

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 3 | SUMMER 2019

*in*FOCUS

QUARTERLY

Israel



Hillel Frisch on Israel's Security Outlook | **Jan Goldstein** and **Iris Ricks** on Touring Israel | **Adam J. Sacks** on Jordan's Politicized Archeology | **Benjamin Weinthal** on the UN's Anti-Israel Bias | **Brian Blum** and **Abigail Klein** **Leichman** on Innovation in Biotechnology | **Dan Diker** on the Roots of BDS | **Shoshana Bryen** on Israel as a Military Asset | **Lenny Ben-David** on a Jewish Spy for Germany | Col. (Res.) **Eran Lerman** on Security Cooperation with Egypt

Featuring an Interview with Ambassador **Danny Danon**

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

For our annual Israel issue, we at *inFOCUS* like to bring you the new, the exciting, the unusual – and there is a LOT of that – so we have fun with it. But it is a conundrum because for all the hot, high-tech fabulousness in the Third Jewish Commonwealth, not to mention history and intrigue, there is also the part of Israel and its neighborhood that makes us worry – and we have to bring that to the table as well. Our Israel issue this year doesn't have a theme as such. It is, rather, a broad look – the story of "Fanny" shares space with BDS, travel off the beaten track shares with the ever-nasty UN Human Rights Council. It is slightly dizzying, but then, so is Israel.

The end result is a picture of a remarkable country and, we hope, an addition to your understanding of and thinking about Israel.

Start with our interview with Israel's Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon, as he walks us through Israel's improving relations with countries around the globe.

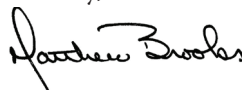
Hillel Frisch sets the strategic stage, and he, like Israel, is both realistic and

optimistic. Eran Lerman, Benjamin Weinthal and Dan Diker take on Egypt, BDS and the UN respectively, while *inFOCUS* Editor Shoshana Bryen explains the unique basis for the relationship between American and Israeli security forces. Adam Sacks shows how Jordan is weaponizing archaeology. Travel in Israel for people who know Israel is so large a topic that it requires both Jan Goldstein and Iris Ricks to do it justice. Brian Blum and Abigail Klein Leichman worked on the cutting edge of Israel's medical research. Lenny Ben-David takes care of the intrigue.

Shoshana Bryen will tempt you, too, with four outstanding books to take to the beach.

If you appreciate what you've read, I encourage you to make a contribution to the Jewish Policy Center. As always, you can use our secure site: <http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/donate>.

Sincerely,



Matthew Brooks,
Publisher



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Israel's Security: Hardly Rosy, but Never Better

by HILLEL FRISCH

To size up the technical aspects of writing my *inFOCUS* article, I looked at Marian Tupy's "Things Are Getting Better – So Why Are We So Gloomy?" [Spring 2019] I quickly realized that the substance of his excellent article set the basis for an article on Israel's security, even though Israel is never mentioned by Tupy and "geostrategic security" only briefly.

Many articles on Israel's security begin and end in gloom, for reasons that are probably obvious to those who follow Israel and Middle East affairs. Gloom is the least of emotions historical events such the destruction of the Second Temple and the last vestiges of Jewish sovereign in the Holy Land and the more recent Holocaust elicit.

The continuous succession of leaders of populous states since then who vowed Israel's destruction, from Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser to Iran's Ayatollahs Khomeini and Khamenei, counsel gloom and pessimism.

Especially disconcerting is the Islamic Republics with which Israel does not share a common border. Israel's leaders for decades after the Iranian Revolution still believed that Iran's leaders would change course to the mutual benefit of both countries. Not only has such change failed to take place, the Islamic Republic spews its invective, continues its nuclear program, and deepens its attempts to set a missile siege of vast proportions on the country through its Hezbollah proxy in the north, and its Sunni ally, Hamas, as well as directing and funding other terrorist activities directed at Israel.

A source of light for many are the United Nations with its affiliated organizations, other international NGOs in their thrust to enshrine universal human rights and bring the planet to a world that knows war no more.

In Israel, they cast a giant shadow despite their lofty goals.

Israel and its advocates look in bewilderment and of course with gloom at how Israel accounts for 60 per cent

Solving the problem through immigration to Palestine to establish a Jewish homeland seemed to be the appropriate solution, particularly as the Western democracies – "the kingdoms of mercy" in the words of leading rabbis at the time – closed their doors to Jewish mass immigration in the second and third decades of the 20th century.

Nearly 100 hundred years later, the antipathy Jewish individuals and com-

Israel accounts for 60 percent of condemnations in United Nations bodies, when in North Korea alone 25 million people have been politically enslaved and terrorized...

of condemnations in UN bodies, when in North Korea alone 25 million people have been politically enslaved and terrorized for almost as long as the Palestinian refugee problem existed.

■ *Zionism was the Answer, Wasn't It?*

The stance these international organizations and fora take against the Jewish state brings into question the very validity of modern Zionism, which is the staple ideology and identity of the vast majority of Israel's citizens.

Zionism was supposed to be the answer to the "Jewish problem." Jewish individuals and communities faced a rising tide of ethnic nationalism in the countries in which the vast majority of Jews lived at the beginning of the 20th Century, such as Poland, Russia, and Ukraine.

munities faced for not being "Polish," "Russian," or "Ukrainian" is now directed at Israel as the state of the Jewish nation. The so-called solution, Jewish statehood, seems to have become a major international problem instead.

And to top it all is the gist of Tupy's article that – even in the best of times, indeed, humanity writ large has never had it so good - most of the human species are biologically and psychologically disposed towards being pessimistic!

Yet, Israel's many security challenges should hardly elicit gloom.

■ *The Good News*

The basis for the good news about Israel's security environment can be found, ironically, in the basic historical scheme proposed by Arnold Toynbee, hardly a friend of either Israel or the Jews.



Israeli soldiers look at Jerusalem's Old City. (Photo: Ryan Rodrick Beiler)

Toynbee argued that states and societies that prosper most are those challenged by their environment. States and societies that are relatively protected by seas, good climates and basic agricultural attributes do less well than those challenged. The emphasis, however, is being challenged rather than being overwhelmed. Clearly, Holland could do little against an overwhelming Nazi Germany.

Allies of the United States, who used to be called the Asian Tigers in light of their substantial economic and scientific gains, seem to match Toynbee's scheme. Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, not only economic miracles but deepening democracies as well, were challenged by their environment. That they were not overwhelmed is probably due to their alliance with the United States, which helped balance each against its powerful neighbor.

Israel is fortunate to be an ally, albeit unofficially, of the United States, and the days of being possibly

overwhelmed by Arab states working in tandem to war against Israel with Soviet support that might have called for U.S. military intervention, have long since passed.

Unlike American allies in Europe and Asia, Israel never sought American troops as the "trip wire" they were in Western Europe against the Soviet Union and continue to be in Japan and South Korea. Neither does the United States fly sorties or deploy ships to defend Israel's airspace and shores as it does on behalf of those states.

These key differences show up in the real as opposed to the formal amounts of United States military and civilian aid. Israel is officially the biggest recipient of U.S. aid. But this does not take into account the costs of American troop deployment within the borders of these European and Asian allies, the costs of deploying ships and planes and costly joint naval maneuvers, which run into the hundreds of billions of dollars.

■ Cost Accounting

In the real accounting, U.S. aid is about \$3.9 billion – about one per cent of what the United States spends on its official and costly allies. Israel is also the only ally that spends on its military budget more than the United States as a percentage of GDP. NATO countries, by contrast, spend less than half of what the United States does as a percentage of GDP and less than their military commitment to NATO requires. This freeriding is made possible not only because of the effective American security umbrella, but also because the U.S. is willing to finance it for advanced states – who President Trump rightly says should foot more of the bills relating to their own security.

Israel's close relationship is a tremendous boon for the country and rewarding to the United States as the joint projects in missile defense and tunnel detection well prove.

As Turkey under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan slips out of the Western

orbit and links with the more fundamentalist currents in the Middle East and as Egypt becomes absorbed domestically with keeping its ship of state afloat, Israel holds a privileged position being the strongest ally in the Middle East to the leading democracy in the world, particularly under the Trump administration. This is a cause for celebration rather than gloom.

■ *Facing Adversaries*

For three decades at least, Israel, despite facing numerous enemies, increasingly confronts them on a one-to-one basis rather than on simultaneous fronts. In 1948, the fledgling state faced the combined (though hardly coordinated) assault of the armies of four states and the more minor contribution of a fifth, Lebanon. In 1967, Israel confronted three states and in 1973, two, with important contributions of two others, Iraq and Jordan, whose tanks stopped the Israeli advance on Damascus.

As the passion for war-making of Arab states has dwindled, or even been extinguished in the face of cumulative pain, Israel's new enemies, non-state actors such as the PLO, Hezbollah and Hamas increasingly act alone despite a rhetoric of togetherness. Thus, when Hezbollah confronted Israel for over a month in 2006, not only did not one Arab state, including Syria, Iran's ally, join the fray, neither did Hamas. Hezbollah likewise stood on the sidelines during the three rounds of warfare between Hamas and Israel in the winter of 2008/9, 2012, and during the 55-day duel in 2014.

So divided have Israel's foes become that even the Palestinians no longer act in unison against it. Since the Hamas takeover of Gaza and the Palestinian partition into two de facto "states," Hamas-controlled Gaza and the West Bank Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas, when Gaza under Hamas spews flames against Israel, the inhabitants living under Abu Mazen in Judea and Samaria, remain passive and when the latter protest, Hamas-controlled Gaza falls silent.

The weekly and by now almost daily confrontations against Israel's security fence in Gaza over the past 15 months reflects this as well. Hamas's hope that these activities would generate an intifada against both the Palestinian Authority and Israel has completely failed.

The failure of Israel's foes to come to each other's aid even pervades Syria, where Iran is trying to military bases and establish an arms industry specializing in the production of precision guided missiles the Islamic Republic could employ against Israel or supply to

at Iran's financial life-line; to strike at Bandar Abbas is to strike at its imports. Nearly four-fifths of container imports to the country run through this port. Container imports are those finished goods – cars, trucks, apparel, electronics – countries import that make the difference between living in the 21st century and the 19th.

Nevertheless, though the probability of Iran's nuclear strike is small, the effects were one to occur, are great.

Israel also has to contend with Iran's attempts to create a missile siege

Israel's new enemies, non-state actors such as the PLO, Hezbollah and Hamas increasingly act alone despite the rhetoric of togetherness...

its proxy Hezbollah. Israel's numerous sorties to foil this plan (over 200 to date) has not elicited any external support, even from Hezbollah.

■ *Don't Call it Rosy*

Though gloom is not called for, neither can Israelis evaluate their security predicament as rosy.

Iran continues its military nuclear efforts and makes advances in missile production to deliver warheads. The probability that Iran would launch nuclear missiles against Israel is small, not least because Iran is a very vulnerable country despite its vast size.

Were it to make such a move, Israel would have no inhibitions about destroying the island port, Kharg, from which over 80 percent of its energy exports are shipped. Oil and gas exports account for between 40 and 60 percent of Iranian government revenue (depending upon the fluctuating price of energy and the state of Western sanctions).

Another convenient target is Iran's second vulnerable nodal point – Bandar Abbas, Iran's biggest port on its southern coast. To strike at Kharg is to strike

on the people. Iran's long-term goal is to provide its proxies Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad, and its ally, Hamas, with precision guided missiles. This would be a game changer to Israel's detriment in the regional balance of power, which is why Israel is focusing on the Iranian build-up in Syria to thwart its aims.

Meeting the two-dimensional dangers – the nuclear ballistic threat and the more conventional missile siege Iran's proxies are trying to impose on Israel – are serious challenges to Israel's security, but they are hardly overwhelming. Israel's ingenuity, its people's resolve to meet these challenges and a close relationship with the world's leading democracy and military power are the foundations for response to make sure that even these serious challenges to Israel's security will not be overwhelming.

HILLEL FRISCH, *Ph.D.*, is a professor of Political Science and Middle East History at Bar Ilan University and a senior researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.

What to See After You Think You Have Seen Israel

by **JAN GOLDSTEIN** and **IRIS RICKS**

Everyone knows that there is nothing like the first-time experience of visiting Israel. Even accompanying first-time visitors to Israel and seeing their faces as they enter the city of Jerusalem, pray at the Kotel, climb Masada, swim in the Dead Sea, go to Yad Vashem or witness their first encounter with an Israeli breakfast is an experience!

There isn't anyone who is prepared for the power Israel has as it brings to life the stories of the Bible and presents the spiritual, historical, cultural and physical beauty of the land and its people, the Jews and others who also call it home. Israel is the place that you want to return to almost as soon as you leave. Fortunately, after visitors get their first or even second taste of the ancient land and its people, they only have begun to scratch the surface of experiences that Israel has to offer.

Here are a few of the "seldom seen" possibilities for those returning:

visit. It is the world's largest erosion crater. Most craters are formed as a result of a meteor or a volcanic eruption, but Makhtesh Ramon was created by erosion 220 million years ago. It is shaped like an elongated heart and forms Israel's largest national park, the Ramon Nature Reserve. It contains geological formations unparalleled in the world. In addition to the sheer beauty and majesty of the crater, there are many unique things to do in the crater and the surrounding area:

- Take a jeep tour to enjoy the beautiful scenery;
- Rappel down the cliffs;
- Stargaze at night;
- Hike on the Har Ardon Trail and the Negev Highlands Trail; or
- Visit Faran, a mini-cosmetics factory that creates a range of 100 percent natural cosmetics inspired by nature and the surrounding desert.

In addition, The Spice Route Quarter is an old industrial area in the town

century BCE and the seventh century CE. The Nabataeans also built Petra.

In addition, there is a fabulous hotel located on a cliff at the edge of the Ramon Crater. The Beresheet Hotel and Resort is a five-star hotel and spa in a dramatic setting unique in the world. The hotel offers spa services and excellent cuisine.

■ **Voluntouring**

Volunteering in Israel is an excellent way of integrating and immersing yourself into the community and culture. When one volunteers for the benefit of others, one attains the satisfaction of self-fulfillment and the knowledge that he or she has made a positive change. You can choose from a variety of options based on your skills and interests. It is a great opportunity to discover up close the amazing cultural and natural diversity that makes Israel the special country that it is. It also gives you an opportunity to work closely with and get to know Israelis.

Here are only a few of the opportunities available. If you have a specific interest in an area such as children at risk, the elderly, youth and sports or anything else that helps other and builds communities, there are a multitude of experiences awaiting you on your next trip.

- Fruit Picking at Leket Israel

Leket Israel is the country's largest food bank and leading food rescue and delivery network. Leket Israel volunteers enter fields and orchards at the end of the season's harvest to glean fruits and vegetables that will then be distributed all over the country to those in need.

- Packing with Pantry Packers

This is an exciting hands-on

Israel is the place that you want to return to almost as soon as you leave.

