



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
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succeeded in demolishing the physical structures that comprised Amona, they cannot defeat the Zionist spirit that continues to animate the explosive growth of Judea and Samaria's Jewish population, which has more than doubled in the past 15 years. So let no one underestimate the power of Jewish

Commentary...

Amona Shall Rise Again By Michael Freund

As the security forces descended on Amona on Wednesday with orders to expel the town's Jewish residents, it was hard to overlook the bitter irony of the move's timing. For it was precisely 11 years ago, on February 1, 2006, that then-prime minister Ehud Olmert carried out the destruction of the Amona community in a whirlwind of violence and bloodshed that shocked the nation.

And now, here we are, over a decade later, and Amona's Jews are once again being dragged out of their homes by the very same government that encouraged them to move there in the first place and even provided them with budgetary support and infrastructure over the years. Hundreds of Jewish men, women and children, driven solely by a love for the Land of Israel and the pioneering spirit to rebuild it, will now find themselves without a roof over their head, left homeless in the heartland of the Jewish people.

It should never have come to this.

Whatever legal problems that might have existed with regard to the status of some of the lands on which Amona was built could have been addressed through a variety of other means short of demolition, such as providing compensation to Palestinian landowners. Indeed, the government had ample time to resolve the issues surrounding Amona, which worked their way through the courts over the course of several years via either legislation or negotiations.

But the bureaucrats dithered, and once the High Court of Justice issued its final ruling ordering the community's obliteration, there was little room left to maneuver.

Supporters of Amona's removal from the map cite the fact that Israel is a country based on the rule of law, and the law must be upheld. Of course, what they fail to mention is that the manner in which the rule of law is upheld is no less crucial, and that when it is selectively used against one sector of the population more than another, it can hardly be considered to be just.

Spread throughout the Negev, for example, are dozens of the Beduin equivalents of Amona, unauthorized towns and villages that have grown rapidly in recent years thanks to the government's unwillingness to enforce the law. Last month, the authorities finally took action against one such Beduin town, Umm al-Hiran, but there is a long list of others waiting to be addressed.

Will the supporters of the rule of law be just as vocal about the need to demolish additional illegal Beduin towns as they are regarding Amona? I think we all know the answer to that one.

Adding to the frustration over the government's handling of Amona is the flippant manner in which various figures on the Left and in the media have sought to dismiss the importance of the community.

Yesterday, Attila Somfalvi, Ynet's chief political correspondent, interviewed a spokesman for Amona and effectively asked him: What does it matter which hilltop you live on?

Aside from the callousness of the question itself, as though a person's ties to the home in which he lives are of little consequence, is the stale post-Zionism that underlies it. After all, if one views the Land of Israel as mere real estate, then perhaps it really doesn't matter "which hilltop you live on."

But anyone with even a minimal appreciation for Jewish history recognizes just how precious each and every part of our national homeland is. The Amona hilltop isn't merely a topographical land form. It is part of the very same land from which our ancestors were exiled and to which they dreamed of one day returning. And that is why so many Israelis, myself included, are pained at the razing of the community even if the law of the land left no other choice.

Yet let no one think for a moment that Amona's destruction is anything more than just a passing blow to Israel's national reclamation of Judea and Samaria. Yes, it is most certainly a setback, and opponents of the settlement movement are sure to rejoice.

But their celebration will be short-lived because while they may have

tenacity.

Amona may have fallen, but it will rise again. (Jerusalem Post Feb 2)

Building the Land will Bring Comfort By Dror Eydor

My brothers and sisters on the mountaintop, the pioneers of Amona. I was with you all day on Wednesday, in my thoughts and in my heart. Like me, there were many, many others among this nation, who were pained by the eviction and who appreciate your mission of strengthening our grip on the land of Israel.

