

Growing Middle East Crisis Reflects U.S. Leadership Vacuum



*Desperate crowds in Yarmouk [Syria]
seek scarce UN food parcels*

Photo: UN Relief and Works Agency

Editorial

Honoring a Heroic Jewish Scholar: For Barry Rubin (1950-2014) ז"ל

Frederick Krantz

It is often thought, as the great German sociologist Max Weber put it in two influential essays, that politics as a vocation [*Beruf*, “calling”] and scholarship as a vocation were inimical, indeed antithetical. Scholarship, he thought, demanded an objectivity distorted by necessarily partisan power-political engagement; while politics, committed to transforming reality, required practical compromises in contradiction with truly dispassionate scholarship.

This tragic antinomy between thinking and doing is, rarely, overcome in the life and work of exceptional individuals. Barry Rubin, a truly outstanding contemporary student of Middle Eastern society and politics, was such a remarkable person, whose life and work exemplify this overcoming. He was the rare academic able to maintain the highest standards of scholarship while engaging in a public discourse capable of playing a role in the realm of politics and power.

Barry recognized the key role true scholarship can play in the arena of public opinion: as an analytic instrument in the political give-and-take of Israel’s unending struggle against both Arab and Palestinian enmity, and in relation to the often-hypocritical stance of “the international community”. His books and articles and teaching, his editorship of scholarly journals and chairing of research centers, and his media work, blogs and public appearances, trained generations of students, rallied like minded scholars, and developed a remarkable, appreciative, and influential public following.

In recent years, his often-caustic and sometimes parodically humorous eviscerations of American Middle Eastern and Israeli policy, and of the Obama Administration’s obtuseness and dishonesty, in particular, were beacons of sanity in an increasingly irrational political, diplomatic and media universe.

Barry was, out of knowledge, a realist about the Middle East: the relative backwardness of the Arab-Muslim states was endemic, despite the efforts of Western leftists and “post-colonial” apologists to paper over their contradictions and airbrush the essential brutality of their dictatorial governments. The UN was a hopeless, and toothless, entity, whose muddled interventions usually served only to worsen matters; and anti-Semitism, far from disappearing after the Holocaust, had taken on renewed life in ever-changing left-, right-, and on-campus forms—not least of which the boycott and BDS movements, the hypocrisy of which Barry mercilessly exposed.

Israel, to which he had made aliyah, was, nevertheless, despite its own faults and mistakes and constant Arab and Muslim enmity, an admirable, embattled democracy. Embodying the great legacy of the historic Jewish people, it was well worth a principled and intellectually powerful defense, one indeed demanded by our own

Continued on page 10

The Holiday of Freedom

Passover 5774

Baruch Cohen

In Loving Memory of Malca ז"ל

The Passover story as told in the *Haggadah* recounts how Israel moved from darkness into light; from ignorance and a history of idolatry into freedom and glory. A permanent and a continuing saga, Passover is an event which eternally calls people of all generations to hope and anticipation of a new dawn. Indeed, the springtime festival of Passover represents a new life for all who suffered during the long years of exile and oppression. Celebrating the joyful festival at the Seder table, we remember our long and stormy history.

The Passover story is living drama, a script involving Israel’s children of all generations: a story of a fight for freedom, for human dignity, and for a permanent home for all the children of Israel. Passover is a democratic struggle for human dignity. From generation to generation one must picture oneself as having been freed from Egypt. The ongoing struggle for dignity and freedom has given the Jewish people the will, the power, and the determination to fight on.

Today, Passover’s legacy sustains the Jewish people’s struggle against terrorism and global antisemitism. We learned from history and gained faith and the confidence to continue our struggle against all present enemies – toward the ultimate victory.

The story of Passover enjoins all men and women to join in brotherhood, to join in the building of Jerusalem and Israel and, by that very fact in the rebuilding of the world! This festival is the festival of human freedom, a fascinating miracle by which human dignity is restored to all generations.

Hag Pessach Sameah! To all CIJR’s friends and to the entire *am Israel*, the Jewish people, and to all men and women of good will.

(Baruch Cohen is Research Chairman of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, and a member of the Holocaust Memorial Center)

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We welcome your letters, comments and materials, which can be faxed or e-mailed (see cover.)

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WEEKLY QUOTES

“It’s increasingly apparent to me that the Cold War has never left Vladimir Putin’s mind; I think he still thinks in those terms... We simply, as a world, cannot afford the risk of Europe going back to being a continent where people seize territory, where they make claims on neighbouring countries, where the bigger military powers are prepared to invade their neighbours or carve off pieces.” —Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, condemning Russian President Vladimir Putin’s annexation of Crimea during a speech in Munich, Germany (*CBC*, Mar. 27, 2014)

“Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors, not out of strength but out of weakness... The fact that Russia felt compelled to go in militarily and laid bare these violations of international law indicates less influence, not more,” —U.S. President Barack Obama, during an exchange with *ABC*’s Jonathan Karl. (*Commentary*, Mar. 26, 2014)

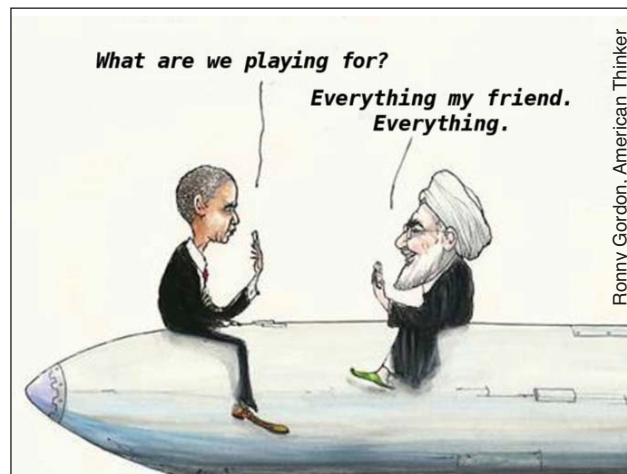
“Unfortunately, antisemitism at U.S. colleges, and, especially, in California, is growing at an alarming rate,” —Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, a University of California professor and Jewish advocacy group AMCHA Initiative cofounder. **“It is a concern we hear about daily from members of California’s Jewish community, including university alumni, rabbis, professors, religious school principals and, of course, students, parents and grandparents,”** she added. (*Jewish Press*, Mar. 21, 2014)

“We, the members of the Christian Lobby in Israel, found it appropriate to turn to you and cry out about the human and citizens’ rights condition of our Christian brothers across the Middle East. The slaughter, persecution, discrimination, apartheid, the ethnic cleansing, and all the crimes committed against the Indigenous Aramaic & Christians of the Middle East, in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Gaza, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority, among others, and continue to be committed without any intervention of the Western countries,” —letter from the Christian Lobby in Israel to the EU Ambassador in Israel and 18 other western Ambassadors, protesting the EU’s silence in relation to what they termed **“the ethnic cleansing of Christians throughout the Middle East.”** (*Jewish Press*, Mar. 23, 2014)

