



## 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*

harm it. School shootings can stop. Terrorism can stop. Large cities are not all equally the victims of car-ramming attacks. In fact 99% of cities have not experienced Islamist car-ramming and knife attacks. Some of the largest cities in the world, such as Tokyo, Seoul and Osaka, do not experience

## Events...

**May 21-28**

2017 marks the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem and to mark this extraordinary year the BAYT Brotherhood is running a second mission – in addition to its annual mission in December – to celebrate Yom Yerushalayim. The BAYT Yom Yerushalayim Mission to Israel will incorporate the World Mizrahi mission, plus add additional touring and Shabbat in Jerusalem. For information email Larry Zeifman at [LWZ@Zeifmans.ca](mailto:LWZ@Zeifmans.ca)

## Commentary...

### Terrorism Must not Become 'Part and Parcel' of our Daily Life

By Seth J. Frantzman

In what now seem like oddly prescient and tragic comments, London Mayor Sadiq Khan was quoted by The Independent before the terrorist attack in his city as saying the public must be vigilant against terrorism. Terrorist attacks, he said, were "part and parcel of living in a big city."

It has become de rigueur to repeat a refrain that terrorism is impossible to fully prevent. When I posted on Twitter arguing that pretending terrorism was a "fact of life" is akin to excusing the KKK lynchings as something that we "can't prevent," others disagreed. "It is all but impossible to prevent someone acting alone who decides to use a car as a weapon," one person replied. Throwing up our hands as a society in the face of daily violence is not a solution to terrorism, nor should it be a logical response.

Terrorism was not a fact of life in most cities a generation ago. It became a fact of life only recently in Europe, with the London and Madrid bombings, and then with the Islamic State-inspired and -controlled attacks in Paris and Brussels. Only recently has it graduated to the use of trucks and knives as weapons. Most terrorist attacks can be easily traced to their origin and inspiration. In the old days terrorism originating from Northern Ireland would often involve calling in bomb threats. In 2001 after the 9/11 attacks a Provisional IRA member told a radio station that IRA terrorism could not be compared with al-Qaida because the IRA gave warnings. But even al-Qaida cannot be compared with Islamic State because its method of attack in the early years tended to seek mass-murder spectacles, attacking embassies and the World Trade Center and Pentagon. It planned for years for these attacks and used a cell-like organizational structure.

We have now entered a period of lone-wolf style Islamist terrorism, almost all of it carried out by Sunni jihadists, many of them educated and born in the West. They are told they can be "lions" and "martyrs" for just driving over some people. To pretend that because some terrorists have decided in the past year to use vehicles to run people over means that is it now "part of life" is preposterous. It wasn't part of life a few years ago. It needn't be tomorrow. In the 15th century members of parliament used to carry swords. The Duke of Gloucester famously banned the carrying of swords by members at a parliament held in 1426 in Leicester. The members turned up with bats and clubs instead.

"We must get used to the carrying of bats and clubs," someone surely must have said at the time.

But we don't have to get used to people dueling in parliament.

New York was once called the "ungovernable" city. Crime was out of control. But crime was reduced. Car-jackings, once more common in California, have virtually disappeared as a leitmotif of American culture. Remember Steve Martin in L.A. Story having a shootout on an Los Angeles Freeway? Remember the 1960s race riots? Would anyone at the time have made the statement that race riots are just "part an parcel" of living in a city? That lynchings and cross-burnings are just part and parcel of living in the Old South? Don't like it, leave? Um, no. We don't have to accept lynchings. We don't have to accept witches being burned at the stake or the Inquisition, or everyday antisemitism, or sexual harassment in the workplace. We have a society and it is our duty to change those things that

such terrorist attacks.

