



Tamara Green and Roberta Marcus Leiner  
**Rabbi Chaplain Robert Marcus (far left) with Jewish soldiers in 1944.**

## Jewish-American soldiers didn't just fight Nazis—they endured anti-Semitism

By Curt Schleier

(JTA)—“GI Jews: Jewish Americans in World War II” begins as many Holocaust documentaries do, with a history of the rise of Hitler and Nazism in Germany mixed with what is now standard archival footage of Brownshirts and Kristallnacht. Throw in interviews with some Jewish celebrities—in this case, Carl Reiner and his friend Mel Brooks wearing his old Army jacket—and it has all the workings of a typical PBS documentary.

But the film, which premiered April 11,

on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, quickly takes an unexpected turn. Jewish-American soldiers, the viewer learns, weren't only fighting Nazis during the war—they had to battle the anti-Semitic prejudice of many of their fellow soldiers.

All told, some 550,000 Jews served in World War II. A few had experienced anti-Semitism at home already in the form of “Gentiles Only” signs, for example, which were found at some public facilities across the country.

Mimi Rivkin, one of the 10,000 Jewish

women who enlisted, a future member of the Women's Army Corps, recalled a more personal incident in public school: “Suddenly kids weren't playing with me. I asked one why and she said, ‘The teacher told us you're a Jew and we're not supposed to play with you.’”

But for the most part, these soldiers were immigrants or the children of immigrants who lived in largely Jewish urban areas, and it was a major culture shock for them to suddenly hear

**Soldiers on page 14A**

## Iceland welcomes its first rabbi while considering a ban on circumcision

By Cnaan Liphshiz

REYKJAVIK, Iceland (JTA)—At a windswept harbor of this Nordic capital, a bearded man wearing a black hat dips eating utensils into the icy water while hissing from pain induced by the bitter cold.

Perplexed by the spectacle, a caretaker helpfully offers to let the man and his three com-

panions use a washing basin to clean their dishes instead of precariously bending over the freezing water.

“Thank you, but we need to do it in the sea,” one of the men, 27-year-old Avi Feldman of New York, tells the caretaker. “It's for religious reasons.”

Feldman and his companions, a journalist and two relatives who are visiting him here for the holidays, haul the wet dishes back to a car parked at the foot of one of the many snow-capped volcanoes surrounding this gray but picturesque capital city.

The exchange last week was Feldman's first attempt since registering as a resident of Iceland at explaining to a local a potentially awkward Jewish religious custom: in this case, “tevilat kelim”—immersing utensils acquired from non-Jews to make them kosher.

But it won't be the last explanation coming from the New York native, who this year became Iceland's first resident rabbi in documented history. Feldman and his wife, Mushky, and their two small daughters settled in the country as its parliament prepares to vote on a bill that would outlaw nonmedical circumcision of boys



**Rabbi Avi and Mushky Feldman with their daughters in Reykjavik, March 26, 2018.**

Measuring his words on the subject, Feldman, a Chabad rabbi, told JTA before his arrival only that he and his wife “hope to bring awareness to local Icelandic people and especially to lawmakers in their decision on rules.” He also said the bill is a “matter of great concern” for those who “value religious freedom.”

According to Feldman, the issue is not rooted in any hostility to Judaism in Iceland.

Hotly opposed by the several hundred Jews and Muslims who live in this Christian nation of 330,000 citizens, the bill has wide support in the parliament and population,

**Iceland on page 14A**

## A new face in JCRC leadership



**Dori Gerber**



**Michelle Zaltsberg**

Dori Gerber will join Michelle Zaltsberg as co-chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council, the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando has announced. The JCRC, a funded committee of the Federation, advocates on behalf of the Jewish community through government, education, media, and interfaith engagement.

“Dori is a human ray of sunshine,” said Zaltsberg, who is in her second year as JCRC co-chair and first year as the JCRC representative on the Federation's board of directors. “More importantly, her experience as an educator has already been invaluable to JCRC as we have worked on programming to assist families with confronting discrimination in schools.”

On stepping into a leadership role with JCRC, Gerber

said, “It is so important, now more than ever, to build and strengthen relationships within the Jewish community and the community at large. I am thrilled to be joining forces with Michelle, under the leadership of Ben Friedman and the JCRC board, to uphold the organization's mission.”

“When we looked at the needs of the JCRC, Gerber's name was top of the list for whom we hoped to see in leadership. We were elated when she offered to take on this responsibility, and we are all excited to see the results of her initiative,” said Rhonda Forest, acting executive director and former board president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando.

Gerber's elevation comes on the heels of Ina Porth's

**JCRC on page 14A**

## Holocaust heroes in unexpected places

Many in the American Jewish community are aware of two outstanding examples of individual courage, daring and initiative demonstrated by gentiles in the Holocaust. They are the German industrialist Oskar Schindler and the Swedish consul in Hungary, Raoul Wallenberg. Both have been the subject of films, memorial commemorations, and have had their likenesses portrayed on postage stamps, statues, and the honor of being celebrated at the Yad Vashem Institute in Israel.

There are other individuals whose stories are just as remarkable but little known and have not been the subject of similar commemoration or whose stories are available only in foreign languages such as Italian, Portuguese, Japanese and Danish.

In collaboration with the University of Central Florida's History Department and Judaic Studies program, Dr. Norman Berdichevsky helps uncover the stories of these extraordinary individuals at the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education



**Dr. Norman Berdichevsky**

Center on Thursday, April 19, from 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

This event is open to the public free of charge; however, reservations are required as seating is limited. Please visit <http://www.holocaustedu.org/events/all/heroes-of-the-holocaust/> to make reservations.





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*Help a Senior by hitting the greens on May 6*



Keith Levitt

Tee it up for a good cause at the 6th annual Pavilion Golf Society golf tournament taking place Sunday, May 6, at the Rosen Shingle Creek Golf Club. Hosted by The Jewish Pavilion and benefitting the Orlando Se-

nior Help Desk, this popular tournament offers golfers a mimosa breakfast followed by a round of golf on the resort's challenging Arnold Palmer-designed course. Following completion of the 18 holes, participants will be treated to a gourmet lunch and live auction.

Registration costs \$130 per person or \$500 for a foursome. Participants have the option to make it a staycation with a special offer from the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort that allows a Saturday-night stay for a low rate of only \$119. Tournament golfers also receive a \$35 Shingle Creek return play coupon.

This year's event honors Keith Levitt for his volunteer work with The Jewish Pavilion. Levitt has helped with the annual golf tournament since its inception, with his family's company Oakley Signs

donating all event signage every year. Levitt and various members of his family have also been continuously active volunteers at programs put on by The Jewish Pavilion.

Not an avid golfer but still want to support the event? Interested local businesses can purchase hole sponsorships and have the ability to interact with golfers as playing groups approach the sponsored tee. Tickets to the luncheon are also available for \$40. Call the office at The Jewish Pavilion to learn more: 407-678-9363.

Tournament participants can register online for the tournament at www.Jewish-Pavilion.org. The Orlando Senior Help Desk is a public non-profit operated by The Jewish Pavilion and provides both resources and guidance to Central Florida seniors and their families.

**Mahjong time at COS**

The Congregation Ohev Shalom Sisterhood is presenting Mahjong Tournament 2018 on Sunday, April 29, from 11 a.m.—3:15 p.m. It will be held at the synagogue, located at 613 Concourse Parkway, South, Maitland. The cost is \$36 and includes snacks and a hot

lunch. There will be prizes and raffles. Beginners are welcome.

To participate, please RSVP no later than Monday April 23 to Debbie Bellinkoff, 407-739-7130 (she will also give you her address to mail a check made out to COS Sisterhood). For questions, please contact

Debbie or Es Cohen, 407-765-6806.

Also—Mahjong sets are needed for the tournament. Please let Sisterhood know if you can help!

Proceeds of the Mahjong tournament benefit the various programs supported by Sisterhood.

*Looking for a specific book*

Does anyone have a copy of the book "The Migden Families from Tarnopol and Allied Families" by Carl Richard Migden?

Heritage received a phone call from Steven Migden who

lives in New York and he is trying to find a copy of the book. It is not available on Amazon or Google any longer. It seems to be out of print, although it was written in 2001.

Carl R. Migden is a resident of Central Florida but is no relation to Steven Migden.

If you have any information about the book, please call the Heritage at 407-834-8787.

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**Kinneret residents enjoyed their Passover seder**

The Kinneret Council on Aging provided a Passover seder for the residents of Kinneret Apartments that was shared with family, friends and area youth.

The seder was celebrated on the second night of Passover with over 50 participants. Partnering with the event was Central Florida Hillel, as well as KCOA staff and volunteers who provided table service that made each resident feel both special and appreciated. Dinner was provided by Kosher Central out of South Florida.

"The seder provided our residents and their families an opportunity to gather on this special evening and to enjoy a traditional Passover service without leaving their homes," said Sharon Weil, director of Programming and Development, KCOA. She continued, "It is exciting and rewarding to continue to provide activities that are enjoyed and are engaging."

KCOA is a nonprofit agency that provides ongoing programs and services to residents of Kinneret Apartments.

Kinneret Apartments, located in downtown Orlando, provides subsidized housing to 280 independent seniors. For information on the facility or to donate to KCOA, go to www.kinneretapartments.com or contact Sharon Weil at 407-425-4537, ext. 211.

# What Israel's gun policies can teach Americans

By Israel Kasnett

(JNS)—As American society has become more polarized in recent years, the debate over gun control has reflected this reality, with leaders and lawmakers on both sides firmly entrenched in their positions. Yet the recent school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., which left 17 dead—14 of them teenagers—has transcended the usual debate on gun control as an entire new generation, fed up with violence in their schools, has launched a social movement for change.

While school shootings

seem to be a uniquely American phenomenon, Israel is no stranger to violence. Anyone who has visited the Jewish state quickly becomes accustomed to seeing security guards in nearly every public venue, including schools, with Israeli soldiers carrying M16s slung over their shoulders. Many supporters of gun rights have pointed to Israel as a potential model for the United States.

“Just waking up in Israel to news of heartbreaking school shooting in FL; Reminded that Israel pretty much eliminated it by placing highly trained people strategically to spot the one common thread—not

the weapon, but a person with intent,” tweeted former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee following the Parkland tragedy.

Similarly, Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association, has praised Israel for placing armed guards at schools, saying in December 2012 following the school shooting in Newtown, Conn., which left 20 children ages 6 and 7 dead, along with six staff members, that “the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.”

**‘How to respect the weapon’**

While some may point to

Israel as an exemplar of how a society with widespread gun ownership can still prevent school shootings and gun violence in general, several key differences exist between the United States and Israel.

A 2012 study by Janet E. Rosenbaum, an epidemiologist at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., examined the perception of many gun-rights advocates, noting that Israel and Switzerland are “gun utopias” with permissive gun laws and widespread gun ownership, and that they encourage the arming of civilians who can confront shooters.

She concludes that “Swiss and Israeli gun ownership is rare [and] regulated stringently, such as by putting the burden of proof on permit applicants to demonstrate a specific need for a gun,” adding that neither country promotes gun ownership.

Unlike America, where gun rights are protected by the Second Amendment, there is no parallel in Israel’s legal framework. Instead, like most of the developed world, Israel has strict gun-control laws, where gun ownership is considered a privilege granted by the Ministry of Public Security—not a right. As such, only a small percentage of Israelis—about 135,000 citizens out of some 8.5 million people—are licensed to carry guns. Contrast that with the United States, with its estimated 300 million firearms, nearly one for every man, woman and child.

Simon Perry, professor at Hebrew University’s Institute of Criminology in Jerusalem and co-director of the Program in Policing and Homeland Security, dismissed the lessons people appear to have drawn from Israel’s gun-control policies. Firstly, “the people who refer to Israel as an example of successful gun control see a lot of weapons on the street, but these are soldiers on the way to or from base, not ordinary civilians.”

According to Perry, there are two major differences between Israel and America when it comes to gun control. “One, in the U.S., it is easy to

obtain a weapon. In Israel, it is very difficult. If you want one, you need to have a very good reason why. At most, you can get a small caliber pistol, not an automatic or semi-automatic rifle. The process makes it very complicated to obtain a weapon. And two, the fact is that most Israelis undergo some type of training in the military. Even in lower-level basic training, they treat you how to respect the weapon. Israelis know how to handle weapons. The gun culture you see in America is not accepted by Jews or Arabs in Israeli culture.”

He added that “we don’t have a lot of school shootings because we have security in schools to protect against terror attacks.”

**‘More can and should be done’**

For American law enforcement, the best lesson from Israel may not be the fact that a security guard is armed, but that a greater focus is placed on that guard’s training and state of mind.

Shortly after the Parkland shooting, U.S. President Donald Trump blamed Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School resource officer Scot Peterson, saying he “didn’t have the courage” to run inside and confront teen shooter Nikolas Cruz. But Perry retorted: “It’s not about courage. It’s a state of mind. We test our security system on a daily basis. People have to be alert, aware and constantly checking. It’s important to understand how to keep people prepared for this type of instance. Training is not enough.”

Perry listed two major elements that define criminal behavior: motivation and opportunity. “If you prevent a criminal from obtaining a weapon, you remove the opportunity. You need to build systems that will prevent people like this from purchasing such weapons. You need to build the system that actively deals with finding these people and have someone who deals with it exclusively, working on it full-time” in order to prevent similar such tragedies.

American law enforcement is already considering these suggestions.

The Broward County Sheriff’s Department, led by Sheriff Scott Israel, told JNS that “there is no simple solution for this very difficult problem,” but pointed to several measures that it believes could help prevent future attacks.

“First, and most importantly,” it noted, “is creating Violent Threat Restraining Orders because they will empower the justice system to prohibit the sale or possession of guns to violent or individuals deemed to be mentally ill.”

The department added that “another reform is to strengthen the Baker Act, so that those who are involuntarily committed to mental-health institutions have their firearms temporarily removed from their possession and not permit them to reacquire those weapons until a court approves.”

Additionally, “threats of violence made online are not always arrestable offenses. Sheriff Israel supports the efforts of law-enforcement leaders around the state to urge legislators to close a loophole in Florida law so that police can make an arrest when broader online threats are made.”

The Sheriff’s Department concluded that “more can be done and should be done ... A uniform national system of mandatory background checks should be implemented to stop criminals and the mentally ill from acquiring guns. This will take bipartisan consensus in Washington to make this a reality.”

Asked if police support a ban on AR-15 types of assault rifles, the department said: “Sheriff Israel supports common-sense gun reform, including reinstating the federal ban on assault rifles, and banning the sale and possession of modifiers such as bump stocks.”

The department did not comment on allegations against it that its officers acted improperly during the shooting.

## Calls on Supreme Court to uphold Trump travel ban

NEW YORK (JTA)—The Zionist Organization of America has filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in support of President Donald Trump’s most recent ban on travel from a number of predominately Muslim countries.

The group, which has been an outspoken supporter of many of Trump’s policies, in its brief said the action did not amount to a “Muslim ban” or violate the Constitution. On Wednesday, ZOA released a statement announcing its Feb. 28 filing of the brief.

ZOA cited terror attacks by immigrants in Boston, San Bernardino, Orlando and Manhattan, as well as Europe, in its defense of the executive order.

“The six Muslim majority countries affected by the Proclamation are marked by combat zones and infested with terrorist groups and

sympathizers,” the group’s president, Morton Klein, said in the statement. “The Proclamation’s vital purpose exemplifies our most fundamental, overriding value of protecting American lives.”

The executive order announced in September prohibits travel from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, as well as from Chad and North Korea, and includes some Venezuelan government officials and their families. The ban went into effect in December, even as the appeals moved forward.

It was the Trump administration’s third attempt to prevent the entry into the United States of travelers from those countries. U.S. courts struck down the earlier bids by Trump to impose a ban on travel from a number of Muslim-majority countries, in part because Trump him-

self signaled that the ban was meant to target Muslims.

On Friday, at least six Jewish civil rights groups signed onto a joint amicus brief, spearheaded by the Anti-Defamation League, urging the Supreme Court to block the executive order. The American Jewish Committee also filed a brief opposing the ban.

In February, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit in Virginia declared Trump’s travel ban unconstitutional. The decision came a month after the Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal from a similar decision from the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco.

Attorneys general for 16 states and Washington, D.C., also filed an amicus brief Friday with the Supreme Court against the travel ban.

The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the ban at the end of April.

## Former Qatar PM says Israelis have right to live in their land



Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani

By United with Israel

In a Twitter post on Wednesday, former Qatari Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani stated that Israelis have a right to live in their own land, The Jerusalem Post reported.