“What is the meaning of Jerusalem for us?” —Ramadan Shalah, the head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror organization, telling religious leaders in Tehran, Iran that the Jews show their love for the city more than Muslims do. **“Learn from the Jews, from that accursed entity [Israel]. They love Jerusalem not just as a military matter, but as a cultural one ... They have a song in the Israeli entity that their army sings on June 7, when they conquered the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Haram al-Sharif [the Temple Mount, in the 1967 Six Day War],”** quoting part of the chorus of “Jerusalem of Gold,” an inspirational Israeli ballad, **“Jerusalem of gold. Jerusalem of bronze. Jerusalem of light,”** he chanted in both Hebrew and Arabic. **“Every Israeli child and every accursed Israeli soldier says this song in their heart.”** (*Elder of Zion*, Mar. 17, 2014)

SHORT TAKES

‘MOST ADVANCED’ GAZA-ISRAEL TUNNEL IS FOUND (Jerusalem) —The Israeli military announced that it had uncovered a sophisticated tunnel that stretched hundreds of yards into its territory from the Gaza Strip and could have been used to attack or kidnap Israelis. Lt. Col. Peter Lerner, a military spokesman, told reporters that its design, with many offshoots, made it “the most advanced tunnel that we’ve exposed.” In 2006, Palestinian militants used a tunnel to enter Israel, kill two soldiers, and kidnap a third, Gilad Shalit, who was held for five years. (*New York Times*, Mar. 21, 2014)



Ronny Gordon, American Thinker

CANADIANS AMONG NINE KILLED IN KABUL HOTEL ATTACK (Kabul) —A Taliban assault on the restaurant of a luxury hotel, considered one of the safest places in Kabul, and frequented by foreigners, has swelled a tide of violence sweeping Afghanistan two weeks before a presidential election. Three children between two and five were found with bullets in their heads. Four of the nine dead were foreigners, including citizens of Canada. The Islamist Taliban movement has threatened to kill anyone who participates in what it calls a Western-backed sham. (*Reuters*, Mar. 20, 2014)

EGYPT SENTENCES 529 MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD MEMBERS TO DEATH (Cairo) An Egyptian court sentenced 529 members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood to death for murder and other offenses on Monday, in a sharp escalation of a crackdown on the Islamist movement. Family members stood outside the courthouse screaming after the verdict — the biggest mass death sentence handed out in Egypt’s modern history. Supporters set fire to a nearby school in protest, state television reported. Turmoil has deepened since the army overthrew Egypt’s president, Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, in July. (*Jerusalem Post*, Mar. 24, 2014)

MOSSAD BRINGS AN END TO THE MYSTERY OF MISSING IRANIAN JEWS (Tel Aviv)— Mossad has brought an end to the mystery surrounding the disappearance of eight Iranian Jews in the 1990s, the Prime Minister’s Office announced on Thursday, saying they had been murdered. The families of eight out of 11 Iranian Jews who went missing two decades ago received notifications that their relatives had been slain while trying to immigrate to Israel. In a statement, Prime Minister Netanyahu’s office said that Mossad had “received from a reliable source, privy to the details, information that these Jews were captured and murdered while escaping [Iran].” (*Jerusalem Post*, Mar. 20, 2014)

NORWEGIAN MUSEUM TO RETURN LOOTED MATISSE (Oslo) A Norwegian museum says it has agreed to return a Henri Matisse artwork once looted by Nazi leader Hermann Goering to the family of Jewish art dealer Paul Rosenberg. The 1937 painting, *Woman in Blue in Front of a Fireplace*, has been the centerpiece of the Henie Onstad Art Center near Oslo since the museum was established in 1968. Norway is a signatory of the 1998 Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, which requires museums to review their collections for potentially looted works and try to locate rightful owners. (*CBC*, Mar. 21, 2014)

Syria Starving Palestinian Refugees in Damascus's Yarmouk: Amnesty Int'l

Ariel Ben Solomon

Syrian forces are committing war crimes by using the starvation of civilians as a weapon of war, according to a new report by Amnesty International on crimes committed against Palestinian and Syrian civilians in the Damascus suburb of Yarmouk. The report, "Squeezing the life out of Yarmouk: War crimes against besieged civilians," comes ahead of the third anniversary of the civil war in Syria and highlights the deaths of nearly 200 Yarmouk residents since the siege around it was tightened in July 2013. Access to food, fuel, and medical supplies was cut off in Yarmouk as well as in other districts of the capital and other areas near major cities such as Homs and Aleppo.

Neil Sammonds, the lead researcher of the report, told *The Jerusalem Post* that in the last few weeks, since they finished the report, the situation has gotten worse. Food deliveries by the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) stopped in March, said Sammonds. In addition, armed rebel groups such as al-Qaida's Syrian branch, the Nusra Front, and its rival jihadist group, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), have returned to the camp, he said, as they have secret ways to break through the siege. Since March 2, these groups have returned because they felt that the Syrian Army was not upholding the agreement to lift the siege. The Syrian government and the opposition came to a fragile agreement whereby fighters agreed to leave the camp in exchange for a lift to the siege. The deal broke down last week as fighters returned to the camp...

The report focuses on the situation in Yarmouk, where the siege has had the harshest impact. Palestinians who live there are former refugees or their descendants, who fled or were expelled from their homes during Israel's 1948 War of Independence or the 1967 Six Day War. Yarmouk was home to the country's largest Palestinian refugee community, comprising some 180,000 Palestinians and several hundred thousand Syrians. Around 17,000-20,000 people remain, many who are elderly or sick. Almost two thirds of Syria's 530,000 Palestinians are internally displaced in Syria and more than 50,000 reportedly fled to Lebanon, 11,000 to Jordan, 6,000 to Egypt, 1,000 to Libya, 1,000 to Gaza, and others to Turkey, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia among others...

"Life in Yarmouk has grown increasingly unbearable for desperate civilians who find themselves starving and trapped in a downward cycle of suffering with no means of escape," said Philip Luther, director of the Middle East and North Africa Program at Amnesty International. Attacks against schools, hospitals, and mosques have been carried out by air raids and heavy weapons. Doctors and medical staff have also been targeted...

Sixty percent of camp residents are suffering from malnutrition and residents told Amnesty that they had not eaten fruits or vegetables for many months. Prices have increased dramatically, with a kilo of rice costing up to \$100. "Syrian forces are committing war crimes by using starvation of civilians as a weapon of war. The harrowing accounts of families having to resort to eating cats and dogs, and civilians attacked by snipers as they forage for food, have become all too familiar details of the horror story that has materialized in Yarmouk," said Luther...

