



Eyeing the Future: Does Israel's stalemate portend electoral problems in Canada and the U.S.?

Editorial

Israel, Trump, Isaiah, and the Defense of the West Against Radical Anti-Israel "Progressive Socialists"

Frederick Krantz

Upcoming elections—Israeli, American, and, yes, Canadian—are the theme of this *ISRAFAX* edition. In this regard, a colleague from France recently wrote to me, concerned that Donald Trump's supposed mis-steps could "100% ensure" that one of the leftist Democratic Presidential candidates would be elected in 2020. This impression may well be widespread in European circles, and here, as well. My reply to him, which touches on themes in this *ISRAFAX* issue, is summarized here.

First, insofar as Trump's defeat is concerned, far from being "100%" certain; if anything, the reverse is probable. Given the mediocre quality of the current 20+ [!] Democratic nominees (including the increasingly faltering front-runner, Joe Biden), and the utopian, indeed fantasmagorical nature of their political plans, Trump's election is more than possible.

After all, he won in 2016 as a largely unknown quantity, running against an experienced Democrat, with the Party solidly behind her. Now Trump has a proven record— notably, but not only, economic—of solid achievements. He is making headway on the black, Hispanic, and women's votes, reflecting an economic boom based on high employment, low inflation, increasing jobs, and rising wages.

The Russian "collusion" hysteria, capped by the Mueller testimony fiasco, has taken some of the wind out of the anti-Trump sails, and the subsequent campaign to tar him as a "white racist" is also falling flat.

The parallel Democratic political-media complex's absurd attempts to paint him as an anti-Semite has also been unsuccessful. Quite the reverse—he is undoubtedly the most pro-Israel President in American history (a fact not lost on the Arab world's anti-Trump propaganda machine).

With a Jewish daughter and grandchildren, and many Jewish advisers (including his son-in-law and Peace Process representative, Jared Kushner), Trump has recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the Golan Heights as part of Israel. He is also pressuring the Palestinians politically and economically to come, finally, to the negotiating table, has de-funded UNRWA, and set aside the disastrous Obama-Iran nuclear JCPOA agreement.

Barring some unforeseen major domestic or foreign-policy mistake, the probability is high that Trump will be re-elected. And that is crucial, because the Democratic Party, increasingly dominated by its extreme-left "progressive" wing, is departing from its long pro-Israel tradition.

The "Squad"-led progressive caucus looks increasingly like the British Labour Party, but with a difference. While there is growing internal opposition within Britain's long-standing Socialist party to Corbyn and his antisemitic followers, in the U.S Democratic Party, the radical left, unopposed, is growing in influence. Unimpeded by "moderate" Democrats who, led by Nancy Pelosi, are tongue-tied for fear of alienating the "diversity"-dazzled radical base, the Democrats are increasingly shifting to the radical, and anti-Israel left.

This silence may well prove suicidal, since mindless "Green Revolution"-, Everything-for-Free-, and "white nationalist

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Rosh Hashanah [5777]*

Baruch Cohen z"l

According to tradition, *Rosh Hashanah*, the "New Year" and Yom Kippur, the Day of Judgement, are "*Yomim Noraim*", "days of awe" – solemn days. The significance, history, and message of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* are embodied in the great treasures of Jewish classical writings: the Bible, Talmud, medieval theological works, poetic interpretive Midrashim, and other religio-philosophical texts.

The High Holy Days' prayers are of universal significance – not only for the individual, nor even for Israel and the Jewish People alone, but for the entire world, for all mankind – for its redemption, righteousness and truth. On *Rosh Hashanah*, the *shofar's* (ram's – horn) blasts call us to remember the just an ethical value of Judaism, and its call for peace and a harmonious gathering of all people. The ringing blast of the shofar also reminds us of our mighty and proud Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and its acts of heroism in defense of Israel and the Jewish People. "*Tzedek, Tzedec Tirdof: Justice, Justice, you shall pursue!*", demands *Tanakh*, our Bible.

Happy New Year – Shana Tova [5777]* to our *CIJR* family and friends, and to all our supporters. May the coming year be a year of Peace for Israel, for the Middle East and the entire world.

Shana Tova u'mtuka! Have a good and sweet New Year!

(*CIJR is proud to reprint former Research Chairman Baruch Cohen's Rosh Hashanah message that originally appeared in the October 3, 2016* Israfax.*)

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ISRAFAX is the research publication of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, an independent and non-partisan non-profit educational foundation devoted to the study of Israel, the Middle East and the Jewish world. It provides CIJR members with key data and a digest of international analysis and opinion on relevant issues. We welcome your letters, comments and materials, which can be faxed or e-mailed (see cover.)

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ISSN # 1193-7246

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WEEKLY QUOTES

“This nation has made extraordinary accomplishments in the economy, security and diplomacy... We have proven that Israel can be transformed from a small country that is located in the corner of the Middle East into a central power in the world.” – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during an interview with *Israel Hayom*. (WIN, July 18, 2019)

“President Trump has been very clear. Iran won’t have a nuclear weapon on our watch. We’ll stop it.” – Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during an interview with Chris Wallace on *Fox News*. (WIN, Sept. 9, 2019)

“I don’t give Iran immunity anywhere. Iran is a country, power, who has declared her desire to annihilate Israel. She is trying to establish bases against us everywhere.” – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. Israel recently struck a weapons depot in Iraq it believed Iran was using to move weapons to Syria. (WSJ, Aug. 23, 2019)

“If you are a collaborator with Hezbollah regardless of your political party and ideological affiliation, if you’re offering material support, we are going to target you. This not about the Lebanese Shia community, this is about Hezbollah.” - Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorist Financing Marshall Billingslea said. He spoke on the impact of U.S. sanctions against Iran and its proxy Hezbollah. **“Our efforts are having a clear impact, leaving Iran with scarce funds to spend in its perfidious pursuits. Hezbollah is also feeling the squeeze - its fighters have been furloughed or assigned to reserves, where they earn far lower salaries, its media employees laid off, payment to families slashed.”** (N World, Sept. 13, 2019)

“The Palestinians need to accept [Trump’s] proposal or stop complaining.” – Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, in a meeting with leaders of Jewish communities in the U.S., regarding Hamas’s year-long clashes along the Gaza-Israel border. (BESA, Aug. 25, 2019)

“Thus far, Israel and the Middle East have not been major issues in the 2020 Democratic Primary. This must change. With the progressive zeitgeist in America moving so strongly and swiftly against Israel, the American people need to know where these candidates stand on the issue.” – Political columnist David Markkus commenting on the brouhahah over Reps. Ilhan Omar’s and Rashida Tlaib’s cancelled trip to Israel. (NY Post, Aug. 23, 2019)

“The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is deeply troubling – not only for its shocking omission of any mention of Jewish Americans or anti-Semitism, or its blatant anti-Israel bias and praise of BDS, but for its clear attempt to politically indoctrinate students to adopt the view that Israel and its Jewish supporters are part of “interlocking systems of oppression and privilege” that must be fought with “direct action” and “resistance.” – Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, co-founder and director of the AMCHA Initiative, commenting on a new, highly controversial proposed ethnic-studies curriculum for high schools by the California Department of Education. (JNS, Aug. 2, 2019)



Linda Sarsour stumps for presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders

SHORT TAKES

MONTREAL LIBERAL CANDIDATE TURFED FOLLOWING ANTI-SEMITISM ALLEGATIONS (Ottawa) – Canada’s Liberal Party, on the eve of a federal election, removed Hassan Guillet as the candidate for the Saint-Leonard-Saint Michel riding in Montreal after some of his past remarks were called anti-Semitic by a Jewish human rights group. The former imam came to [public recognition after he spoke at the funeral of several victims of the 2017 Quebec City mosque attack. (Global News, Aug. 30, 2019)

NOVA SCOTIA PRIEST FIRED FOR PRAYING FOR ISRAEL (Halifax) – the head priest of St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Church, Father Vladimir Tobin, was forcibly retired for delivering a sermon that honoured Judaism and Israel. He received a letter from the Orthodox Church in America Archbishop Irene, the archbishop of Ottawa and Canada on Aug. 12, informing him that he is being forcibly retired due to the alleged “Jewish twist in your ministry.” The phrase likely alludes to a sermon Father Tobin delivered that asked congregants to pray for Israel. (CJN, Sept. 5, 2019)

RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARAB STATES ARE WARMING (Jerusalem) — A delegation of six journalists from Arab countries, including Iraq and Saudi Arabia, visited Israel, where they were presented with Israeli positions on diplomatic and geopolitical issues. In turn, Israeli journalists attended the Bahrain conference on economic aspects of an American peace plan between Israel and the Palestinians. (Jerusalemonline, July 24, 2019)

ISRAEL PARTICIPATING IN U.S.-LED MARITIME SECURITY MISSION IN GULF (Strait of Hormuz) – Speaking at a closed-door session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Israeli Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz said Israel is assisting the mission with intelligence and in other unspecified areas. (Jewish Press, Aug. 6, 2019)

