



## ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel  
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of  
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

### Commentary...

#### So Much to Mourn... By Sarah N. Stern

How does one adequately mourn a baby of barely 9 months, who was just beginning to crawl and eat solid food? How does one mourn a 4-year-old who loved Batman and had sparkling eyes that carried with them an intense thirst for knowledge? Or a terrified mother who would do anything to shield and protect her children?

Why has the world forgotten about the babies burned in ovens in front of their parents on Oct. 7, 2023? Or about parents brutally executed in front of their children?

What does this say about our world that their posters are not ubiquitous? What does this tell us about our civilization when the sympathizers of Hamas talk about our "settler-colonialism," "open-air prison," "occupation" and "resistance"?

We know these are all words to conceal a Nazi-like hatred that indoctrinates young Palestinian Arab children to grow up to want to strangle young Israeli Jewish children with their bare hands.

We remember the Gaza disengagement plan of 2005, when many Jewish organizations had convinced themselves that the coastal enclave was going to become "the Singapore of the Middle East." And we remember the elections on Feb. 20, 2006, which resulted in the rise of the now-deceased Hamas leader Ismael Haniyeh, and then the 2007 coup in Gaza, where non-Hamas members were thrown off of rooftops.

We recall the delusion that led up to it with the Oslo Accords of the 1990s, when much of the world, including many Jews who were naive, felt that whitewashing and venerating a master terrorist, PLO chief Yasser Arafat, would somehow lead to peace.

We saw the hubris that the Israeli army and intelligence services had prior to Oct. 7, when they dismissed reports of what looked like military drills in Gaza—reports that came from mostly female spotters. Many of those women were brutally murdered as a result.

How does one countenance the years since the "pay for slay" program was unveiled by the Palestinian Authority, paying out approximately \$300 million annually to the families of "martyrs" and "prisoners" who have murdered or attempted to murder Jews? How does the world countenance the sleight-of-hand that the P.A. has just established, where they purport to have eliminated this fund but have simply transferred payments under another name, "The Palestinian National Foundation for Economic Empowerment"?

How has the world allowed Hamas fighters to hide behind their own civilians in hospitals, mosques and schools supported by the United Nations? Why has the international community countenanced for decades that so many employees associated with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) are simultaneously affiliated with Hamas?

Why have we been speaking about the hate education that Palestinian children have been receiving from UNRWA schools and textbooks for 32 years and have been summarily dismissed? Why has the P.A. been showing the toxic messaging from the Palestinian version of "Sesame Street," where these young children have been indoctrinated for a generation-plus that Jews are evil?

Why are terrorists convicted of multiple life sentences being released from Israeli prisons, some as millionaires?

Why are the people of Gaza, and Judea and Samaria, erupting in gleeful celebrations when murderers, such as Ahmed Barghouti, operational commander for the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, have been serving 13 life sentences in Israel for multiple involvement in terror attacks in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem; Kahlil Jabarin, who fatally stabbed Ari Fuld, a 45-year-old father of four at the Gush Etzion junction in 2018; Zakaria Zubeidi, a former commander of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, and Iryad Jaradat and Ahmad Dahari of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who have planned and executed multiple terrorist attacks?

Why are young children dressed up in the fatigues of Hamas, and taught to emulate and honor these mass murderers as exalted heroes?

Why have we allowed this to fester for 32 years since the signing of the Oslo Accords?

It has been difficult to witness the disproportionate formulation of this deal, but we know we have had no choice but to try to get every single hostage

out of the nightmarish hell of the subterranean tunnels lying beneath the dirt of Gaza.

We send our young men and women into battle with the knowledge that no one will be left behind.

A healthy society embraces and loves life. A sick society embraces and worships death.

This week, Jews around the world had to go to sleep with the images of two beautiful redheaded children—Kfir and Ariel Bibas—and their mother, Shiri, in the forefront of their minds.

Let them never be forgotten. (JNS Feb 24)

#### The Perpetually Broken Vow of 'Never Again'

By Sacha Roytman Dratwa

Reportedly, as survivors of the Buchenwald concentration camp were liberated in 1945, they hastily made signs that read "Never again." It was a raw and visceral demand from the world.