“...Israelis have a right to live in their land in peace and safety, this is my conviction. I’ve had this conviction for many long years, and I still do,” Hamad wrote in Arabic, the Post said.

Hamad also called on Qatari leaders to improve

its relationship with other countries in the region. “What we need now in our Gulf,” he said, “is to advise each other and try to reform the severed ties between our peoples,” the Post reported.

Qatar’s problematic situation has come about “because of a lack of strategy and clear belief in dealing with our disputes and in outlining a desired future for generations to come,” he concluded, according to the Post.

These surprising comments were made just a couple of days after an inter-

view appeared in The Atlantic, quoting Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as saying that Israelis have a right to their own land.

Apparently pushing for a two-state solution, the Saudi prince said, “I believe the Palestinians and the Israelis have the right to have their own land. But we have to have a peace agreement to assure the stability for everyone and to have normal relations.”

Ties between Israel and the Gulf states have improved over the past year, triggered by the common Iranian threat.

## Saudi Crown Prince: Israelis have the right to their own land

By World Israel News

In an interview by Jeffrey Goldberg published Monday in The Atlantic, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said Israelis have a right to their own land.

Apparently pushing for a two-state solution, he said, “I believe the Palestinians and the Israelis have the right to have their own land. But we have to have a peace agreement to assure the stability for everyone and to have normal relations.”

Ties between Israel and the Gulf states have improved over the past year, triggered by the common Iranian threat.

“We have religious concerns about the fate of the holy mosque in Jerusalem (i.e. the Temple Mount, Judaism’s holiest site) and about the rights of the Palestinian people. This is what we have. We don’t have any objection

against any other people,” said the crown prince, who is currently touring the US.

“Prince Mohammed’s visit to the US is mainly a hunting trip for investment, and an opportunity for him to sell his so-called Vision 2030, an elaborate, still mainly unexecuted plan to modernize the Kingdom and end its dependence on oil,” Goldberg said.

“Iranian supreme leader makes Hitler look good”

“I believe the Iranian supreme leader makes Hitler look good. Hitler didn’t do what the supreme leader is trying to do. Hitler tried to conquer Europe... The supreme leader is trying to conquer the world,” bin Salman said in the interview.

Furthermore, according to Goldberg, he had not a bad word to say about Israel.

Last month, in a surprising turn of events, Saudi Arabia



Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman

permitted Air India, which launched a direct flight to Tel Aviv, to fly over Saudi airspace, ending a decades-long ban on Israeli commercial flights over its territory.

# The Saudis exit the conflict with Israel

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS)—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman made history after telling The Atlantic's Jeffrey Goldberg that his country recognized the right of the Jews to "their own land." Though he added that the Saudis also care about the rights of Palestinians and the fate of "the holy mosque in Jerusalem," the message he was sending to Muslims and Arabs was loud and clear. As far as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—the state that has styled itself the defender of Islamic holy places, and thus the self-styled moral leader of the Arab and Muslim world—the long war against Zionism is over.

That's good news for Israel and the United States, which wants friendly relations between two of its most important allies, especially in the context of the threat from Iran. Yet this shouldn't be treated as a harbinger of a peace agreement that will end the struggle between Israel and the Palestinians. The reason why has little to do with Israel or the Saudis—and everything to do with the Palestinians.

While important, it should also be understood what the statement from the prince—popularly known as "MbS"—doesn't mean.

His comments shouldn't be confused with a formal declaration of Saudi recognition of the Jewish state. Nor should we imagine that

it means that the Saudis will not continue to be something of a contradiction as they are, at one and the same time, a close ally of the West while also being the primary funder of Wahhabism. It is a particularly militant form of Islam that is closely identified with the Saudi ruling family that has helped inspire violent radicals who have, ironically, become a major thorn in the side of their regime.

Unlike his more traditional father King Salman, MbS, who appears to wield the real power in Riyadh, is something of a reformer. Under his leadership, the kingdom is trying to respond to the challenges of the 21st century by opening its archaic Islamist society up to certain changes, such as allowing women to drive. However, as he made clear to Goldberg, Saudi Arabia will remain an absolute monarchy.

It's also true that Saudi outreach to Israel is not entirely new.

The Saudis put forth a proposal in 2002 that called for recognition of Israel and ending the conflict. But that so-called Arab peace initiative had its flaws. Initially, it linked peace to the "right of return" for descendants of Palestinian Arab refugees from Israel's 1948 War of Independence. Since then, the Saudis

have dropped that part and made it more acceptable to Israel, and it remains a talking point for some on the Jewish left who insist that there is an offer on the table that Israel hasn't embraced.

That isn't true, as Israel has informally discussed the initiative with the Saudis for years. However, the explanation for the failure of the plan and the motivation for the crown prince's latest Western charm offensive rests primarily in the failure of the Palestinians to take the hint with respect to Israel.

Since 2002, Israel has made several attempts at peace that have all run aground on Palestinian rejectionism. In 2005, it withdrew from Gaza. In 2008, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas a state in almost all the West Bank, Gaza and a share of Jerusalem. Abbas walked away from that offer and torpedoed subsequent negotiations sponsored by the United States, during which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu offered another withdrawal from the West Bank.

Since then, Abbas has continued to refuse to negotiate, while the P.A. also continues

Tobin on page 15A

## Time for a moment of silence in our schools

By Tzvi Freeman

The world has changed. Our needs have changed. Our vision of the future has changed. Schools haven't been keeping up.

If our children are our future, then the way we run our schools reflects our dreams for the future. There was an era when American parents dreamed of their children going to college, earning a good degree and supporting a family with all the good things America could provide.

For that, all that was needed was a school that gave your kids that entry pass to college. Principally, your children needed information and the skills to access that information.

Today our dreams are different. We want healthy kids, in body, in mind and in spirit. The facts of this century have taught us that both the success of our economy and of our personal sense of well-being is not based on smarts alone, but on human integrity, a sense of ethics and a sense of meaning in life. We have learned the hard way that none of those things come naturally, or easily.

Most of all, we need respite from the noise.

When the Internet opened its floodgates in 1991, pundits described how the information signal-to-noise ratio had just plummeted. Today, without vigilante self-discipline, there is only noise and more noise. Noise cubed, surrounding each of us in all dimensions of our lives.

Our children, especially, live within this noise from morning to night. It is their world, frighteningly more than the world of their senses in which they walk. Their primary reality has become a place of utter chaos, where seven billion voices scream out for their attention—and mostly not for anything that will do them any good.

The most sensible, most caring, most compassionate thing we can give our children today is respite from that noise. The most sensible and compassionate thing we can give our children today is respite from the noise reverberating within their young minds. That doesn't mean simply a quiet room. They need quiet inside themselves. The noise has entered their minds, and bounces around in there without respite.

We need to demonstrate to our children that it is possible for you to stop, be still and allow that gray matter in your skull to reflect on those things most important to you. Not those things the world screams at you about. Not the voices that tell you who you must be, what you must enjoy, what you have to buy to be cool—but to a small, still voice inside that asks, "Who am I? What am I doing here? What is this all about?"

We need to introduce a daily habit of quietness into American life. And the key place to begin is in our schools.

Does it work?

Take the testimony of the administration of P.S. 191-The Paul Robeson Elementary School in Brooklyn, N.Y., describing the results of their "Moment of Silence" in school in a 2013 report:

When we introduced it several years ago overall student attendance was down, parent participation was low, and student achievement was climbing but not at the rate that everyone was hoping for. Our students required, and still require, a greater need to be listened to. Our students required new ways of dealing with emotions and crisis. Our students needed the time and an outlet that would provide an opportunity to understand the 'whys' and 'hows' of their experiences. They needed to become more contemplative . . .

Since then it has become an ongoing, transformative experience. The Moment of Silence provided the students an opportunity to become more mindful and reflective of their experiences inside and outside the classroom. The students have become more introspective in their writing and have a greater appreciation, empathy, and understanding of their peers. . . . Students have also gained a greater understanding of educational objectives.

More contemplative, more introspective, more empathy. Isn't this all we want for our children? For our future?

A daily moment of silence doesn't demand a bill in Congress, or a presidential signature. Those things would be nice, and send a signal throughout the country.

The place to start, however, is with your own school. Even better, to come from the parents to the administration—and even better, so much better, if it comes from the students themselves. History has shown that the most effective and enduring movements are those that come from the grassroots, from the people who have the greatest investment and the most to gain.

And it can begin with each one of us as well. In this crazy, noisy world, take a moment each morning to watch the sun rise, hear the birds sing, pay attention to the rustling of the wind through the leaves of the trees, and ask yourself, "Who am I? What am I doing here? What is this all about?"

Your day will be a different day. The kind of day you want most for your children.

*Rabbi Tzvi Freeman, a senior editor at Chabad.org, also heads our Ask The Rabbi team. He is the author of "Bringing Heaven Down to Earth."*

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## Hamas is using human matchsticks to fuel the fire

By Fiamma Nirenstein

(JNS)—The risk of the "March of Return," organized by Hamas last Friday, is that of a new kind of mass terrorism, a new kind of war. The whole world knows that this organization's foremost aim, together with the death of the Jews and the conquest of the West, is a strategic turn taking place with these mass marches. It's a terrorist spark in the haystack of the Middle East. Yet the United Nations again blames Israel by engaging in its favorite sport—blaming Israel, even if it was unable to pass a condemnation this time.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres supports the call for an international inquiry. He adheres to the traditional and wrong idea that Israel has used disproportionate force in countering the mass demonstrations on its border, while promoting the idea that it killed Palestinians who marched "peacefully" along its border. And European Union official Federica Mogherini argues against Israel that the civil liberties of the protestors, armed with rocks and Molotov cocktails, must be respected. Whose liberties? Those of the Islamist dictators of Gaza killing the Jews?

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, a so-called human-rights champion whose country holds the title of being the world's biggest state sponsor of international terrorism, immediately presented himself as Hamas defender by saying: "The Zionists tyrants murder peaceful Palestinian protestors, whose land they have stolen, as they march to escape their cruel and inhuman apartheid bondage." Taking to the stage with him is that other proponent of human rights, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose army has almost concluded its ethnic cleansing of the Kurdish region of Afrin in Northern Syria.

Hamas is a terrorist organization. Anyone who dares to oppose it is executed. The marchers—pushed towards the border with Israel en masse—had members of the armed militia of Hamas in their midst. Evidence came in the fact that 10 terrorists were among the killed, and by a skewed pride noting that among the 15 dead, five of them were members of its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Hamas took power in 2007 against Fatah. The Israelis withdrew every last Jew from the Gaza Strip, leaving Gaza residents to be the masters of the agriculture and industrial facilities left behind, which were subsequently destroyed, often razed to the ground. Hamas doesn't care about the welfare of its people; it cares about their obedience in fighting the Jews.

Hamas engages only in warfare. Its charter sees in "world Zionism" the origin of all evil, citing the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. It encourages killing them, stating: "Allah is its goal, the prophet is its model, the Koran is its constitution, jihad is its path, and death for the sake of Allah is its most coveted desire." Hamas has invested the major part of its mil-

lions of dollars that have come as donations from Iran, Qatar and other sympathizers in missiles and tunnels.

Its perennial humanitarian crisis would not exist if those funds had gone into businesses and social structures. Instead, Hamas financed the terrorist enterprise that has killed thousands in Israel. Israel tried to continue to allow help for and trade with the population. But, of course, the border is closed to terrorism, as is the one with Egypt, which would be the most natural exit. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi is careful not to liberalize Gaza. Hamas is only interested in using the exasperated crowd for terrorist ends than for any real progress.

After trying in vain to terrorize Israel with the Second Intifada, Hamas moved to the strategy of missiles against citizens in the south. Only the "Iron Dome" anti-missile defense system saved Israelis from a massacre. The timing of the symbolic move over the crowds last week was not lost on an Israel preparing for Passover. Or at a time when Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) is ill and weak, and competition for his job is being considered. It also comes at a time when the Arab world tries to conform to a new course inaugurated by the Trump administration, in which the U.S. Embassy will move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in a matter of months.

It is no coincidence that Hamas wants to continue its demonstrations until May 15, the day of Israel's independence and the proposed transfer of the embassy. At the border during those "pacifist" demonstrations, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh hurled death threats and calls for Israel's destruction. He also announced the conquest of Israel in order to give it to the Palestinian "refugees" and their descendants—people Hamas does not allow to escape from what has become a conceptual ghetto, consigning them to militant terrorism.

The crowds who marched to the border did so for "the right of return"—a strategic move to ally Hamas to the most extreme front. Never can the return be part of a peace process unless it wipes out the Jewish state. The march only wants death and destruction. It is for this reason that Israel cannot allow Hamas to penetrate its security fence, especially when it advances by throwing rocks, launching Molotov cocktails and burning tires. Last week, Hamas launched human missiles. Escalation will come, especially if the United Nations and the Arab world continue to do nothing but fire off misnomers.

*Journalist Fiamma Nirenstein was a member of the Italian Parliament (2008-13), where she served as vice president of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Chamber of Deputies, served in the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, and established and chaired the Committee for the Inquiry Into Anti-Semitism. A founding member of the international Friends of Israel Initiative, she has written 13 books, including "Israel Is Us" (2009). Currently, she is a fellow at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.*

*Translation by Amy Rosenthal.*

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# Israel at 70: It's time to reclaim the Z-word, Zionism

By Gil Troy

JERUSALEM (JTA)—All too often, when I ask campus organizations that are pro-Israel and deeply Zionist why they avoid using the “Z-word” in their messaging and literature, I’m told, “Zionism doesn’t poll well.”

True, not polling well is one of today’s great sins. But imagine what our world would be like if our ancestors feared the polls. The American Revolution wouldn’t have polled well. Suggestions that Northerners crush slavery in 1860 wouldn’t have polled well. And proposing a new Jewish state in 1897 wouldn’t have polled well either. At the time, most European Jews believed enlightened Europe was outgrowing anti-Semitism—that polled well.

Let’s learn from our heroic predecessors, and from feminists, gays and African-Americans, whose first attempts to defend their rights didn’t poll well either. Take back the night, resist internalizing our oppressors’ hatred of us.

Reclaim the Z-word: Zionism.

You cannot defeat those delegitimizing Israel by surrendering Zionism, the movement that established Israel. If a century ago Zionism brought pride back to the term “Jew,” Jews and non-Jews today must bring pride back to the term “Zionist.”

In his book on “the strange career of the troublesome” N-word, the African-American Harvard Law professor Randall Kennedy explains the “protean nature” of political words. Groups can

triumph with linguistic magic by defining themselves and their aims; when enemies define them, they lose. Kennedy warns against allowing the hater to define the hated, and that’s what is happening.

First, “shame on them”: Shame on the anti-Zionists who single out Jewish nationalism, meaning Zionism, in a world organized by nationalisms, and call it “racist.” Shame on them for libeling a democratic movement. Shame on them for ignoring Judaism’s national-religious duality, which allows non-Jews to convert into the Jewish religion and join the Jewish nation, making Zionism among the least biologically based, least racist, most permeable forms of nationalism. And shame on them for racializing the national conflict

between Israelis and Palestinians—inflaming hatred, making peace more elusive.

Alas, shame on us, too. Zionism should be a more popular term than “Israel.” Until 1948, Zionism was the movement affirming that Jews are a people with a homeland and that like other nations, Jews have the right to establish a state on that land (others may, too—nationalism involves collective consciousness, not exclusive land claims). Since 1948, Zionism has been the movement to perfect that state.

Like all countries, Israel makes good and bad moves. If you’re anti-Zionist, you reject Israel’s very existence. If you’re critical of Israel somehow, you’re a thinking human being.

America’s president offers

an opportunity to understand that distinction. The 77 percent of American Jews who hate Donald Trump still remain proudly American. Why can’t we love Israel and Zionism regardless of particular prime ministers or policies, too?

Here’s the real question for Jews: Do you feel connected to Israel, today’s great Jewish people project? If so, you stick with it because you belong to the Jewish people. And you help perfect that state through Zionism—embracing different schools of Zionist thought. It could be Religious Zionism or left-leaning Labor Zionism or right-leaning Revisionist Zionism or Cultural Zionism.

In honor of Israel’s 70th birthday, I just published “The Zionist Ideas,” updating Arthur Hertzberg’s clas-

sic anthology “The Zionist Idea.” Adding the “s” broadens the conversation, from the 38 thinkers in his book to the 170 in mine. As part of its publication and in honor of Yom Haatzmaut, Israel’s Independence Day, I am urging readers to host Zionist salons, home-based conversations addressing “what Zionism and Israel mean to me today.”