TRUMP APPOINTS NEW U.S. ENVOY TO MIDEAST AFTER GREENBLATT RESIGNS (Washington) – Avi Berkowitz will replace U.S. envoy to the Middle East Jason Greenblatt, who announced his resignation. Brian Hook, who served as U.S. Special Representative for Iran and is a Senior Policy Advisor to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, will also play an increased role on the team. (Jewish Press, Sept. 8, 2019)

BERNIE SANDERS RECRUITS LINDA SARSOOR AS CAMPAIGN SURROGATE (Washington) – Sen. Bernie Sanders (I – Vt) recruited anti-Israel, anti-Semitic Arab activist Linda Sarsour to campaign for him as an official surrogate. Sarsour was recently thrown out of the Women’s March. (Jewish Press, Sept. 8, 2019)

LABOUR MP JOHN MANN QUILTS PARLIAMENT, SAYS CORBYN HAS ‘HIGHJACKED’ PARTY (London) – Following his resignation, John Mann, an outspoken opponent against antisemitism, said that party leader Jeremy Corbyn “has given the green light to the anti-Semites.” Mann is set to become the Conservative government’s point man on combating antisemitism. (Algemeiner, Sept. 8, 2019)

The U.S. Political Outlook as Election Year Approaches

Harold M. Waller

Looking more deeply into pre-election politics, there are some very serious issues that warrant careful examination. The most important of these is the very troubling increase in political polarization. Just watching the Democratic presidential candidates makes it clear that the party has veered far to the left since the last election. Four years ago, Sen. Bernie Sanders was an outlier on the left. Now he is in the middle of the pack of presidential candidates. And nearly all of them articulate support for several policies that were anathema when Hillary Clinton led the party into the 2016 election. More disturbing is the influence of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her three fellow Squad members. The quartet has achieved an outsized influence on their party's policy process. The so-called Green New Deal is but one example. Legitimizing anti-Israel positions is another.

Meanwhile the Republicans under Trump have moved right in many respects, leaving centrist voters searching for a political home. In general, such polarization is highly undesirable in a democratic society...

What does all this mean for those voters who are concerned about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East? The problem that these voters face is that the Democratic Party appears to be moving away from its traditional support for Israel. This is not a new development, but rather is something that has been brewing for several years, since the Obama Administration. ...

Furthermore, the rank and file activists in the party appear to be quite alienated

from Israel. And there is no candidate so far who expresses outspoken support for the Jewish state. On the contrary, bashing Israel has become increasingly common among Democratic activists.

Reps. Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib's antics mask the broader problem of shrink-



Democratic presidential hopefuls: VP Joe Biden, Senators Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Kamala Harris

ing support for Israel among Democrats, even though many Democratic office holders continue to support the Jewish state and about 40 first-term representatives recently visited Israel with Majority Leader Steny Hoyer. Also, ordinary Democratic voters prefer Israel to the Palestinians by a wide margin. But it is still fair to ask whether there is a Democratic presidential candidate who can be depended upon when it comes to Israel.

And what about the issue of Iran possi-

bly obtaining a nuclear weapon? Is any Democratic presidential candidate demonstrating that he or she really grasps the gravity of that problem? That leaves support for Israel as a potent weapon in Trump's hands. However, one must ask whether he inspires confidence that when the chips are down, he will be able to act. His instincts on Israel appear to be good, but the challenges that he will face if he wins a second term will be formidable indeed.

Looking ahead to next year, one hopes that the Democratic Party will straighten itself out, though the prospects of that happening appear to be slim. As for the Republicans, for better or worse their fortunes are tied to a mercurial persona whose behavior is unprecedented in so many ways.

(Harold M. Waller, a Canadian Institute for Jewish Research academic Fellow, is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at McGill University.)

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racist"-obsessed radicalism is further alienating ever-wider circles of the "between-the-coasts" and swing-states electorate. And these are precisely the voting cadres which elected Trump in 2016, and which the Democrats today must attract to defeat him.

This fundamentally un-political radical Democratic utopianism, nourished by and in turn refracting a more significant political-cultural societal crisis, makes it imperative, for the U.S. as much as Israel, that voters re-elect Trump. The reality, ironic though it may be, is that, with all his evident faults, he is the only currently foreseeable barrier against the anti-Israel "progressive social democrats" 'domination of American politics and culture.

Oddly (or not so oddly), if Trump *were* defeated in 2020 and America went radically left, democratic Jewish Israel, even though (or precisely because) isolated, could become the rallying point for the defense of what remains of "Western civilization." (This, of course, assumes that the current Likud-led conservative coalition is re-elected.)

Here we should reflect on the implications of Bibi Netanyahu's recent observation, that tiny Jewish Israel is not just a regional, but in a real sense a Great, Power. And regarding this eventuality, it might be well to re-read the *Book of Isaiah*. ...

(Professor Frederick Krantz is Director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, and Editor of its ISRAFAX quarterly journal.)

SEEKING THE ELUSIVE MIDDLE GROUND WITHIN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY; QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT ANTISEMITIC LIBERAL PARTY CANDIDATE

Living in Dangerous Times

Ira Robinson

I recently had an earnest conversation with a friend living in the U.S., who asked me what I thought were the greatest present dangers facing us as North Americans and Jews. There are certainly a great many things that deserve our concern: mass shootings that seem to spare no groups or institutions; increases in the frequency of violent antisemitic incidents; the upcoming Israeli elections; and many more. “What,” she asked me, “is a sign that things are becoming really out of whack and dangerous?” Denying none of the concerns I listed, I told her that in the next few months it is the race for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination that needs our most careful watching. That is because the result of the Democratic nomination process will tend to either lessen or increase the state of polarization in the United States. ...

Right now, the Democratic field of presidential candidates stands at nearly two dozen (with several other candidates having tried the waters and dropped out). ... Ideologically, the major Democratic presidential candidates range from moderates, like former Vice-President Biden, to “progressives” like Senators Warren, Sanders, and Harris.

Whoever emerges from the Democratic primaries and is nominated by the party for president in 2020 will need to do more than simply oppose Donald Trump’s policies in order to succeed. In order to win, that person will have to attract voters from the center of the political spectrum and limit Trump to his hard-core constituency. Failing that, the 2020 Democratic nominee stands a good chance of losing.

It seems obvious that the Democratic presidential candidate who will have the best chance of capturing the great center of voters and thus ultimately serve to moderate American political polarization will be a moderate. A progressive candidate, on the other hand, runs a real risk of both perpetuating polarization in the U.S. and handing President Trump a second term in the White House.

And yet amid the noise and confusion of the Democratic presidential race so far, it seems far from obvious to many of the candidates that they need to stake out moderate views. On the contrary, a number of the more serious candidates seem to be staking out highly leftist positions, not least with respect to their policy on Israel, a subject which has recently become a matter of concern to pro-Israel observers of the Democratic Party. Articulating such positions may be a good short-term strategy in order to gain attention in a crowded field of candidates. However a number of the positions espoused by these candidates may yet provide President Trump with ammunition he will use with great effectiveness in his re-election campaign.

A Democratic Party that looks to the moderate center of the American electorate will be a good thing for the United States as a whole and for all Americans. A Democratic Party that stakes out a strongly divisive progressive platform will be yet another sign that we are living in dangerous times.

(Ira Robinson is a Professor of Judaic studies in the Department of Religion of Concordia University, and Associate Director, CIJR)

The Liberal Party’s “Too Big” Tent

Nathan Elberg

The autumn election season is upon us. In many of these elections, voters face a choice between a sharp turn to the right or left. In the Americas, seven nations must decide whose turn it is to lead the country; in Europe, eight. Israel is re-running its last vote. Great Britain is on the cusp, as Conservative Prime Minister Johnson tries to trigger a vote to protect Brexit. In the Canadian Federal Election voters will choose to elect one of two centrist parties: The Conservatives, who are in the middle of the political spectrum, and the Liberal Party, which despite its name has been creeping towards the left.

An election concern of Canadian Jews is the breadth of the tent of the governing Liberals. Today’s Parliamentarians represent myriad ethnicities and disparate ideologies. That’s to be expected. What’s shocking is that the Liberal Party accepted a Muslim candidate, whose creed included a whole slew of anti-semitic tropes, including the claim that Jews use children’s blood for baking matza. Imam Hassan Guillet, openly anti-Semitic, vilifies Israel and condones anti-Israel terrorists, contradicting long-standing Liberal policy.

The Liberal Party reacted when B’nai Brith uncovered and publicized Guillet’s racism, quickly rescinding his candidacy. One Jewish Liberal parliamentarian commented, “...every party has to remove some candidates during the election process; no doubt this will be one of them.” As soon as the Liberals discovered the problem, they dealt with it.