It is true that some cities have been wracked by terrorist violence, just as in the 19th century there used to be anarchist terrorist violence in certain cities. But we can reduce the inspirations for Islamist extremism. We can change education systems and we can encourage communities to take responsibility for radicalization. Terrorism can be defeated. It may be true that our societies have to steel themselves for the changes that terrorism brings. Increased security has become a new and common feature in Europe. But let's be honest about the death toll caused by terrorism in the West. There were almost 800 murders in Chicago last year. Thousands have died in drug violence in Mexico and other states in Latin America. People in South Africa face rampant home invasions. Many societies experience different forms of terrorism. Some societies have virtually no civil violence. There are very few murders per capita in Japan, Iceland, Singapore, Norway and Kuwait. There are countries with zero terrorist attacks. Not a few – zero. There are cities with zero terrorist attacks.

Claiming terror attacks are a normal aspect of everyday life not only normalizes and excuses them, but refuses to hold the perpetrators responsible. It turns murder into something akin to pollution. But pollution has a cause, a man-made cause, as does terror. Anything made by humanity can be confronted by society and reduced and eliminated. We must never accept the view that murder is normal and part and parcel of life. Our ideal in society should be zero murders. Zero terror attacks. Zero car jackings. No pick-pockets. No lynchings. No KKK. No neo-Nazis. No ISIS. Anything more than zero is not acceptable. (Jerusalem Post Mar 23)

### Truth is not a Political Position By Morton A. Klein

Truth is not a political position. Yet some who disagree with the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) wrongly label it and similar groups "right wing," "ultra-right" or even "extreme." Hurling such labels avoids fair, reasoned, fact-based debate on the issues, and instead attempts to delegitimize us.

It wasn't "far right" or "right wing" for ZOA to predict the Oslo accords would lead to more terrorism, not peace – when on the very same date the accords were signed in Washington, Yasser Arafat broadcasted his "stages" message in Arabic: "Since we cannot defeat Israel in war we do this in stages. We take any and every territory that we can of Palestine, and establish sovereignty there, and we use it as a springboard to take more. When the time comes, we can get the Arab nations to join us for the final blow against Israel."

Then Arafat and later Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas failed to fulfill any of their signed agreements. Arafat and Abbas did not stop inciting hatred and violence against Jews, ban terrorist groups like Hamas or collect illegal weapons. Instead the PA's leaders named schools, streets and sports teams after Jew-killers and glorified terrorists with posters and parades. The PA's official emblems, stationary, school atlases, maps, stamps and textbooks show all of Israel as Palestine. The PA teaches its children to use knives and car-rammings to "liberate" "Palestine," and pays terrorists to murder Jews.

Opposing Oslo was a rational, centrist position.

Nor was it "right wing" to oppose the unilateral Gaza/Northern Samaria withdrawal that heartlessly removed 10,000 Jews from their homes. Druse MK Ayoub Kara correctly warned that Hamas – whose charter calls for the murder of all Jews and Israel's destruction – would take over Gaza and make it a base for attacking Israel. Evacuating every Jew from Gaza without any Palestinian concession sent a provocative message of Israeli weakness and that Jews had no right to live there. Opposing the Gaza withdrawal was a rational centrist position. Americans opposed the withdrawal by four to one (63% to 16% – McLaughlin & Associates June 2005 poll). The nationwide Likud referendum in Israel also opposed the withdrawal by 60% to 40%.

It's also not "right wing" to oppose dividing Jerusalem. It's a myth that Jerusalem is holy to Islam. The word "Jerusalem" never appears in the

Koran; Jerusalem appears 700 times in Judaism's holy books. When Jordan occupied eastern Jerusalem (1948-1967), it allowed Jerusalem to become a slum and didn't allow Jews access to Jewish holy places. The Jordanians destroyed 58 synagogues in eastern Jerusalem. No Arab leader except Jordan's King Hussein ever visited Jerusalem.

Supporting the right of Jews to live in Judea and Samaria ("West Bank") is also a rational, centrist human-rights position. Judea and Samaria is the Jewish people's ancient, historic, religious homeland, which the Jewish people are entitled to under international law. We are called "Jews" because we are from Judea. If it's Arab land, why is "Palestine" a Roman name? The PLO's 1964 charter said that the PLO "doesn't exercise any territorial sovereignty over the West Bank." And in 1988, Jordan relinquished all claims to the West Bank. It is racist to not support the right of Jews to live there.