Establishing Israel in 1948 fulfilled the Zionist idea—that powerless Jews need a state as a refuge, immediately, and as a platform to flourish and express Jewish values, long-term. Seventy years later, debating Zionist ideas welcomes debate from left to right, religious and nonreligious, about what Zionism and Israel can mean to me

**Zionism** on page 15A

## Liberating thoughts about the Holocaust

By Jonathan Feldstein

Seventh-three years ago this week, three young men who were neighbors of my family, borrowed weapons from Soviet troops occupying post-war Poland, and returned to their hometown to escort the remaining Jews out of Kanczuga for the last time. The three young men had survived the war that ended three months earlier, but the anti-Semitism that fueled the Holocaust was alive and well. They had returned to Kanczuga because of threats of a pogrom, to murder the remaining surviving Jews who had returned to Kanczuga. The pogrom started a day before. Polish neighbors murdered seven Jewish survivors who had returned to search for family and restart their lives. The Poles threatened to finish the job, murdering the remaining Jews of Kanczuga, the next day. The second day of Passover.

Twenty-five years ago I got to know Willie, Yehudah, and Benny (\*), the three then in their late teens who were well into their 70s. They recounted how they buried the seven murdered Jews of Kanczuga, and saved their surviving neighbors. They each shared with me parallel accounts of the same story, stories that after recounting they would say they wouldn’t be able to sleep for three days.

In a year when Poland has made it illegal to refer to Polish collaboration with and participation in the murder of Jews and other atrocities during the Holocaust, it is worth highlighting that it was neither Nazi nor Soviet troops that murdered the seven Jews of Kanczuga in April 1945, but the Polish neighbors of their Jewish victims. Polish atrocities. Polish mass murder. Polish death-culture bread in Polish anti-Semitism.

For every one of the several

thousand Polish “Righteous Among the Nations,” there must have been hundreds or more willing Polish accomplices. That Poles were willing accomplices is an undisputable fact. But in light of Poland today trying to whitewash its history, it’s worth underscoring.

The simple fact is that in Poland, countless Jews died at the hands of their Polish neighbors, before, and especially during and after the war. This fact is not open for dispute no matter how many coats of whitewashing and revisionist laws are enacted.

While the murder of seven Jews of Kanczuga took place after the war without Nazi oversight, orders, or encouragement, the beginning of the end of the Jewish community of Kanczuga took place in August 1942. Indeed, Nazi troops and SS went town-by-town rounding up, deporting, and murdering Jews wherever they could be found. But in

Kanczuga, and throughout Poland, they did this with the willing partnership, enthusiasm, and glee of Poles.

The following is excerpted from “Hidden” by brother and sister survivors Fay Walker and Leo Rosen. They were born and raised in Kanczuga and recounted the last days of its Jewish community in August 1942. It is quoted liberally here, highlighting the fact that even in the rounding up and murder of Kanczuga’s Jews, Polish neighbors and police participated willingly and enthusiastically. *Cases where Polish participation are noted are highlighted in italics.*

“We were hidden in the countryside by the time the war flooded the streets of tiny Kanczuga, until the screams and bursts of gunfire were as familiar as the cries of the peddlers hawking their wares in the town’s main marketplace. More than a hundred of our people were executed at point

blank range in front of the Brill’s house. Then early one morning, two young SS men, *ably aided by the Polish police*, rounded up the hundreds of Jews who had not managed to hide in time. The *officers* deposited them in the main square, where they stood in shocked silence, shivering in the sparkling dawn.

The *police* herded their prisoners past the jeering crowd in to the synagogue. Our people struggled to stare straight ahead, but, as they trudged the dusty streets, they found themselves peering into the *faces they had known all their lives*, into the flat features and pale eyes of their closest neighbors, empty and cold as death.

Kanczuga’s newest synagogue was a quarter mile from the Jewish cemetery. Its sanctuary (was) large enough to seat several hundred people. That Shabbos, every inch was filled for the first time. Yet it was eerily quiet, the low

murmurs punctuated only by the occasional barking of *policemen*.

Wordless, Tata fingered a pocket of his long, black coat and stroked his beard. Beside him, Mamche, her face raw from weeping, rested a delicate hand on one of my sisters’ shoulders. Now and then she whispered to little Tunia, who was serious even in the best of times. (Her) olive-skinned face glistened with tears. Pretty Senia, Aryan-blond and almost a teenager, seemed out of place in this group of frightened Jews.

With so many bodies huddled together, the room was close with the odor of human flesh. People slept standing, straight as sentries; others twisted into unnatural positions on the floor.

A poor tradesman, cowering, consulted with Tata. “Do you think they’ll deport us instead of killing us? Maybe

**Holocaust** on page 15A

## Engaging millennials is all the rage, but is it the best use of Jewish philanthropy?

By Jack Wertheimer

NEW YORK (JTA)—Engaging young people in their 20s and 30s, the so-called millennial generation, is a high priority for Jewish philanthropists.

Some funders have banded together to create new initiatives, including free trips to Israel, with the express purpose of drawing members of this generation into Jewish life. Others have gravitated to the so-called innovation sector, supporting millennials who dream up new programs to entice their peers into some form of Jewish participation.

But for all the energy and money expended on such programs, one question remains unanswered: Will these efforts move people from shallow engagement to actively live a Jewish life or deepen their knowledge?

What fuels these efforts are surveys showing that millennial Jews tend to be less affiliated with Jewish institutions, less observant of Jewish religious rituals and more distant from Israel than

were previous generations of Jews at the same age. Much ink has been spilled to analyze why this might be so, with explanations focusing either on this generation’s unique historical experiences; the unprecedented disruption in the job market created by new technologies that force younger people to chart a new course and thereby extend their “odyssey years”; and the present cultural milieu, which places a high value on individualism but disdains anything resembling “tribal” allegiances

In response to these developments, a number of the largest foundations with Jewish interests are investing heavily in initiatives designed to kindle what in a previous time was described as the “pintele yid,” the little flicker of Jewishness waiting to be lit. The most ambitious—and best-known—such effort is Birthright Israel, the 10-day free trip to Israel. Since its inception in 1999, it has sent over 600,000 young people from around the globe at a cost nearing the billion-dollar

mark. By virtue of its intensive and immersive programming, Birthright differs from most other programs aimed at millennials.

Funders have also invested significantly in Moishe House, a network of some 58 houses scattered throughout the United States offering programs geared to millennials. Begun in 2006, Moishe House subsidizes rents for residents who organize everything from Shabbat dinners and Purim parties to social action activities and Jewish study circles. Most participants, notes an observer, “are ‘not Jewish in the rest of their lives’ in the traditional sense. They may not be celebrating holidays on their own; they may not be attending Shabbat services at a synagogue... Moishe House is the surrogate that provides these experiences for them.”

OneTable, still another creation of funders, works to entice younger Jews to attend Friday night Shabbat dinners hosted by peers. Having drawn positive reviews in such disparate publications as Vogue, The New York Times

and BuzzFeed News, OneTable has been described as “a social dining app that helps people of all religious backgrounds celebrate inclusive Shabbat meals.” Since its founding, OneTable has subsidized over 30,000 Friday night dinners.

Younger Jews are also taking the initiative by founding dozens of startups designed to appeal to their peers. Often with the help of funders, start-

ups meet in unconventional spaces, such as clubs, bars, performing art spaces, lofts and bookstores. They may offer a Friday night social gathering, a musical program or lecture series. Meeting in offbeat venues is part of the allure.

Events designed for millennials usually are free or require only a modest admission fee. Participants attend

episodically and are treated to programming that is light on Jewish content and heavy on socializing. The rationale, no doubt, is that first you have to attract young people who tend to be suspicious of events that seem “too Jewish” or too similar to what an older generation might prefer. As a result, these funder-

**Millennials** on page 15A



# What's Happening

## A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT

**APRIL 13**  
7:32 p.m.  
**APRIL 20**  
7:36 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, APRIL 13

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 15

The Roth Family JCC—JCC 39ers host movie day in the JCC Senior Lounge. "A Dog's Purpose" will be shown at 2 p.m.

### MONDAY, APRIL 16

Israeli Folk Dancing—Celebrate Israel's 70th anniversary! 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.

The Jewish Pavilion—"United for a Purpose" Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and drinks at the Citrus Club in downtown Orlando at 255 S. Orange Ave., 6-8 p.m. Parking: \$5 after 5:30 p.m.; Event: \$15 (\$20 at the door)

### TUESDAY, APRIL 17

#### Yom HaZikaron

Congregation Beth Am—Pages & Pastries Book Club, 7 p.m. at Panera Bread on 434 across from Publix at Springs Plaza. Info: 407-862-3505  
 Congregation Ohev Shalom—Celebrate a "post-tax deadline recess at Miller's Ale House in Winter Park Village, 1251 Lee Road, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Info: Michael Asher, 407-401-3522. RSVP to Michael at michaeldasher3@gmail.com  
 Yom HaZikaron/Israeli Memorial Day Ceremony—Remember Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror at The Roth Family JCC, 7 p.m.—8 p.m. Sing-a-long after the ceremony. Email register@orlandojcc.org to reserve a spot.

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18

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.  
 Lunch and Learn—Enjoy lunch and participate in an in-depth look at our earliest leaders from the patriarchs and Matriachs. Led by Rabbi Michael Rennert of Orlando Torah Academy, and held at the Roth Family JCC, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. RSVP to regiser@orlandojcc.org  
 A Nosh of Yiddish—Classes in Yiddish the third Wednesday of each month sponsored by the Jewish Pavilion, held at Oakmonte Village, Royal Gardens Cir., Lake Mary (Valencia Building), 1 p.m. Info: 407-678-9363. Coffee and refreshments served.  
 PopUp Art Night, Reflections on Israel—At The Roth Family JCC, 7-9 p.m. Info: Leah Sandler, 407-645-5933.

### THURSDAY, APRIL 19

A Nosh of Yiddish—Classes in Yiddish the third Thursday of each month sponsored by the Jewish Pavilion, held at Brookdale Island Lake, 160 Islander Circle in Longwood 10:30 a.m. Info: 407-678-9363. Coffee and refreshments served.  
 Congregation of Reform Judaism—Dr. Norman Berdichevsky shares stories of extraordinary individuals who were heroes during the Holocaust, 6 p.m.-8 p.m. Free and open to the public. Reservations required: visit <http://www.holocaustedu.org/events/all/heroes-of-the-holocaust/>  
 Israeli Cooking with Idit—The Roth Family JCC, 7-9 p.m. Learn how to make easy and delectable Israeli cuisine with the phenomenal Idit Lotringer. Supply fee \$10 per person

### FRIDAY, APRIL 20

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

## Quote of the Week

"The Jew is the symbol of eternity... He is the one who for so long had guarded the prophetic message and transmitted it to all mankind. A people such as this can never disappear. The Jew is eternal."

—Leo Tolstoy

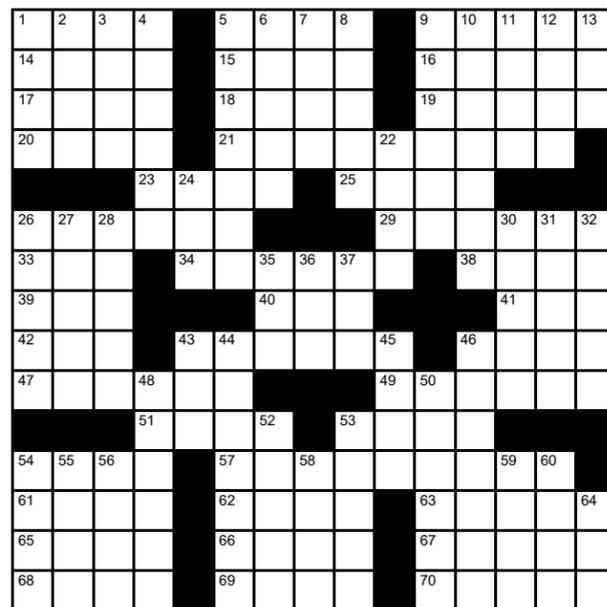
### Manageable puzzle "70 Years Later" by Yoni Glatt koshercrosswords@gmail.com

#### Across

1. Swear words
5. Like cheeks in winter, perhaps
9. Eve, in the Torah
14. Trojan Horse, for example
15. Pot put in
16. Literally, a pious Jew
17. Doubled month
18. On the Mediterranean
19. Word repeated in a seder song
20. Currency of the Holy Land, then
21. Currency of the Holy Land, now
23. Bar candidate's exam, briefly
25. Freight charge deduction
26. Country of the Western Wall, then
29. Country of the Western Wall, now
33. Santa \_\_\_\_, Calif.
34. Jennifer Grey became a great one in a 1987 classic
38. "No problem!"
39. "The \_\_\_\_ Four"
40. Org. that checks Tefillin?
41. Common clothing chain
42. Be untruthful
43. Item that might be launched at a ball game
46. "Great" English river
47. Main language in the Holy Land, then
49. Main language in the Holy Land, now
51. \_\_\_\_ above the rest
53. Market order
54. 29-Across and Saudi Arabia, then
57. 29-Across and Saudi Arabia, now
61. About 2.5 centimeters
62. "...\_\_ buck I might" ("Newsies" lyric)
63. Brutish beasts
65. Clear away, as leaves
66. "Aeneid," for one
67. Raises, as children
68. Hall-of-Famer Slaughter

#### Down

1. Face-to-face exam
2. German auto
3. Romanov ruler
4. Boston rival of the Globe
5. City north of Tel Aviv with a large anglo population
6. First stage
7. Beefy dish, often
8. Dough leavener
9. "L'chaim!"
10. Some WikiLeaks workers
11. New York stadium name
12. Poison container, perhaps
13. Do the numbers
22. It'll grow on you
24. One word sentence for Trump
26. Ancient city now part of Tel Aviv
27. "Live"
28. Midrashic title word
30. Foretell from omens
31. Move the Magna Doodle
- lever
32. "For Scent-imental Reasons" toon Pepé
35. Advanced degree?
36. CBS series, 2000-2015
37. Aural appendage
43. Tac's partner
44. Marred, as shoes
45. Biblical pronoun
46. Accommodates
48. Clobbers
50. "Get Shorty" novelist Leonard
52. Cliche
53. Bit of nosh
54. It "rained" this in Sodom
55. "Take \_\_\_\_ emptystomach" (prescription direction)
56. Designer Marc who put an asterisk on Barry Bonds's 756th home run ball
58. Rocker Clapton
59. They're low for an ace
60. Like the Sinai
64. 123-45-6789, say: abbr.



See answers on page 14.

# HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

"I'm lost without it!"

"It's inexcusable!"

"My week is not complete without it!"

"I can't live without it!"

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

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# Haley rebukes Assad over continued use of chemical weapons

By Ben Cohen

Amid uncertainty over the future direction of US policy in Syria, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley issued a stinging rebuke on Wednesday to President Bashar al-Assad's regime over its continued use of chemical weapons.

"We must not forget that while we sit here debating chemical weapons, there are people on the front lines in Syria who are facing the terrifying reality of those heinous weapons," Haley declared at a meeting of the UN Security Council marking the first anniversary of the massacre at Khan Sheikhoun in northwestern Syria—in which 90 people were killed and hundreds more badly wounded after Syrian Air Force planes dropped a deadly nerve agent on rebel-held areas.

Despite a September 2013 agreement between Russia

and the Obama administration for Moscow to remove chemical weapons stockpiles out of the Assad regime's control, dozens of deadly attacks using chemical weapons were reported in Syria during 2016 and 2017, with at least three so far this year.

Describing the Iranian and Russian-backed Assad presidency as a "regime that uses chemical weapons practically every other week," Haley warned that "our lack of action has consequences."

"When we let one regime off the hook, others take notice," she added, in a reference to Russia's alleged involvement in the deadly use of a chemical nerve agent against a former KGB officer in the UK on March 4.

"Even with all of the profound divisions on this council, the United States refuses to believe that we cannot come together once again to stop

chemical weapons," Haley urged. "Not just to protect the Syrian people, but to protect us all."

Other State Department officials echoed Haley's condemnation of the government in Damascus. "The Assad regime has blatantly violated the Chemical Weapons Convention and UN Security Council resolutions, and no drumbeat of nonsensical claims by either the regime or its protectors can hide this truth," State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert declared in a statement.

Nauert charged that "Russia continues to shield its Syrian ally by openly impeding international efforts to hold the Assad regime responsible for these heinous attacks."

### Unease over Trump's pledge to withdraw from Syria

Wednesday's comments came amid continuing Israeli

and Saudi unease over US President Donald Trump's pledge to withdraw US troops from Syria, where Iran and its allies have become entrenched in the wake of the extensive defeats inflicted upon ISIS.

In a call on Tuesday, Trump and Israeli Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "agreed to continue their close coordination on countering Iran's malign influence and destabilizing activities," according to a White House statement.

