NEVER AGAIN!)

## We lost a true friend recently...

King Michael of Romania was a great friend of the Jewish people, who pushed back against Hitler's cronies and in turn helped preemptively save thousands of lives during World War II," according to WJC President Ambassador RONALD S. LAUDER. "He was also a true defender of democracy, in the face of the worst totalitarian regimes, and even after forced by the Communists to abdicate and flee to exile, he continued throughout his life to look out for his country and implore Romanians to confront the darkest chapters in their history."

In the years following the Holocaust, King Michael famously called on Romanians to memorialize the Jews who suffered at the hands of their brethren, declaring, "They will be forever our countrymen, our brothers and sisters... I urge you: Remember them."

King Michael died a few months ago.

## From the Jewish Pavilion...

I'm bringing you (word for word) the article in the latest Jewish Pavilion bulletin:

"Highlighting A Volunteer—SHIRLEY SCHONEBERGER. Her smile, her warmth, her enthusiasm - they are infectious! Shirley Schoneberger has become a beautiful fixture at weekly



## King Michael of Romania

Forsythe, Winter Park, is "drop dead gorgeous!"

(I can say that. I'm old enough to be his mother. His grandmother? BUT NOT A COUGAR!!!!)

## One for the road...

Naomi and Ruth are arguing about who has the most religious family.

"My bubbeh was so orthodox," says Naomi, "that she only drank her tea from a yahrzeit glass."

"That's nothing," replies Ruth. "My bubbeh only drank her tea from a yahrzeit glass with the candle still in it!

(Oy Gevalt!!)

## Planting friendships and shared celebrations

*Tu'Bshevat was celebrated with the residents of Brookdale Island Lake in Longwood and the 5th graders of Congregation Ohev Shalom of Orlando.*

*Such heartfelt visits and celebrations are shared with excitement and enthusiasm by the students and seniors. On a recent Sunday morning, a Tu'Bshevat program was presented including songs, a short skit, planting seeds and decoration flower pots. Jewish Pavilion programs are often presented as a group program and there are many residents who would benefit and enjoy a personal room visit. Such opportunities are available throughout Orange and Seminole county right in your own neighborhood. Call the Jewish Pavilion office at 407-678-9363 to get involved.*



Shabbat services at Island Lake. She also brings sunshine and smiles to residents at Savannah Court. She is full of positivity and love, and she warms the hearts of everyone she meets. We are so grateful that she shares her spirit with all of us at the Jewish Pavilion and with so many residents in Central Florida. This is why she was honored as Volunteer of the Year last year, and it was well deserved!"

(I want to meet Shirley! She sounds like a perfect friend!)

## The Roth Family JCC Wow Wednesdays...

Pillars of the Past (sponsored by Orlando Torah Academy) will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 21st from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

It takes an in-depth look at many of our earliest leaders from the patriarchs and matriarchs with Rabbi MICHAEL RENNERT.

Lunch is included.

RSVP to ROBIN MERKEL at <[register@orlandojcc.org](mailto:register@orlandojcc.org)> by the Monday before.

## More JCC News...

The JCC 39ers will hold a Meet & Mingle Monday in the Senior Lounge on Feb. 19th at 1 p.m. The subject will be "Up to date Medicare," presented by ASHLEY (BRACHA) LIEBOWITZ.

Refreshments follow.

## All That Jazz at the Altamonte Chapel...



Shirley Schoneberger

On Sunday, Feb. 25th, emcee ALAN ROCK will present KID DUTCH and his New Orleans style in a tribute to Mardi Gras.

The performance is from 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. The requested donation is \$10 per person.

The Altamonte Chapel is located at 825 East S.R. 436 in Altamonte Springs. The phone number is (407) 339-5208.

## Shout Out...

Not only is he charming, smart, fast, on the ball, and able to make everyone feel special, MICHAEL STEWART, the new waiter at Perkins Restaurant on University and Forsythe, Winter Park, is "drop dead gorgeous!"

(I can say that. I'm old enough to be his mother. His grandmother? BUT NOT A COUGAR!!!!)

## One for the road...

Naomi and Ruth are arguing about who has the most religious family.

"My bubbeh was so orthodox," says Naomi, "that she only drank her tea from a yahrzeit glass."

"That's nothing," replies Ruth. "My bubbeh only drank her tea from a yahrzeit glass with the candle still in it!

(Oy Gevalt!!)

# HERITAGE

FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

can be purchased at the following locations:

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## SEMINOLE COUNTY

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## Sudoku (see page 14 for solution)

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

# Water-saving device clinches first prize for Robotics

A promising, prize-winning electronic device designed to save water has been conceived, designed, programmed and produced in Israel. A search for the inventors' boardroom and laboratory leads not to a hi-tech start-up, but to a classroom in Boys Town Jerusalem where the champion team of eight 7th and 8th graders conceptualized and created the prototype from scratch. The apparatus, which clinched First Prize in the Jerusalem Regional FLL-Israel Robotics Competition, could now qualify for a patent.

"We searched for a technological solution to ease the water shortage," explains team member Yonatan Ben Hamo, 14. "Eventually we focused on saving water often wasted in showers at fitness centers and pools. The average shower uses 9 gallons of water, so we devised a 'smart card' to use for entry to the gym or pool and then to swipe at the shower. Every

3 gallons of water used, the system activates blinking LED lights. At the 9-gallon mark, a buzzer is sounded. Water used beyond this point is automatically charged to the bather's credit card."

The project is the brain-child of Boys Town Jerusalem's extra-curricular robotics club. There, dozens of young robotics enthusiasts are guided by two coaches, three 12th grade mentors, and students at BTJ's College of Applied Engineering. The year's highlight, the FLL-Israel (FIRST Lego League) tournament, challenges students to build, program and operate a robot, as well as to develop a technological solution for a "real-world" problem (this year involving hydro dynamics). After weeks of round-the-clock efforts, the BTJ team scored a blue ribbon for their project's "Innovative Solution," plus a Mechanical Design trophy for their robot.

The Water-Saving Shower project will now compete in the national FLL-Israel finals, and the school is exploring funding resources for a possible patent application. Robotics coach Avi Hadad is convinced that the young designers have won an even greater prize. "The boys don't yet realize that their work process, from analyzing market needs to building a prototype, is identical to that of hi-tech start-up teams. They're making ready to transform the future."

Boys Town Jerusalem is one of Israel's premier institutions for educating the country's next generation of leaders in the fields of technology, commerce, education, the military and public service. Since its founding in 1948, BTJ has pursued its mission of turning young boys from limited backgrounds into young men with limitless futures. From Junior High through the college level,



the three part curriculum at Boys Town -academic, technological and Torah - is designed to turn otherwise disadvantaged Israeli youth

into productive citizens of tomorrow. Boys Town's 18-acre campus is a home away from home for its more than 900 students. More than

7,000 graduates hold key positions throughout Israeli society. For more information, please visit our website at boystownjerusalem.org.

## Why is Ireland the most anti-Israel country in Europe?



**Pro-Palestinian protesters near the Irish Parliament in Dublin at a rally against Israeli air strikes in Gaza in 2009.**

**By Sean Savage**

(JNS)—The Irish and Jewish people share a common history of suffering cruel persecution and achieving national redemption against immeasurable odds. But today, modern Ireland is one of Europe's fiercest critics of Israel. This tension was on display last week as the Irish Senate was considering legislation aimed at criminalizing trade with Israeli settlements.

The legislation, titled "Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018," calls to "prohibit the import and sale of goods, services and natural resources originating in illegal settlements in occupied territories," according to Sen. Frances Black, the bill's sponsor.

While the vote on the legislation was eventually

postponed, many in Israel saw it as another example of the growing effort in Europe to single out and boycott the Jewish state.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said that the legislation's "sole purpose is to support the BDS movement and harm the state of Israel."

The Israeli Embassy in Ireland also denounced the bill, saying that it "only offers an incentive to those who wish to boycott Israel and stands in stark contrast to the guiding principles of free trade and justice."

Orde Kittrie, a professor of law at Arizona State University and senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, told JNS that the proposed legislation was clearly aimed at delegitimizing the state of Israel.

"On its face, the bill is about pressuring Israel to evacuate the West Bank and turn it over to Palestinian rule. However, as in so many cases of BDS, it appears the goal was at least also a broader one: to contribute to delegitimizing the state of Israel," he said.

A spokesman for the Irish pro-Israel group Irish4Israel said that the bill was also backed by several anti-Israel NGOs, including Christian Aid and Trocaire, in addition to trade unions in Ireland.

"The bill was endorsed by trade unions and others, and had the support of many smaller parties. The motivation is a naive hope to show solidarity with the Palestinians," the spokesman said.

Economic consequences

In the days leading up to the vote, a debate emerged in Ireland over impending economic consequences for the country if it went ahead with the legislation. Of particular concern was the possibility that the legislation could run afoul of both E.U. and U.S. law, potentially jeopardizing critical ties.

"This bill would make U.S. companies with subsidiaries in Ireland, Irish companies with subsidiaries in the U.S., and their employees who are Irish or resident in Ireland,

choose between violating the Irish law or violating the U.S. Export Administration Regulations," said Kittrie. "Violations of these U.S. antiboycott laws are punishable by fines and by imprisonment for up to 10 years."

As such, in requesting the postponement of the vote on the bill, Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney noted that the bill may violate an E.U. law that all members have a common commercial policy. Coveney also expressed concern that the bill would harm relations with Israel and thus Ireland's ability to play a constructive role in the Middle East peace process.

Current E.U. law stipulates that Israeli products originating from beyond the pre-1967 lines cannot be labeled as "Made in Israel." Israel considers the West Bank to be disputed territory, with borders to be determined in any peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

Nevertheless, despite the delay and concerns, Kittrie believes that the bill will eventually pass, especially if the peace process continues to stall.