■ **Makhtesh Ramon in Mitzpe Ramon**

The Ramon Crater, or Makhtesh Ramon, is a true natural wonder and is one of the top 10 things to see in Israel. Located in the south in Israel's Negev desert, the crater is far enough off the beaten path that tourists don't often have the time to go there on a first or second

of Mitzpe Ramon that has cute boutique stores, guest houses, bakeries and restaurants. One can also:

- Take a hot air balloon ride;
- Enjoy a short excursion to Avdat, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and visit the site of a ruined Nabataean city. Avdat was the most important city on the incense route after Petra between the first



The Yaacov Agam Museum of Art has an asymmetric canopy over the entrance and exhibits works of the Kinetic Art

opportunity to pack commodity food staples for Israel's poorest families. Located in Jerusalem, the facility gives volunteers the opportunity to make their contribution to society in a meaningful way.

- Be a Forester for a Day

The Jewish National Fund's Forester-for-a-Day program is a new ecological initiative that offers volunteers a unique opportunity to assist JNF in helping to maintain forests, prevent forest fires and guarantee a greener tomorrow.

- WWOOF with the Locals

Participants in WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) Israel can enroll in a variety of hands-on experiences that are located variously at a kibbutz, a moshav, a farm or a private home. These experiences include cheese- and wine-making, animal husbandry, green building, and organic gardening to name a few.

■ The Agam Art Museum

Yaacov Agam is one of the most renowned Israeli artists of all time. His paintings, exhibited all over the world, both defy and define kinetic art with his signature approach using bold colors and shapes. Agam was born in Rishon Lezion in what was then Mandate Palestine and though he moved to Zurich and then Paris, a large collection of his art found a permanent home in the place of his birth outside of Tel Aviv. This is the only museum in the world that is dedicated to art in motion.

The recently-opened museum is one-of-a-kind in the way the visitor views the paintings. In most museums, one stands in front of a painting and then moves on. In the Agam Museum, you must view the work from at least several different angles and even then, you will not see everything that the

artist fashioned to speak to you. With all his work, Agam shows us that the most constant thing in life is change.

Though Agam's art is very modern, it expresses an ancient concept of the Jewish people. According to Agam, the whole concept of Judaism is the flow of time and the unexpected. His philosophy is that time, by definition, cannot be repeated and its events are unexpected. He uses this Jewish notion of the unanticipated in his art. His museum is dedicated to the notion of seeing the world in a different way, as Judaism—with its linear and progressive view of time, from creation through development to redemption—broke with previous beliefs in a cyclical, repetitive view of man in time.

The building's structure is as interesting as its contents and reflects Agam's artistic concept. This is not a museum



Sunrise at Makhtesh Ramon crater in Negev Desert, Southern Israel. (Photo: By Byelikova Oksana)

that one should walk through without explanation. Be sure to arrange a guided tour ahead of time in order to truly appreciate Agam's genius. We guarantee that an excursion to Israel's newest museum will be well worth the time spent.

■ **Zichron Ya'acov**

This charming town is rarely visited on even second or third trips to Israel. But it's a gem you don't want to miss!

Zichron is located 22 miles south of Haifa at the southern edge of the Carmel mountain range, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea near the coastal highway. Many people are attracted to the picturesque setting and historic city center whose restored buildings on its main street house restaurants, coffeehouses and boutiques selling locally made crafts, jewelry and antiques.

Zichron Ya'akov was founded in 1882 by 100 Jewish pioneers from Romania. They purchased land but the difficulty of working the rocky soil and an outbreak of malaria led many of the settlers to leave before the year was up.

In 1883, Baron Edmund James de

Rothschild became the patron of the settlement and drew up plans for its residential layout and agricultural economy. Zichron was one of the first Jewish agricultural colonies to come under the wing of the baron. He brought in planners who designed and allotted housing plots along the main road for the use of settlement farmers. Each lot included a house facing the street, a long interior courtyard and a building for agricultural implements. The French-inspired architecture included tiled roofs and painted wooden window frames. These houses can still be seen today. Each farmer was given a salary and placed under the direction of the baron's clerk. The Ohel Ya'akov Synagogue was commissioned by Baron de Rothschild and a beautiful edifice with an ark made of white marble was built. The synagogue opened in 1886 and has conducted daily prayer services continuously ever since.

After a number of economic failures, Baron de Rothschild helped to establish the first winery in Israel, Carmel Winery, in 1885. This was somewhat successful until 1892 when the grapevines were attacked by a parasite. After a brief setback,

the winery grew American seedlings that were resistant to the parasite and subsequently flourished. Today, the winery is the longest-operating institution in Israel's booming wine-making industry.

Be sure to stop or stay at The Elma Arts Complex Luxury Hotel. It is a magnificent architectural complex with outstanding views of the Mediterranean Sea. The hotel has the philosophy that "When you stay with art, the art stays with you long after you leave." The Elma highlights not only a magnificent array of visual arts but also classical concerts, operas and modern musical performances. These make it a special destination for both locals and tourists.

Don't miss the Aaronsohn House-Nili Museum. During World War I, Zichron became famous for the establishment of the Nili spy ring. Sarah Aaronsohn, with her brothers Aaron and Alex and their friend, Avshalom Feinberg, volunteered to spy on Ottoman positions and report them to British agents offshore. In 1917, the Ottomans caught one of Sarah's carrier pigeons and cracked the code. Sarah and several



Old Carmel Winery building in Zichron Yaakov, Israel. (Photo: Vladim Lerner)

others were arrested. After four days of torture, Sarah was able to go home to get some clothes and while there, she shot herself in the throat so that she wouldn't be able to give away secret information.

A unique cemetery also awaits you in Zichron. There are colorful and whimsical but moving tributes marking the graves of children and young people.

■ Culinary Experiences

If you really want to understand Israel and Israelis, sit with them across the table, break bread and listen to the stories they tell. Not only will visitors hear about their personal history and cultural traditions, but they also will get an in-depth perspective on the beginnings of the still-young state and the role markets played in people's lives.

The effect can be seen – and tasted – today in Israel's heterogeneous cuisine, the flavorful result of its diverse populations.

Hummus, falafel, shakshouka and couscous are only a few of the ethnic foods available in Israel. The unbelievable tastes and aromas are all part of the richness and liveliness that makes Israel

special. Tel Aviv is today's world leader in culinary experiences, a magnet for foodie travelers. Places all over the country strengthen the attraction.

- Shuk and Cook

Begin the day with a guided tour of Jerusalem's colorful food and vegetable market, Mahane Yehuda. The tour will be followed by a hands-on cooking workshop with a local chef using fresh products purchased at the market.

- Meet with a Druze Family

The Druze are a minority group living in Israel's Carmel and Golan Heights region. Enter a Druze family home and learn about the Druze society and its customs. End the visit with a home-cooked, all-you-can-eat meal.

- Eat with the Locals

This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know Israelis. Meet and eat with locals inside their homes and absorb the real flavors and aromas of Israel. There are a wide variety of options in terms of areas of the country and hosts and hosting styles.

- Israeli Kitchen Cooking Workshop

Enjoy an interactive cooking workshop with a well-known chef. Learn to

make the most popular Israeli dishes such as hummus, grilled eggplant and spicy Moroccan grilled fish.

- Circassian Hospitality

In a beautiful village in the north of Israel, Kfar Kama, one can learn about and experience Circassian culture and hospitality including traditional dishes, music and folk dancing. During your visit, a local guide will share the traditional stories and heritage of this Muslim minority group that fled Russian conquests in the North Caucasus in the 19th century.

- Bedouin Feast in the Desert

Experience a traditional Bedouin feast and take part in fun-filled activities such as pita bread making or camel riding in beautiful desert surroundings.

We will tell you what we tell all of our travelers to Israel: Welcome Home and we will be waiting for you when you return. L'hitr'aot!

JAN GOLDSTEIN and IRIS RICKS of Amiel Tours, Israel prepared this article especially for inFOCUS. Contact them at www.israeljournays.com.

Selective History & Distortions: Jordan's Politicized Archeology

by ADAM J. SACKS

In the case of Israel's neighbor and almost physical doppelgänger, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, it seems that the colder the peace the less it is discussed. Remarkably stable for the region, Jordan rarely makes headlines. The comparative absence of volatility in this Western-oriented monarchy due, in no small part, to its serving as a security buffer for Israel. On the other hand, it is almost unfathomable to imagine King Abdullah II uttering the recent words of President Abdul Fatah al-Sisi in Egypt: "If Jews return, we will build synagogues." First, Jordan didn't really have a recent historical Jewish community of any note. Second, much of what is today Jordan was either historically part of Jewish territory or was earmarked to be such again. Even during the Hellenistic period, the city of Amman was governed by the Jewish Tobiad clan.

[It should also be recalled that "Transjordan," had originally been part of the British Mandate for Palestine, anointed as such by the League of Nations. None other than Winston Churchill proposed and enacted the rupture of Jordan therefrom as an independent Arab province as compensation for Great Britain's World War I alliance with the Hashemite clan of the Hejaz, far away on the Arabian Peninsula. Their "revolt in the desert" against the Ottoman overlords was in pursuit of an ultimate dream – one large Arab kingdom centered around Damascus. This was dashed by the Western powers in post-war diplomacy. Churchill also acceded to the elimination of Hebrew as an official language in Jordan as well as an absolute bar on Jewish migration to the area.]

For the history buff, though, Jordan is a fount of Jewish experience, for both archeological excavation and memory-building exercises.

■ *Silence on This, but Not That*

All this and the de facto peace make the silence on all things Jewish and Israeli even more deafening and confounding. Any mention of such things, whether in contemporary tourism or historical maps, seems strictly taboo. The majority of Jordan's population is Palestinian Arab, with that culture firmly embedded in the everyday life of the country. So, any enforcement apparently requires little push from above. Israel is never seen on any map, nor on graphics that depict the region, from those offered in hotels to souvenir stores, nor even on archeological markers paid for by USAID, which also dutifully support the prohibition on saying the

anymore?" And he responded, "This is Palestine." It should also be mentioned that a cross marking the spot of the recognized baptism site had been officially and recently removed by the relevant Jordanian authority. Unlike on the Israeli side, literally a stone's throw away, pilgrims here are neither invited nor allowed to follow in the path of John the Baptist and submerge into the river.

In stark contrast, the memory of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein appears empathically cosseted. Apparently embraced as a champion of the Palestinians and confronter of the West, one greater even than Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, it is hard to drive for more than ten minutes without seeing his silhouette embossed on the back of a car or truck. His image is occasionally even paired with that of Adolf Hitler. On-street booksellers seem to find the pairing of Saddam biographies with that of Hitler's manifesto, *Mein*

The overall message given [by the Jordanians] is that the late twentieth century is not the first time Jews were seen as oppressors in the Middle East.

forbidden name: identification of the territory that in reality is Israel invariably reads "Palestine."

At times this obsessive denialism can seem delusional and even comic. Right across the Jordan River, near the spot Christians world-wide revere as the baptismal site of Jesus, literally facing and pointing to an Israeli flag, I asked a tour guide, "So, that's not Jordan

Kampf, good for business. Sometimes these works appear along with texts that claim to reveal "the secrets of the Talmud." Given all this, as well as the long-shared border and history, one could presume that at least a few of the many possibilities for mentioning Israel or the Jews would be taken advantage of. That is why the looming shadow of things once present is so glaring.



Some of the books for sale on the streets of Jordan. (Photo: Adam J. Sacks)

■ The Second Jewish Commonwealth

However, the silence is not total. The deep historical past is not entirely suppressed by disdain and neglect of all traces Jewish. The overarching exception to the rule is both strong and compelling, namely the last time Jews had power in the region. This was during the so-called Second Commonwealth of the Kingdom of Judea. [The years in questions are generally agreed to span from 142 BCE until 92 CE: Judea received quasi-independence from the Seleucid Greeks in 142 BCE with the assumption of the office of prince and High Priest by Simon and ends with the last king of the Herodian line, Agrippa II. He ruled largely over non-Jews including some who lived in what is current-day Jordan and actually opposed the Jewish revolt against Rome. He died in approximately 92 CE.] This is so interesting in part because this often runs counter to Jewish memory, which in its religious vein chooses to focus on the Biblical Davidic kingdom or in its secular variant fastens firmly onto the secular and modern Zionist narrative of redemption.

Modern Zionism and the necessities of life in the Anglo-Christian Diaspora did however import an outside influence to the Hanukkah story of the Maccabees, which it scarcely had before. Strangely enough, Jews do not include the books of the Maccabees in the Tanakh while they serve decisive theological importance for Catholicism, particularly for the church doctrinal matters of the sacrifice of martyrs and the intercession of saints.

Some Zionists of the Revisionist tendency, following Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky, did seize upon the Judaic expansions of this Second Commonwealth period to solidify a claim to the East Bank as well as to the land west of the Jordan River. Jewish historians have hotly debated the achievements and the disorders of the Hasmonean state, and its reputation in the religious world is even more sour as, in contravention of Jewish law, later rules of the Maccabean line, they usurped the priesthood as well as the monarchy, abrogating the legitimate Aharonic and Davidic lineages, respectively. Though Herod himself lay siege to Jerusalem, apparently desecrating the tombs of David and Solomon, the substantial world-historical achievements

of this dynasty are far more verifiable than any of those of the Davidic line centuries before.

From Alexander the Great until the Caesars of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, under a Jewish banner lay the strongest and most independent state in what we now know as the Middle East (excepting Persia, which of course was an empire to rival Greece and Rome in its own right.) Half of this time, an independent Hellenistic state and the other half a client state and then province of the Roman Empire, this Jewish history in Judea is in many ways remarkably a modern mirror of our own times. In some ways it seems that the Jordanian authorities are more well aware of this than their Jewish counterparts.

■ Modern Jordan's Message

When examining this sole mention of the Jews in the Hashemite Kingdom, one cannot escape the impression that Jordanians are really talking about the contemporary State of Israel, and that they are using a not-so-highly encrypted form of code language. The sum effect of their approach here, I would argue, is nothing less than an alarming call for those who might prefer to dwell on the assumption that historical impressions of the Jews highlight spiritual ethics or progressive cosmopolitanism. Leaving aside for the moment questions of historical veracity, the overall message given is that the late twentieth century is not the first time Jews were seen as oppressors in the Middle East.

To begin with, a summary of the Jordanian interpretation of classical era Judea: Recurring if not defining characteristics were the refusal to make due with a small state, a persistent problem of militancy, the tendency to make war on neighboring Arabs and service as a client state to greater powers from outside the region. Sound familiar? In summary, the Maccabean state, ultimately succeeded by a dynasty derived from the forcibly converted Idumean peoples (living on the present-day territory of Jordan) though it flew a Jewish banner,



Anti-western pro-Saddam Hussein demonstrations in Mann, Jordan, during the gulf crisis in 1990. (Photo: Barry Lewis / Alamy)

represented, in the eyes of its neighbors, unwelcome forces of modernity and imperialism, rather than piety or monotheistic morality.