On Wednesday, a White House official said that Trump

was not looking to set a specific date for the withdrawal of the 2,000 American troops presently deployed in Syria.

"We're not going to immediately withdraw but neither is the president willing to back a long-term commitment," the official noted.

**This Yom HaAtzma'ut, celebrate red, white, and blue.**



Magen David Adom, Israel's largest and premier emergency medical response agency, has been saving lives since before 1948. And supporters like you provide MDA's 27,000 paramedics, EMTs, and civilian Life Guardians — more than 90% of them volunteers — with the training, equipment, and rescue vehicles they need. So as we celebrate Israel's independence, make a difference in the health, welfare, and security of the Israeli people with your gift to MDA. **Please give today.**

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# Zach Braff is happy to be back on TV

By Curt Schleier

(JTA)—Lightning struck Zach Braff in 2001. The up-and-coming Jewish actor, who had appeared in a few films—perhaps most notably a small role in Woody Allen's "Manhattan Murder Mystery"—landed the lead role of John "J.D." Dorian in the hospital-based sitcom "Scrubs."

Along the way to starring in 175 episodes of the show, which became one of the most beloved comedies of the 2000s, Braff wrote and directed "Garden State," released in 2004. The indie dramedy film, which also starred 23-year-old Natalie Portman, established the kid from South Orange, New Jersey, as a promising director in addition to being a first-rate comic actor.

But he surprisingly left "Scrubs" in 2009, while its ratings were still respectable.

"When it's something you've been doing for so long, well, I didn't want to phone it in," Braff said in an interview with JTA. "I was tired. I don't mean to complain. It's the best job in the world, but you do get burned out. I wanted to go out on a high note."

After Braff quit the show, he largely vanished from the mainstream film and TV world. He performed in theater on and off Broadway,

notably in the adaptation of Woody Allen's "Bullets Over Broadway: The Musical." He also wrote a play—"All New People" had a run at New York's prestigious Second Stage. His 2014 film "Wish I Was Here," which he wrote and directed, was heartfelt but mostly panned by critics following a limited release.

As he headed further down "the directing path," Braff realized something was missing.

"I missed acting, I missed comedy," he said. "And when this was put in my lap, it seemed perfect."

"This" is a reference to "Alex, Inc.," an ABC sitcom that premiered March 28 with Braff as its protagonist and main star. The network gave the show a coveted slot, on Wednesdays between "The Goldbergs" and "Modern Family" (that's 8:30 p.m., if you were wondering).

Braff plays Alex Schuman, a Jewish character based on real-life Jewish podcast pioneer Alex Blumberg—a former producer for NPR's popular "This American Life" and "Planet Money" podcasts. Blumberg gave up the relatively cushy world of NPR—with its salary, health benefits and paid time off—to start his own podcast company, Gimlet Media, in 2014. Gimlet has spawned several

of its own very successful podcasts, including "StartUp" and "Reply All."

In "Alex, Inc.," Schuman leaves his feel-good radio show ("NPR on Prozac," he calls it) when his idea for a meaningful but depressing story is rejected. He attempts to start his own show to prove the innocence of a convicted murderer. When that doesn't pan out, Schuman decides to make the podcast about the process of starting a podcast business—mirroring the arc of Blumberg's "StartUp."

Of course, like most ABC sitcoms, "Alex, Inc." mostly deals with the ups and downs of family life. There is a narrator via voiceover, a happy ending complete with warm fuzzy feelings in each episode and the recurring theme that fathers don't always know best.

The cast includes Tiya Sircar, whom many will know from NBC's hit comedy "The Good Place," as Schuman's wife. Braff said that if the show is renewed for a second season, it will explore the dynamics of a mixed religious family. (Blumberg is married to Nazanin Rafsanjani, a fellow media producer who is Asian, like Sircar.)

Braff also reserved special praise for Elisha Henig, a recent bar mitzvah who plays Schuman's son, Ben.



Zach Braff with Tiya Sircar, center, in a scene from "Alex, Inc."

ABC/Tony Rivetti

"Family Ties" was supposed to be a star vehicle for Meredith Baxter until this kid Michael J. Fox took over. [Henig] is going to be the next Michael J. Fox," Braff said.

Braff is not religiously observant, but he is aware of his distinctly "Jewish sense of humor," which he infuses into almost everything he works on. He greeted JTA with a cordial "Shalom."

"I was raised on Mel Brooks and Woody Allen and Neil Simon. I totally inherited that from my father," he said.

"I grew up in North Jersey and he would bring us in to see Neil Simon plays and Mel Brooks movies. 'I think there is a [comic] timing ingrained in me, that New York sense of humor.'"

Braff attended Hebrew school and was a bar mitzvah at Oheb Shalom Congregation in South Orange. As Passover approaches, he is reminded of his father's love of the seder.

"My father could make a Passover seder longer than anyone else," Braff said. "He

always wanted to do the after-dinner part, and we'd all say, 'Oh, no. Not the after-dinner part, too.'"

Judging by his enthusiasm for the new project, Braff is enjoying "Alex, Inc." far more than his dad's seders, despite the hectic schedule. He directed four of the 10 episodes.

"With kids in the mix and physical comedy, you're always racing. There's no down time," he said. "There's some behind-the-scenes video where I look like I'm schizophrenic."

## A new study for cancer risk in Ashkenazi Jews aims to be a model for genetic testing

By Josefina Dolsten

NEW YORK (JTA)—A new study will provide free testing for three mutations that substantially increase the risk for developing breast, ovarian and prostate cancer among people with Eastern European Jewish ancestry.

The BRCA Founder Outreach Study (BFOR), which

was launched last week, will test 4,000 men and women in four U.S. cities—New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Boston—for mutations in the BRCA gene that are more common among those with Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry. Those who test positive for one of the mutations will receive genetic counseling to figure out next steps.

"We think it's important because it will save lives," Dr. Kenneth Offit, who is serving on the study's executive committee, told JTA earlier this month.

The BRCA gene is found in all humans, but mutations can cause it to function improperly and increase the risk of developing certain cancers: breast and ovarian

in women, reast and prostate in men. Those with Ashkenazi Jewish roots are 10 times more likely to have a BRCA mutation than the general population, with one in 40 carrying a mutation in the gene.

But the study's goal extends beyond cancer or Ashkenazi Jews, said Offit, who serves as chief of the clinical genetics service at

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center here.

"We think it's a model for the future of genetic testing in health care," he said.

What's new about the way testing is conducted in the BFOR study, Offit said, is the fact that patients sign up online and can choose to receive their results from their primary care provider. The testing will be free for participants, and the study is open to anyone over 25 years old who has health insurance and at least one grandparent with Ashkenazi heritage.

"This study is different because we're making an effort to ensure that the testing is not done at a distance from your doctor. We're really reaching out to have doctors involved," Offit said.

In 1996, Offit discovered the most common BRCA gene mutation for Ashkenazi Jews, but he said the vast majority of people have not been tested for the mutation or the two others that are prevalent in the group.

"In the [Ashkenazi] Jewish community, where these mutations are quite common, we think that probably 90 percent of people who could be tested have not been tested," he said.

Offit said some people are scared of finding out the results and view testing as too much of a hassle. In addition, insurance companies only cover testing for those with a family history of breast, ovarian and prostate cancer, but up to 40 percent of those with the mutation do not have a family history of those types of cancer, according to Offit. An Israeli study published in 2014 recommended that all

Ashkenazi women age 30 and over should be screened for BRCA mutations.

Women with a BRCA mutation have a risk as high as 80 percent of developing breast cancer and as high as 40 percent of developing ovarian cancer. Men with a mutation have an increased risk of developing breast and prostate cancer.

The BFOR study, which received funding from the Sharon Levine Corzine Foundation, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation and other donors, allows people to register on their smartphone or computer, receiving testing at a local laboratory. They can choose whether to receive the results from a primary care provider or a cancer specialist. Primary care providers will receive training about how to provide follow-up counseling if a patient tests positive.

For those who test positive for a BRCA mutation, there are steps that can be taken to lower cancer risk, Offit said. Since ovarian cancer is almost always discovered at an advanced stage, it is recommended that women with a BRCA mutation have their ovaries surgically removed after they finish childbearing. In terms of reducing the risk of developing breast cancer, some women choose to undergo a mastectomy, while others elect to get frequent breast screenings.

Men should be screened regularly for prostate cancer, including by taking a test to measure the level of PSA, a protein that could indicate

Ashkenazi on page 15A



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# Scene Around

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



Noor Salman

**My heart is broken...**

Everyone in Central Florida probably remembers the Pulse Nightclub shooting tragedy where so many precious lives were lost.

My friend Eddie Sotomayor Jr. was the first to be shot that fate-filled day more than a year ago. (Seems like yesterday to me.)



Eddie Sotomayor Jr.

The NOOR SALMAN trial ended recently and she was found not guilty by the jury.

(Life goes on... but not for my friend, Eddie.)

**Another tragic life lost...**

(Actually, six million lives lost.)

I recently watched a rerun of the movie "Diary of Anne Frank" on television.

I felt so depressed and actually frightened because of the anti-Semitism that was at its height (at that time) I was truly sorry I watched.

(Sorry to say, but it seems anti-Semitism is on the rise

once again... all over the world and even here in the United States!)

**For a change of mood...**

There is a wonderful person in town who not only is good at what he does (a periodontist) but is the nicest, sweetest, kindest man ever. I'm talking about Dr. SCOTT COHEN. I may walk into his office nervous about the procedure to come, but his personality makes my nervousness disappear!

And he is skilled at what he does because he makes me look good! (Oh hush!) I'm talking about dental implants, of course. (When I went to the hospital a few months back wanting a face life, I was given a heart valve!!!!) Scott is also a wonderful, loving husband to SARAH, and father to JACOB, 8 and ZACHARY, 6.

(If you want to meet Dr. Cohen you can phone me. I may put you in touch or not because he is sooooo good-looking!)

JCC39ers Meet & Mingle Mondays...

On Monday, April 16th at the Roth Family JCC in the Senior Lounge, there will be a special program, beginning at 1 p.m. It is titled "Baycrest Hospital and Cogniciti Brain Health Workshop." (Sounds truly informative!)



Dr. Scott Cohen and family.

**JCC39ers Wow Wednesdays...**

On Wednesday, April 18th, Pillars of the Past will take place from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

"Take an in-depth look at many of our earliest leaders from the patriarchs and matriarchs with Rabbi MICHOEL RENNERT." Lunch is included.

RSVP to ROBIN MERKEL at register@orlandojcc.org by the Monday before.

**JCC39ers Terrific Thursdays...**

"I NEED IT!" Directed by ANITA WEINTRAUB starts at 1:30 p.m.

(What? What do I need? Phone me, I'll tell you!)

Actually, it is a wonderful afternoon with a game of dice. (See you there.)

**Shout-Outs...**

Going to Bagel King in Casselberry? (Get me a bagel with cream cheese, please!)

If you are going, and I suggest you do, there are two fabulous members of the wait staff, JOSH and COLLEEN that you should meet!

Josh is a complete doll and so expert at what he does. Colleen should have been a comic instead of a waitress (though she is a great waitress) but she is guaranteed to make you laugh! See you there... and leave the lox for me!!)

**One for the road...**

On a recent flight to Israel, the passengers heard this from the pilot:

"Ladies, gentlemen and children. Sholem Aleichem to you all. This is your pilot, Captain Daniel Himmelfarb, speaking. On behalf of El Al airways, my crew and I welcome you on board this flight to Tel Aviv. We will do all we can, God willing, to make sure you have a great flight with us this afternoon. But if, God forbid, by some remote eventuality, we run into some trouble, please keep calm and don't panic. You'll find your life jacket under your seat and if you need to put it on, please wear it in the best of health. Thank you."

## Netanyahu officially cancels African migrants deal



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu officially canceled an agreement made with the United Nations that would have relocated thousands of African asylum seekers to Western countries.

The cancellation on Tuesday afternoon came a day after the agreement was first

announced and hours after the prime minister said he would freeze the deal in order to consult with members of his government coalition as well as the residents of southern Tel Aviv, where many of the migrants live.

"In the past 24 hours, I have held many consultations with Interior Minister Aryeh Deri, with professionals and representatives of residents of southern Tel Aviv," Netanyahu said Tuesday in his announcement. "I listened attentively to criticism of the agreement. As a result, and after evaluating a new balance of advantages and disadvantages, I decided to cancel the agreement."

He also said: "Despite the growing legal and international difficulties, we will continue to act with determination to exhaust all the possibilities available to us to remove the infiltrators. At the

same time, we will continue to seek additional solutions."

Under the agreement announced earlier Monday with the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, Israel would have allowed thousands of African migrants to stay in the country on a temporary residency permit for up to five years. The rest, some 16,000 or so, would have been settled in countries such as Canada, Germany and Italy.

The deal put Netanyahu under fire from several conservative politicians, including some in his own Likud party. Naftali Bennett, head of the right-wing Jewish Home party, said the agreement would "turn Israel into a paradise for infiltrators."

It is not known what will happen now to the up to 40,000 African asylum seekers in Israel; an Israeli government plan to deport them

this month was put on hold following the announcement of the U.N. deal.

Israel had been scheduled to begin deporting the migrants next week under a plan and budget approved by the country's Cabinet in January. The Supreme Court had frozen the deportations in mid-March after a petition filed by opponents, and had been waiting for the government to respond to the petition.

According to the government plan, migrants who had chosen to leave by March 31 would receive a payment of \$3,500 as well as free airfare and other incentives.

The Prime Minister's Office said in a statement Monday that the original mass deportation plan was canceled "because of legal considerations and political difficulties on behalf of third-party countries."



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## Daniel Bruhl talks about playing—surprise—a German bad guy in ‘7 Days in Entebbe’



Pascal Le Segretain/Getty Images

Daniel Bruhl (l) was introduced to a broad American audience in “Inglorious Basterds.” He’s shown here in 2009 with co-stars Brad Pitt and Diane Kruger.

By Ben Sales

(JTA)—In “7 Days in Entebbe,” which hits theaters on Friday, Daniel Bruhl plays a German leftist terrorist tortured by the fact that he’s hijacking a plane full of Jews and taking them prisoner.

The movie, about the 1976 Israeli rescue operation that freed the mainly Jewish and Israeli hostages of a hijacked plane in Uganda, focuses on the conflicted experiences of the two Germans—played by Bruhl and Rosamund Pike—who allied with Palestinian terrorists to hijack the Paris-bound plane. Even as they hold Jews at gunpoint, the two insist they are “humanitarian” activists fighting against fascism. But the parallels to

their German forebears are clear.

“Germans killing Jews,” an associate of his says. “Ever thought about that?” At another point, Bruhl’s character, Wilfred Bose, insists, “I’m no Nazi.”

That last line applies just as well to how Bruhl, who was born in Spain and grew up in Germany, sees his career. The actor, 39, had his breakout role in the 2003 film “Goodbye, Lenin!” about East Germany at the end of the Cold War, and met American audiences six years later playing a Nazi sniper in Quentin Tarantino’s “Inglorious Basterds.” He’s been cast as a Nazi, or a civil servant under the Nazis, or a supervillain from a Nazi family, in at least five films.

In “Entebbe,” he plays a German bad guy grappling with how to avoid looking like a Nazi. And in an interview with JTA, Bruhl made clear that he doesn’t want those roles to define him.

“I’ve done so many different things,” he said. “Looking back, there’s a body of work which is very diverse. Fortunately, I can say I’ve done many different things. I wouldn’t have liked to be typecast and limited to that. When I decided to take these parts it was always out of an interest in period projects, in history.”

The multiplicity of Nazi roles, Bruhl said, is a natural consequence of being a German actor in an industry that keeps churning out World

War II movies. But it also has to do with his interest in playing out historical events. In addition to films about World War II, the Entebbe raid and the fall of the Berlin Wall, Bruhl was in “The Carpenter’s Pencil,” about the Spanish Civil War, as well as dramas set in Franco’s Spain and 1970s Chile. His mother is Spanish.

“I’m always interested in history,” he said. “It’s important to read about history, to analyze history, to also understand where we are right now. I’m not Swedish or Finnish, or I’m not from India, so being a German-Spanish actor, of course I’m participating in projects that deal with the history of my countries... I want to understand where I come from. This is what drives me.”

Bruhl does historical research to prepare for those roles. For “Inglorious Basterds,” a revenge fantasy that cared little for historical accuracy (the movie has—spoiler alert!—a Jew machine-gunning Hitler in the face in 1944), Bruhl took courses with a sniper. For “The Zookeeper’s Wife,” a Holocaust drama based on a true story, he and co-star Jessica Chastain met with the titular zookeeper’s daughter.

