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Five Police Shot During US Protests, Trump Says He Could Bring in Military



US President Donald Trump holds up a Bible, in front of St. John's Episcopal Church, in Washington, DC, June 1, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Tom Brenner.

BY REUTERS
& ALGEMEINER STAFF

Four St Louis police officers were hit by gunfire late on Monday during violent protests over the death of a black man in police custody, hours after President Donald Trump vowed to use the US military to halt the spreading clashes.

Trump deepened outrage by posing at a church clutching a bible

after law enforcement officers used teargas and rubber bullets to clear the way for him to walk there after he made his remarks in the White House Rose Garden.

Demonstrators set fire to a strip mall in Los Angeles, looted stores in New York City and clashed with police in St Louis, Missouri, where four officers were taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

"Officers are still taking

gunfire downtown & we will share more info as it available," St Louis Police said on Twitter.

Trump has condemned the killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American who died after a white policeman pinned his neck under a knee for nearly nine minutes in Minneapolis on May 25, and has promised justice. But he said rightful protests could not be drowned out by an "angry mob."

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Top US Jewish Groups Voice Solidarity, With Black Americans

BY BEN COHEN

The leading Jewish civil rights organization in the US declared its solidarity with black communities "suffering at the hands of a racist and unjust system" as protests sparked by the death of George Floyd at the hands of police officers in Minneapolis last week continued.

In a statement issued over the weekend, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) emphasized that Floyd's killing reflected the "deep, pervasive, systemic issues" confronting African-Americans.



Protesters gather at the scene where George Floyd was pinned down by a police officer kneeling on his neck before later dying in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 26, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Eric Miller.

"We stand in solidarity with Black and Brown communities across the country as they yet again are subject to pain and suffering at the hands of a racist and unjust system," the statement — issued by ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt — declared.

The ADL strongly criticized the fact that three of the four police officers who were involved in arresting Floyd had not, so far, faced criminal charges. The fourth officer, Derek Chauvin — who pinned his knee upon Floyd's neck

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Emergency Committee for Israel?

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ShabbatCalendar

Parshat NASSO
פרשת נשא

Times for New York City, Friday Candle Lighting
Shabbat Begins: 8:06pm | Shabbat Ends: 9:14pm



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Opinion.

Is the EU Having Second Thoughts Over Its Hostility Toward the Jewish State?



MELANIE PHILLIPS
/JNS.org

Has the European Union reached a tipping point over Israel? Or to be more precise, is the Europeans' bluff finally to be called over Israel's proposal to extend its sovereignty over parts of Judea and Samaria?

The EU has been mulling punitive measures against Israel if it goes ahead with what its Western critics call "annexation of the occupied territories of the West Bank."

A number of member states, headed by France along with Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Belgium, and Luxembourg, are calling for a hard line.

Measures being considered include supporting any UN moves against "annexation"; public support of proceedings against Israel currently underway in the International Criminal Court at The Hague; and increasing the boycott of settlements in various ways, along with increased financial support for the Palestinians.

The EU and Britain maintain that Israel is illegally occupying the disputed territories, and that its settlements there amount to a transfer of population into those lands in contravention of the Geneva Convention.

This is a serious misreading of international law. Israel is not "occupying" these territories. In law, occupation can only occur if the land belongs to a sovereign power, which was never the case here; and a state can also hold onto land which continues to be used for belligerent purposes against it.

It is also a gross misreading of the Geneva Convention, as the Israelis living in these territories were not transferred but moved there entirely of their own volition.

The animus against Israel by both the EU and Britain is of long standing. Let's rephrase that: The animus against Israel by the European and British political class and intelligentsia is of long standing.

For although the EU and Britain condemn Israel for "illegal occupation," fail to defend it against the malice of the United Nations, and endorse the meretricious rulings against it at the European Court of Justice, they are nevertheless trading with Israel at ever-increasing levels, as well as depending heavily upon it for crucial military and intelligence support.

So while defaming Israel in the court of world opinion, they have been simultaneously milking its genius for their own benefit. They want to hurt it, but not enough to hurt themselves.

Their hostility is the product of three factors: historic and ineradicable anti-Jewish prejudice; the pathological inability to deal with collective guilt over the Holocaust; and the perception that their interests have for



European Union flags in front of the European Commission building in Brussels. Photo: Amio Cajander via Wikimedia Commons.

decades lain with the Arab world.

Now, however, something more interesting has been occurring to undermine this collective animus.

In 2004, the EU expanded to include a number of post-communist countries from central and eastern Europe, such as Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

Unlike Western Europe, these countries are friendly toward Israel. This is not because their populations are free of anti-Jewish prejudice or that these states are free of Holocaust guilt. On the contrary, central and eastern Europe has a terrible history of deeply embedded Catholic antisemitism, anti-Jewish pogroms, and atrocities against the Jews both during and after the Holocaust.

The friendship extended by these

countries toward Israel is therefore all the more striking. A major reason is that, reacting against their recent experience of Soviet oppression, they are determined to assert once again their historic national identity.

They are having to do so in the teeth of a liberal orthodoxy that the Western nation is fundamentally racist, exploitative, and dangerous, and that it must be superseded by trans-national institutions like the UN or the EU.

These former Communist countries joined the EU because they believed it was in their economic interest to do so. Nevertheless, there stretches a deep philosophical chasm between them and the European monolith.

For the EU was founded on the idea — in line with the progressive belief that the West is

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The New York Times' Anguish Over Annexation



JEROLD AUERBACH
BOSTON

Nothing is likelier to rile *New York Times* editors — and, not infrequently, columnists and contributing writers — than Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria, the Biblical homeland of the Jewish people.

The current round of censure began three weeks ago (May 7) in a *Times* column by Daniel Pipes, listing six reasons why Israel should not annex any part of the West Bank. Among them, curiously, was that President Donald Trump might "erupt in fury," although he had already indicated his approval of the plan. Annexation would also "alienate and weaken Israel's diminishing number of friends in the Democratic Party," as if their long-receding support for Israel mattered.