"Watching the debate in the Irish Senate, it appears that the majority of Irish Senators are far more sympathetic to the Palestinian perspective than the Israeli one," he said.

"A version of the bill, presumably one revised to remove the conflict with E.U. law, seems likely to pass when it is voted upon in four or five months, unless there is significant progress on the peace process or the Irish Senate becomes more sympathetic to the Israeli perspective or the Irish Senate comes to better understand how the bill, if enacted, would gravely undermine Ireland's economic links to the United States," he said.

Irish-Israel relations

But how did the Irish, who like the Jewish people have also faced centuries of persecution, end up so sympathetic to the Palestinian cause?

Much of Ireland's sympathies for the Palestinians

appear to tie back into their own troubled history with the United Kingdom.

"The Irish see Israel as acting as the U.K. did when it occupied all of Ireland [until Irish independence in 1921] and Northern Ireland until the present day," said Kittrie.

"Specifically, they analogize Israel's settlements in the West Bank to the Protestants from Great Britain who settled in Northern Ireland."

Irish-Jewish relations haven't always been this sour. In the early 20th century, many Irish leaders were sympathetic to the Jewish people, with the Irish drawing heavily on historical parallels with Jews, including their suffering, the large-scale migration of Irish in the 19th century and their upward struggle for national self-determination against the British.

But following Israel's independence in 1948, Irish sympathies inexplicably shifted. The Irish no longer viewed Israel as the underdog struggling for national rights, but instead as a foreign occupier on someone else's land—the Palestinians—similar to the Irish experience with British control over Northern Ireland.

Ireland did not extend recognition to Israel until 1963 and did not establish an embassy in Tel Aviv until 1996. Furthermore, Ireland was one of the first European countries to call for a Palestinian state in 1980 and has consistently focused on the Palestinian refugee issue.

Today, despite its subordinate position within the European Union behind such larger powers as France and Germany, Ireland has played an outsized role as a voice on matters concerning Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Last year, the Irish Parliament passed a symbolic resolution calling on the government to recognize Palestinian statehood. Ireland was also the first European country to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as well.

At the same time, the BDS (boycott, divestment sanction) movement in Ireland is viewed by many as some

of the most powerful groups in Europe.

The Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC), which has been at the forefront of anti-Israel sentiment in Israel, recently led to Israel banning some 20 activists associated with the Dublin-based group from entering the Jewish state as part of a recent "blacklist" by the Israeli government targeting anti-Israel BDS groups.

"It's an Irish obsession to identify with the perceived underdog. It's very disappointing and a complete distortion of the facts on the ground," the Irish4Israel spokesman said. "If Israel wants to change the Irish mentality towards Israel, it needs to engage with Ireland more."

Can Irish eyes smile on Israel?

However, one major looming challenge in engagement are recent reports that Israel is mulling closing down its embassy in Ireland as part of plans to shutter seven embassies worldwide due to budget concerns, Yedioth Ahronoth reported.

Israel first opened its embassy in 1996—one of the last countries in the E.U. to have an Israeli embassy—after years of negotiations. Despite strained political relations since then, trade between Ireland and Israel has grown significantly as both countries have become global leaders in areas such as technology and pharmaceuticals. In 2016, Israel was Ireland's 11th-largest export partner, with \$1.63 billion.

Despite growing economic ties, Kittrie believes that Israel needs to improve its outreach to the Irish if the Jewish state hopes to improve relations with the country.

"Israel has a good story to tell. It needs to do a far better job of telling it to the Irish people," he said.

"Watching the debate in the Irish Senate, one would think that the lack of peace between Israel and the Palestinians is entirely the fault of Israel. That is just not true. I think education has a big role to play in improving relations between Ireland and Israel."



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# Ohev Shalom Men's Club's annual World-Wide Wrap

The Super Bowl was not the only big event on Super Bowl Sunday this month. Once again, the Men's Club of Congregation Ohev Shalom—like its brother organizations throughout the United States and beyond, under the auspices of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs—sponsored its annual World-Wide Wrap.

This year's program featured Ohev Men's Club member and Jewish Academy of Orlando Head of School Alan Rusonik starting the morning with some background on the origins of the ancient ritual of wrapping t'filin. Conveying

his experiences with a recently departed friend who had worked as a scribe, Rusonik opened the t'filin "boxes" as he explained what they contained and signified.

Following the presentation, Rabbi David Kay guided participants in the mechanics of wrapping t'filin, and Cantor Allan Robuck then led the Sunday morning minyan service.

A hearty breakfast ranging from lox and bagels to kugel and scrambled eggs with cheese was prepared by Men's Club chefs Richard Schwartz, Andy Rosen and

Mark Goodman. As the group was finishing their meal, Co-President and event-planner Neal Blaher set the stage for that evening's Super Bowl Game with an "A & Q," Jeopardy style. The singular topic was famous Jewish sports figures over the past century. The program provided much enlightenment into not only the tremendous accomplishments of these athletes in their respective sports, but also their philanthropy and service to the community, and their strong Jewish identity regardless of their level of actual ritual observance.

## *The youngest Schindler's list survivor is still telling her story*



Eva Lavi, who was 2 years old when the Nazis invaded Poland, addressing the United Nations last week.

By Ben Sales

NEW YORK (JTA)—Eva Lavi's earliest memories are of the Holocaust.

She remembers how her mother made her hide outside in below-zero weather, clutching a standing pipe, as Nazis searched her home in Poland. She remembers her father telling her to swallow a spoonful of cyanide—better than death at the hands of the Nazis—only to have her mother object at the last minute. She remembers seeing her twin cousins shot to death as they ran up a hill at a labor camp.

Lavi was 2 years old when Nazi Germany took over her hometown of Krakow in September 1939. Now 80, she wants to make sure her stories aren't lost after she's gone.

"There was no childhood for children my age," she said last week in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly following International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27. "Regularly, we saw, heard and understood everything the Nazis were doing to us. At 6 years old, children were cynical old people trying to survive."

Lavi is the youngest survivor to have been on Schindler's list, the Jews saved by German industrialist Oskar Schindler and immortalized in Steven Spielberg's 1993 film. Lavi was put in a ghetto in Poland with her family immediately after the Nazi takeover, transferred to a labor camp and then to Auschwitz.

After being saved by Schindler, who sheltered hundreds of Jews who worked in his kitchen goods and armament

factories, Lavi lived a quiet life in Israel. She served in the army, lived on a kibbutz, worked as an administrative assistant and raised a family. She remembers the early years in Israel when survivors were disparaged as weak and passive. But as interest in the Holocaust increased, she became more vocal in recounting her experience. Now she speaks to groups at Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust authority, and travels to Poland every year with a group of high school students.

"It's true testimony from someone who was there. It's not a story," she told JTA in a separate interview last week, adding that once Israelis became interested in the Holocaust, "the survivors opened their mouths and began to tell the story. It's not just a story. It's the worst and cruellest thing that happened in the world."

Although Lavi now regularly returns to Auschwitz, she says the experience still isn't easy. Each time, she finds herself looking around in horror and crying. But by now she's used to it.

"Every time I go, I cry here and there because it's a terrible thing," she told JTA. "Every person that went there saw the ovens, the gas chambers. Everything was real. It's very scary, but because I've gone so many times, I take it differently. I don't think about myself. I think about how the kids are reacting."

Lavi also feels a sense of urgency in telling her story because she thinks the world hasn't gotten better since she was liberated. There are groups that still seek to annihilate

Jews and other minorities, she says.

And she called the Polish bill that would criminalize those who blame Poland for the Holocaust a "disaster." Yes, she says, Poles were killed, too, at the Nazi death camps. But she adds that the Poles were no angels, citing Polish violence against Jews during and after the war.

"I was in Auschwitz, and there were Polish prisoners," she said. "But what they say, that the Poles were all sweetness and light? No. In any case, they didn't really like the Jews."

As the Holocaust survivor population shrinks—Lavi was born just two years before the war—she sounds conflicted about how best to perpetuate Holocaust memory. On the one hand, she acknowledges that survivors' stories are extensively documented. On the other hand, she knows nothing is more powerful than a firsthand account.

One way to transmit the experience, she says, is movies. She's grateful for the research work that Spielberg did while making "Schindler's List," which won the Academy Award for best picture. One scene featuring her as a child, she says, is mostly accurate: Nazis separated her from her mother, but Schindler saved her by telling the guards he needed her small fingers to operate machinery. She believes that movie and those that have followed play a positive role in educating people about what happened, even if some are fictional.

"They did a lot of movies that had influence," she told JTA. "They engaged the heart, even if they're not true, but they have to be faithful to truth."

After decades of telling her story around the world, Lavi says addressing the United Nations gave her a sense of closure. For years she has carried guilt for surviving where so many perished. But with this speech, she said, she achieved something to justify her life.

"It was very hard to be a child survivor," she told JTA. "I felt guilty. I began to talk to God: Why did he save me? I imagined my Jewish brothers, me and them together, we're walking, and then God pulls me out. Now that they've sent me to the U.N. to speak in front of the world, it's as if I did something to satisfy God after my death."

# 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](http://www.jewishcelebration.org); 407-566-9792.

**Chabad Lubavitch of North Orlando (O)**, 1701 Markham Woods Road, Longwood, 407-636-5994, [www.jewishorlando.com](http://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](http://www.jewishaltamonte.com).

**Chabad of South Orlando (O)**, 7347 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, 407-354-3660; [www.jewishorlando.com](http://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](http://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)**, 181 E. Mitchell Hammock, Oviedo, 407-830-7211; [www.betachaim.org](http://www.betachaim.org); Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.