The years you spent on the mountain are not wasted due to the eviction. You taught us that even in this cynical day and age, one can have a vision, fight fiercely and fulfill the mission of Zionism. In my dream, I saw a long line of women and men with their children, all of them wearing white, marching down the mountain and setting out for the next settlement. You are, after all, public emissaries, and not just private individuals. That could have been an impressive image that would have drawn masses after it in Israel and around the world. Unfortunately we did not get to see such a thing.

It is a propitious time. It is possible that, 20 years from now, we will find that the eviction of Amona was a catalyst for the settlement enterprise on the mountaintops to expand to 10 times its size. Like a flower whose pollen is carried off and planted in other lands, so, too, will Amona's spirit plant many settlements, and we will find comfort in building the land.

It is important to learn from this incident, and not simply to weep over it. The enemies of the settlement enterprise are searching for every crack with which to undermine our grip on our land, even at the cost of demolition that is not followed by construction. Those claiming ownership over the land will not come to the mountain after you. The area will remain in ruins, a painful reminder to the mother of a dead baby, who said of the living baby, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two" (1 Kings 3:26).

Your struggle is not private. This matter has been demonstrated in the rude comments made by the Silwad council chief, who was assisted by the Yesh Din organization in filing a petition against your relocation to a nearby plot of land: "The only solution for the Amona evictees is to return to Europe, the place where they came from." He was also talking about the Jews of Tel Aviv and of the entire country. The history of the struggle for the return to Zion summed up in a single sentence. "The place where they came from," is exactly there, on the mountain and its surroundings. It is from there that our mothers and fathers were exiled following the Assyrian, Babylonian and Roman conquests, and also following the Muslim conquest in the 7th century, which brought Arabs to our land from the Arabian Desert. It is from here that we were exiled and to here that we have dreamed of returning for hundreds of years.

Those who do not understand that the pendulum of history is returning the Jewish people home will sow the wind and, at the end of the day, they shall reap the whirlwind that will sweep them away from here.

The High Court's ruling was expected. We must obey it because it is a part of our revered rule, a structure of the state. But we are obligated to change the High Court's attitude toward our rights to the land. Those who quote Likud MK Benny Begin, who opposes the outpost regulation bill, will have the honor of also quoting his call to settle our land in its entirety, in Judea and Samaria and on every mountaintop in the hundreds of thousands of acres of state land there.

When I visited you, I told those who listened that in this historic moment, you cannot look "up" and blame the responsible adults, because in the journey of the yearslong struggle of our people, you are now "carrying the stretcher," and there is no one to replace you. You are the responsible adults. You, too. A new elite is taking the place of the old one in a complex process of which you are an essential part, and the state can no longer be blamed. You -- you, too -- are the state. An entire nation is watching you, some in admiration, some with jealousy and some with apprehension. Understand this. (Israel Hayom Feb 2)

Turn Down the Job, Jared By Jonathan Rosenblum

The achievement of peace between the Palestinians and Israel is the diplomatic equivalent of El Dorado, the mythical city of gold pursued by generations of Spanish explorers. President Trump too seems to have been bitten by the bug.

He has announced the appointment of his son-in-law Jared Kushner as his special envoy to the Middle East to broker a peace deal between the Palestinians and Israel. Making the announcement, Trump sung the praises of Kushner as a "dealmaker". "If you cannot produce peace in the Middle East," Trump told his son-in-law, "nobody can." He described a Middle East peace deal as the "deal of all deals."

In appointing a special Middle East envoy at the outset of his presidency, Mr. Trump is emulating his predecessor whose first act in office was to appoint former senator George Mitchell as his Special Middle East envoy. With the possible exception of President George W. Bush, every president since Richard Nixon has devoted great energy to the pursuit of peace between the Palestinians and Israel. All have failed.

At the very least, any president who seeks to reverse that series of failures requires a clear theory of where all previous efforts went wrong. Otherwise, following the same approach in the hope of achieving different results fulfils Einstein's definition of insanity – repeating the same actions in the expectation of different results.