And for “Entebbe,” Bruhl read up on the German far-left activists of the 1960s and 1970s, including Revolutionary Cells, the urban terrorist group that conducted the Entebbe hijacking. He also met with survivors of the raid. The period when the hijacking happened resonates for Bruhl, who was born two

years later and heard his parents talking about the leftist groups.

“I just wanted to go back in time and dig a little bit further and get into the mindset of a person who was taking the decision to not only be politically active, but to go that extra step and be a radical and join a mission in which a left-wing German terrorist is hijacking a plane with Jewish passengers,” he said. “It’s still so unbelievable. That made me curious to do some more research.”

“7 Days in Entebbe,” directed by Brazilian José Padilha, departs from the traditional narrative of Entebbe that’s been enshrined in Israeli lore. “Operation Thunderbolt,” the 1977 movie about the operation, tells a heroic saga starring Israeli soldiers. In that movie, and in the Israeli popular imagination, the hero is Yoni Netanyahu, the brother of the current Israeli prime minister, who was killed in the raid.

But “Entebbe” alternates mainly between the hijackers and an Israeli political drama centered on Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, who at the time were prime minister and defense minister, respectively. Much of the dialogue between Peres and Rabin, who is played by Israeli A-lister Lior Ashkenazi, is a heavy-handed discourse—performed in heavily accented English—on the need to negotiate for peace. The end credits trace the two men’s lives after 1976 and note that the peace process is inactive now—as if to draw a comparison between a hostage negotiation with a

terror group and final-status talks between two recognized governments.

The part that does feature the Israeli army’s rescuers focuses on an ambivalent soldier and his girlfriend, a dancer whose performances are, for some reason, interspersed with scenes of the raid. (The choreography is by famed Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin.) Yoni Netanyahu plays a bit role in this version and is unceremoniously killed as the operation is beginning.

The movie is most engaging as it explores the dilemmas of the Bruhl and Pike characters, whose dynamic—conflicted man and zealous woman on a violent ideological mission—is familiar to any fan of “The Americans.” The movie humanizes them, telling their backstories, showing how they were trained and, ultimately, how they break down during the escalating hostage crisis. But it’s hardly ambiguous in judging them: They are villains in this story.

For Bruhl, that’s not a problem. As with much of his work, it’s another way to delve into history, however messy it may be.

“That ongoing conflict is important, especially for younger generations, to take a step back, and look at the ‘70s, look at the situation back then,” he said. “It can help you understand the current situation a little bit better, to remind yourself of the positions of what historically, politically was behind such a mission... To not show an easy black-and-white picture of the conflict.”

## Hollywood executives offer support to Netflix after BDS movement asks it to scrap ‘Fauda’

(JTA)—More than 50 entertainment industry executives have signed a letter in support of Netflix, after the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel threatened a lawsuit over its distribution of the Israeli drama series “Fauda.”

The show focuses on a commando unit of the Israeli Defense Forces whose members embed themselves in the Palestinian community,

gathering intelligence and preventing terror attacks. Fauda is an Arabic word meaning “chaos.” The show incorporates both Arabic and Hebrew dialogue. It airs on Netflix with English subtitles. Netflix is set to release the second season of the series next month.

The letter sent to Netflix’s Ted Sarandos, chief content creator, and Peter Friedlander, vice president of original

series, praised “Fauda” for presenting a “nuanced portrayal of issues related to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict,” Variety reported. The letter also said that the show, “mirrors the power of the arts in general; they bring up difficult but important conversations, expanding our horizons and allowing us to experience different points of view.”

Among the executives signing the letter, accord-

ing to Variety, were Rick Rosen, head of television at WME; Marty Adelstein, CEO of Tomorrow Studios; Gary Ginsberg, executive vice president of corporate marketing and communications of Time Warner Inc.; Jody Gerson, chairman and CEO of Universal Music Publishing Group; Neil Jacobson, president of Geffen Records; and Ben Silverman, chairman and co-CEO of Propagate Content.

The BDS movement posted a statement on its website last week from the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.

It called on Israel to “nix” the series, calling it “an anti-Arab racist, Israeli propaganda tool that glorifies the Israeli military’s war crimes against the Palestinian people. Failing to do so will open Netflix to nonviolent grassroots pressure and possible legal accountability.”

Specifically, the statements demands that Netflix suspend production of season three of the series, refrain from releasing season two and remove season one from its streaming service.

The statement also said that the series “promotes and

legitimizes violent acts committed against Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory by Israeli army death squads—the so-called ‘Mistaravim.’ The show’s writers, who were members in these units, have based the series on the war crimes committed by these squads against Palestinians.”

The series was created by Avi Issacharoff, the Arab affairs reporter for the English-language Times of Israel news website, and actor Lior Raz, who stars in the show. Both men served in the IDF unit depicted in the series.

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# Israelis want a solution to the African migrants crisis

By Josefin Dolsten

(JTA)—When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu walked back an agreement with the United Nations last week to resettle abroad at least half of the African migrants seeking asylum in his country, it did not play well with the majority of Israelis.

But don't assume that means the public wants the migrants to stay in Israel, pollsters warn. While most knocked Netanyahu for a lack of leadership, the Israeli public overwhelmingly rejects the idea of granting residency to all or most of the migrants.

"They are not ready to have 40,000 people being recognized," said Tamar Hermann, the academic director of the Guttman Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research at the Israel Democracy Institute, which has done surveys on the issue.

Hermann was referring to the 40,000 or so Sudanese and Eritrean migrants who have made their way to Israel, often to South Tel Aviv. While non-governmental organizations in Israel and Jewish and civil rights group abroad consider them refugees, opponents regard them as "infiltrators" who came to Israel for economic reasons, not fleeing persecution.

Israelis also ask why it is their responsibility to solve problems originating in Africa, and question the economic and social impact of absorbing the non-Jewish migrants.

Over 70 percent of Jewish Israelis are against granting the migrants residency, Hermann estimated. However, in that group some support granting residency to those of the migrants who qualify for official refugee status—but under the assumption that the number of recognized refugees will be small, she said.

Hermann said it is hard to estimate how many of the group would actually qualify as refugees.

Among those on the right of the migrant issue, meaning they do not want to the migrants to settle in Israel, Hermann said there are two groups that are the most vocal in their opposition to allowing the migrants to settle: residents of South Tel Aviv and religious Zionists.

Those two groups oppose the asylum seekers for different reasons. The South Tel Avivians say the migrants who have moved there have brought crime and significantly deteriorated conditions in the low-income neighborhood.



Tomer Neuberger/Flash90

*African migrants protesting in Tel Aviv, June 10, 2017.*

One such activist, Mai Golan, told the Israeli news site Walla that the situation in the neighborhood was "unbearable."

"It's not the situation five years ago, it's worse," Golan said. "The foreigners raised their noses, they got confidence and they enjoy the aid organizations that surround them. They talk to us inappropriately; the fear in the street increases."

Those who are part of the religious Zionist camp oppose settling the migrants for ideological reasons. They believe that as a Jewish state, Israel's responsibilities do not extend to the non-Jewish migrants, Hermann said.

In January, the Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, David Lau, defended the government's announced plan to deport the migrants—originally scheduled to be implemented this month—by distinguishing between refugees and economic migrants.

"We have many people in the State of Israel who need to be cared for — citizens of the state," he said. "I'm thinking of the disabled, whom we aren't always able to support; the Holocaust survivors living amongst us — including some in disgraceful conditions. And I'm also talking about the residents of South Tel Aviv."

"Aside from all that," Lau said, "we have to distinguish between refugees and people looking for work."

Hermann said that between a fifth and a quarter of Jewish Israelis are on the left on the issue, meaning they agree a solution must be worked out that will allow migrants to stay or that ensures their safety if they are sent elsewhere.

But among progressives there is also a split, with some in support of allowing all the asylum seekers to stay in the country, regardless of whether they meet the international standards for refugee status, and others saying only those who can be classified as refugees should be allowed to stay.

Rabbi Susan Silverman of Jerusalem has drawn comparisons to Jewish history,

including Jews facing deportation to concentration camps during the Holocaust, in her advocacy work on behalf of the migrants.

"People risked their lives to save Jews, and we as a country are now saying we don't want to risk the tiniest demographic shift?" she told Haaretz.

When the migrants were facing threats of deportation, Silverman helped lead an initiative urging Israelis to shelter the asylum seekers in their homes.

Hermann said the debate is not only about the fate of the migrants, but also touches upon a larger question in Israeli society.

"The struggle is not only about these 40,000 people," she said, "it's about is Israel a liberal democracy acting along the lines of international law or the code of conduct of liberal democracies—or is it another kind of a country, for Jews and therefore those who are not Jewish should not be allowed to stay here for a longer period of time unless they have a very good reason."

Meanwhile, Netanyahu earned scorn for what even in Hebrew is described as a "zigzag" on the UN. deal that would have granted refugee status to about half the migrants and resettled the rest in Western countries.

Fifty-six percent of Israelis described his move as "very bad" or "bad," according to a poll by Israel's Channel 10. Another 23 percent described his handling of the agreement as "fair" and only 10 percent said it was "very good," with the rest saying they were not sure.

Hermann said the decision was viewed "very negatively" even among those who had criticized Netanyahu for the agreement because it was seen as an example of bad leadership.

"People are wondering how does he make his decisions, why didn't he consult with his coalition partners earlier on," she said. "They see it as a negative sign of his ability right now to deal with strategic issues."

## Central Florida Synagogues

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

**Celebration Jewish Congregation (R)**, services and holiday schedules shown at [www.JewishCelebration.org](http://www.JewishCelebration.org); 407-566-9792.

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

**Chabad of Altamonte Springs (O)**, 414 Spring Valley Lane, Altamonte Springs, 407-280-0535; [www.jewishaltamonte.com](http://www.jewishaltamonte.com).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Congregation Beth Shalom (R-C)**, 315 North 13th St., Leesburg, 352-326-3692; [www.bethshalomflorida.org](http://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](http://www.mybethshalom.com); Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

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

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

**Congregation of Reform Judaism (R)**, 928 Malone Dr., Orlando, 407-645-0444; [www.crorlando.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.shalomaleichem.com); Shabbat service, 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, 8 p.m.

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

**Congregation Sinai (C/R)**, 303A N. S.R. 27, Minneola; 352-243-5353; [congregation-sinai.org](http://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](http://www.mytbs.org); Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday: 9:30 a.m. Minyan, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

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

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

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

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

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

**Temple Israel of DeLand (R)**, 1001 E. New York Ave., DeLand, 386-736-1646; [www.templeisraelofdeland.org](http://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](http://www.templeshalomcentralfl.org); Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; last Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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

## OBITUARY

### ROBERT COHEN

Robert "Bob" Cohen, age 86, of Lake Mary, passed away on Saturday March 31, 2018, at Oakmonte Village. He was born Dec. 25, 1931, in Philadelphia, and was the only child of the late Simon and Dora Garlikov Cohen.

Bob grew up in Dayton, Ohio, and graduated from Fairview High School in 1950. After his graduation

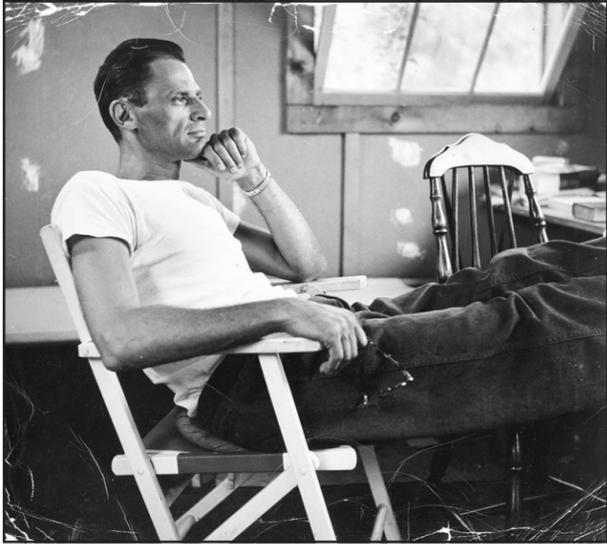
from Ohio State University, he served in the U.S. Army where he ran a M\*A\*S\*H unit in Korea. Bob was a longtime pharmacist in Dayton and following his retirement volunteered many years at Hospice of Dayton.

Bob is survived by his wife of 55 years, Helen; children Steve (Michelle) of Dallas, Marlee (Lee Cutler) of Winter Park, and Michael (Joanna)

of Winter Springs, Fla; and grandchildren Jordan, Miles, Rayna and Dara.

A memorial service was held at Oakmonte Village on April 2, 2018, with Rabbi Maurice Kaprow officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Bob's memory to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research or the Jewish Pavilion (Orlando).

# Arthur Miller's daughter made an intimate HBO documentary about her father



Arthur Miller Archive/Robert Miller/HBO

**Arthur Miller's tumultuous public and private lives are the subject of a new HBO documentary.**

**By Curt Schleier**

(JTA)—“Arthur Miller: Writer,” a lovingly crafted documentary about the award-winning playwright set to air on HBO, doesn’t reveal a lot of new information. A good portion of the film involves Miller himself speaking from the audio version of his 1987 memoir, “Timebends: A Life.” And much has already been written elsewhere about the tumultuous life of the Jewish author who gave us classics such as “Death of a Salesman” and “The Crucible,” and spent much of the 1950s in the public eye.

But the film succeeds at filling the gaps between Miller’s public and private lives, painting a fuller and more nuanced portrait of one of the 20th century’s most celebrated writers. That’s probably in large part because the film’s director is Rebecca Miller, Arthur’s daughter.

The movie, which premieres March 19, is as much a warm and intimate father-

daughter conversation as it is a summary of his life. It traces Miller’s story from his childhood in New York City to his marriage to Marilyn Monroe to his run-in with the notorious “anti-Communist” House Un-American Activities Committee.

But the film also captures Miller in unguarded moments, in his woodworking shop and in his garden with his third wife, Inge Morath, who was Rebecca’s mom and a noted photographer. Rebecca follows him through these moments, asking questions that search for the secrets behind his creative process.

In a phone conversation, Rebecca Miller told JTA that though she wanted to be a filmmaker growing up, her sessions with her father, which began over two decades ago, started as more of a family project than a potential film. (These days, she is a respected indie filmmaker and author, and is married to the Oscar-winning actor Daniel Day-Lewis.)

“In the beginning, I just wanted to get the stories down,” she said.

In film school, though, Rebecca Miller won a prize for an unrelated project and was given reels of professional-grade 16 millimeter film. That made her “think of doing more formal interviews and turning it into a more serious film.”

Rebecca eventually found a treasure trove of old family films dating back to the 1940s and added interviews with her two half-siblings, Robert and Jane (born to Miller’s first wife, Mary Slattery); Arthur’s older brother, Kermit, and his younger sister, Joan Copeland; as well as with Jewish playwright Tony Kushner and the late Jewish director Mike Nichols.

On its own, Arthur Miller’s story has enough ups and downs to pack far more than the film’s 98 minutes. A lackluster student, Miller took a job after high school that required a 90-minute commute. He began reading what he called “thick books” on his way to work that awakened literary ambitions. At the University of Michigan, Miller twice won the school’s prestigious Hopwood Award for creative writing. While there, he met and married Slattery, a lapsed Catholic.

“She wanted an intellectual and Jewish artist, and I wanted America,” Miller says in the film.

The newly married Millers moved to New York, where his first Broadway effort, “The Man Who Had All the Luck,” had none, closing after six performances. Miller’s fortunes changed in 1947 with the debut of “All My Sons,” his initial collaboration with director Elia Kazan. The play, which involved a company that knowingly manufactured defective air-



Inge Morath/The Inge Morath Foundation/Magnum Photos/HBO

**Rebecca Miller filming her father.**

plane engines, won multiple Tony Awards.

Miller followed that with “Death of a Salesman,” which debuted in 1949 and is widely considered one of the great American plays of the last century. The protagonist Willy Loman was based on one of the playwright’s uncles.

“There is an ongoing debate on how Jewish the Lomans are,” Rebecca said. “They’re Jewish if you want them to be Jewish. Certainly they were based on his own family.”

Asked in the documentary if he was Jewish, Miller responds, “Absolutely Jewish. But I inherited from my father the attitude of being American more than being a Jew.”

That was typical of his generation of American Jews, who hoped to assimilate, Rebecca noted. But she also said she had heard Miller’s great-grandfather was a rabbi. His mother kept kosher at home until she developed a “taste for bacon.” In one of their last conversations in the

film, Miller says a play “is the process of approaching the unwitting, the unspoken and the unspeakable.” Rebecca suggests that that sounds a lot like Kabbalah, and he agrees.