**Congregation Beth Am (C)**, 3899 Sand Lake Road, Longwood, 407-862-3505; [www.congbetham.org](http://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](http://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; [bethsholomflorida.org](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.ovevshalom.org](http://www.ovevshalom.org); Shabbat service, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

**Congregation Shalom Aleichem (R)**, 3501 Oak Pointe Blvd., Kissimmee, 407-935-0064; [www.shalomaleichem.com](http://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; [congregationsinai.org](http://congregationsinai.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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.templeshirshalom.org); Shabbat services: three Fridays each month, 7:30 p.m.

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

(R) Reform (C) Conservative (O) Orthodox (Rec) Reconstructionist (T) Meheitsa

# Germany recognizes Algerian Jews as Holocaust survivors



**In an undated photo from the Yad Vashem Archives, Algerian Jews are shown celebrating Passover.**

**By Debra Nussbaum Cohen**

NEW YORK (JTA)—Nearly 80 years after being persecuted by the Nazi-allied Vichy French government, some 25,000 elderly Algerian Jews are being recognized for the first time as Holocaust survivors by the German government.

Algerian Jews had their French citizenship stripped in 1940 by the Vichy government, which then ruled the area. Nuremberg-like laws banned Jews from working as doctors, lawyers, teachers and in government. Children were kicked out of French schools.

On Tuesday, 78 years after they endured suffering that left families penniless and starving, and pariahs in their own country, the Conference on Material Claims Against Germany will begin taking their applications for recognition as survivors, making each eligible for a one-time “hardship grant” and additional services like food vouchers and in-home care.

“For the first time they’re being recognized as Nazi victims by the German government,” said Greg Schneider,

executive vice president of the Conference on Material Claims Against Germany. It is the last settlement Germany will make with a large group of Holocaust survivors, he added, since it was the only major population remaining without that recognition.

Each survivor approved will receive a hardship grant of 2,556 euros, the equivalent of approximately \$3,100. The euro figure is the equivalent of 5,000 Deutschmarks, a sum the Claims Conference negotiated with the German government in 1980. The money will be distributed beginning in July.

The youngest Algerian survivors, born in 1942, would today be 76 years old. Most, however, are in their 80s and 90s, Schneider said. As important as the money is, even more valuable is acknowledgement of their suffering, he told JTA in an interview from Paris, where he was getting the Help Center set up.

“They weren’t murdered,” Schneider said, “but there were lots of deprivations” under the anti-Semitic Vichy laws.

“There weren’t extermination camps in Algeria, but a

person’s childhood was turned upside down because of this persecution targeting Jews. It becomes a huge part of a person’s identity. The experience during the war for so many people defines them, is the seminal experience of their lives. All these decades it’s never been acknowledged.”

Israel had earlier recognized Algerian Jews as Holocaust survivors. But the German government did not, and not being acknowledged as survivors has “undermined their core sense of self, especially when they see all the other groups getting recognized,” Schneider said.

“It’s a psychological trauma. The validation and acknowledgment, for so many people that’s what this will stand for.”

The Claims Conference has negotiated with the German government for about five years to get this done, Schneider told JTA. Being recognized as victims of the Holocaust now entitles survivors to social services like home care, food and transportation to doctor appointments in local communities funded through the Claims Conference.

The vast majority of people

affected—about 20,000—now live in France. On Monday morning, the Claims Conference opens a website where survivors can make an appointment to go to a Help Center. The first Claim Help Center opens in Paris on Tuesday morning.

Located across the street from the U.S. Embassy, just a block from the Seine in the 8th Arrondissement, the center in the French capital will have a staff of 24 to assist the Paris area’s 12,000 Algerian survivors in assembling the documentation they need in order to establish that they lived there between 1940 and 1942.

Satellite centers to serve another 8,000 Jews will soon open in Marseille, Lyon and other French cities in the next few weeks. The Paris center will be open through April. After that, people will be able to apply by downloading a form from the website and mailing it in.

Some 4,000 surviving Algerian Jews live in Israel. Since the Israeli government keeps a registry of survivors, their addresses were available to the Claims Conference. Letters to them were mailed out on Sunday.

The rest of the survivors live in Francophone Canada, mostly around Montreal, according to the Claims Conference. Eventually they, too, will get assistance in applying for the new German recognition.

The German government has spent nearly 75 billion euros, about \$93 billion, on compensation and restitution to Holocaust survivors between 1953 and 2016, the most recent year for which there is a record, according to figures provided by Martin Chaudhuri, a spokesman for the German Finance Ministry.

Chaudhuri confirmed the

compensation settlement for Algerian Jews.

“There is now the possibility of compensation in the framework of the so-called Hardship Funds. The JCC [Jewish Claims Conference] and the German Federal Ministry of Finance estimate that around 30,000 people might be concerned,” he wrote to JTA. “The JCC will decide about the individual cases, considering the guidelines which were decided upon together between the JCC and the German Federal Ministry of Finance.”

Today almost no Jews remain in Algeria—fewer than 50, according to the Jewish Virtual Library.

But in 1940 it was a different story. A Vichy government census showed about 118,000 Jews there, according to Wesley Fisher, the Claims Conference’s director of research. They had been citizens of France since 1870. It was a community full of professionals and artists and writers.

The Algerian Jewish community was the most assimilated of any Muslim country, said Haim Saadoun, a professor at Israel’s Open University and director of The Documentation Center of North African Jewry During WWII. Though they were generally less religious than Jews in neighboring Morocco and Tunisia, there were still hundreds of synagogues in hundreds of cities, towns and villages.

Anti-Semitism had been a strong force in Algeria since the late 19th century. It was far worse even than in France during the Dreyfus Affair, said Saadoun.

Despite that, Jewish life was vibrant. Jews, he said in an interview, “were part of all the political life, the artistic life, in music, they were very involved in French and in

Muslim society. The first local novels written in French were by Jews.”

Saadoun said over one-third of doctors in Algeria were Jewish, as were nearly one-quarter of the lawyers.

Vichy anti-Jewish laws, issued first in early October 1940, stripped Jews of French citizenship and forbade them from working in army, press, civil service, industrial and commercial jobs. They were then prohibited from working in education, law and medicine.

It was deeply traumatic, said Saadoun. The community did not know then that it would last just two years. Jews opened their own schools in Algiers, Oran and Constantine: 70 elementary schools and five secondary schools, he said, which were run by Jewish administrators but regulated by the Vichy government, which did not permit the Jewish community to open its own university.

The Claims Conference has tried to keep this story under wraps until now, in part to make sure a system was in place to pay claimants directly without them having to pay attorney’s fees.

“On a communal level, we are unfortunately reaching the time when the stories of the Shoah pass from memory to history,” Schneider told JTA. “Germany recognizing the persecution is very important for the historical record. It helps combat Holocaust denial. Fifty years from now, 100 years from now, it will be much harder to refute.”

“In the 1930s and ‘40s, Jews were abandoned by their towns, their friends, society and even the Jewish communities” in other places, he said. “We will never do that again.”

“Even though it’s 70 years later, we’re still fighting. I wish it had been sooner.”

## Everyone loved this French-Muslim singer’s Leonard Cohen cover—Then they read her Facebook posts



**Mennel Ibtissem performing “Hallelujah” on France’s version of “The Voice.”**

**By Cnaan Liphshiz**

(JTA)—In a deeply divided nation that is still reeling from a toxic presidential election last spring, as well as jihadist and racist attacks, Mennel Ibtissem’s performances offered a rare vision of hope.

The blue-eyed Muslim woman sang Arabic and French-language renditions of Leonard Cohen’s “Hallelujah” on national television in France while wearing a head covering. She was a favorite on the French edition of “The Voice” talent and reality show.

seeming to embody the values of coexistence and tolerance in a country with a notorious integration problem.

But in a repeat of recent scandals involving ambassadors for diversity in Europe, Ibtissem’s social media activity showed a different side of her—one that spread pro-Palestinian propaganda, conspiracy theories and accusations that the French state, not jihadists, is responsible for terrorism.

It was that last remark, posted by the 23-year-old singer on social media in 2016, that prompted the TF1 television network to consider disqualifying Ibtissem from the show.

“We cannot keep on the show a person who made illegal statements,” a network spokesman told television host and journalist Jean-Marc Morandini on Tuesday.

In her 2016 remarks Ibtissem, the show’s first contender to perform while wearing a Muslim head covering, wrote following the murder of a priest in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray by an Islamist that “the real terrorist[s] are our government.”

The same year, one day after a jihadist terrorist attack in Nice in which 86 people died, she seemed to peddle a popular conspiracy theory that Muslims are being framed for false-flag attacks.

“It’s becoming a routine: An attack each week!! And sure enough, the ‘terrorist’ takes with him his identity CARD. Of course, when planning a dirty you always take papers! #DontTakeUsForFools,” she wrote on Facebook.

In a separate post in 2016, Ibtissem said her country has “a shitty society,” that she is “sick of the French system” and that she’s “eager to get the hell out of here.”

Henda Ayari, a French feminist and author who grew up in a Muslim family, said L’Affaire Mennel indicates an eagerness in the French media and beyond to seek the semblance of tolerance rather than the real thing.

“Wearing a veil does not make one a saint, modesty needs no veil, beauty needs no pretty face to shine, external beauty does not mean internal one. Never rely on appearances, they’re deceiv-

ing,” Ayari wrote Tuesday on Twitter about Ibtissem.

The debate about Ibtissem comes on the heels of a similar brouhaha surrounding the hiring by the French cosmetics firm L’Oreal of a British Muslim woman to model a line of hair products.

Initially celebrated as a milestone for diversity, Amena Khan’s contract fell apart following the discovery of statements she wrote about Israel. In 2014 she tweeted that the country is an “illegal and sinister state.” She also labeled Israel a “child murderer” that Allah will ultimately defeat.