It would become the cry of Jews ever since.

Despite these two words being often repeated and even incorporated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the sight of the coffins of Shiri, Ariel and Kfir Bibas, and Oded Lifshitz—himself born during the years of the attempted annihilation of the Jewish people—is a stinging reminder that little has changed.

Since the end of the Holocaust, the Jewish people have returned to their ancestral and indigenous homeland, building a strong and brave army that has defeated enemies many times its size. What doesn't appear to have changed is the global inaction in the face of atrocities against Jews, including those committed against toddlers, children, terrified mothers and pensioners.

The Hamas-curated disgraceful and obscene handover ceremonies—and the coffins themselves—serve as a painful reminder of how the world has failed to uphold the solemn vow made in the wake of World War II and the Holocaust.

This pledge—repeated for generations by world leaders, civil society and international organizations—promised that the horrors of the Holocaust would never be allowed to repeat themselves. The heart-wrenching images of the Bibas boys' coffins reveal how empty this promise truly is.

These two young children and their mother—with their hopes, dreams and futures cruelly extinguished—are not just victims of a regional conflict. They are symbols of the failure of the international community to prevent ongoing atrocities against Jews, whether in Israel or across the Diaspora.

Paris, Istanbul, Buenos Aires, Pittsburgh, Jerusalem, Tehran, Toulouse, Mumbai, Poway, Tel Aviv ... the list is seemingly endless. Jews targeted in these and countless other attacks are victims of a civilization that has repeatedly stood by, offering words of condemnation but failing to act when it matters most.

No matter how seemingly heartfelt or frequent, words are insufficient without the power of action.

Holocaust survivors witnessed firsthand how the world's inaction allowed genocide to unfold. Yet today, in the face of murderous violence and ongoing attacks against the Jewish people, it is clear that many have not learned from the past.

The promise of "never again" was meant to be more than a slogan. It was meant to be an enduring moral commitment to prevent the horrors of blood spilled resulting from bestial antisemitic urges from ever taking root again. It was a pledge that the collective strength of humanity would stand as a wall with the Jewish people against such horrors.

These coffins are a testament that such vows remain unfulfilled, and speak to a global failure of will and responsibility.

The tragedy of the Bibas family is a reminder that words alone will never suffice. What's needed is action.

What's needed is a commitment to holding accountable not just those who perpetrated this unspeakable savagery but all those who

support and encourage it—whether nations and governments that funded the evil monsters of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad or their cheerleaders on streets and college campuses around the world.

How can anyone mean “never again” and stand by as chants of Khaybar, Khaybar, Ya Yahud or “Intifada revolution” and “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” reverberate across the world?

Decision-makers and opinion-shapers globally must ask themselves: What are we doing to honor the vow of never again? Are we truly upholding this promise or merely offering empty rhetoric that does nothing to stop the ongoing suffering?

It is not enough to speak of the human rights of Jews in abstract terms, including leaders who tried to find context in the bloodletting of the Hamas-led terrorist attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. It is these immoral equivocations that dishonor the office of those who make them, and spit in the face of those who survived the Holocaust and today’s Génocidaires, whether they wear black or green.

The international community must act with urgency, clarity and resolve.

We owe it to the Bibas and the Lifshitz families—and all of those who were brutally murdered on Oct. 7 and long before then—to make “never again” a reality and not just a slogan repeated when tragedy strikes.

The Jewish people cannot afford another broken promise.  
(JNS Feb 26)

---

### **The 'Hezbollahization' of Gaza** By Meir Ben Shabbat

While Israel focuses on completing phase one of the hostage deal and determining the fate of its next stage, the Arab world and Hamas are accelerating discussions on formulas that could lead to “the day after” – without renewed fighting and without implementing former President Donald Trump’s plan to relocate Gaza residents to other countries.