For a deeper look, consult the description inside Jordan's first archeological museum on the grounds of the citadel on the summit of the capital city of Amman:

After the Seleucids achieved domination over the entire area from the late 3rd Century BC onwards, the militant Hasmonian Jews rose up against Greek domination and established their own reign in Palestine and the Northern part of Jordan. Most of the Greek cities welcomed the Roman army headed by General Pompey as a liberator from Jewish oppression...

In what I can confirm is the only instance of the use of the word "Jewish"

at any of Jordan's many historical sites, it appears only as an adjective modifying the word "oppression." One can find another depiction of Judea as a ruthless, imperialist state inside the renovated museum at Petra, the world heritage site recently awarded the title of new Wonder of the World. In Jerash, one of the most extraordinary Roman city ruins in the world, which was once a part of the Hasmonian kingdom and included synagogues, mention of any of the Jewish connection is conspicuously absent to the point of not labeling a location where historians agree a synagogue surely stood:

Aretas II first minted coins, during his reign Alexander Janneus was King of Judah and he was a ruthless ruler who sought to expand and strengthen the territories of Judah. Around 100 BC he took control of Gaza and

though the people of Gaza asked for Aretas' help it came too late.

Not just oppressive but also led by a "ruthless" ruler and the echo of a beleaguered and besieged Gaza is hard not to cross-reference against contemporary events. It would be surprising if the effect were entirely unintentional.

Describing the peaceful, wealthy and diplomatic regime of the proto-Arabic Nabatean peoples (who spoke an early Arabic language and migrated from the Arabian Peninsula northward over centuries) in contrast to the warlike, expansionist Herodians, the permanent exhibit goes on to recount:

King Herod the Great invaded twice, second time taking control of large parts of the country... Aretas IV whose daughter married Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.

Herod Antipas later divorced Phasaelis in order to marry his brother's wife Herodias, mother of the famed Salome, who danced for Herod and in return asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter. The shamed Phasaelis fled back home to Petra, escorted by Nabatean guard. Aretas IV, angered by the snub, sent an army to invade Herod's territory and captured large parts of it along the west bank of the Jordan river.

Perhaps even more remarkable is that archeologists now claim to have found the palace site at which that infamous tale actually may have taken place. Machareus, the fortified hilltop Herodian palace lies barely 20 miles from the Jordan River and the border with Israel. Especially remarkable is that this palace was first constructed by the Hasmoneans and then revamped by Herod the Great precisely to oversee territories on the east bank of the Jordan. Excavated and digi-

its peaceable proto-Arabian neighbors. Furthermore, it had to grapple with the problem of the growing militancy of its population and the persistent ruthlessness of its leaders. All the while, even though flying a Jewish banner, it was perceived as a client state of a foreign power that stood for westernization and modernity, in this case Rome, whose global hegemony the Jews were seen to serve.

As disturbing a picture as this might appear, sometimes one's reflection in the eyes of one's neighbor is worth consultation and consideration. One would avoid the presence of this selective history only at considerable peril. Entirely overlooked are the considerable technological and cultural achievements of Herod's Judea, which was often seen as the significant junior partner in Caesar Augustus's Pax Romana.

This is literally the long and the short of what any otherwise uninformed visitor to Jordan would have to learn about the Jews and Jewish history. As a warning from the past as well as the present, sober narratives of the perils of power might reinforce the exigency of good neighborliness. But just as much

When examining this sole mention of the Jews in the Hashemite Kingdom one cannot escape the impression that Jordanians are really talking about the contemporary state of Israel...

■ *The Message Continues*

So, it appears that duplicity and decadence can be added to the cycle of war, revenge and retribution between the Judeans and the proto-Arabs in the last century before the Common Era. Left entirely unmentioned is the significant Jewish community of Petra which undoubtedly contributed to its famous flourishing. Some recent ethnographers have even claimed that the Bedouin of Petra have verifiable Israelite ancestral trace markers.

Jordanian authorities see fit here to refer only to the infamous tale of Salome and John the Baptist. Largely derived from New Testament Gospel accounts, some would even claim the origins of Christian and therefore global anti-Semitism began with the villainous portrayal of the Herodians depicted there. Putatively secular modern European culture would also find its uses for these tales. Richard Strauss in his 1905 opera of Salome used the Judean court of Herod as a template to depict "female hysteria" and critique the decadence of European society brought on, so the implication goes, by the pernicious influence of the Jews and especially their sexually uninhibited women.

tally reconstructed by a Hungarian team just a few years back, the site naturally carries special significance for Christians. It would also not be farfetched to speculate that were Machareus to lie within Israel it surely would be one of the main sites of archeological pilgrimage. As it is now in Jordan, this site lies on ab-

Some recent ethnographers have even claimed that the Bedouin of Petra have verifiable Israelite ancestral trace markers.

solutely none of the major or even minor tourist itineraries and the one hotel once intended to accommodate visitors here lies a ruin. What few informational placards exist on the site make no explicit mention of the Kingdom of Judea or the Judaic character of the site.

■ *What to do With the Picture*

When we are offered a composite picture by Jordanian archeological authorities of this classical history we are left with the impression a Jewish entity that refused to make due with a small state and had a particular tendency to make war on

they could be ample fodder for intransigent prejudice. It is a warning from the past, as well as the present, that a formal peace without historical enlightenment and lacking popular support will be understood in the skewed language of an "old" Middle East, not the "new."

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Calling Out the UN Human Rights Council's Anti-Israel Bias

by **BENJAMIN WEINTHAL**

The pro-Israel community is rarely shy about lambasting the profoundly invidious UN Human Rights Council, which year after year singles out the Jewish state among all the countries of the world for unparalleled criticism.

While written condemnations of the Council's bias, and quotes to the media, are par for the course (and highly important), a demonstration in Geneva in March against the UNHRC infused efforts to debunk the anti-Israel narrative with renewed energy. The organization UN Watch, which seeks to reform the UN's reactionary policies and structures, termed the event a "historic protest rally." UN Watch mobilized the demonstration.

Hundreds of protestors, including the outspoken American ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell, challenged the UNHRC's infamous Agenda Item 7 – defined as a review of the "Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories" – the measure used to punish Israel at every council session. It is the UN body's only permanent element targeting a particular state. No country but Israel is permanently singled out for opprobrium at the UNHRC.

■ **UNHRC and the War Against Israel**

The UNHRC has devoted seven reports to Israel, accusing the Jewish state of various human rights violations and war crimes. The most sensitive report dealt with an UN inquiry that concluded in February 2019 that Israel may have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity during Hamas-sponsored protests/riots on the Gaza Strip-Israel border

last year. The so-called UN Independent Commission of Inquiry ignored the role of the U.S.- and EU-designated terrorist organization Hamas in engineering the violence. In an effort to stop Hamas terrorists and supporters from entering Israeli territory, 189 (according to the UN-HCR) Palestinians were killed, and 9,204 (again, according to the UNHCR) people were injured.

Israel's government noted that most of those killed and injured in the riots and the attempts to breach the border were young men of fighting age, and said that the number of those injured was in the range of 4,000. Predictably, the UN report failed to address Hamas's use of grenades thrown at Israeli soldiers. Hamas also engages in ecological terrorism by dispatching kites and balloons across the border to carry out arson attacks and to detonate bombs. The goal is not only environmental destruction but also to murder Israeli civilians.

The UNHRC and the inquiry investigators are wholly ill-equipped to ad-

Hamas-organized "March of Return," a multiweek campaign during which thousands of Gaza civilians—including women and children – repeatedly rioted at the border with Israel. Groups of armed Gazans used these riots as cover to attempt to breach the border.

Dubowitz and Kittrie noted:

Yahya Sinwar, Hamas's leader in Gaza, admitted that the march was designed to generate civilian casualties – to sacrifice "that which is most dear to us – the bodies of our women and children." The plan worked, he claimed, as "our people" forced onto "the world's television screens . . . the sacrifice of their children." Hamas official Salah Bardawil later admitted that most of those killed by Israeli troops defending the border were Hamas operatives. But the television images had already done the intended damage to Israel's reputation.

No country but Israel is permanently singled out for opprobrium at the UNHRC.

dress Hamas's asymmetrical warfare. As Mark Dubowitz and Orde Kittrie, my colleagues at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) wrote in an August 2018 *Wall Street Journal* commentary:

The most prominent recent example [of asymmetric warfare, ed.] is the

■ **At the anti-UNHRC Protest**

All of this helps to explain why hundreds of people across Europe, including President Donald Trump's most prominent ambassador on the continent, Richard Grenell, participated in the demonstration in front of UNHRC headquarters in Geneva.



The Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations Room in the United Nations Headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland. (Photo: Martin Lehmann)

“The belief that a single country and a single people merit such attention on a permanent basis. This belief is motivated by one thing: anti-Semitism,” Grenell said at the protest in Switzerland. Agenda Item 7, “speaks to the fundamental flaws of the Human Rights Council that it singles out Israel on a permanent basis.”

While Israeli and Jewish media outlets in the Diaspora covered the rally against the anti-Israel discrimination at the UNHRC, the American media did not devote much coverage to the event. For example, a *New York Times* dispatch dated Geneva noted in one paragraph in its article about the UNHRC session that a protest took place, writing: “The Human Rights Council’s activity on Israel prompted pro-Israeli demonstrations on Monday outside the United Nations in Geneva. Senior American diplomats joined Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations and pro-Israeli groups from around Europe in denouncing what it called the council’s anti-Israeli bias and anti-Semitism.”

To its credit, Voice of America devoted coverage to Grenell’s remarks.

Col. (ret.) Richard Kemp, former

commander of British forces in Afghanistan, spoke at the anti-UNHRC protest. He commented on the recent UN report:

I have first-hand knowledge of what Hamas and the IDF have done and I gave evidence to the commission of inquiry. I told them from my professional experience the reality on the border, and they did not listen to one word of what I said. This report is a tissue of lies, abuse, prejudice and distortion and is not worth the paper it is printed on.

Nikki Haley, then–U.S. ambassador to the UN, jolted many UN members into rethinking their anti-Israel bias. In June 2018, Haley famously rebuked the UNHRC while announcing the U.S. withdrawal from the body:

Regrettably it is now clear that our call for reform was not heeded... Human rights abusers continue to serve on, and be elected to, the council. The world’s most inhumane regimes continue to escape scrutiny and the

council continues politicizing and scapegoating of countries with positive human rights records in an attempt to distract from the abusers in their ranks. For too long the human rights council has been a protector of human rights abusers and a cesspool of political bias.

Marie van der Zyl, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, recognized improvement in British policy. “We congratulate the UK on its new and principled stance on announcing that it will fulfill its promise to vote against all resolutions tabled under the UN Human Rights Council’s discriminatory Item 7,” said van der Zyl. The United Kingdom, however, rankled Israel advocates by abstaining in March on UNHCR Resolution L25 – which was considered under a different Agenda Item – accusing Israel of “possible war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

■ Germany’s Anti-Israel Policies

Germany, while not involved in the March vote because it is not currently a UNHCR member, waged a diplomatic

war against Israel at the UN in 2018.

Diplomats working for Chancellor Angela Merkel, who said in Israel in 2008 that its security is “nonnegotiable” for her administration, voted 16 times to condemn the Jewish state in 2018, alongside authoritarian regimes including the Islamic Republic of Iran. Out of 21 anti-Israel resolutions that year, Germany’s ambassador to the UN in New York Christoph Heusgen and the country’s UN diplomats voted 16 times against Israel, and abstained on four.

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Germany’s ambassador to the UN in New York
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voted 16 times against Israel, and abstained on four.

A number of Israeli diplomats see Heusgen as stoking anti-Israel bias. Heusgen in March compared Israel’s security measures against Palestinian terrorism with Hamas rocket attacks. Put simply, for Berlin’s top UN diplomat, a recognized terrorist organization is the moral equivalent of the only democracy in the Middle East. This sort of demonization of Israel is allowed by Merkel and her Social Democratic foreign minister Heiko Maas.

Maas, who said last year he went into politics “because of Auschwitz,” has advocated a largely pro-Iranian regime policy. His deputy Niels Annen celebrated Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution at Tehran’s embassy in February. Annen also rejected a full ban of the terrorist entity Hezbollah in Germany. After the United Kingdom outlawed all of Hezbollah in February, Annen said Germany would not ban Hezbollah from its soil.

In addition to the UK, the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands, the Arab League and Israel all classify all of Hezbollah as a terrorist entity. The EU and Germany divide Hezbollah into so-called political and military wings. Merkel rejected an

appeal from the Central Council of Jews in Germany to proscribe Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, amid rising Jew-hatred in the Federal Republic.

■ *Changes on the Horizon?*

In March, the Free Democratic Party, an opposition party in the Bundestag, introduced a pro-Israel resolution calling on the federal government to act “in the bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations (such as the UN General Assembly, the UN Hu-

man Rights Council or UNESCO) to dissociate [Germany] from unilateral, primarily politically motivated initiatives and alliances of anti-Israeli Member States, and protect Israel and legitimate Israeli interests from unilateral condemnation.” Free Democratic Party legislators Bijan Djir-Sarai and Frank Müller-Rosentritt drafted the resolution. Merkel’s governing coalition of Christian Democrat, Christian Social Union and Social Democrat legislators rejected the effort to change her administration’s anti-Israel voting pattern.

A breakthrough of sorts took place in May. Health Minister Jens Spahn, a prominent member of Merkel’s cabinet, played a critical role, for the first time, in rolling-back Germany’s anti-Israel voting record at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva. Spahn is an openly gay member of the Christian Democratic Union party who has criticized Merkel over immigration policy. The American embassy in Berlin tweeted, “Thank you, Jens Spahn, for your leadership in standing against anti-Israel bias at the UN.”

And that same month, while marking the 70th anniversary of Israel’s

admission to the UN, Maas criticized the UN’s treatment of the Jewish state, stating, “Israel is still being denounced, treated in a biased manner and marginalized inappropriately in UN bodies to this day.”

It is too soon to know whether Maas will reverse Berlin’s anti-Israel track record at the UN. Germany’s foreign ministry is permeated with anti-Israelism and Merkel has made no serious effort to rope in the hostility toward Israel from Maas and the German diplomatic corps. A telling example was that German diplomats defended the anti-Semitic policy of Kuwait Airways to refuse passenger service to Israelis at Frankfurt’s airport. Sustained pressure, along with critical media reports, on Germany’s anti-Israel voting record at the UN might lead to fundamental changes during Merkel’s tenure. With Merkel planning to step down as Chancellor in 2021, a left-wing German government could intensify Germany’s already anti-Israel voting behavior at the UN.

■ *Conclusion*

To return to the protest at the UNHRC in Geneva, it is worth noting that the list of high-profile speakers along with media attention helped to draw attention to contemporary anti-Semitism unfolding within an organization that, in theory and practice, should seek to combat modern anti-Semitism. The rise of anti-Semitism in Europe can’t be divorced from UNHRC-sponsored anti-Semitism. One litmus test for major European powers, who have been complicit in turning Israel into a state punching bag at the UNHRC, will be to reverse their anti-Israel voting pattern. European countries could also consider replicating the American decision and pull the plug on their participation at the UNHRC because of its theater of the absurd character.

