



In center, with the red beard, Rabbi Shaya Denburg, co-director of CTeen in Coral Springs, Fla., with Rabbi Moshe Klein on his right; Chayale Denburg, co-director of CTeen in Coral Springs, Fla., who is standing and second from right; and some survivors of the Parkland, Fla. school shooting. The survivors were in New York this weekend for Chabad's CTeen conference.

ADL: Anti-Semitism surged in 2017



Anti-Semitic graffiti.

(JNS)—The number of anti-Semitic incidents in the United States soared in 2017, according to the annual report by the Anti-Defamation League.

There were 1,986 acts classified as anti-Semitic in 2017, up 57 percent from 2016 at 1,267 and more than double the 2,015 total of 941. That makes 2017 the second-most anti-Semitic year since the ADL began tracking the incidents almost 40 years ago, and the highest-ever single-year spike.

"It had been trending in the right direction for a long time," Jonathan A. Greenblatt, CEO of ADL, told The New York Times. "And then something changed."

However, included in the

figures are the 160-plus bomb threats to Jewish community centers and Jewish institutions in the early part of 2017, which were discovered to be mainly carried out by a Jewish teenager in Israel.

Even without those threats, anti-Semitic incidents increased by 43 percent in 2017, with seven Jewish cemeteries vandalized, 19 anti-Jewish physical assaults, and 457 non-Jewish elementary and high schools experiencing anti-Semitic incidents, compared to 235 in 2016 and 114 in 2015.

The states reporting the most anti-Semitic incidents were those with large Jewish populations, including New York, New Jersey and California.

Parkland students begin to heal at Jewish conference in New York

By Ben Sales

(JTA)—Seven survivors of the Parkland school shooting were among thousands of Jewish high school students who attended the annual conference of the Chabad movement's youth group.

Responding to the Feb. 14 shooting became an impromptu theme of the conference, which was hosted in New

York City by CTeen, the teen arm of the Hasidic outreach movement. CTeen, which has 100,000 members worldwide, has eight chapters in the South Florida area surrounding Parkland.

The shooting, which killed 17 students and staff at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, has galvanized a youth-led movement for gun reform. But the students at the conference, each of whom

had taken part in previous local Chabad activities, said they appreciated the opportunity to grieve and be comforted.

"We all have been feeling better because we've been with other teens who have been supporting us," Marc Susskind, 14, told JTA. "They've been checking in on us, keeping us company."

Parkland on page 15A

Choices 2018: A night of transformation

The 24th annual presentation of Choices on March 26 is subtitled "Women Transforming Lives," and that theme rings true, right down to the venue chosen for the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando's largest fundraiser of the year.

Choices 2018 will be held in the gymnasium—yes, the gymnasium—of The Roth Family JCC in Maitland. The idea of selecting such a unique venue evolved from several brainstorming sessions by

Federation staff and the volunteer Choices co-chairs, Judy Kahan Davis and Shira Spector.

"In the fall, when we began considering ideas for a Choices theme, we kept returning to the idea of transformation and the crucial role that women have played in transforming our Jewish community," said Federation's Rhonda Forest. That theme was truly apropos, Forest said, as the Federation itself has been undergoing a significant transformation over the past few years.

When it came time for the women to discuss potential

venues for Choices, the Maitland campus was not initially at the top of the list—in fact it wasn't on the list at all. But that changed during a pivotal meeting in December.

"The more we explored the concepts of transformation and growth as they relate to our community, the Maitland campus suddenly became the obvious choice," Forest said. "This campus has been a hub for Jewish life locally for the better part of the past half-century. It has grown, evolved and transformed right along with us. Those who have spent time on our campus have been

transformed by their experiences here. It's the perfect venue."

Of course, there's plenty of work to do between now and March 26 to transform the JCC gym into the elegant but festive setting women have come to expect from Choices, but Forest said the Federation is up to the challenge.

"This will be a breathtaking transformation," she said. "I can't wait until women arrive at Choices on the 26th and see what we've accomplished. I believe it will set the tone for the entire evening."

The Federation is able to



Co-chairs of the upcoming Choices 2018, Shira Spector and Judy Kahan Davis.

Choices 'Lights of Empowerment' ceremony

In response to feedback from previous attendees, Choices 2018 will place a greater emphasis on socializing than in years past, allowing women ample time to connect and celebrate. The highlight of the brief formal program this year will be the "Lights of Empowerment" ceremony, during which all of the community's women in 13 categories will be honored in a candle-lighting ceremony.

The categories, and the women scheduled to represent them during the event, are:



- The Arts, represented by Henrietta Katzen
- Caregivers, represented by Margo Lightman
- Educators, represented by Carol McNally and Phyllis Bochman
- Entrepreneurs, represented by Amy Imber
- Jewish Organization Professionals, represented by Amy Geboff
- Mothers, represented by

Gail Gold

- Past Women of Choice, represented by Loren London
- Philanthropists, represented by Debbie Meitin
- Professionals, represented by Susan Flower
- Social Service/Nonprofit Professionals, represented by Karen Broussard and Sasha Hausman
- Survivors, represented by Helen Greenspun
- Volunteers, represented by Sara Stern
- In Memory of, presented by Judy Kahan Davis and Shira Spector

bring its vision to life thanks to the generosity of this year's Choices sponsors. The Presenting Sponsor for Choices 2018 is Harriett's Charitable Trust. The Diamond Sponsor is AVMedia, which will be handling the lighting and production, and Orlando Health is a Ruby Sponsor.

Choices tickets are now on sale for \$54. You can purchase online at www.jfgo.org/choices or call the Federation at 407-645-5933, ext. 236. Everyone who purchases a ticket by March 16 will receive a free Choices raffle ticket, a \$25 value. Women who buy a ticket

can also bring a "first-timer" (someone who has never attended Choices) for free.

The Federation is providing complimentary valet parking on all attendees.

Choices begins at 6 p.m. Monday, March 26, on the Maitland Jewish Community Campus, 851 N. Maitland Ave. Visit www.jfgo.org/choices for details.



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JNF gala speakers to talk about 'Israel and the next generation'

Jewish National Fund (JNF-USA) will host the annual Tree of Life™ Award Gala at Congregation Ohev Shalom on

Tuesday, March 20, to honor Deborah Dorsky Meitin, Marc Reicher, James Riola, and Rabbi Aaron Rubinger with

Tree of Life™ awards for their dedication to the Orlando community, JNF, and Israel. Guests will hear from Rabbi

Leor Sinai, co-CEO of Alexander Muss High School in Israel, and Ariel Kotler, JNF's Israel operations development officer, who will speak about "Israel and the next generation," focusing on engaging youth and young adults in the U.S. and in Israel.

The Tree of Life™ award is a humanitarian award given in recognition of outstanding community involvement, dedication to the cause of American-Israeli friendship, and devotion to the peace and security of human life.

The Alexander Muss High School in Israel-JNF's mission is to promote, build, and strengthen life-long bonds between youth and Israel through the study of the history and culture of Israel. Students are inspired to live outside their books, encounter new ideas and challenge themselves to find their own link within the chain of Jewish continuity. AMHSI-JNF is an important contributor to the leadership and educational fabric of the North American Jewish community and boasts more than 22,000 alumni.

As Israel operations development officer, Kotler travels



Ariel Kotler



Leor Sinai

around the world educating communities about JNF's mission and its transformative projects throughout the land of Israel. Kotler has provided critical leadership for JNF's campaigns to build communities in the Negev and modernize Israel's fire and rescue infrastructure. Prior to joining JNF, he served two tours of duty in Lebanon, rising to the rank of lieutenant commander in the Intelligence Infantry of the IDF.

The Orlando Tree of Life™ award gala will take place on Tuesday, March 20, 2018

at 6 p.m. at Congregation Ohev Shalom, located at 613 Concourse Parkway South in Maitland. There will be heavy hors d'oeuvres, an open bar and dessert served. Dietary laws observed.

RSVP by March 6 at jnf.org/orlandotol

Sponsorship information and tickets also are available online at jnf.org/orlandotol. For more information on this event or ways to get involved with JNF in Orlando, please contact Laura Abramson at labramson@jnf.org or 407.804.5568.

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CARDINAL MONUMENTS

Congregation Sinai needs community help and support

This small congregation located in Minneola, Fla., has been serving the Jewish community of Central Florida since 2003. After providing successful community service for the past 15 years, they have just received an unexpected lease non-renewal notice, with no reason given, from Cactus Management.

Under the spiritual leadership of Joe and Lynn Goldovitz, the congregation provides a spiritual environment for observance of Jewish traditions and celebration of member's lifecycle events. Congregation Sinai's membership ranges from age 6 to 96, and the average member is retired. They regularly supply donations of food and supplies

for the local schools as well as food and clothing for Puerto Rican and US Virgin Islands relief. They also hold ongoing food drives for the needy and interfaith activities to promote understanding among different cultures.

Congregation Sinai has an active Sisterhood with special events and an annual fashion show for women across the community. They also host various women's outreach programs. The Men's Club holds monthly movies, fundraising events, charitable programs and an annual golf tournament.

Congregation Sinai serves as a house of prayer, assembly and study in which the spectrum of Jewish expression

is cultivated, protected and nurtured. They hold Shabbat services every Friday night with Torah readings, Bible and Bagel study workshops, healing services, as well as special services for every major Jewish holiday.

Congregation Sinai is in need of funds, land, and/or a building to lease of approximately 3,000 sq. ft. (with adequate parking). They need to be reasonably close to Minneola as most of the membership can't drive any distance at night. For those who would like to assist, please contact the synagogue president, Peter Sobel at petesobe@gmail.com. Congregation Sinai is a 501(c)(3) institution, so donations are tax deductible.

Celebrate Passover with Congregation Beth Shalom

Congregation Beth Shalom, "The Synagogue that Feels Like Family," invites the community to attend a second night Passover Seder with Rabbi Karen Allen at Penbrooke Fairways, 501 State Road 44, in Leesburg, at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 31.

A traditional Kosher Seder dinner will be catered by

Deanna's Catering, LLC. The meal will include gefilte fish, matzo ball soup, carrot tzimmes, grilled vegetables, oven roasted potatoes, and a choice of four entrees: beef brisket, chicken, salmon, or Vegan. Dessert, coffee, hot tea, and iced tea are also included. A roasted chicken fingers meal is available for children.

Reservations must be made in advance—no later than March 20. For more information or to make your reservations contact Burt Kraft at 352-513-3517. Information and a reservation form can be found on the synagogue website: www.bethshalom-florida.org.

Rosen JCC Men's Night Out

It's a time for the men to get together and watch the opening games of the NCAA tournament or play poker and blackjack at the Rosen JCC's Men's Night

Out, March 15 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. There will be lots of food, fun and friendship.

The event, held at Audi South Orlando, located at

4725 Vineland Rd., Orlando, is free for JCC members. However, RSVP's are a must. Email joelb@rosenjcc.org by March 12 and you are in.

JFS Orlando Restock Challenge is on!

From March 1 until April 15 JFS Orlando will be collecting non-perishable food items and cash donations to restock their pantry shelves.

This year the Weiner family and the Winter Park Wealth Group will match 50 cents for every dollar and one pound of food donated, up to \$10,000.

For more information or to register as a Restock Challenge Food Drive partner, email heather.betts@jfsorlando.org.

Syria is now 'a Shi'a colony of Iran,' Damascus-born professor tells Israeli conference



BESA via Facebook

Professor Efraim Karsh, director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS)—After years of bloody warfare, Syria has become a “Shi’a colony of Iran,” a Syrian professor who lives in Germany told an Israeli conference in recent days.

Addressing the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University, Bassam Tibi, professor emeritus of international relations at Georg-August University of Göttingen, said: “They have killed our clans. They have

killed our family. The Alawites of the Assad regime have killed our Sunni identity of Damascus.”

Tibi, a secular Sunni scholar born in Damascus, said the Syrian conflict has been transformed into a sectarian-religious war, adding that this core fact has been missed by many Western observers.

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, Iran has been filling the vacuum “created by the removal of [former Iraqi leader] Saddam Hussein. Ever

since, Iran has been expanding its power,” explained Tibi.

“Today, there are two blocs in the Middle East: the Sunni and Shi’a blocs. The strongest bloc, even though Shi’as are the minority, is the Shi’a bloc. The Saudis are unable to meet the Iranian challenge. Iran now controls Iraq, Lebanon and Syria,” he warned.

‘Sunni eyes are opening’

Daniel S. Mariaschin, executive vice president and CEO of the B’nai B’rith, who had recently met with Persian Gulf leaders in the United Arab Emirates, said at the conference that due to the Iranian threat, Sunni Arab leaders no longer fear Israel and are potential allies to stop Iran.

“Sunni eyes are opening to the fact that Israel poses no threat, but that Shi’a Iran... aspires to dominate far beyond its borders,” stated Mariaschin. He added that significant potential exists for Sunni states to cooperate with Israel on shared concerns.

Despite this positive development, Tibi forewarned that Saudi Arabia, which today is considered to be the leader of the Sunni Arab world, lacked a policy to effectively push back Iran. “Saudi Arabia is not likely to win. But one should support them against the Iranians,” he argued.

Professor Hillel Frisch, a Middle East expert who is a

member of BESA, said the term “Arab-Israeli conflict” is no longer relevant to describe the region. “It’s basically an Israeli-Iranian conflict or an Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The only Arabs that are confronting Israel today are proxies of Iran.”

While non-Arab regional powers—Israel, Iran and Turkey—are on the rise, the Arab states are in dramatic decline, he added. “Of course, this was aided by the Americans when they destroyed the Sunni state of Iraq, which was replaced by a Shi’a state,” said Frisch. **The Shi’a corridor: Tehran to Beirut**

According to Tibi, Iran works with state and non-state actors to take over the region, saying the governments of Syria, Iraq and Lebanon were all under Tehran’s control, while non-state armed groups such as Lebanon’s Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi’a militias of Iraq are also members of Tehran’s radical alliance.

“There is an axis of power coming from Iran to the Mediterranean, and from Iran to central Asia, and from Iran to the Red Sea,” said Tibi. “All of the people who talk about the conflict in Syria do not acknowledge Iranian power. They do not acknowledge that the nature... of the conflict is between Sunnis and Alawites

[who are seen as an offshoot of Shi’a Islam].”

Professor Benjamin Miller, an expert on international relations from the political-science school at the University of Haifa, also told the conference that Tehran has gained significantly by constructing “a corridor from Iran to the Mediterranean.” He added that introducing democracy to Iraq has “made Iran a key broker” in that country, which has a Shi’a majority of 60 percent.

In Syria, the Alawites, “who are kind of offshoots of Shi’as, are threatened by the 70 percent Sunni majority,” he explained. “Iran is their natural protector and ally. This led to the corridor’s formation.”

The common threat posed by Iran to Israel and Sunni Arab states has “helped to transform relations” between them, maintained Miller.

Meanwhile, the Russian-Iranian alliance—formed to assist the Syrian regime of Bashar Assad and rescue it from collapse—is narrowly built on shared interests, but with no shared identity. Miller believes it’s most likely going to end.

The failure of the West

In his address to the conference, Frisch also expressed concern over America’s withdrawal from the region, calling it “the major threat that

connects between Trump and Obama. From that point of view, they’re equal in seeking to withdraw from the role as the world’s policeman.”

Frisch described Iran as “truly a radical imperial state. The best proof of that is that it’s the only state in the Middle East... that projects power above 1,000 kilometers from its border,” using it to attack Israel, which harbors no ill will towards Iran.

Iran “keeps teaching us, together with Hezbollah, that they won’t do business with us,” he added.

Tibi agreed with Frisch’s assessment, saying the West is failing to meet the Iranian challenge, while also leveling heavy criticism of the 2015 nuclear deal between the world powers and Iran, under which “inspectors can’t enter military sites... This must be fixed.”

“Iran continues to be successful,” he said.

Looking ahead at the future, Tibi shared a bleak picture, saying, “Syria, my home country, is bleeding... there is a term to describe this conflict, which cannot be solved. The diagnosis for the Syrian conflict is: intractable. In the next five years, there will be no solution. Sunnis and Alawites—and the protectors of the Alawites, the Iranians—cannot live together.”

Rajoub vs. Dahlan to replace Mahmoud Abbas



Michal Fattal/Flash90

Former Palestinian Fatah Party lawmaker Mohammed Dahlan, who is viewed as a potential successor to Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas, speaks to the media in December 2006.

**By Yoni Ben Menachem
Jerusalem Center for
Public Affairs via JNS**

The battle for the succession of Mahmoud Abbas in the Palestinian Authority is heating up. This was apparent from Fatah Secretary-General Jibril Rajoub’s recent attack on Egypt, which supports the candidacy of Palestinian politician Muhammad Dahlan for the position of next PA chairman.

The Israeli security forces are concerned about a possible bloodbath in the West Bank as soon as Mahmoud Abbas leaves office.

The “bombshell” that Jibril Rajoub, secretary-general of Fatah in the West Bank, dropped during an interview on the BBC’s Arabic service on February 17, 2018, is still reverberating throughout the Arab world and the territories.

During the interview, Jibril Rajoub attacked Egypt for supporting his bitter political rival Muhammad Dahlan. He said: “It is not acceptable for Egypt to support Muhammad Dahlan. He was expelled

from the Fatah movement, and Egypt knows why. They were part of this process. It’s not honorable for Egypt as a nation to support someone who is against the Palestinian problem and his own nation. We are talking about a wrongful precedent and step for Egypt.”

Jibril Rajoub has a terrible relationship with Egypt. Last year, he was deported from Egypt shortly after he arrived in Cairo to take part in a political conference as a representative of Fatah. Soon after his plane touched down, Egyptian security officers put him on another plane and ordered him to leave the country because he had criticized the Egyptian president in the media.