By characterizing Middle East peace as the "deal of all deals" and expressing an eagerness to show his skills as a dealmaker, as if this was just another real estate deal – only bigger – Mr. Trump gives the strong impression that he has no clear theory of why all previous efforts have proven futile. Until he does, it is worse than a waste of time to invest the prestige and resources of the United States in another futile effort. Doing so will push peace even further from realization and further drain the credibility of the United States.

Jared Kushner should politely tell his father-in-law that he does not want this particular job.

Once upon a time, the energy and resources invested by successive American administrations in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict might have made at least superficial sense. The theory went – always a bit implausibly – that resolution of that conflict held the key to solving all the ills of the Middle East.

Today that theory lies shattered. Saudi journalist Aal Al-Sheikh addressed the Palestinians recently in the Saudi paper Al Jazirah (as translated by MEMRI). He told them bluntly that they "need to understand that the Arabs of today are not the Arabs of yesterday, and that the Palestinian cause has lost ground among Arabs. This cause is no longer a top priority for them, because civil wars are literally pulverizing four Arab countries."

The Palestinian issue had nothing to do with any of those civil wars. The Iranian threat is what keeps Sunni leaders up at night, and in the struggle against Iran, they view Israel as a crucial, perhaps the crucial, ally, not as a foe.

If there were ever a conflict due for a bit of "benign neglect," it is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. As long as the United States and rest of the Western world are obsessed with that conflict and continue to give it attention out of all proportion to its actual importance, they reinforce the Palestinian belief that the world will hand them everything they seek on a diplomatic platter.

As Daniel Pipes has written repeatedly over the past two decades, only the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan paved the way for the transformation of those former enemies into pillars of the Western alliance. And only Palestinian recognition that they are on a dead end course will ever persuade them to make peace. As Al-Sheikh wrote, "All I can say to my Palestinian brethren is that stubbornness, contrariness, and betting on the [support of] the Arab masses are a hopeless effort."

President Trump has pledged to place America's national interests first. America has no particular stake in Palestinian-Israeli peacemaking, especially if its efforts end in almost guaranteed failure. The Palestinians lack even a moral claim to American concern. Already over 90% of the population of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza live under Palestinian self-rule.

But they have not exercised self-rule in such a way as to earn a state. Mahmoud Abbas is in the 12th year of his four-year terms as president of the Palestinian Authority. As soon as Israel withdrew from Gaza, a brief, but brutal, civil war broke out between Hamas and Fatah. And the same would happen in Judea and Samaria after the withdrawal of Israeli security forces.

The Palestinian Authority in Judea and Samaria and Hamas in Gaza have done little to develop institutions of a civil society that underlay any viable democracy, and much to thwart their development. They have preferred to spend their money on generous stipends to the families of terrorists and on building underground terror tunnels. A Palestinian state in the West Bank would soon come to resemble the Hamas mini-state in Gaza, and have similar consequences for Israel.

The strategic and moral claims for an independent Kurdish state in what was once Iraq is in every respect stronger than that of the Palestinians for

statehood, both morally and strategically. The Kurds speak their own language and have a long history as a distinct people; the Palestinians are indistinguishable from the other inhabitants of southern Syria from which most of them emigrated.

An independent Kurdish state in Iraq would be a major strategic asset for the United States, and American military bases there would magnify greatly the credibility of American military action against Iran.

Still there is one way that President Trump and his special envoy could make a contribution to peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. But it would involve getting out of the mindset that the basic contours are well known, and all that remains is some fine-tuning of the details.

What is needed, Dr. Max Singer of the Begin-Sadat Center argues persuasively, is a new truth-telling agenda. Donald Trump is no fan of received wisdom, polite diplomatic fictions – e.g., terrorists shouting A-lahu Akbar have nothing to do with Islam, and political correctness in any form. Such a truth-telling agenda might just appeal to him.

The first myth that needs to be disposed of is that the Palestinians have made a strategic decision for peace. In 2006, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered Abbas the Kerry parameters in every respect. Abbas replied that he would look over the offer, which came with detailed maps. That was the last Olmert ever heard from him.