In September, L’Oreal dropped the British model, DJ and transgender activist Munroe Bergdorf for racist comments against white people. Following last year’s far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, Bergdorf said that “All white people are racist,” adding, “Honestly I don’t have the energy to talk about the racial violence of white people any more. Yes ALL white people.”

In February, a Muslim baker in the Netherlands, Rachid el Hajoui, who moved many viewers in his country

with his televised plea for co-existence and acceptance, was found to have called in the past for a genocide against Jews.

“Hitler was nothing compared to the Israelis. Someone would have to finish his work 60 years ago,” he wrote on Twitter in 2014, adding, “Only answer to Israel is total extermination, annihilate the cockroaches #1945 #WeHateIsrael.”

Coming from a “Voice” favorite—the panel of judges unanimously celebrated her performance of the Cohen song as “moving” and “sincere”—Ibtissem’s past remarks hit a sour note for many in France, not least for relatives of the Nice victims.

The National Bureau for Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism, or BNVCA, joined many other anti-racism groups in condemning Ibtissem and demanding she be taken off the air.

“The candidate’s beauty and charm, her talent, must not in any way serve as a pretext for the television channel,” the organization said in a statement. “Mennel cannot serve as a role model

**Ibtissem on page 13A**

# Weekly roundup of world briefs from JTA

## Republican Jewish Coalition chairman says its members are ‘thrilled’ with Trump

(JTA)—The chairman of the Republican Jewish Coalition said its members are “thrilled” about the performance of President Donald Trump, especially with his approach to the Middle East.

“I think they’re feeling thrilled,” said former Minnesota Sen. Norm Coleman in an interview with McClatchy at the weekend’s annual RJC leadership conference in Las Vegas. “If you look at the change of what has happened with Israel, in terms of moving the capital to Jerusalem, the tough approach to Iran, holding the U.N. finally accountable... I think there’s a great deal of enthusiasm in the center-right, pro-Israel community about President Trump.”

The McClatchy reporter noted that in March 2016, Coleman wrote an op-ed titled “I will never vote for Donald Trump” in which he called the then-presidential candidate “A bigot. A misogynist. A fraud. A bully.”

Reminded about the op-ed, Coleman replied, “There are things I agree with the president on, things I disagree with. When it comes to Middle East policy, when it comes to what he’s doing in Iran, absolutely I’m thrilled he’s doing it, I’m thrilled he’s here.”

The annual gathering took place at the Venetian/Palazzo Hotel, owned by one of the RJC’s and Republican Party’s main benefactors, Sheldon Adelson, who was in Israel for a friend’s funeral and did not attend.

While others at the event were similarly enthusiastic about Trump’s Middle East policies, McClatchy noted mixed feelings among the RJC membership.

“For center-right Jews such as myself, that’s been the problem, is that on certain things he’s been overall positive—on the U.S.-Israel relationship, no question he’s better than Obama,” said Noam Neusner, who served as a speechwriter for President George W. Bush. “But on so many aspects of how he’s handled the presidency, how he’s conducted himself, perhaps certain issues of leadership, fitness—it’s been a challenge.”

Trump has recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and made plans to move the U.S. Embassy to the city from Tel Aviv. He also has declined to certify the Iran nuclear deal and pulled the United States out of the United Nations’ economic and cultural agency over its anti-Israel bias.

## White House: Netanyahu’s claim of US-Israel talks on annexing settlements is ‘false’

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The White House denied Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s reported claim that the United States and Israel are discussing the annexation of West Bank settlements.

“Reports that the United States discussed with Israel an annexation plan for the West Bank are false,” White House spokesman Josh Raffel said in an email to JTA. “The United States and Israel have never discussed such a proposal, and the president’s focus remains squarely on his Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative.”

The statement was unusually forceful for a White House that enjoys a close relationship with the Israeli government.

Hours earlier, Netanyahu had told the Likud faction in the Knesset that he was in “historic” talks with the Trump administration about annexing settlements. Netanyahu delivered the remarks in a bid to stave off individual Knesset members from advancing bills to annex the settlements, saying that such a bill should be government initiated and be timed to solidify U.S. support for annexation.

Within minutes of Raffel releasing his statement, Netanyahu’s office sent a message to Israeli reporters that did not quite walk back his earlier remarks, but that noted that President Donald Trump remained committed to reviving the peace talks.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu updated the Americans about initiatives arising in the Knesset and the Americans expressed their unequivocal position that they are committed to advancing President Trump’s peace plan,” the WhatsApp message said.

Trump has suggested that Israel would have to compromise on settlements and has cautioned Israel against radically altering the current status of the settlements.

Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner, is spearheading the bid to restart the peace talks. The Palestinians in December retreated from the “talks to start the talks” after Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.

## Paul McCartney wins Israel’s prestigious Wolf Prize

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Paul McCartney is one of nine laureates announced for Israel’s prestigious Wolf Prize.

McCartney is one of two recipients of the 2018 Wolf Prize in Music, Israel’s President Reuven Rivlin announced Monday.

Each year the Wolf Foundation awards \$100,000 prizes in five fields. More than 30 winners have gone on to receive the Nobel Prize.

The announcement called McCartney “one of the greatest songwriters of all time. His versatility underlies an extraordinary wingspan, from the most physical rock to melodies of haunting and heartbreak intimacy. His lyrics have an equally broad range, from the naive and the charming to the poignant and even desperate. He has touched the hearts of the entire world, both as a Beatle and in his subsequent bands, including Wings.

McCartney shares the prize with conductor Adam Fischer, who the prize committee called an “eloquent defender of human rights,” particularly “his protest against the political developments in his native Hungary.”

Seven other prizes also were announced in the fields of mathematics, chemistry, physics and agriculture.

According to the Wolf Prize, the prizes will be presented to the winners by Rivlin at a special ceremony to be held at the Knesset in Jerusalem, at the end of May. The Associated Press reported that the prize foundation had notified McCartney representatives of the prize, but that it was not immediately known if the former Beatle would attend the ceremony.

McCartney has appeared once in Israel, for a concert for over 50,000 fans in Tel Aviv’s Yarkon Park in 2008.

## Iceland is getting its first resident rabbi in decades

(JTA)—The Chabad movement is sending a rabbi and his wife to Iceland, an island nation with 250 Jews where ritual slaughter of animals is illegal and circumcision is likely to be outlawed as well.

Rabbi Avi Feldman, 27, of Brooklyn, New York, and his Sweden-born wife Mushky, are slated to settle with their two daughters in Reykjavík, the world’s northernmost capital city, later this year, the couple told JTA last week.

The country is not known to have had a resident rabbi servicing an active Jewish community there since 1918, the year it gained independence from what was then the Kingdom of Denmark.

The announcement closely followed news last month that lawmakers from four political parties in Iceland submitted a bill proposing to outlaw non-medical circumcision of boys younger than 18 and equates that practice, common among Jews and Muslims, with female genital mutilation—the custom of removing parts of a girl’s clitoris, which is com-

mon in some African Muslim communities.

“We hope to bring awareness of the relevance and importance of brit milah,” the rabbi told JTA, using the Hebrew-language word for Jewish ritual circumcision, which is typically performed on boys when they are eight days old. “We hope to bring this awareness to local Icelandic people and especially to lawmakers in their decision on rules, which we hope will have a religious exemption clause.”

Feldman and his wife visited Iceland in December and organized a Hanukkah celebration for the community, which is made up of some locals and Jewish expatriates from the United States and Israel. The couple hopes to set up an educational framework for Jewish children, a synagogue and a mikvah, or Jewish ritual bath, none of which exist in Iceland, a nation of some 300,000 people.

A Chabad spokesman said Reykjavík is one of only a handful of European capital cities without a synagogue. The absence of infrastructure for Jewish communities can be seen as “a challenge,” the rabbi said, “but it’s also a tremendous opportunity, to set up a living breathing community.”

Notwithstanding, local Jews have celebrated holidays in Iceland also without a resident rabbi, often with help from yeshiva students and Chabad rabbis who came there especially to celebrate the dates, Feldman said, calling this “inspiring and very special.”

Despite the decades-long ban on ritual slaughter in Iceland, “the country actually has a lot more kosher products than many people realize,” Feldman said. This is because the island depends on imports from Europe and the United States, “so this means you can find products with a kosher label in your average minimarket.”

Mushky Feldman, who grew up in Gothenburg, Sweden, said she looked forward to “bringing the light of Judaism to one of the world’s darkest places,” a reference to how Reykjavík in January enjoys only 4 1/2 hours of daylight. “But sunrise comes after 11 a.m., so that means we’ll get to see the sunrise every day,” she noted. In the summer, Reykjavík has days with 18 hours of daylight.

The Feldmans said they will travel to Reykjavík next month to organize a Passover seder.

## State of New York sues Harvey Weinstein

(JTA)—The state of New York has filed a lawsuit against Harvey Weinstein, his brother and their production

company for violating laws against sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

The lawsuit could harm a deal to sell the Weinstein Company, which had been expected to be finalized on Sunday, and push the company toward bankruptcy, The New York Times reported.

The lawsuit filed in New York State Supreme Court on Sunday includes “new and extensive allegations about longtime company CEO Harvey Weinstein’s vicious and exploitative mistreatment of company employees,” the office of state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said in a statement.

It follows a four-month investigation that included interviews with multiple company employees, executives and survivors of Harvey Weinstein’s sexual misconduct.

Executives of The Weinstein Company “repeatedly failed to take meaningful steps to protect company employees or curb Harvey Weinstein’s misconduct,” the lawsuit alleges.

The civil rights lawsuit calls for the defendants to pay restitution and damages to the victims, something that was not provided within the framework of the sale of the company.