According to Fatah sources, Jibril Rajoub suspects that PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas will soon retire from political life. As Rajoub believes he is the most suitable candidate to succeed Abbas as chairman, he launched an attack on his rival Muhammad Dahlan. Dahlan has the backing of the Arab Quartet (Egypt,

Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates) for the position of the next chairman of the Palestinian Authority.

Unsurprisingly, the Hamas leadership is supporting Muhammad Dahlan. Khalil al-Hayya, a member of the Hamas political bureau, stated on Feb. 20, that, “Muhammad Dahlan is a major Palestinian figure. His stance is clear regarding reconciliation, and we thank him for his steadfastness for the Gaza Strip.”

Muhammad Dahlan’s supporters reacted derisively to Jibril Rajoub’s remarks and said that he is “a crazy man like President Trump.”

According to them, Rajoub is very concerned by the possibility of Dahlan becoming the next chairman of the Palestinian Authority. In the event of his ascension, Rajoub will have to either leave the area or take the risk of being put on trial and facing a long sentence in a Palestinian jail.

Dahlan’s supporters claim that Rajoub is trying to market himself as the successor of Mahmoud Abbas and that he has allied himself with Qatar, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Israel against Egypt.

The US government opposes Dahlan

Jibril Rajoub is not the only one working against Muhammad Dahlan. In recent years, the United States has been working against him as his power continues to increase within the Arab world.

Dahlan sees himself as Yasser Arafat’s true successor. Although he was expelled from the Fatah movement, he is patiently planning his comeback, straight into the

position of chairman of the Palestinian Authority. For the past 11 years, the United States has refused to allow Muhammad Dahlan to enter its territory and considers him to be a destructive force against its policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In this regard, the Trump administration has adopted the standpoint of the previous administration regarding Muhammad Dahlan.

During a Quartet debate in Vienna in 2010, former U.S.

Secretary of State John Kerry stated that Muhammad Dahlan is no less dangerous than Hamas and that Washington refused to allow him entry into the United States.1

In discussions held by the Trump administration on “the day after Mahmoud Abbas,” attended by envoy Jason Greenblatt and Ambassador David Friedman, Arab sources stated that Muhammad Dahlan had saved the Hamas movement and he had persuaded the Egyptian gov-

ernment to open a dialogue with it.

Senior officials in the Trump administration have accused Dahlan of propagating statements calling for the annulment of the Oslo accords and declaring the territories “a state under occupation,” which contravenes U.S. policy.

The American campaign against Muhammad Dahlan actually serves his purposes very well. For this reason, it is mentioned at length on any Internet site that supports him.

Granddaughter of former Sen. Lieberman makes aliyah

(JNS)—The granddaughter of former longtime U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman has immigrated to Israel.

Nesya Lieberman, 20, made aliyah on Tuesday through the Nefesh B’Nefesh organization, in partnership with the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, the Jewish Agency of Israel, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael and the Jewish National Fund-USA.

Nesya, formerly of Atlanta, will join an ulpan, learning Hebrew at Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu before beginning a year of national service work.

“I’ve wanted to make aliyah ever since my eighth-grade school trip and am overjoyed to have finally accomplished that goal! Making aliyah alone is intimidating, but I truly believe that this is where I need to be,” Nesya told Israel National News. “Jews have been praying for a return to Israel for millennia, and I’m



Nefesh B’Nefesh

Nesya Lieberman

fortunate enough to live in a time when such a return is possible. Why would I live anywhere else? Israel is my home, and I can’t wait to see what my future here will bring.”

The former Connecticut

senator, who was in Israel just two weeks ago for an event titled “The First Israeli Congress on Judaism and Democracy,” is an outspoken advocate for a strong relationship between the United States and Israel.

The embassy will move... and the world won't end

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS)—Maybe it wasn't such a big deal after all.

Instead of waiting until 2019 or 2020, the U.S. embassy to Israel will move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in May. On Friday, the Trump administration said the ceremony converting a Jerusalem consulate into the embassy would coincide with Israel's 70th birthday celebrations.

Unlike Trump's initial announcement recognizing the holy city as Israel's capital, the reaction to this latest one turned out to be substantially low-key. The Arab world and Muslim populations didn't take to the streets to protest or commit mayhem. Countries that were already critical of Israel and of Trump's stand issued pro forma statements. The Palestinian Authority protested the idea of the United States celebrating a date they regard as the anniversary of their Nakba ("disaster"), but that's as far as it went.

All of which ought to alert the peddlers of conventional wisdom about the conflict that this isn't the only thing they've been wrong about. They've been telling us for decades that the actions currently being taken by Trump would wind up setting the world on fire. But there's more to the lesson that the embassy saga teaches, other than Jerusalem not being as big a deal to the Islamic world as we've been told.

The notion that Palestinian grievances are

the sole or even main cause of instability in the Middle East was always a myth. So is the idea that peace can happen before the Palestinians admit defeat in their century-old war against Zionism. Yet by creating a fact on the ground that does nothing to impede a theoretical peace agreement, the United States has also exposed the hollow nature of the anti-Israel consensus that holds that any Western recognition of reality that forces the Palestinians to give up their illusions is inadmissible. If peace is to ever to come—and right now, it seems a long way off—it will be built on the kind of realism that Trump is employing, not on the kind of appeasement of Palestinian fantasies that often characterized the policies of previous presidents.

The problem starts with the fact that sovereignty over the city was never settled by an international agreement. Jerusalem was designated as an international zone by the 1947 partition agreement set forth by the United Nations. Not only was that scheme a nonstarter, Israel's War of Independence ended with the city divided—with the Western part under Israeli control and the eastern part, including the Old City, under illegal Jordanian occupation.

The world held off on recognizing western Jerusalem as Israel's capital, in part because of the expectation that a peace treaty was inevitable, and because others were simply waiting for the next war to result in the extinction of the Jewish state. Nothing changed after Israel's

victory in the 1967 Six-Day War that united the city. Some continued to wait for a peace the Arab world pledged not to make, while others still clung to the fantasy.

The problem with waiting was that holding off only served to reinforce Palestinian rejectionism. That became especially true since the Oslo Accords in 1993, which had the unintended consequence of encouraging Palestinian intransigence rather than ending it. To this day, the supposedly moderate Palestinian Authority continues to deny—as its leader, Mahmoud Abbas, has repeatedly done—Jewish ties to the city, or that the Temple Mount and the Western Wall are ancient Jewish holy places. In that sense, they are little better than their Hamas rivals.

The P.A.'s Western donors and Arab patrons know this is nonsense. But by pandering to their denial by holding off recognition of Israel's capital, the world ensured that the Palestinians were not forced to rethink their rejectionist political culture. Instead of the Trump administration inflaming the conflict, it has been the willingness of everyone else to indulge Palestinian fantasies that has been the problem.

Nothing Trump is doing precludes the possibility of a two-state solution, if indeed one were otherwise possible. All the United States has done is to recognize what has been the truth on the ground for 70 years. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.

Once the U.S. consulate puts a new sign on the building declaring it the official embassy, the Palestinians will still be free

to negotiate a two-state solution that could, in theory, redivide the city and allocate part as the Palestinian capital. If they don't, it won't be because U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman no longer has his desk in Tel Aviv. It will be for the same reason they've consistently rejected peace all along: They're locked in the same tragic mindset that has continued to nurture their failed war against Israel.

Peace will have to await a sea change in their culture that will make it possible for their leaders to choose peace, rather than, as Abbas has consistently done, to pander to religious and nationalist fantasies that preclude it. The first step toward that goal can only be taken once the international community that has enabled them to hold onto their destructive vision begins telling them to accept the reality regarding Jerusalem, as well as to give up subsidizing and fomenting terror.

As Trump has proven, doing so won't blow up the world. The only question now is whether he understands what he's done. If, as reports indicate, he pushes forward a new peace deal predicated on more Israeli concessions, he will only encourage Palestinian illusions and repeat the same errors made by Presidents Obama, Bush and Clinton. If that happens, it will prove that even Trump can still fall prey to the influence of outdated and discredited "experts," whose myths about the conflict should have been discarded long ago.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS—the Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathans_tobin.

On Israel, Trump doesn't just make promises, he takes action

By Boaz Bizmuth
Israel Hayom/Exclusive to
JNS via JNS

President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel on Dec. 6 was not a political move, but rather the fulfillment of a true intention. The same goes for his decision on Friday to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem on May 14, as part of the celebrations marking 70 years since the founding of Israel. The American announcement proves to the world that Trump doesn't just make promises, he takes action. Remember his remarks two weeks ago in a special interview to Israel Hayom—that recognizing our "wonderful" capital was the high point of his first year in the White House? He meant every word he said to me in the Oval Office.

Trump is the best thing to happen to Israel in recent years, after predictions that we had "lost America." Between us, history will decide—not the studio pundits who miss the loud voice of former U.S. President Barack Obama. Those same pundits explained just a few days ago that there was a divide between the White House and the Israeli government after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "lied" to the president about construction in Judea and Samaria. Divide? At the most, it was a misunderstanding that was fixed within a matter of hours.

These are also the same analysts who explained that Trump wouldn't win the 2016 election, and afterward explained with the utmost gravity that he would never recognize Jerusalem, and therefore never move the embassy. I'm curious to know what they'll say now—will they make threats about the heavy pressure that will be exerted on us as part of the peace deal Trump is putting together? Maybe they'll try to cast doubt on

the American president's brave ties with the Jewish people because he hasn't yet moved to the Efrat settlement?

It's astonishing (or not) to see that this joyful, groundbreaking announcement was just the third or fourth report on the Saturday evening news broadcasts, with the worried anchor wondering if it was a gift or a complication. Everybody can calm down. The American president gave us a wonderful present for our 70th birthday. In terms of history, Trump is the gift—Obama was the complication.

Just like former U.S. President Harry Truman, who recognized the state of Israel 11 minutes after it was founded, Trump found himself facing objections to the move, including from his own White House staff. "I can understand why many other presidents bailed on their promise because tremendous pressure was put on them not to do it. The other presidents, all of them have failed in the promise even though they made it as a campaign promise but I understand it because I will tell you, the lobbying against it was tremendous," he told me in the interview.

There were some including European leaders who tried to explain that an American move like this one would undermine the peace process and even cause unrest. As if all the years in which the U.S. Embassy has been in Tel Aviv were years of calm, without terrorist attacks. Other than that, we all know the peace process isn't exactly going well. In any case, Trump hopes that he has taken Jerusalem off the table, or at least made the Palestinians' radical demands irrelevant, as the overwhelming majority of Israelis believe them to be.

The hope is that the U.S. move will

Action on page 15A



Everywhere

Purim and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee

By Mel Pearlman

Last week we observed the holiday of Purim with the reading in synagogues around the world of the Megillat Esther, partying with strong drink and masquerades, eating Hamantashen (named after the notorious Haman), and exchanging Shalach Monot (gifts of food and sweets). Purim commemorates a theme which occurs too frequently in Jewish history: our struggle for survival against those who "in every generation would rise up to destroy us". Of course, the outcome happily is always the same: with the help of G-d, we prevail over our enemies.

Earlier this week, immediately following Purim, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) held its Annual Policy Conference in Washington, D.C.

While the story of Purim is ancient (Circa 357 BCE), its plot and subplots remain relevant in our modern day struggle to battle the delegitimizers of Israel and the 21st century anti-Semites who would like nothing better than to see Israel and the Jewish people disappear from the face of the earth. While G-d watches over us from above, the Covenant he made with us requires that we be proactive in assuring our own survival.

In the palace court of King Ahasuerus in ancient Persia, where all the political ambitions and governmental schemes played out, a Jew named Mordecai closely watched on the sidelines to protect the interests of the Jewish people living securely in exile under a benign administration.

Mordecai knew the nature of the political elites of his time and their possible negative influence on the king. He was determined to position a person close to the king to oppose any negative policies and neutralize any deleterious influences that would endanger the security and safety of the Jewish people as well as the stability of the kingdom. His opportunity came when the king sought a new queen, and that person was Esther. You know the rest of the story. Without Mordecai's knowledge of the internal workings of the king's court and the affective lobbying of Esther the events of the day would have had a very different outcome.

Fast forward to today. For almost all of Israel's modern existence, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has been the pre-eminent American/Jewish lobby to assure that the American/Israel relationship is strong and that a special connection exists between two of the world's strongest democracies and which is in the best interest of both nations.

In Washington D.C., where Congress and the White House play out their political ambitions and governmental schemes, AIPAC closely watches on the sidelines to protect the interests of the Jewish people living securely in America and to educate and lobby members of our government with regard to the American/Israel relationship. The recently concluded Annual Policy Conference brought together thousands of Americans from every corner of our nation to perform the work begun by Mordecai and Esther in another time of Jewish peril.

Although the acronym AIPAC may be misleading, AIPAC is not a political action committee. It does not raise funds for or endorse political candidates, although many members of AIPAC are political activists who independently support, endorse and campaign for candidates for public office as responsible citizens of our country.

AIPAC is a non-partisan organization whose mission is solely to educate, explain and support the American/Israel relationship as being in the best interest of the American people, to lobby members of our government and to promote policies that enhance this special relationship. Their membership is made up of a cross-section of America's population and is not exclusively Jewish.

The Jewish lobby in ancient Persia was very different from AIPAC's sophisticated lobbying in the United States, but the end game remains the same: the safety, security and survival of the Jewish people in Israel and the promotion of policies to members of our government for the safety, security and well being of America, the nation we call home.

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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ISSN 0199-0721 Winner of 46 Press Awards

HERITAGE
FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

HERITAGE Florida Jewish News (ISSN 0199-0721) is published weekly for \$37.95 per year to Florida addresses (\$46.95 for the rest of the U.S.) by HERITAGE Central Florida Jewish News, Inc., 207 O'Brien Road, Suite 101, Fern Park, FL 32730. Periodicals postage paid at Fern Park and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes and other correspondence to: HERITAGE, P.O. Box 300742, Fern Park, FL 32730.

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You cannot whitewash away Polish anti-Semitism

By Sarah N. Stern

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki was forced last week to deny being a Holocaust revisionist, after suggesting that Jews were complicit in their own genocide.

Referring to a new Polish law making it illegal to say the country has responsibility for the Holocaust, an Israeli journalist and son of Polish survivors asked Morawiecki if he could face prison for recounting how his mother was betrayed by her Polish neighbors.

The prime minister replied: "Of course it's not going to be punishable... to say that there were Polish perpetrators, as there were Jewish perpetrators, as there were Russian perpetrators, as there were Ukrainian, not only German perpetrators."

Morawiecki's remarks were a shameful adulteration of history. There were no "Jewish perpetrators" in the Holocaust. They were victims. The Jewish prison-

ers who participated in the extermination machinery did so under the immediate threat of death.

The new law, which Polish lawmakers chose to push—on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, no less—cannot be understood without an appreciation of the context from which it emerged, nurtured by the rise of nationalism in Poland and the tacit support of the populist government, which views itself as the guardian of Polish historical honor.

A dark trend is once again sweeping across the European continent. In Macerata, a small town in Italy, a neo-fascist admirer of Mussolini recently went on a shooting rampage, wounding five men and one woman of African origin. In Austria, a party with neo-Nazi roots now sits in the coalition government. And from Hungary to the Czech Republic, France and Britain, political parties and their supporters are reviving the old blood libel against Jews. Europe's grip

on its bloody past is far from assured.

Of course, Poland's history with the Third Reich is complex. If the new law were to clarify that the Polish government had no official role in the Holocaust, it would be an accurate reflection of events. Likewise, Poland is right to object to the flippant use of "Polish death camps" to describe Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek and Chelmno rather than "Nazi death camps inside Poland."

But in every country under Nazi occupation—Poland is no exception—most of the local population were either silent witnesses to the slaughter or willing participants in the annihilation of Jews.

Take, for example, the role of Polish collaborators. In July of 1941, 1,600 Jews, nearly the entire Jewish population in the village of Jedwabne, were murdered by their Polish neighbors. Some were hunted down and killed with clubs, knives and axes.

Most were forced into a barn and burned alive.

The Polish police collaborated with the Germans on many occasions such as in Warsaw, where they remained on duty to control the 50,000 Jews still alive in the ghetto after the liquidation in the summer of 1942.

This is only part of the story. In Poland, complicity and heroism coexist. An important aspect of history that must not be forgotten or minimized is the sacrifice of the Polish Underground State. The organization, which came to the rescue of Polish Jewry, operated from 1939 to 1945 and was subordinated to the Polish government-in-exile.

The Council to Aid Jews codenamed "Zegota," a unique organization one on a global scale, provided structural and monetary assistance to Jews hiding among the Polish population and those living in ghettos, saving the lives of tens of thousands. Thousands of other Poles sheltered Jews despite the fact they and their

entire families faced execution by the Nazis, if they had been caught.

But the selfless act of humanity by a selective group of Poles cannot whitewash the more sinister chapters of Polish history. In Poland, and many other parts of Eastern Europe, historical revisionism is far from a new phenomenon.

The widespread hostility that Jews faced did not die with the defeat of the Nazis. After the closure of World War II, Jewish survivors that returned home were confronted with an anti-Semitism that was terrible in its fury and brutality.

The new communist government in Poland made no mention of the crimes committed against Jews by the Nazis. They, too, were anti-Semites. In July 1946, a pogrom occurred in the Polish town of Kielce, resulting in 42 Jews being massacred, an event that Poland's foreign minister would recognize 50 years later as an "act of Polish anti-Semitism."

In recent years, things have regressed again. A rise in nationalism has always been bad for the Jews.

Matters were not helped when Poland, over the last decade, lost important public intellectuals who reminded their country of the horrors of the Holocaust with firsthand accounts. Among them Marek Edelman, a Jewish leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, and Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, a leading figure in the Zegota underground organization.