Or so it seemed. Guillet claims that the Liberal Party knew about his antisemitic remarks and had worked with him to create an action plan to counter any trouble his comments might create. The problem for the Liberals wasn’t that their candidate was an antisemite; the problem was that he got ‘found out’ before they could cover it up adequately. The initial acceptance of Guillet’s Liberal candidacy says that the Liberal’s big tent welcomes antisemitism.

It will only get worse. Guillet claims that Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, the riding he wants to represent, is no longer a primarily Italian enclave. Muslims make up a significant component of the population, and they can be expected to support someone who shares their values. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Somali critic of Islam, says that Muslim anti-Semitism is of a “scale and scope” that most people in the West do not understand and is, therefore, even more insidious.

Guillet’s antisemitism is not a problem for people who share antisemitic values. As Canada admits more people with those values, our political landscape will shift. The Canadian Government has denied a report in the Lebanese newspaper *Al Akhbar* that it recently agreed to accept one hundred thousand Palestinian refugees from Syria and Lebanon. How many has Canada, in fact, decided to take in?

Future Guilletts will not have to prepare action plans to cover-up their hatred towards Jews and Israel.

(Nathan Elberg is CIJR’s International Board Chairman)

Human Rights, Human Wrongs: How to Fight the UN's Targeting of Israel

Hillel Neuer

Opening this month's UN Human Rights Council session on September 9th, High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet devoted more time to condemning Israel than she did to Iran, Syria, and North Korea combined. The former Socialist Party president of Chile said not a word about Palestinian violations of the human rights of their own people, attacks against Israelis by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, or the Palestinian Authority's payments to the families of terrorists who murdered Jews.

Although the Council underwent a major reform in 2006 that promised the "elimination of double standards and politicization," and pledged itself to the principles of "universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity," examples of how the 47-nation UNHRC continues to single out Israel abound.

Between 2006 and 2016, the newly reformed Council in its first decade adopted 68 resolutions condemning Israel—and only 67 on the rest of the world combined. Apart from the absurdly disproportionate quantity of moral outrage devoted to the Jewish state, there is also a chasm separating the language found in regular resolutions from that used in the texts on Israel. By default, the UN is diplomatic. Even resolutions that spotlight human rights problems in specific countries tend to refrain from directly criticizing the government, and often include acknowledgments of its positive actions.

What makes the resolutions on Israel different is that they are suffused with political hyperbole, selective reporting, and the systematic suppression of any countervailing facts that might provide balance in background information or context.

Second, the Council discriminates against Israel as a built-in feature of its permanent agenda ... There is one agenda item for the whole world, and then one for Israel alone. No other country in the world—not Venezuela, Syria or North Korea—is scrutinized under its own agenda item.

Third, the council appoints biased experts. Notoriously, its Special Rapporteur on Palestine, from 2006 to 2014, was Richard Falk — an overt supporter of Hamas, and author of the classic 1979 *New York Times* op-ed entitled, not in irony, "Trusting Khomeini." Likewise, the UNHRC's so-called expert on hunger for many years was Jean Ziegler, who devoted much of his time to accusing Israel of starving Palestinians.

What explains this discrimination against one single, tiny state, which, however imperfect, also happens to be the only democracy in the Middle East? First, oil. As Joshua Muravchik outlines in his essential book *Making David into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel*, the Arab states' deployment of oil embargoes in wake of the Yom Kippur war generated immediate policy shifts on the part of weak-kneed European states. Second, sovereign wealth funds. You don't vote for our resolutions, say the Arab states, and we won't invest our billions in your country. Third, the UN works by cynical vote trading. You vote for me; I vote for you. The Islamic bloc has 56 votes to offer, and the Jewish bloc only one. UN Watch has uncovered letters exchanged between Russia and Saudi Arabia, ostensible antagonists, in which they contract to vote each other onto the UNHRC. Fourth, terrorism. We now know that in



the 1970s the PLO regularly struck deals with European states to refrain from attacks in exchange for political support. Today, nations worldwide fear attacks by any number of Palestinian or Islamic terrorists if they refrain from joining the jackals at the UN.

But in my experience, it does not explain all. I have witnessed the particular mood and sentiment that takes hold of the room when the lynch mob grabs Israel in its clutches. Europe often seems moved by an unconscious need to perpetually investigate and condemn the Jewish state. The collective need to vilify the Jew is but a modern form of the Inquisition, the deicide charge, and the blood libel. This is what Israel is up against: an organized campaign, at the highest levels of international law and human rights, to demonize and delegitimize the Jewish state.

In March, when the UNHRC in Geneva attacked Israel with a battery of war crimes accusations and condemnatory resolutions, UN Watch held a major protest rally outside the Council's Geneva headquarters, involving Members of Parliaments from across Europe. When the voting took place later that week, several countries including Britain, Denmark, Japan, and Brazil, responded by voting to support Israel ... In this month's Council session, the Netherlands called out Agenda Item 7 for its "unacceptable and disproportionate singling out of Israel."

However, too often we will still lose the votes. It is then that explaining who stands behind the biased resolutions—educating public opinion—becomes essential. UN Watch spreads the word by daily placing our truth-telling message in *AP*, *Reuters*, *CNN*, *Le Monde* and other major media. And our video of the son of Hamas telling the UN that "the Palestinian Authority is the greatest enemy of the Palestinian people" got 10 million views in its different iterations on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *YouTube*.

Going forward, UN Watch intends to launch a state-of-the-art online database to expose UN bodies and their bias towards Israel. This interactive digital tool will analyze and tabulate hundreds of UN resolutions, show the voting records of each country, expose membership of dictators on key UN bodies, and translate information into powerful talking points for activists.

Finally, we can and must hold abusers to account, and uphold the noble human rights principles of a body founded by two of the 20th century's greatest supporters of Israel: Eleanor Roosevelt and René Cassin.

(UN Watch Executive Director Hillel Neuer is a former student activist with CIJR)

ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS PARTIES: EXPLAINING THEIR POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Religious Parties: On the Margins or at the Heart of Political Life in Israel?

Julien Bauer

Now that religious parties are more diversified than ever, they are under attack by Lieberman, and by Blue and White's Benny Gantz, who are calling for a unity government – Likud (sans Netanyahu), Gantz and Liberman, without any representative of the religious electorate: Will this policy of “everybody, but the Religious” become the new norm?

I doubt it. Religious voters will come out en masse to vote to defend their right to be part of the political decision-making process. As well, the two main parties – Likud and Blue and White – will oppose an approach that ostracizes up to 20% of the citizens.

Pragmatically, both main parties want to form a coalition composed of one of the two main parties, about a quarter of the electors each, and including small parties to obtain a majority of the 120 members of Knesset. Leftist parties cannot support a right-wing government; rightist parties cannot support a left-wing government. Religious parties were part of both kinds of coalitions and will be needed in the future for the political system to function.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Religious views diversified — from total support of Zionist enterprise to rejection: Participation is advocated by Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever (1824-1898): Jews need to return to the Land of Israel and should work with non-religious Jews. Rejection follows based on the fear of new ideas, including political Zionism, and a secular ideology that threatened Judaism's exclusively religious perspective.

Two religious parties: When in 1901, the second Zionist Congress stressed secular education with no religious content, the Orthodox created a Spiritual Center, Mizrahi, two years later. Mizrahi remains within the Zionist Organization but is separate as regards religion and education.

1912: In Kattowitz, Poland, Agudath Israel is founded. It is a strictly Orthodox movement, with both Hassidim and Lithuanians. Agudath Israel fears socialism, Bundism, Zionism, and other “isms” deemed to have broken away from strict Judaism.

1948: The list of signatories to The Declaration of Independence manifests a shift in religious (Orthodox) links with Zionism. Amongst the 37 signatories, five are rabbis including three leaders from Mizrahi, Rabbi Yehudah Leib Maimon, Rabbi Zeev Wolf Gold, Rabbi Sa'adia Kobashi, and two leaders of Agudath Israel, Rabbi Kalman Kahana and Rabbi Menachem Levine. An additional three are lay people from *Mizrahi*: David Zvi Pinkas, Chaim Moshe Shapira and Zerach Warhaftig.

1964: Mizrahi and its workers branch unite under the name of National Religious Party (NRP). In 2008, it joins the National Union to form Jewish Home, and in 2019 is part of Yamina, a party composed of nationalist and religious Zionists.

1984: A new religious party, Shas, was created to represent orthodox Sephardim. Over the years, Shas won between 4 - 17 MKs, and participated in most governmental coalitions.

1988: Agudath Israel split into two parties: the non-Hassidim (Lithuanians) formed a new party, Degel HaTorah. Four years later, the two groups – Degel HaTorah and Agudath Israel - presented a common front: United Torah Judaism (UTJ).

Mizrahi, later *NRP*, maintained a “historical link” with Labour, and was a member of every governmental coalition. It connected, as well, with Likud. *NRP* wanted to be part of any government, left or right, if it was not promoting a policy opposed to Jewish values. *NRP* has participated in every government except during the years: 1976-1977, 1992-1996 and 2004-2006.