(Jerusalem Post, Mar. 10, 2014)

Obama's Syria Debacle Laid Bare

Fouad Ajami

Sen. John McCain took to the Senate floor on Feb. 12 to shine a bright light on the plight of the Syrian people and its consequences. He had with him a sample of unforgettable images, 55,000 photographs in all, of the brutalities inflicted on 11,000 detainees of Bashar Assad's regime... "We must not look away," Mr. McCain said. Failure to "acknowledge through our sense of revulsion that what is happening in Syria today," ... would be "a stain on the collective conscience of moral peoples everywhere."

It will be said of President Barack Obama when he leaves office that he kept the U.S. out of the Syrian ordeal. But at what price? Even the architects of his Syria policy now acknowledge its utter failure. With more than 130,000 dead and millions displaced, it is too late for dissimulation and doublespeak. Much was made of the deal struck in September with Russian cooperation to remove Assad's chemical weapons. But at a Feb. 11 news conference with French President François Hollande, Mr. Obama said the "state of Syria itself is crumbling. That is bad for Syria. It is bad for the region. It is bad for global national security." He also said that Russia, along with Iran, was obstructing U.N. Security Council action to aid Syria's starving civilians.

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, at a Feb. 4 House Intelligence Committee hearing, connected the dots for Syria observers, saying that Assad had grown stronger over the past year "by virtue of his agreement to remove the chemical weapons." After crossing Mr. Obama's "red line" last summer by slaughtering civilians with chemical weapons, Assad has become a partner in a disarmament effort whose pace he alone dictates...

The jihadists have fulfilled our worst fears: More than 20,000 of them, from lands as far away as Russia's North Caucasus, have made their way to Syria. They come bearing the message that the world powers took no interest in the fate of a tormented population, and the feckless diplomacy of the past three years lent credence to their worldview...

And still, in the face of the massacres and the barrel bombs and the denial of food to besieged cities, the policy of indifference holds. Grant Mr. Obama his due: The bet he made that he could ride out the outrage has been vindicated. It was 30 months ago that he called on Bashar Assad to step aside, and two years ago that a senior State Department official compared his regime to a "dead man walking." No such luck: The Syrian despot held his ground. He was on his turf, he outplayed the U.S. and its "lead from behind" tactics, the outrage that could have devastated his regime never materializing. Evil is attentive, and forever alert...

In reckoning with the evils of the Syrian regime, American power was either naïve or willfully indifferent. The House of Assad and its ruling cabal have behind it nearly five decades of violence and subterfuge. After five years, they have taken the measure of Mr. Obama: For a fleeting moment, they feared that American power could decapitate their regime. Once spared, they grew emboldened, openly defying the will of the U.S. and U.N.

In the Geneva talks...the Assad regime said any "peace" or "power-sharing" agreement would not include the dictator standing down. The fence-sitters in Syria's neighborhood could be forgiven the conclusion that Bashar Assad's reign will outlast the presidency of Barack Obama. That would be a stain indeed.

(Wall Street Journal, Feb. 20, 2014)

IRAN – NUCLEAR & EXPANSIONIST – IS CENTRE OF M.E. INSTABILITY

Edited versions of Lawrence Solomon's and Jonathan D. Halevi's presentations at the "First Sabina Citron Annual International Conference" on "The Approaching Nuclear Showdown — Israel, Iran and the U.S. after Geneva" (Toronto, Feb. 9, 2014)

Why Israel Should Attack Iran Now; Why Iran's Response Might Be Muted

Lawrence Solomon

Many consider the Geneva negotiations over Iran to be a betrayal of Israel by America. Yes, it certainly is a betrayal. But is anyone really surprised? It should surprise no one that President Barack Obama didn't have Israel's back – he has too many personal associations with Israel-haters to make him a reliable ally. But more fundamentally, it should surprise no one that an American president doesn't have Israel's back. American presidents have routinely ignored Israel's security needs, or turned on Israel, when doing so served American political interests... If Israel's vital interests clash with American interests of the day, Americans will look after their own needs.

Before Israel made its Declaration of Independence in 1948, the U.S. under President Harry Truman demanded that Israel postpone its declaration and place itself under UN Trusteeship...

When it became clear in 1949 that Israel would win its War of Independence, Truman... demanded that Israel give up its territorial gains and make concessions to the Arabs... Ben-Gurion stood his ground and refused to capitulate to Truman's demands.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who succeeded Truman... hoped to woo Egypt's leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, to the anti-Communist camp. In 1956, ... to get Israel to withdraw from territories captured in the Suez war, Eisenhower threatened Israel with expulsion from the UN...

...Until the Kennedy Administration in the 1960s, when the U.S. allowed Israel to purchase defensive anti-aircraft HAWK missiles – but no planes, tanks, or offensive weapons — the U.S. refused to even sell arms to help the fledgling state defend itself.

In every war involving Israel, the Arab states were the aggressors yet in every war, the Israelis knew they were fighting not only against the Arabs on the battlefield but against the U.S. diplomatically. The U.S. pressured Israel, generally successfully, to stop its military advances and to give up war gains...

The undeniable conclusion is that the U.S. acts only in its own best interest, as the U.S. sees it, and that Israel cannot count on the U.S. to remove the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran...

Waiting has not served Israel's need for security. It now faces far more complex dangers than it did a year ago, two years ago, or five years ago. Continuing to wait – and to hope for the U.S. or something to save it – would likely only worsen Israel's predicament. Because Iran has been allowed to pursue nuclear capability, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni states are pursuing nuclear weapons. If Israel waits much longer, it could be surrounded by unstable nuclear weapons states in Egypt, Jordan and Turkey as well as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

There is never a good time for military action but where Israel and Iran are concerned, now is always better than later. Now, Iran is preoccupied in securing both Syria and Iraq to its sphere of influence. If Iran succeeds... it would represent the biggest gains for the Iranian Empire in centuries. Iran would be loath to risk losing these prizes in a prolonged war with Israel and might decide to minimize or ignore any actions Israel took, just as Syria stayed mum in 2007 after Israel took out the nuclear plant it was building...

And today, Israel has secret allies in Saudi Arabia and Egypt,

The Impending Clash Between Iran and Saudi Arabia

Lt. Col. [ret.] Jonathan D. Halevi

Iran recently marked 35 years since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that brought to power Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini... Khomeini set the tone for Iranian-Saudi relations in the first decade of the Islamic Republic, challenging the legitimacy of the Saudi regime to serve as the protector of the Muslim holy sites in Mecca and Medina. In 1987, Khomeini declared that Mecca was in the hands of a "band of heretics" and characterized the Saudis as "vile and ungodly Wahhabis." For the current Iranian leadership, Khomeini's remarks remain authoritative and frame the way Iran views Saudi Arabia...