Annexation might also "lead to Palestinian fury," as though Israeli policy must comport with the emotions of a sworn enemy that has rejected every peace plan offered in the past 30 years. In the end, Pipes subsequently explained, annexation was "too-expensive symbolism." But if only symbolism, why bother?

Pipes' critique was only a warm-up exercise for the *Times*, not known as a friend of Israel. Ever since Zionism raised its ugly head more than a century ago, the *Times* repeatedly lacerated it for pursuing the restoration of Jewish national sovereignty and its culmination

in the State of Israel. Its Jewish publishers were frightened lest American Jews like themselves be seen as disloyal citizens.

Its May 31st issue featured a two-column editorial diatribe titled "Annexation Violates International Law." It focused on the malfeasance of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for declaring his intention to annex Jewish settlements. Attentive to the opposition of "international organizations" (never renowned for their embrace of Jewish statehood), it spelled out "many reasons" why annexation is "a bad idea."

The "main reason" for *Times* opposition is that "the West Bank is regarded by international organizations and most of the world as occupied territory, and the Jewish settlements as illegal under the Geneva Convention." According to Article 49, "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." It also prohibits "individual or mass forcible transfers."

Yet *Times* editors concede that Israel, even assuming that it is "the occupying power,"



A general view picture shows the Israeli settlement of Maale Adumim, in the West Bank, Feb. 15, 2017. Photo: Reuters / Ammar Awad / File.

did not "deport or transfer," or forcibly compel, anyone to move there. Unlike the forced population transfers by Nazi Germany during World War II (the source of this prohibition), Jewish settlers eagerly returned of their own accord to Biblical Judea and Samaria, the ancient homeland of the Jewish people (as even the *Times* acknowledges). So much for that misplaced analogy. The *Times* editorial pleasingly notes that Joe Biden has declared that if elected president he would "reverse" a Trump annexation decision.

Annexation, the editors warned, "would render the West Bank into a patchwork of simmering, unstable Bantustans" (a familiar *Times* equation of Israeli settlements with South African apartheid). It would also "weaken Israel's support in the Democratic party," already at a low level, and among "American youth," most of whom do not embrace the Jewish state they know little about.

Moreover, annexation might "destabilize Jordan," where, the editors note, "Palestinians form the majority." It is a curious inclusion by the *Times*, undermining its claim of Palestinian homelessness. The League of Nations Mandate for Palestine defined it as the land east and west of the Jordan River. But the Churchill White Paper (1922), issued following Arab rioting, gifted Palestine east of the Jordan River to King Abdullah for what became his Kingdom of Jordan. With its majority Palestinian population in the land internationally recognized a century ago as part of Palestine, there hardly is need for

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World News.

Israel's Relations With China 'Purely Economic,' While India Is 'Strategic Partner,' Diplomat Says

BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

Israel's envoy to New Delhi sat down for an interview on Monday to discuss the Jewish state's burgeoning ties with India.

Speaking with *The Print* journalist Shekhar Gupta on the "Off the Cuff" program, Ambassador Ron Malka commented, "There is unlimited scope of cooperation between India and Israel. We are ready to share technology on mutual trust and mutual respect."

"Many challenges that we see in India look so familiar for me," he added. "So many familiarities in challenges faced by Israel and India. We can learn from each other."

"India and Israel are two countries that respect the rule of law," Malka noted. "Both countries are democratic. And there is mutual trust and respect between them."

Comparing Israel's relations with India to those with China, Malka pointed out "Our relationship with China is purely economic. India is our strategic partner. It is much more



An Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane lands at the Ben-Gurion International airport in Lod, near Tel Aviv, Israel, March 22, 2018. Photo: Reuters / Amir Cohen.

open. Even China knows our relationship with India is different."

"We are now working on a new free trade agreement (FTA) with India," Malka stated. "We'll not flood Indian markets with our products."

"Under the new free trade agreement (FTA), which we will announce in future, we are working at expanding our cooperation in trade," he continued.

Continued from Page A1
Black Americans

for almost nine minutes after the latter was forced to the ground — was charged on Friday by the Hennepin County Attorney with unintentional murder and manslaughter.

"While it is a necessary first step in the pathway towards justice that former Officer Derek Chauvin was taken into custody, it is simply not enough," the ADL statement said. "Based on the horrifying cell phone footage that has rightfully outraged Americans across the country, it is clear that the three other former officers who participated in Mr. Floyd's death need to be held responsible for their actions to the fullest extent of our legal system."

A range of Jewish organizations also voiced their concerns, with the American Jewish Committee (AJC) criticizing US President Donald Trump's bellicose rhetoric in the wake of the killing.

"At a time of national crisis, triggered by the abhorrent, racist murder of George Floyd, we need our leaders to summon the best in us," the AJC tweeted. "POTUS, dividing a country & pouring fuel on the fire are not the ways to go."

Other groups placed Floyd's death in the broader context of young black men being shot

or killed during encounters with the police.

"Our sorrow is further compounded by the recent killing of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia, another act of ugly and violent racism," a statement from the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of New York asserted. "56 years after the historic signing of the Civil Rights Act, hopes for equal rights for Blacks and other communities of color have been dashed again by blatant acts of bigotry and bloodshed."

In a statement issued on Monday, the Orthodox Union (OU) declared itself "saddened, sickened, and outraged to have seen another broadcast video of an African-American man dying at the hands of police officers."

Racism remained "a real and present danger that must be met head on," the OU statement said. "As religious Jews, we believe the most important starting point for the national discourse that must take place is the recognition that all people are created in the image of G-d and that each human life is of infinite value."

The rise in antisemitism over the last year had left the US Jewish community "acutely sensitive to the essential imperative to foster tolerance and respect in this highly diverse society in which we live," the OU emphasized.