The flood of statements from Hamas spokespersons about the organization’s willingness to hand over civilian administration of the Gaza Strip to other entities is meant to provide Egypt and Qatar with the basic condition for advancing an initiative to replace ideas being discussed in Washington and Jerusalem. The “Arab Emergency Summit” that Egypt is expected to convene on March 4 regarding “the Palestinian issue” will provide the stage and diplomatic packaging for this initiative. Its supporters hope that putting it on the agenda will reduce diplomatic and public focus on the Trump plan – which since its presentation has shaken the Arab street and threatens, in their view, regional order.

Against the backdrop of efforts that will be made by the initiators to market the plan as a solution meeting all players’ needs and enabling progress toward former President Donald Trump’s broader vision of regional normalization, it’s worth paying attention to Hamas’ precise wording and identifying both what’s missing and the pitfalls within.

Hamas emphasizes that its position on Gaza’s future rests on two principles. First, Gaza’s governance is an internal Palestinian matter requiring “national consensus” – a code for involving the Palestinian Authority while allowing Hamas to set conditions and demands. The second principle – “armed resistance to Israeli occupation is a right of all Palestinian people across all Palestinian land, not just Hamas’ right” – means Hamas not only opposes demilitarization of Gaza’s military capabilities but seeks legitimacy for building and operating them in other areas as well.

In other words: There will be no demilitarization in Gaza or elsewhere. The likely response from the “mediators” will be demonstrating greater commitment on their part to preventing Hamas’ rearmament, quiet agreement to Israeli activity similar to what’s conducted in Judea and Samaria, and mechanisms allowing coordinated action to weaken Hamas. They will undoubtedly argue this requires a prolonged, multi-dimensional effort addressing the roots of hostility, requiring patience – better managed this way than being dragged toward adventurous directions relying on the false illusion of a quick fix.

Well, we’ve seen this movie before. A plan transferring civilian management from Hamas while leaving the terrorist organization as the central power in Gaza represents the “Hezbollahization” of Gaza. Under cover of the “Administrative Committee” (or whatever name is given to that governing body), Hamas will rebuild its military power in the Gaza Strip and pull strings behind the scenes in managing all its affairs. It can channel its freed-up energies toward increasing efforts in

the West Bank and additional arenas. Arab and international involvement in implementing such an outline will only burden Israel and interfere with its ability to deal with Hamas’ moves.

Israel must clarify it won’t compromise on its demand for Gaza’s demilitarization in addition to – not instead of – toppling Hamas’ rule. The Israeli Defense Minister’s intention to establish an administration for voluntary emigration of Gaza residents and coordination of moves related to the Trump initiative is part of Israel’s response to the emerging initiative. This isn’t enough – it’s important to make clear Israel won’t agree to such ideas, so it’s better not to climb that tree.  
(Israel Hayom Feb 21)

---

### **The Israeli Media’s Favorite Villain** By Ruthie Blum

There’s nothing new about the unabashed slant of the mainstream Israeli press. Nor is it novel that the local media’s favorite villain is Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin (“Bibi”) Netanyahu.

So much so that an alien from another planet might assume that it is Bibi—not Hamas and the “civilians” in Gaza raised to annihilate the Jewish state—who perpetrated the Oct. 7 massacre.

This creature from outer space might be puzzled, however, by the way in which Netanyahu is accused by his elitist detractors of contradictory failings, often in the same breath. Indeed, the editorial line of most Hebrew dailies is that Bibi is everything bad and its opposite: He’s weak and dictatorial; too capitulatory and excessively belligerent. In other words, unlike a broken clock, he’s not even right twice a day.

It’s enough to give a UFO pilot a bad case of vertigo—intellectual dizziness caused by disingenuous rhetoric. We Israelis are used to it by now. But there’s a limit to the quantity of distortions we can tolerate.

Take the coverage of Netanyahu’s speech at the graduation ceremony of the latest Ground Combat Officers Course. In attendance at the packed event at the Holon Toto Arena were the 600 soldiers receiving their new ranks, along with proud parents, spouses and children.