There is also nothing extreme about opposing a Hamas/Fatah Palestinian Arab state. (Fatah is the PA's ruling party, and is politically aligned with Hamas.) A Palestinian state would be an armed terrorist state threatening Israel, similar to Hamas-controlled Gaza – but with even more dangerous missiles near Israel's major population centers. Polls show that Hamas would win elections in both Gaza and the West Bank (Reuters). Iran bragged three years ago that it had already begun arming the West Bank and that its efforts will lead to Israel's annihilation (AP).

Thus ZOA's views are widely shared.

In an October 2016 American Jewish Committee (AJC) poll, 81% of American Jews agreed that the Arabs' goal is not obtaining territory "but rather the destruction of Israel." Surely all these Jews are not "extreme" or "right wing." Most of them voted for Hillary Clinton.

The reality is that the PA does not want a state if it means accepting the Jewish state or making any significant concession. The Palestinian Arabs were offered a state in 1937 (Peel Commission); 1947 (UN Res. 181); 2000 (Ehud Barak offer); 2008 (Ehud Olmert offer) – but said no every time. And they never established a state when Arabs controlled the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem and Gaza from 1948-67. Statehood will also not transform the PA into a human rights-loving peaceful society. Syria, Libya, Iran and North Korea are sovereign states. Have they become peace-loving?

Prior to heading the ZOA, I worked with two-time Noble laureate (chemistry/peace) Linus Pauling. Professor Pauling would frequently say: "Mort, what does the evidence require us to believe?" This levelheaded reasoning guides ZOA's outlook and policies. We look at the facts, instead of engaging in divorced-from-reality fantasies and wishful thinking. As Winston Churchill said: "You must look at the facts, for the facts are looking at you."

The positions of ZOA and like-minded people have been proven painfully correct. It's time to stop labeling our rational centrist positions as "right wing" or worse. (Jerusalem Post Mar 22)

*The writer is the president of the Zionist Organization of America.*

---

### **Follow the Money** By Moshe Elad

In the 1970s, an "innocent" Geneva-based charity organization was exposed as supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization. Unmasked as PLO sympathizers, the Swiss feigned innocence, claiming the group was merely "fostering cooperation." The Israeli defense establishment agreed. The group was, indeed, fostering cooperation between two terrorist groups - Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

At the time, the PLO was able to turn fundraising for terrorist activity into an art form. Since the Palestinian Authority's creation in 1994, Hamas has emerged as the dominant Palestinian organization in raising funds for terrorism.

The global fundraising network, headed by Kuwaiti Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, operates in dozens of states. Some nations, like Iran and Syria, sponsor terrorist directly, albeit covertly; other countries, like some European nations, disguise this support by funding "innocent" aid groups; and others still, like Turkey, do so overtly, by funding what they call education and welfare ventures.

The recent arrest of Muhamad Murtaja, the manager of the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency in Gaza, who allegedly embezzled millions of the aid group's funds and funneled them to Hamas, may embarrass Ankara. Murtaja, a member of Hamas' military wing, was named to his position over the role Turkey, under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has assumed in aiding the "besieged" Palestinians in Gaza.

Turkey recently tasked Murtaja with ensuring that the \$25 million earmarked for the enclave's rehabilitation finds its way to the relevant construction and infrastructure contractors, schools and welfare organizations, but instead, the money ended up in Hamas' hands: It appears \$13 million were given to needy families, \$4 million went to pay for mass weddings, \$3 million were given as aid to families in Gaza, \$3 million were used as student grants, and the remainder \$2 million funded food parcels. But these funds did not benefit Gazans as a whole -- only "the families of Hamas operatives and supporters."

What consequences can this incident have? First, it will embarrass Ankara. Someone in Erdogan's government will be made to pay, which

comes at a very inconvenient time for the Turkish president. The resumption of relations with Israel after a prolonged diplomatic chill, the fact the rapprochement saw Turkey's demands met nearly in full, and its attempts to once again receive Israeli defense aid, means Turkey will have to provide some sort of explanation.