BENJAMIN WEINTHAL *is a fellow for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.*

Israel's Amazing Med-Tech Innovation Stream

[Editor's note: We wanted to highlight one aspect of Israel's innovative medical research. We couldn't choose just one – so this article combines three recent stories reported by Israel21c, an online magazine dedicated to spotlighting Israel's diverse culture.]

Nanosynex: Stopping the Superbug Surge by Brian Blum

Almost 700,000 people around the world are estimated to die each year – not from the illness for which they went to the doctor or hospital – but from an infection resulting from contact with antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

In the United States alone, two million patients contract infections from superbugs; 23,000 people die from those infections. Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill estimates that by the year 2050, more people will die from antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections than from cancer.

One of the ways superbugs develop is when a patient is prescribed the wrong antibiotics. The bacteria “learn” from that incorrect treatment and can share their newfound resistance with other bacteria. “The body becomes an incubator for resistant bacteria,” explains Diane Abensur Bessin, chief executive officer of Nanosynex, an Israeli startup working on a novel approach to help physicians avoid mis-prescribing antibiotics.

“If we give a patient the correct treatment at the right dose, then no resistance will be created, the patient will be cured faster, and other patients won't be infected by resistant bacteria,” Abensur Bessin says.

Nanosynex's solution is a diagnostic

test that determines which bacteria in a patient's body are resistant to which antibiotics – in just four hours. That compares favorably with the day or two or more required for traditional diagnostic tests. The result: physicians can more quickly prescribe the antibiotics that will work.

This will entail some change in behavior among doctors, who tend to prescribe a broad-based treatment rather than taking blood or urine samples and waiting for results. It's not that physicians are in cahoots with the bad bacteria; their patients come in suffering and doctors want to provide fast relief. “But every minute counts when you're dealing with resistant bacteria,” Abensur Bessin says. If you don't get your test results back for a couple of days, it may already be too late to stop resistance from developing.

Antibiotic overprescribing is a particular problem in primary care, where it is viruses—not bacteria—that cause most infections. About 90 percent of all antibiotic prescriptions in the United States are issued by general practitioners.

Nanosynex is creating a kit that will be sold to laboratories; it contains disposable cards, a fluorescent reading device and software to do the analysis.

The technology is based on “microfluidic” features, requiring a smaller quantity of bacteria than other testing technologies, Abensur Bessin explains. The sample is mixed with a fluorescent dye; the intensity of the fluorescent signal is proportional to any bacterial growth.

Abensur Bessin came up with the idea for Nanosynex with co-founder Brazilian native Michelle Heyman, while both were studying for their

MBAs at the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology). The two approached the university's technology transfer office and asked which researchers had technologies that were mature enough to be turned into a company.

“We met with five different professors,” Abensur Bessin relates. “We wanted something that had a short time-to-market—five years or less.”

That's how the two were introduced to Prof. Shulamit Levenberg, dean of the Technion's biomedical-engineering faculty. Levenberg and her team had already been working for several years on the microfluidic “chip” that would become the basis of the Nanosynex kit.

Paris-born Abensur Bessin was particularly interested in identifying a medical technology around which to build a company. Her father has a firm in France that distributes diagnostic tools across Europe. With the marketing channels already in place, Levenberg's invention was a match. “We knew there was a huge potential,” Abensur Bessin says. “There was no debate on the need to create this.”

Nanosynex incorporated in 2017 and has raised \$1 million with another \$500,000 pledged from the Israel Innovation Authority. The five-person company is operating out of the Technion's in-house accelerator but will be moving to its own offices soon.

In 2018, Nanosynex was one of 10 companies accepted into IBM's Tel Aviv-based accelerator for healthcare startups. The company receives blood for testing from Rambam Healthcare Campus in Haifa and Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem. The head of Rambam's microbiology department is on Nanosynex's scientific advisory board.

Abensur Bessin says when Nanosynex results were compared with those

from existing diagnostic devices, “they were exactly the same but done in half the time.”

Slowing the rise of the superbugs is just the start of what Abensur Bessin hopes will be a “long-lasting business that will grow internationally.”

In the meantime, if your doctor tells you to wait a few hours before he or she prescribes an antibiotic, don’t become too anxious: it will be for the good of your health — and the wellbeing of the entire planet.

Diagnoz.me: Smartphone into Diagnos- tics Microscope *by Abigail Klein Leichman*

If your eye is oozing and red and you suspect you have an infection, you have to make an appointment with your doctor and get a lab analysis before you can start treatment with antibiotics. Physicist-turned-biologist Ariel Livne wondered if the whole process could be done at home by pairing some simple optics equipment with his smartphone to analyze biological samples – in the case of an eye infection, a teardrop.

That is the basis of the startup Diagnoz.me of Jerusalem, cofounded by Livne in November 2017 with Tamir Epstein, with the help of a pre-seed grant from the Israel Innovation Authority.

“Our innovation is that we enable the smartphone to see bacteria,” Livne says. “Once you see bacteria you can perform medical diagnostics. Our technology transforms a low-cost disposable together with a regular smartphone into a high-end medical diagnostics microscope.”

Still in the proof-of-concept stage, Diagnoz.me aims to enable patients to run tests at home, receive lab-grade results within minutes and instantly share them with their physician.

“We have shown that our image-analysis software can detect bacteria as accurately as a high-end lab microscope

that costs over \$100,000,” says Livne.

The optics add-on would be a disposable chip device sold at a pharmacy for less than \$20. You’d put the relevant biological liquid onto the chip, whether urine, saliva or a teardrop, “in a convenient way so it’s not disgusting or unhygienic. The camera takes and analyzes the pictures and sends you and your physician automatic results.”

Diagnoz.me is not the only Israeli company pioneering the home diagnostics sector.

TytoCare of Netanya and New York sells a home exam kit and app that lets people perform basic medical exams guided by a doctor. The device includes instruments to check ears, throat, heart and lungs, skin and body temperature and transmits those images and sounds to the physician.

Healthy.io of Tel Aviv, which recently raised \$18 million in a Series B round, sells a smartphone-based home urinalysis kit and is starting a test-and-treat service in the UK for urinary-tract infections in collaboration with pharmacy chain Boots.

Livne explains that most home diagnostics developers are using PCR, a technology that identifies the DNA of specific bacteria.

Diagnoz.me uses a different technology, fluorescence microscopy, which has been around for over 100 years – but it wasn’t until about 2017 that smartphones had the right high-level specs to make Diagnoz.me possible. “The physician receives the same kind of information as from a lab, including bacterial count, to know what you have. If you need a prescription, that can be done electronically as well,” says Livne.

The founders won a 3 million Euro prize at the Health 2018 Summit held in Rishon LeZion.

Livne and Epstein have decided that Diagnoz.me’s first use-case will be vaginal infections, the most common gynecological problem, accounting for more than 10 million office visits per year in the United States.

“We looked at a number of different infections and vaginal infections stood out because they are very common but unfortunately most women don’t go for treatment because it’s so unpleasant,” Livne explains.

“Possibly 80 percent of women do anything to avoid going to the gynecologist so they try over-the-counter and home remedies instead. But they are in pain and it lowers their quality of life. We can help these women because collecting the sample and running the test is very easy and done in private.”

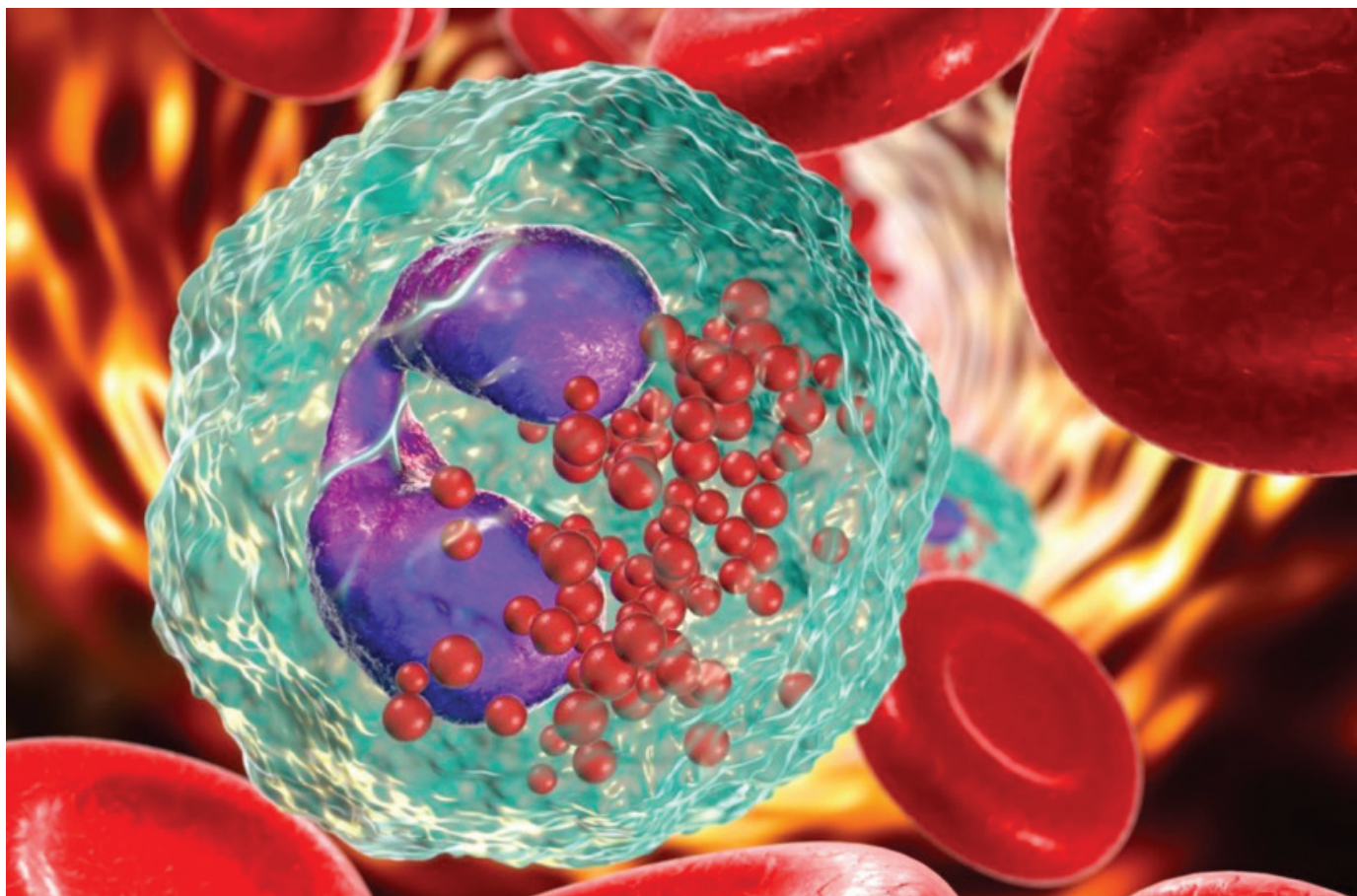
The technology can be adapted to detect each type of relevant bacteria, in this case those that cause vaginal infections.

Diagnoz.me is now raising seed funding. Livne estimates it will take about two to three years for the product to reach the market. Meanwhile, Livne and Epstein are seeking strategic partnerships and continuing to develop the product with a medical advisory board including, among others, the former head of the Women’s Health Department at the Lin Center in Haifa, and an obstetrician/gynecologist who heads Femicare VZW in Belgium.

Eosinophils: Cells related to allergies and asthma may destroy cancer *by Israel21c Staff*

A surprising new study from Israel finds that malignant colorectal cancer cells can be eliminated with eosinophils—white blood cells that originate in bone marrow and may once have killed off intestinal parasites, but which today are responsible for chronic asthma and allergies.

The research, published in *Cancer Immunology Research* this year, was led by Prof. Ariel Munitz of the Tel Aviv University Sackler School of Medicine department of microbiology and clinical immunology and conducted by his doctoral student Hadar Reichman, in collaboration with colleagues in Tel Aviv



A eosinophil white blood cell among red blood cells. (Illustration: Kateryna Kon/Shutterstock)

Medical Center's gastroenterology department. "Eosinophils are white blood cells that secrete powerfully destructive proteins," Munitz said. "They may have played an evolutionary role in combating parasites. But now that most people, particularly in the West, enjoy good hygiene and few parasites, the eosinophils have become destructive agents, causing allergies and asthma."

"Our new research theorized that since eosinophils are capable of killing parasites and can cause damage in the lungs of asthma patients, they might play a role in cancer treatment and would be able to kill tumor cells."

The largest eosinophil reservoir is situated in the digestive system, so the researchers initially decided to test their theories on colorectal cancer. In the first stage of research, they selected samples from tumors of 275 patients to determine the number of eosinophils in a tumor as compared with the stage and

severity of the disease.

"We found that the higher the number of eosinophils in the tumor, the less severe the disease, which represents a clear correlation," said Munitz. "We identified that the cancerous environment attracts these cells, which infiltrate the tumors and flourish there for a long time."

The researchers subsequently tested their hypotheses in various mouse models of colorectal cancer. They discovered that eosinophils displayed potent anti-tumor activities and could directly kill tumor cells.

"We also found that when eosinophils were activated by a protein called IFN-gamma, they induced an even greater tumor-killing response," Munitz explained. "Following various extensive analyses, we concluded that eosinophils have unique and distinct activities in comparison with other cells present in the tumor. For example, eosinophils can

kill tumors independently of known tumor-fighting cytotoxic T cells."

He believes eosinophils could be used in treating cancer if their robust anti-tumor response somehow could be unleashed pharmaceutically, or by combining treatments to harness the potent forces of both eosinophils and cytotoxic T cells.

"We have discovered a new target for immunotherapy for cancer patients — the eosinophils," concluded Munitz. "We hope that our research will serve as a foundation for drug development in a number of different approaches."

The study was supported by the Israel Cancer Research Foundation, the Israel Cancer Association and the Israel Science Foundation.

BRIAN BLUM is a journalist and high-tech entrepreneur at ISRAEL21c. ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN is a writer and associate editor at ISRAEL21c.

Israel at the UN: Marking Progress

An *in*FOCUS interview with Ambassador DANNY DANON

Ambassador Danny Danon is Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, having previously served as a member of the Knesset, as Minister of Science, Technology and Space, and as Deputy Minister of Defense. His term as Permanent Representative has seen several notable achievements: recognition of Yom Kippur as an Official UN holiday; acceptance to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; consultative status for two Israeli NGOs; adoption of an Israeli UN resolution on Agricultural Technologies for Sustainable Development by the General Assembly. Israel held the first ever international summit at the UN against the boycott, divestment and sanction movement, and the Israeli Mission hosted event in remembrance of the Jews persecuted in Arab countries. In June 2016, Danon was elected as chair of the UN Legal Committee, the first Israeli ever to hold a committee chairmanship.

***in*FOCUS:** IT SEEMS THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ISRAEL'S RELATIONS GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT WITH MANY COUNTRIES AND THE WAY THOSE SAME COUNTRIES BEHAVE IN THE UNITED NATIONS. IS THIS SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE SEEN AND IS THERE A WAY TO DEAL WITH THAT?