“I know what we have achieved, and at the same time, I know what we have lost,” he told the crowd. “The sacrifice of our sons and daughters will carry meaning for generations—the eradication of evil and the guarantee of Israel’s eternity. ... This is your home. You planted the seeds, nurtured them and provided the backing—and today, you and the entire State of Israel reap the fruits of success. Congratulations and thank you.”

After expressing appreciation for their “patriotism and willingness to fight,” the prime minister held up a photo of the Bibas family, whose bodies had been returned to Israel mere days beforehand.

“This picture says it all,” he stressed. “I ask you to etch it into your hearts, so that we will always remember what we are fighting for and who we are fighting against. We are fighting for our existence against human monsters who seek to destroy us.”

He continued: “In the early days of the war, [Gaza terrorists] murdered Shiri [Bibas] and her children, [Ariel and Kfir], in cold blood. They strangled the young children with their own hands. And if they could, they would murder all of us with the same cruelty. ... This is what we are fighting against. These monsters—we must and can defeat them, and we will defeat them. That is our mission, and that is your mission. As defenders of the homeland, you are all imbued with a sense of duty, wielding sword and shield.”

He went on to list war’s objectives: returning all the hostages, both living and deceased; dismantling Hamas’ military and governing capabilities in Gaza; eliminating any future threat against Israel from the Strip; and ensuring the safe return home of residents of Israel’s southern and northern communities.

He also spelled out the government’s ongoing policies on all fronts: in Gaza, Judea and Samaria, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, with an emphasis of not allowing the regime in Tehran to obtain nuclear weapons—“not only for Israel’s national security, but for that of the entire world.”

Virtually none of the content of his words was given ink or airtime, other than in the country’s less-than-a-handful of right-wing outlets. No, the headlines that emerged highlighted two issues.

Heckling from the audience was one. Netanyahu’s not having obtained permission from the extended Bibas family to describe how Shiri and her babies were killed was the other.

Let's start with the first. Well, it's true that someone got up and shouted at Netanyahu for not having saved Shiri and her babies. The same guy also yelled at him for not having visited Nir Oz, the kibbutz from where the Bibas family members were abducted 16 months ago.

But the rest of the hordes cheered when Netanyahu entered and tried desperately to shake his hand upon his exit.

Then there's the second item that made the moving event sound like a Netanyahu fail: that he hadn't been at liberty to discuss the details of the Bibas murders "without consent."

Talk about grasping at straws to hurl mud at the prime minister whom reporters love to hate. If they had possessed an ounce of integrity, they would have mentioned that on Friday, Israel Defense Forces Spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari presented the Bibas children's autopsy results in greater graphic detail than Netanyahu subsequently did on Sunday.

Not only that. Hagari announced that Yarden Bibas "looked me in the eye and requested that I let the whole world know" how Ariel and Kfir were murdered. So, why would Netanyahu assume that doing so wasn't kosher?

The answer came on Monday in the form of an appeal to his office and other government bureaus on behalf of the Bibas family. The request, through attorney Dana Fogatz, was actually a demand that everyone cease talking about the circumstances of the brutal murders—and a warning that the sole authority to decide to whom it may be revealed lies with the family.

The vultures in the press naturally reported that the above was spurred by Netanyahu's speech. There was nothing about Hagari's statement, in which he claimed to have been asked by Yarden Bibas to disseminate the horrors far and wide.

Maybe Yarden was misunderstood by Hagari. Or perhaps he and his relatives aren't in agreement about spreading such gruesome information. But it doesn't matter, because whatever the facts, there's always Bibi to blame. Go explain that to a perplexed extraterrestrial. (JNS Feb 25)

---

## How Biden Fueled a 200% Surge in Anti-Semitism

By Liel Leibovitz

"It will be the policy of the United States to fight anti-Semitism vigorously, and to use all legal means at our disposal to prosecute, remove, or otherwise hold accountable those who commit unlawful acts of harassment and violence motivated by anti-Semitism."

This unequivocal declaration comes from President Donald Trump's executive order issued earlier this month. The order gives all federal agencies exactly 60 days to propose new and muscular ways to eradicate the meteoric rise in anti-Semitism in the U.S.