There are multiple points of friction, beyond the struggle over the future of Syria, that make Saudi Arabia one of Iran's principle targets in the period ahead. The first point... is the widespread Shiite belief that the Saudis destroyed the shrines of the early generation of Muslim leaders who are buried in Medina... The second point of friction is that the escalation of sectarian conflicts between Iran and Saudi Arabia has led to outright clashes between their proxy forces. In fact, along Iran's eastern border, there have been anti-Shiite *jihadist* groups stationed in Pakistan who have kidnapped Iranian soldiers. Another point of contention is the fact that Iran is prepared to assert its military power against its neighbors, including Saudi Arabia... the Iranian army is building the capability to attack American targets in the Persian Gulf...

Saudi Arabia, Iran's historical rival, sees in Tehran's recurrent messages further evidence of Iran's strategic and tangible danger to the entire region, regardless of Rouhani's "charm offensive." In [Sunni] Riyadh's eyes, Shiite Iran remains the most serious security challenge to the stability and territorial integrity of the Saudi kingdom...

Saudi Arabia became more concerned with Iran's military and political ambitions after Saddam Hussein's fall in 2003 and the subsequent U.S. withdrawal from Iraq... In the absence of a regional balancing factor, the threats emanating from Tehran have a much stronger echo in Riyadh... Iran's rapid military buildup, coupled with the maneuvers it holds in the Persian Gulf, underlie the threat that Iran may block the Strait of Hormuz to oil tanker traffic.

Iran's nuclear program is seen in this context as a complete change in the rules of the game. The Saudis do not oppose Iran's right to establish a nuclear infrastructure for peaceful purposes, but it appears as though they do not trust Iran's promises. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is preparing to purchase an atomic bomb "off the shelf" from Pakistan in order to create deterrence against Iran. The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, visited Pakistan on February 17, 2014, for discussions... Iran's determination to persist with its nuclear program and the Saudi determination to acquire a nuclear shield may drag the Middle East into a nuclear arms race...

(Lt. Col. [ret.] Jonathan D. Halevi is a CIJR Academic Fellow and Senior Researcher the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs)

both of whom fear Iran above all others. Both countries are likely to help Israel in the event Israel strikes Iran without U.S. help...

Most importantly, an attack on Iran now would eliminate a harsh condemnation from the United States, which is heading into mid-

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term elections, with the U.S. Senate up for grabs. Obama does not want to lose the Senate to the Republicans, yet that might happen if he is seen to side with Iran... Because Israel cannot and never could count on either Obama or the U.S., Israel should go it alone, and soon.

*(Lawrence Solomon is a Canadian Institute for
Jewish Research Academic Fellow)*

SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER: CANADA'S HARPER LEADS WEST ON ISRAEL

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Edited Speech to the Israeli Parliament, the First Speech to the Knesset by a Canadian Prime Minister

January 20, 2014 — ...Ladies and gentlemen, Canada and Israel are the greatest of friends, and the most natural of allies. And, with your indulgence, I would like to offer a reflection upon what makes the relationship between Canada and Israel special and important. Because the relationship between us is very strong.

The friendship between us is rooted in history, nourished by shared values, and it is intentionally reinforced at the highest levels of commerce and government as an outward expression of strongly held inner convictions... To truly understand the special relationship between Israel and Canada, one must look beyond trade and institutions, to the personal ties of friendship and kinship. Jews have been present in Canada for more than 250 years. In generation after generation, by hard work and perseverance, Jewish immigrants, often starting with nothing, have prospered greatly. Today, there are nearly 350,000 Canadians who share with you their heritage and their faith. They are proud Canadians.

But having met literally thousands of members of this community, I can tell you this: They are also immensely proud of what the people of Israel have accomplished here: Of your courage in war, of your generosity in peace, and of the bloom that the desert has yielded under your stewardship. Laureen and I share that pride. The pride and the understanding that what has been achieved here has occurred in the shadow of the horrors of the Holocaust. The understanding that it is right to support Israel because, after generations of persecution, the Jewish people deserve their own homeland and deserve to live safely and peacefully in that homeland. Let me repeat that: Canada supports Israel because it is right to do so...

But, I would argue, support today for the Jewish State of Israel is more than a moral imperative. It is also of strategic importance, also a matter of our own long-term interests. Ladies and gentlemen, I said a moment ago, that the special friendship between Canada and Israel is rooted in shared values. Indeed, Israel is the only country in the Middle East which has long anchored itself in the ideals of freedom, democracy and the rule of law... What today threatens the societies that embrace such values and the progress they nurture? Those who scorn modernity, who loathe the liberty of others, and who hold the differences of peoples and cultures in contempt. Those who often begin by hating the Jews. But, history shows us, end up hating anyone who is not them. Those forces, which have threatened the state of Israel every single day of its existence, and which, today, as 9-11 graphically showed us, threaten us all.

And so, either we stand up for our values and our interests, here, in Israel. Stand up for the existence of a free, democratic and distinctively Jewish state or the retreat of our values and our interests in the world will begin. Ladies and gentlemen, just as we refuse to retreat from our values, so we must also uphold the duty to advance them. And our commitment as Canadians to what is right, fair and just is a universal one. It applies no less to the Palestinian people, than it does to the people of Israel...

Ladies and Gentlemen, support – even firm support – doesn't mean that allies and friends will agree on all issues all of the time. No state is beyond legitimate questioning or criticism. But our support does mean

at least three things. First, Canada finds it deplorable that some in the international community still question the legitimacy of the existence of the state of Israel. Our view on Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state is absolute and non-negotiable.

Second, Canada believes that Israel should be able to exercise its full rights as a UN member-state and to enjoy the full measure of its sovereignty. For this reason, Canada has spoken on numerous occasions in support of Israel's engagement and equal treatment in multilateral fora. And, in this regard, I should mention, that we welcome Israel's induction this month into the western, democratic group of states at the United Nations.

Third, we refuse to single out Israel for criticism on the international stage. Now I understand, in the world of diplomacy, with one, solitary, Jewish state and scores of others, it is all too easy "to go along to get along" and single out Israel. But such "going along to get along," is not a "balanced" approach, nor a sophisticated" one. It is, quite simply, weak and wrong... We all know about the old anti-Semitism. It was crude and ignorant, and it led to the horrors of the death camps. Of course, in many dark corners, it is still with us. But, in much of the western world, the old hatred has been translated into more sophisticated language for use in polite society. People who would never say they hate and blame the Jews for their own failings or the problems of the world, instead declare their hatred of Israel and blame the only Jewish state for the problems of the Middle East. As once Jewish businesses were boycotted, some civil-society leaders today call for a boycott of Israel. On some campuses, intellectualized arguments against Israeli policies thinly mask the underlying realities, such as the shunning of Israeli academics and the harassment of Jewish students.

Most disgracefully of all, some openly call Israel an apartheid state. Think about that. Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that: a state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish as Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in history. That is condemned, and that condemnation is masked in the language of anti-racism. It is nothing short of sickening. But, this is the face of the new anti-Semitism. It targets the Jewish people by targeting Israel and attempts to make the old bigotry acceptable for a new generation.