Erdogan's government will most likely excuse the incident as a simple affair -- after all, TIKA is in the business of "fostering cooperation." Israel, for its part, will most likely exercise restraint and move on.

Secondly, Israel will likely leverage this incident with the Trump administration, which is eager to fight terror funding.

Terrorist groups using what is perceived as legitimate fronts to mask their operations and raise money is nothing new. U.S. President Donald Trump might be surprised to learn that back in the 1980s, under the guise of a "social welfare organization," senior Hamas official Musa Abu Marzuq raised funds in the U.S. to finance the 1989 abduction and murder of IDF soldiers Avi Sasportas and Ilan Saadon.

Will discovering the latest embezzlement scandal drive a wedge between Hamas leadership and the people of Gaza? Chances of that are slim to none. The enclave's miserable population will suffer this humiliation in silence and move on.

When funding terrorism is the result of a combination of radical Islamic ideology, black market economy that fuels Islamic terrorism and, of course, a burning hatred of Israel, there is no point in expecting universal standards will apply -- even when it comes to "humanitarian aid." (Israel Hayom Mar 23)

*The writer, a colonel in the IDF reserves, is a lecturer on national security issues at Western Galilee College.*

---

### **Undeserving of the Israel Prize** By Haim Shine

Israel allows extensive freedom of artistic expression and creativity. In the name of art, students showcase posters depicting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with a hangman's noose; poets unleash harsh verses in the spirit of Der Stuermer; and playwrights portray IDF soldiers as warmongers. Tolerance toward artistic creation lies at the core of Israeli democracy, even in cases in which the artistic creation is of questionable aesthetic value.

For decades, since the early days of the state, the historical iterations of the Labor party have dominated culture, media and academia. The "members" divided prizes for culture and creativity among themselves, promoted each other in academia, and praised one another in the media.

Unfortunately, the Right, which included the religious community and Mizrahi Jews, was excluded from the cultural establishment. To make matters worse, it accepted this exclusion submissively, having been convinced by the proprietors of culture and knowledge that it did not belong in Habima Theater, the Cameri Theater, or the Tel Aviv concert hall, which were "reserved" for bleeding-heart liberals and artists who held the same homogeneous set of ideas.

Yair Garbuz is an important painter and author. His work, influenced by American pop art, and his collages of piercing social criticism, are commendable. Throughout his artistic career, Garbuz has won several awards from his artistic friends, who share his cultural and social views, and has held various key positions in the art world that profoundly influenced future generations of Israeli artists and the cultural fabric of our country.

However, when it comes to Garbuz being a leading contender for the Israel Prize in fine arts, enough is enough. The cultural establishment cannot do as it pleases. The Israel Prize is not a sectorial or political award. It might be decided by a committee but it is granted on behalf of all Israeli citizens to individuals who have made significant contribution to research, science, society, humanities and culture.

Israeli society as a whole decides who will receive the award, and it is unthinkable that an individual who holds the opinions that Garbuz does, as clearly expressed ahead of the 2015 election, be recognized and appreciated by the same people he publicly ridiculed and humiliated for petty political purposes.

In the history of human culture, classic masterpieces were created by artists, writers and poets whose opinions and conduct as human beings were miserable. Indeed, there is an age-old debate, mostly unresolved, about separating the artist from the art. But when it comes to an award granted by the state, the dignity of the public must be honored.

Two years ago, Garbuz gave a speech at a demonstration in Rabin Square in opposition to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in which he called a certain segment of the Israeli public "superstitious amulet-kissing idol worshippers who prostrate themselves on the graves of the saints."

Everyone understood whom he was referring to, just as everyone knew whom the late entertainer Dudu Topaz was referring to in his infamous "riffraff" speech during the 1981 election campaign.

Well, I am one of those amulet-kissers Garbuz was mocking and I refuse, like many others, to lend my name and tax money to an award for

someone who scorns and denounces my faith, my outlook, and my way of life.