Amb. Danon: I feel that there is a gap between the public UN and the private UN where publicly they will condemn Israel, but privately they will admire Israel. I am pleased to think I was able to close that gap in the time that I was elected to my previous position at the UN, and now more and more countries are publicly supporting Israel. We saw it in the vote that took place last December about a resolution condemning Hamas and its attacks on Israel - where we got 87 of the member states publicly to vote for the condemnation and only 57 voted against the condemnation. *[Editors Note: It failed to reach the 2/3 majority needed to pass.]*

iF: DO YOU THINK THIS IS A TREND THAT WE'LL SEE MORE OF, ARE YOU

LOOKING FORWARD TO MORE OF THOSE KINDS OF VOTES?

Israel is coming back to Africa – and Africa is coming back to Israel and we are very proud of that.

Amb. Danon: Yes, I think so, but we have to convince people more. That's what I have to do and in every bilateral meeting I have with a head of state, I tell him, "The great bilateral relations or trade relations that you have with Israel, we want to see that reflected also here in the multinational arena when it comes to a vote in the UN." And as we meet more people, the fact that they are afraid or shy about bringing it up – as if it means admitting to it – to me means that we should bring it up.

iF: IS SOME OF THAT RELATED TO THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT? HOW WE BEHAVE IN THE UN?

Amb. Danon: We are very grateful for the position your previous ambassador Nikki Haley took at the UN in public

support during the votes of moral clarity. We appreciate that endorsement for us and it is good when other countries see that the U.S. is behind Israel.

iF: DO YOU THINK THAT BEING THE FIRST ISRAELI ELECTED TO A UN COMMITTEE – THE LEGAL COMMITTEE – HELPED OTHER COUNTRIES TO SEE ISRAEL IN A MORE POSITIVE LIGHT? AND WHAT DO YOU SEE COMING AFTER IT?

Amb. Danon: It was a very important precedent when I began to run for that position. Many people in Israel were skeptical about the chances to get elected. But I said that even if we lose it it's a victory,

but I won and I received the support of 109 member states. It was a very important precedent. And when I chaired the committee, many countries recognized that Israel, just like any member state, could handle it properly, professionally and we achieved a lot as the chair of the committee. Now I think all positions are open for Israel at the UN. I think our next role should be a seat in the Security Council of the United Nations. It is about time, after 71 years, that Israel should sit in the Security Council.

iF: DO YOU THINK THAT YOU WILL GET IT?

Amb. Danon: I don't believe in my life that we will get anything. We have to fight, to demand and I think we have to start a campaign, collect the support and the votes – and eventually we'll be there. My philosophy is that I think we can make it happen.

iF: CAN YOU TALK ABOUT ISRAEL'S RELATIONS WITH THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES. IS THERE A GROUP OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAT ISRAEL CALLS FRIENDS IN THE UN?

Amb. Danon: Sure. I have brought many ambassadorial delegations on missions to Poland to visit [the concentration camp at] Auschwitz and then to Israel, and many from Africa joined me. I think today we are experiencing a new era with Africa. Israel is coming back to Africa – and Africa is coming back to Israel and we are very proud of that. I don't want to name names but I think we have to name at least one name, which is Rwanda, with which we work very closely at the UN and we even opened an embassy a few months ago in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

iF: THE OTHER GROUP OF COUNTRIES THAT IS INTERESTING TO US IS THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE VISEGRAD COUNTRIES, AND THE DIFFERENCE



Ambassador Danny Danon

BETWEEN THOSE AND THE WESTERN EUROPEANS. ISRAEL SEEMS TO DO BETTER WITH HUNGARY AND CZECH REPUBLIC AND THOSE COUNTRIES THAN FRANCE AND GERMANY.

Amb. Danon: Increasingly, our Eastern European friends are not afraid to take positions supporting Israel within the European Union (EU), within the UN, and we are grateful for that. One example is when President Trump decided to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem, a few Western European countries tried to pass a resolution condemning the U.S.

in the EU for that. But you need full consensus among the 28 EU member states to pass such a resolution, and some of those countries you mentioned blocked it. I think today we have very important friends, we are grateful for that. We have other issues but we deal with them. Domestic anti-Semitism in Europe is one of them. But we are of between making the distinction between collaborating with them in the international arena but at the same time demanding more action in the domestic arena.

iF: TURKEY BEING A SPECIAL CASE. DO YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH

TURKEY IN THE UN?

Amb. Danon: Unfortunately, we see that every once in a while, Turkey is trying to lead a fight against Israel in order to score points domestically. Whether it is issues with Gaza or the Palestinians, Turkey tries to stir the pot. We have felt Turkey's involvement in many resolutions against Israel.

iF: LET'S MOVE SLIGHTLY TO A DIFFERENT AREA, AND THAT IS THE SUNNI ARAB COUNTRIES. FIRST, AS ISRAEL AND THE GULF ARAB STATES TALK TO EACH OTHER IN DIFFERENT WAYS, DO YOU SEE A PROBLEM WITH WHAT USED TO BE CALLED THE ARAB STREET? AND SECOND, THE ISLAMIC BLOCK IN

Sunni Arabs as well as us, so we do have to work together. Not only the leaders but also people-to-people.

Regarding the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and division with the Islamic countries, yes, it's a large group but we are fortunate because they don't always vote against Israel. And we can work with many countries in the OIC.

iF: IN 1967 THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL PASSED SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242, WHICH REQUIRED THE ARABS TO DO SOMETHING, TO GIVE ISRAEL THE RECOGNITION OF ITS LEGITIMACY IN THE REGION. MOST OF THE PEACE PROCESS CONVERSATION

I think that we should respect all UN resolutions, but in order to look forward, the bottom line is to have direct negotiations.

THE UN IS A BIG PROBLEM FOR ISRAEL, ANYTHING THEY DON'T WANT IS UNLIKELY TO PASS. HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH BOTH OF THOSE ISSUES?

Amb. Danon: We do collaborate with many countries quietly at the UN. I went to Dubai two years ago. And we have quiet relations with many other countries. I think we can expect more. When I speak with my colleagues I tell them they should not be afraid of so-called public opinion. When you hear President Sisi, the way he speaks about the importance of the peace treaty with Israel – I think if he can do that everybody else can do that. So that's why we expect more from those countries, especially when we have a common enemy and a common threat. Iran is spreading a lot of money around the region and provoking hatred. Against the

WE'VE BEEN HEARING IS NOT ABOUT THE ARAB STATES AND ARAB RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, BUT RATHER THE PALESTINIANS. IS THE GOAL OF UN RESOLUTION 242 STILL CONSIDERED ISRAELI POLICY AND IS IT STILL CONSIDERED UN POLICY?

Amb. Danon: I think that we should respect all UN resolutions, but in order to look forward, the bottom line is to have direct negotiations. That's what I tell my colleagues in the Security Council. We can speak to you about history, about revolutions but when you look at the actual reality in the Middle East, the only way to move forward is to have direct dialogue exactly like we did with the Egyptians after many wars and with the Jordanians. So yes, we can go back to history and speak about resolutions, but I think the only way to move forward is

by having direct dialogue.

iF: IN THE UNITED STATES SOMETIMES IT SEEMS AS IF AMERICAN CHRISTIANS, EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS ESPECIALLY, BELIEVE MORE FIRMLY THAT ISRAEL IS THE HOMELAND OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE THAN SOME OF THE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS. I'M NOT GOING TO ASK YOU TO COMMENT ON JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BUT HOW DO YOU WORK WITH THEM? IN YOUR ROLE AS AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY?

Amb. Danon: I work very closely with the Jewish community, and in general we have tremendous support coming from them. I marched on Fifth Avenue in the Israel Day parade, and I receive that same support every day. So, we are grateful for that support. Yes, sometimes we have difficulties, we have criticisms – and we are open to that – but overall, I believe that we do have the support of the Jewish community, and we welcome that. And no matter what happens in the U.S., no matter the political situation I think the support will continue.

iF: AND YOU MEET WITH THEM REGULARLY?

Amb. Danon: Absolutely, whenever I need them to be involved I will call them to speak about and discuss the challenges that we have, and some of them will offer their help and solutions.

iF: ONE OF THE THINGS ON THE TABLE IS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS AT PEACEMAKING, WHICH HAS BEEN DELAYED FOR DIFFERENT REASONS. DOES ISRAEL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE INPUT INTO THE THINKING OF THE PRESIDENT'S ENVOYS? ARE THEY DOING THIS WHILE THEY TALK TO YOU OR IS IT MORE THAT THEY'RE GOING

TO COME TO ISRAEL WITH A PLAN?

Amb. Danon: It will be an American plan, not an Israeli plan, and we respect the efforts of the administration and the work that is being done very seriously. The president's team met with many, many Israelis and they heard a lot of opinions, but at the end they will come up with their own recommendations. But we will respect their offering; we will be open-minded as we will look at it. Unlike the Palestinians, who say in Gaza that they will ignore it and they will reject it without even opening the file. This is not the case with Israel. We will be more open-minded and respectful, both of the plan and of the effort to put it forward.

iF: I LOVE THAT ANSWER. IN THE CONTEXT OF UN, THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN ISRAEL'S CLOSEST FRIEND ON THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND ELSEWHERE. HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH RUSSIA AND CHINA? ISRAEL SEEMS TO HAVE A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA OUTSIDE OF THE UN. IS THAT REFLECTED IN THE UN?

Amb. Danon: Indeed, the U.S. is our greatest friend. We do have other friends and we are grateful for them – Canada, Australia and many, many other countries as well, and we are grateful for them all. With Russia and

COUNTRIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS - FRIEND COUNTRIES AND OTHER COUNTRIES - ABOUT ISRAEL. WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW THAT THEY MAY NOT KNOW, THAT YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW?

I work very closely with the Jewish community, and in general we have tremendous support coming from them.

China, we have strong bilateral relations but many times when it comes to votes in the Security Council they will oppose the U.S. and they will oppose the position of the U.S. But we do have a dialogue with them; we do speak with them, we engage with them, but we don't always get their support.

iF: MY LAST QUESTION, WHICH YOU CAN SPEND THE NEXT HOUR ON BECAUSE THE QUESTION IS, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL THE

Amb. Danon: It is, actually, a short answer. They should take a step back and look at Israel with a new lens. We are here and want to work with them. I think they can look at what we have achieved in 71 short years, and know we are eager to help them to improve their lives as well.

iF: MISTER AMBASSADOR THANK YOU.

Amb. Danon: My pleasure.

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Terror and Anti-Semitism in the Physiology of BDS

by **DAN DIKER**

The roots of the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) were planted in radical left wing and Islamist soil, and its extremist goal is eliminating the State of Israel. Since 2018, powerful evidence has emerged exposing BDS's anti-Semitic physiology, its "DNA" that includes ideological "genes" from Islamic and Palestinian nationalist terror organizations.

The BDS movement is embodied by an anti-Semitic anatomy that categorically denies Israel's right to exist. BDS is not, as is commonly thought in Western circles, a political critique of the Jewish State's longstanding security policies against Palestinian terror. Neither is BDS intended as legitimate criticism of decades-old governmental policy of building and developing communities east of the 1949 armistice lines in the West Bank and the Golan Heights. BDS founder Omar Barghouti has stated

unmasks BDS's tyrannical character and helps shift the public discourse from considering BDS a grassroots, political protest campaign, to recognizing it as the radical-left version of the better-known right-wing extremists' totalitarian crusades that have demonized Jews as pretexts to massacre them.

■ *It's About Israel's Existence.*

Though BDS presents itself to the West as a peaceful, nonviolent, grassroots organization that seeks social justice and human rights for Palestinian Arabs, it obscures its operations via Palestine Liberation Organization and Hamas-affiliated NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in the Palestinian Authority-controlled city of Ramallah and the BDS leadership in the Gaza Strip. BDS activities in both areas are integrally connected to Islamic and Marxist-Leninist terror organizations. BDS

U.S. State Department's 2010 definition of anti-Semitism and the internationally accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) 2016 working definition of anti-Semitism, which includes, "denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor."

■ *BDS Denies Israel's Existence as a Jewish State*

Despite the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism, BDS leaders and activists have remained uncompromising in branding Israel an illegal and illegitimate implant in the Middle East. Barghouti has said, "No Palestinian, a rational Palestinian not a sell-out Palestinian, will ever accept a Jewish state in Palestine." Lara Kiswani, executive director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center stated, "We're resisting colonialism in Palestine, and colonialism entails all of occupied Palestine, from Haifa, to Jerusalem, to Ramallah." Denying the Jewish people the right to self-determination, including by claiming that the existence of the State of Israel is a racist endeavor, is precisely described in the clauses of the IHRA definition.

Even more egregiously, anti-Semitic statements made by the Islamist terror organization Hamas, which sits on the BDS National Committee, have called for genocide of the Jews in its charter, which states (Article 7): "The last hour would not come until the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them, until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree

The Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel is embodied by an anti-Semitic anatomy that categorically denies Israel's right to exist...

in no uncertain terms that, "Definitely, most definitely, we oppose a Jewish State in any part of Palestine."

Understanding the anti-Semitic and terror physiology of the global BDS crusade is important for two reasons: it facilitates governmental and parliamentary action by democratic countries; and equally far-reaching, it

has masked its goals in the language of justice and human rights.

To be clear, the Palestinian-led global BDS movement does not exist just to criticize Israeli policy; it categorically rejects Israel's existence as the nation-state of the Jewish people. BDS rejectionism explains why the movement by definition contravenes both the



Graffiti on the Israeli security barrier dividing the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Abu Dis. (Photo: Ryan Rodrick Beiler)

and a stone or a tree would say: Muslim, the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him.”

It is no surprise that the new anti-Semitism calling for the destruction of the Jewish state is voiced by Hamas and Hezbollah, whose paymaster is Iran, a regime that has promised the annihilation of the State of Israel since the mulahs took power in the late 1970s.

■ **The BDS National Committee in Ramallah and Gaza**

Palestinian terror groups outlawed in the United States and European Union, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad, (a branch of the Iranian regime), Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP General Command,

Palestinian Liberation Front, and other largely European-funded political organizations sit as co-equal members of the BDS National Committee (BNC), which was founded in Ramallah in 2007.

The above-mentioned organizations fall under the umbrella of the PNIF – the Palestinian National and Islamic Forces in Palestine. The PNIF was founded in 2000 during the so-called “second intifada” (known in Israel as the “al-Aqsa terror war”) by Yasser Arafat and Marwan Barghouti, head of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, an offshoot of Fatah. (Arafat’s Fatah is the largest PLO faction.) It was inspired by both pan-Arab and Islamic ideologies. PNIF’s aim during the intifada was to coordinate terror and political action against Israel, which led

to its constituent terror group members being outlawed by the U.S. and the EU.