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Military

"Mayors and governors must establish an overwhelming law enforcement presence until the violence has been quelled," Trump said. "If a city or state refuses to take the actions that are necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, then I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem for them."

Following his address, Trump walked through an area that had been cleared by police to nearby St. John's Episcopal Church, where he posed for pictures with his daughter, Ivanka, and US Attorney General William Barr.

The presiding bishop of the Episcopal

Church diocese in Washington DC, Michael Curry, was among those who criticized Trump's use of the historic church for a photo opportunity.

"In so doing, he used a church building and the Holy Bible for partisan political purposes," he said on Twitter. The church suffered minor fire damage during protests on Sunday night.

The White House said it was clearing the area before a curfew.

A few hours later, thousands of people marched through Brooklyn, shouting "Justice now!" while cars drove alongside, some drivers honking in support.

Television images showed crowds

Jerusalem Hopes 'Silicon Wadi' Will Create 10,000 Jobs



View of the eastern Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan on December 3, 2017. Photo: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90.

BY ISRAEL HAYOM/JNS.org

The first stage of the Jerusalem Municipality's "Silicon Wadi" project, an initiative designed to set up industrial and business zones in the eastern half of the city and strengthen the city's Arab residents' faith in local government, is under way, the city announced Monday evening.

The Silicon Wadi project entails the construction of approximately 200,000 square meters (2.1 million square feet) of business area, with an emphasis on the high-tech, trade and hotel sectors. One of the goals of the initiative is to create 10,000 jobs in eastern Jerusalem and increase the participation of eastern Jerusalem women in the job market, as well as bolster support for the Israeli school curriculum in eastern Jerusalem schools.

Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Lion said, "We are taking another step toward implementing

a historic plan in the east of the city and bringing huge economic news to Jerusalem in general and eastern Jerusalem in particular, by increasing employment in high-tech."

"We will ensure that we bring in leading companies and the best manpower in east Jerusalem. We will coordinate fully with planning, employment, and training bodies to create a true revolution and create hope in east Jerusalem," said Lion.

The Jerusalem Municipality is also working on another project to turn 13 local streets into pedestrian thoroughfares that will host tours and street performances at regular times through August.

Lion said that the idea of opening up city streets to pedestrian traffic would "increase the sense of safety of people who spend time in business streets and ... help businesses and encourage people to enjoy themselves in larger spaces, outside businesses themselves."

smashing windows and looting luxury stores along Fifth Avenue in Manhattan before the city's 11 p.m. curfew. Mayor Bill de Blasio said the curfew would be moved to 8 p.m. on Tuesday.

Two police officers were struck by a car at a demonstration in Buffalo, New York, on Monday night. Officials said the driver and passengers were believed to be in custody. It was not immediately clear whether the incident was intentional.

Fire in Hollywood

In Hollywood, dozens of people were shown in television images looting a drug store. Windows were shattered at a nearby Starbucks and two restaurants.

Anti-police brutality marches and rallies have turned violent after dark each night over the last week.

A second autopsy ordered by Floyd's family and released on Monday found his death was homicide by "mechanical asphyxiation," or physical force that interfered with his oxygen supply. The report says three officers contributed to his death.

The Hennepin County Medical Examiner later released autopsy findings that also called Floyd's death homicide by asphyxiation. The county report said Floyd suffered cardiopulmonary arrest while being restrained by police and that he had arteriosclerotic and hypertensive heart disease, fentanyl intoxication and recent methamphetamine use.

Derek Chauvin, the 44-year-old Minneapolis police officer who knelt on Floyd,

was arrested on third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter charges. Three other officers involved in the arrest have not been charged.

Floyd's death was the latest case of police brutality against black men that was caught on videotape and prompted an outcry over racism in US law enforcement.

It reignited simmering racial tensions in a politically-divided country that has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, with African Americans accounting for a disproportionately high number of cases.

Dozens of cities are under curfews not seen since riots after the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The National Guard deployed in 23 states and Washington, DC.

Most Americans were just emerging from weeks of strict "stay-at-home" orders imposed over the pandemic.

On Monday, dozens paid their respects to Floyd outside Cup Foods, the scene of his death, leaving flowers and signs. A little girl wrote, "I'll fight with you," in the road.

Terrence Floyd, the victim's brother, told the gathering he wanted people to get educated and vote rather than resort to violence and destruction. "Let's do this another way," he said.

James Pool, a 31-year-old former Marine, said he hoped peaceful protests would make a difference.

"I want to see more community and this country come together and stop letting the powers that be divide us," he said.

World News.



Rioters during the antisemitic pogrom in Baghdad, Iraq, known as the 'Farhud,' June 1, 1941. Photo: Twitter.

'Farhud' Massacre of Iraqi Jews Remembered, 79 Years Later

BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

Jewish leaders and organizations on Monday marked the anniversary of the 1941 Baghdad pogrom known as the "Farhud," which began the ethnic cleansing of the millennia-old Iraqi Jewish community.

Following a pro-Nazi coup led by nationalist Rashid Ali al-Kailani and Palestinian leader and Nazi collaborator Hajj Amin al-Husseini, anti-Jewish riots broke out in Baghdad on June 1, 1941. Before being suppressed by the British military, the pogrom left at least 180 Jews dead.

Over the next decade, almost all of Iraq's around 135,000 Jews fled the country, most of them going to the new State of Israel.

The director-general of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Yuval Rotem, wrote on Monday, "Today we commemorate the #Farhud, the bloody massacre of Iraqi Jews. Following the pogrom, the majority of #Iraq's vibrant Jewish community, which dated back to 586 BC, has found its safe haven in Israel. We will forever remember those murdered in the Farhud."

David Harris, CEO of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), said the Farhud was "the beginning of the end for an ancient Jewish community. And note it was 7 years before Israel's rebirth."



David Harris @DavidHarrisAJC

#OTD in 1941, pogrom launched by Iraqis against Jews of Baghdad.