Of course, criticism of Israeli government policy is not in and of itself necessarily anti-Semitic. But what else can we call criticism that selectively condemns only the Jewish state and effectively denies its right to defend itself, while systematically ignoring - or excusing - the violence and oppression all around it? What else can we call it when Israel is routinely targeted at the United Nations? And when Israel remains the only country to be the subject of a permanent agenda item at the regular sessions of its Human Rights Council?...

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude with this thought. I believe the story of Israel is a great example to the world. It is a story, essentially, of a people whose response to suffering has been to move beyond resentment and build a most extraordinary society, a vibrant democracy, a free-



Gali Tibbon-Pool/Getty Images

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, his wife Laureen, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu listen to the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau while looking at pictures of Jewish Holocaust victims at the Hall of Names, Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum, Jerusalem, January 21, 2014

dom-loving country with an independent and rights-affirming judiciary, an innovative, world-leading "start-up" nation. You have taken the collective memory of death and persecution to build an optimistic, forward-looking land one that so values life, you will sometimes release a thousand criminals and terrorists, to save one of your own. In the democratic family of nations, Israel represents values which our government takes as articles of faith, and principles to drive our national life. And therefore, through fire and water, Canada will stand with you.

(CBC, Jan. 20, 2014)

Speaking Truth to Power Frederick Krantz

It is exceedingly rare that politicians speak clear and unadorned truth, especially today when elected officials rely on slick P.R. advisors and "professional" diplomats in their foreign ministries to crank out "balanced", and "even-handed", *i.e.*, self-serving and often-cowardly policy-statements. Hence Stephen Harper's speech before the Israeli Knesset, and the world, today is truly remarkable: a politician speaking truth out of principle to the nation that invented "speaking truth to power", and to the world which so often subordinates truth to power. When an elected official does this, despite the quickly expressed negative criticisms and condemnations not only of many in Israel's sad and vicious region, but also in the United Nations, among some Western nations, and even in the political opposition in his own country, he is not a politician, but a statesman, even a prophet.

The Canadian Prime Minister clearly noted the real issues confronting the Jewish state: unending antagonism on the part of both Arab dictatorships and West European democracies; the vile record of anti-semitism leading to the Holocaust (and his own country's "none is too many" policy for Jewish refugees) and resurfacing today as "anti-Zionism"; absurd "apartheid" analogies and calls for "BDS", Palestinian opposition to real peace and ongoing terrorism; the terrible moral and political hypocrisy of the UN, and the U.S.-led G5+1 coalition's dangerous appeasement of Iran on the key nuclear issue which—once again—threatens the Jewish state's very existence.

Politicians come and go, as do political parties and governments. Indeed, Stephen Harper's Conservatives may well be defeated in the next, increasingly-impending Canadian election. But when, disregarding politics, he says that embattled democratic Israel is a "great example to the world", that the Jewish state's story, despite suffering and horror, has been to "move beyond resentment and build a most extraordinary society"...one that so values life that, "overcoming the collective memory of death and persecution [it] will sometimes release a thousand criminals and terrorists to save one of [its] own"—he speaks not for the moment, but for the ages.

Stephen Harper's historic Jerusalem appearance, and his prophetic words there, will long endure: "Justice, Justice, thou shalt pursue", says the Biblical prophet, and we here in Canada should be proud that our Prime Minister's courageous words and deeds embody this call, and that they are now, as the ancient Greek historian said, a possession for all time. (Prof. Frederick Krantz is Director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, and Editor of ISRAFAX)

Obama Has Made America Look Weak

John McCain

Should Russia's invasion and looming annexation of Crimea be blamed on President Barack Obama? Of course not, just as it should not be blamed on NATO expansion, the Iraq war or Western interventions to stop mass atrocities in the Balkans and Libya. The blame lies squarely with Vladimir V. Putin, an unreconstructed Russian imperialist and K.G.B. apparatchik.

But in a broader sense, Crimea has exposed the disturbing lack of realism that has characterized our foreign policy under President Obama. It is this worldview, or lack of one, that must change. For five years, Americans have been told that "the tide of war is receding," that we can pull back from the world at little cost to our interests and values. This has fed a perception that the United States is weak, and to people like Mr. Putin, weakness is provocative. That is how Mr. Putin viewed the "reset" policy. United States missile defense plans were scaled back. Allies in Eastern Europe and Georgia were undercut. NATO enlargement was tabled. A new strategic arms reduction treaty required significant cuts by America, but not Russia. Mr. Putin gave little. Mr. Obama promised "more flexibility."

Mr. Putin also saw a lack of resolve in President Obama's actions beyond Europe. In Afghanistan and Iraq, military decisions have appeared driven more by a desire to withdraw than to succeed. Defense budgets have been slashed based on hope, not strategy. Iran and China have bullied America's allies at no discernible cost. Perhaps worst of all, Bashar al-Assad crossed President Obama's "red line" by using chemical weapons in Syria, and nothing happened to him.

For Mr. Putin, vacillation invites aggression. His world is a brutish, cynical place, where power is worshiped, weakness is despised, and all rivalries are zero-sum. He sees the fall of the Soviet Union as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century." He does not accept that Russia's neighbors, least of all Ukraine, are independent countries. To him, they are Russia's "near abroad" and must be brought back under Moscow's dominion by any means necessary. What is most troubling about Mr. Putin's aggression in



AFP/Getty Images

U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin

Crimea is that it reflects a growing disregard for America's credibility in the world. That has emboldened other aggressive actors — from Chinese nationalists to Al Qaeda terrorists and Iranian theocrats.

Crimea must be the place where President Obama recognizes this reality and begins to restore the credibility of the United States as a world leader. This will require two different kinds of responses. The first, and most urgent, is crisis management. We need to work with our allies to shore up Ukraine, reassure shaken friends in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, show Mr. Putin a strong, united front, and prevent the crisis from getting worse....

Crimea may be falling under Russian control, but Ukraine has another chance for freedom, rule of law and a European future. To seize that opportunity, Ukrainian leaders must unify the nation and commit to reform, and the West must provide significant financial and other assistance. Bipartisan legislation now before Congress would contribute to this effort. More broadly, we must rearm ourselves morally and intellectually to prevent the darkness of Mr. Putin's world from befalling more of humanity....

Three American presidents have sought to cooperate with Mr. Putin where our interests converge. What should be clear now, and should have been clear the

last time he tore apart a country, is that our interests do not converge much. He will always insist on being our rival. The United States must look beyond Mr. Putin...eventually, Russians will come for Mr. Putin in the same way and for the same reasons that Ukrainians came for Viktor F. Yanukovich. We must prepare for that day now. We should show the Russian people that we support their human rights [and] should prove that countries like Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova have a future in the Euro-Atlantic community, and Russia can, too.