Like Arafat before him, he was simply too terrified to go back to the Palestinians and tell them they must give up on their dream of returning to the homes that their grandfathers and great grandfathers once lived in. Journalist David Bedein has just produced a video made in 59 UNRWA refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. In those camps, writes Sol Stern of City Journal, a daily drama of "redemption and return" is played out. In the UNRWA educational system -- of which 30% of the budget comes from the United States – children are taught that the day fast approaches when they will return to their homes in Jaffa, Haifa, and Acre. They sing songs of praise for martyrdom and suicide bombings.

Two decades ago, Abraham Sofaer wrote in Commentary that when the Palestinians dismantle the refugee camps, we will know that they are serious about peace. That has not happened. The United States could help that process by ceasing all support for UNRWA, writes Stern, and putting aside the money saved in an account for resettling the "refugees."

The myth of over five million Palestinian refugees is another that should be tossed in the garbage can. In fact, there are no more than 50,000, according to the standard definition of refugee used by the UN. With respect to none of the other of the tens of millions of refugees from ethnic conflict in post-World War II, including 700,000 Jews from Arab lands, did refugee status last beyond the lifetime of those fleeing from ethnic conflict. And the presumption of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees was that those refugees would be resettled in countries of their own ethnicity.

Only the Palestinians were granted special multi-generational refugee status and a separate U.N. organization, UNRWA, of which they became wards. The surrounding Arab states refused, by and large, to resettle those who abandoned their homes in 1948 at the behest of Arab leaders. That special status for Palestinians who left their homes in the 1948 fighting has ill-served the Palestinians themselves and the cause of peace. One million descendants of those who fled remain in squalid camps nursing dreams of return – a fantasy that UNRWA has perpetuated.

The third myth mentioned by Dr. Singer is the false equivalency between Jewish and Muslim claims to Jerusalem, i.e., that it is a city holy to both religions. Daniel Pipes has shown that Jerusalem, which is unmentioned in the Koran, has taken on importance to Muslims only in response to Jewish claims. When Jews were largely absent, Muslim rulers were content to relegate Jerusalem to backwater status.

It has been a staple of Palestinian education for decades that the Jews have no ties or claim to Jerusalem. Just this week a senior Palestinian official reacted with outrage to the statement by a high UN official that the Temple destroyed by the Romans was the Jewish Temple. Perhaps the Palestinians even believe their myths, but the longer they dwell in cuckoo land, the less the chances are for peace.

As Dr. Singer puts it, Israel cannot exist without Jerusalem as its capital. On the other hand, granting the Palestinians a toehold in the city that would foster violent conflict would be an important advance towards the Palestinian goal of destroying Israel.

Which brings us to the fourth of the current fashionable myths shared by much of the Western world, and too frequently acquiesced in by Israel as well: the myth that Israel occupies Palestinian land. There is not now and never has been any state of Palestine. So Israel cannot be said to be occupying Palestinian land. Individual Arabs may own land in the West Bank, and those claims should be respected, and generally have been.

But there is no occupied Palestine. Indeed both the League of Nations and subsequently the United Nations designated the entire area up to the Jordan River for the Jewish people. The 1948 UN partition plan was accepted by the Jews and rejected by the Arabs. The Arabs cannot now claim what they rendered void by going to war.

Recognizing that there is no land of Palestine does not preclude

territorial compromise between Israel and the Palestinians. Indeed it may make it more possible. As long as the myth of Israeli occupation continues, no Palestinian leader has discretion to concede stolen "Palestinian lands."