## Half of House Democrats urge Trump to preserve funding for UN’s Palestinian relief agency

(JTA)—Some 102 Democratic congressmen sent a letter to President Donald Trump calling on him to continue funding for U.N.’s Palestinian relief agency.

The State Department last month announced that it had put a hold on \$65 million of the \$125 million annual allocation to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which distributes its assistance in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, as well as to refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Days later, the State Department announced that a \$45 million payment pledged for the UNRWA food aid program would also be held up.

According to UNRWA, the United States provided more than \$350 million in aid to the organization in 2017.

“Continuing to freeze this aid will harm American interests by exacerbating the threats facing both peoples and reducing the United States’ ability to help the Israelis and Palestinians reach a two-state solution,” said the letter sent Thursday signed by more than half of the House Democratic Caucus.

The deterioration in the near-term prospects for

progress toward a negotiated peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would render a cut-off of US assistance all the more dangerous. Deliberately exacerbating the hardship of the Palestinian people and reducing the ability of their government to function would only contribute to the benefit of those who reject engagement. Extremist and anti-Israel groups would be all too eager to fill in the vacuum, deepening their hold in the region and expanding their destructive influence on the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.”

Reps. Peter Welch of Florida and David Price of North Carolina circulated the letter. J Street, the liberal Middle East policy group, rallied lawmakers to sign the letter.

## Israel has ‘absolute right to defend itself,’ US Defense Secretary James Mattis says

(JTA)—U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis defended Israeli airstrikes in Syria.

“Israel has an absolute right to defend itself, and I think that’s what happened yesterday,” Mattis told reporters before leaving on a European trip on Sunday.

The Israeli Air Force downed an Iranian drone in airspace over northern Israel on Saturday morning, and followed the infiltration by attacking 12 targets in Syria, including three aerial defense batteries and four Iranian targets that are part of Iran’s military establishment in Syria.

Mattis told reporters that the United States was not involved in supporting the airstrikes, but he pointed a finger at Iran.

“It is interesting that everywhere we find trouble in the Middle East, you find the same thing behind it. Whether it be in Yemen or Beirut, or in Syria, in Iraq, you always find Iran engaged,” Mattis said.

“So when Syria, which has made no—has not hidden at all, made no excuse for what they’re doing alongside Iran, when they are providing throughput for Iran to give weapons, including more sophisticated weapons, to the Lebanese Hezbollah, Israeli has an absolute right to defend themselves. They don’t have to wait until their citizens are dying under attack before they actually address that issue.”

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson arrived in Egypt on Sunday, part of a five-nation visit to the Middle East that does not include Israel. Tillerson also is scheduled to visit Kuwait, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

## Ibtissem

### From page 12A

for uninformed fans. She is not a good role model, she is not a good choice, she is dangerous.”

BNVCA also noted a 2015 video of a song she wrote and performed titled “Smile Palestine,” in which she sings of “a life of despair” for the Palestinians amid “slaughter of mothers, fathers, little sisters and little brothers.”

Reacting to the controversy Ibtissem, an English teacher in training who was born in France to a Syrian father and an Algerian mother, wrote on Facebook that her statements about terrorism had been “taken out of context” and “do not reflect any of my views.”

She did not attempt to recontextualize her remarks, but added that she was born in France.

“I love my country, and of course I wholeheartedly condemn terrorism, which was the reason for my fury: How can you imagine that I would defend the indefensible!” Ibtissem wrote.

She said her message is one of “love, of peace and tolerance and the proof of this is to sing Hallelujah by Leonard Cohen, a song that illustrates perfectly the message that I wish to express as an artist.”

But her Arabic-language rendition of Cohen’s song shows she took some artistic liberties with that message, according to the Tribune Juive weekly. Whereas the French-language translation of the song’s first verse was faithful to the English origin, Ibtissem proceeded to sing in Arabic a verse that stripped away its sensual language and unmistakably sexual allusions.

The verse was written years ago by a singer from Kuwait, Muhamad Al Husayn, who is known for setting Islamic proselytizing lyrics to Western pop melodies.

It exchanges Cohen’s iconoclastic musings about King David’s lust for Bathsheba and female sexuality with the story of a man who was “surrounded by darkness” until he found God.

A Tribune Juive author, in

an unsigned op-ed, wrote that the altered version went to the heart of the controversy surrounding Ibtissem.

“To the uninitiated French public, Mennel began to sing a poetic story drawing on Psalms and King David, who ruled a Jewish kingdom in Jerusalem,” the op-ed read. “But to her many followers who speak Arabic, this artist had a very different religious message.”

# Poland isn't the only country trying to police what can be said about the Holocaust

**By Cnaan Liphshiz**

(JTA)—In 2015, Ukraine's president signed a law whose critics say stifles debate on the historical record of World War II and whitewashes local perpetrators of the Holocaust.

Law 2538-1 criminalized any rhetoric insulting to the memory of anti-communist partisans. And it celebrates the legacy of such combatants—ostensibly including the ones who murdered countless Jewish and Polish citizens while collaborating with Nazi Germany.

The law generated some backlash, including an open letter by more than 70 historians who said it “contradicts the right to freedom of speech,” ignores complicity in the Holocaust and would “damage Ukraine’s national security.”

But as with similar measures in Europe’s ex-communist nations, the Ukraine law generated little opposition or even attention internationally—especially when compared to the loud objections to a similar measure in Poland that was signed into law on Tuesday by the president. The law had passed both houses of parliament in recent days. The United States and Israel joined historians and Israel’s Yad Vashem Holocaust authority in decrying the bill.

The Ukrainian and Polish laws are similar, but in Ukraine’s case we didn’t see anything even close” to the avalanche of condemnations that Poland received, said Edward Dolinsky, director of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee and a longtime campaigner

against Holocaust revision in Ukraine. “I wish we had; maybe this law could have been stopped in Ukraine.”

To activists like Dolinsky, the singling out of Poland reflects the ongoing politicization of the debate on Eastern Europe’s bloody World War II history. They say the conversation is distorted by geopolitical tensions involving Russia, populism, ignorance and unresolved national traumas.

There are clear similarities between the Ukrainian and Polish laws, according to Alex Ryvchin, a Kiev-born Australian-Jewish journalist and author who has written about the politics of memory in Eastern Europe.

“Both seek to use the legitimacy and force of law to enshrine an official narrative of victimhood, heroism and righteousness while criminalizing public discussion of historical truths that contradict or undermine these narratives,” he said. Yet, he noted, “The reaction to the Polish law has indeed dwarfed the response to persistent state revisionism elsewhere in Europe in spite of the fact that the rate of collaboration was generally lower in Poland than in Ukraine and Latvia.”

The Baltic nations of Lithuania and Latvia were pioneers in nationalist legislation that limits discourse about the Holocaust in their territories. Critics say these laws also shift the blame for the murder of Jews, which was done with local helpers, to Nazi Germany alone. They also seem to equate the Nazi genocide with political repression by the Soviet Union—which

many in the former Soviet Union blame on Jewish communists.

In 2010 Lithuania—a country where Nazi collaborators virtually wiped out a Jewish community of 250,000—amended its criminal code, prescribing up to two years in jail to anyone who “denies or grossly underestimates” the crime of genocide or “other crimes against humanity or war crimes committed by the USSR or Nazi Germany against Lithuanian residents.”

Similar legislation in Latvia from 2014 imposes up to five years in jail for those who deny the role of “the foreign powers that have perpetrated crimes against Latvia and the Latvian nation,” without mentioning the involvement of Latvian SS volunteers in murdering nearly all of the country’s 70,000 Jews.

The denial of local culpability during the Holocaust is at the root of opposition to Poland’s law, which sets a maximum of six years in jail for “whoever accuses, publicly and against the facts, the Polish nation or the Polish state of being responsible or complicit in the Nazi crimes committed by the Third Reich” or “grossly diminishes the responsibility of the actual perpetrators.” On Tuesday, President Andrzej Duda said he would sign the laws (which he did later in the day), finalizing them, but also refer them for review by Poland’s highest court.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who in the past has been criticized for not calling out his country’s Eastern European allies on these issues, called the Polish legislation “baseless” and said Israel opposed it. The U.S. State Department in a statement suggested it could have “repercussions” for bilateral relations with Poland.

Israeli Education Minister Naftali Bennett’s scheduled visit to Poland this week was canceled after he criticized the law, which Israel’s embassy in Poland said was generating anti-Semitic hate speech in the media.

Back in Israel, the Polish Embassy condemned what it called ignorant remarks by Yair Lapid, a prominent

opposition leader. Citing his credentials as the son of a Holocaust survivor, Lapid said the Polish law is designed to hide how Poland was “a partner in the Holocaust.”

Jewish organizations, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said for their part that they understand the Polish frustration with terms like “Polish death camps,” which seem to shift the blame for Nazi war crimes to Poland—one of the few Nazi-occupied countries where the Nazis did not allow any measure of self-rule or integrate locals into the genocide.

And the term is especially offensive in Poland, where the Nazis killed at least 1.9 million non-Jews in addition to at least 3 million Jews.

But, many Jewish groups added, the legislation in Poland ignores how many Poles betrayed or killed Jews and is therefore detrimental to the preservation of historical record and free speech.

Dolinsky in Ukraine isn’t a fan of the Polish legislation, either.

“But I don’t quite understand why it and only it provoked such a strong reaction,” he added. “We needed that strong reaction two years ago in Ukraine. This fight needs to apply to all these cases. For the pressure to be effective, it shouldn’t be selective.”

Dolinsky believes that Ukraine—which, unlike Poland, shares a border with Russia—is getting a free pass from the West because it is subjected to hostility from Russia under President Vladimir Putin.

In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine amid ongoing psychological warfare against the Baltic nations, often involving the deployment of Russia’s mighty army around those countries in blunt loudspeaker diplomacy.