In the year and a half since the Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7, 2023, the number of antisemitic incidents in the U.S., according to Anti-Defamation League data, has surged by more than 200%, with more than 10,000 cases of harassment, threats, vandalism and outright violence against Jews. Of these, more than 2,000 incidents occurred on university campuses—an increase of nearly 500%.

To understand why Trump's executive order is so important, and what exactly it can do, we must first understand the reality that preceded the election of the 47th president, namely Joe Biden's years in the White House.

According to many American commentators, the former vice president's path to the Oval Office began to be paved more vigorously in the summer of 2020, when a white Minneapolis Police Department officer named Derek Chauvin used unreasonable force, causing the death of a black detainee named George Floyd.

Almost overnight, massive riots erupted in hundreds of U.S. cities, with dozens killed and more than a billion dollars in property damage. The riots were led by members of a relatively new movement called Black Lives Matter, which maintained deliberate ambiguity about its goals, leadership or any other transparency details expected of a public organization. Members of the movement accused white America of systemic racism and demanded far-reaching changes, chief among them the complete abolition of all police forces, under the slogan "Defund the Police."

As ridiculous as it may seem, the idea gained traction, and between Floyd's killing in May 2020 and December of that year, Black Lives Matter raised more than \$10 billion, including from major corporations and large donors to the Democratic Party. The Democrats immediately rallied to the flag, praising the movement and promising to continue

promoting its goals.

It didn't matter that reports from some brave and independent media outlets showed that the movement's leaders were using the funds mainly to buy themselves luxurious mansions. It didn't matter that the movement's official website clashed not only with Jews but also with the institution of the family, which—the movement declared—must be dismantled, since every family is oppressive by its very nature, and therefore children should only be raised in communal collectives. It didn't matter that large cities that implemented the promise to dismantle the police were immediately flooded with unprecedented waves of crime and violence.

It also didn't matter that the narrative that ignited the movement, that of police violence against blacks, was blatantly false:

Since 2015, when the U.S. began collecting precise data on policing, there have been about 10 million arrests per year, and exactly 14 unarmed black people were shot dead by police officers. Each of these cases can be examined individually, and ways can be suggested to reduce shooting of innocents, but it cannot be claimed, as members of Black Lives Matter and their associates in the Democratic Party did, that this is an epidemic of racism and violence.

None of the above data particularly interested Joe Biden and his colleagues. The presidential candidate called it a "historic movement for justice" and promised to support it and its goals.

He did not lie: On his first day as president, he signed Executive Order 13,985, which promised to allocate significant resources to diversity, equity and inclusion, or DEI. Those who supported the president and his policies claimed that this was nothing less than a revolution to finally eradicate the racism that pervades American society.

The less enthusiastic, on the other hand, argued that while there is room for improvement, America in 2020 is light years away from that of the '50s or '60s, and that allocating significant resources to fight a problem that is not really noticeable will only cause social upheaval.

Almost overnight, a significant part of American institutions—giant corporations, universities and the federal government itself—aligned with the Biden administration and began to divert significant budgets, partly encouraged by the administration, to DEI.

The University of Pennsylvania, for example, announced in 2020 an initiative called Projects for Progress, designed to invest vast resources in everything related to fighting all types of discrimination, real or imagined. Or, more accurately, almost all types of discrimination.

"After DEI took hold at Penn, antisemitic fervor on campus intensified," said Dr. Stanley Goldfarb, former vice dean of the university's medical school. In an article in City Journal, Goldfarb explained that all this is no coincidence.

"At the heart of DEI is a simple binary: The world is divided between oppressors and the oppressed. Proponents of DEI cast white people as oppressors and black people as the oppressed. While they apply this frame primarily to America, they often apply it to Israel, too. Apparently, Israel is a bastion of Jewish whiteness, with a racist commitment to shattering the lives of nonwhite Palestinians," he wrote.