At the height of the McCarthy era, Miller penned “The Crucible,” a thinly veiled indictment of the House Un-American Activities Committee, using the Salem witch trials as backdrop. (The committee later found him guilty of contempt of Congress when he refused to out fellow artists as communists. He received a suspended prison sentence and was fined \$500.) In 1956, he married Marilyn Monroe, who converted to Judaism. They divorced in 1961, and Monroe died of an overdose little over a year later.

Three years after Monroe’s death, Miller reunited with Kazan for “After The Fall,” a roman a clef that re-created his life with Monroe. It was savaged by reviewers. When talking about the play in the film, Miller laments the future

of playwriting and his treatment at the hands of critics.

Miller never enjoyed superstar success again. Among his subsequent plays were “Incident at Vichy” (1964), about a group of men detained by Nazis; “The Price” (1968), which featured Gregory Solomon, a Yiddish-accented character; and “Broken Glass” (1994), about a Jewish couple from Brooklyn set around the time of Kristallnacht.

In the film, Rebecca is able to bring out a warmth and honesty from her father—he was hardened by public scrutiny and decades of waning critical relevance—that a stranger might not have elicited. The viewer can hear her say things such as “OK, Pops, you’re on” while filming.

“[His] public persona is so different from the man I knew,” she said. “I felt I was the only filmmaker he would let close enough.”

“Arthur Miller: Writer” debuted at 8 p.m. March 19 on HBO.

## Bill Clinton admits quiet campaign against Netanyahu during the 1996 election

**By Alex Traiman**

(JNS)—In an interview, former U.S. President Bill Clinton admitted that he tried to help former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres defeat Benjamin Netanyahu during Israel’s elections in 1996, just a year after the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Clinton stated in an interview on Israel’s Channel 10 news that it “would be fair to say” that he assisted in the process to elect Shimon Peres, adding that “I tried to do it in a way that didn’t overtly involve me.”

He explained his motivation in supporting Peres, stating: “I did try to be helpful to him because I thought he was more supportive of the peace process. And I tried to do it in a way that was consistent with what I believed to be in Israel’s interest, without saying anything about the difference in domestic politics, without anything else.”

Despite Clinton’s under-the-radar efforts, Netanyahu defeated Peres in a narrow

upset, in what was seen by many as a rejection of the Oslo peace process.

Clinton additionally noted that when the newly elected Netanyahu visited him for the first time in the White House, “Bibi” (as Clinton referred to him in the interview) “wanted me to know that he knew I wasn’t for him, and he beat us anyway.”

Yet Clinton acknowledged the reality that his efforts had failed: “You know, I realized that he was now the leader of the country, and if I wanted to support the peace process, I had to find a way to work with him. I wasn’t so much angry as just bemused by the brashness with which he played his hand. But that’s who he is. He did a very good job of it.”

The Clinton administration has also been accused of working to defeat Netanyahu during Israel’s 1999 general elections, in which Ehud Barak defeated Netanyahu by a large margin.

In a New York Times article titled “White House is quietly pro-Barak” published in the middle of the 1999 campaign,

Richard N. Haass, then-director of foreign-policy studies at Brookings Institution, said that the Clinton team was being too careful about making their preference for Israeli prime minister too overt. “They tilted heavily the last time toward Shimon Peres, and it clearly didn’t help,” he said. “They realized it would be counterproductive to make the same mistake as last time.”

Yet the same article notes that three Clinton advisers—James Carville, Robert Shrum and Stanley Greenberg—were working for Barak during the 1999 campaign, with Carville stating while in Barak’s Tel Aviv “war room” that “I’m all for aggressive neutrality. As for the president, well, all politicians have personal preferences, of course.”

President Barack Obama is also accused of working to have Netanyahu defeated during the 2015 election campaign. An article from The Hill in 2015 cites an interview on New York’s 970 AM Radio, in which Republican strate-



**Bill Clinton with Benjamin Netanyahu.**

gist John McLaughlin stated: “What was not well reported in the American media is that President Obama and his allies were playing in the election to defeat Prime Minister Netanyahu.”

“There was money moving that included taxpayer U.S. dollars, through non-profit organizations,” said McLaughlin. “And there were various liberal groups in the United States that were raising millions to fund a campaign called

V15 against Prime Minister Netanyahu.”

In this week’s Channel 10 interview, Clinton noted that Netanyahu’s approach to the peace process changed during his current consecutive terms in office since 2009, due to new realities that did not exist during Netanyahu’s first term between 1996 and 1999.

“By the time prime minister Netanyahu got back in office, the security situation was markedly better on the West Bank because of President

[Mahmoud] Abbas,” said Clinton.

“Now, the coalition that Prime Minister Netanyahu heads, I think they believe that the Palestinians are too weak to cause them any trouble. And the security seems to be working,” he maintained.

Clinton added his hopes that a peace agreement may be reached, saying “I still hope that some day, if some decent accommodation could be reached, that Israel would be even more prosperous.”

# Weekly roundup of world briefs from JTA

## Clarence Thomas' wife says Jews 'gave up their firearms to Hitler'

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas shared a Facebook post blaming the Holocaust in part on gun control and attacking survivors of the high school shooting in Parkland, Florida.

The post was one of several identified by The Hill on Monday as posted by Virginia Thomas. They registered strong disagreement with gun control while criticizing the survivors of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High shooting in February that killed 17 students and faculty members.

"To all the kids that walked out of school to protest guns," said the post, which featured a photograph of a pile of shoes of Holocaust victims. "These are the shoes of Jews that gave up their firearms to Hitler. They were led into gas chambers, murdered and buried in mass graves. Pick up a history book and you'll realize what happens when we give up freedoms and why we have them."

Thomas, herself a prominent conservative activist, was sharing the image from the page of an acquaintance who died recently. "This post from his page is amazing," she wrote.

The notion that Jews may have prevented the Holocaust had they been armed, popular in some pro-gun circles, has been debunked by historians, who have noted how outnumbered Jews were in countries in which they were slaughtered.

Other posts shared by Thomas accused Parkland survivors of being "stupid," of being manipulated by adults, and of manipulating the deaths of their fellow students and teachers to advance their agenda.

## Mayim Bialik will not light a torch for Israel's Independence Day after all

JERUSALEM (JTA)—First basketball star Omri Casspi and the president of Honduras. Now actress Mayim Bialik.

Israel's annual Independence Day celebration on Jerusalem's Mount Herzl, whose torchlighting ceremony is a highlight of the country's civic calendar, has been beset by a number of high-profile cancellations and almost-cames.

Bialik had made a pitch to light a torch as the representative of Diaspora Jewry in a Facebook post. Hundreds of her followers reportedly sent nominations to the Diaspora Affairs Ministry.

But when she was chosen, she discovered that she would not be able to attend due to the shooting schedule for the popular television series "The Big Bang Theory," where she plays nerdy neuroscientist Amy Farrah Fowler.

For the second year in a row, the Ministerial Committee for Ceremonies and Symbols asked for nominations of a Diaspora Jew to light a torch. Now that Bialik has declined, there will be no Diaspora torch lighter.

Meanwhile, Casspi, the first Israeli to play in the

National Basketball Association, missed his opportunity to light a torch in the April 18 ceremony.

Casspi had been asked but declined because his team, the Golden State Warriors, would not release him at the start of the playoffs to attend. On Sunday, hours after the list of torch lighters was announced, Casspi was cut by the Warriors.

The following day, the president of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernandez, canceled a trip to Israel and his participation in the torchlighting ceremony following accusations by the chairwoman of the left-wing Meretz party that his country is guilty of gross violations of human rights. Hernandez had confirmed his participation in the Mount Herzl event last week.

Israelis lighting torches include singer-songwriter Shlomo Artzi; stage actress Leah Koenig; Gen. (Res.) Yeshayahu "Shaikhe" Gavish, chairman of the Palmach Veterans Association; paralympic gold medalist Noam Gershony; Racheli Ganot, CEO of Rachip, a high-tech company that employs haredi Orthodox women; Zeev Revach, a Moroccan-born comedian, movie actor and director; linguist Avshalom Kor; Margalit Zinati, the only Jewish resident of the Druze village of Pekiin; Sheikh Mowafak Tarif, spiritual leader of Israel's Druze community; biotechnical researcher Marcelle Machluf; mathematician Aviezri Fraenkel; and May Korman, 15, who patented an idea to prevent children from being left alone in cars.

## Honduras president cancels participation in torchlighting ceremony for Israel's 70th

JERUSALEM (JTA)—The president of Honduras canceled a trip to Israel and his participation in the torchlighting ceremony at the annual Independence Day ceremony amid calls for the invitation to be rescinded.

Juan Orlando Hernandez withdrew on Monday following the rescission calls over accusations of gross violations of human rights in his Central American country. Hernandez had confirmed his participation in the Mount Herzl event last week.

Saying the Honduras leader would not be attending, Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it "regrets his not coming and welcomes the friendship between the two countries."

Some reports said that Hernandez had reconsidered his participation due to the criticism of his government, while others said he was reconsidering due to the political controversy between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the speaker of the Knesset, Yuli Edelstein. Edelstein had threatened to lead a boycott of the ceremony by the Knesset; he said he was protecting a tradition by which only the Knesset speaker, as the head of a body meant to represent all Israelis, gives an address.

On Sunday, a compromise reportedly was reached that would have Netanyahu lighting a 13th torch and giving a short speech at the ceremony,

with Edelstein giving the keynote address.

Tamar Zandberg, chairwoman of the left-wing Meretz party, in a letter to Culture Minister Miri Regev, said including Hernandez in the ceremony is a "scandalous decision that legitimizes a president responsible for gross violations of human rights in his country, solely to provide an excuse for Netanyahu to attend as well."

Hernandez was to have lit the torch at the April 18 ceremony along with a Foreign Ministry official representing its Agency for International Development Cooperation, or Mashav, program. Hernandez graduated from a Mashav enrichment course in 1992 at the beginning of his diplomatic career.

Hernandez's participation in the torchlighting would have mandated that Netanyahu be present. Traditionally, the highest-ranking government official at the annual Yom Haatzmaut eve ceremony is the speaker of the Knesset. According to protocol, the presence of a foreign president at an official state ceremony obligates the attendance of the prime minister.

## Israel accused of attack on Syrian military base that killed 14

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Russia accused Israel of striking an air base in central Syria that killed 14, and two unnamed U.S. officials reportedly confirmed that it was Israel that carried out the attack.

Iranian nationals were among those killed in the early Monday morning missile strikes, according to reports.

The strikes came less than two days after a chemical weapons attack in the rebel-held Syrian town of Douma, for which both the United States and France threatened to retaliate. At least 40 people have died in the chemical weapons attack.

NBC on Monday quoted the U.S. officials as saying that Israel had carried out the attack, and that Washington had been notified in advance.

Syria first blamed the United States for the attack on the air base, which the U.S. denied. After Russia accused Israel, Syrian state media quoted the military saying that it was Israeli F-15 war planes that had carried out the strikes.

"The Israeli aggression on the T4 airport was carried out with F-15 planes that fired several missiles from above Lebanese land," state news agency SANA said. The Tiyas, or T4, military air base reportedly has been in use most recently by Iran-backed forces.

Israel, as is its standing policy, has neither confirmed nor denied involvement in the attack. Moscow reportedly has called on Israel to clarify its involvement.

In February, the Israeli Air Force downed an Iranian drone that came from the Tiyas base in airspace over northern Israel, and followed the infiltration by attacking 12 targets in Syria, including three aerial defense batteries and four Iranian targets that are part of Iran's military

establishment in Syria.

The Israeli military reportedly struck Syrian military targets twice during December and once during January, but did not confirm the reports. Israel reportedly has carried out dozens of airstrikes on Syria's army and its allies since 2011.

## Does QB Josh Rosen want to play in NY over Cleveland because there are more Jews?

(JTA)—Top NFL quarterback prospect Josh Rosen would prefer playing in New York rather than Cleveland because of its larger Jewish community, two ESPN radio shows suggested.

The radio discussions were first highlighted by The Big Lead, a Gannett sports blog.

Stephen A. Smith, speaking Wednesday on his ESPN show, discussed comments earlier this month by Rosen's former coach at UCLA, Jim Mora. The coach told the NFL Network that if he were running the Cleveland Browns, he would take USC quarterback Sam Darnold over Rosen. Mora said it was "because of fit" and cited Darnold's "blue-collar, gritty attitude."

Smith said Wednesday that Mora "may have been doing it to dissuade the Cleveland Browns from picking him because Josh Rosen, according to my sources, would prefer to be in New York. He's Jewish, there's a stronger Jewish community, he'd rather be in the New York market than the Cleveland market, blah, blah, blah. We don't know, but it's some of the things that we've heard."

The hosts of ESPN's morning show in Los Angeles—Keyshawn Johnson, Jorge Sedano and LZ Granderson—had suggested a day earlier that Rosen would be more comfortable in New York because his father is a doctor and he comes from a more affluent background.

"When you talk about his religion, I believe Josh is Jewish. New York. Big Jewish community. Much like L.A.," one host said. "People gravitate to people like them, all I'm saying."

Another host added: "If he is an observing Jewish individual who is embraced by the local community, that will certainly raise his ball"

The hosts looked up the cities with the largest Jewish community and Cleveland did not appear in their top 10 despite its some 80,000 members.

The quarterback's father is Charles Rosen, a noted Jewish orthopedic surgeon. His mother, Liz Lippincott, is Quaker and is the great-great-granddaughter of Joseph Wharton, who founded the prestigious Wharton business school at the University of Pennsylvania.

A 2014 profile noted that Rosen became a bar mitzvah and attends seder every Passover, but he also celebrates Christmas and he called himself "kind of an atheist."

**Brandeis fires men's basketball coach for discriminatory behavior**  
(JTA)—Brandeis University has fired its men's basketball coach for alleged discriminatory and racist behavior toward student-

athletes, and put its athletic director on administrative leave.

Several students filed "serious discrimination complaints" last year against the coach, Brian Meehan, Brandeis President Ron Liebowitz said in a letter Thursday. The complaints alleged "preferential and discriminatory treatment, unprofessional behavior, and racially biased harassment," according to the letter.

After a new complaint was brought last week against Meehan, he was placed on administrative leave, the complaints were investigated and he was fired. The players had taken their complaints to the university's human resources department in May 2017, Deadspin reported.

"No one at Brandeis should ever have to experience discrimination or harassment from any other member of this community," Liebowitz wrote. "The university is committed to responding promptly, vigorously, and effectively once notified of any act of discrimination or harassment, and forbids retaliation against any individual who comes forward with a good-faith complaint."

In one incident, Meehan told a black player, "I'll ship you back to Africa," according to Deadspin.

A day later, on Friday, the university placed its athletic director, Lynne Dempsey, on administrative leave, Liebowitz announced. The Boston-area school—a Jewish-sponsored, nonsectarian research university—also hired two attorneys to conduct an independent investigation of the university's policies and procedures in the case.

Liebowitz said he was disturbed to learn about the student-athletes' frustrations as they worked through the system of filing the complaints and waited for a resolution.

"They found our processes moved slowly and opaquely, and ultimately inadequately," he said in a second letter to the campus community. "Anyone accused of committing an offense on this campus—student, faculty, or staff member—is entitled to a fair investigation and due process. This can take time. In this case, the process did not work the way it should have for the students who filed complaints. This cannot and should not happen again."

A communitywide town hall meeting was scheduled for Monday afternoon.

Meehan was the winningest coach in Brandeis history, going 205-160 in his 15 years guiding the program, including an appearance in the Division III Final Four.

## Leader of Reform movement's rabbinical arm to retire

(JTA)—Rabbi Steven A. Fox, the head of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, will retire next year.

Fox and CCAR President David Stern made the announcement on Monday. Fox will leave in June 2019 after 13 years as CEO.

CCAR is the rabbinical arm of the Reform movement, the largest in America.

Fox, 64, strengthened the organization's governance, renewed its financial stability and built up its senior leadership team, the CCAR said in a statement.

He also oversaw the creation of the CCAR Lifelong Learning/Continuing Professional Education program, which provides Torah and professional development classes to Reform rabbis. He developed major new streams of funding to expand these and other CCAR programs.

The statement noted that CCAR Press, the publishing arm of the organization, has grown during Fox's tenure. After a period of seven years in which only one book was published, CCAR Press now maintains a publishing program of six to 12 books a year.

"It is with mixed emotions that I announce my plans to retire from the CCAR in 2019," Fox said. "We have accomplished much in these years together. Now is the moment for the CCAR leadership to consider the future direction of the Conference, to affirm our mission in bold new ways, to assert our leadership role in the Reform Movement and broader community, and to consider new avenues to add value to our members' lives, focusing on all rabbis no matter where or how they serve, with a new Chief Executive to lead at the helm."