The Ramallah- and later Gaza-based BDS crusade has exported its ideology and tactics to university campuses across the United States and Europe. Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) has become its arm on approximately 250 university campuses across North America. BDS is a classic anti-Semitic political warfare campaign, masquerading as a human rights, social justice, and equality organization while harassing, intimidating, and even assaulting Jews and Israel-friendly students on campus. The AMCHA Initiative headed by Professor Tammi Ross Benjamin at the University of California Santa Cruz has documented the demonstrable and intensifying anti-Semitic

activity of BDS organizations, particularly in its 2018 report.

SJP activity has included swastika graffiti on campus following a Gaza solidarity weekend at the University of North Carolina, and the posting of mock eviction notices on doors of Jewish students' dorm rooms at Emory University in Georgia, to name two examples among scores. These expressions of anti-Semitic intimidation and harassment have silenced pro-Israel and even "Israel-neutral" students.

The SJP national network was founded by a former mid-level Hamas affiliate, Hatem Bazian, who today is a professor at University of California-Berkeley. Bazian has called for the subversion of the United States in addition to his denial of Israel's right to exist. He is chairman of AMP, American Muslims for Palestine, a direct outgrowth of three Hamas-supporting organizations: the Islamic Association for Palestine, Kind Hearts, and the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, which were either disbanded or closed following the al-Qaeda Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Holy Land was designated a terror-financing organization and shuttered by the American government. AMP was the outgrowth of and populated by unindicted members of these three organizations. Unsurprisingly, Hatem Bazian also serves as president of SJP. It doesn't take a microscope to detect the anti-Semitic DNA of the leading BDS movements today on American college campuses.

■ **Historical Roots: Arafat at the U.N.**

The anti-Semitic rhetoric that is characteristic of the BDS movement was previewed by PLO leader Yasser Arafat, who, in his 1974 speech at the United Nations, labeled Zionism "racism." He called for a "world free of colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, and racism... including Zionism." Arafat, together with anti-Western "non-aligned"



A pro-BDS protester. (Photo: Takver/Flickr)

states, managed to push through the UN General Assembly adoption of the infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution in 1975, which was annulled in 1991. "Zionism is racism" as an idea, was hatched in 1965, when the Soviet Union, the arch anti-Semitic power at the time in the General Assembly, refused to recognize anti-Semitism as a form of racism, such as apartheid or Nazism. In the USSR, "Zionist" was a euphemism for Jew.

Arafat and his comrades learned to employ political warfare from the Soviets and the North Vietnamese, who encouraged the PLO to market its terrorist insurgency as "resistance" in the

doublespeak revealing his lack of sincerity in the peace process. His successors in the Palestinian-controlled areas of the West Bank and Gaza are like-minded, using one set of terms in Arabic, and another that is palatable to Westerners.

Arafat's strategy to mainstream Palestinian political anti-Semitism against the Jewish state climaxed in 2001 at the UN-sponsored World Conference Against Racism (WCAR), also known as Durban I. In South Africa, at Durban's NGO Forum, Israel was targeted as the embodiment of evil, and like the apartheid regime in South Africa, would have to be dismantled. Durban's final declara-

Anti-Israel activists insist that anti-Semitism can only be perpetrated against Jews as individuals or groups, but not against the State of Israel.

"people's war" strategy they themselves used in their wars with the West. Arafat's cries of "Jihad, jihad!" in Morocco, immediately after the Oslo Accords, was

tion affirmed Israel's "Acts of genocide and practices of ethnic cleansing as a racist system, which is Israel's brand of apartheid." Durban's NGO declaration

is widely considered the anti-Semitic fuel that powered the global BDS movement. This movement was conceptualized in 2002, piloted by the Palestinian Aca-

the most terrible chapter in German history,” reviving memories of the Nazi motto, “Don’t buy from Jews.” French President Emmanuel Macron has de-

IHRA and State Department definitions. Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) has similarly delegitimized Israel by engaging in Holocaust revision, saying that Palestinian Arabs assisted Holocaust survivors in Israel, a complete fabrication and even inversion of the historical record.

Anti-Israel activists insist that anti-Semitism can only be perpetrated against Jews as individuals or groups, but not against the State of Israel. However, the language they employ when referring to Israel includes the terms Nazi, apartheid, racist, and genocidal regime, which all fall under the IHRA definition of vilification of Israel that represents the same historical patterns and messages embodied in classic anti-Semitic incitement.

Overcoming the anti-Semitic BDS crusade is a challenging task that requires moral clarity and strong political will. The underlying principle motivating this mission was stated cogently by Natan Sharansky at a March 2019 consultation on the new anti-Semitism held at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

...the language they employ when referring to Israel includes the terms Nazi, apartheid, racist, and genocidal regime, which all fall under the IHRA definition of vilification...

demic and Cultural Boycott of Israel in 2004, and formally launched in 2007 as the BDS National Committee.

■ Countering BDS

One way of combatting BDS’s anti-Semitic character is to refer to the IHRA definition, which was adopted by the U.S. State Department and virtually all European governments. The IHRA definition is based on the principles of the “three Ds” test (Demonization, Delegitimization, and Double Standards) formulated by former Israeli Minister and Soviet Prisoner of Zion, Natan Sharansky, together with Israel’s ambassador to the United States, Ron Dermer. The 3 Ds determine what constitutes anti-Semitism against Israel as the collective Jew. Claims of dual loyalty by Jews, using classic anti-Semitic symbols or tropes against Israel, Holocaust denial or revision, denial of Jewish self-determination, branding Israel “a racist endeavor, applying double standards, or holding Jews collectively responsible for what happens in Israel” – all fall under the IHRA definition.

With anti-Semitism rampant in the British Labor Party, and violence against Jews in France and Germany reaching unprecedented post-World War II levels in 2018, some European leaders are beginning to wake up. In May 2019, the German parliament passed a resolution condemning BDS as anti-Semitic, noting that, “the pattern of argument and methods of the movement are anti-Semitic,” and that “their ‘Don’t Buy’ stickers recall

clared BDS to be anti-Semitic, as have Chancellor Angela Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union party and outgoing British Prime Minister Theresa May.

■ The Challenge to America

In the United States, Elan Carr, President Donald Trump’s Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism, has said that there is no distinction between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Governors of all 50 states, 27 of which have outlawed BDS, have spoken out against the movement. On the other

hand, some American politicians such as Congresswoman Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) have perpetuated the charade of anti-Semitism hiding as political critique of Israel. Omar who famously tweeted about American Jews exhibiting loyalty to a foreign power, has also stated, “Drawing attention to the apartheid Israeli regime is far from hating Jews.” These quotes masquerade as criticism of Israel, drawing in political progressives, when in reality, they are demonstrably anti-Semitic polemics, under the

Overcoming the anti-Semitic BDS crusade is a challenging task that requires moral clarity and strong political will.

Sharansky invoked the former Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, saying, “History has come full circle, and just as in the ‘good old days’ of Stalin when they spoke of Zionist, they meant Jews, and when they spoke of Jews, they meant Israel.”

DAN DIKER is a Fellow and Senior Project Director at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs where he heads the Program to Counter Political Warfare and BDS. His most recent book is *Deception: Unmasked*, with Adam Shay (2019).

Israel: A Security Asset for the United States

by SHOSHANA BRYEN

One of the few points of unbounded bipartisan agreement in Washington has for decades been that U.S.-Israel security cooperation is right, good, mutually beneficial and worth every nickel spent on it. It is well-grounded in facts and acknowledged benefits to both sides.

Today, however, support for Israel is becoming polarized. Even within the United States military, younger officers – and certainly cadets and midshipmen in the service academies – have been exposed to one or more of the following canards:

- That a close relationship with Israel precludes a close relationship with Arab States. This despite the clear shift in Gulf Arab States' position not only on Israel as a partner in addressing Iran, but also Israel as a legitimate state in the region.

- That the United States is defending the State of Israel. This despite the fact that no American soldier has been dispatched to defend Israel, and despite the return of more than 75% of America's security assistance funds through purchases in the United States – plus the results of Israel's research and development. This percentage is set to rise.

- That Israel uses American security assistance to oppress hapless Palestinians. This despite the facts of security assistance above, and Israel's clear need for border security.

The election of several pro-boycott members of the House of Representatives, and the retirement of several staunch supporters of Israel are indications that this misinformation will continue its malicious spread in Washington.

■ *Where We've Been and Where We Are*

The origins of U.S.-Israel security cooperation are in the Cold War understanding that the United States could not engage all the adversaries of all its allies and friends around the world.

The first US-Israel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on military cooperation was signed in 1981, recognizing "the common bonds of friendship between the United States and Israel and builds on the mutual security relationship that exists between the two nations." It was embraced warily at first

increasingly desperate Iran, is as much in need of capable allies now as it ever was.

At the same time, as the Syrian civil war winds down and ISIS is bereft of its land base and oil revenues (though not its threat capabilities), Israel finds itself with new, positive relations in the Sunni Arab world, a deeper relationship with Russia on security matters, and political hostility in Europe that has not yet manifested itself in a lowering of security cooperation. Israel's place in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue appears secure, despite the increasingly hostile relations with Turkey – which are also a reflection

Israel went from being considered a net security consumer to net security producer...

– the Americans were unconvinced they would receive anything of value and the Israelis were concerned about continued freedom of action.

But, it worked. Israel went from being considered a net security consumer to net security producer, meaning the United States did not have to expend resources to defend Israel, and Israel participated in making the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean regions more secure by its presence.

Today, the volatility of the Middle is unlikely to be constrained. The United States, desirous of removing its soldiers from the region even as it understands the risk attendant to a resurgent Russia and

of Turkey's increasingly hostile relations with the rest of NATO.

The United States is Israel's ally of first choice. And Israel remains the one country the United States can rely on to defend itself by itself and in coordination with American interests.

■ *But Why?*

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks believes it has to do with the unique nature of our two societies, starting with the Jewish people's demand of the prophet Samuel to have a king. God told Samuel to explain what having a king would mean, and if the Israelites still wanted one, to give them one. Rabbi Sacks:



An allied fighter jet taxis out to the runway during Blue Flag, a multilateral exercise hosted by the Israeli Air Force in 2017. (Photo: IDF)

What happened in the days of the Prophet Samuel is a social contract, exactly on the lines set out by Thomas Hobbes in “The Leviathan.” People are willing to give up certain of their rights, transfer them to a central power, a king, a government, who undertakes to ensure the rule of law internally and the defense of the realm externally.

In fact, One Samuel, Chapter Eight is the first recorded instance in all of history of a social contract.

But what makes the Hebrew Bible unique... and makes it completely different from Hobbes and Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau is that this wasn’t the first founding moment of Israel as a nation, as a political entity. That took place at Mount Sinai when the people made with God not a contract but a covenant. And those

two things are often confused, but actually they’re quite different.

In a contract, two or more people come together to make an exchange... which is to the benefit of the self-interest of each.

A covenant isn’t like that. It’s more like a marriage than an exchange... A covenant isn’t about me, the voter, or me, the consumer, but about all of us together. Or in that lovely key phrase of American politics, it’s about “We, the people.”

Biblical Israel had a society long before it had a state... And there is only one nation known to me that had the same dual founding as biblical Israel, and that is the United States of America which has its social covenant in the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and its social contract in the Constitution in 1787.

Covenant is central to the Mayflower Compact of 1620. It is central to the speech of John Winthrop aboard the Arbela in 1630. It is presupposed in the most famous line of the Declaration of Independence... “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

They are self-evident only to people who have internalized the Hebrew Bible.

End, Rabbi Sacks.

That is the center of America’s security relationship with Israel – the notion that our two countries have the same founding principles, the same respect for the social contract and for the social covenant. I have taken more than 400 American security professionals – primarily



U.S. Soldiers with the 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment and Israeli soldiers during Austere Challenge 2012 in Hazor, Israel. (Photo: SSgt Tyler Placie/ U.S. Department of Defense)

retired American admirals and generals – to Israel in more than 30 trips. And at the other end of their careers, I have sent more than 500 cadets and midshipmen of our service academies to Israel before they received their commissions. And I can say that they all understood the fundamental and profound principles that guide both the United States and Israel.

They don't always agree with Israel's politics – or Israel's defense choices – or any other single aspect of Israeli political, military and social life, but I never found one that didn't believe in the relationship between Jews and the land of Israel, and between Israel and the United States.

■ ***The Practical Relationship***

Starting there – and you have to start there – you quickly reach the practical aspects of our partnership. Those haven't changed since 1979, when I first published a “quick reference guide” to security cooperation. Israel brings to the party:

- A secure location in a crucial part

of the world

- A well-developed military infrastructure
- The ability to maintain, service, and repair U.S.-origin equipment
- An excellent deep-water port in Haifa
- Modern air facilities
- A position close to sea-lanes and ability to project power over long distances
- A domestic air force larger than many in Western Europe and possessing more up-to-date hardware
- Multilingual capabilities, including facility in English, Arabic, French, Farsi and the languages of the (former) Soviet Union
- Combat familiarity with Soviet/Russian style tactics and equipment
- The ability to assist U.S. naval fleets, including common equipment
- The ability to support American operations and to provide emergency air cover
- A democratic political system with a strong orientation to support the United States and the NATO system.

Added in 1996: Israel's military R&D

capabilities complement those of the U.S.; its intelligence services cooperate closely with ours – to our benefit; and large numbers of American troops train in Israel.

Added in 2006: The establishment of police-to-police counterterrorism training in Israel. Can you imagine the American police learning tactics from Saudi Arabia, China or Venezuela?

■ ***The Practical Result***

In 1967, in the 1970 War of Attrition, in 1973, and over Lebanon in 1982, Israel fought pro-Soviet forces and provided intelligence information and Russian equipment to the U.S. Most of the equipment had never been inspected close-up by American troops that then expected to face them in battle.

It was the aftermath of Israel's Yom Kippur war that led to the American “combined arms doctrine” that was so successfully deployed in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990/1991.

In 1981, Israel's bombing of the Iraqi

nuclear reactor at Osirak meant the U.S. knew it wouldn't be facing a nuclear-armed Iraq in 1991.

After 9-11, Israel "opened the closets" for the U.S., supplying battle-tested experience in combating terrorism and urban warfare. Americans benefitted from Israel's tactics against car bombs, IEDs and homicide bombing.

After the 2003 allied invasion of Iraq, American military personnel were

purchased a variety of Israeli-developed systems and participated in joint development of anti-tunnel defenses, the Arrow Missile Program, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Plane, THEL Laser Program, the Advanced Urban Combat Training Facility as well as Iron Dome.

After the 2014 Gaza War, during which Israel was roundly criticized by the American administration for allegedly not taking proper precautions to

exercise in which Israel and the UAE flew together, signaling a change in Israel's relations with Persian Gulf countries.

Late last year, Israel hosted the largest aerial training exercise in its history – Blue Flag, in the Negev Desert. Seventy foreign aircraft from around the world, hundreds of pilots and air support team members. Participants included the United States, France, Italy, Greece, Poland, Germany, and India. It was the first time French, German and Indian contingents have trained in Israel.

And if you thought you would ever see the Luftwaffe flying in Israel, you have a better imagination than I do.