President Trump's willingness to break with received wisdom is well-suited to the truth agenda proposed by Dr. Singer. But first he too must break out of the mindset that Middle East peace is just another New York real estate deal. (Jewish Media Resources Feb 3)

The Embassy and the Realists By Jonathan S. Tobin

The Trump administration hadn't been in office a week before the rumors started flying that its romance with Israel was being shelved. The fact that there was no announcement of a move of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem during the course of the first White House briefings caused some observers to jump to the conclusion that Donald Trump's vows to make the change were as insincere as those of his predecessors that had made similar promises. Yet opponents of the shift were probably being over-optimistic. The rumblings from within the new government was that the shift would indeed occur in due time though when that will happen is still a mystery.

While the focus on the embassy move is understandable, it is not the sole measure by which the U.S.-Israel relationship should be judged in the next four years. The real battle to watch is between those in the administration who might adhere to the so-called "realist" school of foreign policy that may inevitably lead to a call for more Israeli concessions and those who believe the priority must be to reverse eight years of President Barack Obama's efforts to create daylight between the U.S. and Israel.

The rediscovery of the embassy move as a front-burner issue has tended to obscure a more fundamental question about the direction of American foreign policy under Trump. While the Obama administration was more open in its desire for daylight between the U.S. and Israel, the substance of much of its policy was consistent with all of its predecessors in terms of its focus on the need for pressure on Israel.

With the exception of part of President George W. Bush's first term when abhorrence for terrorism after 9/11 caused Washington to distance itself from Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority during the Second Intifada, Obama's belief that peace depended on Israeli concessions on settlements, borders and even Jerusalem has always been at the core of the American approach to the peace process. That was true when an outspoken realist like James Baker led the State Department under the first President Bush as well as for those who have followed him in that post under President Bill Clinton, the second Bush and Obama.

The real question about Trump and his team is not whether they choose to make a splash by keeping his campaign promise on Jerusalem. Rather, it will be whether, once ensconced in office, they decide that pursuing talks between Israel and a Palestinian Authority that has made no secret about its disinterest in negotiations will once again return to its familiar place as an American foreign policy obsession. Moving the embassy could be seen --- as Trump's pro-Israel backers rightly claim -- as a signal to the Palestinians that the U.S. recognizes the Jewish state's rights and that it is no longer interested in daylight. But if that decision leads to violence throughout the Muslim world or a new round of intifada violence, that could prompt some in the new administration to seek talks that will inevitably lead to calls for Israeli settlement freezes or commitments to more territorial withdrawals despite the dismal results such policies have produced in the past.

That is when we will find out exactly where leading figures like Defense Secretary James Mattis and Rex Tillerson -- assuming the latter is confirmed as secretary of state -- really come down on Middle East policy. It may be a mistake to take it for granted that Tillerson's convictions are identical to the pro-Arab inclinations of the oil industry where he has worked his whole life. It may be also be wrong to assume that Mattis' attitude toward Israel was summed up by his past testimony to Congress while serving as a Marine general that America's closeness to Israel increases the risk to U.S. troops in the Middle East. But we will only find out where exactly they stand or will try to lead Trump once they find themselves under pressure from allies and Arab and Muslim nations to show a more evenhanded approach to the conflict, whether the embassy has been moved or not.

It will be up the mercurial man behind the big desk in the Oval Office to decide if he should listen to the heavy hitters he has hired with realist roots or to advisers like Steve Bannon and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who believe the guiding principle of administration policy should be a complete reversal of everything Obama advocated. It will be then that we will discover whether the talk about the embassy was just campaign rhetoric or indicative of a fundamental shift of U.S. policy that will put the onus for peace where it belongs -- on an intransigent Palestinian political culture that is incapable of recognizing the legitimacy of a Jewish state no matter where its borders are drawn. (Israel Hayom Jan 31)

Pseudo-Liberal Jews are Causing Unspeakable Damage

By Isi Leibler

Chaos is the order of the day throughout the entire democratic world. This has been accelerated by the hypocrisy and intolerance of the vindictive Left, aided and abetted by foolish bleeding-heart pseudo-liberals who have become accomplices in the undermining of democracy.

One can understand that many Democrats were incredulous and devastated that Hillary Clinton could be defeated by Donald Trump, whose lack of civility, absence of political experience and coarse language even offended conservatives.