Agudath Israel and UTJ had a bumpy relationship with government, both from the left and the right. It was in opposition during the first 50 years of the state; in coalition in 1996-2003, 2009-2013, 2015- 2019; in opposition in 1992-1996, 2003-2009, 2013-2015.

Religious parties and prospects for peace: Contrary to what most people believe, the three religious parties are far from presenting a unified view of what should be the future of Judea and Samaria (withdrawal, annexation, status quo, others?) **Oslo 1:** *NRP*: against; *UTJ*: against; *Shas*: abstain; **Hebron Agreement, January 16, 1997, on the withdrawal from most of Hebron, Judaism's second holiest city:** *NRP*: six members of Knesset against - two ministers and one deputy of *NRP* abstain; *UTJ*: two for, two (*Hassidim*) abstain; *Shas*: ten for.

The three parties are not only divided on basic political issues, they represent very different societal groups. *UTJ* is the most insular, *Shas* is in the middle, and *Yamina* is the most integrated.

Military service: the quasi totality of *Shas* supporters does military service. Religious Zionists, the successor of *NRP*, considers it a religious obligation. Only *UTJ* followers use the exemption loophole.

Education: *UTJ*, the *Hassidim* and the “Lithuanians” privilege a Torah education without or with little general secular education. *Shas* and *Yemima* — while recognizing the importance of religious education — want their children to benefit from a general education, and be able to find a job.

Diversification: *UTJ* is uninterested in mixing with other Jews, even the religious ones. *Shas* has Orthodox and traditional members and is ready to mix with others. *Yamina* is the most diversified, from very Orthodox to vaguely religious. Their leaders are both Ashkenazi and Sephardic.

Status of Women: For *Shas* and *UTJ*, led by their rabbinical authorities, women should not be elected to government, let alone become ministers. *Mizrahi* had its first woman, Tova Sanhaidrya, elected to the Knesset in 1959. She became Deputy Speaker of the Knesset. *Yamina* chose Ayelet Shaked, a woman as leader over Rabbi Rafi Peretz.

(Prof. Julien Bauer is a professor of Political Science at UQAM, and a CIJR Fellow.)

SECURITY

“I have come to recognize that neither the United States nor the Western countries are likely to act toward the goal of democratization in the Arab world. ... Consequently, we must assume that for our generation and perhaps the next, the task of peacemaking is with the Arab world as it is, unreformed and undemocratic. ... For the sake of peace, they [Arabs] must renounce their claims to part of the four ten-thousands ... of the lands they desire, which constitutes the very heart of the Jewish homeland and the protective wall of the Jewish state. If the Arabs are unwilling... , it is hard to make the case that they are in fact ready for peace.” — **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Tablet, Aug. 26, 2019**

“There will be no second disengagement [from the West Bank.] Any historic political decision will be brought to the people’s decision by referendum or approved in the Knesset by a special majority.” — **The Blue and White platform, expressed in its manifesto.**

U.S. AND ISRAEL MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY

“I agreed with Trump to promote a historic defense alliance between the U.S. and Israel [Mutual Defense Treaty.] This adds a huge layer of deterrence to our enemy, along with preserving the freedom of action of our forces.” — **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Likud**

“Such an agreement would be a serious mistake for the State of Israel’s security because a mutual defense treaty requires us to coordinate our security with the United States. ... We haven’t asked anyone to be killed for our sakes, we haven’t asked anyone to fight for us, and we haven’t asked anyone for the right to defend the State of Israel.” — **Benny Gantz, Blue and White**

WEST BANK SOVEREIGNTY

“We will apply sovereignty in the Jordan Valley and the Northern Dead Sea as soon as the next government is established in the next Knesset. ... Applying Israeli sovereignty to all our communities in Judea and Samaria, including the blocs and the territory outside the blocs, and other areas that are essential for our security and our heritage - these things will come up in the “Deal of the Century” plan, which will come very soon after the elections.” — **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Likud**

Israel’s Changed Political Landscape Remains Confused

Manfred Gerstenfeld

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s decision in May this year to propose new elections rather than return his mandate to form a government to President Reuven Rivlin has backfired. The September 17 election has changed the political landscape without lifting its confusion. The two largest parties lost seats. The Likud — this time after merging with Moshe Kahlon’s Kulanu — lost most. Instead of 38 seats in April it now only has 31. Blue and White, which had gained 35 seats, will hold 33.

Likud’s religious partners in the center-right bloc, could not compensate for the Likud’s loss of seats. The ultra-Orthodox Shas gained one seat and now holds 9, the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism remained stable with 8 seats and the enlarged religious-Zionist Yamina holds 7 seats, a gain of 2. The center/ultra-Orthodox bloc which could not form a government after the April election because it held 60 seats now remains with 55. Concluding, however, that Netanyahu’s days are over, as a variety of media did, is premature.

Neither can Blue and White leader Benny Gantz form a government. With his natural partners, Labor-Gesher holding 6 seats and the extreme left-wing Democratic Union gaining 5 seats, his center-left bloc only has 44 seats. That is one less than in the April elections.

To form a government, Gantz would need support from two additional parties. One is Israel Beiteinu which now holds 8 seats, a gain of 3. Its leader Avigdor Lieberman states that he will only support a unity government of Blue and White and the Likud. Gantz would in addition need support of most of the members of the Joint Arab List,



President Chaim Weizmann votes in 1949 Parliamentary election

GAZA

“We must choose the time that is best for us, evacuate the Israeli citizens who live in towns along the Gaza envelope in order to give us maximum flexibility, and we must uproot the terror from within Gaza. ... Israel acts to make sure that Iran does not establish itself and a base for terror against Israel in Syria. We act every time we see them beginning to take root. We must change the situation on the ground in Gaza so that we can do the same thing there as well,” — **Ayelet Shaked, Yamina**

“For the first time, we see the State of Israel ready to pay terrorists” in order to

GES ITS POLITICAL LANDSCAPE



First government of Israel, May 1, 1949

which gained 3 seats and holds 13. The latter would cause problems to a number of right-wing MKs' in Blue and White.

Yet, forming a unity government is difficult because Blue and White has stated frequently that it will not sit in a government with Netanyahu. Netanyahu is temporarily in an advantageous position. Without a new government, he continues to be prime minister. But a possible indictment of Netanyahu for fraud in the coming months may change the situation. Pressure on him to resign would then increase. In that case a unity government becomes more likely.

Another scenario is the defection of some MKs' from one of the blocks. A question is also whether Gantz can keep Blue and White, which consists of three parties, together.

One should, furthermore, compare the results of these elections with those of 2015. A major conclusion is the abysmal decline of Labor. Under Yitzhak Herzog and jointly with Tzipi Livni's The Movement it gained 24 seats. In the April elections Labor fell to 6 seats. Now under the new-old leader Amir Peretz it maintained this number only due to joining forces with Orly Levy-Abekasis' Geshet movement.

Other scenarios than the aforementioned are possible. Major security problems could justify a unity government without preconditions. Also, a third election cannot be totally excluded.

(Dr. Gerstenfeld, considered one of the world's leading authorities on anti-Semitism, is a member of the CIJR International Board)

maintain calm on its southern border [Gaza]. "It is a huge mistake and has damaged our deterrence capability, with very bad consequences for the long run." — **Avigdor Lieberman, Yisroel Bateinu**

SOCIAL ISSUES

"One cannot reverse the judicial activism initiated by [Supreme Court] Chief Justice Aharon Barak [liberal views] over the course of 20 years in just four years," she said, referring to the longtime Supreme Court justice who used the court to imple-

ment his more liberal views." — **Ayelet Shaked, Yamina who served as Justice Minister from 2015.**

"Secular people [should] consider the range of issues on which UTJ has legislated, including social-welfare laws, for the general public and not just for the ultra-Orthodox community." — **MK Uri Maklev, UTJ (United Torah Judaism)**

"Do we want Meretz and Lieberman and Arabs to decide who will be Prime Minister here? Do we want a country that will damage our assets and hurt the welfare state, or do we want a Right-leaning social-government led by Netanyahu with the Shas party that will look after Israeli tradition and the weaker strata." — **MK Michael Malkieli, Shas**

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

The party "will preserve the Jewish identity of the state alongside the realization of the right of every person and community to shape their way of life in freedom and tolerance." — **Blue and White platform, expressed in its manifesto**

"We are in the middle of a war over Shabbat, a war to ensure that the state will be a Jewish state. We are in the middle of a war for yeshiva students, who the High Court could draft immediately after the election if we do not pass a law to prevent it." — **MK Moshe Gafni, of Degel HaTorah, the "Lithuanian" half of UTJ**

ELECTIONS

"To be very clear, our target in the coming elections is to establish a national unity government without Orthodox [parties] and without radicals. I am trying to be realistic; it is not our time." — **Avigdor Lieberman, Yisroel Bateinu**

"Up until yesterday, I did not attack Gantz at all; I said I could go with him provided Lapid is not with him. But apparently Lapid is a contagious disease, and he also infected Gantz ... Criticism is legitimate, it is permissible. But whoever has a hatred of religion I believe is anti-Semitic." — **Deputy Health Minister Yaakov Litzman, UTJ**

"Lieberman twice overthrew Right-leaning governments in the past six months, and joined Meretz and the Arab parties to overthrow a Right-led government once again. Shas must be strengthened alongside Netanyahu to maintain Netanyahu, Israeli tradition, and social policy." — **MK Michael Malkieli, Shas**

Are Israeli Jews White Settlers?