Reciprocally, this year Israel participated in US-EUCOM's Spirit X exercise in Germany with nearly 4,400 American and European troops.

In 1981, Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak meant the US knew it wouldn't be facing a nuclear-armed Iraq in 1991.

being introduced to Israel's bomb-sniffing dogs. The U.S. wanted such dogs, but the training period is fairly long. The IDF was willing to make Israeli dogs available, but they only took commands in Hebrew. It was quicker to train the Marines than retrain the dogs, making some interesting scenes in Baghdad

In September 2007, the IAF destroyed a Syrian-North Korean nuclear plant, extending the U.S.'s strategic arm and providing vital information on Russian air defense systems, which are also employed by Iran.

In Today's World

Not a single American serviceperson needs to be stationed in Israel. Aside from training missions, there have been American soldiers stationed in Israel since 2009, working with the US-Israeli co-designed X-band radar system – a deployment that helps the U.S. and Israel monitor threats from the east.

And, as a reminder, Israel's missile defense capabilities – developed and produced in conjunction with American industry – not only protect Israel from Hamas and Hezbollah missiles, but protect the United States from emerging threats from North Korea and Iran. Various branches of the U.S. military have

limit Palestinian civilian casualties, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey said:

Israel... did some extraordinary things to try to limit civilian casualties, to include... making it known that they were going to destroy a particular structure. The IDF is not interested in creating civilian casualties. They're interested in stopping the shooting of rockets and missiles out of the Gaza Strip and into Israel.

General Dempsey surprised his audience – the Carnegie Council for Ethics

Americans benefitted from Israel's tactics against car bombs, IEDs and homicide bombing.

in International Affairs – by telling them he had already sent an American delegation to Israel to learn lessons from the IDF, "including," he said, "the measures they took to prevent civilian casualties."

Israel has been a partner in U.S. and multi-lateral military exercises for years – interestingly, most recently there was an

Conclusion

Israel and the United States are drawn together by common values and common threats to our well-being. The bipartisan support of our ally Israel is a testament to those values as well as to the practical recognition that the threats require cooperation in intelligence, technology, and security policy.

We have that with Israel. But more than that, the United States and Israel share an intimate understanding of nationhood. The British – our other best friends in the world – can't say that rights are inalienable and come from

The Creator. For the British, rights came from the earthly King or Queen, and only those rights the sovereign chose to give – which is why we had a Revolution.

SHOSHANA BRYEN is Senior Director of The Jewish Policy Center and Editor of inFOCUS Quarterly.

Fanny, the Jewish Spy for Germany in World War I

by **LENNY BEN-DAVID**

Editor's Note: This is an excerpt from the author's forthcoming book, Secrets of World War I in the Holy Land, Revealed in Photographs.

Spying in the Holy Land is a very old profession, dating back more than 3,500 years to when a disguised Joseph accused his brothers of spying in Egypt. [Genesis: 42] Moses sent 12 spies to Canaan to check on the land's inhabitants, defenses, and economy. [Numbers:13] And, upon entering the land after 40 years of wandering in the desert, Joshua sent out two spies to reconnoiter the fortress city of Jericho. [Joshua: 2]

World War I in the Holy Land was also well-populated with tales of espionage and some very intriguing spies providing intelligence for the German, British, and Turkish armies. They include a Christian Jerusalemite who spied for Britain, a Jewish Jerusalemite reporting to Turkey, a Russian Jewish woman who spied for Germany, and

“aliyah” – immigrating to Palestine. Perhaps her loneliness made her easy prey for Curt Prüfer, a polyglot German diplomat known for his philandering. But Prüfer was also the head of German intelligence in Palestine, and he charmed Fanny into becoming one of his spies against the British. The British were allied with Czarist Russia, and it probably wasn't too hard to turn Fanny, an anti-czarist socialist (who even dallied with the Bund as a teenager).

World War I had broken out and Prüfer provided intelligence to the Ottoman leaders and assisted in planning the Turkish attack on the British-controlled Suez Canal.

Prüfer dispatched his recruit and paramour to Egypt in May 1915, where she was welcomed as a doctor at the overcrowded British military hospitals and as an ingenue in British, Russian, French, and Jewish circles in Cairo and Alexandria. Egypt was a candy shop for the young, attractive German doctor and spy.

Egypt was a candy shop for the young, attractive German doctor and spy.

the well-known Jewish espionage ring, NILI, working for Britain.

Fanny was the nickname of a young, attractive Berlin-trained doctor who immigrated to the Jewish homeland from near Pinsk in Russia in 1913. She was the first of her family to make

Fanny's family connections certainly helped as well: Fanny – Minna Weizmann was her full name – was the youngest sister of the Zionist leader and pro-British scientist Chaim Weizmann.

Minna Weizmann in Egypt ran into a dilemma: how to deliver her



Fanny (Source: My Motele, by Benny Gvertzman)

information to her German spymasters. She embarked across the Mediterranean accompanying a badly wounded French soldier. In Rome, she delivered her information to the German ambassador to Italy, not aware that the embassy was under British surveillance. Weizmann was arrested and taken back to Egypt for trial – and possible execution. “Instead,”



Minna, or “Fanny,” Weizmann (circled) sitting in the bottom row with her family in Pinsk, Belorussia, in 1904. In the top row, (circled) is her brother Chaim. Another brother, Shmuel, was executed in the Soviet Union in 1939. A sister, Masha, and her husband, were sentenced by the Soviets to the Gulag in Siberia in the late 1940s. When released, they moved to Israel.

wrote blogger FarOutliers, “Weizmann’s considerable charms, combined with old-fashioned chivalry, produced a far more pleasant outcome... She was deported to Russia in the fall of 1915.”

Weizmann was shown “remarkably tender treatment,” according to Scott

returned to Russia.” CIA analyst James Noone suggests in his article *The Modernization of Intelligence*, “Minna’s lenient treatment has led to speculation she was a herself a double agent [who worked] against Prüfer.”

After the war, Weizmann re-em-

gathering, she met British Army Captain Alfred Noel Law, a Christian. The intermarriage was a rare event and may be one of the factors explaining why she is barely mentioned in Chaim Weizmann’s autobiography.

Dr. Minna Weizmann practiced medicine until her death in 1925 at the age of 35.

Her German handler, Curt Prüfer, returned to Germany where he worked in the Foreign Ministry. In December 1937 he joined the Nazi Party, and in 1943, he was appointed head of the ministry’s Oriental Department where he oversaw the liaison with the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin Al-Husseini, a sworn enemy of the Jews of Palestine.

World War I in the Holy Land was also well-populated with tales of espionage and some very intriguing spies providing intelligence for the German, British, and Turkish armies.

Anderson in his book *Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East*.

A Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) study on *The Role of Military Intelligence in the Battle for Beersheba in October 1917*, reported she was “generously

igrated to Palestine where she worked in the Hadassah-Rothschild Hospital’s obstetrics department in Jerusalem. She rented an apartment from the well-known Hebraist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and attended the high society salons of Jerusalem. Apparently, at one such

LENNY BEN-DAVID is a former Israeli diplomat in Washington and author of *American Interests in the Holy Land Revealed in Photographs, 1840-1940*.

Egyptian Mediation in Gaza: A Strategic Asset

by Col. (Res.) ERAN LERMAN

It is in Israel's interest to solidify the Egyptian role in the Gaza Strip in the context of "conflict management" as a governing policy concept. Egyptian participation in the efforts to stabilize the situation in Gaza serves as an important component in the vital Egypt-Israel relationship. It also helps erode Hamas's pretension of *jihad*.

A temporary and fragile calm was established vis-à-vis Hamas and other "resistance groups" in the Gaza Strip during the run-up to the Israeli elections on April 9, 2019. This came in response to significant economic gestures by Israel, but it was by no means a solution to the basic problems posed by the dangerous and complex military and political reality in this part of the world. The lingering frustration of the residents of the border areas (the Gaza "envelope," in Israeli parlance) and that of many other Israelis with Hamas provocations is understandable and justified.

Still, there are no magic solutions hidden up anyone's sleeve. A systemic and persistent engagement in managing the conflict, without a "decisive outcome" as traditionally understood in Israeli security doctrine, is probably the pattern best suited for Israeli needs in the foreseeable future. The alternatives are costlier and more difficult, and their chances of success are doubtful.

In this context, a unique role is played by Egypt – or to be more precise, by the Egyptian intelligence services – which can be used with "plausible deniability" and without granting diplomatic recognition to the de facto Hamas regime in Gaza. This is of broad strategic importance, both for Israel and for

others in the region, including the Egyptian leadership, who share Israel's sense of threat and order of priorities.

■ *Egypt as the CEO*

Much in the same way as Israel uses Russian good offices in Syria, Egypt's contribution makes it possible to deliver unambiguous messages to the Hamas leadership. These messages, in turn, rest upon Israel's proven ability to exact a heavy price from Hamas by military means. This establishes a triangular diplomatic maneuver that is aimed, from Israel's perspective, at bringing about a restored calm for as long a period as possible, but without falling into the trap of direct dialogue with forces committed

this situation, it is the Egyptian leadership that retains the role of CEO (Chief Executive Officer) in full control of the operation as a whole. For obvious geopolitical reasons, Hamas has no choice but to oblige the Egyptians.

This offers Israel several benefits in their own right (beyond the impact of achieving calm with Hamas). Israel's clear and overt preference for an Egyptian role was indeed manifest throughout the rounds of fighting in 2008-2009 ("Cast Lead"), 2012 ("Pillar of Defense") and 2014 ("Protective Edge"), and several smaller conflagrations since. Paradoxically, it was easier to enlist Muhammad Mursi's regime in the effort in 2012 to curb Hamas. Israel put him in

Egypt ... makes it possible to deliver unambiguous messages to the Hamas leadership. These messages, in turn, rest upon Israel's proven ability to exact a heavy price from Hamas by military means.

to Israel's destruction.

On the economic side of the equation, Qatar (closely supportive of the Muslim Brotherhood, and hence also Hamas) plays the role of funder for the Gaza Strip – a role which Egypt, for obvious reasons, cannot possibly play. The use of cash-filled suitcases, reminiscent of old Hollywood crime films, is due to the staunch refusal of the Palestinian Authority (PA) leadership in Ramallah to provide any proper banking and financial services to the "rebel held" area of Gaza. But even if Qatar does serve as the CFO (Chief Financial Officer) of

a situation in which, if he did not act to end the fighting, Israel would opt for an extensive ground maneuver, and he may have then faced the stark choice between acting as a responsible Egyptian leader (to sustain peace with Israel) and doing his duty as a Muslim Brother (to help and protect Hamas). Mursi indeed committed himself to the effort to restore calm, and won accolades from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for his role. Things were far murkier in 2014, due to the deeply-held mutual hatred between Hamas and Egyptian President Fattah el-Sisi's regime – yet at the end it was

again Egyptian mediation that played a key role. Today, the Egyptian administration has developed a sophisticated and effective approach combining rewards for the Hamas leadership with significant leverages.

■ *The Bilateral Relationship*

For Israel, it is of primary importance to broaden cooperation with Egypt. The bilateral relationship has shown remarkable resilience over 40 years, through significant tests and moments of crisis. It held firm despite regional events, such as the Israeli raid on Iraq's nuclear facility in 1981, the Lebanon War in 1982, the Palestinian uprising of 1987-1990, the failure of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, the second intifada violence that erupted in 2000, and the rounds of fighting ever since; and despite the internal turmoil in Egypt after Sadat's assassination and again since Tahrir Square in 2011 and the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak. At the root of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty lies an Egyptian awareness of Israel's military might; but it is also bolstered by common interests and common challenges.

Today, the relationship has reached new heights, due to the common stand against terror in Sinai on one hand, and against Turkish subversion in the eastern Mediterranean on the other. With a partnership in restoring calm in Gaza, and in an age of integration in the field

Authority, Cyprus, Greece and Italy – is another step in that direction.

At the same time, the mediation is of great importance for Egypt itself. And again, Israel has an interest in anything that the Egyptians themselves see as conducive to their stability and to the chances of economic growth. A severe deterioration in the situation in Gaza, and a level of distress that may lead to pressure to throw the border open, are

At a time of unprecedented strategic affinity with the Egyptian leadership, Israel shares (if indirectly) Egypt's interests in this respect as well.

viewed in Cairo as a nightmare. The last thing that Egypt needs is millions more mouths to feed. Beyond that, the growing grip by Egyptian intelligence on events in Gaza can serve to force the Palestinian terror groups to cease and desist from all aid to the "Sinai Province" (mu-hafazat sina') of ISIL (the Islamic State in the Levant, another name for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) and other subversive elements in the peninsula. Such support from within the Strip had previously played a role, which the Egyptians are well aware of, in the rise of these

■ *Egypt in the Eyes of the West*

At the level of ideas and symbols, the political leadership and the policy professionals in Egypt have long been committed to the concept of "Egypt's Role" (Dawr Masr, in Arabic) in international affairs: namely, the senior position in the Arab and regional context, which among other things reflects their open access to all players – including Israel. They use this role to conduct grand diplomatic bids that would

bolster Egypt's standing and utility as an indispensable factor – both in the eyes of the West as well as her own Arab allies and donors. This becomes more important in the face of sharp criticism being hurled at Sisi's regime by elements in the U.S. Congress and some European circles, over the issue of human rights abuses. By contributing to a reasonable conflict management, and avoiding crisis deterioration and bloodshed, Egypt thus enhances her historic role. At a time of unprecedented strategic affinity with the Egyptian leadership, Israel shares (if indirectly) Egypt's interests in this respect as well.

There is also a major consideration that goes beyond the bilateral dimension. Under present circumstances, the entire region now witnesses a "resistance" movement with a jihadi pretense like Hamas (and at its side, a typical proxy of Iran, Palestinian Islamic Jihad) finding itself again and again seeking the help and relying upon the power and influence of a nation such as Egypt. This, even though Sisi is a sworn enemy, at the ideological and strategic levels, of Islamism in all its forms. Sisi's speech at al-Azhar University, on January 1, 2015, remains a formative text of the direct confrontation against the intellectual

Today, the relationship has reached new heights, due to the common stand against terror in Sinai, on one hand, and against Turkish subversion in the eastern Mediterranean, on the other.

of energy supply, there may even some change in the generally shrill anti-Israel atmosphere in the Egyptian public domain. In this respect, the creation, in Cairo, of the EMGF – the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum, bringing together Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian

groups, which conduct a murderous and ruthless campaign against the Egyptian forces and against local tribal elements that dared to stand against ISIL. At present, Egypt seems to have achieved an effective deterrence against further Palestinian support for terror groups in Sinai.



Palestinian security forces patrol the border area of southern Gaza Strip with Egypt in 2015. (Photo: Abed Rahim Khatib/Alamy)

deviation from the proper path of Islam, a deviant interpretation put forward by the Muslim Brotherhood (including Hamas as an offshoot of the movement) as well as by al-Qaeda, ISIL and their ilk.

struggle between ideological camps, the Islamists are not quite sure that they still have the upper hand.