It was not Education Minister Naftali Bennett who prevented Garbuz from being awarded the prize, and he should not be accused of undermining freedom of artistic expression, or given undeserved credit.

The prize was revoked under the Israel Prize regulations, which stipulate that if the selection committee fails to reach a unanimous vote, the prize would be canceled. I do not know which committee member was the dissenting vote, but he too deserves an award for saving the honor of many Israeli citizens. (Israel Hayom Mar 23)

---

### **Beware Doomsday Prophecies** By Dror Eydar

Former Mossad Director Tamir Pardo, speaking at a security and strategy conference hosted by the Netanya Academic College Tuesday, outlined a bleak vision for Israel's future unless the Palestinian issue is resolved. He blamed Israel for burying its head in the sand and ignoring an existential threat.

One can only wonder why he made this statement, as if there is one thing Israel's governments have focused on more than any other issue, it is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This topic has also been the primary focus of public discourse and the media for about a century. Unlike the Jewish-Israeli side, the Arab-Palestinian side has never consented to declaring an end to the conflict and all demands, even if they were met in full.

I'm convinced that when it comes to daring Mossad operations, Pardo was able to think "outside the box," but when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict he mutters something about occupation, the demographic problem, and what kind of country we will bequeath our children.

Pardo spoke of the "occupation" in Judea and Samaria -- but Israel is no longer present in the Gaza Strip and it is still seen as an occupier. And what of Israeli Arabs? Does having the right to vote mitigate their "occupation"? The Arab sector's leadership does not accept their Israeli citizenship and strives to revoke Israel's Jewish nature. Do prisoners who have the right to vote for their wardens feel any freer?

As for the demographic issue, Pardo named the Palestinians in Gaza as a threat to Zionism and Israel's Jewish character. Why? Gaza harbors an independent Hamas entity. As for Judea and Samaria, Pardo spoke of between 2 million and 2.5 million Palestinians. But for more than a decade now, a serious population survey has been challenging demographers who have been intimidating us with an Arab majority from the time of Israel's inception till now. The survey was published by the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies and its findings, which speak of 1.75 million or fewer Palestinians, have been confirmed by Nicholas Eberstadt, a senior demographer at the American Enterprise Institute.

Moreover, tens of thousands of Palestinians leave each year: Lt. Col. Eyal Zeevi of the Civil Administration estimates that some 175,000 Palestinians have left Judea and Samaria via the Allenby crossing in the past 15 years alone. What about those who left through other border crossings?

Like other defense and political official, Pardo speaks of "resolving" the Palestinian issue, but are they willing to shake off their fixation and dare think that there might not be a solution? The solution is linked to the causal perception of Western philosophy, which seeks a cause for every phenomenon; therefore, if we find the cause of the problem, we can find a solution.

This is a rationalist view that assumes both sides share a similar perception of reality and similar values. Look around -- do we share a similar rationale? Even the perception of time in the Middle East is different than that of the West. In this sphere, the cradle of human civilization, not every problem has a solution, and 100 years are a mere blip on a continuum spanning millennia.

Only 73 years ago, in 1944, the extermination of the Jews reached its peak. Within a few months more than 500,000 Jews, transported from Hungary to the death camps, had been exterminated. At the same time, the Jewish community in British Palestine numbered less than 500,000 Jews. Logic did not lend itself to the possibility of establishing an independent Jewish state only four years later while overcoming superior armies; and it certainly did not lend itself to the possibility that a million immigrants would make aliyah a decade later. Even a fictional book whose plot would have raised the possibility that the Jewish state would be in economic, security, cultural, scientific, religious and technological position it is today, would have been branded as madness.

The opinions of Pardo and other defense officials are no better than anyone else's. The former Mossad chief's expertise lies with defending Israel, but he is no expert on Israel's future or the Zionist objective. Pardo has chosen a side in an ancient debate between two schools of history: revolution versus slow evolution; hasten the end versus those opposing calculating it.

The Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the redemption of the land and the people, resolved this issue, saying, "The smallest shall become a thousand, and the least a mighty nation; I the Lord will hasten it in its time" (Isaiah 60:22). The latter five words illustrate the difference between those subscribing to the "hasten it" school of thought, who would see the end come sooner rather than later; and those subscribing to the "in its time" school of thought, who are patient and believe that redemption will come in due time, in a historical process more solid than any doomsday prophecy.

(Israel Hayom Mar 22)

---

### **Falsehoods and False Hopes** By Ruthie Blum

Fatah Central Committee Secretary Jibril Rajoub told foreign reporters on Monday that he was encouraged by U.S. President Donald Trump's overtures to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, which ostensibly indicated a strong commitment to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Referring to Trump's phone conversation with Abbas, whom he invited to the White House for a meeting, Rajoub said the U.S. administration is in a "stage of exploration" on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ways to achieve "real and serious" peace between the sides.

There are two main problems with Rajoub's enthusiasm. One is that no matter who occupies the Oval Office, there will be no peace between Israel and the PA until the latter decides to stop delegitimizing Israel and killing and encouraging violence against Jews. The other is that Rajoub himself is among those leaders who promote, in word and deed, the elimination of the Jewish state. He is thus both deluding himself and lying about the extent to which Trump has a say in the matter.

But this is par for the course for someone like Rajoub, the head of the Palestinian Football Association and Olympic Committee, who uses sports as an additional tool to incite against Israel.

Like the rest of his fellow Fatah honchos, Rajoub pretends for international consumption that it is only the "malignant cancer" of occupation under dispute. Aside from the fact that the land in question was not "Palestinian" to begin with -- and the entity known today as the "Palestinian people" was invented after the Six-Day War in 1967 -- Rajoub and the rest of the PA make no bones in Arabic about considering the establishment of Israel in 1948 a "nakba" ("catastrophe") in need of eradicating.

This is old news by now, which is why no agreement negotiated with the Palestinians has led to anything but bloodshed. Trump may not be fully cognizant of this yet, but he will come to learn that deals with mendacious murderers are simply not possible.

Someone might want to fill him in on who Rajoub -- touted as a possible successor to 81-year-old Abbas -- actually is.

In 1970, Rajoub was arrested, tried and convicted for throwing a grenade at an IDF bus and for membership in an armed group, and sentenced to life in prison. While incarcerated, he led hunger strikes and protests, while studying Hebrew, the language of the enemy.

In 1985, he was among the 1,150 Arab prisoners freed in the Ahmed Jibril agreement, the exchange for three Israeli hostages held by the terrorist organization the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command. Upon his release, Rajoub resumed terrorist activity and was detained on several occasions. In between and following his bouts in jail, Rajoub continued to work with terrorist cells in the West Bank, and was arrested for his part in the First Intifada. In 1988, he was deported to Lebanon, from where he moved to Tunisia, serving as an "intifada adviser" to PLO chief Yasser Arafat's deputy, Khalil al-Wazir, and subsequently -- after Wazir's assassination by Israeli commandos -- as a close aide to Arafat himself.

After the signing of the Oslo Accords, Rajoub was allowed in 1994 to return to the West Bank, where he became head of the Palestinian Preventive Security Force and then national security adviser to Arafat. This role entailed using harsh methods, including torture, to thwart any opposition to his boss. Since that time, he has been busy glorifying terrorists who died as "martyrs" while killing Israelis, naming soccer stadiums and sports events after them.

In 2013, during a visit to Lebanon, Rajoub gave an interview to the Hezbollah-affiliated TV network Al Mayadeen in which he said, "We, the Palestinians, are the enemies of Israel. ... Until now we have not had nuclear weapons, but in the name of Allah, if we had nuclear weapons, we'd be using them."

If Trump is harboring illusions about his ability to employ the "art of the deal" with Palestinian leaders like these, he will have a rude awakening. And if Rajoub is imagining that Trump can be hoodwinked by Abbas, he has not been paying attention. If there's one thing that the new U.S. president cannot tolerate, it is having his intelligence insulted. (Israel Hayom Mar 21)

## **Pro-Israel Media also Exists** By Smadar Bat Adam

There is no doubt that the pro-Israel news videos by Canadian journalist Faith Goldy for The Rebel media website are a breath of fresh air in the continuous heat wave of the anti-Israel global media.