We must do all we can to demonstrate that the tide of history is with Ukraine — that the political values of the West, and not those of an imperial kleptocracy, are the hope of all nations. If Ukraine can emerge from this crisis independent, prosperous and anchored firmly in Europe, how long before Russians begin to ask, "Why not us?" ...America's greatest strength has always been its hopeful vision of human progress. But hopes do not advance themselves, and the darkness that threatens them will not be checked by an America in denial about the world as it is. It requires realism, strength and leadership. If Crimea does not awaken us to this fact, I am afraid to think what will.

(John McCain is a Republican Senator from Arizona. New York Times, Mar. 14, 2014)

Obama vs. Putin: The Mismatch

Charles Krauthammer

"The United States does not view Europe as a battleground between East and West, nor do we see the situation in Ukraine as a zero-sum game. That's the kind of thinking that should have ended with the Cold War." — Barack Obama, March 24

Should. Lovely sentiment. As lovely as what Obama said five years ago to the United Nations: "No one nation can or should try to dominate another nation." That's the kind of sentiment you expect from a Miss America contestant asked to name her fondest wish, not from the leader of the free world explaining his foreign policy.

The East Europeans know they inhabit the battleground between the West and a Russia that wants to return them to its sphere of influence. Ukrainians see tens of thousands of Russian troops across their border and know they are looking down the barrel of quite a zero-sum game. Obama thinks otherwise. He says that Vladimir Putin's kind of neo-imperialist thinking is a relic of the past — and advises Putin to transcend the Cold War.

Good God. Putin hasn't transcended the Russian revolution. Did no one give Obama a copy of Putin's speech last week upon the annexation of Crimea? Putin railed not only at Russia's loss of empire in the 1990s. He went back to the 1920s: "After the revolution, the Bolsheviks ... may God judge them, added large sections of the historical South of Russia to the Republic of Ukraine." Putin was referring not to Crimea ... but to his next potential target: Kharkiv and Donetsk and the rest of southeastern Ukraine.

Putin's irredentist grievances go very deep. Obama seems unable to fathom them. Asked whether he'd misjudged Russia, whether it really is our greatest geopolitical foe, he disdainfully replied that Russia is nothing but "a regional power" acting "out of weakness." ... Hitler's Germany and Tojo's Japan were also regional powers, yet managed to leave behind at least 50 million dead. And yes, Russia should be no match for the American superpower. Yet under this president, Russia has run rings around America, from the attempted ingratiation of the "reset" to America's empty threats of "consequences" were Russia to annex Crimea. Annex Crimea it did [and] the "consequences" have been risible....

Indeed, Obama's dismissal of Russia as a regional power makes his own leadership of the one superpower all the more embarrassing. For seven decades since the Japanese surrender, our role under 11 presidents had been as offshore balancer protecting smaller allies from potential regional hegemony. What are the allies thinking now? Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and other Pacific Rim friends, [as] China expands its reach and claims. The Gulf states are near panic as they see the United States playacting nuclear negotiations with Iran that, at best, will leave their mortal Shiite enemy just weeks away from the bomb.

America never sought the role that history gave it after World War II to bear unbidden burdens "to assure the survival and the success of liberty," as movingly described by John Kennedy.... But Obama doesn't even seem to recognize this truth.... [He] will leave our allies with two choices: bend a knee — or arm to the teeth. Either acquiesce to the regional bully or gird your loins, i.e., go nuclear. As surely will the Gulf states. As will, in time, Japan and South Korea....

(Washington Post, Mar. 27, 2014)

A Baleful Peace Process

Reuel Marc Gerecht

To be outrageously iconoclastic among the Washington foreign-policy crowd is easy: Just suggest that the Israeli-Arab peace process is not merely pointless but actually damaging to America's position in the Middle East and bad for both Israelis and Palestinians. Such a view is anathema not only to the liberal foreign-policy establishment, which instinctively does the peace process because Americans have been doing it for five decades ... but also to the establishment's "realist" set, who usually view Israel as a strategic liability: Israel vs. 22 Arab countries; 6 million Jews vs. 425 million Arabs, with another billion Muslims howling from the bleachers.

Liberals and realists mix, of course, which is what we've got in Barack Obama and his secretary of state, John Kerry. The president also gives off a whiff of a sentiment common on the left, especially in Europe and increasingly in Israel itself: The creation of Israel denationalized the Palestinians. America supported Israel's birth, but failed, so the argument goes, to give equal justice to the Palestinians. And without justice for the Palestinians, the Middle East will not be stable. It's a stunning tribute to the perdurability of this belief that even after the Great Arab Revolt—which has roiled the entire region...—serious people in Washington want to spend America's capital on talks between West Bank Palestinians and the Israelis, neither of whom appear to care as much about these discussions as American officials....

It has always been part of the American gospel to believe "that the rule of one people over another offends against a basic principle of nature, if not a higher edict," to borrow from the Middle Eastern historian J.B. Kelly...

But Israeli democracy has been doing extremely well since 1967... Israelis may be rough in their views of Arabs, but they are more concerned about civil liberties for all citizens—Jewish, Christian, and Muslim—even through the intifadas and suicide bombings. Israeli Arabs, it should be noted, show no desire to leave Israel for the West Bank, Gaza, or Jordan....

In 2000 Arafat, and in 2008 Abbas, refused to make a final deal with Israel. Israeli prime ministers Ehud Barak and Ehud Olmert were willing to give far more, in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Jordan Valley, than any Israeli government is likely to offer again... Most likely, the deal was impossible because the men of Fatah know that it isn't just the true believers of Hamas who are deeply uncomfortable with renouncing the claim to all of "Palestine." The right of return for Palestinians has been such a sticking point because it is in essence their claim to Israel.

For Fatah, there is only one safe place to put [potentially pro-Hamas] Palestinian refugees—inside Israel...

President Obama is right that the Israelis should take risks for peace: They should insist that the Palestinian Authority be ruled democratically. But Israelis, understandably, are subject to the authoritarian temptation since free elections in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, and Egypt could bring Islamists to power...

New elections in Gaza and the West Bank might reveal ... the Palestinians, overwhelmingly Muslim, have no desire whatsoever to renounce their "right of return" or accept land swaps. Democracy could kill the peace process.

(Weekly Standard, Mar. 17, 2014)

Remembering Romanian Jews

Felicia Carmelly

As one of the survivors of the Holocaust in Romania, an author, and educational speaker on this experience, I cannot help but ask why those hundreds of thousands of Romanian Jews who were murdered still remain forgotten, despite the proliferation of other historical material on the Holocaust. It is as if that chapter of the Holocaust was forgotten before it was remembered. In fact that was, geographically, the largest killing field of Jews in the Holocaust... Are our lives less precious than those who were murdered in gas chambers, or were... the methods used to murder our brothers and sisters less dramatic and therefore unworthy of remembering?