None of this should bind Israel's hands if Hamas and the other terror

managing (and indeed perpetuating) the separation of Gaza from the PA – which currently serves Israel's interests. The Egyptians continue to pay lip service to the hopeless "reconciliation" between Fatah and Hamas. But this is an effort doomed to fail. For Israel, in the foreseeable future, the present level of Hamas's dependence upon Egyptian influence from outside is distinctly better than some of the alternative scenarios. This includes the idea (that some Israelis had toyed with) of Egypt exercising direct sovereignty in Gaza. The Egyptians have shown no interest of any sort and would reject it out of hand. For Israel, too, this would entail an unacceptable risk. To rule in Gaza, the Egyptians would need to station a large component of its modern, mobile military within a short drive from the heart of Israel.

The present pattern, despite its painful cost, is a better choice in term of the balance of power.

Col. (Res.) ERAN LERMAN, Ph.D., is Vice President of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security (JISS), where this article first appeared as a policy paper.

Israel has an interest in anything that the Egyptians themselves see as conducive to their stability and to the chances of economic growth.

■ **Eroding the Myth**

Over time, the combination of Israeli pressures, a deterrent effect (even if limited and fragile) and intense Egyptian engagement, all help in eroding the myth of the jihadi "resistance." The efforts the Hamas leadership has been putting in for a year now are overtly designed to extract more material gains. As such, they also raise – in a certain sense – question marks about the movement's ideological commitment to *jihad* at all costs. Thus, the very reliance upon Egypt, at times of crisis and distress, may indicate that in the regional power

groups re-ignite and resume their large-scale provocations. Restoring deterrence and reinforcing it are much more important duties than the diplomatic interest vis-à-vis Egypt. However, as long as all activities are part of the ongoing pattern of the last 12 months – in which Egypt plays a major role in trying to (literally) lower the flames, including the incendiary kites and the explosive balloons Palestinians have sent over the fence with Israel – Israelis have an interest in furthering Egypt's influence, in the context of better "conflict management."

This present pattern also helps in

Beach Reading

reviews by SHOSHANA BRYEN

If you think of beach reading as fluffy romance novels with a margarita on the side, these books are not for you. But if you think of beach reading as an opportunity to slow down, learn something, and examine your beliefs without social media interruptions, you're in luck. Here are four books for your vacation suitcase:

- *What Justice Demands: Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* by Elan Journo

- *Jews Make the Best Demons: "Palestine" and the Jewish Question* by Eric Rozenman

- *Israeli National Security: A New Strategy for an Era of Change* by Charles Freilich

- *Armies of Sand: The Past, Present and Future of Arab Military Effectiveness* by Kenneth Pollak

The first two turn the prism on material you probably know, and thus are good for self-examination – and examining community leaders, politicians, and pundits. The third is both descriptive and prescriptive. The fourth offers a deeper understanding of Israel's wars and its enemies.

■ *What Justice Demands*

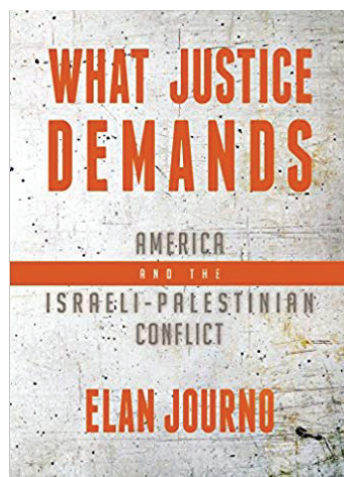
Libertarian author and director of policy research at the Ayn Rand Institute, Elan Journo frames the conversation about American policy in the Middle East as a question of justice. Or many questions of justice. In a book less about Israelis and Palestinians than about Americans, Journo posits that America has been unable to be the honest broker it would like to be because politicians – regardless of party – chose one of three (useless) positions: 1) Finding the Middle Ground; 2) Doing Right by Israel; or 3) Doing Right by the Palestinians. This, he says, misses the point.

Rather, we need a secular, moral framework "concerned not with collectives, but with the lives of individual,

irreplaceable human beings; and it holds certain values – human life, freedom, progress – as objective: Values for everyone, at all times, in all places."

How does that work?

Journo's assessment of forms of government – democracy, dictatorship, monarchy – gives Israel an edge for offering individuals freedom and progress, though it clearly isn't perfect. His assessment of what he calls "Palestinian grievances," to which he is sympathetic, castigates Palestinian leadership for operating as a collective and ignoring the actual lives of real Palestinian people. For decades. And generations. He is very specific about the origins of the Palestinian "refugee" problem, and about its resolution. The chapter on "The Palestinian Cause" is a carefully built history of the movement and its allies, and the effects it has had on its own people.



In the end, Journo believes the United States should stand for freedom and justice for as many people as possible. That inclines us toward Israel and away from the Palestine Liberation Organization, Palestinian Authority and Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement as Palestinian leadership. Toward the Palestinian people and – oddly

– against elections, which, in his view, have empowered not only Palestinian dictators, but jihadists across the region.

As the Trump administration wades into Middle East peace brokerage, he and the managers of administration policy would do themselves, the regional players, and the American people a service to read this very American, and very wise, book.

Time: A couple of hours to read; several more to assimilate a pro-American Middle East policy.

■ *Jews Make the Best Demons*

This book is irritating. And important. Irritating because you wanted to think that anti-Semitism – especially in Europe – isn't a problem, but in fact you know better. Important because Eric Rozenman, a journalist and columnist for a wide range of newspapers and organizations, [Disclosure: he is a consultant to the Jewish Policy Center] makes you look where you didn't want to.

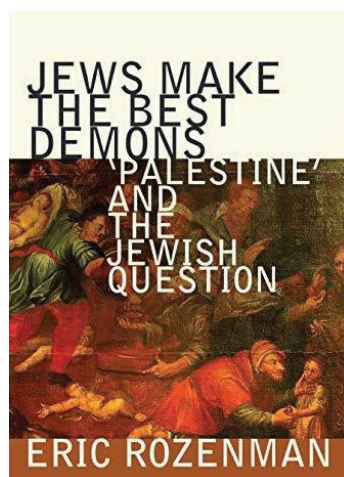
He starts with "the dilution of content but intensification of form," that has resulted in the increasing "delegitimization" of Israel. The heart of the book is the observation by a progressive political thinker that, "In general, truth is a relative thing, and if you state something which is factually untrue, it may, nevertheless, in fact, be considered to be true if it ought to be true."

Anyone who has spent time on social media knows that's true, and it is especially true of anti-Semitism and the Palestinian "narrative."

Rozenman applies the principle to Europeans, Palestinians, supporters of Palestinians, the American left – and its subset of intersectionality advocates – who "selectively demonize Israel and celebrate the Jews' terrorist enemies, the Palestinians, as poor, suffering victims in the name of 'social justice.'"

Are you ready to throw the book down in dismay? Don't. Really, don't. But get ready for a broad, deeply disconcerting intellectual ride.

Rozenman skips around through Jewish, American, European and Israeli history, Nazis, Islamists, collaborators, Palestinians, and more. Nowhere else will you find buzhashi, Paul DeMan, Aunt Frieda, Khalid al-Wazir, the International Criminal Court, Rue Copernic, Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, and the Holy Roman Empire sharing space with Bataclan, Samuel Johnson, Kimberle Crenshaw, Ilan Halimi, Rwanda, Ilan Pappé, and the Peace of Westphalia.



In a key theme, it took only a few decades before the Holocaust, a singularly Jewish experience, was appropriated by non-Jews (and some Jews), well-meaning and not, who changed the debasement, dislocation and horrific torture and murder of Jews into political fodder. Jews as metaphor: Jews are the “new Nazis” and Palestinians the “new Jews.” Or Jews want “too much” compassion for their history and a “dispensation” for “crimes” they commit. “Je suis Charlie” - no one else is really Charlie Hebdo and the French magazine’s staff massacred by jihadists – but appropriating him, or the Holocaust, scores political points.

The conclusion will not surprise you: anti-Semitism is, indeed, the world’s oldest hatred. And dressing it as anti-Zionism doesn’t change it.

Time: A half hour for the first

chapter; a day to get over it; and several days to assimilate the content and the excellent footnotes.

■ **Israeli National Security**

Pick and choose carefully in this book. Charles Freilich, a senior fellow at Harvard’s Belfer Center and a former Israeli deputy national security adviser, is a profound believer in a “peace process” resulting in a “two-state solution” for Israel and the Palestinians. It heavily influences his strategy for Israel in certain areas – including, in Chapter 10, the “Special Relationship” between the United States and Israel.

In the section on Foreign Policy Responses (Chapter 9), Freilich describes the Oslo and post-Oslo search for “peace.”

It is certainly fair to say that Israel went to great lengths to achieve peace... based on major territorial withdrawal, accompanied by security guarantees... unfortunately, as the peace process floundered, Israel’s goals have narrowed from conflict resolution and peace, to conflict management, military deterrence, and war avoidance, with a focus on stability.

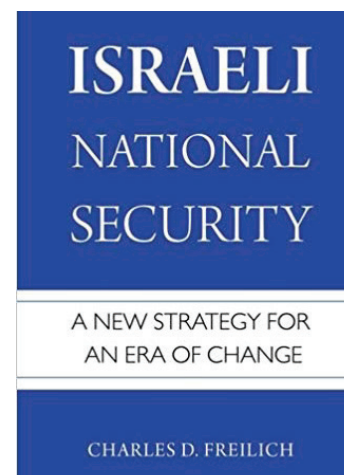
The obvious question is “why?” Without an answer, it is hard to understand the observation at the end of the section that: “Israel’s West Bank policies have eroded its international image, and it has come to be viewed as a pariah state. Israel has ceded the battle for ‘soft power.’”

Actually, it is Freilich, and others who refuse to mount a defense of Israel’s defense, who are ceding Israel’s position in the international arena.

The “peace process” also informs his recommendation in Chapter 12 for “Separat(ion) from the Palestinians as foremost national objective... Unilaterally if necessary... on the basis of demography and security.” Such unilateral border drawing would necessarily include territory east of the Green Line – which would certainly add to the “pariah” narrative. And the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza

didn’t do much for security, either.

His belief that Israel is too dependent on the United States – a fair point – also leads him to see “a resolution of the Palestinian issue would be one of the most effective means possible of reducing Israel’s dependence on the United States...” OK, yes. But how? With whom? Under what circumstances?



This line of political thinking winds through the chapters, but don’t be discouraged. Freilich is a great writer and his broader understanding of Israel’s classic defense doctrine, new strategic environment, changing military threat, nuclear and regional arms control policy, the military response today, and more are definitely worth the price.

Time: How much do you have? You don’t have to read from one end to the other. Skipping around is more worthwhile.

■ **Armies of Sand**

The old joke about Jewish holidays is, “They tried to kill us; they failed. Let’s eat.” The old axiom about Arab-Israeli wars is, “They had Russian equipment and tactics; Israel had Western/American equipment and tactics. We won; let’s eat.”

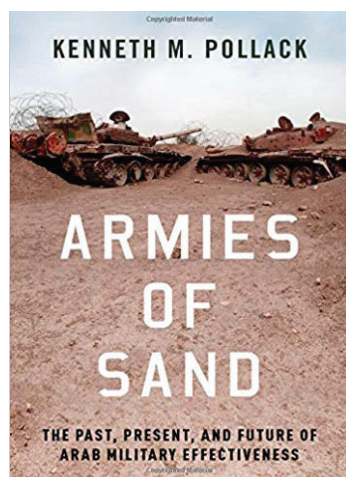
Not so, according to this fascinating study of not only Arab armies and tactics, but also the relationship between cultures and the militaries they produce.

Starting with an excellent overview of the 1967 Six-Day War, former CIA military analyst and current resident Scholar at the American Enterprise



Israeli armored unit stands in the Negev during the Six Day War. (Photo: Israeli Government Press Office)

Institute, Kenneth Pollack, notes that not all of the Arab armies in the war – or in the 1973 Yom Kippur War – were actually Russian-armed and trained. To make the differences clear, he takes the reader carefully through those countries and on a detailed dive into Russian military operational and tactical constructs in World War II. He notes the effectiveness of the Russian Army against the Nazis, although at a horrendous price in lives lost – but the Russians knew that was coming and had accounted for it.



The chapter on culture and the “dominant mode of war” is a stopper.

The Mongols did not become great horse archers purposely so that they could conquer Eurasia. The Mongols became great horse archers because those were the skills they needed to survive on the twelfth-century Eurasian steppe. However, once their society developed this skill and Mongol culture began to produce large numbers of skilled horse archers, it gave Mongol warlords such as Genghis Khan a military tool that enabled him to conquer Eurasia.

There is more.

The advantages that culture may grant to warfare does not mean that that culture or its society are somehow superior in any way except in war making at a particular moment of time... (a society can be) badly hamstrung because its culture is not producing sufficient numbers of people with the traits best suited to the dominant mode of warfare at the time. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, that was exactly what happened to the Arabs.

Pollack’s examination of Arab culture and its variants is interesting, but what emerges as truly useful in assessing military capabilities are the trends across the region: conformity, centralization of and deference to authority, passivity, group loyalty, manipulation of information, atomization of knowledge, personal courage, and ambivalence toward manual labor and technical work.

Pollack presents no judgment – just expert information well-organized and accessible to the non-militarily inclined. With that in mind, skip to Chapter 18 to begin to understand how that affects military organizations and fighting operations, including some exceptional Arab fighting organizations.

And, finally, a very useful chapter on non-state militaries including Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, and ISIS.

Time: Forever. You will come back to this one often and it will be time well-spent.

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■ *A Final Thought ...*

The Root of the Conflict

Hint: It is not the absence of a Palestinian State

The UN once understood the 1967 Six-Day War as a war of Arab aggression against Israel. The Security Council recognized that the root of the “Arab-Israel conflict” was not where Jews lived, but that they had sovereign rights to a Jewish homeland — which the Arabs did not accept. The Arab position, in the view of the UN, was wrong — Israel had an absolute, undeniable and irrevocable right to a sovereign presence in the historic Jewish homeland.

The Security Council decided that Israel should not be forced to give back territory as it had in Sinai in 1956 without a resolution of the underlying problem. In that frame of mind, it passed Resolution 242 with its central clauses (i) and (ii):

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

Not all the territories — American and British diplomats insisted then and do now — and accompanied by:

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty,

territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

All of that was to be given to Israel not by the Palestinians, who did not and do not meet the requirements of a state, but the belligerents of 1948 and 1967. Egypt and Jordan have done so. Israel is still awaiting acknowledgement of its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence from Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and the countries that supported the war — Algeria, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Sudan, and Tunisia. Today, Israel demands that the Palestinian Authority (PA) — successor to the PLO in the West Bank — accept those terms as well. The PA has refused.

It should have been simple. In 1967, the Arab states should have acknowledged that their obstructionism in 1948 was illegitimate and the establishment of Israel was legal and just. Some of the countries that have to make their peace with Israel will be in Bahrain, and the fundamental principle of UN Resolution 242 should be on the table.

Fifty-two years late is not too late.