The so-called "Holocaust Bill," the new Polish law, promotes the avoidance of historical responsibility and deflects blame, in an attempt to rewrite history in the name of blind nationalism. But the Holocaust cannot be denied, avoided or played down. We are here to remember, educate and speak truth to power.

Sarah N. Stern is founder and president of the Endowment for Middle East Truth, a pro-American and pro-Israeli think tank and policy institute in Washington, DC.

The PA is not a sacred cow

By Judith Bergman

(JNS)—It has become a platitude repeated ad nauseam by former Israeli security officials: The Palestinian Authority must not be weakened because this might imperil Israel.

The reasoning is that even though the PA is bad, at least it cooperates, to a greater or lesser degree, with their Israeli counterparts, whereas Israel does not know what kind of potentially radical monster would take over after a collapsed PA.

This Sunday, the Ministerial Committee for Legislation approved a bill that would deduct salaries given by the PA to convicted terrorists and their families from the tax revenues Israel transfers annually to the PA.

Israel transfers millions of dollars each year to the PA in customs duties levied on goods destined for Palestinian markets that transit through Israeli ports. If passed by the Knesset, the proposed legislation would enable Israel to either deduct

the funds from the revenues or "freeze" the payments.

"Soon, this theater of the absurd will come to an end, and the salaries of the terrorists that we will withhold from [Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud] Abbas will be used to prevent terrorism and compensate victims," said Minister of Defense Avigdor Lieberman about the proposed bill.

Predictably, parts of the Israeli security establishment were opposed to the proposed legislation, fearing that it could weaken the PA. Similar fears have been expressed by a group calling itself Commanders for Israel's Security, which reportedly represents hundreds of retired Israeli military officials, regarding the U.S. Taylor Force Act.

The Taylor Force Act, which thus far has passed the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, would end American funding of the PA unless it stops paying salaries to terrorists and their families.

However, Commanders for Israel's Security have voiced

concerns that the Taylor force Act would "undermine P.A. stability; expand the circle of frustration and hostility; erode the security coordination;" and deny the P.A. funding for "vital economic projects." All this, say the retired military personnel, would "compromise Israeli security."

Since when is stuffing your own pockets and using the rest to pay terrorists a "vital economic project"? One might argue, however, that the P.A. has done exactly that—created a monster that ceaselessly incites the murder of Israelis and the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state.

The PA differs from the Hamas only in its lack of honesty and its two-faced public relations, according to which Abbas says one thing in English and another in Arabic, just as his predecessor Yasser Arafat did. The PA's ideology concerning the end goal, however, is as radical as that of Hamas. Furthermore, the constant brainwashing has ensured that Palestinian Arabs continue to see con-

flict with Israel as the only viable option.

As recently as two weeks ago, the official Facebook page of Fatah communicated that "the blood of the martyrs is the light of freedom" with an image of, among other things, the PA map of "Palestine" that presents all of Israel as "Palestine."

Mahmoud Abbas is the leader of Fatah, the party that controls the PA. Also less than two weeks ago, Fatah honored the mothers of terrorists who have killed or wounded Israelis, calling them "the crown on our heads, the mothers of the Martyrs [Shahids]." The list goes on.

What the former Israeli security-establishment figures sorely seem to miss is that the P.A. has made impossible in the long term any kind of peace. In a 2012 interview, Itamar Marcus of Palestinian Media Watch, which translates and makes accessible to the public the internal rhetoric of the P.A. that is not intended for Western consumption, said "the

tragedy is that the Palestinians were much closer to peace with Israel before the Oslo Accords. An ocean has developed because of hate promotion by the Palestinian Authority."

Marcus estimated that chances for peace may have been better in 1996, when after decades of contact with Israelis, a poll of Palestinians showed that 78 percent considered Israel to be positive in democracy and human rights.

Today, that figure would be pure science fiction. Poll after poll shows that a majority of Palestinian Arabs hold deeply ingrained anti-Semitic beliefs (according to a 2014 ADL poll, 93 percent of Palestinian Arabs held anti-Semitic beliefs) and support terror against Israelis. That is what decades of the P.A. indoctrination has fostered or reinforced.

A generation of people has been raised on an unadulterated diet of hatred of Israel and the Jewish people, courtesy of Arafat, Abbas and their ilk. In kindergartens and schools, in the written

and electronic press, on TV and especially on children's TV, Jews have been called monkeys and pigs that need to be killed.

Schoolbooks show Israel erased from the map, history lessons deny the existence of Jewish nationhood and never teach the Holocaust, (Abbas, after all, has a Ph.D. in Holocaust denial) monuments are erected in honor of terrorist murderers of Jews in city squares, and terrorists are rewarded with fat salaries.

While the PA has been raising "shahids" for the past 25 years—ensuring that there will be no peace for at least a generation—retired Israeli military personnel would have you believe that the PA is the guarantor of Israeli security. The kind of "security" where you have—as was the case in January 2018—some 332 terrorist incidents in a month, resulting in one murder and 16 injured, including two stabbings/attempted stabbings, two shootings, one ramming attack, four roadside bombs, 251 stone-

PA on page 15A



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

How Israel handles school shootings

As our government continues to debate the gun law issues and what to do concerning protecting our schools, Israel has the problem very much under control.

Since 1974 there have only been about one-half dozen terrorist attacks on Israeli schools. What is their secret?

CBS News foreign correspondent Jonathan Vigliotti asked, "Does everyone have a gun in Israel?" No, said gun instructor Sharon Gat.

"Gun laws in America are much more loose than gun laws in Israel."

What are the requirements to have a gun?

- It takes up to three months to get a gun.

- Forget 18 or 21, you must be over 27, unless you served in the military.

- You must prove your job requires a gun (not just that you want one).

- And you must get a doctor to sign off on your application.

Dr. Omri Ben Ezra explained to Vigliotti that if you suffer from epilepsy or loss of consciousness or any mental disturbances, you can't have a gun.

Those who have guns must take a gun test (like a drivers' test) that is pretty rigorous, about 40 percent fail the test and need to reapply.

Do teachers in Israeli schools have guns? "No," said Nati Stern, principal of Municipal School in Tel Aviv. "That is the job of police and the state." Every school does have an armed security guard outside the main entrance of the school, which Stern said is sufficient. The guard is there not by choice, but by law.

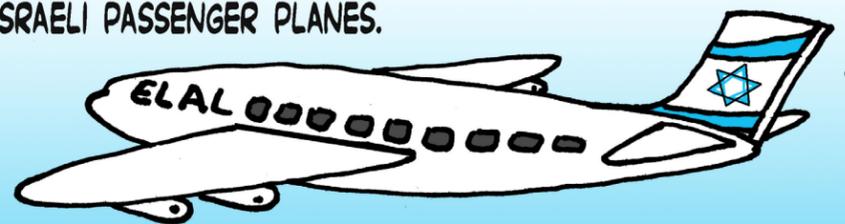
Security guards must take the gun test every four months.

Sounds like a simple, clear solution. Would Americans give up some of their rights for the common sense protection of our children?

Christine DeSouza

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What's Happening

A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT

MARCH 9
6:12 p.m.
MARCH 16
7:16 p.m.

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

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

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

FRIDAY, MARCH 9

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown
 Congregation Beth Shalom—Services, 7 p.m. Synagogue located at 315 North 13th St. in Leesburg.

SUNDAY, MARCH 11

Time changes to Daylight Saving Time (Spring forward one hour)

MONDAY, MARCH 12

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.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

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.
 The Roth Family JCC—Annual JBall, honoring Carol McNally with the Harriet Weiss JCC Legacy Award, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., held at the Orlando Science Center, 777 E. Princeton St., Orlando. Info: 407-645-5933.

Correction

In an article titled "Trump's Mar-A-Lago resort to host gala for Israel's 70th anniversary," the event, scheduled for late March and is organized by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, is selling tickets for \$1,000 per person and \$10,000 per table. (Not \$1,000 per table as previously reported by JTA).

HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

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"I can't live without it!"

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

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THURSDAY, MARCH 15

Rosen JCC—Men's Night Out, 6—9 p.m. at Audi South Orlando, 4725 Vineland Rd., Orlando. Info: Joel Berger, 407-387-5330.
 Congregation Beth Shalom—Rabbi's Torah roundtable Discussion Group with Rabbi Karen Allen, 1 p.m. at Sumter County Admin and Library Building, 7375 Powell Road, Wildwood.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.



The ballet came to Westminster

The Orlando Ballet School, on behalf of the Jewish Pavilion and under the direction of Dierdre Miles Burger, gave a special performance for residents of Westminster Winter Park on Feb. 27. Attendees learned about the daily life of a ballet student, and were then treated to a performance featuring the works of three different composers. After the show, Purim was celebrated with a play and the serving of Hamantaschen.

Quote of the Week

"I will insist the Hebrews have [contributed] more to civilize men than any other nation. They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this Earth. The Romans and their empire were but a bubble in comparison to the Jews."

— John Adams

Manageable puzzle "Oh My ____!" by Yoni Glatt koshercrosswords@gmail.com

Across

1. Word on a door
5. 10 out of 10, e.g.
10. Israeli political party or all of the Talmud
14. State with only one consonant
15. Many a 2018 Olympic medalist
16. Mario ____, Nintendo racing game
17. One is worth about 4.5 shekels
18. "The Adventures of ____ Marsh" (Bellow novel)
19. A ghost in "Pac-Man"
20. Gretzky, in the early 90's
23. Drink in Jerusalem?
24. ____ Diego
25. Big name in Torah commentary...and wine
28. Meas. for Jamie Geller or Susie Fishbein
31. Light, watery sprays
35. High Priest or Giant quarterback
36. Seder part with dipping
39. Anagram for item, mite and time
40. Who Hebrew National answers to
43. Be in pain
44. Less of a mess
45. Day of the week Yom Kippur can never fall on: Abbr.
46. Zionist youth movement
48. "General" on Chinese menus
49. Make a bracha
51. Archaeological undertaking
53. Apple or peach, e.g.
54. Landlord, perhaps
62. Post-it message
63. Old photo color
64. Kosher forest animals
65. Ancient Peruvian
66. "Slumdog Millionaire" actor Dev
67. McGregor in "Beauty and the Beast"
68. 1922 Danish Nobelist Niels
69. Billy Joel album "____ Front"
70. Sacrificial NFL team?

Down

1. Keats or Lazarus, e.g.
2. "Nah!"
3. Kingly title not used for Jewish kings
4. Bar not focused on alcohol
5. Pointless
6. General MacArthur, to friends
7. Therefore
8. "Clueless" catchphrase
9. Kin of onions some eat on Rosh Hashanah
10. Less chubby
11. Make like Haman
12. Places for Torahs
13. "Piggies" setting
21. "That's what ____ about you"
22. Words before "Sam" in a Sean Penn title
25. Addiction-treatment facility, briefly
26. "Wonderland" girl
27. Enhanced sense for a prophet?
28. Genetic feature
29. They're used for latkes

30. Where a sukkah might be built
32. Whack, biblically
33. General who destroyed the Second Temple
34. Eye ailments
37. Shamsky or Garfunkel
38. "____ shall be called woman" (Gen. 2:23)
41. Certain orthodontic device
42. Once around, to an astronaut
47. Sipped part of a kiddush cup
50. Joshua, after Moses
52. Deep, sudden breaths
53. Song by King David
54. "U2's" main man
55. Insect bite consequence, perhaps
56. "Groovy!"
57. "What've you been ____?"
58. Jaffa waterfront walk
59. State with only one consonant
60. Large amount of paper
61. Gov. ID letters
62. Small Twizzler bite

1	P	2	U	3	S	4	H	5	I	6	D	7	E	8	A	9	L	10	S	11	H	12	A	13	S
14	O	15	H	16	I	17	O	18	N	19	O	20	R	21	S	22	E	23	K	24	A	25	R	26	T
27	E	28	U	29	R	30	O	31	A	32	U	33	G	34	I	35	E	36	I	37	N	38	K	39	Y
40	T	41	H	42	E	43	K	44	I	45	N	46	G	47	O	48	F	49	K	50	I	51	N	52	G
53	A	54	L	55	E	56	S	57	A	58	N	59	S	60	A	61	N	62	S	63	A	64	N	65	
66	R	67	A	68	S	69	H	70	I	71	T	72	S	73	P	74	M	75	I	76	77	78	79	80	
81	E	82	L	83	I	84	K	85	A	86	R	87	P	88	A	89	S	90	E	91	M	92	I	93	T
94	H	95	I	96	G	97	H	98	E	99	R	100	A	101	U	102	T	103	H	104	O	105	R	106	I
107	A	108	C	109	H	110	E	111	T	112	I	113	D	114	I	115	E	116	R	117	T	118	U	119	E
120	B	121	E	122	T	123	A	124	R	125	T	S	126	O	127	B	128	L	129	E	130	S	131	S	
132	D	133	I	134	G	135	P	136	I	137	E	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	
151	B	152	I	153	G	154	M	155	A	156	N	157	U	158	P	159	S	160	T	161	A	162	I	163	R
164	N	165	O	166	T	167	E	168	S	169	E	170	P	171	I	172	A	173	D	174	O	175	E	176	S
177	I	178	N	179	C	180	A	181	P	182	A	183	T	184	E	185	L	186	E	187	W	188	A	189	N
190	B	191	O	192	H	193	R	194	S	195	T	196	O	197	R	198	M	199	R	200	A	201	M	202	S

See answers on page 14.

Czech-Israeli solidarity

By Norman Berdichevsky

Although “The Moldau” (Czech Vltava), is immediately recognized by most lovers of classical music as the work of composer Bedrich Smetana evoking the flow of the Vltava River from the forests of Bohemia through the Czech countryside to the city of Prague, it holds out a special appeal for many Jews and especially Israelis who hear in its opening bars a melody quite similar to the Israeli national anthem and Zionist hymn “HaTikvah” (The Hope). This seems to symbolize the long tradition of solidarity, sympathy and tragic history that led to the struggles for the independence of the Czech Republic (Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1938) and Israel.

In 1938, Lawrence Morrell, a British journalist, was sent by his newspaper to report on the “Czech Crisis” threatening war between Nazi Germany and the Anglo-French Alliance, which along with the USSR, Yugoslavia, and Romania had pledged themselves to come to the aid of the beleaguered country in case of German aggression. His book “I Saw the Crucifixion” (London, Peter Davies, 1939) was a cry of despair over how Britain, the other Great Power, and the moral blindness of the so-called “international community” had betrayed Czechoslovakia and made possible the transfer of valuable resources and strategic strengths, paving

the way to further German aggression and the inevitability of World War II.

Morrell had earlier, unsuccessfully tried to warn world opinion of the German threat to absorb Austria and later went on to play an important role in the formation of what became the British Secret Service. His firsthand account of the Sudeten crisis in his book is a masterful portrayal of the immense pressure put on a proud nation to surrender its strategic defenses in the name of “peace.”

The book casts an eerie spell over all those concerned about current events and the mounting pressure on Israel from all sides to accommodate the Palestinians who are a Trojan Horse today parallel to the Sudeten Germans in 1938. Czechoslovakia then, like Israel today, had the will and means to defend itself against its mortal enemy but was deprived of the right to do so by its “friends” who exercised enormous pressure and mobilized to deprive this democratic state of its right to defend itself and its borders.

“It was not the rights and wrongs of the Sudeten Germans which constituted Hitler’s problem. It was precisely the integrity of Czechoslovakia, the barrier that the Czechs presented to his drive toward becoming the strongest power in Europe. The Sudeten Germans were pawns he used for his public policy. For his not so public policy, for the benefit of the Communist-haunted

handful of people in England, he used the scare of the Czech-Soviet pact and raised the ghost of Communism in Germany.

“Perhaps I did not and still do not see things as Mr. Chamberlain sees them, but to my mind the issue seemed very simple that day: England’s vital interest lay in Czechoslovakia. After all, when you play chess, you do not wait until your opponent is two moves off checkmating you before moving to defend your king.” (pp. 172-173.)

Morrell observed how Walter Runciman, 1st Viscount Runciman of Doxford, a prominent National Liberal politician in the United Kingdom between the 1900s and 1930s with a distinguished background of humanitarian aid he helped organize during World War I, was deceived by Chamberlain to lend his hand as an “impartial mediator.”

Although British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain knew full well of the Nazis’ unalterable demands, he nevertheless played with the idea to satisfy anti-Nazi sentiments at home, that various compromise positions based on the Swiss cantonal arrangement of local autonomy might be reached in which the Sudeten region would still formally remain part of Czechoslovakia with only the local police and army units still under the control of Prague.

When the Czechs had reluctantly agreed to accept even this which granted the local Sudeten regions the

right to introduce the same policies as Nazi Germany, including anti-Semitic measures (Czechoslovakia had granted full equality to its Jewish population, the only state in Central or Eastern Europe who actually lived up to this promise during the Versailles Treaty deliberations), the SdP leader Konrad Henlein balked and withdrew from what were in fact his original demands. He and Hitler had agreed not to stop short of anything less than a complete annexation by Germany of the entire Sudeten region. Can the Israelis expect any better type of negotiation and “compromise”?

The SdP, while ostensibly calling for local autonomy had received instructions from Nazi Germany not to reach any agreement and thus all attempts at mediation failed in much the same way that Arafat’s PLO, Hamas and a dozen other Palestinian “resistance groups” backed by the political strength at the U.N. of two dozen Muslim majority countries, never were ready to honestly negotiate a compromise.