The most recent video, which includes additional insight on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict gathered from Goldy's recent trip to Israel, quickly reached about a million viewers and even roused the curiosity of Channel 2, which dedicated an item to the video, even if it seemed a bit forced, during Friday night's broadcast. The viral video, which was filmed in the Golan Heights with Syria in the background, seeks, like Goldy's other reports, to challenge the average viewer -- who has been fed on a diet of fake news about Israel -- by busting common myths.

Take, for example, the myth that a "high wall divides between Palestinians and Israelis," which has recently generated buzz anew thanks to graffiti artist Banksy's Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem, which promises "the worst view in the world." Goldy addresses the barrier, saying, "It's not a wall! It's a giant fence! Only about 5% of it is a wall!" She goes on: "We found that Palestinians can actually freely come into Israel so long as they're not carrying any pipe bombs or explosive vests. They have to go through the sort of security that's akin to essentially going through an airport." She then explains to her viewers that it is the Israelis who are not allowed to cross over to the other side of the fence.

And for those who think that the difficulty in crossing over is only a problem for Israelis, Goldy clarifies that she, as a Christian, sought to visit Bethlehem, but cannot safely do so because the city is full of mosques and posters praising and sanctifying terrorists and acts of terrorism. The Western world already knows this story. And then she brings up another fact that you wouldn't hear from the media that is hostile to Israel -- the Israeli military hospital on the Israeli side of the fence treats Syrian women aged 8 to 80 who have been brutally raped by Islamic State operatives.

Sounding a bit uncomfortable, Channel 2's Friday night host, Danny Kushmaro, told Goldy that he liked how she stated that Palestinians cannot move to Israel, and went on to say, "It's not east to be a Palestinian, you know." Goldy was not led astray. To her, it is clear that this is the result of acts of terrorism that claimed many lives, among them children's, and that the government of Israel is not creating difficulties out of a desire to make life hard for the Palestinians, but rather out of the duty to protect its citizens.

Goldy, wearing a cross around her neck, spoke of Zionism, and Kushmaro told her that he knows Israel is far from perfect, and that he also feels the U.N. is too critical of Israel. He went on to ask her how she explains the latter, and Goldy said that the U.N. is run by a group of "Islamoglobalists," comprising countries that deny Israel's existence, such as Saudi Arabia, which, absurdly, sits on the Human Rights Council, and raises human rights complaints against Israel. She went on to explain that the hostility toward Israel in the global media is influenced by haters of Israel who fund various non-governmental organizations, such as the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, as well as academic institutions, against the background of ignorance, creating fertile ground for libel and lazy journalism.

Goldy has been busting hateful myths against Israel for several years now. But at a time when her clear voice corresponds with that of U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley, who is calling on the international body to stop its constant condemnations of Israel, and with the voices against Islamic terrorism in Europe, it seems that a space for listening has opened. Regardless, a report by a foreign journalist supporting Israel has drawn interest within Israel and around the world. Perhaps we are hearing the footsteps of the Messiah, or at least a sign of the awakening against Israel hatred. (Israel Hayom Mar 20)

---

## **It's the Sovereignty, Stupid!** By Douglas Altabel

There has been an increasing drumbeat of analysis as to the growing divide between Israeli and American Jewry, and, as befits any Jewish issue, a virtual panoply of reasons given.

For example, there has been the intense study of the degree of affiliation and affinity of the American Jewish community, provided by the Pew Foundation reports, all showing rampant intermarriage and a significant lessening with identifying oneself as a Jew by religion, as opposed to being a cultural Jew, a Jew by background, or just a plain Jew.

This has led to the hypothesis that a loosening of ties with Judaism would consequently result in a diminishment of interest in and attachment to Israel.