Known as "Farhud," at least 180 Jews were killed. App. 1000 were injured. Many homes destroyed.

It was the beginning of the end for an ancient Jewish community.

And note it was 7 years before Israel's rebirth.



190 6:36 AM - Jun 1, 2020 - New York, NY

The World Jewish Congress (WJC) tweeted, "For two days, a mob in Baghdad went from door to door to Jewish homes — killing, raping, looting." The pogrom, it said, "was a shocking turning point for the Iraqi Jewish community. Within a decade, most of them fled the country."



It started on June 1st, 1941. For two days, a mob in Baghdad went from door to door to Jewish homes - killing, raping, looting. The pogrom, known as the Farhud in Arabic, was a shocking turning point for the Iraqi Jewish community. Within a decade, most of them fled the country.



Michael Dickson — the executive director of Stand With Us Israel — wrote, "The murders and devastation of the Farhud led to the expulsion of almost 1m Jews from Arab countries in the years following."

Pro-Israel activist and descendant of Farhud victims Hen Mazzig tweeted, "Today I remember the violence my grandparents faced in Iraq. I remember how Iraqi police targeted them because they were Jews. I remember how 850,000 Jews were forced out of their lands as refugees."

"I will never forget the #Farhud," he said.

The organization JIMENA — which advocates for Jews of Middle Eastern and North African origin — related the Farhud to the ongoing protests against police violence in the US, writing, "On this 79th anniversary of the anti-Jewish pogrom in Baghdad, Iraq known as the Farhud we decry police brutality and indifference that plagues our country."

"Jews from Arab countries are no stranger to systemic discrimination and we demand more for African Americans," the group wrote.

Netanyahu Will Pursue West Bank Annexation, but Only in Context of Trump Peace Plan

BY BENJAMIN KERSTEIN

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a group of settler leaders on Tuesday that he intended to annex parts of the West

Bank, but only in the context of the US President Donald Trump's Middle East peace plan.

A statement from the Prime Minister's Office stated that Netanyahu met with the heads of the Yesha Council, the umbrella

Thousands of Iranians Said to Contact Israel's Foreign Ministry to Request Asylum

BY BENJAMIN KERSTEIN

In recent weeks, thousands of non-Jewish Iranians have been sending messages to Israel's Foreign Ministry asking for help in escaping Iran and even immigrating to Israel.

Israeli news site *N12* reported on Monday that the requests had come in public and private messages sent to the Foreign Ministry's official Farsi-language Instagram page.

The Foreign Ministry stated that there were so many inquiries that the ministry had found it impossible to handle the volume.

"We receive tens of thousands of comments each day in private messages and comments on the posts themselves asking to receive asylum in Israel," said Yonatan Gonen of the ministry's Digital Diplomacy Department.

It is believed that the rush of requests is due to the dire economic situation in Iran and especially the coronavirus pandemic, which has hit the country especially hard.

Gonen said Iranians may also want to come to Israel because "they probably see



A rally in Los Angeles supporting pro-democracy protests in Iran, January 2018. Photo: Reuters / Monica Almeida.

in various publications that Israel leads in various fields of technology and is a free and democratic country."

"Some are also being persecuted in Iran by the authorities," he added. "They want to get away and believe that Israel can help them."

Gonen noted that Iranians might be further attracted to the Farsi-language Instagram page because it included a great deal of information that was censored in Iran itself, such as material on the regime's persecution of dissidents and involvement in terrorism.

Police in German City of Munich Ban Display of Nazi-Era Yellow Star at Coronavirus Demonstrations

BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

The southern German city of Munich has banned the use of Nazi-era "Judenstern" badges and signs at demonstrations protesting the government response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The ban came into effect ahead of last Saturday's rally in Munich, a police spokesman said, adding that no violations were reported. Future displays of the yellow Star of David — which Jews were compelled by the Nazis to wear on their outer clothing — will be punishable with a fine, the spokesman said. At rallies throughout Germany to counter the coronavirus restrictions, some demonstrators were seen appropriating the imagery of Nazi antisemitism and the Holocaust, along with its

organization of local councils in the settlements, and said to them, "We face a historic opportunity to apply sovereignty to areas of Judea and Samaria."

Netanyahu added, however, that he planned to pursue negotiations in accordance with the Trump plan.

Because the plan stipulates the eventual creation of a Palestinian state, it is bitterly opposed by many settler leaders.

The Israeli news site *Walla* states that the settler leaders raised the issue of Palestinian statehood with Netanyahu and expressed their opposition to a wholesale adoption of the Trump plan because of it.

Council officials said at the end of the meeting that they were "looking forward to continuing the debate."

Yossi Dagan, head of the Samaria Regional Council, said before the meeting that the settler leaders intended to draw a red line at Palestinian statehood.

He added that Israel should "apply sover-

associated conspiracy theories. Participants have worn the "Judenstern" in a direct nod to the Nazi persecution of the Jews, but labeled instead "Not Vaccinated" and "CoV-2."

In an interview last week, the top German official combating antisemitism expressed concern that the coronavirus demonstrations were being taken over by antisemitic extremists.

The protests had become "a melting pot for antisemites, conspiracy nuts, Holocaust relativists and enemies of democracy who try to monopolize people for their own purposes," the official, Felix Klein, said in an interview with the *Judische Allgemeine* newspaper.

Antisemitic outrages in Germany rose by nearly 14 percent in 2019, with more than 2,000 incidents reported, according to figures released by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

eighty without fear and without trepidation. With the United States' consent or without the United States' consent."

"We have come to give the prime minister the power to set the red lines of the Jewish people and the settlement of Judea and Samaria," he added.

Dagan said he and his colleagues were "confident" that Netanyahu would adopt their recommendations.



A general view picture shows a construction site in Efrat, in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc in the West Bank, Jan. 28, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Ronen Zvulun / File.

U.S. News.