“There is a lot of Russophobic sentiment worldwide and it means international silence on countries with a conflict with Russia,” said Joseph Koren, chairman of the Latvia Without Nazism group.

“Poland and Hungary are in a different category,” agreed Dovid Katz, a scholar of Yiddish in Lithuania and longtime campaigner against



Janek Skarzynski/AFP/Getty Images  
**Polish President Andrzej Duda (l) nominating Mateusz Morawiecki to be the prime minister at the presidential palace in Warsaw, Dec. 11, 2017. Both support the controversial law on the term “Polish death camps.”**

Holocaust distortion there. The singling out of Poland and Hungary, he said, is “not least because the issues of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and restrictions on democratic expression in these countries have never been perceived primarily through the same binary lens of pro-and anti-Putin.”

Under that alleged cover of silence, in Ukraine and the Baltic countries there is a rapid lifting on taboos that had been in place for decades on the honoring of war criminals, even including SS volunteers who enthusiastically participated in the mass killings of Jews and Poles.

Largely ignored by the international media, Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis last week gave the final approval for a law that offers financial benefits to all World War II veterans—including SS volunteers who murdered Jews. Latvia is the only country in the world known to have an annual march by SS veterans, which takes place with the approval of authorities’ on the country’s national day in the center of its capital, sometimes with mainstream politicians in attendance.

Last year, the municipality of Kalush near Lviv in Ukraine decided to name a street for Dmytro Palii, a commander of the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS, also known as the 1st Galician.

Ukraine’s state television observed a moment of silence for the first time last year for Symon Petliura, a nationalist killed by a Jewish communist for Petliura’s role in the mur-

der of 35,000 to 50,000 Jews in a series of pogroms between 1918 and 1921, when Petliura was head of the Ukrainian People’s Republic.

“There is less willingness to speak out on Ukraine in media, in the scientific community and in Western governments, so it seems,” Dolinsky said.

But this alleged turning of a blind eye, he added, is a disservice. “Ukraine needs to join Europe as a civilized member of that family of nations. And for that to happen, it needs to speak honestly and openly about its history,” he said.

To Ryvchin, the Australian author, the “particularly forceful reaction to the Polish law is likely because Poland is seen as the epicenter of the Holocaust,” he said. The Germans built extermination camps only in Poland, according to Holocaust historian Efraim Zuroff.

“Any attempt to distort or disguise what happened in Poland is seen as a particularly egregious attack on the history of the Holocaust and the memories of the dead,” Ryvchin said.

Ironically, Poland is perhaps singled out for criticism because of the country’s vocal civil society and the lively debate it is generating over the politics of memory, Katz suggested.

Even today, he said, Poland and Hungary “have robust liberal movements that themselves counter official government policy on many issues—unlike the Baltics, where dissent is often quashed using the full force of the law.”

## PACE to Palestinians—stop funding terror

**By United with Israel**

A Knesset delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was successful in softening the language of a resolution denouncing the US’ recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and Israeli construction in the “occupied territories,” while successfully pushing it to call on the Palestinians to cease their practice of financially incentivizing Palestinian terrorists.

The final resolution, submitted to PACE’s Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy at the initiative of Palestinian delegates, states that “the role of the USA as a serious broker in the peace process was undoubtedly undermined by the decla-

ration of its president on Jerusalem.”

Palestinian Authority (PA) leadership is refusing to return to the negotiating table completely and has repeatedly announced it will reject any peace plan proposed by the Trump administration.

The head of the Israeli delegation, Member of Knesset Aliza Lavie, succeeded in adding to the final draft a clause in which, for the first time, the Council of Europe called on the PA to stop providing financial support to prisoners convicted of terror acts and to their families. The resolution was adopted on Thursday with a vast majority.

According to PA laws and regulations, every terrorist arrested, tried and imprisoned in Israel receives monthly

financial payments. The more Israelis killed and the longer the terrorist is sentenced to prison, the higher the PA payment to the terrorist or their family.

For instance, a Palestinian terrorist who murders innocent civilians and is sentenced to over 30 years in prison receives over \$3,000 US dollars a month.

Palestinian terrorist prisoners are regarded by the PA as patriotic “fighters” and as employees of the PA government. While in prison, these terrorists and their families are paid premium salaries and given extra benefits as rewards for their “service.” On release from custody, the terrorists become civil service employees.

The PA spends at least

\$300 million annually on terrorists’ stipends, totaling approximately \$1 billion over the past few years. At the same time, the PA receives massive international aid and exists on the verge of bankruptcy.

In addition to adding the clause demanding Palestinians stop incentivizing terror, the Israeli delegation thwarted a Palestinian initiative to add five clauses to the final draft that condemn Israel. Since Israel has only observer status at the council’s Parliamentary Assembly, the Israeli delegation recruited the support of MPs from a number of European countries.

Following the vote, Lavie said, “The obsession of the European institutions with

**PACE** on page 15A

1 S	2 A	3 G	4 A	5 D	6 A	7 Y	8 A	9 N	10 U	11 R	12 S	13 A
14 E	15 R	16 O	17 S	18 I	19 N	20 G	21 T	22 O	23 U	24 S	25 A	26 B
27 L	28 L	29 P	30 A	31 Y	32 R	33 E	34 S	35 B	36 I	37 W	38 A	39 Y
40 I	41 E	42 R	43 L	44 O	45 S	46 C	47 E	48 O	49 C	50 D	51 R	52 I
53 J	54 E	55 F	56 E	57 R	58 S	59 A	60 G	61 O	62 S	63 A	64 G	65 K
66 T	67 R	68 U	69 S	70 H	71 D	72 I	73 E	74 M	75 L	76 M	77 A	78 E
79 N	80 D	81 S	82 T	83 S	84 E	85 S	86 E	87 M	88 E	89 M	90 E	91 D
92 R	93 I	94 S	95 E	96 S	97 T	98 R	99 I	100 S	101 E	102 M	103 E	104 E

3	1	7	8	6	5	9	4	2
2	6	9	4	1	3	8	5	7
5	8	4	9	7	2	1	3	6
7	4	5	6	8	1	3	2	9
6	3	2	7	5	9	4	8	1
8	9	1	3	2	4	7	6	5
9	7	6	5	3	8	2	1	4
4	2	3	1	9	6	5	7	8
1	5	8	2	4	7	6	9	3

**BBYO****From page 1A**

vital need and incredible opportunity for young people to unite communities of all faiths, races and cultures toward shaping a stronger, fairer and more democratic society for all people.

IC 2018 will offer a range of programming throughout

the weekend that will focus on empowering and energizing teens to partner with each other to bring new ideas to fruition, including nearly 60 direct service projects and leadership labs at sites throughout the Orlando area. The programming will also spotlight inspiring stories from speakers who took an unlikely path to their current work and

place in life. Additionally, the conference will showcase the diversity of the BBYO community, with 235 delegates from 36 countries attending the iconic event. For the first time, delegates from Australia, China, Colombia, Mexico and Spain will join the conference, enhancing BBYO's celebration of Jewish culture in a way that only BBYO is poised to do.

International Convention will also be home to a gathering of "Movements and Shakers," sponsored by BBYO, NCSY, NFTY, USY and Young Judaea. This conference of more than 100 professionals and volunteers will meet to explore collaboration opportunities around reaching and inspiring Jewish teens.

"This is going to be a

weekend unlike any other, as teens gather in Orlando to interact with diverse and compelling leaders they would not have access to anywhere else," said Matthew Grossman, Chief Executive Officer of BBYO. "Participants are going to leave with a great deal to think about, and our expectation is that they'll bring the spirit of creativity and

desire for action cultivated here to future endeavors."

For those unable to attend IC 2018, BBYO will be livestreaming select sessions on Facebook Live. Livestreaming will be accessible on BBYO's Facebook page, and videos will later be posted on BBYO's YouTube channel. Schedules for streaming will be posted on BBYO's International Convention event page.

**Pulse****From page 1A**

pen. What was the mindset of the perpetrator of this vicious murdering spree? Will there be more of these attacks in the future?

Asra Q. Nomani, Yasmine Mohammed, and Orli Peter, Ph.D. have each been personally affected by violence, understand this essential principle and have joined hands and hearts to begin a candid and courageous conversation on healing after trauma.

Event organizer, Debra Corso, will moderate the discussion. Corso and her family had a personal connection to the attack at Pulse, and she is now a community activist, devoted to ending extremism and religiously sanctioned hatred and violence.

Meet the panelists...

Asra Q. Nomani is a former Wall Street Journal reporter and the author of two books, including "Standing Alone: An American Woman's Struggle for the Soul of Islam." A former scholar in

the practice of journalism at Georgetown University, she is co-director of the Pearl Project, a faculty-student, investigative-reporting project into the kidnapping and murder of her former colleague, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

She is a cofounder of the Muslim Reform Movement, which advocates for an interpretation of Islam that promotes peace, secular governance and human rights, including rights for women, LGBTQ and atheists. Nomani

has also testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security, and has appeared on Real Time with Bill Maher.

Yasmine Mohammed is an Arab-Canadian college instructor, activist, podcaster and writer who has written a memoir, "From Al Qaeda to Atheism." Mohammed's message is one of hope to fellow ex-Muslims, atheists and freethinkers.

Orli Peter, Ph.D. is a neuropsychologist and clinical psychologist who directs

Accelerated Psychology, a clinic in Beverly Hills that integrates neuropsychology and clinical psychology to help traumatized people. Dr. Peter is a former associate professor of psychology and director of the Graduate Psychology Programs at Mount St. Mary's University. She also assisted in terrorism research at Rand Corporation. Her experiences as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor and as a trauma survivor inspired her to research, teach, and provide treatments for the

many survivors around the world, including survivors of the 9/11 attacks, Iranian refugees, sexual abuse victims, and traumatized Palestinian and Israelis.