A search committee has been appointed to find Fox's successor.

Fox's announcement comes less than a month after the announcements that the CEOs of the Conservative movement's rabbinical and congregational umbrella groups are stepping down.

## Ronald Lauder disavows anti-Muslim videos of a group he gave \$11 million

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Ronald Lauder, a leading Jewish philanthropist, disavowed the anti-Muslim videos of a beneficiary organization, saying he had contributed because the group opposed the Iran nuclear deal.

"Mr. Lauder donated to Secure America Now to support their work in opposition to the Iran nuclear deal," a spokesman for the World Jewish Congress president said Monday in an email to JTA. "He had nothing to do with any of the group's other activities. Mr. Lauder has consistently supported inter-faith respect and dialogue. He would never be involved with insulting people of faith."

Open Secrets, an elections watchdog, published an investigation last week that identified Lauder and Robert Mercer, a reclusive hedge fund billionaire, as the main donors to the group Secure America Now in 2016, when it ran anti-Muslim ads that appeared to target voters in swing states just prior to the presidential election.

Mercer, a major backer of Donald Trump's presidential run, gave Secure America Now \$2 million and Lauder donated \$1.1 million. The group, headed by Allen Roth, a longtime adviser to Lauder, garnered over \$8.27 million that year.

It's not clear how much

# JTA

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Secure American Now paid for the videos, which popped up in social media feeds in swing states just before the

election, and which were parody travelogues depicting Muslim takeovers of France, the United States and Germany.

The ads may have been aimed at spurring turnout by pro-Trump voters who agreed

with the candidate's views on restricting immigration and the perceived threat from Muslims.

Bloomberg News said last year that Facebook and Google competed for "millions" of dollars in ad money

to distribute the videos, but did not explain how it came up with that amount.

Secure America Now reported vastly different amounts in election-related spending, according to Open Secrets: \$1 million to the

Federal Elections Commission and \$124,000 to the Internal Revenue Service. The reason for the discrepancy is not clear.

Secure America Now, as Lauder's spokesman noted, also campaigned against

the Iran nuclear deal, which swapped sanctions relief for a rollback in Iran's nuclear program. However, the deal was wrapped up by 2015, and much of the campaigning by groups opposed to the deal occurred before that time.

# JCRC

From page 1A

departure as co-chair in anticipation of her upcoming move to Massachusetts with her husband, Eli. After many years of service to the Federation, the JCRC, and the entire Jewish Community, the Porths are moving to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

"I have always felt the need to build relationships by

building bridges within and outside our own community," said Porth. "Today it is even more important that minority communities bond and support each other and we work to unify and strengthen our Jewish community."

Zaltsberg, an attorney practicing in the area of disaster recovery with Baker Donelson, grew up in Orlando and recently returned to the

area from Atlanta, where she began her law career. She lives in Winter Park with her husband, Ben, and their daughter, Nora.

Gerber, an educator for 18 years, is currently working as an educational trainer for The Institute for Curriculum Services where she travels across the Southeast region of the country, leading professional development for

social studies teachers on the topics of teaching the Arab-Israeli conflict, teaching religion in the classroom, and environmental cooperation in the Middle East. She lives in Altamonte Springs with her husband, Doug, and their two daughters Jacqui and Lila.

"I have learned so much from Ina since joining her as co-chair of JCRC. Her unwavering commitment to

service and passion for this community is inspiring, and while she has left us big shoes to fill, I am optimistic about the future of JCRC and our community," said Zaltsberg.

On the future of JCRC, Porth commented, "Advocating for issues of importance to our Jewish community is vital to the work that we are entrusted to do. I leave all in the good hands of Michelle and Dori.

Both women are passionate advocates, and will be great leaders for our community."

Follow @OrlandoJCRC on Facebook and Twitter. If you are interested in joining the Jewish Community Relations Council, or would like to report an issue for the JCRC to address, you can reach Ben Friedman, JCRC director, at 407-645-5933 ext. 233 or bfriedman@jfcgo.org.

# Iceland

From page 1A

according to polls, and is expected to pass when brought to a vote at a date that has yet to be determined.

This is part of the reason that leaders of European Jewry view the bill as a dangerous precedent amid a two-pronged attack on fundamental customs of Judaism and Islam—including circumcision and ritual slaughter of animals, which already is illegal in Iceland. As European nationalists hostile to Islam or Judaism target such customs, so do secularists and progressives who find the rituals intolerably cruel.

In the rest of Europe, the debate about such bans is informed by the continent's sad history of centuries of virulent anti-Semitism.

"In Iceland there isn't this awareness" because the country never had more than a few dozen Jews, according to Hannah Jane Cohen, a Jewish-American journalist from New York who moved to

Iceland last year. "If you try to explain that the Nazis also banned it, it comes across as exaggerated."

To Sigal Har-Meshi, an Israel-born mother of three boys who has been living in Iceland for 14 years, "it's an insult," she told JTA at a chic café near Reykjavik's university. "It's my country telling me and my husband we are not only barbarians, but criminals just because I'm Jewish."

At the same time, she shares the reservations of many Jewish mothers with regard to circumcision.

"It's pretty shocking, I don't feel 100 percent comfortable with it, either," said Har-Meshi, a successful jeweler who first came to Iceland as a tourist in 1986 and married a local non-Jew. Her teenage sons suffered taunts at school and "don't feel comfortable showering in public" in a country that had fewer than 20 nonmedical circumcisions of boys since 2007, she added.

Against this backdrop, the arrival of a Chabad rabbi to

Iceland is "great news," said Mike Levin, a Chicago native who is the unofficial leader of the Jewish community of Iceland. Judaism is not among Iceland's recognized state religions, so there is no way of gaining official status for his community. A group of a few dozen people without a synagogue, they celebrate Jewish holidays and events together at hotels, restaurants, picnics and at each other's homes.

Some years, community members brought leavened bread to get-togethers on Passover, when the consumption of such food is forbidden, Levin and Har-Meshi recalled. But other events were supervised by visiting rabbis from Chabad, who imposed a strictness that was foreign and unwelcome at this highly secularized community, where the Feldmans are the only observant members.

Unlike the mink whale meat that is sold here in many supermarkets and restaurants, kosher meat is nowhere to be found in Iceland. But it does have world-famous kosher fish, most notably salmon. It was the main course at one of the largest Passover seders in the island nation's history: a gathering of 100 last week at a local hotel, followed by a second seder for 50 people.

"On a community level, it will give us representation to the outside world," Levin said of the Feldmans' arrival. "Recognition. And perhaps also state funding, visibility, a synagogue, a Jewish kindergarten."

The Feldmans said they are looking into opening a Chabad house and synagogue. In parallel, they are negotiat-

ing the import of kosher meat through local distributors. They represent a Hasidic movement with a mission to build Jewish communities in sometimes unlikely places.

Levin, a carpenter in training who recently sold his popular catering firm for offices, said he is also "happy to be relieved" of the duties that come with leading a small Jewish community, with the usual bickering and logistical problems they entail.

A follower of Conservative Judaism with cantorial skills, Levin said he never really sought to become the national leader of a Jewish community.

"But someone had to do it," he said.

The proposed ban on circumcision, though, risks undoing decades of community building, Levin said.

"It definitely doesn't feel good. It sends a bad message," he said.

The leaders of the Jewish communities of four Nordic countries warned in a joint statement that a ban "will guarantee" that no Jewish community is established in Iceland and make it "the only country to ban one of the most central, if not the most central rite in the Jewish tradition in modern times." The Feb. 13 statement also noted how the Nazis imposed bans on circumcision.

Iceland, however, is hardly the only European country where Jewish circumcision, or milah, and ritual slaughter, or shechitah, are being attacked.

A law banning shechitah passed in the Netherlands in 2011. Tellingly, it was submitted by the ultra-progressive and small Party for the Animals, but it passed

thanks to the support of the large and populist Party for Freedom—an anti-Islam movement. Ultimately the law was scrapped by the Dutch Senate. Last year in Belgium, shechitah was banned in two of the country's three regions with similar alliances.

In Sweden, where progressives have spoken out for years against ritual circumcision, a draft motion against it was submitted to parliament in 2013 by a far-right, anti-Islam party.

Iceland for the first time is seeing the arrival of relatively large numbers of Muslims—asylum seekers and other immigrants, often from the war-torn Middle East.

"This comes with some tensions," Har-Meshi said.

Still, xenophobia appears to have had a negligible role in Iceland's bill on circumcision, which lawmakers from four political parties introduced in January. Together, the parties account for 46 percent of the parliament's 63 seats.

Seeking a prison sentence of up to six years on offenders regardless of where the underage circumcision is performed, the bill equates the practice with female genital mutilation, calling both human rights violations. Circumcision, the bill also says, places subjects at an elevated risk of infection and causes "severe pain."

"It's concerning the community in Denmark," Andrew Baker, the personal representative on combating anti-Semitism for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said in February during a symposium in Vienna on anti-Semitism. "They fear it will set a prec-

edent. Nordic countries will somehow look one to another and it will open the door."

In Denmark, a petition favoring a milah ban has received 68 percent of its target of 50,000 signatures. Once the target number is reached—organizers have until August to collect signatures—the petition will go up for a vote as a draft resolution in the Danish parliament.

Stopping short of calling the proposed ban in Iceland a form of anti-Semitism, Baker said, "We have acknowledged the kind of public discourse that accompanies these debates"—a reference to an anti-Semitic caricature that appeared in 2013 in a Norwegian paper, among other materials.

Occurring simultaneously with efforts to ban ritual slaughter, the campaigns to ban circumcision in Iceland and Denmark are the latest development in an escalation that occurred in 2012, when a German court in Cologne ruled that ritual circumcision of minors amounted to a criminal act of child abuse. The ruling triggered temporary bans in Austria and Switzerland but was overturned.

Seen in this context, it's easy to understand why Jewish communities are up in arms over the bill in Iceland, Baker said in an address in Vienna on Feb. 20. He also noted that the audience for his talk outnumbered Iceland's Jewish population, drawing chuckles.

"So here we are," he said, "fighting for the protection of an element of religious practice on behalf of frankly a handful of people who may themselves never exercise it."

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# Soldiers

From page 1A

anti-Semitic slurs from their peers. In one case, a Jewish Marine chaplain assigned to accompany combat units was asked to conduct an interfaith service following the battle of Iwo Jima—until his fellow chaplains objected, forcing the military to conduct three separate services.

Some friendships formed across religious lines. The film recounts the story of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds, a senior noncommissioned officer in a German prisoner of war camp. When the camp commander ordered all the Jews to step forward, he refused to allow it.

"We are all Jews," he said. Threatened with a gun,

Edmonds said, "You can shoot me, but you will have to shoot all of us, and when the war comes to an end you will be tried as a war criminal."

The commandant turned and walked away, and Edmonds was subsequently the first American soldier recognized at Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations.

The documentary is timely as anti-Semitism is on the rise throughout the world, but it came about by chance.

"I was actually working on another documentary [where] I had interviewed Jewish veterans and I started to hear stories about the anti-Semitism they'd experienced in barracks when they went [to Army camps] down south,

and what it was like to serve in the war as Jews," Jewish filmmaker Lisa Ades told JTA. "I felt this was a story that had never been told. When you think about Jews in World War II, you think of them as victims."

The story had been told before, by historian Deborah Dash Moore (a senior adviser on the film) in her 2004 book, also titled "GI Jews," but Ades saw an opportunity to bring it to a larger audience. She began filming five years ago.

"We had to get these stories on tape while the veterans were still alive," Ades said. "They were grateful. They never had a chance to tell their stories before. They were ready to talk about them, finally after all these years."



Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds was honored by Yad Vashem for sticking up for Jewish soldiers at a German POW camp.

## Tobin

From page 4A

to incite hate against Israel and Jews with its media and schools on a daily basis, and to subsidize terrorists. The Saudis have become closer to Israel as a result of President Obama's appeasement of Iran, which scared them even more than it did Israel.

Just as important, the Palestinians have made it clear to the Trump administration that they won't consider any

new peace plan. This is in spite of the fact that, like those plans that have preceded it from previous administrations, this effort to achieve what Trump calls the "ultimate deal" will likely involve more Israeli retreats and a Palestinian state.

The key event preceding the Saudi crown prince's statement came earlier this year when, in the aftermath of the Trump administration's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Abbas journeyed to Riyadh. The message

he reportedly got there was a Saudi demand that Abbas accept what the United States was offering in terms of a two-state solution. They even offered serious financial support for him if he was willing to make peace and become part of an anti-Iran alliance. Abbas's reply was that no Palestinian leader could accept such a deal. Abbas is more concerned about competing with Hamas, which is why he supported Hamas's violent riots along the Gaza border also intended to promote the

idea "return"—synonymous with Israel's destruction—as the keynote of Palestinian demands.

So when MbS spoke of a Jewish right to a "land," he wasn't so much speaking to Trump or Netanyahu, who realize that the Saudis look to Israel as an ally against an Iranian foe that they, as the prince stated, regard as worse than Hitler. Rather, it was a message to Abbas, Hamas and the Palestinian people emphasizing that if they are determined to

persist in their century-old war on Zionism, then they can do it without any help from the Saudis.

As the prince made clear, the Palestinian refusal means Israel-Saudi relations will remain warm, but under the table. That probably suits them just fine since the Saudis are too conscious of their role as guardian of the Muslim holy places and the standing it gives them in the Islamic world to have "normal relations" between their kingdom and the Jewish state.

The Saudi peace initiative is a dead letter not because Israel said no to it, but because the Palestinians still won't recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state—no matter where its borders are drawn. As long as the Palestinians won't give up their dreams of "return," even a royal pronouncement like that of MbS, won't end the conflict.

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## Zionism

From page 5A

as Jew, as a person—and how some of these ideas can help Israel become a model democracy.

That's why Zionism didn't end in 1948—the debates continue.

If Zionism as an idea asserts that Jews are a people with a homeland, and Zionism as a movement builds, protects and perfects the state, Zionism as a value is more personal. Zionists see it as a way of explaining Judaism

as a culture, a civilization, an ethnicity, a tradition, not just a religion. It anchors us in a self-indulgent, throwaway society, providing a sense of community in an often lonely, alienating culture, and a sense of mission in an often aimless world.

Reclaiming Zionism often entails moving from Political Zionism—asking what we can do for our country—to Identity Zionism—asking, with apologies to JFK, what your country can do for you. There's a reason why Israel

ranks 11th on the world "Happiness Index," despite the nation's many challenges. Most Israelis are instinctively Identity Zionists. Their identity blossoms from the Zionist state—which appreciates strong family values, robust community ties, deep patriotic feelings—and a broader sense of mission in life. That's part of the package Birthright participants and other tourists appreciate when visiting Israel. And that's the recipe that makes so many Israelis happy despite the rush-rush of

their society and the roar-roar of some Palestinian neighbors demanding their destruction.

Zionism isn't the only way or the best way, it's just my way, my people's way. I'm not smart enough to improvise another framework.

Identity Zionism includes commitments to Jewish education, Jewish action, to making Jewish ethics come alive, to Jewish peoplehood and Jewish community—these are core Zionist values I, for one, would—in Churchill's words—never surrender.

Today, the #MeToo conversation spotlights how often victims—especially women—internalize persecution, letting bullies win. Anyone interested in abandoning Zionism first should ask: How much of this internalizes the delegitimization campaign?

If we don't stand up for ourselves, who are we? If we let those haters win, what are we? And if we don't start celebrating and reclaiming the Z-word now—at Israel's 70th—then when?

*Gil Troy is the author of "The Zionist Ideas," which updates Arthur Hertzberg's classic work "The Zionist Idea," and was just published by The Jewish Publication Society. He is a Distinguished Scholar of North American History at McGill University. Follow on Twitter @GilTroy*

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.*

## Holocaust

From page 5A

send us away and spare our lives, God willing?"

Father shrugged. "Who is to say? I heard that the families who didn't come to the square to be picked up were shot in their homes. We can only wait and put our faith in God. God will provide for us. God has never forsaken us."

Like everyone else, my parents had come to the shul without packing a bag.

Shabbos morning arrived warm and bright, but musky with fear. Several men began to daven, (pray). They were still praying when the police ordered them to leave their families and trek up the hill to the cemetery. Mamche gripped the girls harder, her fingers digging so deeply into their flesh that they squirmed, but they did not break away. Our father, never a demonstrative man, reached for our mother's hand. The gesture was so unexpected that she met

his eyes with a smile. Then the butt of an unseen rifle knocked Tata squarely between the shoulder blades, and he flinched and moved on without speaking.