Allen Z. Hertz

The accusation that Israel Jews are “White colonialist settlers” shamefully rests on the thoroughly discredited theory that the world’s population is globally divided into four or five genetically distinct “races” that are mostly distinguished by skin color. This crackpot theory was popular from the late eighteenth century into the first half of the twentieth century, after which it was mostly abandoned by reputable anthropologists and scientists.

To the point, the new genome science finds that all human beings are genetically approximately 98 percent identical, with some meaningful specific, genetic differences observable among distinct, historic Peoples or ethnic groups. Accordingly, geneticists have vigorously rejected macro “race” terminology (like “White” or “Black” or “Yellow”) as a meaningful typology for the rational classification of humans.

Some particular historic Peoples or ethnic groups display a proclivity to specific inherited diseases. This is an epidemiological and genetic finding that only applies to a specific, historic population that *intra se* has a long-time close sociological relationship, including the intimacy of significant endogamous courtship, procreation and child rearing. The higher the degree of persistent endogamy, the likelier that such an historic People or ethnic group might be marked by a genetic mutation giving rise to a higher chance of one or more inherited diseases. For example, this is true of self-styled “French Canadians” and “Black Americans.” Both of these human collectivities are not races, but rather long-standing, historic, ethnic groups found only in North America. The higher proclivity to an inherited disease arises not by reason of macro “race” but rather due to distinct descent from a specific, historic People.

“Black American” is just a self-chosen name for a specific, historic population, descended from a mixture of ancestors, mostly from West Africa but also from Europe, via North America. The historical existence of self-identified “Black Americans” does not amount to a claim that there is some sort of a special genetic relationship between them and folks of darker skin everywhere on the planet. For example, there is no special, genetic proximity between self-described “Black Americans” and relatively dark-skinned components of the population of Bangladesh. Thus, the existence of this People or ethnic group that now chooses to self-style as “Black American” does not logically prove that there is a companion People to be objectively designated as “White American.” To learn about the name and cultural identity of any kind of Americans, we have simply to ask them about how they self-identify. There is nobody entitled to dictate to such folks that they are “White Americans” or that they are “Whites.” To the point, the very small minority of Americans who trumpet that they are “White” are most certainly racists in the fullest sense of the term.

There is nobody entitled to dictate to Jews or to the Jewish People that they are “White,” which is transparently a highly racist or simply racist category. Those persistently speaking about “Blacks” and “Whites” are evidently themselves racialists, if not outright racists. Such persistent Black/White conversation perpetuates discredited anthropological and genetic theories that ought to have no place in the 21st century. Scientifically, there is no rationale for trying to classify Jews as “White.” This is a thoroughly disre-



putable meme concocted, purely for propaganda and polemics.

Scientifically and sociologically, the world’s population is not meaningfully divided globally into distinct races marked by skin color. For example, the Han People of China never imagined that they might perhaps have “yellow” skin color until they came to learn about eighteenth-century European theories globally classifying the world’s population into alleged distinct races by perceived skin color. Thus, books have been written about when the Chinese first became “Yellow.”

As with regard to other folks, if you want to know how Jews self-identify, just go and ask Jews themselves. Such self-identification is the normal sociological, political and legal rule for all Peoples. Jews will likely tell you that they are a famous People of world history that for close to three millennia has normally called itself by both a popular and a sacred name. “*Yehudim*” is the enduring popular name, and “the People Israel” (*Knesset Yisrael*) is the persistent, age-old sacred name for this long-standing, ethno-religious group.

During the entire period of its existence, this distinct, historic, “Jewish” People has always maintained some cultural and demographic connections to its aboriginal homeland between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, where they are now a solid majority of the local population. Of all extant Peoples, the Jewish People has the strongest claim to be “the” aboriginal People there. Across the centuries, there was never a single day, when self-identified “Jews” were entirely absent from their aboriginal homeland, *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel. Accordingly, Jews returning to live with other Jews in *Eretz Yisrael* are certainly not to be compared to the first English settlers in America or the first Dutch settlers in South Africa, both of whom were certainly colonists without local kin or history. Nor are Israel Jews to be tarred with the thoroughly racist category “White.”

(Allen Z. Hertz was senior advisor in the Privy Council Office serving Canada’s Prime Minister and the federal cabinet, formerly worked in Canada’s Foreign Affairs Department and earlier taught history and law at universities in New York, Montreal, Toronto and Hong Kong)

THE TIMIDITY OF “LIBERAL” ZIONISTS; ISRAEL CULTIVATES FRIENDSHIPS WITH EUROPEAN POPULIST PARTIES

Why Are Many “Liberal” Zionists Afraid to Speak Up Against Anti-Zionism?

Bernard Bohbot

Anyone following the controversy over BDS ... knows that it is difficult to come out as a Zionist in “polite” society. Despite that, many principled left-wing Zionists have decided to confront this anti-Israel atmosphere and to fight the defamatory accusations of the BDS movement. Among them, is Bernard-Henri Levy in France, Howard Jacobson in the UK, Shlomo Avineri in Israel, and Michael Walzer in the U.S.

However, other self-proclaimed “liberal”-Zionists are timid when it comes to defending their Zionist bona fides. *Guardian* columnist Jonathan Freedland, for instance, confessed in a July 2012 article that he avoids saying that he is a Zionist when talking to non-Jews, “because the word has become so misunderstood.” As well, *Haaretz* correspondent Gideon Levy ... calls for the dismantling of the Jewish state.

Unlike Freedland, prominent Jewish American journalist Peter Beinart doesn’t hide his Zionist identity. However, he defends virulent anti-Zionists against the charge of anti-Semitism ... Arguing that anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism cannot be equated, in a February op-ed published in *The Forward*, he claimed that those who oppose the existence of Israel do not single out Israel, as they also called for the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Even though he acknowledged that Israel (at least within the Green Line) was not an apartheid state, he justified the desire of the far left to dismantle Israel by arguing that they merely oppose “ethnic nationalism.” Most states, though, are based on a specific ethnic identity, but Beinart doesn’t see anything wrong with singling out Israel. Besides, most contemporary scholars of nationalism (Rogers Brubaker, Bernard Yack) reject Hans Kohn’s obsolete separation between ethnic and civic nationalism, as there is no such thing as a culturally neutral state.

Why then do Freedland, Levy, and Beinart feel the need to respect those calling for the destruction of the State of Israel, especially when anti-Zionists don’t reciprocate this need? The pro-BDS *Jewish Voices for Peace* calls for the exclusion of liberal Zionists whenever possible; it endorsed the “Dyke March” leadership’s decision to bar Zionists from its demonstrations.

Left-wing Zionists identify with the broader progressive community. Rejection by this community is psychologically as well as politically painful. What they fail to understand is that no matter how much they bend over backwards to accommodate the anti-Zionist far-Left; the Left will never accept them. Standing up for one’s principles may be existentially isolating, and cost friends, positions, and prestige. Still, left-wing Zionists who passionately defend Palestinian rights at the expense of Israeli rights wind up denying reality and defending lies, and ultimately lose credibility all around.

(Bernard Bohbot is a history PhD student at UQAM, and a CIJR Fellow. He studies the tortuous relations between the Jews and the left.)

How to Deal with Right-Wing Populism in Europe?

Daniel Rickenbacher

Right-wing and right-wing populist parties in Europe, such as Viktor Orban’s *Fidesz* party, have in recent years adopted an increasingly pro-Israel stance. Benjamin Netanyahu cultivated a friendship with some of these parties, seeking to outbalance the pro-Palestinian bias predominant in the Western and Northern member states of the European Union. There is no question that this approach has met with marked success. Hungary and other right-wing-governed Eastern European countries successfully blocked the European Union from taking measures against Israel, and defended Israel in international forums such as the UN Human Rights Council.

Israel’s opposition parties and some officials, such as Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, voiced concern over this emerging alliance and made clear that Israel should never cooperate with “neo-fascist” pro-Israeli parties. Indeed, some right-wing populist parties, such as the German AFD or the Austrian FPÖ, harbor significant far-right and antisemitic elements, and Israel and the Jewish community in Europe are right to approach them with skepticism. It is, however, a misunderstanding to believe that far-right, or even “neo-fascists” groups have turned pro-Israel. On the contrary, Neo-Nazi and far-right parties, such as the German *NPD* or the Hungarian *Jobbik*, continue to hold a pro-Iranian, pro-Islamist, anti-American and anti-Israeli outlook – a political worldview which is often not all that different from that of the far-left. These unrepentant anti-Semites are often among the sharpest critics of modern right-wing populist parties, which they believe were taken over by Zionists.