My need to write this article was triggered by the recent publication of a booklet titled "Holocaust under Marshall Antonescu's Regime,"... by Liviu Beris, the president of the Association of Holocaust Survivors in Romania. The booklet consists of 85 pages in which Beris presents excerpts from correspondence between high-ranking officers and Antonescu regarding the ethnic cleansing of Jews from Romania. The documents he researched have only recently been made available to the public. The savagery with which the Romanians executed their criminal tasks sounds like a horror science-fiction movie, and it comes "from the horse's mouth," the Romanian authorities themselves. That is why it is imperative that this booklet be made available in the Western world. Luckily, we found somebody who had already translated it.

There are three main criminal actions through which mass murders were perpetrated in Romania during World War II: 1. The brutal pogroms, which started in 1940 and continued for a long time throughout the many cities and villages. 2. The deportations to Transnistria that affected many provinces. Bessarabia and Bucovina were particularly targeted, because of the large percentage of Jews there. Transnistria, a name coined by the Nazis for a territory of 16,000 sq. km. across the River Dniester (before the war the river was the border between Romania and the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine)... was under Romanian administration. There, the deportees died... slow agonizing deaths from starvation, freezing, typhoid fever, dysentery, exhaustion, herding from one camp to another and back again, and shooting; 3. Forced labour camps on Romanian territory, where Jews suffered a treatment similar to that in Transnistria...

The barbaric actions of the Bucharest Pogrom started on Jan. 21 and raged until Jan. 24, 1941. Members of the fascist Iron Guard, consisting of students, priests, intellectuals of every kind, young and old, men, women, and children, descended like birds of prey on the Jewish districts of the capital of Romania. They burned down synagogues, demolished Jewish stores, plundered apartments, raped, tortured, beat, arrested and murdered their Jewish neighbours. This pogrom is called by historians "The *Kristallnacht* of Romania."

The Iron Guards were fully aware that the state authorities of Marshal Antonescu would not stop the savagery. "Jewish leaders, Zionists, and intellectuals were arrested in their homes and on the streets, taken to previously established destinations, where they were subjected to savage treatment. Some were forced to drink a mixture of bitters with gasoline, kerosene and vinegar, then were beaten until they lost consciousness, and locked in the basement of the jail, where they were left to die in their own filth. Others were forced into trucks, and driven to the Jilava Forest, where they were shot. Yet others were

driven to the city slaughter house, where they were stripped of their clothes, cut up with butcher knives, and hung up on hooks like carcasses of cattle. Their bellies were cut open and their intestines were tied around their blood drenched necks, with notices pasted on them saying "Kosher meat." These atrocities were witnessed and reported by Reserve Lieutenant I. N. Vladesu (from Mr. Beris' booklet)...

Romania was home to about 800,000 Jews before WWII. About half of them were murdered. After WWII many of the Jewish survivors managed to emigrate to Israel and the Western countries, so that presently there are only a few thousand elderly Jews left. Nevertheless, now, after Communism has imploded, anti-Semitism seems to be flourishing again. Recently, I received an e-mail from Romania with a video attachment presenting a folk choir singing a popular Christmas Carol on TV, in which the lyrics say "the smoke from our chimney is from burning kikes." Tiberiu Groza, the director of the Center for Conservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture, "explained" in an TV interview, that they simply used carols from archaic traditional folklore, and no anti-Semitic content was implied. Yet, such a vision could not be imagined before the end of WWII, when the gas chambers and crematoria were discovered by the Allies.

It seems to those who have been attacked by the virus of anti-Semitism that there exists no cure. How very sad that some people are wasting their energy hating others, instead of using it to improve their lives and the weak economy in their country, which presently is almost *Judenrein*...

(*Canadian Jewish News*, Jan. 15, 2014)

Editorial – Continued from page 2

integrity as scholars and as Jews.

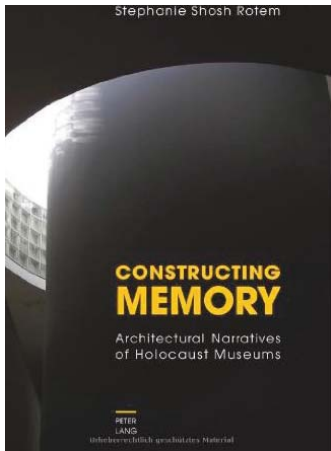
With the advent of the computer and internet, the ether abounds today with self-appointed commentators and pundits of all kinds, both independent and institutionally-related, all claiming remarkable insights and unique "points of view". Most of this self-servingly termed "first draft of history", uninformed by knowledge, is passing *Zeitgeschichte*, what Plato long ago called *opine*, mere uninformed, and transient, opinion.

Barry Rubin's work, however, is informed by a deep knowledge of history, politics, and language, of both Israel and the Arab world, and of Western diplomacy in the region. Informed too by a high scholarly standard, and by a drive to make such knowledge an instrument not only of understanding, but of politics in the deepest sense, it is the negation of such journalistic opinion, a scholarly *oeuvre* which will long endure.

It is my honor, and duty, to dedicate this issue of *Israfax* to Barry—he fought for Israel down, almost literally, to his last breath, addressing the current "peace process" charade with all his waning strength and energy. He exemplified a rare, courageous and, I am afraid, declining breed, the engaged intellectual and, increasingly, the even more rare consciously Jewish and pro-Israel scholar. He bridged Weber's distinction, and in so doing both illuminated the field of Israel and Middle East studies, and defended the well-being of the Jewish State and People. He will be deeply missed: and we will not, I fear, see his likes soon again.

(*Prof. Frederick Krantz is Director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, and Editor of the Israfax magazine*)

Stephanie Shosh Rotem: *Constructing Memory: Architectural Narratives of Holocaust Museums*
(New York: Peter Lang Publishers, 2013)



How do we remember the Holocaust? What role do museums play in constructing a collective memory of the Holocaust? Almost seventy years after the end of the Second World War, the need to commemorate the victims has not diminished. Indeed, it is more important than ever as the number of survivors decreases, and the link with first-hand knowledge of the event is lost. In-

evitably, it will become the responsibility of Holocaust museums to commemorate and educate future generations.

Stephanie Shosh Rotem's *Constructing Memory* analyzes the architecture of Holocaust museums in Israel, the U.S., and Europe, and explains how architecture often conveys important, symbolic messages. Unlike traditional museums, whose main function is the storage and display of valuable and historically important objects, the objects exhibited in Holocaust museums often have little monetary value, because Holocaust victims were looted of these possessions. The symbolic, abstract effect of architecture is, therefore, intensified, and adds to the didactic role of the institutions.

As Shosh Rotem explains, the symbolic message of Holocaust museum architecture is often political or ideological, and varies depending on the nation. Yad Vashem, the national Holocaust Museum of Israel, is a key site of commemoration of the genocide of European Jews. It disseminates a Zionist message symbolically through its design. Moshe Safdie, the architect of the rebuilt Yad Vashem (2005), designed the site to emphasize the rebirth of the Jewish people in Israel after the horrors of the Second World War. Visits typically begin in the dimly lit underground section of the building, symbolizing the darkness of the Nazi period, and emerge in a light-filled room dominated by panoramic views of Jerusalem's hills. Contrasting elements of darkness and light are, therefore, used for dramatic and symbolic effect.