The parallels and sense of déjà vu between Morrell’s book and today’s continued mounting pressure on Israel to throw away all its advantages and risk all it has achieved is startling. Many historians are reluctant to make historical comparisons but in this case, the parallels are inescapable. They extend to the very similar sense of a far-flung diaspora and its aspirations for the contin-



ued welfare of the original homeland and close cultural ties. Not only the Czechs and Slovaks abroad but all of the Southern Slavs that comprised Yugoslavia identified with the most successful, vibrant, culturally creative and democratic state of Czechoslovakia much as Jews feel today with the celebration of such events in Israel as the Maccabiya Games.

Is it any wonder that this sense of solidarity and common fate linked Czechoslovakia and Israel during and after Israel’s War of Independence in 1948? The leaders of the Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine), already in the summer of 1947, intended to purchase arms and sent Dr. Moshe Sneh (the Chief of the European Branch of the Jewish Agency, a leading member of the centrist General Zionist Party who later moved far leftward and became head of the Israeli Communist Party) to Prague in order to improve Jewish defenses.

In January 1948 Jewish representatives were sent by Ben-Gurion to meet with General Ludvik Svoboda, the Minister of National Defense, and sign the first contract for Czechoslovak military aid. At first, a “Skymaster” plane chartered from the U.S. to help in ferrying weapons to Palestine from Europe was forced by the FBI to return to the USA.

Czechoslovak assistance to Israel’s military strength comprised a) small arms, b) 84 airplanes—the outdated Czechoslovak built Avia S.199s, Spitfires (see illustration) and Messerschmidts that played a major role in the demoralization of enemy troops; c) military training and technical maintenance; On Jan. 7, 1949, the Israeli air-force, consisting of several Spitfires and Czechoslovak built Messerschmidt Bf-109 fighters (transferred secretly from Czechoslovak

Czech on page 15A

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What is AIPAC's role in the age of Trump?

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—When candidate Donald Trump spoke at AIPAC's Policy Conference in 2016 and said Barack Obama may be the worst thing that ever happened to Israel, many cheered, many choked and the organization apologized.

The fallout from that event will haunt the proceedings when 18,000 activists, including 3,500 students, attend the American Israel Public Affairs Committee conference here this week.

Navigating an increasingly polarized political landscape is the new reality for the lobby, which remains pre-eminent among pro-Israel groups and has long banked on bipartisanship.

Trump, on the one hand, has delivered on much of AIPAC's agenda: He is moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem; he is pushing Congress and America's allies to toughen up the Iran nuclear deal; he is cutting funds to the Palestinians as a means of forcing them to align more with Israel and the West; and he has spoken forcefully against United Nations members who go against the United States on its Israel policies. AIPAC has advocated

all of these policies in recent years.

At the same time, much of the Jewish community reviles Trump for his perceived bigotries and postures on a range of issues, including immigration, minority and women's rights, and funding for social safety net programs. His approval ratings among Jewish voters remain bargain-basement low—28 percent according to Gallup in January, “significantly below the national average,” the pollster said. That was after Trump had announced the embassy move and made clear his positions on the other issues that AIPAC favors.

AIPAC also has always claimed to speak for the American Jewish community on matters relating to Israel. But can the center hold when its delegates are so deeply divided, sometimes against themselves?

“It's a real delicate balance,” said Neal Sher, who helmed AIPAC as executive director for a period in the mid-1990s before Howard Kohr assumed the post he still holds.

Sher said the pro-Israel credibility that Trump accumulated over his first year in office would guarantee a hearty reception for those representing his administra-

tion, including Vice President Mike Pence, U.N. envoy Nikki Haley and the ambassador to Israel, David Friedman.

“The conference this year, they're going to be going nuts, it's going to be like Trump at CPAC,” Sher said, referring to the ecstatic reception afforded the president earlier this month when he addressed the annual conference for political conservatives. “That's going to be a problem when you look at Jewish demographics,” he said, referring to Jewish disaffection with Trump.

Some Jewish Democrats who once relished attending AIPAC now describe it as hostile territory.

“I feel the right wing has taken over the organization and there is no respect for other opinions,” said a former board member who is a major Democratic donor and once reached high enough in AIPAC's ranks to chair a policy conference. “It's just not a place for me anymore.”

The dilemma facing AIPAC was in evidence in March 2016, the day after Trump, then close to clinching the Republican presidential nomination, earned a round of cheers for saying Obama, then the incumbent president, “may be the worst thing to ever happen to Israel, believe me, believe me.”

The following morning, the AIPAC brass appeared on stage to apologize for Trump's behavior and the reaction.

“There are people in our AIPAC family who were deeply hurt last night and for that we are deeply sorry,” said Lillian Pinkus, the lobby's president, her voice choking. “We are deeply disappointed that so many people applauded a sentiment that we neither agree with or condone.”

It was a sequence of events that pleased no one: Democrats despaired of the robust cheers Trump earned, Trump enthusiasts were shocked at the apology. (Reportedly so was Trump, and his displeasure was conveyed to AIPAC by a senior aide.)

Two years later the sequence still smarts—for both sides.

“They boo the president at the policy conference and

it takes them 24 hours to apologize?” the former board member said.

Morton Klein, who heads the Zionist Organization of America and has emerged as a Jewish leader with some of the closest Trump administration ties, said an AIPAC apology was overdue.

“The first thing AIPAC should do is apologize for two years ago, for having the audacity to apologize for Trump's speech,” he said.

Significantly, both the former board member Klein—along with multiple others—cited that moment without prompting as representing AIPAC's crisis point.

It's critical for AIPAC to figure out how to navigate those rough waters, said Tom Dine, Sher's predecessor as executive director, if only to sustain the broad bipartisan support Israel has accrued over the decades.

“At this deeply divided and poisonous period in our politics and policy debate, AIPAC is needed now more than ever,” he said.

An AIPAC official said the path to bipartisanship ran through Congress.

“Bipartisanship is part of our DNA because it is the only proven way to secure the U.S.-Israel relationship for the long term,” the official said in an email. “At a time of polarization, our Policy Conference is an oasis of bipartisanship where we are united in the single goal of strengthening that relationship.”

An AIPAC insider said the focus on Congress would promote bipartisanship in an arena where the divisiveness Trump tends to elicit is not so apparent.

“AIPAC has always been about Congress; Congress is 90 percent of the relationship,” said the insider, who acknowledged that there was more AIPAC could do to cultivate the Democratic grassroots.

The problem with that strategy is that Republicans in Congress are increasingly identified with Trump. Indeed, some of AIPAC's best Republican advocates in Congress, who were always careful to

partner with Democrats in advancing pro-Israel legislation, are retiring this year in part because they can no longer abide Trump's GOP. Among them are Ed Royce of California and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida—both leave behind influential foreign policy spots.

The seeds of partisan division over Israel precede the Trump presidency. The deep divide between the Obama administration and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government over Iran policy and settlements drove some Democrats away from reflexive support for Israel. AIPAC took Israel's side more often than not in those disputes.

“When I joined AIPAC, it was a safe space for Democrats,” said Steve Sheffey, a pro-Israel and Democratic activist from the Chicago area. “It has become increasingly right wing, and not where the American Jewish community is, and in the age of Trump it's become increasingly embarrassing.”

Last month, a Pew poll showed that the gap between how Republicans and Democrats view Israel is widening, “with 79 percent of Republicans saying they sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians, compared with just 27 percent of Democrats.” Although some criticized its methodology, the poll reflected concern that Israel could rapidly become as politically divisive as abortion or gun control.

AIPAC is not ready to give up the fight. Members of Congress speaking at the conference are evenly divided between the parties and, in a let-by-gones-be-by-gones sign, include many Democrats who voted for the Iran deal. (Most backers of the Iran deal were absent from the last two conferences.) AIPAC is endeavoring to reconcile Democratic and Republican agendas on key legislative actions, including the Taylor Force Act, named for an American slain in 2016 by a Palestinian terrorist. It would cut funding to the Palestinian Authority until it stops payments to Palestinian

attackers. Democrats want some carve-outs for humanitarian purposes, Republicans are resisting them.

Ann Lewis, formerly a communications director for the Clinton White House, is leading two sessions on reaching out to progressives.

Lewis said progressives were a critical constituency to cultivate because America was at a point where political positions are being set in stone for subsequent generations.

“From all the data I have seen, decisions about political identity is being decided now for years to come; we're looking at a generational shift,” she said. “It is really important that support for the U.S.-Israel relationship be included.”

Then there was the point of view that AIPAC may as well cut its losses with one party and embrace the more natural fit.

Of course, what the natural fit is for a pro-Israel lobby depends on where you sit.

“The impact of Jews in politics is mostly in campaign contributions,” said Steve Rosen, a former AIPAC foreign policy chief who now works for conservative pro-Israel groups. And, he pointed out, the natural constituency for Israel's policies increasingly is politically conservative Jews.

“If the future of AIPAC depends on becoming an organization of donors, that means looking to the Orthodox over time, who also happen to be more conservative politically,” Rosen said.

Jeremy Ben Ami, who heads J Street, the liberal Jewish Middle East policy group that at times has positioned itself as AIPAC's rival, said catering to the Trump and Netanyahu governments would be a death sentence considering the American Jewish community's political trends.

“The alliance between two leaderships that three-quarters of American Jews disagree with makes it hard to back an organization that exists only to support the Israeli government,” he said. “We're in an era where the majority of American Jews want to be in opposition.”

Bat Mitzvah

Lily Paige Rebar

Lily Paige Rebar, daughter of Daron and Tracy Rebar of Orlando, will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on Saturday, March 10, 2018, at Congregation Ohev Shalom in Maitland, Fla.

Lily is in the seventh grade at Lake Highland Prep where she is a member of the dance team. Her hobbies and interests include dance, being with friends, going to the beach, big hair bows and spending time with family.

Sharing in the family's simcha will be Lily's brother, Marshall; grandparents, Carol and Gene Rintels, Joyce Thompson, and Skip and Judy Rebar.



Bat Mitzvah

Kathryn 'Katie' Rose Botwink

Kathryn “Katie” Rose Botwink, the daughter of Steven and Nikki Botwink, will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on Saturday, March 17, 2018, at Congregation Beth Am in Longwood.

Katie has been homeschooled since kindergarten, and is in seventh grade. She is an avid reader and aspiring writer. She wrote an original musical called “The Bad Apple,” which she then produced, directed, and performed with her friends. At the moment she is editing her first book, a fantasy story for middle grades. Katie loves to sing and to perform with Magic Curtain Productions' Junior Troupe, a theater competition troupe that has performed at Disney and in statewide competitions. Like her older sister, Anne, she is a longtime Girl Scout who loves community service projects, camping, and hanging out with her friends. She is also a brown belt in Seido Karate with her younger brother, Aaron. Katie's goal is to publish her current book and eventually become a best-selling author.



JNF celebrates the power of women

Jewish National Fund is celebrating Women's Month in March and highlighting the remarkable women who have taken on leadership roles within the organization. JNF Women's Month coincides with National Women's History Month, as well as International Women's Day, which has been observed since the early 1900s.

Throughout the month of March, JNF is hosting over 30 events across the country to bring women together to share their personal stories and highlight the important work that Jewish National Fund accomplishes through the women who give their time and financial support to the nonprofit. Thanks to the generous donations of Theresa Lungwitz of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Polly Levine of Paradise Valley, Ariz., donations to JNF's Women for Israel campaign from March 8th to March 31, 2018, will be matched up to a total of \$1,000,000.

“Women raise money with

their heart,” said JNF Future National Chair Stephanie Kelman of Portland, Ore. “I'm not saying men don't, but women are able to reach other women on a more emotional level and relate to some of the issues that we're working toward a bit more personally. Jewish National Fund is going to be a ‘women-run’ organization in the next 20 years, for sure.”

This year alone, the number of women on JNF's national board doubled and more women are stepping up to fill roles on local boards and committees. Almost half of the leadership positions at Jewish National Fund across the U.S. are held by women—including 22 national board members and 19 local board presidents and 150 task force members.

“In 2013, women contributed a little more than \$11 million to our annual campaign,” said JNF's National Vice President of Women for Israel and San Diego Board President Myra Chack Fleischer. “In just

four short years, that number has ballooned to more than \$22 million—an incredible 100 percent increase.”

In 1999, Jewish National Fund's Women for Israel was founded with the creation of the Sapphire Society under the leadership of Terry L. Katz, of Philadelphia, Pa. In less than two decades, JNF's Women for Israel has become a powerhouse within the organization with over 50,000 donors across the country contributing more than 25 percent of the dollars raised each year to improve the quality of life in Israel for all who call it home. In fact, one of JNF's largest and most successful initiatives started out as an idea that was developed through Women for Israel.

“The town of Zukim in the Arava [located in the Negev Desert] was a brainchild of JNF women,” said JNF's National President of Women for Israel Nina Paul of Cincinnati, Ohio. “Where there were once only sand dunes a new com-

munity has developed that is both entrepreneurial and a great tourist destination. That vision helped to inspire JNF's Blueprint Negev campaign to develop the Negev and bring to life Ben Gurion's dream.”

Jewish National Fund Women for Israel is a dynamic group of female philanthropists who share a passion for building a prosperous future for the land and people of Israel. Through this society, women connect with each other on many levels—professional, emotional and ideological—with the common goal of changing lives in Israel and supporting the ongoing development of the Jewish homeland.

Throughout March, JNF's website, blog, and social media channels will call attention to the incredible women involved with the organization. Follow along using the hashtag #JNFWomen. To learn more about Jewish National Fund's Women for Israel, please visit jnf.org/women.



Scene Around

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

Our people have been there...

I read this in a letter from the American Jewish World Service: As this column is read, “we have just celebrated Purim, a celebratory holiday filled full of treats and costumes. Purim has deep lessons to teach us about fighting intolerance and acting on our shared values to pursue justice. Just as Queen Esther courageously stood up to the evil Haman and saved the Jewish community of ancient Persia, we too can stand up for those who face persecution today.

In Burma (also known as Myanmar) the Rohingya ethnic minority is under threat of annihilation from the Burmese military. Whole villages have been destroyed, families massacred, women gang-raped and infants burned alive. It’s simply devastating.

The Rohingya have suffered violence and discrimination for decades because of their ethnicity.” (Sound familiar?)

(What can we do to help? you ask. To find the answer, please either phone the AJWS in New York at 212-273-1620 or email them at <ajws.org>. Remember, “Whoever destroys a soul, it is as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is as if he saved an entire world.” Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin.

Remembering Jewish history...

The following message was addressed from President Herbert Hoover to Emanuel Neumann of the Zionist Organization and was read at the organization’s dinner of the American Palestine Committee in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 17, 1932:



President Herbert Hoover

“I am interested to learn that a group of distinguished men and women is to be formed to spread knowledge and appreciation of the rehabilitation which is going forward in Palestine under Jewish auspices, and to add my expression to the sentiment among our people in favor of the realization of the age-old

US ambassador warns against Jewish expulsion from Judea and Samaria

By Batya Jerenberg
World Israel News

Privately and off the record, US Ambassador David Friedman gave a pessimistic assessment of issues surrounding a possible peace deal with the Palestinians to a group of officials from the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish American Organizations, according to a Channel 10 News report Monday.

“We do not want to raise expectations about the chances of reaching a peace agreement too much. We are realistic. We want a peace agreement, but we know that this would not destroy Hezbollah or ISIS,” he reportedly said, while adding, “In any case, we don’t believe that threatening to pressure Israel is helpful.”

He came down hard on the Palestinian Authority, according to a few attendees at the briefing, saying, “They have not shown that they are capable of building institutions that will allow them to live in peace with their neighbors.”

But even if a deal was in the offing, he was not sanguine about the chances that Israeli society would survive intact,

according to the report. The possibility of a mass refusal to follow orders to evict Jews from their homes “worries the Israeli government,” he reportedly said. “The command echelon in the IDF is going more and more to the national religious [sector]. These are people who feel duty-bound to this land as land given to them by God,” he added, saying it was his opinion that “the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of settlers could lead to a civil war in Israel.”

On a less controversial note, Friedman said that he believed that the American embassy would be moved to Jerusalem by the end of 2019, “at the latest.”

Both his interlocutors at the meeting and US embassy representatives pushed back against the remarks attributed to Ambassador Friedman.

Conference of Presidents Chairman Stephen M. Greenberg and CEO Malcolm Hoenlein said in a statement following Monday’s report, “We have seen the reports on the off-the-record address held with Ambassador David Friedman. The words attributed to him were taken out of

aspirations of the Jewish People for the restoration of their national homeland. I shall appreciate it if you will present my cordial greetings to those attending the dinner... to advance this enterprise.”

(Yeah! Israel!)

A very special event...

On Wednesday, March 14th, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Orlando Science Center, the fabulous J Ball will be held.

It is a prehistoric event benefiting The Roth Family JCC.

There will be hors d’oeuvres, an open bar, a silent auction, gaming tables and live entertainment.

(It doesn’t get any better than MICHAEL ANDREW and the J Life Magazine swing band!)

CAROL J. McNALLY, early childhood director, will be honored with the Harriet Weiss JCC Legacy Award.

For further details, email <orlandojcc.org/jball>

All that jazz...

On Sunday, March 25th, there will be something very special happening at the Altamonte Chapel.

Wonderfully talented ALLAN VACHE and his group of special musicians, MARK McKEE on piano, BEN KRAMER on bass and WALT HUBBARD on drums, will be performing songs from Allan’s new CD from Arbors Records that is coming out this month! The CD is titled “It Might As Well Be Swing.”

This will be a CD release performance.

The Altamonte Chapel is located at 825 East SR 436, Altamonte Springs. The phone number is 407-339-5208.

(It just doesn’t get better than Allan when it comes to great sounds! Don’t miss this performance!)

One for the road...