That many right-wing parties credibly condemn anti-Semitism and express support and understanding for Israel should not be dismissed. Moreover, this support has real-life consequences. It stands in stark contrast to the often-hypocritical professed sympathy for Jewish suffering expressed by many left-wing politicians. Take Heiko Maas, Germany’s social-democratic foreign minister, as an example. Maas’s claim to have entered politics because of the horrors of Auschwitz, does not prevent him from actively courting the anti-Semitic Iranian regime and trying to circumvent the economic sanctions imposed on it. As well, moderate left-wing parties, such as the British *Labour* or the U.S. *Democrats*, are increasingly dominated by far-left politicians expressing open hostility to Israel and are not shy about embracing anti-Semitic Islamist far-right activists, as most recently Bernie Sanders did with Linda Sarsour.

Even though the historic partnership between Diaspora Jews and left-wing politics is dying a quick death, many Jews and Israelis are nevertheless understandably reluctant to embrace right-wing populists as allies. Many of them, knowing enough history to be aware that European ethno-nationalists were once overtly anti-Semitic, are worried about resurgent nationalism. But they are insufficiently aware that liberal nationalism was once attractive to Diaspora Jews, and that modern Zionism is reflective of that tradition. Moreover, it is worth remembering that the needs of *Realpolitik* can make strange bedfellows, and that ideal choices rarely exist. Israel and the majority of the Jewish community which supports it may not have the friends that they wish for, but it is sometimes useful to work with the ones they have.

*(Dr. Daniel Rickenbacher is
CIJR Assistant Director, Research and Operations)*

SAMI AL-ARAN: THE MAKING OF A TERRORIST; U.S.- ISRAEL ANTI-MISSILE DEFENSE ALLIANCE

Sami Al-Arian: Profile of an Academic Terrorist

Bradley Martin

Dr. Sami Al-Arian is a Palestinian-American and former head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist group. Al-Arian was previously a tenured computer engineering professor at University of South Florida, using his position to raise funds and organize for the PIJ. He was invited to the White House on four occasions from 1997 to 2001, even actively campaigning for George W. Bush during the 2000 United States presidential election.

On February 2003, Al-Arian was indicted under the Patriot Act for racketeering and using his USF office as a base of operations. Described as a “master manipulator” by the federal judge, the jury acquitted Al-Arian on 8 of 17 charges while pleading guilty to one count of conspiracy. Al-Arian admitted that he and several of his co-conspirators performed services for PIJ, knowingly benefitting a Specially Designated Terrorist. On May 1, 2006, Al-Arian was sentenced to 57 months in prison and three years of supervised release. As part of Al-Arian’s plea deal, the remaining charges would be dropped, and he would be deported to Turkey in 2015. Evidence uncovered during the investigation showed that Al-Arian may have even drafted the manifesto of PIJ.

Al-Arian was born on January 14, 1958 in Kuwait to Palestinian parents. They had previously fled their home after the State of Israel declared independence in 1948, where Al-Arian’s father left behind his family’s soap factory in Jaffa. This was the first major trigger point in the formation of Al-Arian as a terrorist financier, who blamed Israel for his family’s financial loss.

This leads to Al-Arian’s second major trigger point: living as a Palestinian refugee in Kuwait and Egypt. Under Kuwaiti law, his parents were barred from citizenship. Al-Arian’s family were expelled from Kuwait to Egypt in 1966, after refusing to become informants for Kuwaiti intelligence. Al-Arian’s father then sacrificed his life savings to send his son to the U.S. to continue his education; the Egyptian government denied him access to higher education in the country. Secular Arab regimes then became targets of Al-Arian’s uncontrollable rage.

The final trigger in Al-Arian’s development was his embrace of radical Islam. Fiercely opposing the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, Al-Arian joined the Muslim Brotherhood from 1978-1983. Al-Arian and other members later broke off to form PIJ, with the goal of destroying Israel and replacing it with an Islamic Palestinian state. Since 1987, PIJ has killed 123 Israelis and injured 235 more in a series of shootings, suicide bombings and car bombings.

For years, Al-Arian was a terrorist leader without raising suspicion from his colleagues in academia or even in the highest echelons of the U.S government. Now, Al-Arian is a professor of public affairs and director of the Center for Islam and Global Affairs at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, where he continues to propagate his dangerous brand of radical Islamic ideology with the open support of Turkish President Recep **Erdogan**.

(Bradley Martin is Deputy Editor at the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research and Senior Fellow with the Haym Salomon Center)

Israel, U.S. Conduct Successful Arrow 3 Exercises

Charles Bybelezer

Israel and the United States recently conducted a joint series of tests in Alaska on the new, mutually developed, long-range Arrow-3 anti-ballistic-missile defense system. The tests, which included the “hit-to-kill” interception of three missiles outside of Earth’s atmosphere, took place over the course of 10 days at Pacific Spaceport Complex-Alaska and were the first-ever tests of the Arrow-3 outside Israel. The move is being construed as a message to Iran, which for years has pursued a ballistic missile program in contravention of United Nations resolutions.

Once approved for dissemination, Moshe Patel, director of the Israel Missile Defense Organization, said: “The fact that [this took] place in Alaska, [some 6,000 miles] from the State of Israel, shows the ability of the Arrow-3 system to withstand any threat.”

Uzi Rubin, considered the “father of Israeli missile defense,” emphasized that the tests meant the Arrow-3 system was now almost, if not fully, operational. “It’s one of the pillars of [Israel’s] missile defenses,” he said, which also include the short-range Iron Dome system and David’s Sling, designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles.

Adm. Jon Hill, head of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, said that his “team and industry partners are committed to helping the State of Israel upgrade its national missile defense capabilities in order to protect itself and the American forces deployed in the region from growing threats.” Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu affirmed that the tests had “succeeded beyond all imagination.”

“Today, Israel has the ability to act against ballistic missiles launched against us from Iran or anywhere else,” Netanyahu said. “This is a tremendous achievement for Israel’s security. Let our enemies know that both on defense and on offense, we can defeat them.”

Amos Gilead, a retired Israeli general who served as director of policy and political-military affairs at the country’s Defense Ministry, likewise hailed the accomplishment. “It is one of our major systems that aim to protect and defend the nation from hostile attacks, [from] Iran, for example,” he told this reporter. “It is a measure [we have taken] so we are prepared for all scenarios.”

Regarding the Islamic Republic, an Iranian military official contended that its ballistic missile tests were purely for “defensive needs,” even though such arms are generally used for offensive purposes and, most notably, constitute a primary vehicle for the delivery of nuclear warheads.

A *New York Times* report suggested that Tehran’s ongoing tests “appear[ed] to be a political statement by Iran, acting both as a carefully calibrated effort at escalation – and as a message to Europe.” Indeed, representatives of the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran – Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China – remain committed to salvaging the accord through the creation of a complex financial mechanism – known as INSTEX – that would effectively by pass U.S. economic sanctions by allowing continued non-dollar trade with the Islamic Republic.

(Charles Bybelezer, who writes for Medialine in Israel, is a CIJR Academic Fellow. Tara Kavalier contributed to this report.)

Rashida Tlaib: The Politization of Grandmothers

Barbara Kay

There are so many angles to consider in the political theatre surrounding U.S. congresswomen Rashida Tlaib's and Ilhan Omar's on-off trip to Israel ... One feature that did catch my attention, arousing both amusement and ire, is the comedy surrounding Tlaib's grandmother ...

Tlaib had wanted to include on the trip a visit to her 90-year old grandmother, who lives in the town of Beit Ur El Foka, ... west of Ramallah. Israel graciously granted Tlaib permission to come for that visit on humanitarian grounds if she complied with the BDS activism prescription. She agreed to this proviso. Then she was subjected to harsh criticism from Palestinians in the BDS movement, after which she reversed her decision, tweeting, "I have decided that visiting my grandmother under these oppressive conditions stands against everything I believe in ... It would break my grandmother's heart."

Really? Would it really have broken her grandmother's heart to see her granddaughter, ... completely under Palestinian Authority control, through Israel? Tlaib's Sity has likely never had anything to do with any Jew, let alone an Israeli Jew in her life, Jews being unwelcome in her village, as they are everywhere in the Palestinian Authority's domain. It is doubtful that she finds Israel "oppressive" in her personal life. ... When approached by journalists, her concern seemed more focused on the feast that would have been prepared in Rashida's honour ...

The blatant political use of grandmothers ... is not ... confined to Palestinians. ... In 2009, when Jewish anti-Zionist Naomi Klein attacked the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) for spotlighting the city of Tel Aviv, left-wing activist Judy Rebick supported her, writing that "my grandmother would have been so proud of Naomi Klein." ... This was "a revisionist canard of a peculiarly chutzpadik order, as Rebick's pogrom-surviving grandmother would doubtless have been appalled by a smug Jew consumed by Israel-hatred."