In 2021, for example, Jay Greene, a fellow at the prestigious Heritage Foundation research institute, examined the social media accounts of 750 people holding key positions in DEI departments at 65 American universities, and found not only that almost all of them frequently shared content about Israel—despite the fact that the Jewish state, needless to say, is not supposed to play a significant role in the lives of those whose job definition is to ensure equality on campuses thousands of miles away from the Gaza Strip—but also that 96% of the content they shared about Israel was not only extremely critical but bordered on anti-Semitism.

A rare glimpse into the anti-Semitism of the DEI world was provided by Tabia Lee, a black non-Jewish woman who in 2021 was hired to lead the DEI efforts of De Anza College, near San Jose in Northern California.

In an article she wrote for the New York Post after her dismissal in 2023, Lee said that she was horrified, when she arrived at the college, to experience an atmosphere of antisemitic incitement and agitation. When she told her colleagues that Jewish students deserve treatment exactly like any other minority group, they replied that this was not true because Jews are Zionists, Zionism is racism and white supremacy, and therefore care should be taken, if Jewish events are allowed to take place at the college at all, that these events focus on

Israeli injustices against Palestinians.

Lee was appalled and immediately demanded that the college officially condemn anti-Semitism. The college leadership refused, and after students and colleagues in the DEI department called her derogatory names such as “filthy Zionist,” Lee lost her job.

The picture she painted is painful and accurate. Before Biden’s election, systematic anti-Semitism on campus was rare. After the Democrats’ return to the White House, universities began establishing DEI departments at a dizzying pace, and staffed them with faculty members who saw hatred of Israel not only as a legitimate opinion but also as a moral duty of anyone who considers themselves a good progressive.

This is why so few universities lifted a finger after Oct. 7, when students raised Hamas and Hezbollah flags, set up tents in the heart of the campuses, and attacked their Jewish friends: Anti-Semitism in universities was the result of years of built-in policy, not a momentary and surprising outbreak.

Just as university presidents turned a blind eye to anti-Semitism—a blindness that cost some of them, including the presidents of the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard and Columbia, their jobs, not to mention vast sums in donations from Jewish supporters—so did the Democrats.

On Oct. 31, 2024, for example, Republican lawmakers on the House Education and Workforce Committee published a 325-page report on the state of anti-Semitism in universities. The report summarized a year of interviews with hundreds of people, as well as a thorough examination of 400,000 pages of internal documents at prestigious institutions such as those of the Ivy League.

One of the most incriminating findings published in the report was a transcript of a conversation between Minouche Shafik, former president of Columbia University, and David Greenwald and Claire Shipman, the co-chairs of the university’s board of trustees.

Shafik told Greenwald and Shipman about a conversation she had with then-Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.).

Shafik asked Schumer, the highest-ranking Jewish politician in the U.S., what he thought the university should do with pro-Hamas students who disrupt studies on campus and harass Jews. And Schumer, as Shafik reported, said the university should do nothing, as anti-Semitism is a political issue that only interests Republicans.

Schumer, of course, denied the report, but it’s hard to imagine why an experienced leader such as Shafik would lie about such a matter in an internal conversation with her confidants. And even if the report is not accurate, it cannot be denied that the Biden administration did little, if anything, to ensure the safety of Jewish students on American campuses.

Which brings us back to Trump.

In the first weeks of his second term, Trump declared all-out war on DEI. He not only declared that every federal agency must immediately dismantle all DEI departments established in recent years, but also instructed the federal government to identify and immediately combat all DEI initiatives in the private sector that led to reverse discrimination.

Does such discrimination exist? The answer can be inferred from the panic that gripped giant companies such as Facebook, Google, Disney and others, which rushed to immediately dismantle DEI initiatives that just a few months ago boasted hundreds of employees and budgets of millions of dollars. It’s time, the president declared in several interviews, to build an American society “color-blind and based on abilities, not identities.”

And nowhere will this change be felt more prominently than in American universities: At least 240 of them in 36 states have announced, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education, the cancellation of all or a significant part of their DEI initiatives.