Victor and Rivkah have always wanted a son to join their two stunningly gorgeous teenage daughters and so attempt for ‘their’ boy one last time. After months of trying, Rivkah gets pregnant and 9 months later delivers a healthy baby boy. Victor is at first ecstatic but as soon as he sees his son he is horrified—it’s the ugliest baby he’s ever seen. He turns to Rivkah and says, “This can’t be my son, Rivkah. Anyone can tell this just by looking at the two beautiful daughters I’ve fathered. Have you been unfaithful to me?” Rivkah smiles sweetly and replies, “No, not this time.

(This is one of my very favorite jokes!)



Carol McNally



Hillel Maier/TPS

David Friedman, US ambassador to Israel

context, are incomplete, and are therefore a distortion of the ambassador’s remarks.”

A.U.S. Embassy spokesperson said, “The Channel 10 report is based upon three attendees at the conference who failed to provide much of the context behind Ambassador Friedman’s comments as well as significant additional and related remarks by the Ambassador... As for settlements, the Ambassador believes that unrestrained

settlement growth is not helpful for peace.”

Friedman, however, is known for his staunchly pro-Israel, pro-settlement stance, having been the president of the American fund-raising arm for the Yeshiva of Beit El in Judea. It was also reported last year that he asked the State Department to stop using the term “occupation” when describing Israel’s presence in Judea, Samaria, and eastern Jerusalem.

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Poland's prime minister said some Jews collaborated with Nazis—Say what?



Gil Cohen-Magen/AFP/Getty Images

Holocaust survivors protesting Poland's new bill on Holocaust rhetoric in front of the Polish Embassy in Tel Aviv, Feb. 8, 2018.

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA)—The row between Poland and Israel about the Holocaust reached new heights this week after Poland's prime minister said that the genocide had not only Polish, Ukrainian and German perpetrators, but Jewish ones as well.

Addressing a new law that criminalizes blaming Poland for Nazi crimes, Mateusz Morawiecki said in an interview Saturday that the law's effects would not be as sweeping as its critics complain. "It's not going to be seen as

criminal to say that there were Polish perpetrators, as there were Jewish perpetrators, as there were Ukrainian; not only German perpetrators," he said.

If his statement was meant to soothe the law's critics—they include international Jewish groups and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who called the legislation baseless in a rare rebuke of an ally of Israel—then Morawiecki failed spectacularly.

Escalating his rhetoric, Netanyahu called the remark "outrageous."

"There is a problem here of an inability to understand history and a lack of sensitivity to the tragedy of our people," the Israeli leader said.

Another Israeli leader, President Reuven Rivlin, offered his contempt for the remark.

"Saying that Jews collaborated with the Nazis is a new low," he said.

Jonny Daniels, an influential commemoration activist in Poland who is friendly with Morawiecki, called it a form of Holocaust denial.

What Morawiecki said is technically accurate, but

historically unfair in light of the specific nature of the Nazi persecution of Jews, according to scholars who have studied the dozens of indictments brought forward in Israel against Nazi collaborators.

Until 1972, dozens of indictments led to trials in Israel of alleged Jewish collaborators with the Nazis, said Rivka Brot, a fellow at Bar-Ilan University's Center for Jewish and Democratic Law. Brot wrote her doctoral thesis on the prosecution of Jewish collaborators by Jewish tribunals in transit camps in Europe after World War II, and later in the State of Israel.

None of the trials ended with a sentence longer than 18 months in prison.

Even before Israel's establishment, dozens of unofficial communal tribunals were set up to process hundreds of complaints against alleged Jewish collaborators in displaced persons camps in Europe, Brot said. Lacking binding legal powers, these tribunals could pronounce symbolic guilty sentences that meant excommunication for the convicted.

Brot said the offensive element in Morawiecki's remark is not that he mentioned Jews who collaborated with the Germans, but that he listed them alongside Polish collaborators.

"Any comparison between Jewish collaborators and Polish ones is false," she said. "The Jewish prisoners who collaborated did so under the immediate threat of death." Poles, Brot added, suffered a lot under the Nazis, "but most were not subjected to the same circumstances as Jews destined for annihilation."

Jewish collaborators included "kapos" and other functionaries of the internal power structure that the Nazis forced Jews to form in camps and ghettos, Brot said.

Additionally, some Jews helped the Nazis track down other Jews living in hiding in exchange for the collaborators' freedom or that of their relatives.

Jews who collaborated inside camps and ghettos often said in their defense that they did so not to better their own situation but to better the lives of other Jews.



Michele Tantussi/Getty Images

Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki of Poland at a joint news conference with Germany's chancellor in Berlin, Feb. 16, 2018.

Eliezer Gribaum, a Polish Jewish kapo who was accused of mercilessly beating inmates at the Birkenau camp and was later killed in Israel's War of Independence, said he accepted the position at the request of other Jews who needed protection from an anti-Semitic non-Jewish kapo, a German criminal.

The case of Jews who remained outside camps or ghettos by helping the Nazis hunt down other Jews appears even murkier.

Notorious among them was Stella Kubler, who began hunting Jews for the Nazis to keep her parents from being deported and stayed in their service until the war's end. She and other Jewish hunters of Jews were given special papers by the Gestapo and even weapons. Some even received a cash bonus of 200 marks for every Jew they helped deliver.

Some of them, including Rolf Isaaksohn, delivered to the Nazis their own relatives—an uncle, in Isaaksohn's case, according to a 1992 Der Spiegel expose about Jewish hunters of Jews.

Kubler was tried twice for her actions, which resulted in the murders of dozens: Once by a Soviet tribunal that sentenced her to 10 years in jail, and then by a West German one, which convicted her but did not sentence her to any additional prison time. She spoke with raw hate about the Jewish people, and until her death in 1994 was a favorite among publishers of anti-Semitic literature.

Members of Judenrats, Jewish councils set up in ghettos that were answerable to the Germans, constitute yet another variant of collaboration.

Dozens of them committed suicide to avoid carrying out the Germans' orders of annihilation against vulnerable ghetto populations, such as children and women, Dina Porat, chief historian for the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Israel, told JTA. Others cooperated with the Nazis out of fear that the ghetto would be subject to mass reprisals if they didn't.

Other Judenrat leaders, however, seemed to relish the powers vested in them. Notorious among them was Chaim Mordechai Rumkowski of the Lodz ghetto.

Moving around the ghetto on a broken-down horse-drawn carriage, Rumkowski instituted currency bearing his signature and postage stamps with his image, earning him the sarcastic nickname "King Chaim." Infamously, he urged his subjects to hand over their children to the Germans, who sent them to be murdered. He was beaten to death at Auschwitz, where he came on the last transport.

On Tuesday, Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz acknowledged in an interview to the Dziennik Gazeta Prawna newspaper that there were Polish collaborators, adding that the situation concerning collaboration "was extremely complicated." There were cases, he added, where Jews caught by the Germans led the Nazis to Poles who were hiding them. (According to one testimony, a woman in the village of Chociszewo denounced her non-Jewish husband to the Germans to pursue her love affair with a Jew whom she had hid—and who later was killed by Russian troops.)

Although many Jewish collaborators were despised by Jews in Israel and beyond, comparing them to Polish collaborators "is morally and historically false also because of the complex spectrum of collaboration," Porat said. This complexity does not apply to Polish collaborators, few of whom were threatened with death if they did not betray or turn in Jews.

"The indictment against all of those collaborators may appear similar," Porat said, "but the context in which they acted is radically different."



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Congregation Beth Shalom service, March 24

Congregation Beth Shalom will hold a Shabbat Morning Service led by Rabbi Karen Allen on Saturday, March 24 at 10 a.m. A Kid-

dush will follow the service. The synagogue is located at 315 North 13th St. in Leesburg, with the entrance on Center Street. More infor-

mation is available on the synagogue website: <http://bethshalomflorida.org/> or by calling the synagogue at 352-326-3692.

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH IRA DENBERG

Joseph I Denberg, age 71, of Maitland, passed away on Monday, Feb. 12, 2018, at Florida Hospital—Orlando. Born in Brooklyn, New York, on Oct. 11, 1946, to the Harry and Gertrude Goldfarb Denberg, Joe was a well-known fixture in the truck parts industry—with an encyclopedic memory for hundreds of obscure, but needed machinery parts. He attended school in Orlando and following graduation entered the United States Navy serving during the Viet Nam era.

In 1971, in Orlando, Joe married the former Sheri Tross, his wife and partner for over 46 years, who survives him. Joe was the also the proud father of two daughters, Dara Denberg and Lori Denberg. The family has been long-time members and stalwarts of Temple Israel.

A graveside service, with Naval honors, was held at Temple Israel Cemetery with Rabbi Joshua Neely officiating.

In memory of Joseph I. Denberg, the family requests contributions to Temple Israel, 50 S Moss Road, Winter Springs 32708.

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

BRENDA FELDMAN

Brenda “Bunny” Feldman passed away at 74 years of age on Feb. 24, 2018, following a sudden, but brief, illness.



The family she cherished surrounded her.

Although Brenda was an only child, she had a gift for creating sisterhood among her many close friends and relatives, and positively affected the lives of many of her friends and her children's friends through her selfless and tireless devotion to those around her. Brenda will be remembered for her inquisitiveness and thoughtfulness. She never missed a birthday or anniversary, and put tremendous thought into the selection of greeting cards for such sim-

chas. She enjoyed attending shows at the Winter Park Playhouse and other venues with her beloved husband of over 47 years, Lawrence, rooting for her alma mater, the Temple Owls, and visiting her children and grandchildren in Atlanta. Brenda was also a 27-year survivor of breast cancer and proud supporter of breast cancer research and the Jewish community.

In addition to her husband, Lawrence, Brenda is survived by her sons—Richard, Jonathan (Jennifer), and Joel (Allison); and her grandchildren—Ethan, Anna, Everett, and Micah. Her son Michael predeceased her.

Brenda's life and lasting memory was celebrated at DeGusipe Funeral Home in Ocoee on Wednesday, Feb. 28. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Brenda's favorite charity, the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk.

MARC M. FELDMAN, MD

Dr. Marc M. Feldman, 68, of Celebration, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018, at Florida Hospital—Orlando. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Feldman was born on Aug. 4, 1949, to Frances Halpert Feldman and the late Clarence Feldman. Dr. Feldman received his bachelor's degree from Washington & Jefferson College in Pennsylvania and his medical degree from the University of Kentucky in 1975. On June 21, 1975, at Park Synagogue in Cleveland, he married the former Helen Call, his wife of nearly 43 years who survives him. Dr. Feldman was a pediatrician in private practice for many years in Cleveland and was a part-time resident in the Orlando area since 2002. In 2009, the Feldmans became full-time residents.

In addition to his wife, Dr. Feldman is survived by his son Scott (Aimee) Feldman of Chesapeake, Va.; and daughter Abigail (Eric) O'Leary of Celebration. He is also survived by his mother Frances of Clearwater; sister Karen Feldman of Lake Mary; brother Dr. Alan Feldman of Tampa; and his uncle Marvin (Alva) Feldman of Shaker Heights, Ohio. He was predeceased by his brother Bruce J. Feldman in 2008.

A funeral service was held at Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel with Rabbi Arnold Siegel of Jewish Family Services officiating.

In memory of Dr. Marc M. Feldman, the family requests contribution to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital (donors@stjude.org) or ASPCA (aspc.org).

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

HAROLD FORMAN

Harold Forman, age 67, of Longwood, passed away on Monday, Feb. 19, 2018, at his residence. Harold was born in Brooklyn, New York, on Feb. 24, 1950, one of three children born to the late George and Sylvia Shapiro Forman. Harold received his bachelor's degree in pharmacy from the Brooklyn College of Pharmacy and his master's degree from St John's University. On Aug. 6, 1977, in Tarrytown, New York, he married the former Melanie Blair, his wife of nearly 41 years who survives him. The family relocated to the Orlando area from New York in 1996 and became members of Congregation of Reform Judaism.

Harold is survived by his wife, Melanie of Longwood; his son, David (Julie) Forman; daughter Rachel (Daniel) Sandler; and grandchildren—Lilah, Alexis and Jordan. He is also survived by his brother, Robert (Linda) Forman of New York. Harold was predeceased by his sister, Linda Kahan and a granddaughter, Ava.

A funeral service was held at Congregation of Reform Judaism with Rabbi Steven W. Engel and Cantor Jacqueline Rawiszoff officiating. Burial followed at the CRJ Cemetery in Gotha. The family has requested that contributions in memory of Harold Forman be made to the PJ Library at Greater Orlando Jewish Federation, 851 N Maitland Ave, Maitland 32751 or the PJ Library at the Jewish Family Community Services, 8540 Baycenter Road, Jacksonville 32256.

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

INEZ MISHLER-BERG

Inez Mishler-Berg, 97, of Port Charlotte, passed away at the Port Charlotte Hospice House on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018. Ms. Mishler-Berg was born in North Manchester, Indiana on June 23, 1920, to the late Milton and Ruth Pierce Nichols. She was a high school graduate and worked as a bookkeeper for many years. She lived in Orlando for many years before relocating to the west coast to be near her family.

Funeral services and interment were held at Rice Cemetery in Elkhart, Indiana.

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

Central Florida Synagogues

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Congregation Bet Chaim (R), 181 E. Mitchell Hammock, Oviedo, 407-830-7211; www.betchaim.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Florida exposes need for stricter gun control, say Jewish groups

By Rafael Medoff

(JNS)—Major American Jewish organizations are calling for stricter gun-control laws in the wake of the Feb. 14 mass school shooting in Parkland, Fla., that left 14 students and three staff members dead.

A spokesperson for the women's organization Hadasah told JNS that the group supports all three of the legislative proposals under discussion in the aftermath of the shooting.

One is a bill sponsored by U.S. Sens. Jon Cornyn (R-Texas) and Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) to expand criminal background checks on prospective purchasers of guns. A second legislative proposal, supported by many Democrats, is to renew the federal ban on assault rifles that expired in 2004.

In addition, Sen. Edward

Markey (D-Mass.) is calling for legislation that would institute universal background checks, ban individuals on the terrorist watch list from purchasing guns and outlaw bump stocks, the device that enabled the Las Vegas shooter last October to upgrade his weapons from semiautomatic to fully automatic.

On Feb. 20, President Donald Trump ordered the Department of Justice to take action to ban bump stocks. He also has indicated that he supports some strengthening of background-check regulations.

Hadassah is urging its members to promote the gun-control proposals at upcoming "Day in the District" sessions, in which its members nationwide meet with Congress members in their local districts.

Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Ad-

vocacy Center in Washington, D.C., told JNS that his organization "will likely support" all three of the gun proposals. He said the Orthodox Union "has long supported common-sense measures to reduce gun violence, including banning certain sophisticated assault weapons such as the AR-15 used in [the Parkland] attack."

The organization is also seeking additional federal and state funds for schools for their security needs, although "the precise elements of an individual school's security program should be made by each school's leadership," said Diament. Some conservative pundits have suggested stationing armed guards in front of schools, though the logistics and costs for such a policy have not been analyzed.

The Orthodox social-justice group Uri L'Tzedek supports

all three of the legislative proposals and will be promoting them through a "beit midrash" series of educational programs within the Orthodox community. Participants will "learn and then pick up the phone," its president, Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz, told JNS. "We will also be using our email blasts to 10,000 recipients and the thousands following our social media to get folks to visit senators and congressmen, call them and write to them."

In addition, Uri L'Tzedek intends to hold public vigils to "mourn the losses [from gun violence] and raise public awareness," said Yanklowitz.

In a statement to JNS, B'nai B'rith International expressed support for "legislation to limit access to the most dangerous weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines whose sole purpose is to maximize death

counts." It also urged broader background checks, longer waiting periods between buying a gun and taking possession of it, and restrictions on the number of guns an individual may purchase.

Barbara Weinstein, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said her movement endorses the Cornyn-Murphy legislation, but believes that bill "will only begin to address the problem." She told JNS that Congress should establish universal background checks, renew the ban on assault rifles and close the "private sale" loophole, which permits a private party to sell guns without obtaining information about the buyer's criminal record or mental state.

Other Jewish groups have been somewhat less specific in their positions.

A spokesperson for the

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism told JNS: "As a religious organization, we believe that Jewish values compel us to do all that is possible, within the framework of U.S. law to protect our children and enact sensible gun-safety laws."

The USCJ has not taken a position on pending gun-control legislation.

A spokesman for the Anti-Defamation League told JNS that the ADL "has taken no position on specific legislative efforts" other than those suggested in the group's 2013 resolution on gun control. That resolution recommended "stricter controls governing the sale, possession and distribution of firearms"; "comprehensive background checks"; and "a responsible conversation on the [gun control] issue that does not further stigmatize mental illness."

Benjamin Netanyahu accusations—what you need to know

By Ben Sales

(JTA)—Benjamin Netanyahu is in trouble. Maybe.

The Israeli prime minister is engulfed simultaneously in four separate scandals, and each day seems to bring him more bad news. Netanyahu could be indicted or pushed out of office -- or both.

Whether this is the beginning of the end of the Bibi Netanyahu era, or just the latest challenge to a seasoned political survivor, is the hot topic in Israel.

First, Netanyahu was accused of accepting hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal gifts from a wealthy American. Then he was accused of making a shady deal with a newspaper publisher. Then he was accused of trying to quash an investigation of his wife. Then came news of another shady deal with another newspaper publisher.

At least one of Netanyahu's friends has turned on him, and the police have recommended that he be indicted. His opponents have put up a billboard on a major highway

suggesting he step down. His allies have hemmed and hawed.

All the while, Netanyahu has maintained his innocence, claiming the media and police have conspired against him.

Will it all mean the end of Netanyahu's nine-year rule? It's too soon to tell. But here's a quick guide to the biggest corruption scandal to rock Israel in years and what it means for Jews outside of Israel.