Then there was Jenny Peto, a 29-year old student at the ... University of Toronto, who wrote a controversial master's thesis entitled *The Victimhood of the Powerful: White Jews, Zionism and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*. ...

Peto dedicated her thesis to her grandmother, Jolan Peto: "If she were alive today, she would be right there with me protesting against Jewish apartheid." Peto's appalled brother David ... wrote a public rebuttal to Jenny, pointing out that their grandmother, Jolan Peto, was a Holocaust survivor who helped save "countless" children from the Nazis in war-torn Budapest. Their grandmother, he wrote, "taught us to abhor hatred" and was "an ardent supporter of the state of Israel."

Rashida Tlaib's kitschy exploitation of her grandmother for political gain has served her immediate purpose of ginning up anger against Israel ... But her decision also shows ... the chilling ruthlessness of ideologues whose moral compass never points to the true north of personal loves and loyalties for long.

(Barbara Kay is a noted National Post columnist, and a CIJR Fellow)

First, They Praised Killer of Senator's Niece—Then They Organized Rep. Tlaib's Trip

Moshe Phillips

First, they praised the terrorist who murdered a U.S. senator's niece. Then they were chosen by Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib to organize her now-canceled trip to Israel. Tlaib's outrageous choice of the pro-terrorist group "Miftah" to run her trip is a slap in the face of the U.S. Congress and deserves to be investigated by the House Ethics Committee.

The fact that Rep. Tlaib chose Miftah ... is no secret; it was widely reported by major news media. But nobody is explaining what "Miftah" really is. *The New York Times*, for example,

reported only that Miftah is a group "that promotes 'global awareness and knowledge of Palestinian realities.'" ...

The official Miftah website features an essay by one of the group's leaders, Johara Baker, profusely praising Dalal Mughrabi, the murderer of Gail Rubin, the niece of the late U.S. Senator Abraham Ribicoff, (D- Conn.) Baker is not some minor figure at Miftah. At the time she wrote her article ... , she was identified as the group's "Director of the Media and Information Department." ... Last year, she was one of Miftah's representatives at a gathering to discuss "Possible Repercussions of the Collapse of the International Order on the Palestinian Issue."

On March 1978, Gail Rubin, a nature photographer, was walking along the beach. Mughrabi shot her in the head. Then Mughrabi, the leader of a PLO death squad, and her gang hijacked an Israeli bus and carried out what is known in Israel as the Coastal Road Massacre. They slaughtered 37 bus passengers, the highest casualty toll in any terrorist attack in Israel's history.

Baker praises mass-murderer Mughrabi in her article, titled "Let Us Honor Our Own," which to this day appears on the Miftah website. The article strongly defends the right of the Palestinian Authority to pay salaries to imprisoned terrorists and the families of dead terrorists. Baker denounces Israel for objecting to such salaries, and for objecting to the PA's policy of naming parks, streets and other venues after Mughrabi and other terrorists. ...

That's the group that Rep. Rashida Tlaib put in charge of her proposed trip to Israel. The House Ethics Committee should immediately investigate this sordid episode. It should insist that Tlaib explain the nature of her relationship with Miftah and the reasons behind her decision to embrace those who praise the murderer of a member of a U.S. senator's family.

(Moshe Phillips is National Director of Herut North America's U.S. division; Herut is an international movement dedicated to the ideals of pre-World War Two Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky.)



Remembering Chaim Kincler ז"ל, and His Role in Commemorating Jewish Life in Radom, Poland

Jack Kincler

In May 2019, I attended the 11th annual “Encounters with Jewish Culture Festival” in Radom, Poland, the first time I had returned to the city since 1992. Radom, the birthplace of my father Wolf (Ze’ev) Kincler ז"ל (born 1922), and his older brother Chaim Kincler ז"ל (born 1918), is located south of Warsaw, Poland’s capital.

Musical performances, films, presentations, talks, and panel discussions highlighted its varied activities. Additional programs included a walking tour along the new Memorial Route, a cemetery ceremony in which I spoke, and a *Shabbat* dinner with non-Jewish Poles participating. The festival organizers, two American ladies—descendants of Radomers—together with the Radom cultural center, called the “Resursa” and government officials, worked throughout the year to bring this festival about.

For my cousin Zehava Rapaport and me, it was an emotional journey into the past. Walking the streets where our parents and grandparents had walked felt eerie. Their silenced voices haunted us. We vicariously experienced the crowded, closed-off quarters of the ghetto that existed from April 1941 until August 1942, when the Nazis and their Polish collaborators shipped the ghetto’s starving inhabitants to Treblinka to their deaths. Most of my paternal family—grandparents, my father’s younger brother, uncles, aunts, and cousins—perished during the following months.

But, on Jeromskiego, Radom’s main boulevard, these voices were particularly perturbing. It was there that my father’s family lived, and where my grandparent’s store had stood. Standing in front of these homes and properties inhabited today by non-Jewish strangers, I couldn’t help but reflect on a community of over 30,000 Jews, extinguished. Today, Radom is *Judenrein*. Still, those Poles who hosted us were genuinely interested in reviving Jewish legacy and building bridges with Jews worldwide. Their sincerity impressed us.

More impressive still, was the impact my uncle Chaim had left on the city. Academics researching Radom’s Jewish history begged me for any piece of information regarding this great man. They, in turn, provided me with books that Chaim helped publish, and in which photos of him appeared.

Their interest did not surprise me. Uncle Chaim was a significant inspiration in my life and the reason I am involved in community affairs today. Early in the war, he and my father fled to Soviet-occupied Poland and then wandered deep into Soviet Russia, where they struggled to survive throughout the war. After the Holocaust, Chaim became a co-commander of a displaced persons camp in Southern France that housed over 5,000 survivors, many of whom boarded the *Exodus* to mandate Palestine on July 1st, 1947. Later Chaim fought in the 1948 War of Independence, and was blinded in both eyes.

He never allowed his injuries to stand in his way. While middle-aged, he obtained degrees in law and criminology and was renowned as an intellectual and activist. Never forgetting his roots, he continued speaking an impeccable literary Polish, in addition to mastering four other languages. He was later appointed head of Beit Radom in Israel, connecting with other associations in the Diaspora where Jewish survivors from Radom had settled, including Montreal and Toronto.

In the late 1980s, with the fall of communism, Chaim began to



(Chaim Kincler (centre) receives the Bene Merenti Civitas Radomiensis award from Radom Mayor Andrzej Kosztowniak, (right), with Polish Ambassador to Israel Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska (left) looking on.

contemplate reviving Poland’s Jewish legacy. He faced stiff resistance from survivors who wanted nothing to do with Poles. Chaim well understood their sentiments; still, he became obsessed with saving what was left of the Radom Jewish cemetery, now a garbage dump. In this and many other regards, Uncle Chaim was a trailblazer, helping Poland save and maintain its Jewish community assets.

Working with national, regional and municipal authorities, the cemetery, which had not one headstone left, was cleaned up, and a fence erected around its perimeters. Chaim later discovered 70 tombstones in the backyard of the son of a Polish tombstone maker, whose father salvaged them before the German invasion. With the help of Polish authorities, they got them back.

To inaugurate the newly restored Jewish cemetery, and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the tragic liquidation of the Radom ghetto, Chaim organized a private March of the Living for three generations of Radom survivors and their children and grandchildren. My sister, Chana, and I participated as well. At the cemetery rededication ceremony, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, the Israeli Ambassador to Poland, the regional governor, the mayor, and the media were present,

Then in 2010, Chaim, with the support of a British philanthropist, the Israeli and Polish prison service, and the City of Radom, erected a Lapidarium commemorating those buried within the cemetery’s sacred grounds. The ceremonial unveiling of the monument took place in the presence of the Polish Chief Rabbi, Michael Schudrich.

For his untiring efforts, Radom’s most meritorious award, the *Bene Merenti Civitas Radomiensis* medal, was conferred on Chaim by the Mayor of Radom and the Polish ambassador to Israel. In 1993, Polish President Lech **Wałęsa** awarded Chaim the *Knight’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland* for his exceptional contributions towards Polish-Jewish dialogue.

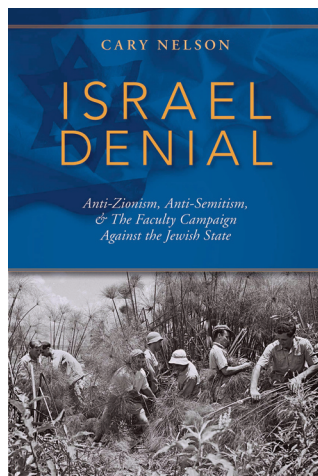
In the increasingly anti-Semitic world in which we live, grassroots attempts to build bridges between individual Jews and Poles should be encouraged, despite the existence of a not-too-friendly Polish government. In this regard, as in others, I am reminded of Leonard Cohen’s famous lyrics: “There is a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in...”.