Debra Corso, the event's organizer, is a yoga instructor, living in Central Florida and is the panel's local speaker. She led workshops and retreats at home and abroad for nearly 15 years.

The cost for the event is \$10; free for Heritage readers or if you mention Chris Hart, radio commentator.

**Debate****From page 3A**

massacre of hundreds of Jews by their non-Jewish Polish neighbors. The controversial plan was proposed in 2014 in an effort to provide conclusive forensic evidence about the massacre.

"Since we already have a war, I appeal to the Institute of National Remembrance to take this opportunity to finally make exhumation in Jedwabne, blocked effectively

over 10 years ago by the pressure of Jewish organizations," he wrote on Facebook.

Ziemkiewicz said the exhumation could provide evidence that the crime "was committed by the Germans."

The head of the Polish Press Agency, Wojciech Surmacz, also blamed Jews for the deaths of other Jews during the Holocaust, sharing on Twitter a photo of Jewish ghetto police. He said the police were responsible for the

deaths of "millions of Jews" in Poland.

The Nazis often forced Jews to police the ghettos, usually under threat of death.

Surmacz is the author of a 2013 Forbes article accusing Polish Jewish leaders of personally benefiting from the restitution of prewar property. Forbes later apologized.

Also last week, a former priest, Jacek Miedlar, began producing T-shirts and sweat-

shirts with the inscription "I am not sorry for Jedwabne."

Counterprotesters chanted the slogan during an anti-racism march in Białystok in 2011. Two years later a court said the chant was incitement to hatred and sentenced those counterprotesters to prison terms of six to 10 months, which were suspended. Their lawyer said that "research shows that nearly 50 percent Poles do not want to apologize for Jedwabne."

Miedlar is associated with Polish nationalists and last year was indicted in the western Poland city of Wrocław for "public incitement to hatred based on religious and national differences." In 2016 he gave a speech in which he called for hatred against Jews and Ukrainians.

Michał Szczzerba, a member of the parliament from the opposition Platforma Obywatelska party, said he would report Miedlar to the prosecutor's office for selling the shirts.

"In my worst nightmares I never expected to hear jokes about Auschwitz, Jews and gas chambers on state-owned television," Piotr Kadlcik, a prominent Warsaw Jewish leader, told JTA. "I sincerely hope that the Polish president will veto this law and we will be able to start the process of putting back together Polish-Jewish relations."

**Israel****From page 4A**

the U.S. demanding amnesty for illegal aliens in America.

Israeli opponents of amnesty for African migrants are not simply reviled as racists, however. Over the past two weeks, leftist pressure groups and activists have equated amnesty opponents to Nazis.

Africans who enter Israel illegally in search of work are equated to Jews in Europe during Holocaust desperate to escape the Nazis.

The Israeli public supports deporting the illegal migrants—by a huge margin. A poll of Israeli Jews published this week by the mass circulation daily Israel Hayom found that 58 percent of Israelis

support deporting the illegal migrants. Only 23 percent disagreed with the government's policy. The rest had no opinion.

But Israel's far left has never been moved by public opinion. Backed by wealthy liberal American Jewish organizations including the Anti-Defamation League, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the Reform Movement's Religious Action Center, J-Street, T'ruah, and the New Israel Fund, the Israeli far left responded with rage and slander to the law and the government's decision.

Speaking at a conference in Tel Aviv Wednesday, Anti-Defamation League Director Jonathan Greenblatt blasted

the government's intention to deport the illegal migrants. He likened the situation in Israel to the situation in the U.S. with the so-called "Dreamers" (children brought illegally to America as minors), and insinuated that Israel, and Americans who oppose amnesty for Dreamers, are racist. (Before joining the ADL in 2015, Greenblatt worked in the Obama White House under President Barack Obama's senior advisor, Valerie Jarrett, directing the Office of Social Innovation and Civil Participation.)

The New Israel Fund, a radical American Jewish group that spends millions of dollars every year in Israel funding radical leftist and Palestinian groups, has been at the

forefront of the fight to force Israel to naturalize its African migrants. Currently, the NIF is underwriting at least six different groups in Israel to prevent the enforcement of Israel's immigration laws and government decisions.

In an open letter, NIF CEO Daniel Sokatch told supporters that the group is supporting the campaign to block the deportations "financially and with expert advice."

For Americans interested in finding solutions to the illegal immigration crisis in the U.S., Israel's experience is instructive on two counts.

First, border security works. The combination of legislation and the border wall ended infiltration by illegals almost instantaneously.

Second, as Israel's current situation indicates, champions of illegal immigration have no intention of making any deal. They are not fighting for illegal aliens because they want to make the world a better place. They are championing their cause because they want to make Israel a different place. And since most Israelis like Israel the way it is, there is no common ground to be found.

Which brings us back to Green's article in the Atlantic. Green noted that at the end of the day, the dispute about illegal immigration in Israel is really a fight between Israelis and liberal American Jews, who make up the majority of the pro-illegal immigrant activists in Israel.

Green quoted Elliot Vaisrub Glassenberg, an American immigration activist working in Israel.

Vasirub Glassenberg explained, "For American Jews, what is the number one thing that it means to be Jewish: Tik-kun olam: Working for a more ethical world. But when you asked Israelis what it means to be Jewish they answer, 'Well, I'm Jewish. This is my identity.'"

*Originally published in Breitbart.com.*

*Caroline Glick is the senior Middle East Fellow at the Center for Security Policy in Washington, DC, the deputy managing editor of The Jerusalem Post and a contributor to the Jewish World Review.*

**Palestine****From page 4A**

that families moving to such areas must take account of the risks.

The Palestinian leadership is at high bombast, asserting that there was not a historic presence of Jews in the Jerusalem, along with the impropriety of Balfour, and variously insisting on the boundaries of 1947 or 1967.

Sweden has joined a number of Third World countries in recognizing a Palestinian state, Slovenia has moved

in that direction, and many other countries grant the Palestinians some degree of diplomatic status.

The United States has signaled something like a recognition of the status quo, without actually using those words. Trump moved substantially beyond Obama in his rhetoric about Jerusalem and the marginal nature of Israel-Palestine among other problems of the Middle East.

Other countries have reacted in varying degrees of shock

to what Trump has said. Some have acted to replace what the US said it would no longer be paying for the problematic efforts of UNRWA.

The status quo has at least the potential of dynamism. Whatever happens, if anything, may show the impact of what Palestinians do, along with actions of Israel, international organizations, and the numerous national governments concerned with Palestine.

The spread of Jewish settlements, the power of Israel, and

Israelis' distrust of Palestinians may render the issue of a Palestinian state moot—at least for the foreseeable future.

Is Israeli opposition to a Palestinian state morally justified?

Self-defense is a powerful explanation, against a background of chronic violence for at least a century, with several waves severe in the numbers of casualties.

Among the questions dangling is the degree of lip service in sentiments expressed

by national leaders about Palestine.

It's convenient to arrange for Mahmoud Abbas an honor guard, a public handshake, and another dollop of money. What else? What comes next? has been more elusive.

Recent news is that important Muslim authorities, including leading members of the Saudi regime, have sought to downsize Palestinian aspirations, while other messages coming out of the same regimes have expressed what's traditional about Pal-

estinian rights and Israeli injustice.

It's best to avoid speculation. Those feeling certain about one moral posture or another will continue to preach, most likely produce little more than responses from people also confident of their moral position.

Anyone certain of movement in one direction or another should not bet more than a few cents on their passions or predictions.

Comments welcome, irashark@gmail.com.

**PACE****From page 14A**

Israel has remained the same, but with a determined effort we managed, for the first time, to add to the final report an

unequivocal call to stop the support for terrorists and their families.

"Unfortunately, many members of the council are blind to the fact that the con-

flict did not begin with President Trump's declaration or construction in Jerusalem," she argued. "Rather, it stems from the Palestinians' consistent refusal to recognize the

existence of the State of Israel, in any territory."

She said that behind the scenes, more countries are sympathetic to Israel's claims, and Israel's diplomatic ef-

forts are bearing fruit, albeit partially.

However, "the insistence to continue to accept every Palestinian demand to adopt unfounded resolutions in

urgent procedures—not only does this not promote peace, it pushes it further away and encourages the Palestinians to avoid direct negotiations," she stated.

# Summer camps offer kids an immersion in Israel's tech prowess

**By Ellen Braunstein**

CHICAGO (JTA)—Sam Rosen, a 10-year-old Minecraft player, builds virtual castles at his computer and protects himself from monsters. His mother, Carrie, a high school math teacher, knows the game teaches tech skills and engineering—valuable skills he can build on in school.

So when JCC Chicago announced plans to roll out a tech day camp for the first time this summer, Carrie signed up Sam, understanding that he would learn programming or, as she calls it, “the back end of games.”

The new specialty camp, offering different tech workshops for second- to ninth-graders, is one of the first North American partnerships for BIG IDEA in Israel. BIG IDEA, a 10-year-old tech sleepaway camp located on the outskirts of Zichron Yaakov, is where 1,000 elementary to high school-aged children from around the world get a taste of Israel’s culture of innovation every summer. It also runs travel trips and a gap year program.

“This is pretty new and exciting for us,” said Dotan Tamir, the 34-year-old founder and CEO of BIG IDEA Educational Projects, of the Chicago spinoff. “It’s part of our mission to help kids in the Jewish world dream of a better world through innovation and creativity—things Israel is known for.”

A second BIG IDEA day

camp is starting this summer at the Bender JCC of Greater Washington in Rockville, Maryland. And this summer will mark the third year for a BIG IDEA program at the Kaplan JCC on the Palisades in Tenafly, New Jersey. In its first two years in New Jersey, an all-Hebrew track drew day campers from an Israeli-American community already familiar with the BIG IDEA brand.