But the outpouring of rage, the histrionic protest marches throughout the world, the establishment of committees to impeach Trump -- even prior to the traditional 100-day honeymoon period -- is unprecedented. Contrary to all the claptrap about democracy that they sanctimoniously preached while in office, leftists are unwilling to accept the fact that their candidate was defeated by a parvenu.

The same chaos has swept through Europe, many of whose citizens are revolting against the failure of the Brussels-based European Union bureaucrats to address their needs and above all the collapse in the quality of their lives resulting from millions of so-called refugees flooding their countries.

This has led to a rise in global populism, a revival of conservative and right-wing political parties and rejection of the "politically correct" way of life imposed by sanctimonious liberal ideologues.

How has this chaos impacted on Diaspora Jews?

As history has testified, during periods of stress and anxiety, Diaspora Jews face grave threats. Anti-Semitism, already having reached record levels since the Nazi era, is poised to become even more vicious. That situation has been temporarily muted because the prevailing threat of Islamic fundamentalist terror attacks in many Western nations has directed public anger toward Muslims rather than Jews. This does not apply to Hungary, Greece and Germany.

The Jews, as a minority that has suffered tyranny and persecution, would be expected under current circumstances to concentrate primarily on their own security.

Ethics of the Fathers quotes Hillel the Elder, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I?"

Liberal-inclined Diaspora Jews -- especially those lacking an authentic Jewish education -- appear to have reversed this dictum. They consider that the well-being of the world and politically correct standards of social values must be their priority -- with disregard to the harm this inflicts on them as a community.

Observing Conservative and Reform Jewish leaders in the U.S., accompanied by once-mainstream liberal Jewish groups like the Anti-Defamation League and National Council of Jewish Women, at the forefront of hysterical demonstrations accusing Trump of being fascist and encouraging anti-Semitism, it is if they have been possessed by a dybbuk.

The same bleeding hearts in the U.S. as well as those in Europe were at the forefront of calls to open the gates to Muslim "refugees" steeped in anti-democratic behavior and nourished on diets of undiluted, visceral anti-Semitism. Setting aside the question of ISIS terrorist sleeper cells, there is little doubt that these elements will strengthen existing anti-Semitism in the older immigrant Muslim communities that failed to integrate. Yet many Jews are so dismally ignorant and oblivious that they even compare these immigrants to Jews facing annihilation during the Holocaust who were denied haven by other democratic countries.

This behavior is even more disturbing at a time of historic opportunities with the election of President Trump.

Although by no means yet assured, the U.S., still the only true global superpower, may truly treat Israel as a genuine ally, a move that would be reinforced by an overwhelmingly pro-Israel Congress

Trump has repeatedly proclaimed his determination to reverse former President Barack Obama's hostile anti-Israeli policy and create a new alliance between the U.S. and Israel that would be sensitive to the security needs of the Jewish state.

His commitment to recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel would have more than symbolic value. It would have a major impact in reversing the odious definition of the settlement blocs and even the Western Wall and Temple Mount as "occupied territory." Israel could proceed to build homes and the Jewish neighborhoods over the Green Line would prosper.

Furthermore, the U.S. will hopefully no longer acquiesce to the U.N. persecution of Israel and will reject calls to return to the indefensible 1949 armistice lines.

Trump is also likely to bring an end to the U.S. component of the scandalous \$300 million per annum provided to the Palestinian Authority, much of which is doled out to murderers.

Israel will also have a powerful ally that recognizes Iran as a rogue state and would substantially reduce the genocidal threat from the Iranian Muslim fundamentalists.

All this [IL1] has yet to be delivered but there is no doubt that there is

now a window of opportunity which Israel should exploit to dramatically minimize the security challenges and separate from the Palestinians with defensible borders. This can be achieved if Israel now has the support of a U.S. that can be counted on as a true ally. Over the past eight years under Obama, the U.S. dramatically eroded Israel's diplomatic standing, treated the Jewish state as a pariah and provided incentives to the Palestinians to stall negotiations and engage in terror. With renewed American support, Israel could at long last stabilize itself.