He's accused of bribery, fraud and obstruction of justice

Netanyahu is facing an array of allegations that are hard to follow, even for those who follow Israeli politics. Here's a rundown of the four main accusations:

- Accepting a bribe from Israeli Hollywood producer Arnon Milchan in the form of champagne and cigars totaling about \$200,000. The prime minister allegedly returned the favor by pushing for a U.S. visa for Milchan, as well as a beneficial tax break.

- Illegally negotiating for more favorable media cover-

age by agreeing to back legislation hurting a newspaper that supports his government in return for favorable coverage from a newspaper that usually opposes it.

- Trying to obstruct an investigation of his wife, Sara. A senior aide to the prime minister allegedly offered the post of attorney general to a judge if the judge agreed to stop the probe. Sara Netanyahu was indicted last year for improperly spending state funds on fancy cooking.

- Illegally negotiating for more favorable media coverage—again. This time, he allegedly supported regulations favoring Bezeq, an Israeli telecom giant, in return for favorable coverage on a news website owned by Bezeq's majority stakeholder.

Last week, the Israel Police recommended that Netanyahu be indicted in the first two cases. The third and fourth emerged this week, turning up more heat on the beleaguered leader.

Netanyahu has been in trouble before. But this time it looks real.

The prime minister has been accused multiple times of illegally charging the state for personal expenses, along with other allegations, but none of them has ever resulted in an indictment.

This time could be different. Along with the recommended indictments, in the cases that emerged this week, a close confidant has agreed to become a state witness in return for avoiding prison time.

If Israel's attorney general decides to indict Netanyahu, it would be an unprecedented legal threat to his leadership.

Will Netanyahu have to resign? Other prime ministers facing corruption scandals have quit before this point in the process. Ehud Olmert, who went to prison for bribery, announced his resignation a couple months before the police recommended that he be indicted.

But it's unclear whether Netanyahu will leave his post. According to a Feb. 21 poll on Israeli Channel 2, half of Israelis say Netanyahu should

step down, as opposed to 33 percent who think he should stay. But none of his political allies are calling for him to resign (something that did happen with Olmert), saying they'll wait to see if he is actually indicted.

Through it all, Netanyahu has remained defiant, denying the allegations and attacking the police and the media for seeking to topple him. He's even adopted the term "fake news," a favorite of President Donald Trump.

"What's happened over the past two days is simply madness," Netanyahu said in a video posted to Facebook on Wednesday. "A scandal. False claims are brought, lies, as part of a hunting campaign against me and my family that's gone on for years... And we know the goal: to forcibly create a public cloud over the prime minister. Simply unbelievable."

If Netanyahu does resign, it will be the end of a defining era for Israel. He has served as prime minister for nearly a decade, representing Israel pugnaciously on the world

stage--opposing Iran, picking fights with (or, as many would have it, standing up to) the Obama administration, courting the Trump administration and taking a (usually) hard line on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

His Israeli supporters credit him with guiding Israel through numerous threats in a chaotic region, advocating for Israel internationally, expanding its relations in Africa and Asia, and maintaining a prosperous economy at home. His opponents blame him for diplomatic inaction on the Palestinian front, economic inequality, personal corruption and stoking internal divisions in Israeli society.

Even if he does resign, that does not mean the Israeli government will lurch to the center or left. Netanyahu stepping down would likely trigger an election, and polls show his right-wing Likud party again winning the most votes. His main rivals, centrist Yair Lapid and Avi Gabbay, the head of Israel's center-left Labor Party, have consistently lagged behind him in surveys.

Why these supporters of a new US Embassy in Jerusalem think Sheldon Adelson shouldn't pay for it

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Sheldon Adelson's offer to help pay for the new US Embassy in Jerusalem is getting a thumb's down from a range of observers who support the embassy's relocation.

The Associated Press had the exclusive on Friday morning, and JTA confirmed it with sources who have been apprised of the State Department's deliberations. State Department lawyers are poring over the law books to determine how to pull off America's first privately funded embassy.

Why the Trump administration would want this? Well, no one's saying, but cost-cutting seems likely. The move to temporary digs, due in May, is eventually going to cost taxpayers about \$60 million. An embassy built

from scratch will be much pricier. The newly opened US Embassy in London cost \$1 billion.

Presumably, a Jerusalem embassy will come under \$1 billion (although who can guess). Adelson, worth an estimated \$40 billion, can afford it.

Adelson's spokesman declined to comment.

JTA asked various people who have been intimately involved in advocating for the embassy move, in some cases for decades, what they thought of the plan to privatize the embassy. The five who talked thought it was a terrible idea.

The triumph of Trump's recognition of Jerusalem, they tended to agree, is that it came about honestly because recognizing an ally's capital is the right thing to do. Trump himself said Friday in a speech

to conservative activists that he came under intense pressure from the international community not to make the move.

The optics of a rich donor paying the US government for the embassy, critics said, makes the move look less like a principled policy than a personal favor.

"Citizens volunteering their resources and energies to ease the government's burdens is laudable," said Jason Isaacson, the American Jewish Committee's director of government and international affairs. "But an American Embassy represents—and must be seen indisputably as representing—the United States of America, rather than any generous individual or segment of American society. The American Embassy in Jerusalem—as with all American embassies around the world—should

serve, and belong to, every American equally."

Morton Klein, the president of the Zionist Organization of America, who is close to Adelson, referred to AP's reporting that Adelson might seek other funders, including among pro-Israel Christians. "This is a United States government project and policy, I don't think it should be 'the evangelicals, the Jews made this happen.' It should be crystal clear the US government made this happen," he said. "I don't think it's a good idea for any private citizen to pay for the US Embassy to be moved."

Daniel Shapiro, the Obama administration's ambassador to Israel who has since leaving the position advocated for a move, said he did not believe that State Department lawyers would sign off on the arrangement. Once Adelson started funneling hundreds

of millions of dollars into the U.S. government's coffers, there would be immediate conflict of interest questions, including, what is the casino magnate and pro-Israel philanthropist getting in return?

"When individuals or corporations are giving something, there's an expectation they may be getting something in return," Shapiro said. "That concern about quid pro quo is naturally pregnant in such a proposal."

Also against the idea was William Brown, the ambassador to Israel under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton. He wrote memos to both presidents recommending moving the embassy to Jerusalem. "I've worked in embassies that could use some money," said Brown. "But not this way."

If Adelson really wants to feel useful, there are some

limited options, said Shapiro. "Embassy 4th of July parties can receive both cash (usually a few thousand dollars) and in-kind contributions from US companies operating overseas. They are then listed as sponsors, which is a form of promoting US businesses."

Abraham Foxman, the emeritus national director of the Anti-Defamation League—who also thought private funding for embassies was a terrible idea—had a different proposal.

"It would be nice if the Adelsons could pay for the art in the embassy," he said. "There's never a budget for art."

The State Department runs an "Art in Embassies" program that solicits private money to help create "vital cross-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding through the visual arts and dynamic artist exchanges."

Weekly roundup of world briefs from JTA

Trump says he may attend Jerusalem embassy opening

WASHINGTON (JTA)—President Donald Trump said he may be present in Jerusalem when the U.S. Embassy opens in May.

"We're looking at coming," Trump said Monday in opening his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, D.C. "If I can, I will"

Trump said last month that the embassy move from Tel Aviv would take place in May, timed with Israel's 70th anniversary, following his recognition in December that Jerusalem is the capital. He is also planning to build a new embassy in Jerusalem, which could take up to nine years. In the meantime, the embassy will be housed in a consular building.

"This will be remembered by our people through the ages," Netanyahu said. "Others talked about it. You did it."

The two leaders met in the Oval Office in a closed-door session said to have been scheduled to coincide with Netanyahu's visit here this week for the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. A photograph of the visit showed Trump and Netanyahu flanked by their wives, Melania Trump and Sara Netanyahu.

Netanyahu was effusive in his opening remarks.

"I've been here for nearly four decades with, talking, seeking to build the American-Israel alliance. Under your leadership, it's never been stronger," he said to Trump. "And the people of Israel see your position on Jerusalem. They see your position on Iran. They see your magnificent defense of Israel and the truth in the United Nations."

Netanyahu and Trump were to discuss a range of issues, White House spokesman Josh Raffel said.

"The President and the Prime Minister share a great relationship and make an effort to meet whenever the opportunity arises," Raffel said in an email ahead of the meeting. "The Prime Minister will be in Washington for AIPAC and the two leaders look forward to discussing a variety of issues, including the Iran nuclear deal, the Syrian Civil War, efforts to thwart Iran's attempt to establish a permanent presence in Syria from which to threaten Israel, and the Administration's ongoing peace efforts."

Father of Parkland victim calls students' efforts against assault rifles misdirected

(JTA)—The father of a teenager killed in the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, said the students' gun control efforts are misdirected.

Andrew Pollack, whose daughter Meadow was slain in the Feb. 14 attack, told CNN's "New Day" on Monday that now may not be the time for the students to work toward a ban on assault weapons.

"I want them to focus their energy on something that is

achievable right now," Pollack said.

"Be productive in the country. Work with us. Let's make these schools safe and once every school is safe in America, do what you have to with the gun laws."

Pollack appeared on CNN to support a Florida Senate bill to raise the age to purchase a firearm from 18 to 21, and also provide funding for armed school resource officers and for mental health services. Over the weekend, the state Senate rejected a ban on assault weapons.

The teen leaders tweeted their anger over the rejection of the ban on AR-15 rifles, the weapon used in the attack on their school.

"I understand their pain, the children," Pollack said. "My kid was murdered in that school, so there's no one that could feel the way I do."

Pollack gained notice in the days after the shooting by attending what was billed as a listening session at the White House with President Donald Trump.

"How many schools, how many children have to get shot?" he asked Trump. "It stops here, with this administration and me."

Former Netanyahu media adviser turns state's witness in corruption investigation

JERUSALEM (JTA)—A former media adviser to Benjamin Netanyahu and his family has turned state's witness in a corruption investigation, which could strengthen the case against the prime minister.

Nir Hefetz signed the state's witness agreement on Sunday night, the Israel Police said in a statement Monday afternoon. Hefetz was released from police detention on Sunday after two weeks in jail. He will remain under house arrest until March 13.

Hefetz is a suspect in the investigation dubbed Case 4000, or the Bezeq corruption probe, according to reports. Both Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, were questioned separately in relation to the case, each for about five hours on Friday.

Shlomo Filber, the suspended director general of the Ministry of Communications, turned state's witness last month in the same investigation. In exchange for a lighter sentence, Filber agreed to provide police with information about Netanyahu's part in the case, which alleges that Shaul Elovitch, the majority shareholder of Bezeq, received political favors for the Israeli telecommunications giant in return for favorable coverage of Netanyahu on the Walla! news website owned by the company.

Netanyahu has denied wrongdoing in the case and others against him.

Last month, the Israel Police recommended that Netanyahu be indicted on bribery and breach of trust charges in two other corruption cases. State prosecutors must decide whether or not to file indictments.

Netanyahu currently is in the United States, where he is scheduled to meet with President Donald Trump and

address the annual AIPAC policy conference in Washington, D.C.

Actress Amber Tamblyn says 'Hasidic man' tried to run her over

(JTA)—Actress Amber Tamblyn claims a "Hasidic man" tried to run her and her baby over in Brooklyn.

The accusation, made in a tweet asking if there were any witnesses to Sunday's incident, led to some angry responses against Tamblyn and condemnations of the Hasidic community.

"If anyone in Brooklyn near the intersection of Washington Ave and Atlantic Ave just saw a Hasidic man in a grey van try to hit a woman and her baby in a stroller as she crossed a crosswalk, honking and touching the stroller with the car's bumper, please DM me. That woman was me," Tamblyn, who was unhurt, tweeted Sunday morning.

Tamblyn described herself as "shaken" but "okay" after the incident, in response to followers who asked how she was doing.

Some Twitter followers accused her of being anti-Semitic and stereotyping Hasidic Jews. "What kind of anti-semitic BS is this?" tweeted Mordechai Lightstone, the social media manager for Chabad.org. "It's awful for any pedestrian, let alone a mother, to be threatened by an aggressive driver ... But bad drivers are bad drivers. I'm sorry but this is an incredibly troubling generalization."

Others criticized the Hasidic community.

"They really don't follow our laws or really care. It's scary," one of Tamblyn's followers wrote.

Tamblyn responded to the criticism of her tweets as being anti-Semitic by pointing out that she is married to a Jewish man, comedian David Cross.

Tamblyn starred in "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" and "127 Hours," and had a recurring role in the CBS sitcom "Two and a Half Men." Her father, dancer and actor Russ Tamblyn, starred in "West Side Story" and "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."

Guatemala will move its Israeli Embassy to Jerusalem in May

WASHINGTON, D.C. (JTA)—President Jimmy Morales of Guatemala said his country will move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem in May.

Speaking at the annual conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in Washington, D.C., Morales said Guatemala will make the move on May 16, two days after the 70th anniversary of Israel's independence, when the United States will also move its embassy from Tel Aviv. The United States and Guatemala recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December.

"In May of this year, we will celebrate Israel's 70th anniversary, and under my instruction, two days after the United States, Guatemala will move its embassy permanently to Jerusalem," Morales said to raucous applause. "We are sure that

many other countries will follow in our footsteps."

President Donald Trump's decision last year to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital departed from decades of U.S. policy. At the AIPAC conference, cheers have greeted every mention of the recognition. The embassies of most countries are located in Tel Aviv.

Morales noted that Guatemala was among the first nations to recognize Israel after it declared independence in 1948, and was the first country to establish an embassy in Jerusalem in 1959, before subsequently moving it. He said Israel and Guatemala share common goals, from fighting terrorism to combating the spread of drugs and protecting human rights.

Guatemala "maintains the highest level of political dialogue with Israel, and has a very strong relationship," Morales said. "This is why we must stand together and support each other."

The AIPAC conference that opened Sunday also featured a speech by the chairman of Israel's Labor Party, Avi Gabbay. Vice President Mike Pence will address the conference on Monday night, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will speak on Tuesday morning. **Former Trump Jewish aide Sam Nunberg says he won't appear before grand jury on Russia investigation**

(JTA)—Former Trump aide Sam Nunberg said he will ignore a subpoena to appear before a federal grand jury investigating Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Nunberg, who was fired by the Trump campaign in the summer of 2015 over racist Facebook posts, told The Washington Post on Monday that he was asked to appear Friday before the grand jury. According to the newspaper, he also sent an email list from the office of special counsel Robert Mueller requesting his appearance.

The subpoena seeks correspondence and "records of any kind" related to President Donald Trump and nine others, notably two former top advisers to Trump, Steve Bannon and Roger Stone.

Nunberg said he would provide neither testimony nor documents.

"Let him arrest me," Nunberg told The Washington Post in an interview. "Mr. Mueller should understand I am not going in on Friday."

He added: "The Russians and Trump did not collude. Putin is too smart to collude with Donald Trump."

It is not known what actions Mueller would take if Nunberg, who is Jewish, follows through on his vow not to appear.

"Donald Trump won this election on his own," Nunberg told The Post. "He campaigned his ass off. And there is nobody who hates him more than me."

Later Monday, Nunberg in an interview on MSNBC again said he would not appear before the grand jury. He also suggested that Mueller may have evidence against Trump.

"I think they may," Nunberg said, according to The Washington Post. "I think that he may have done something during the election."

In response, White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters, "There was no collusion with the Trump campaign."

Nunberg was a consultant to the Trump campaign before he was dismissed for his racist and incendiary posts, which included calling the daughter of the Rev. Al Sharpton's daughter "N—!" The posts had been made in 2007, before he went to work for Trump.

In a 2017 interview with Newsmax, Nunberg said his grandfather Simon survived Auschwitz but that the rest of Simon's family, including his parents, were murdered. Asked where he might move if he had to live in another country, Nunberg replied, "Easy question—the Jewish State of Israel."

Florida public school investigating teacher who reportedly hosted white supremacist podcast

(JTA)—A Florida public school has launched an investigation into a teacher who reportedly hosted a white supremacist podcast and shared anti-Semitic and Islamophobic content on social media.

Dayanna Volitich, a teacher at Crystal River Middle School in the western part of the state, has been removed from her classroom as the Citrus County School District looks into the podcast she hosted under a pseudonym.

The probe started Friday, after HuffPost reported that using the name Tiana Dalichov, the teacher bragged about secretly injecting her beliefs into the classroom. She reportedly bashed diversity, said Muslims should be eradicated "from the face of the Earth" and praised the work of Kevin MacDonald, a retired psychology professor who holds anti-Semitic views. MacDonald has said Jews are genetically programmed to destroy Western societies, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The district said Volitich would not be teaching until its investigation was complete, HuffPost reported.

Volitich denied subscribing to racist views and said in a Sunday statement to WFLA News Channel 8 that her podcast was satire.

"None of the statements released about my being a white nationalist or white supremacist have any truth to them, nor are my political beliefs injected into my teaching of social studies curriculum," Volitich said in the statement. "While operating under the Russian pseudonym 'Tiana Dalichov' on social media and the Unapologetic Podcast, I employed political satire and exaggeration, mainly to the end of attracting listeners and followers, and generating conversation about the content discussed between myself and my guests."

Brooklyn residents demonstrate against matzah factory

(JTA)—The residents of a Brooklyn neighborhood

demonstrated against the smoke coming from a local matzah factory.

Dozens of members of the South 5th Street Block Association in Williamsburg protested Sunday against the Congregation Satmar's factory.

The residents told WPIX-TV that the factory spews what they described as toxic coal smoke, which is so bad in the early morning that some residents say they have to wear masks in order to get to the subway. They added that they have been complaining to the city for seven years to no avail.