They traveled a short distance in wagons. A boy named Yankele Kelstecher jumped out of his wagon and disappeared into the woods before the policemen could fire. (\*) Then the men were ordered out of the wagons. Perhaps the thought of Yankele gave the men strength as they climbed in a thin, halting line along the muddy path (weaving) through a cornfield. At the crest of the hill was the tree-lined cemetery, its tombstones swathed in even rows of shrubbery. The men paused to catch their breaths and wipe their brows. They gazed out over the hill to the patchwork of fields below. For a moment, they forgot their terror and shook their heads at the lush landscape. It could not be helped; they loved this country.

A straight-backed officer handed out shovels and told them to dig. "Keep digging," he said. "We'll tell you when you're finished. Thought you could get away with something, eh? Thought you could hide from us, you filthy Jews?"

When at last they were allowed to stop, the men stood in silence beside the freshly dug earth. Their faces slick with tears and sweat, they stared at the raised rifles in astonishment. At eyes opaque as marbles, that didn't look back.

Then they saw the other eyes, those of their neighbors, the customers in their shops, the people to whom they had just last week sold a loaf of bread, who gave them a good price on chickens and eggs. The goyim stood or sat on their haunches in unruly rows alongside the policemen. Whole families, with baskets of cheese and bread and homemade wine. The chattering spectators

were in a festive mood, the women's heads bobbing in their colorful scarves.

"Zyd!" they cried. "Jew! Out with the Jews!"

The policemen raised their rifles. One hundred hearts were broken before a single shot was fired. When it was over, the audience applauded and cheered.

The next day, the sunlight was so fierce that the women shielded their eyes when they were led outside. They climbed through the tall grass directly to the pit, as if they had done so many times before, children sobbing at their skirts. A fetid smell they did not recognize reached their nostrils, and they covered their faces in horror.

When the policemen loaded their rifles, Senia clutched Mamche's waist. "I don't want to die!" she cried.

For the first time in Senia's life, our Mamche could do nothing to help. One policeman who witnessed this scene was so moved that,

later, he would recall Senia's words to the Kwasniaks, who had worked for us back in town.

Then a bullet shattered our little sister's face, and she collapsed at Mamche's feet, spraying blood in her new white shoes. Next, Tunia dropped onto Senia, her breath a shallow purr. Even before the third shot was fired, our mother fell on them both, trying to protect what was no longer hers. Beside the gunmen, the onlookers, some of whom had tied handkerchiefs over their noses to stave off the scent, clapped and shouted their approval. A burst of laughter skimmed the crowd."

At the Passover Seder, we recite and recount a concise history of the Jewish people: In every generation they rise up against us to destroy us. And the Holy One, blessed be He, rescues us from their hands. In a generation not long ago, Poland embodied the rising up to destroy us. Let us pray this year that they get a better

sense of history. It's their call, whether they want to be part of this generation rising up against us or not. But either way, no matter who rises up, God has our backs. He always has and will have.

\* NOTE: In America after surviving, Yankele Kelstecher became Benny Schanzer and recounted this to me personally, crediting my great-grandmother for inspiring him to run away and saving his life.

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

## Millennials

From page 5A

supported efforts must find a way to move participants from Jewish lite to something more content-rich, let alone demanding, without turning people off—a fine line not easy to walk.

One wonders, though, whether these episodic and mainly social gatherings will lead to lifelong engagement unless participants grow as Jews, deepen their Jewish knowledge, connect with the richness and complexity of Jewish civilization, and

grapple in a meaningful way with their Jewish identity. Episodic connection is unlikely to educate individuals about how to live as Jews, and certainly is not a recipe for building commitment to Jewish community.

The heavy investment in millennial engagement, furthermore, usually comes with no comparable funder commitment to improving Jewish education for children. Which raises the question: Why not educate Jewish youth properly when they are young? That way they won't need engage-

ment programs to remediate for the shallow education most have encountered in their Jewish schooling and informal Jewish education.

To be sure, local funders are supporting Jewish education, as are a few national foundations, but for the most part the big dollars are going for millennial engagement. It's not as if the field of Jewish education presents no large systemic challenges requiring ambitious funding and creativity.

The most obvious needs are in the arena of supplementary

schooling. Funders have shied away from investing in the so-called Hebrew school, the vehicle educating the largest proportion of Jewish children, on the grounds that the field is diffuse, housed in synagogues of various denominations and lacking in national operators. All the more reason, then, for national funders with the ambition to make a big impact to invest in this educational arena.

Several other large challenges persist: One is the affordability crisis in Jewish day schools, which could benefit from new thinking.

Another concern is the still too-low proportion of Jewish children experiencing Jewish overnight camp and teen programs that could do even more to infuse their offerings with serious Jewish content. By finding solutions to these challenges, national funders can make a large difference in the education of Jewish children.

Within a generation, today's school-age children will become the new cohort of 20- and 30-somethings. Wouldn't it be wise to invest in their Jewish education now

so as to reduce the need to "re-engage" them when they enter their post-college years?

*Jack Wertheimer is professor of American Jewish history at the Jewish Theological Seminary. His report, Giving Jewish: How Big Funders Have Transformed American Jewish Philanthropy, was prepared under the auspices of the Avi Chai Foundation.*

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.*

## Ashkenazi

From page 8A

prostate cancer. Offit said doctors should use a lower cutoff for the level of PSA for men who have a BRCA mutation in order to perform a biopsy to check for cancer.

Offit hopes to learn more about how people opt to receive the test results—whether through their pri-

mary care providers or a specialist—and how many primary care providers will feel comfortable giving the information to their patients.

"Yes, we will be testing many individuals of Ashkenazi background and we will save lives for sure because we know that," he said, "but the research question is to

improve the way we offer this information to the whole population."

Offit said similar testing could be offered for the general population for a wide variety of diseases.

The executive committee consists of doctors from institutions in the four cities. Offit said he is hoping to launch a larger study later this year.

For those who are not eligible to participate in the study, he recommends speaking to a doctor about risk factors. For those who do not have a family history of breast, ovarian or prostate cancer, insurance does not cover testing for BRCA mutations. In those cases, Offit recommends regular screenings for breast and prostate cancer.



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# The first Torah reading in orbit and five other fun facts about Jews in space

By Josefina Dolsten

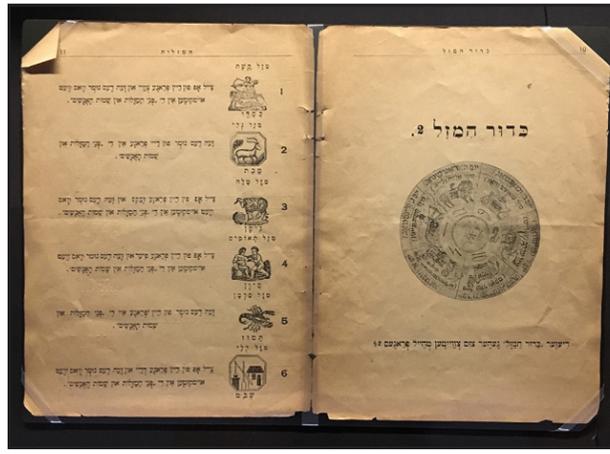
NEW YORK (JTA)—The Torah tells how God created the earth and the heavens, although the stories that follow tell us more about the former than the latter. A new exhibit doesn't quite answer theological questions about space, but it does show the ways in which Jews have looked at, written about and traveled into the final frontier.

"Jews in Space: Members of the Tribe in Orbit," named after a Mel Brooks gag, is an exhibit organized and on view at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and the Center for Jewish History. It features both Yiddish and Hebrew books on astronomy and astrology, science fiction works created by Jews and sections on the history of Jewish astronauts.

JTA was given a tour by Eddy Portnoy, YIVO's senior researcher and director of exhibitions, who curated the collection with Melanie Meyers, and learned about some of the unusual and unexpected relationship between Jews and the cosmos.

**This book of horoscopes was written in Yiddish.**

Published in 1907 in Odesa, Ukraine, "The Revealer of That Which Is Hidden: A New Practical Book of Fate" gave Yiddish readers a way to learn about their futures by way of astrology. Much like a modern-day horoscope, the book offered predictions based on the reader's zodiac sign. Similar books existed both in Yiddish and Hebrew during the time period, but rabbinic authorities were not thrilled, since astrology is banned by



Josefina Dolsten

*This book from 1907 contains horoscopes in Yiddish.*

Jewish law (although zodiac symbols have shown up as synagogue decorations for at least 1,500 years). Despite that, Jews at the time continued to read horoscopes as well as seek other ways of predicting the future, such as by going to psychics and reading tea leaves.

**The first Jewish American to go into space was a woman.**

Judith Resnik became the first Jewish American and second Jew (Soviet astronaut Boris Volynov was the first) to go into space when she flew on the maiden voyage of the Space Shuttle Discovery in 1984. Born in 1949 to Jewish immigrants from Ukraine who settled in Ohio, Resnik worked as an engineer at the Xerox Corp. before being recruited to NASA in a program to diversify its workforce. Resnik was only the fourth female to ever do so. She died in 1986 along with the rest of the crew of the Space Shuttle Challenger when the

spacecraft broke apart shortly after takeoff.

**In 1985, a Jewish-American astronaut read from the Torah in space.**

consulted a rabbi on how to observe Judaism on his first trip, in 1985. Hoffman, a Brooklyn native who was born in 1944, brought with him a scaled-down Torah and did the first Torah reading outside of Earth. He also had a set of Jewish ritual items specially made for his trip, including a mezuzah with a Velcro strip that he would attach to his bunk and a prayer shawl with weights to keep it from floating away in zero-gravity. He also brought a menorah to celebrate Chanukah, although he was never able to actually light it aboard the spacecraft.

**The Vulcan salute on "Star Trek" has Jewish origins.**

Actor Leonard Nimoy used an unlikely source of inspiration for his character Spock's iconic Vulcan salute, which



NASA/Space Frontiers/Getty Images

*Mission specialist Judith Resnik sending a message to her father from the shuttle Discovery on its maiden voyage, Aug. 30, 1984.*

consists of a raised hand with the middle and ring fingers parted into a V. The gesture looks just like the one kohanim do in synagogue during the Priestly Blessing. In his autobiography, Nimoy explained that he had copied the Jewish gesture, which he had seen in a synagogue as a child (it also appears on tombstones of kohanim). The Vulcan salute, which is accompanied by the phrase "Live long and prosper" (the kohanim's blessing begins "May God bless you and guard you"), became so iconic that the White House mentioned it in a statement issued on Nimoy's death in 2015.

**An alien in "Futurama" was named after the YIVO Institute.**

Some might think it a coincidence that the institute

shares a name with a bizarre extraterrestrial in the animated science fiction comedy series. In a 2008 direct-to-video film based on the TV series, Yivo (voiced by actor David Cross, who was raised Jewish) is a tentacled being who uses his many limbs to have sex with every living being in the universe. Turns out the screenwriter, Eric Kaplan, is friends with Cecile Kuznitz, a professor at Bard College who has done extensive research on the institute. He decided to, um, honor her by naming the character after the topic of her work, the archive and research center on Eastern European Jewish life founded in Vilna in 1925.

**A Jewish immigrant to the U.S. helped popularize science fiction.**

Hugo Gernsback, a Jewish

immigrant from Luxembourg, is sometimes called "The Father of Science Fiction" for publishing a magazine that helped popularize the genre. Launched in 1926, "Amazing Stories" featured tales of aliens, robots and other beings, including ones written by Gernsback himself. His magazine brought science fiction—a term he coined—to the mainstream and inspired many writers, such as Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the Jewish-American duo that created Superman. Gernsback left "Amazing Stories" in 1929, although it held on in one form or another until 2005. Among the Jewish writers who had their first stories published in the magazine were Isaac Asimov and Howard Fast.

## 25 funniest Jewish comedians in history

By Mark Miller  
Aish Hatorah Resources

In 1978, Time magazine claimed that 80 percent of all stand-up comedians in the United States were Jewish. And this at a time when Jews made up only 3 percent of the U.S. By way of explanation, psychologist Samuel Janus told a meeting of the American Psychological Association that, "Jewish humor is born of depression and alienation from the general culture. For Jewish comedians, comedy is a defense mechanism to ward off the aggression and hostility of others." Or as Mel Brooks put it: "If they're laughing, how can they bludgeon you to death?"

Freud's "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious," which was published in 1905, drew almost exclusively on Jewish stories, because, he maintained, they were the funniest and the most interesting. Salcia Landmann, a scholar of Yiddish, argued that Jewish humor is "more acute, more profound and richer in expression than that of any other people."

A 2013 survey from the Pew Research Center, "Portrait of Jewish Americans," found that humor is one of the main qualities that four in 10 of the nation's 5.3 million religious and cultural Jews say is essential to their Jewish identity.

All this comedic examination brings to mind E.B.

White's wonderful quote, "Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it." Therefore, let us instead celebrate the rich variety of Jewish humor from 25 of the funniest Jewish comedians in history. And for the love of God, let the poor frog live!

1. Jon Stewart: "We've come from the same history—2000 years of persecution—we've just expressed our sufferings differently. Blacks developed the blues. Jews complained; we just never thought of putting it to music."

2. Groucho Marx: "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."

3. Billy Crystal: "At 60, I could do the same things I could do at 30, if I could only remember what those things are."

4. Jerry Seinfeld: "My parents didn't want to move to Florida, but they turned 60 and that's the law."

5. Jackie Mason: "My grandfather always said, 'Don't watch your money, watch your health.' So one day while I was watching my health, someone stole my money. It was my grandfather."

6. Rodney Dangerfield: "My wife and I were happy for 20 years. Then we met..."

7. Mel Brooks: "Tragedy is when I cut my finger. Comedy

is when you fall into an open sewer and die."

8. Lenny Bruce: "If you live in New York, even if you're Catholic, you're Jewish."

9. George Burns: "Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city."

10. Gilda Radner: "Well it just goes to show you, it's always something, you either got a toenail in your hamburger or toilet paper clinging to your shoe." (as Roseanne Roseannadanna on SNL)

11. Joan Rivers: "I hate housework! You make the beds, you do the dishes and six months later you have to start all over again."

12. Don Rickles: "Room service is great. If you want to pay \$500 for a club sandwich."

13. Sid Caesar: "The guy who invented the first wheel was an idiot. The guy who invented the other three, he was a genius."

14. Milton Berle: "My wife and I have a perfect understanding. I don't try to run her life, and I don't try to run mine."

15. Jerry Lewis: "When I was a kid, I said to my father one afternoon, 'Daddy, will you take me to the zoo?' He answered, 'If the zoo wants you, let them come and get you.'"

16. Jack Benny: "I don't deserve this award, but I have

arthritis and I don't deserve that either."

17. Albert Brooks: "I was in Kashmir last weekend. Went to visit one of my sweaters."

18. Roseanne Barr: "I'm not going to vacuum 'til Sears makes one you can ride on."

19. Garry Shandling: "I'm very loyal in a relationship. Any relationship. When I go out with my mom, I don't look at other moms and go, 'I wonder what her macaroni and cheese tastes like.'"

20. Robert Klein: "I was in the De Witt Clinton High School marching band. One of the worst bands ever formed. When we played the national anthem, people from every country stood—except Americans."

21. Nichols & May: "No doubt you are as alarmed as I by the tragic decline in America's language skills. If 10 people read the following sentence: 'Two tanker trucks have just overturned in Alaska, spilling a total of 10,000 gallons of beer onto a highway,' two would find an error in subject-verb agreement, two would find an error in spelling, and six would find a sponge and drive north."

22. Andy Kaufman: "Okay, now be quiet, I will pay \$1000 to any woman that will beat me in this ring. I will not only do that, I will shave my head completely bald if I am

beaten here. And any woman that will beat me has an extra prize she will get to marry me. Right here. She will take my hand in marriage. I will offer my hand in marriage if she beats me right here."

23. Shelly Berman: "If you've never met a student from the University of Chicago, I'll describe him to you. If you give him a glass of water, he says, 'This is a glass of water. But is it a glass of water? And if it is a glass of water, why is it a glass of water?' And eventually he dies of thirst."

24. Mort Sahl: "Most people past college age are not atheists. It's too hard to be in society, for one thing. Because you don't get any days off. And if you're an agnostic you don't know whether you get them off or not."

25. Seth Rogen: "I am lazy, but for some reason, I am so paranoid that I end up working hard."

Mark Miller has held positions as a nationally syndicated humor columnist for the Los Angeles Times, an interviewer and humor blogger for The Huffington Post (along with a wealth of other publications), a TV sitcom staff writer/producer, a stand-up comic in nightclubs and on TV, and a writer for comedians such as Jay Leno, Dana Carvey, Roseanne Barr, Rodney Dangerfield, and Jim Carrey.

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