Jewish World Mourns Passing of Former Yeshiva University Head Rabbi Norman Lamm

BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

Dr. Norman Lamm — the former head of Yeshiva University in New York City and one of the leading Jewish scholars in the United States — passed away on Sunday at the age of 92.

In a statement on its website, Yeshiva University mourned the loss of “an elegant and articulate spokesman for Jewish life in modern times.”

Lamm’s “oratory, wisdom and leadership inspired our institution for more than three decades,” the statement said.

In its obituary of Lamm published on Sunday, *The New York Times* credited him with having molded Yeshiva University into “a centrist Orthodox Jewish institution that encouraged engagement with the secular world and in doing so rescued the school from the brink of bankruptcy.” Lamm spent 37 years at the helm of Yeshiva University. By the time he stood down as its president in 2001, the university’s endowment was valued at \$875 million.

Born in Brooklyn into a family of Jewish immigrants from Poland, Lamm gained wide recognition for his writings and discourses on the interpretation of Jewish philosophy and law, especially in relation to problems involving science, law, technology and philosophy in the modern world.

He authored 10 books, including his major work, *Torah Lishmah* (1972), about the Mitnaggedim, and *The Religious Thought of Hasidism: Text and Commentary*, which won the coveted 1999 National Jewish Book Award in Jewish Thought.

He also published many articles on Jewish law in many journals, one of which was cited in two separate

landmark Supreme Court decisions on self-incrimination.

Lamm edited or co-edited more than 20 volumes, including *The Library of Jewish Law and Ethics*. He was the founder and first editor of the Orthodox journal *Tradition* and associate editor of *Hadarom*, a journal of Jewish law; founder of the *Torah U-Madda Journal*; and founder of the *Orthodox Forum*.

Lamm’s passing came only a few weeks after he lost his 88-year-old wife, Mindella, to the coronavirus.

In a statement, Dr. Ari Berman, the current president of Yeshiva University, reflected that the Jewish community had “lost a legend, and we mourn the passing of our teacher and guide.”

Said Berman: “Rabbi Lamm was the premier expositor of our community’s worldview. His teachings and writings anchored



The late Dr. Norman Lamm, former president of Yeshiva University in New York City. Photo: Screenshot.

modern life in Torah values and taught us how we can grow from the interchange of history’s great ideas.”

Lamm’s “enormous impact is simply incalculable in considering both the influence of his ideas as well as the number of alumni who graduated during his tenure from across our institution’s graduate, undergraduate and rabbinic programs,” Berman added.

No Time Like a Pandemic to Make Aliyah, Say North American Jews

BY ISRAEL HAYOM/JNS.org

May saw the highest number of American and Canadian Jews requesting to make aliyah through the Nefesh B’Nefesh organization since it was founded in 2002, according to numbers obtained by *Israel Hayom*.

The figures indicate that the number of aliyah files opened doubled in May, with most applicants seeking to move to Israel in the next few months. Over 800 households applied online in May to make aliyah, compared to 424 in May 2019.

The reason? Coronavirus.

“Coronavirus has caused a lot of US Jews to rethink their paths and work to carry out something they’ve been planning for some time,” said Nefesh B’Nefesh.

The May wave of new aliyah requests comes after the 50 percent jump in new files the organization saw in April, which was also a record.

Nefesh B’Nefesh also reported a change in the profiles of the potential new immigrants, with more families and fewer single people and retirees applying.

Rabbi Yehoshua Fass, co-founder and executive director of Nefesh B’Nefesh, said, “We have an unusual opportunity to make a 2,000-year-old dream come true.”

The organization is making preparations to bring several thousand new North American immigrants to Israel this summer.



New immigrants arrive in Israel, many coming alone to serve in the nation’s military. Photo: courtesy of Nefesh B’Nefesh.

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Opinion.

A Prayer for My Father



SHMULEY BOTEACH
ENGELWOOD

This is the eulogy that Rabbi Shmuley Boteach delivered on May 27, 2020, for his father, Yoav Botach, on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at a funeral service over which he presided.

It was nearly 26 years ago, also on a summer day, that my father called me from here in Israel to tell me the impossible news that the Lubavitcher Rebbe had died. I was living in Oxford, England at the time, serving as rabbi to the students, and was meant to travel to Israel that very day to visit my father in Jerusalem. The news shocked me to my core. The Rebbe was larger than life. He was going to usher in a messianic era. He could not die.

My plans for Israel changed immediately as I traveled in the opposite direction for the Rebbe's funeral in New York.

And now, more than a quarter of a century later, I have traveled in the right direction, to the Jewish homeland, but for another impossibly sad occasion, the funeral of my own father.

And as with the Rebbe, I never believed this day would come.

My father too was larger than life. Always the most charismatic personality in the room, he was a force of nature, a magnet that drew everything to him, a planet that forced all that surrounded him into his orbit. He could neither be avoided nor ignored. Even as his health deteriorated over the last few months, his broken body always fought back and rallied in a way that had agnostic doctors using the words "miracle." Even when the hospital told us on several occasions — including at the Passover seder — that we had to say goodbye as he had hours to live, he always miraculously pulled through. Sickness and illness could never defeat him.

My father was a giant of a man, a business titan who bestrode the streets of Los Angeles like a colossus, a real estate genius with the charisma and good looks of a Hollywood star. My friend Kevin, writing from Australia, summed it up best: Yoav was a legend.

His struggle never to quit and always prevail was his defining characteristic. Born in abject poverty as the second child in a family of 13 in Iran in 1932, he was selling carpets and fabrics in the markets of Isfahan — the ancient Persian capital — from the age of ten to help support his brothers and sisters. And reaching out to aid his many siblings in every way possible would be an act he would continue for the rest of his life, along with charitable acts to complete strangers who approached him in dire straits.