There is no disputing that many Democratic Party supporters, including large numbers of Jews, were bitterly disappointed at the election result and were further outraged by Trump's triumphant and, in their view, divisive inaugural address.

But surely it is in the interest of the Jewish community to develop a good relationship with the new administration, especially taking into account the enormous uplift it could provide to the beleaguered Jewish state. Even setting aside his religious Jewish son-in-law, Trump has always been close to Jews and his inner councils incorporate an unprecedented number of passionate religious Zionist Jews. This was highlighted by the honored role of Rabbi Marvin Hier as the first Orthodox rabbi invited to invoke a prayer at the presidential inauguration.

In this context, setting aside individual political beliefs, one must question the legitimacy of those purportedly mainstream Jewish organizational leaders who led the scurrilous accusation of fascism against the new president and the Jewish progressive religious groups calling for mourning and fasting.

One of the main justifying positive elements of progressive Jews was that even if they did not consider themselves obligated to follow Halachah (Jewish law), their activity would ensure that they at least remained within a Jewish framework. What their leaders are doing now is the opposite -- encouraging them to take up liberal causes even if it means forsaking Israel, the most fundamental component providing them with a Jewish identity.

They have reversed Hillel's maxim and act for what they perceive to be the universal needs of humanity, dismissing the interests of their own people. They are undermining themselves as a community and acting as lemmings marching off a cliff to their own destruction.

There is only one example in Jewish history to which such behavior can be compared. The Jewish Bolsheviks also turned against their own people and ultimately the revolution consumed them. Unfortunately, the vociferous anti-Trump Jewish activists represent a far greater proportion of the Left and their bleeding-heart pseudo-liberal allies than the Bolsheviks who represented an insignificant proportion of Russian Jews.

It is clear that in the Diaspora, committed Jews will remain overwhelmingly supportive of Israel while the pseudo-liberal or progressive Jews will become less interested in Israel and ultimately lose their identity. Indeed, Christian evangelicals now play a far greater role in promoting Israel than some of the mainstream Jewish groups.

We live in a world of chaos and upheaval.

Now is the time for all committed Jews to unite, stand together and concentrate primarily on securing their own rights. Diaspora Jews who, from their comfortable armchairs, claim a better understanding than Israelis of what is good for their security, should be treated with contempt. Israel is entitled to expect support from committed Jews over the next few years until it stabilizes its relationship with the world and creates an iron barrier to deter its genocidal enemies.

Once the threats to the Jewish people have been overcome, we can and will become more directly involved in tikkun olam and fulfilling Rabbi Hillel's wise advice. (Jerusalem Post Jan 29)

The Mouse That Roared By Barry Shaw

When the incoming Trump administration spoke of the possibility of moving the US embassy to Jerusalem the Palestinians began making threats.

Hamas, the Islamic terrorist regime that controls the Gaza Strip, threatened a new upsurge of violence and terrorism by saying that the move would "open a new chapter of conflict" and "add fuel to the fire."

Palestinian Authority diplomat Saeb Erekat said that the Palestine Liberation Organization, an entity that considers all of Israel an illegitimate country occupying "Palestine," would revoke its 1993 decision to recognize the State of Israel.

This is an empty threat. They have never accepted the State of Israel. The PLO Charter still contains Article 2 stating that "Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit." The British Mandate stated that all of Palestine was to be the national home of the Jewish People.

It is the so-called Palestinian entity that is the fraud here, not the Jewish state.

Palestinian leaders like Erekat have a history of saying one thing to the foreign media and something completely different to their own people.

Threatening violence, Article 9 of the PLO Charter says that "Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine."