Public universities in North Carolina, for example, announced last week the cancellation of the requirement to take courses dealing with DEI to be eligible for a bachelor’s degree, and the University of Colorado removed the page dealing with DEI from its official website.

But many other universities declared war on the president and his policies, and vowed to continue on their path until further notice.

Princeton University President Christopher Eisgruber, for example, chose the famous British slogan from World War II—“Keep Calm and Carry On”—which left no doubt as to who are the good guys here and who are the potential destroyers of democracy. The university, he made clear, will continue with its DEI initiatives until all the lawsuits recently filed against Trump and his presidential orders

are resolved in court.

But it’s likely that Eisgruber and his fellow travelers will soon have to recalculate their route. The U.S. president and his people, explained Asaf Romirowsky, CEO of two influential academic associations—Scholars for Peace in the Middle East and the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa—are taking campus anti-Semitism extremely seriously, and intend to use far-reaching measures to ensure that Hamas and Hezbollah supporters face real punishments.

“Trump’s executive order regarding anti-Semitism,” Romirowsky told Israel Hayom, “makes it very clear which way the wind is blowing. It specifically mentions U.S. immigration laws, which order the immediate deportation of any noncitizen who supports or encourages organizations defined as terrorist organizations.”

Since a significant number of the loudest anti-Jewish activists on campus are foreigners staying in the U.S. on student visas, Romirowsky explained that it’s likely the administration will demand their immediate deportation. And this, it’s also likely, will put universities in a sensitive position: Columbia, for example, did everything in its power to avoid identifying the students who participated in the antisemitic riots on campus last year, and ordered a brief investigation that was closed after six days, claiming it failed to identify any of the students guilty of disturbing the peace.

Given the fact that most of the rioters were documented in videos uploaded to social media, the claim is patently ridiculous, but the university administration knows that if it points to names, and students are deported as a result, it will have to deal not only with internal riots but also with a potentially huge loss of income: As of 2023, 56% of Columbia’s students were foreign students, who usually pay full tuition. The university is not eager to do anything that might lead to harming this golden goose.

Unfortunately for them, Romirowsky explained, Trump has even sharper tools to hit universities’ pockets. “Columbia alone,” he said, “received more than \$6 billion from the federal government in the last five years in various grants. If Trump decides not to approve budgets for any academic institution that doesn’t comply with the law, it will mean the loss of vast sums.”

Trump can also significantly affect donations that constitute the bulk of universities’ capital. Columbia, for example, has a treasure chest of about \$14.8 billion, managed in various investment funds. During his first term, Trump passed a law that taxed net investment income of universities whose total endowment exceeds \$500,000 per student at a rate of 1.4%, which mainly affected large and wealthy universities. Last week, Rep. Mike Lawler (R-N.Y.), who is close to Trump, introduced a bill to raise the tax rate on investment income of wealthy universities to 10%.

“Universities need to understand that the president and his people didn’t come to play games,” Romirowsky said. “When violent demonstrators impose terror against Jews on campus, and when there’s no real freedom of expression for anyone who supports Israel, our universities are in danger of turning from acclaimed academic institutions into nests of hatred and violence. The previous administration saw this process happening and encouraged it. The current administration is committed to doing everything to change direction and protect the core values that have made the U.S. and its universities renowned worldwide.”

Romirowsky added that he expects another series of steps from the administration, including real investigations against anyone who refuses to enforce the law and ensure the safety of Jewish students.

He also said he hopes to see the administration taking sanctions against Qatar, which has invested \$4.7 billion in recent decades in American universities, making the country the largest foreign donor to higher education in the U.S. Qatari money, Romirowsky explained, very often leads to appointments of people with extreme antisemitic positions, as well as curricula that present Israel in a distorted and terrible light.

“It’s inconceivable that a country that supports terrorist organizations like Hamas and continues to fund America’s sworn enemies should have such extensive influence on what American students know and think about the world,” he said.

Judging by events of recent weeks, Trump understands all these threats very well. And unlike his predecessor in office, he takes them seriously. (Israel Hayom Feb 22)