He had only minimal schooling and was proud that he spent most of it not reading books but fighting antisemitic Muslim teachers and pupils and organizing the Jewish children in Isfahan into street fighters. At a Friday night Shabbat dinner that I spent alone with him when I was 14 and living in a Los Angeles yeshiva dorm, he regaled me with tales of the non-stop Jewish wars in Iran and proudly moved my hands over the battle scars in his scalp that proved it. "Feel here, under my hair, at the holes I still have from rocks that nearly cracked my skull," he said with a huge grin. He would later show my children the same wounds. "They tried to break me with sticks and rocks," he said, "but I'm the one who always beat them up."

He was a Jewish lion, a mighty warrior,

a living incarnation of his namesake, King David's general-in-chief Yoav, instilling fear in all who would do harm to his people. He oozed Jewish pride from every pore of his being. My friend David Suissa, who edits Los Angeles' *Jewish Journal* and was of the last non-family members to visit my father in the hospital, told me after he met him for the first time, "Your dad is the original Mesopotamian man. He has a powerful, leathery hand." And yesterday my former student at Oxford and now Los Angeles mayor, Eric Garcetti, summed up my father beautifully in a text: "He was a heroic figure to me and I saw such a fire and a love in him. His memory is such a blessing to our city of Angels and to this world."

This defiance of standing up, of being a proud Jew, ready to battle our people's foes in every arena, constituted my father's irreducible essence. Rarely has a man stood so straight. Rarely has a person walked so tall. Rarely has a Jew born in a Muslim country carried himself with such utter disregard for his hostile surroundings. To say that my father could not give a damn what anyone thought of him is to offer an unimpressive understatement. Once, when we flew together from Los Angeles to Miami for a grandson's bris, he pulled out a cooked duck with his bare hands and tore it apart, offering me a leg dripping in grease, oblivious to an entire plane staring at him. And why would he care? If they could not appreciate that a Jew only eats kosher, and if the airline forgot to board the meals we ordered, that was their problem.

My grandfather Ezra, an ardent Zionist, moved his large brood to Israel where my father spent his late teenage years and met my mother Eleanor when she, as a young American tourist, asked a handsome local for the city's best falafel in Beersheva. They married and began a family in Israel where my sister Sara was born, and, a few years later, moved to my mother's native New York, where Bar Kochva was born, and to Los Angeles thereafter, where the twins, Chaim Moishe and Ateret, and then me, the youngest, followed.

My father arrived in America not speaking a word of English. He was sometimes looked down upon and degraded, with his dark, Middle Eastern complexion and the broken English of an immigrant.

That he would go on to build a large business and out-manuever those with the impeccable college degrees he lacked should surprise no one. Few were as dedicated. Few worked harder. Few were as sharp.

My father rose at the crack of dawn each and every morning until he was felled by a catastrophic stroke last December on the night before Hanukkah. And over the next five months he waged a ferocious battle for life that electrified and astonished all who witnessed it.

He would often tell me stories of his work ethic. He drove from Los Angeles to the various swap meets and flea markets to feed his family. "I was so tired, I took the scissors that I used to cut the fabrics because I was falling asleep at the wheel. I started to poke my legs until blood flowed. But," he said with his eyes open wide as saucers, "I didn't miss the market."

He never missed synagogue on any morning, either. In his last years, he would drag his broken frame day after day at 5 am and put on his tefillin, eschewing the help of other worshipers that in his later years he was finally forced to accept.

He believed in strength. He never showed weakness. After his first stroke nearly a decade ago, he would become visibly upset at me or any of my siblings as he pushed his walker to shul. I

would bend to help dislodge it from a crack in the sidewalk or the roots of a tree. I would put my arm out to help him climb the stairs. He would never accept. It might take three times as long, but he would get to the top on his own. He had made his way through life on his own two feet, and his struggle to survive became symbolically solitary in the last weeks as the COVID-19 pandemic closed the hospitals to visitors and we children who were at his side were reduced to watching him on an iPad until he came home to my sisters' care for a final 10 days.

Death to him was a curse, an aberration never to be discussed, an unacceptable tear in the glorious tapestry of nature — "the green" as he called it — whose pristine beauty he loved so much. In his hospital bed at Cedars-Sinai, he would hold my hand so utterly tight. He held on for life itself as he entered his final battle, attended with unequalled care by my sisters Sara and Ateret, who never left his side, my brother Bar Kochva, and my brother Chaim who crossed the country from Miami constantly to visit his sick father in LA.

I was moved to my core when, on the last Shabbat that we spent together, he struggled in semi-consciousness to move his unresponsive body and even to breathe. He grabbed my hand, first with his almost useless left arm, and then, moving his entire frame, with his right hand as well, as he seized me with a ferocious grip. My wife Debbie stood by watching with tears in her eyes as I sang to him the melodies of Havdalah that he so loved.

He adored Debbie ever since I brought her from Australia to obtain his blessing for our marriage 32 years ago. Characteristically, he stared her down. "Where do you want to live?" Debbie, not missing a beat, replied, "Wherever Shmuley wants to live." And he lit up like a Hanukkah menorah as Debbie passed his test. "Uuuuho," he laughed, giving us his blessing, knowing that he had successfully teased this Ashkenazi woman about being the perfect Persian wife!

Such displays of love and tenderness were not foreign. My father had tremendous sensitivity to those in need. At the end of a long summer fast day in Los Angeles, when I was driving home from synagogue with him to eat our meal, we saw a confused, elderly woman in the middle of the street, nearly killed by passing cars. My father picked her up, saw the address of her nursing home, and drove her there, all while his famished teenage son prayed to himself that he would just leave her so we could eat. The owner of the nursing home told my father to butt out. "It's none of your business." "NONE OF MY BUSINESS?" my father hollered. "If ever I come back and see this woman in danger, I will teach you a lesson about respecting the elderly that you will never forget."

My father loved music and loved to sing. Every Friday night he raised his voice to God like an ancient Hebrew prophet. He made the words of the Bible come to life and elongated the pronouncement of every syllable, doing impossible musical somersaults with his vocal chords.