The real strength of the book is in the author's comparison of the diversity of Holocaust museums. European Holocaust museums in particular have several, often conflicting, political messages at the heart of their designs. Although the theme of the Berlin Jewish Museum, for example, was meant to be Jewish history, the public perceived it as a Holocaust museum, mainly because of its design. Originally built in 1933, but badly damaged during the

Berlin *Kristallnacht* of 1938, the museum reopened in 1997, but with no collection on display. For three years visitors walked through an empty museum, a so-called memory void that was interpreted as a powerful symbol of the destruction of Berlin's Jewish community.

The Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest is briefly discussed, but the book omits mention of the persistent problem of antisemitism still facing Hungarian Jews. News reports consistently mention antisemitic events in the nation: from the far-right Jobbik party, Hungary's third-largest political party, which is considered by Jewish groups to be a neo-Nazi organization, to the desecration of Jewish cemeteries. The book should have focused on the role of Budapest's Holocaust Memorial Center in informing its visitors of this alarming trend. As the Holocaust increasingly becomes part of our collective memory, it is imperative that future Holocaust Museums also inform visitors about the reality of the Shoah and all its geographical sectors, and about the ongoing dangers of antisemitism.

(Rob Coles is CIJR's Publications Chairman)

Recently Received Books in Our Israel & Middle East Library

Allison, Roy. *Russia, the West, and Military Intervention*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Brassard, Jacques. *Hérésies*. Montreal: Les Editions Accent Grave, 2013

Merkley, Paul C. *Those That Bless You I Will Bless: Christian Zionism in Historical Perspective*. Brantford: Mantua Books, 2011.

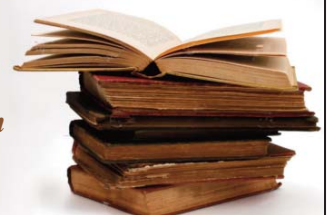
Merridale, Catherine. *Red Fortress: History and Illusion in the Kremlin*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2013.

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Ryan, Michael W. S. *Decoding Al-Qaeda's Strategy: The Deep Battle Against America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

Sherr, James. *Hard Diplomacy and Soft Coercion: Russia's Influence Abroad*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2013.

CIJR invites all readers to consult its research Library and extensive Israel DataBank in person and online.



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Barry Rubin z"l

(1950-2014)

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EXTRA! EXTRA!

A Word from Jack Kincler (CIJR Board Chairman)

Dear friends and supporters,

After a long and bitter winter we welcome the first signs of spring and celebrate the Passover Seder with our families and friends, sure signs of revival and hope for the Jewish people, and for mankind.

At CIJR we are, as ever, busy with a number of initiatives and projects. An office expansion doubling our space and allowing us to host events for up to 60 people is being completed, thanks to the Drazin family, owners of the building who generously provided the additional space at an affordable low cost. This agreement was negotiated by our indefatigable Research Chair, Baruch Cohen, now 94.

We are also hard at work improving productivity and efficiency at the office while reducing overhead expenses. Our presence in cyberspace and on social networks is being extended, and we are now active on Facebook and Twitter, and on our website Blog, among others.

The biggest news of 2014 is the approval and opening of our sister organization **AIJR (American Institute of Jewish Research)**, headquartered in Washington DC. Prof. Frederick Krantz, our founder and Director, initiated the process and persevered, seeing it to a successful conclusion. Fortunately for us, the extensive legal work and support was done *pro bono* by attorneys Howard Silver, a leading non-profits lawyer, and Stefan Krantz (Prof. Krantz's son), both from the DC law office of **Hogan Lovells US LLP**.

Another key CIJR initiative is the **CFA (Canadian Freedom Alliance)**, a pan-Canadian alliance of disparate groups with similar values focusing on direct actions. Gaining traction, with dozens of organizations and individuals involved, CFA hopes to hold an annual National Conference, for networking and the exchange of information and ideas. Over time, we hope to counter the existing toxic dynamics of on-campus BDS and IAW campaigns, by making inroads with the media, politicians, students, academics, and administrators.

This year's **26th Annual CIJR fundraising Gala (Montreal on June 10, Toronto June 11, 2014)** will look back at the 1973 Yom Kippur War, 40 years after, and at Canadians' role in the 1948 [*Mahal*] foundation of the Israel Air Force, and at forward to present-day strategic issues, like Iran's nuclear threat and endemic M.E. volatility.

General Eitan Ben Elياهو, former IAF Chief from 1996-2000, who participated in the Yom Kippur war as a F-4 Phantom squadron commander, and later flew on the Iraqi Osirak nuclear reactor mission with the first Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon Z"l, is our Keynote.

We need your support, more than ever before. Please consider a generous tax-receipted donation to CIJR so that we can continue, for Israel and for our students, our unique work.

Hag Pesach Sameach, A Happy Passover,

Jack Kincler, National Board Chairman

From the Toronto Chapter – Alan Herman

On Sunday, February 9, 2014 CIJR held its Colloquium "The Approaching Nuclear Showdown: Israel, Iran & the U.S. After the Geneva Accords", at the Lodzer Congregation Centre in Toronto. The day brought Toronto audiences up to speed on the imminent showdown Israel faces with a near-nuclear Iran and with its relations with its traditional ally, the U.S. CIJR's Dr. David Bensoussan examined the role of oil, power and armies in shaping the current balance of power in the Middle East. Lt. Col. (ret.) Jonathan D. Halevi, CIJR Academic Fellow and Senior Researcher with the *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs* and editor of *Shalom Toronto*, highlighted the implications of Iran's nuclear program for Middle East stability; and renowned *National Post* columnist Lawrence Solomon made the case for a military strike being Israel's best option with Iran. The colloquium was held in honour of generous CIJR benefactor and proud Jewish community activist Sabina Citron, and we were privileged to hear a moving homage by her nephew, Dr. Leo Aryeh Wintre.

CIJR has also been actively partnering fellow pro-Israel community groups, most recently the Israel Truth Week all-day conference, Sunday, March 23rd. We promoted CIJR and informed eager Toronto audiences about CIJR's Israel Learning Seminar Series. Additionally, CIJR shared its time with Amnon Zohar, a retired Israeli-Canadian businessman, who described his experiences as a vocal and proud pro-Israel student in anti-Israel courses at York University.

And now, all our sights are set on the upcoming "The Jewish Thought of Emil Fackenheim Colloquium" set for June 1, 2014, and CIJR's early June Gala fundraiser, commemorating the Yom Kippur War's 40th Anniversary, and 1948 *Mahal* volunteers.