The factory burns coal and wood during the baking of the matzah.

One neighborhood resident, Rosa Ortiz, told WPIX that the smoke is irritating her 9-year-old child's asthma. She said the smoke wakes them up in the middle of the night.

Factory officials refused to speak with WPIX reporters.

A year ago, the bakery was heavily damaged in a fire caused by a new wood-burning oven that had been used for the first time

Its specialty is hand-made shmura matzah, the artisanal, disc-shaped type considered extra special because the ingredients are "guarded" against leavening before the wheat is harvested.

George W. Bush to attend launch of Jewish Agency institute in NY

(JTA)—The Jewish Agency is launching an institute in New York to prepare Israeli emissaries for their service.

The Shlichut Institute, which will be launched Wednesday, will provide the emissaries, or shlichim, with training, tools and technology before they serve, as well during and after.

Natan Sharansky, the outgoing chairman of the Jewish Agency, will serve as the founding chair of the institute. The launch will be part of a special event in New York celebrating the end of Sharansky's nine-year tenure as chairman of the Executive Committee.

President George W. Bush will be among those on hand for the launch, along with 43 emissaries working in North American communities.

Some 2,000 Israelis currently serve in the Jewish Agency's shlichut program, living in countries around the world and working as camp counselors, representatives on college and university campuses, or staff in Jewish schools and community organizations. The emissaries connect Jews around the world to Israel, including promoting aliyah. They return with insights into Jewish life outside of Israel, as well.

The Shlichut Institute will create an online community in which emissaries are always connected and training no matter where they live.

"On the one hand, it is essential for Jews around the world to get to know Israelis to strengthen their connection to Israel. And on the other, there is no better way to strengthen the Jewish identities of Israelis

Aiding Nazis in mass killing of Jews

**By Dr. Yvette Alt Miller
Aish Hatorah Resources**

Father Desbois is on a mission to expose the Holocaust's hidden crimes.

Father Patrick Desbois, a French priest, might be one of the greatest detectives of all time. In nearly a decade of work, he has uncovered the murder of 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Europe during World War II. His most recent book, "In Broad Daylight," maps out the mass killings of Jews in Eastern Europe in exhaustive detail.

While the mass execution of Jews in Poland, France and Germany in Nazi concentration camps and death camps is well documented, in the eastern countries including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and other neighboring nations, the Nazis used a different method to murder Jews. Over a million and a half Jews in these regions were murdered by mobile Nazi military units called Einsatzgruppen. Jews were forced into fields and woods, shot, and buried, their mass graves left unmarked and forgotten. Father Desbois calls these massacres "The Holocaust by Bullets" and he's made it his life mission to uncover these crimes, case by case, and show the world what happened.

Father Desbois' grandfather had been a prisoner of war in Ukraine in a village called Rawa-Ruska, though he seldom spoke to his grandson about what he'd seen there. A visit to Poland and Ukraine made the Holocaust more real and upon his return to France, Father Desbois began to learn Hebrew and Jewish history. He wanted to see for himself what had become of

the Jews near the Nazi camp in Rawa-Ruska.

It took years of visiting Rawa-Ruska to finally learn even a part of the truth. At first, Father Desbois was rebuffed. The town's mayor refused to say anything and villagers wouldn't speak. Researching the town's history, Father Desbois discovered that about 10,000 Jews had disappeared from the town during the Holocaust. He was flabbergasted. The murder of even one person in his small town would have been a huge event. Father Desbois couldn't understand how the murder of 10,000 went seemingly unnoticed, resolutely unremembered.

He started tracking down survivors of the Rawa-Rusk POW camp who'd been interred with his grandfather. He finally met one, Rene Chevalier, a nephew of the famous French singer Maurice Chevalier, who agreed to meet. "Did you ever see Jews being assassinated?" Father Desbois asked him.

Chevalier's eyes clouded over. "With a voice full of restrained emotion, he started to talk, with a fixed gaze that looked far into the distance," Father Desbois later related. "He had witnessed the requisition of Jewish women to do the harvesting as there were no more animals to pull the carts filled with hay. They came in the morning with their children. The German who was guarding them could not stand their crying and whenever it irritated him too much, he would get hold of a little child and bludgeon it to death against the cart. In the evening, all that remained were the women, carts and hay."

In 2003, Father Desbois

returned to Rawa-Ruska and the new deputy mayor knew of his quest. He went to Father Desbois and said, "Patrick, we are waiting for you." He led Father Desbois to a desolate area outside of town where about a hundred elderly people were waiting. They took him to the mass grave where the Jews of Rawa-Ruska had been shot and buried. One by one, the elderly people spoke, recalling the day the Jews were massacred. The Jews were herded together, led out of town, and shot near a freshly dug mass grave. Finding that some people in the pit were still alive, the German soldiers threw grenades into the pit to kill yet more victims. Some locals recalled helping the Nazis in the bloodbath.

When the testimony was over, Father Desbois was stunned. As he prepared to leave, the deputy mayor said, "Patrick, this is what I could do for one village. I can do the same thing for a hundred villages." Father Desbois then realized that this was his mission and decided on the spot to document this and other long-forgotten massacres before it was too late.

He started researching and visiting sites of massacres, and interviewing locals. In 2004, Father Desbois founded a group called Yachad-in Unum, a combination of the words for "together" in both Hebrew and Latin, to help with his work. The 29 full-time members of Yachad-In Unum, many of whom are young people working on their Ph.D.'s, provide him with support and companionship as he plumbs the depths of human evil.

That research has taken years and thousands upon thousands of hours. They have interviewed nearly 6,000 witnesses to the massacre of Jews and other minorities in Eastern Europe. Each investigation takes weeks to complete. "When they smile and welcome me into

their homes," Father Desbois explains of the elderly locals whose stories he documents, "I don't know if they saved Jews or participated in the killing."

"We were very surprised at the amount of locals who remember the day the Jews were killed," Father Desbois recalls in an exclusive Aish.com interview. In each town where Jews were massacred, the children of the village were witnesses, and sometimes even participants. "The schools were closed, everyone went to watch the mass murder of their towns' Jews."

In the small town of Medzhybizh, the birthplace of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Hassidic movement, Father Desbois and his team located 17 witnesses. "We wondered why there were so many witnesses." It turned out that the day of the killing was like a holiday. "The killing of the Jews was a public event, like a show."

A witness named Vladimir told Father Desbois about the day a Ukrainian policeman came to his school with a horse-drawn cart. The teacher pointed out each of the half-Jewish children, crying "Juden! Juden! Juden!" and the policeman took them away. Later, Vladimir described how he and his friends came to watch the Jews' murder: "I came through the cornfield to see," he explained. "For us children, it was interesting."

For many witnesses, the murder of their town's Jews was something to celebrate simply because it was fun, or because it allowed the belongings of murdered Jews to be seized by townspeople. Father Desbois has found there is very little regret and sorrow over the massacres. Some witnesses are even proud that they aided the Nazi killers.

In many cases, villagers were forced to watch Nazi murder. In other cases, some were eager participants. Typical was the testimony of one

Ukrainian named Andrei, who was 15 when he helped Nazi troops massacre the Jews in his village. Andrei insisted in wearing his old Soviet medals to the interview with Father Desbois, and sat proudly, showing them off. He was among other men in the village requisitioned to build a temporary prison to hold his town's Jews. He recalled one old Jew begging through the barbed wire, telling him he was starving and asking Andrei for bread. Andrei traded him some bread for the Jew's watch and calmly recounted the entire episode to Father Desbois' team, seemingly undisturbed by his role in the suffering. "All their (the Jews') goods were pillaged by the villagers. People took everything..."

"The shooting of the Jews in the village was like a carnival," Father Desbois explains sadly. "Everyone wanted to watch, wanted to grab something."

In all his years interviewing witnesses, not one has ever asked Father Desbois for forgiveness, as a religious leader, for their role in massacring Jews.

An old woman named Olga recalled her town's Jews being rounded up and led to an execution point on Sept. 21 and 22, 1943. "We lived not far from the paved path on which they took the Jews," Olga recalled. "People said it was Judgment Day."

It was a sentiment Father Desbois had heard before; the killing of Jews seemed to some witnesses to be a fulfillment of Christian doctrine. "Some people were thinking it had a religious element," Father Desbois explains. "The Jews were dying in the middle of the Christians. They thought it was something from God."

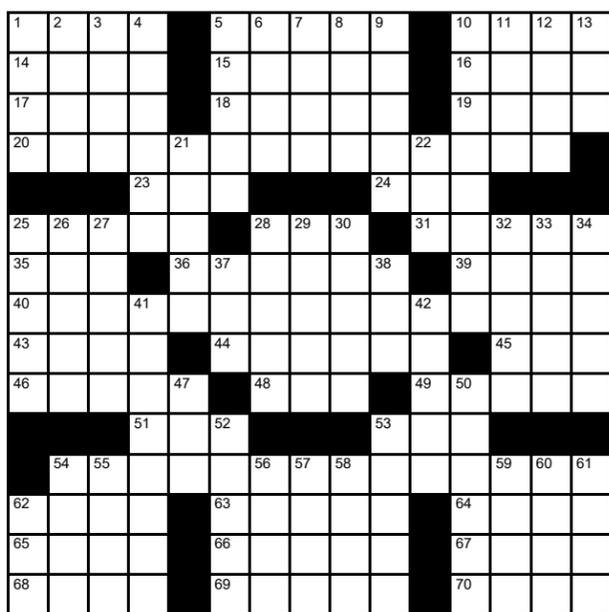
As a refutation to the Jew-hatred he has uncovered and to counter the growing number of people who deny the Holocaust, Father Desbois wrote "In Broad Daylight: The Secret

Procedures behind the Holocaust by Bullets," a painstaking account of the mechanics of killing whole communities of Jewish men, women, and children. The book chronologically describes the process of arriving in town, selecting townspeople to help, rounding up and killing Jews and then burying them in mass graves and removing all trace of the crime, providing a horrific account of the template Nazi troops used to kill over one and a half million Jews, and the role that bystanders often played in helping them.

When he teaches about the Holocaust, Father Desbois stresses that it was a crime on a massive scale. Ideology played a part, but the desire to steal, to rape, to pillage, and to kill were what motivated most of the people he has interviewed. This year Father Desbois has been teaching at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and is training students and professors alike to be meticulous in their research about the Holocaust, to be able to prove to a new generation that it did indeed take place.

In recent years, Father Desbois and his team have made numerous trips to Iraq, documenting mass killings by ISIS. He's written a book on the subject, which is due out in July 2018. He has continued his grueling pace in Eastern Europe, racing to document yet more mass graves and evidence of genocide against Jews and others. Father Desbois estimates he has about four more years in which he can work because witnesses to the Holocaust are aging and dying. That means only four more years in which "to give back the dead to their family, to the community and to fight strongly against the deniers."

More information about Father Patrick Desbois' organization, Yachad-in Unim, visit <https://www.yahadinunum.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/yahadinunum/>.



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The Palestinians and their allies should know the truth about the Nazis

By Mitchell Bard

The most offensive attacks made by Palestinians and their supporters against Israelis are comparisons to the Nazis. These analogies demonstrate a profound ignorance of history—and a malicious hatred of Jews. As an educational service to these ignoramuses and propagandists, I would like to provide some examples of what the Nazis did to the Jews.

First, I must apologize for the graphic nature of some of the examples, but they were purposely chosen because they are so horrific that they are not often discussed.

The discussion of the Holocaust is often antiseptic. We talk about the six million murdered by the Nazis as if it is an abstract statistic—similar to the GDP of Brazil. Israel's detractors simply think of Jews as victims of mistreatment that is no different from the way that Palestinians are treated today. It is a lie.

Every concentration camp was horrible, but let's consider what occurred at one of the camps that may be less familiar than Dachau or Auschwitz. According to war crimes prosecutors, here are some of the methods used to kill Jews at Mauthausen: "gassing, hanging, clubbing, heart injections, driving inmates into the electric fence, kicking in genitals, being buried alive, and by putting a red-hot poker down the throat."

Father Patrick Desbois documented how Jews in Ukraine were killed by the Nazis "for fun," "out of anger, boredom, drunkenness," or "to rape the girls."

At various times and places, Jews would be forced to strip naked and dig their own graves before the Nazis shot them so their bodies would fall into them. If a single shot did not kill a Jew, sometimes they were buried alive to save bullets. In Hungary, three Jews were tied together along the bank of the Danube. The middle person was shot, send-

ing all three into the freezing water to drown.

Groups of Jews were corralled into buildings, and locked inside before the buildings were set on fire. In Bialystok, 800-1,000 Jewish men and boys were burned alive in the Great Synagogue on June 27, 1941.

Recently, advocates for the Palestinians have made an issue of a small number of Palestinian teenagers being arrested by Israel for various crimes. During the Holocaust, one million children were gassed, burned alive, stabbed or starved to death for the crime of being Jewish.

Jews at many camps were employed as slave laborers. For example, the Heinkel aircraft manufacturing company used between 6,000 and 8,000 prisoners from Sachsenhausen to help build a bomber. Prisoners unfit to work in the camps were murdered. Those who survived the long working hours with little food or rest were usually killed later.

In one town, Jews were

taken to the butcher's slaughterhouse. They were stripped and forced to crawl on their hands and knees up the ramp used for animals. When they reached the end, their heads were chopped off and put in baskets. Their bodies were taken and hung on meat hooks with signs that said "kosher meat."

The Palestinians have fabricated stories about Israel infecting Palestinians with the AIDS virus. These were actual medical experiments carried out by the Nazis:

At Auschwitz, Josef Mengele injected twins and dwarfs—aged two and above—with various substances. He then killed them so he could conduct comparative pathological examinations of their internal organs.

Carl Clauberg injected chemical substances into the wombs of thousands of Jewish women to determine how long it would take to sterilize 1,000 women. Horst Schumann

Parkland

From page 1A

On Saturday night, the conference held a moment of silence in Times Square for the murdered teens, and the next day began a campaign for members of the youth group to fulfill one Jewish commandment, or mitzvah, in the teens' memory. The group also called for schools to institute a moment of

silence at the beginning of the day.

Both the mitzvah campaign and the idea of a moment of silence in public schools—in place of prayer, which is prohibited—are longtime Chabad causes. The movement often encourages doing Jewish rituals, such as lighting Shabbat candles or laying tefillin, as a response to tragedy.

Rabbi Mendy Kotlarsky, CTeen's president, said the

group tries to avoid political issues like the gun control campaign, but acknowledged the power of the Parkland students' activism.

"Teens are the leaders of today, not the leaders of tomorrow," he said. "Many of them are embracing that. The Parkland event is something that brought this onto the national stage. Teens might be getting a bump in being able to mobilize because a lot of people are looking toward

them and seeing what they're going to do."

Other Jewish youth groups are explicitly supporting the gun control campaign. According to the New York Jewish Week, the teen arms of the Reform, Conservative and Modern Orthodox movements have all signed onto the effort.

"Never before have students across the country mobilized like this, and never before have the eyes

of the nation been so closely trained on us as we fight for change," Zoe Turner, a member of the Reform movement's National Federation of Temple Youth in Florida, wrote in an essay last week. "A country-wide call to action roars loudly in all of our ears, and NFTY is heeding the call."

The students at the CTeen conference, which drew 2,500 attendees, said they would also be engaging in

activism, including a march in Washington, D.C., scheduled for March 24. But this weekend, Parkland survivors said, they were just grateful to be among friends who comforted them.

"Everyone knows about the incident and everyone is going to help reconnect," said Maverick Reynolds, 15, who heard gunshots while hiding in a nearby classroom. "We knew it was real and it was very scary."

Action

From page 4A

compel the Palestinians to realize that the rules have changed and become more flexible. We should always remember that even when

the peace process was at its peak, when various speeches cast Israelis and Palestinians as relatives (cousins, brothers), the Palestinian demand to divide Jerusalem and allow the right of return

was always lurking in the background to torpedo any move. Trump understood that immediately.

You need to be in the White House and hear the president and those around him to un-

derstand what historic days these are. How lucky we are that Trump has good advisers who love us. Yes, most of the mainstream thinks differently, but most of the mainstream also thinks that Jerusalem

should be divided. We don't take directions from them.

The Turks and the Palestinians have condemned the embassy move on the grounds that Washington is losing its credibility as a mediator. Some of

them are even threatening that the move will set the Middle East on fire. For now, the only thing I see lighting up is the torch Trump will light this coming Independence Day. He deserves to! And we deserve this.

PA

From page 5A

throwing attacks and 45 thrown Molotov cocktails.

Coddling terrorists and pretending that they are "cooperating" with one

hand, while they stab Israel in the back with the other, is ludicrous. A "weakened" PA might just be what is needed to turn the vicious circle around.

If the PA has no intention

of stopping the incitement on TV and radio, such media can be shut down. Other sanctions could be also imposed by Israel. If they know not to mess with Israel because there will be actual financial

consequences might actually weaken terrorist resolve.

Why does it not occur to former Israeli security officials to suggest showing the P.A. that Israel will not put up with even a single terrorist

incident, nor the incitement and rewarding of terrorism?

What if Israel tries an approach of strength for once—the only currency respected in the Middle East—instead of trembling

at the thought of what the international community could or will say? After all, it might just work.

This article originally appeared in Mida and was provided exclusively to JNS.

Czech

From page 7A

bases to Israel), shot down five British-piloted Spitfires flying for the Egyptian airforce over the Sinai desert (see illustration) causing a major diplomatic embarrassment for the British government. Since May 2005 the Prague Military Museum has displayed a special exhibition on the Czechoslovak aid to Israel in 1948.