Shabbat was especially dear to him. He loved going to synagogue and loved having his children and grandchildren around him singing at the Sabbath table. At family celebrations, he would suddenly stand in the middle of the guests and cry out in lyrical praise to the Creator. As I was conducting my daughter Shaina's wedding, he rose under the chupa, in the middle of the ceremony, and began to sing the eternal words of the prophet Isaiah: "And Kings and queens will serve you and care for all your needs. They will bow to the earth before you and lick the dust from your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord. Those who trust in me will never be put to shame." As he did so he swung his hips into a Middle Eastern belly dance, scandalizing the serious, black-clad, Hasidic crowd who looked at him in shock. He gave a mischievous laugh and



The Mount of Olives Jewish Cemetery in Jerusalem. Photo: Berthold Werner via Wikimedia Commons.

twisted his waist again. He loved every minute of it. And so did I.

When hundreds of thousands of Iranian Jews began fleeing Khomeini's brutal regime in 1979, my father was already an established Los Angeles business figure. He saw it as providential that he had come to LA some 15 years earlier so that he could assist so many Iranian refugees and get them back on their feet. He became a patriarch to the Iranian Jewish community and is respected as such till today. In about 1980, I was with him in downtown Los Angeles when he took an Iranian immigrant to a meeting to try and help him close on a business. My father told the cynical American owner who listened halfheartedly to the refugee's business pitch, "He may have nothing now, but in Iran this man had a huge business. Big. Like an elephant!" almost screaming the last word as he so hated seeing people's dignity compromised.

A man as large as my father was never going to be a saint and would have been a bore had he not also possessed the flaws that accompany men of Biblical proportions. He could be stubborn, uncompromising, and, as a son who loved him and always sought his approval, at times distant. After my parents' divorce, I grew up on the other side of America and missed him every moment. When he visited he could see my pain and I once heard him tell his brother Shlomo that he thought that I, as the family's youngest, was especially wounded by the divorce. And that is how I felt too.

Which is why no global pandemic, no worldwide malady, was ever going to stop me or my beloved siblings — Sara, Ateret, and Chaim Moishe — who are here with me, from burying our father in the city that he loved so much, Jerusalem, and where he wished to live in his last years, as did his mother, Eshrat, to whom he was especially devoted. And we are joined today by my children Chana and Mendy, who also made the trip from the United States during the pandemic, and my nephew Aaron, all three of whom my father took such pride in as they served as soldiers in the IDF.

It would be the will of God that my father would not ultimately inhabit the home that he bought at the foot of the Old City. But interred now here as he is at Judaism's holiest burial site on the Mount of Olives, just steps away from his great hero Menachem Begin, and the founder of the modern Hebrew tongue, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, my father has finally come home.

He will now be, as Jewish tradition maintains, the first to greet the Messiah and the first to rise in the resurrection of the dead.

In the same way that my father always kept his faithfulness to God, I know that the Creator will likewise fulfill his promise to his people, spoken through Isaiah, that in the end of days "Death shall be swallowed forever," and through Daniel, that "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will wake again."

And at that time I will be reunited with my Rebbe and with my father, both of whom died on a Saturday night just as the holy Sabbath went out, making a world without them a little bit darker, and a world into which they will eventually reawaken shine with particles of everlasting light.

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach's book on Judaism and the messiah, *The Wolf Shall Lie With the Lamb*, is available on Amazon and at Shmuley.com. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram @RabbiShmuley.

Opinion.

Mahmoud Abbas' Threats to Israel and the Validity of Oslo

ALAN BAKER/
JNS.org

In his May 18 declaration, Mahmoud Abbas, head of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and PLO, announced, "The Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Palestine are absolved from all agreements and understandings with the American and Israeli governments and from all the obligations based on these understandings and agreements, including the security ones."

This latest tantrum by Abbas, and subsequent actions to unilaterally halt security, health, and other forms of cooperation with Israel, raise several interesting legal and political questions regarding the veracity and credibility of all and any Palestinian commitments, whether in the various documents comprising the Oslo Accords, or in other international commitments entered into by the Palestinians.

For if the Palestinian leadership feels that it can glibly and freely revoke solemn obligations in signed agreements, witnessed and guaranteed by international leaders, merely at the whim of Abbas and his close advisers and merely because they disapprove of, and even object to, speeches or Israeli policy statements, then one may indeed ask what value or reliability do any Palestinian commitments — past, present, or future — hold?

What is perhaps curious, if not even sad, in Abbas' declaration and actions is the fact that they are ostensibly not in response to any specific Israeli action that might be interpreted as violating those agreements. Israel, true to its Oslo Accords obligations, has not made any unilateral alteration in the status of the territories.

The Palestinian actions are merely in response to a provision in the Israeli government's coalition agreement and a speech by Israel's prime minister in the Israeli Knesset expressing possible intentions to apply Israeli law or sovereignty to parts of the territories at a later date — but they were made without such actions having been actually taken and without any detail as to how and if such actions will indeed materialize.

To the contrary, the Trump peace plan invites the Palestinian leadership to involve itself in negotiating the implementation of the plan, with extensive financial and economic inducements that would greatly benefit the Palestinian population. But after having rejected the plan outright and removed himself from the negotiating table, Abbas is in no position to threaten or pressure Israel and the United States. He does not have any right of veto at his disposal.

In light of Abbas' declaration absolving the Palestinians from all obligations, the question arises whether such abrogation, as well as the actual, unilateral violation by the Palestinian leadership of its commitments in the Oslo Accords, through actively obstructing and preventing security and other forms of bilateral cooperation, does not represent a material breach of those accords, rendering them frustrated and impossible to implement, and thereby enabling Israel to declare them void.

One may even ask the international community what value exists in the continued

Palestinian fixation of acceding to international conventions in violation of their Oslo commitments, when they demonstrate so assertively that they can freely violate any commitments in such conventions and agreements, for no good reason.