Add to this mix the heightened emotional intensity since the recent US presidential election, when the Americans living in Israel voted significantly for Trump, while American Jewry voted overwhelmingly for Clinton.

I would suggest that all of the above, and more, are not only relevant, but also probably contributory factors. However, bestriding these various

explanations is an inescapable reality that has existed for decades, but is not being pointed to as a determinative explanation. That factor is of course the difference between a sovereign majority community and a small minority seeking to maintain its position in a much larger polity.

Ariel Sharon famously observed that, when it came to the responsibilities and pressures imposed on a prime minister, "what you see from there is different from what you see from here."

By extension, I would suggest that the same can be said about making decisions, formulating policies and priorities and developing the sensibilities of a society. The reality of responsibility and ultimate accountability renders a situation very different from one where people are just making recommendations, but will not be accountable for their implementation or implications.

Sovereignty is simultaneously the greatest blessing of national self-determination, yet also quite messy, and at times ugly. Sovereignty has consequences. The sovereign has direct and ultimate control over many facets of the lives of its citizens and residents.

It is sovereignty, pure and simple, that has produced the sense that Israeli and American Jews are living in parallel universes. The difference can be captured by my experience (and that of many others I know) as a young kibbutz volunteer in the mid-1970s. Here I was, a 24-year-old Ivy League grad and Ivy League law school dropout picking bananas under the tutelage of young Israelis who had recently fought the Yom Kippur War. Now they were back home, hoping to assume leadership roles in the kibbutz they were raised in.

It absolutely floored me to discover that they were my age, and even, in some cases, younger. To a one, they struck me as being 10 years older; not because they were aged, but because of how they carried themselves.

They had been through the crucible of battle, fighting for their country. I had been playing at anti-war demonstrations which were, as often as not, a way to meet girls.

They had been protecting their families and community; I had been trying to figure out what to do with my life. They had been laden with the inescapable responsibilities of living in a sovereign country with no safety net, while I had no such weight cast upon my shoulders.

That existential gap continues on the macro level some 40 years later. Israelis, their leaders and their citizens, must make and live with decisions that will impact all of them, as well as well their neighbors, allies and adversaries.

American Jews can "Just Do It!" or "Go for It!" while Israeli Jews have to be prepared to "Just Live with It!" Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the cringe-a-thon known as Israeli coalition politics. For all its raucous, occasionally farcical circus atmosphere, there is an implicit genius to the process that recognizes that we all will have to live with whatever comes out the door marked "legislation."

Therefore, 'tis better not to succeed than to fail. This is the underlying wisdom of the Knesset. It would be better not to legislate, or embark on an initiative, no matter how attractive, than risk imposing something counterproductive, not to mention harmful, on the Israeli people.

To many American Jews, this often appears to be a failure of will, a cave-in to one-track constituent groups, producing the need "to save Israel from itself." While all of the above might have validity, the American analysis often lacks the empathy of the realization that only Israelis would have to live with the consequences of American suggested or imposed solutions.

This is largely why Israelis roll their eyes at American finger wagging, which of course only infuriates the frustrated Americans even more.

The solution is not easy, but the Birthright trips provide a healthy dose of the reality of what it means to be living in one's own country. Americans visiting Israel need to see the precariousness of the geopolitical reality here, such that a mortar fired from hilltops in what might become sovereign Palestine could paralyze the entire coastal plain, including Ben Gurion Airport.

The recognition that the decisions made here will have profound consequences should be a humbling speed bump in the rush to offer advice, demand solutions and to be increasingly critical over the continued impasse that is not likely to end any time soon.

Americans need to realize that the margins for error here are dramatically smaller than they are in the US, where Jews have the luxury to advocate for positions that sound great, make one feel righteous, but might have disastrous real-world consequences.

Israelis willingly have assumed the joys and burdens of sovereignty. American Jews should celebrate this reality and understand the pressures and constraints that sovereignty conveys. Doing so is likely to bring the communities closer together, generating mutual respect and appreciation. (Jerusalem Post Mar 22)

*The writer is an executive board member of Im Tirtzu and a board member of the Israel Independence Fund.*