(Jack Kincler, engineer, entrepreneur and noted Montreal community activist, is the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research’s National Board Chairman.)

BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Machla Abramovitz

Nelson, Cary, *Israel Denial: Anti-Zionism, Anti-Semitism, & The Faculty Campaign Against The Jewish State*. Indiana University Press, 2019



Academics and Jewish university students are well aware of the damaging encroachment of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement on their campuses. Formed in 2005 by Omar Barghouti, this Palestinian led campaign calls for the economic boycott of Israeli companies and institutions, up until Israel withdraws from “occupied territories,” removes its separation barrier, and allows all Palestinians the right to return to Israel proper, among other requirements. Even though BDS has had little impact on Israel’s economy, which is booming, its influence is more pernicious, in that it seeks to influence public policy against Israel.

Cary Nelson is a professor of Liberal Arts and English at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. A Liberal who strongly supports a two-state solution, he is well-positioned to take on the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic attitudes pervading today’s campuses. In his book *Israel Denial*, he offers a comprehensive analysis of faculty publications supporting BDS and tears apart their arguments point by point. His intended audience is left-leaning academics who can be convinced by these arguments, as well as university students factually ignorant of the conflict’s historical context and who have uncritically accepted terminologies and truisms prevalent in today’s university liberal arts programs and humanities-social sciences departments.

Nelson spent years interviewing academics, politicians and ordinary men and women in Israel and the territories to compile the facts necessary to counter the outright lies against Israel prevalent in these university circles. He exposes how BDS helps to undermine liberal arts disciplines and associations as bastions of academic freedom and higher learning. By politicizing their host institutions, these disciplines and departments seek to make it impossible for Zionists to survive within their purview, and to silence intellectual arguments that counter accepted orthodoxies. As such, BDS is not only a cause but a symptom of a fundamentally flawed academic environment that is all too eager to think the worst of Israel, while continuously giving the Palestinians undeserved passes, overlooking their virulent antisemitism. He exposes, as well, the falsehood behind the movements’ claim that it targets institutions and not individuals, and that it cares about the Palestinians’ welfare.

Nelson dedicates the bulk of his book to dissecting the positions of BDS’ four primary philosophical proponents – the movement’s intellectual gurus, professors ensconced in “respectable” academic positions. These are Judith Butler, Steven Salaita, Saree Makdisi, and Jasmir Puar: In that order, he begins with the most influential extending, to the least academically credible. Salaita, he says, equates Israeli leaders’ behavior towards Palestinians with how

white settlers treated Native Americans. Makdisi insists that Israel is racist, an apartheid state, and even worse than South Africa was, while Puar “championed the false rumor that Israel harvests major Palestinian organs for transplantation,” and “that Israel has a continuing practice of permanently stunting, maiming and disabling Palestinians.”

As regards Salaita, Makdisi, and Puar, Nelson concludes that their “ambitious anti-Zionist projects” are “fundamentally anti-Semitic” for a variety of reasons not least of which is that “they share a conviction that Zionism is racist at its core;” that “Israel has no right to exist” and is demonic in nature and anti-democratic; and that “little or nothing positive can be said about it.”

Butler is the most credible because of her stated assurance of the movement’s peaceful nature. Her idealized goals of two peoples living in harmonic co-existence, in a place “beyond war” if only Israel relinquishes its nationalistic dreams and gives Palestinians everything they want (that is, disappears as an independent, Jewish state) appeals to the American left and partly explains her influence.

A professor of comparative literature and rhetoric at Berkeley, Butler is on the advisory board of the “anti-Zionist” *Jewish Voice for Peace*. She refers to Israel as “pernicious colonialism that calls itself a democracy,” and issues false statements about Israel: that only Jews have full right of citizenship, that Jews are privileged over Palestinians in employment and academics, and so on . . .

More significant is her insistence that anti-Zionism is not anti-semitism. Rather, Zionism distorts Jewish history. Jews are a “diasporic people” as a result of centuries of rootlessness, their “preferred” state of being, she says. By dwelling on Jewish victimhood, Zionism transforms Jews into a people unsympathetic to the “other.” But, as Nelson points out, such views distort Jewish history: “as in a traditional anti-Semitic trope, [they make] Jews...to be the eternal wanderers.”

As successful as his ambitious undertaking is, Nelson’s unwavering belief in a two-state peace-process resolution may be impossible to achieve, given the Jew-hatred and rejectionism that permeates Palestinian society. Controlling the situation on a *de facto* basis may be Israel’s only solution.

(Machla Abramovitz, a noted Jewish world-issues journalist, is CIJR’s Publications Editor)

Recent Books

Bartov, Omer. *Anatomy of a Genocide: the Life and Death of a Town called Buczacz*. London: Simon & Schuster, 2018

Douglas, Murray. *The Strange Death of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017

Gerwarth, Robert. *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017, c2016

Heller, Daniel Kupfert. *Jabotinsky’s Children: Polish Jews and the Rise of Right-Wing Zionism*. Oxford, England: Princeton University Press, c2017

Lerner, Robert E. *Ernest Kantorowicz: a Life*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, c2017

Salam, Reihan. *Melting Pot or Civil War? A Son of Immigrants Makes the Case Against Open Borders*. New York: Sentinel, c2018

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EXTRA! EXTRA!

From The Chairman

Jack Kincler

At *CIJR* we have been busy over the past few months organizing events for which we received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The Naomi Shemer program, presented with the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue last June, was tremendously successful. About 200 people attended this moving documentary and verbal presentation reflecting modern Israeli history up to the 1973 Yom Kippur War through the poetry and life of Israel's national composer and song writer, Naomi Shemer.

Other seminars included Dr. Daniel Rickenbacher, *CIJR* Assistant Director of Research, speaking on anti-Zionism in Quebec in the 1970s, and Alan J. Hertz, a *CIJR* Fellow and former senior federal foreign policy adviser in the Privy Council Office, serving Canada's Prime Minister, lectured on Napoleon's relationship with the Jews.

Prof. Xu Xi, founder and director of the Institute for Jewish and Israel Studies at Nanjing University in China, gave a well-attended and moving talk at the Spanish and Portuguese, "Seeing Israel Through China's Eyes." During the Q&A he examined several interesting topics, including the issue of anti-Semitism, and why it doesn't exist in China. And—to rousing applause—he told how he had come to admire, and love, the Jewish People.

At the office, we are revamping our web site, updating and integrating donor and mailing lists, and working continuously to improve efficiency and productivity.

Many thanks as usual to Prof. Krantz and Lenore Krantz, Machla Abramovitz, Dr. Daniel Rickenbacher, Ravit Rosenblum, and Megan Shapiro in the Montreal office, to Alan Herman, Doris Epstein and Prof. Sally Zerker in Toronto, and to the entire *CIJR* staff, professional and volunteer, in Montreal and Toronto for their dedication to *CIJR*'s pro-Israel mission.

Wishing all our readers and their families a Happy New Year, *Shana Tova U-Metukah* to all.

(Jack Kincler is *CIJR*'s National Board Chairman)

From the Toronto Chapter

Alan Herman

Shalom from the Toronto Chaverim;

On April 22, a full audience filled the sanctuary of the Lodzer Synagogue for the screening of *The Rock and the Star* by Brazilian filmmaker Katia Mesel, who was present to discuss the film. It told the story of the first Jewish colony in the Americas in Recife, Brazil, at the time of and after the Inquisition. For a long time, this was the only place to offer religious freedom for persecuted Jews. The city also housed the first-ever synagogue in the Americas. The Consul General of Brazil, Ana Beltrane, attended and spoke about the increasing closeness between Israel and Brazil. The documentary was presented in partnership with Kulanu Canada.

More recently, working with Kulanu, we organized an evening at Beth Emeth Synagogue with Professor Xu Xi, founder and director of the Institute for Jewish and Israel Studies at Nanjing University in China. The talk - Seeing Israel Through China's Eyes - attracted close to 300 people. Prof. Xu Xi later spoke in Montreal under the auspices of the *CIJR*, and the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. Professor Xin will return to Toronto where, on September 8th, at the Lodzer Shul, he will speak on the subject "Chinese Policies Towards Judaism: Is There Anti-Semitism in China?"

On June 6, *CIJR* hosted internationally renowned filmmaker, Martin Himel. The title of his lecture was "White Supremacy and BDS: Exposing Anti-Semitism in America." After his talk, the audience viewed one episode of his ground-breaking film "Jew-Bashing: The New Anti-Semitism," which triggered a heated q & a.

Coming up: *CIJR* continues to work with partner organizations, Beth Emeth, Beth David, the Lodzer Shul, Kulanu Canada and the Canadian Anti-Semitism Education Foundation to bring Torontonians the most interesting, informative and up to date programs concerning Israel and Jewish issues.

(Alan Herman, Doris Epstein, and Prof. Sally Zerker head the Toronto Chapter)