This year, an English track will open up the program to more families who don’t necessarily want Hebrew immersion, said Aaron Atlas, the camp director at the Kaplan JCC on the Palisades.

The U.S. camps offer two-week workshops in 3-D modeling, coding and computer programming, web design, DJ mixing, digital photography, robotics, jewelry design, graphic design, video production, animation and virtual reality. Campers can enroll in one or more for multiple sessions. No experience with the technology is necessary.

At the end of the two weeks, campers present a final project. All the software links are sent home for campers to keep working on projects.

Guy Goren, 8, is continuing to explore programming since he attended a coding workshop at the Tenafly JCC. He took a break from his computer to tick off all the fun activities during his day at camp, including lunch.

“I did like DJ,” Guy told JTA. “You choose a song and add a

few things to it to make your own song.”

Omer Kariv, 19, is typical of the Israeli shlichim, or emissaries, who teach the workshops. He spent one summer in Tenafly after being released from the Israeli army’s Intelligence Corps. A counselor at BIG IDEA in Israel, Kariv came to New Jersey knowing the latest technologies it offered back home. He is studying mechanical engineering and competes in robotics competitions. He hopes to attend MIT and then the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

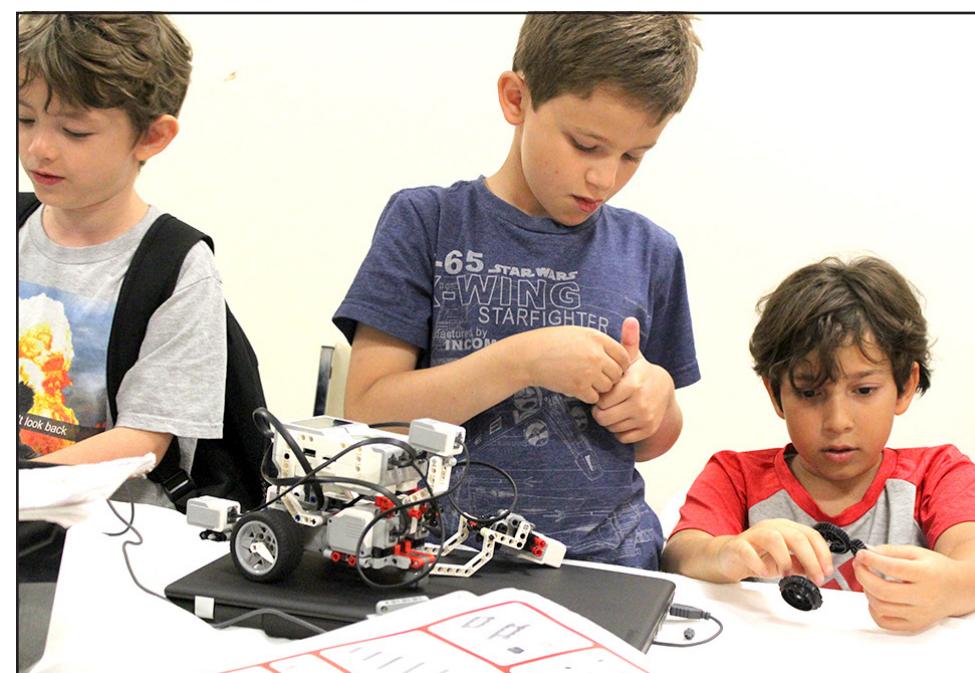
“I love the way we make the kids interested in high tech,” Kariv said of the BIG IDEA program. “We show them the high-tech world through their own games. Instead of the hard robotic stuff I learn in college, we add programmable robotics to Lego projects, making it fun and functional.”

The specialized workshops of no more than eight kids are combined with unplugged time for swimming, arts and sports.

“It’s a good mixture with being outside enjoying summer, but it’s technology that my son is really into,” Carrie Rosen said.

“They really bring the Israeli technology spirit to kids,” said Sharon Goren, Guy’s mother, “teaching them how to be more creative and expand their knowledge in a laid back environment.”

Jewish summer camps have been adding specialty camps at a fast clip in recent



Campers at Big Idea/JCC Day Camp in Tenafly, N.J., incorporate robotics into Lego projects.

years, in everything from tech to targeted sports training, the arts, sciences and filmmaking. The Foundation for Jewish Camp, which runs an incubator for specialty camps, said the options are necessary for attracting youth who are bombarded with competing programs and responsibilities.

“To make camp appealing,” the foundation wrote in a report last year, specialty camps “need to continue marketing their newness, to new campers coming for their first experience and returning campers who want to do something different from last summer.”

BIG IDEA’s satellite camps in North America provide

campers with an introduction and feeder track to its programs in Israel. Ariel Oren, 17, of Toronto, attended the camp in Israel for two summers—one as a camper for two weeks, the other as a counselor in training for four weeks. He remembers surfing in the morning, learning 3-D modeling and taking a course in entrepreneurship.

He and his team members created a survey and did market research for an app that connects young adults beset by mental illness with a therapist. Business moguls judged the entry and gave feedback on the product and presentation. The session included a visit to a university where the camp-

ers were lectured on how to launch a startup.

Oren most remembers the new and lasting friends he made at BIG IDEA.

“What’s really unique was the fact that this is really an international camp and I really connected with a lot of people who are now friends,” he said.

The Chicago JCC is committed “to bringing Israel to life for kids who have probably never been there,” said Jamie Lake, its day camp marketing manager. “It’s interwoven within the fabric of the camp, helping kids connect to modern Israel, giving them a sense of pride in Israel’s success in technology.”

## Orthodox Union will not penalize synagogues that already have women clergy

**By Ben Sales**

NEW YORK (JTA)—The Orthodox Union will not penalize its member synagogues that already employ women as clergy, but it has reaffirmed a policy that prohibits other synagogues from hiring women in rabbinic positions.

A statement adopted at the umbrella Orthodox synagogue association’s board meeting last night and obtained by JTA states that while the O.U. prohibits synagogues from hiring women as clergy, the four synagogues that already employ women clergy will be

allowed to remain members without making any changes.

A fifth synagogue also employs an ordained Orthodox woman, but seemingly not in a position the O.U. considers to be clergy.

“Each of the four shuls has had female clergy in their employ for a considerable period of time—and certainly well before the issuance of the Rabbinic Responses and the OU Statement,” the board statement read, referring to the women clergy ban adopted last year. “Moreover, we are taught that communal unity and darchei shalom [Hebrew for ways of peace] are significant core Jewish values

that must be weighed, advanced and nurtured.”

Last February, the O.U. adopted a policy, based on a rabbinic committee’s ruling, saying that while there is a place for women at synagogues to teach Torah, hold professional leadership positions and advise on certain Jewish legal matters, Jewish law prohibits women from filling a role akin to a pulpit rabbi.

“The formal structure of synagogue leadership should more closely reflect the halakhic ethos,” the decision read, using a Hebrew term for Jewish law. “For the reasons stated above, we believe that

a woman should not be appointed to serve in a clergy position.”

Representatives of the O.U. later met with each of the synagogues that have female clergy hoping to persuade them to comply in some way with the ruling. The synagogues, however, have not changed the titles or job descriptions of their women clergy.

“We also recognized, and conveyed to each of these shuls, that a significant portion of the functions and services admirably performed by these women—particularly in the areas of Torah education, and family and pastoral counseling and guidance—fall, in our understanding, within the parameters of the Responses of the Rabbinic Panel,” the board statement read. “However, certain of their activities do not; and the concept of female rabbinic clergy itself falls outside the parameters of the Responses of the Rabbinic Panel.”

The O.U. will take no action against the synagogues that employ the women, although the statement says that “this determination is not—and should not be viewed—as an endorsement of such arrangements.” The group will continue to negotiate with the synagogues to find common ground on the issue for three years. After that, the O.U. will re-evaluate the decision.

All four leaders in question are graduates of Yeshivat Maharat, a liberal Orthodox

seminary here that ordains women as clergy. The maharat title, which was coined by the seminary’s founder, Rabbi Avi Weiss, is a Hebrew acronym for “Jewish legal, spiritual and Torah leader.” In practice, graduates take a range of titles, including rabba and rabbanit.

“The ordination of women has unquestionably been a positive development for Orthodox Judaism and Yeshivat Maharat is proud to be at the forefront of recruiting the best and the brightest in our community into the ranks of leadership,” Rabba Sara Hurwitz, the dean of Yeshivat Maharat, said in a statement. “The work our graduates are doing is within the scope of Jewish law and we will continue to provide a pathway to women who want to serve as spiritual leaders and share their Torah knowledge with their communities through our rigorous and comprehensive curriculum.”

The O.U. statement added that other synagogues, while they are encouraged to hire women in professional positions, should not hire women as clergy. It suggested that synagogues that seek to do so should reconsider their membership in the Orthodox Union.

“As a condition of continued membership, all current O.U. synagogue members will be expected to adhere to O.U. standards,” the board statement reads, adding later



**Maharat Ruth Friedman**

that “we intend to continue a process of dialogue and exploration to identify and evaluate approaches to maximize the participation of women within the ranks of synagogue professionals in a manner consistent with the Responses of our Rabbinic Panel, and communal needs and sensitivities.”

Maharat Ruth Friedman, who works at the Orthodox Ohev Shalom synagogue in Washington, D.C., said she was not pleased with the decision. While it means her job is safe, she is unhappy that it bars other women from having the same opportunity.

“I don’t feel a sense of relief,” she told JTA on Wednesday. “I consider myself part of a great institution and I have a strong camaraderie with all of my colleagues from Yeshivat Maharat. ‘Grandfathering me into the seat but not opening the door to future opportunities for my colleagues, this does not bring a sense of relief. It’s very upsetting.’”

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