"Two-state solution" advocates should note that this article would remain the core belief of radical Palestinians should Israel be forced to withdraw from territory, and these two-state diplomats now insist that the essential heart of the Jewish People be included in this so-called solution. What are commonly defined as "1967 lines" behind which Israel must retreat include the eastern parts of Jerusalem and the Old City, which contain most of the most important shrines of Judaic heritage.

Erekat said that all agreements signed with Israel would be dead should the US move its embassy to Jerusalem. Palestinian signatures are apparently meaningless. When Yasser Arafat signed the Oslo Accords on the White House lawn in 1993 he agreed to renounce violence. Seven years later he ordered major terrorist attacks against Israel. This terrorism, known as the Second Intifada, went on for two years, peaking with the Passover Massacre at Netanya's Park Hotel, when a Palestinian suicide bomber murdered Jews who had gathered to celebrate the Jewish festival of deliverance.

Palestinian signatures and promises are temporary appeasements, convenient pauses until a more favorable opportunity to eradicate Israel presents itself.

Proving this point, Erekat threatened that the entity he represents would consider all agreements signed with Israel null and void and that Israel would be responsible for paying all the salaries of the Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem. In other words, he threatened to disband the PA.

This opens up the possibility of applying alternative and better solutions for Israel and for the local Arabs than the two-state failure.

Erekat also warned that he would ask the UN General Assembly to suspend Israel's membership if the US moves its embassy. Erekat may have forgotten that the PLO is a non-member observer at the UN and cannot ask the UN to do anything.

The UN has proven by its incessant anti-Israel voting that it is at war against the Jewish state. Yet Israel continues to thrive and develop. It is the Palestinians that threaten and shrivel and, take note: the Arab world is fed up with them.

Erekat threatened to disband the PA. This is an opportunity for Israel and the US to initiate a move away from the failed two-state paradigm.

There are a number of feasible alternative solutions, some of which require dismantling of the PA and replacing it with something better for the Arab population of the area. The PA has been a corrupt, undemocratic, violent governing body, while the people under its divided authoritarian rule continue to suffer.

As a first step, Israel should reclaim its legitimate sovereignty over the part of Judea and Samaria designated in the Oslo Accords as "Area C," in which almost 500,000 Jews and fewer than 100,000 Arabs live today.

Israel, since its inception, has known Arab wars and terrorism. Israel is strong. Israel will not fold under new threats.

Israel has seen that gestures of good will and appeasement such as full withdrawals from southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, handing them over to our mortal enemies, have not resulted in peace. There is no assurance that withdrawal from Judea and Samaria will end up any better.

If the Palestinian mouse cannot stop roaring and get back to the negotiation table with a sense of pragmatism that has been so lacking for decades, the time has come for bold new initiatives that would allow Israel to withdraw from the diplomatic cul-de-sac in which it finds itself today.

For this it needs the support of the United States.

The US should set a marker by moving its embassy to Jerusalem because there is justice in it and it is the right and moral thing to do. It should do so because it acknowledges to the Palestinians and to a world in denial that without the Jews Jerusalem would not have been built thousands of years ago and it is their eternal capital. It should tell the Palestinians that refusing to accept this fact will never bring peace.

The US should move its embassy to Jerusalem and tell the Palestinians that any violent rejection of the move would be an act of war against the US.

Furthermore, Brexit and the phenomenon of Trump's ascendancy heralded the start of a new world order. We saw signs of change when Britain, which had voted for the iniquitous UN Security Council Resolution 2234 that attempted to rob Israel of the vital heart of Jerusalem, reverse itself under the looming presence of a Trump presidency by defending Israel and refusing to sign the anti-Israel statement at the Paris Conference. This was followed by the UK vetoing an attempted endorsement by the EU foreign ministers.

It seems in certain capitals the truth is beginning to register.

As both the US and Britain have taken a stand and acknowledged that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and an integral part of the Jewish People they have little choice in honesty and justice but to move their embassies to Jerusalem.

And the Palestinians be damned if they refuse to accept it. (Jerusalem Post Feb 1)