Israel learned from the history of interwar Czechoslovakia not to rely on anyone, least of all, the "international community" or formal alliances with the Great Powers. The long

memory of the Czech people and their sense of solidarity with the modern state of Israel coupled with the gratitude of many Israelis to the only state that afforded real aid on the ground during the 1948 Israeli War of Independence is a lasting heritage. It explains the recent vote of the Czech Parliament to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and its recommendation to the government to take steps to do so as well as the Czech vote along with other East European states such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Latvia and even Bosnia-Herzegovina to abstain in

the recent vote of the U.N. General Assembly criticizing the United States for its stated plan to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Of course, historians are fond of drawing historical parallels and others are just as fond as writing "revisionist" treatises challenging established views and proclaiming that one cannot judge history with hindsight. The Sudeten crisis and the Munich Agreement are fertile ground for revisionist claims that Chamberlain did the only "right" thing because British public opinion would not have tolerated potential involvement

in another European or world-wide conflict. The same calls are incessantly hurled at Israel for further compromise to make room for a Palestinian state.

What these historians neglect to do is to take into account the other even more probable alternative, on the other side and weigh the likely conclusions that: War in September 1938 would have seen a powerful Czech army of two million men in the highest state of readiness and morale, strongly entrenched enjoying topographic advantages dealing the German invaders massive casualties. Such casualties would have

undoubtedly rocked German morale and grievously damaged the Nazis' image of invincibility.

Hitler himself said in August 1939, "When after Munich we were in a position to examine Czechoslovak military strength from within, what we saw greatly disturbed us; we had run a serious danger." The plan prepared by the Czech generals was formidable. At the Nuremberg trial Gen. Wilhelm Keitel, the German chief of staff, said the High command had been greatly relieved by the Munich Agreement because "We did not believe

ourselves strong enough at that moment to take Czechoslovakia."

Morrell's book is a collector's item today. I was thrilled to remember that I had acquired it at a used bookstore in London for less than two pounds about 20 years ago. It now sells on Amazon for over \$200. It brought history alive from an eyewitness who had amazing prescient powers of observation and did not hesitate to call a spade a spade. What can be said today is that Israelis learned this lesson and are overwhelmingly united by their resolve to avoid the mistakes of Czechoslovakia 80 years ago.

JTA

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than by encountering world Jewry," Sharansky said in a statement. "Shlichim go to Jewish communities around the globe and represent Israeli society. But when they come back to Israel, they are unique ambassadors for Diaspora Jewry in Israel."

Russian-Jewish billionaire Roman Abramovich donates \$20 million to fund nuclear medicine research

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Russian-Jewish billionaire businessman Roman Abramovich donated \$20 million to fund a research center

for nuclear medicine at an Israeli hospital.

Abramovich, who owns Britain's Chelsea soccer club, made the donation to Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer, located near Tel Aviv to fund the cutting-edge research center.

Nuclear medicine can be used for the diagnosis and treatment of a range of diseases including heart disease, cancers, strokes and Alzheimer's.

Sheba has submitted its permit application to build a new 21,500-square-foot, three-floor, diagnostic and research center for nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

The entire basement floor will be dedicated to housing a cyclotron, a special nuclear reactor, which will produce small quantities of nuclear isotopes for use in molecular imaging, the medical center said in its announcement.

Abramovich has donated a total of \$57 million to projects at Sheba, including to the Sheba Cancer and Cancer Research Centers, the Pediatric Middle East Congenital Heart Center and the Sheba Heart Center.

In 2017, Forbes estimated Abramovich's net worth at \$9.1 billion, making him the 139th richest person in the world. He is Russia's 12th richest person.

Jewish mayor of Oakland defends decision to tip off community to immigration raid

(JTA)—The Jewish mayor of Oakland defended her decision to warn the community in advance of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid in Northern California.

Mayor Libby Schaaf said Friday that she felt it was her duty to warn local residents of the impending raid, which ended two days earlier. Schaaf posted the warning on Twitter the previous weekend.

The tipoff allowed some 800 illegal immigrants to es-

cape arrest, Thomas Homan, ICE's acting director, told "Fox & Friends." Homan said the Justice Department is looking into whether Schaaf obstructed justice.

The four days of raids last week in Northern California resulted in the arrest of about 230 people.

"I remain confident that my actions were both legal and moral," Schaaf said Friday, the Bay City News reported. "I find it difficult to believe even in today's America that informing people of their legal rights could be considered illegal."

The mayor's actions have

escalated tensions between California officials and the Trump administration, The Associated Press reported. Oakland has declared itself a sanctuary city for illegal migrants.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders at a news conference Thursday called the action "outrageous."

"I think it's outrageous that a mayor would circumvent federal authorities and certainly put them in danger by making a move such as that," Sanders told reporters. She said Schaaf's action was "under review," without offering any other details.

Nazis

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sterilized men and women by pointing x-rays at their sexual organs. Many subjects died after great suffering.

At Dachau, doctors experimented with methods of reviving prisoners after they had been forced to remain in a tank of ice water for hours. Other prisoners were infected with malaria to test treatments for the disease.

Here's a description of one of the high-altitude experiments carried out at Dachau: "It was a continuous experiment without oxygen at a height of 12 Km. (7½ miles) conducted on a 37-year-old

Jew in good general condition. Breathing continued up to 30 minutes. After 4 minutes the experimental subject began to perspire and to wiggle his head, after 5 minutes cramps occurred, between 6 and 10 minutes breathing increased in speed and the experimental subject became unconscious; from 11 to 30 minutes breathing slowed down to three breaths per minute, finally stopping altogether."

If these examples are not enough, I would refer Palestinians and their supporters who repeat the calumny about Jews and Nazis to the eminent philosopher, Emil Fackenheim, who offered

these distinguishing characteristics of the Holocaust:

The "Final Solution" was designed to exterminate every single Jewish man, woman and child. The only Jews who would have conceivably survived if Hitler had been victorious were those who somehow escaped discovery by the Nazis.

Jewish birth (actually mere evidence of "Jewish blood") was sufficient to warrant the punishment of death. Fackenheim notes that this feature distinguished Jews from Poles and Russians—who were killed because there were too many of them—and from "Aryans," who were not

single out unless they chose to single themselves out. With the possible exception of Gypsies, he adds, Jews were the only people killed for the "crime" of existing.

The extermination of the Jews had no political or economic justification. It was not a means to any end; it was an end in itself. The killing of Jews was not considered just a part of the war effort, but equal to it; thus, resources that could have been used in the war were diverted instead to the program of extermination.

Yes, Palestinians can claim their share of suffering, but they have never faced anything remotely like what the

Nazis did to the Jews. The only systematic murders of Palestinians because they are Palestinians have been carried out by their fellow Arabs, not Israelis.

During Israel's administration of the disputed territories, the Palestinian population has grown exponentially. More than 20 percent of the Israeli population are Palestinians who enjoy equal rights with Jewish citizens.

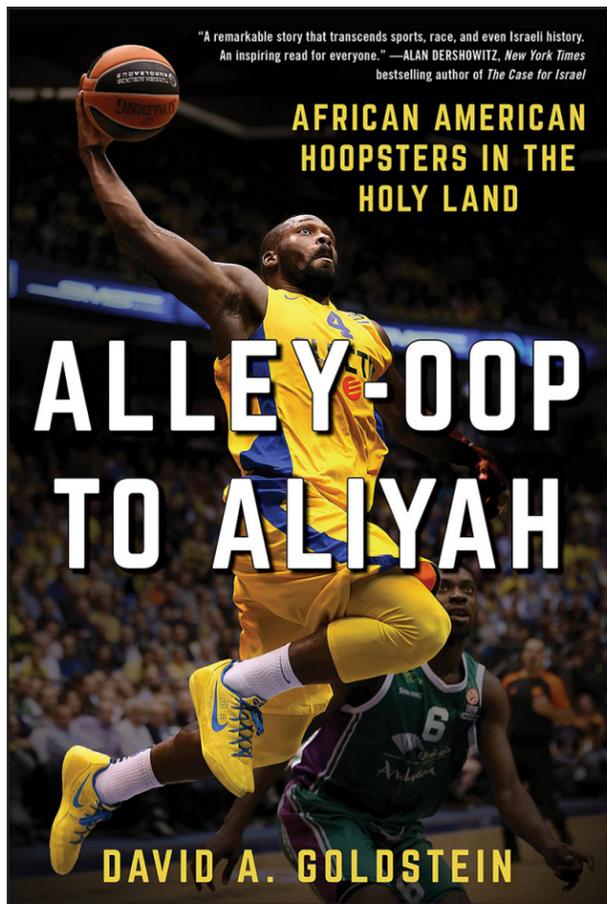
Palestinians in the territories have the right to petition Israeli courts to redress their grievances, and more than 100,000 Judea and Samaria Arabs work in Israel and Jewish settlements—with

benefits similar to their Jewish co-workers.

Palestinians are not forced to wear special clothes or badges. They have no tattoos on their forearms. They have not been sent to concentration or slave labor camps, or forced to build Israeli armaments. The only camps holding Palestinians today are refugee camps—and the residents are kept there by their fellow Palestinians and other Arabs.

Dr. Mitchell Bard is executive director of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise and author/editor of 24 books, including "The Arab Lobby" and the novel "After Anatevka: Tevye in Palestine."

New book: A slam dunk for African-American hoopsters who take to Israel



By Eliana Rudee

(JNS)—Canadian sports executive, lawyer and author of the new book “Alley-Oop to Aliyah: African American Hoopsters in the Holy Land,” David A. Goldstein is often asked why he decided to write about hasbara, or positive propaganda used to convince others to support Israel. But according to Goldstein, when he started on the book 11 years ago, he discovered an unknown, upbeat phenomenon. “I didn’t set out to create that positive feeling about Israel. That feeling is created by this country—how players embrace it, and in turn, how this country embraces them,” he said at a Nefesh B’Nefesh event featuring a panel with some of Israel’s most well-known Zionist basketball superstars.

According to Goldstein, more than 800 African-American

players have competed in Israel. “This phenomenon was hiding in plain sight,” he told JNS. “It’s a phenomenon that’s much larger than many realize. After playing here, some players convert. And others fully commit to living life here as Israelis—staying and becoming citizens, joining the IDF and raising their kids as Israelis with fluent Hebrew.”

Although many hoopsters are at first hesitant to even visit Israel, let alone live there, said Goldstein, many come for the beautiful weather and scenery, friendly people, good nightlife and the ease at which English speakers can get by.

“They celebrate Jewish holidays like Purim and Pesach, go to beach or the Western Wall, show patriotism on Israel’s Independence Day and even choose the No. 18 jersey (“chai,” the number symbolizing life in the Jewish faith) later in their careers as

a homage to Israel and the Jewish people,” he said.

As they embrace Israel, Goldstein found, Israel embraces them back. “In Israel, players are welcomed in a way that’s special compared to other countries,” said Goldstein, who maintained that in the context of Israel being somewhat of an outcast in the international political arena, the fact that high-profile athletes would choose to come to Israel and fully embrace the country “means something special here and is a big complement.”

“They like Israel—and even love it—take less money and then go on to tell others Israel is not what they see on the news,” said Goldstein. “They become part of the family.”

According to Goldstein, although players who stay in Israel and become citizens have the notoriety of being famous players, they share a lot of commonalities with other olim (new immigrants) who become citizens. While they speak about having no personal space at the bank and dealing with aggressive drivers, they are also invited to Shabbat dinners. “It’s the flip side of the coin—how everyone stops to help, but also to criticize,” Goldstein told JNS, describing the Israeli phenomenon of being treated as family for better and worse.

“NBA is possible for Israelis’ Aulcie Perry is perhaps the first and best example of a player fully embracing Israel and being embraced in return. “Aulcie is the forefather of this movement and phenomenon,” said Goldstein.

Perry originally signed a two-month contract with Maccabi Tel Aviv in the mid-1970s but ended up not only staying in Israel but serving in the Israel Defense Forces, converting to Judaism and becoming an Israeli citizen.

Perry’s aliyah predated Nefesh B’Nefesh, an organization founded in 2002 to make the process easier and facilitate the integration of



Eliana Rudee

David Goldstein, Josh Halickman, Aulcie Perry, and Tamir Goodman pose for a picture at a Nefesh B’Nefesh event in Jerusalem.

new immigrants into Israeli society. Thus, he spoke of various hardships getting used to the culture; even so, Perry fell in love with Israel, recalling his first year with Maccabi as “an unbelievable dream come true” to play at a high level and have the whole country behind the team.

He found that he was accepted in Israel in a way he never experienced in the United States. “I was born in the 1950s in America during the Jim Crow laws of segregation and discrimination,” Perry told JNS. “And here in Israel, I learn there’s 100 ethnic groups all together as one and hardly no racism,” he said. “And that opened the door.”

Goldstein, who has studied the intersection of sports, Zionism, culture and race for more than a decade, found that other African-American players share this sentiment. “By and large, they don’t feel racism,” he stated. “Many see commonalities in the history of persecution between Jews and African-Americans.”

According to American-Israeli basketball player known as the “Jewish Jordan,” found this capacity of family-building especially unique when he moved to Israel. He told JNS of its special capacity “to break through boundaries while at the same time uniting so many people.”

Goodman lauded the influence of African-American players in Israel who have changed the Israeli basketball industry. “Their influence in Israel is all positive, as I see it,” he said. “Now, playing in the NBA is possible for Israelis. We wouldn’t have gotten that if not for African-American

players who taught us a different style of play, better defense and how to get to hoop. We learn from the great players, and that’s what basketball is about—not settling and going for the best.”

Goldstein concurred with Goodman, saying, “When you’re an Israeli kid playing basketball, it’s an escape or a game. But if you’re an African-American playing here, it’s your job, and you work hard at it,” said Goldstein. “They teach Israelis players to raise their work ethic. Omri Casspi said he learned about hard work and dedication from them.”

“I want people to know that if they see an African-American basketball player walking around in Israel or watch them play, they know what that person has contributed in so many different ways.”

As he told JNS, “my biggest aspiration is that this very positive phenomenon about a really amazing group of people, and a really unique and amazing country, becomes better known.”

Netanyahu hails US Embassy move as ‘a great moment’ for Israel

(Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS via JNS)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday hailed a recently announced US plan to relocate the American Embassy in Israel from its current abode in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as early as May of this year, calling the move “a great moment for the State of Israel.”

“President Trump’s decision to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem will make our Independence Day celebration even happier,” Netanyahu said, noting that the planned relocation will coincide with the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of Israel’s independence. “Thank you, President Trump, for your leadership and for your friendship.”

The Israeli Embassy in Washington issued a statement saying, “President Trump’s decision to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem on the coming Independence Day follows his historic declaration in December to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. This decision

will turn Israel’s 70th Independence Day into an even bigger celebration. Thank you President Trump for your leadership and friendship.”

On Facebook, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat thanked Trump for “fulfilling your promise to bring the US Embassy home to Jerusalem, the eternal, united capital of the Jewish people.”

He added “this gift is a particularly meaningful way to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Israel’s independence and the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem. This is a recognition of Jerusalem not just in words, but in deeds. We look forward to hosting you this year at the Jerusalem embassy!”

Danny Danon, Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, said Trump’s “courageous decision is proof of the strength of the genuine alliance and friendship between the United States and Israel. This is the hour to recognize Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the State of Israel.”

Jerusalem Affairs and Heritage Minister Zeev Elkin urged additional countries to follow the American lead and move their embassies to Jerusalem as well.

“We at the Jerusalem Ministry will give any assistance necessary to advance this process, to both the US State Department and to any other country that is interested,” said Elkin.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett said “the people in Israel thank the US president for the friendship, the courage and the determination in recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the transfer of the US Embassy to Jerusalem. You will be recorded in the chronicles of Israel.”

Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely praised the Trump administration for its “actions to implement the historic decision” to transfer the US Embassy.

And Michael Oren, deputy minister and former Israeli ambassador to the United States, called the announce-

ment “a great moment for the State of Israel.”

He said he believed additional countries would follow in its footsteps and relocate their own embassies to Jerusalem.

“This is another step that proves Trump is a president who lives up to his word,” he said, adding that Israel was committed to channeling its strong friendship with the US administration to work towards a genuine solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “I congratulate President Trump and thank him from the bottom of my heart.”

Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Chairman Avi Dichter said: “In a 70-year delay, the US Embassy will be located in Jerusalem, Israel’s capital.”

Calling the move “a small step for America, a giant step for Israel and humanity,” Dichter said “we hope this move will propel other countries around the world to transfer their embassy to Jerusalem.”

According to Likud MK Anat Berko, “this news only proves how important Israel is to the international community and how beloved it is to the U.S.”

Likud MK Yehuda Glick hailed the move as “a historic decision of biblical proportions.”

Yisrael Beytenu MK Oded Forer said that with the embassy relocation, “the Americans have proved that the winds that have blown since President Trump entered [office] are genuine.” He hailed his “friends in Congress and the American administration for keeping their promise and their steadfast stance alongside Israel and Jerusalem.”

United Torah Judaism MK Uri Maklev was slightly more cautious in his praise for the move. He said the embassy relocation was “a good thing if it comes from the recognition of the importance of the issue, and not from a demand by Israel and in the hope that we will not end up paying a heavy price.”

Opposition lawmakers also welcomed the move.

Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid said Israel should “thank President Trump for a wonderful gift for Israel’s 70th birthday.”

In a statement, the president of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Dr. Jurgen Buhler, said: “We are grateful to the Trump administration, which has kept its promise to transfer the American Embassy to the capital, the place where it should be. We join the people of Israel and its government in saluting the gesture.”

“The Christian Embassy hopes other countries will join the move and we are acting to achieve this goal through our representatives and activists around the world. It is our belief that the transfer of the US Embassy and other embassies from around the world will bolster the city’s standing around the world and the freedom of religion that the State of Israel grants the city.”