Abbas justifies his actions against both the United States and Israel on the basis of his deep antipathy toward the Trump peace plan, to the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital city, and his personal aversion to President Trump himself. But the Trump plan, in and of itself, violates no agreement as such. It merely sets out an ostensible framework for peace between the Palestinians and Israel, including the establishment of a Palestinian state and the granting of considerable economic benefits to the Palestinian people.

Indeed, one may ask how any of this could be seen to justify — legally or politically — Abbas' declaration absolving the Palestinians from all agreements and understandings, and the subsequent instructions to obstruct and impede security cooperation with Israel, much of which serves the interests of the Palestinian leadership itself as well as the Palestinian population.

By the same token, practically speaking, one may ask how Abbas and his colleagues intend to free themselves from such obligations as that specified in the September 1993 Exchange of Letters of Mutual Recognition between PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, in the name of the Palestinian people, and Israel's prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, according to which the PLO head declared that "all outstanding issues relating to the permanent status will be resolved through negotiations."

Similarly, the question arises how the abrogation of security cooperation obligations will affect the very central and vital Palestinian commitments in the Oslo Accords to "take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism, crime, and hostilities." By the same token, their specific obligations to prevent and to act against incitement and hostile propaganda, as well as to cooperate in preventing criminal activity, drug trafficking, and the like, represent central obligations which, inasmuch as they are not already being repeatedly violated by the Palestinians, constitute a fundamental component of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship.

The implications of the violation of such commitments could be considerable and most serious inasmuch as they represent the very heart of the neighborly relationship between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Their formal abrogation by the Palestinian leadership, for no apparent or justifiable reason, could indeed be seen to be a fundamental breach of the accords, entitling Israel to consider them void, and to pursue its own vital security and territorial interests without being limited by any obligations emanating from them. This is particularly significant in relation to those provisions dealing with security of the airspace and security along the Gaza coastline and provisions granting rights of Palestinian VIP and police passage.

Even in the long list of non-security-related fields of cooperation and coordination covered by the Civil Affairs Protocol to the Interim Agreement, including health, agriculture, water and sewage, telecommunications, fisheries, fuels, quarries, tourism, and transportation, as well as the other protocols to

Anti-Israel Groups Promote Discrimination and Bigotry



DOV GUGGENHEIM
LONDON

Even a broken clock is right twice a day.

In early April, BDS leader Omar Barghouti expressed support for allowing the use of potential Israeli-developed vaccines for COVID-19.

"If you use medical equipment from Israel — it's not a problem. Cooperating with Israel against the virus — to begin with, we do not consider it normalization," he said in an Arabic-language Facebook live broadcast.

He continued, asserting, "Up until now, we have not been in a situation where we need Israel urgently and no one else can save us but Israel. If that will happen, saving lives is more important than anything else." Since the BDS movement rejects normalization with Israel, this statement took many by surprise.

However, this statement could actually be a positive development. Barghouti is, in essence, reiterating a mantra repeated by much of the international community — politics are politics, and we shall have our political arguments as we see fit — but our ideologies should not cost human lives. While we may often disagree about certain policies, rarely do they have as direct an impact on the well-being of others as medicine does.

So, being that Barghouti set the precedent that human lives are more important than political steadfastness, it was disappointing (yet predictable) that this is not the case with some prominent BDS chapters on US college campuses.

For example, in March, Tufts University's chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) became the first campus group to submit a referendum condemning and ultimately attempting to end all security training for campus police by Israeli security forces. (A decision on the referendum was delayed until the fall due to COVID-19).

This is merely SJP's latest endorsement of the "Deadly Exchange" campaign, which they have openly supported since 2018. The

campaign is rooted in antisemitism. Essentially, it claims that Israel and American Jewry contribute to police brutality in the United States, and that university police have become "militarized" to implement "discriminatory and repressive policing" used by the Israeli defense establishment. This is a "jaccuse" par excellence devoid of any evidence, and utilizes classic antisemitic tropes of Jewish power and money.

This campaign is unsurprisingly spearheaded by Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), a group that uses its Jewish identity as a shield when denying Jews their right to national self-determination and security.

There are many issues to be taken with the campaign (not least of which, that JVP openly voices support and has even hosted convicted terrorists at their events), but the most striking issue here is the complete disregard for human life by JVP and SJP. Barghouti himself stated that lives come before politics — and ending security training will leave many staff without the necessary skills needed to protect campuses, which can end up costing lives.

When Tufts-SJP won an award for student collaboration, Academic Engagement Network (AEN) Executive Director Miriam Elman stated, "Tufts-SJP is hardly a worthy recipient of an award for collaboration," echoing similar statements made by Anthony Monaco, president of Tufts, who expressed that this award should not have been bestowed to SJP, and highlighted many concerns that arose from the unfortunate incident. Indeed, both SJP and JVP consistently act divisively (and in a bigoted manner) in ostracizing students and impeding a healthy exchange of ideas meant to improve society.

Encouraging student activism and being politically involved are important for any functioning society. But when we are faced with organizations that hold abhorrent stances, spit in the face of human rights, and are knee-deep in antisemitism, one must ask — what values are really driving these organizations to action? Are these organizations worthy of being rewarded?

Dov Guggenheim is a CAMERA Fellow at Hebrew University.

Continued from Page A2
Anguish

another "Palestine" west of the Jordan River.

Times editors recognize that the portions of Judea and Samaria that Netanyahu would annex have already become "integral parts of Israel in all but name." So why the fuss? Because "on the tawdry political level where Mr. Netanyahu thrives," annexation would solidify support from his right-wing base and "cloak him with the mantle of a Jewish hero" before his pending trial.

Dire consequences (surely for *Times* editorial writers) would inevitably follow: a

the agreement covering legal cooperation, and economic and financial relations, Abbas' whimsical termination of the agreement with Israel would cause considerable harm and suffering to his own population.

The Palestinian declaration should be taken very seriously by Israel, the United States, and the international community, all of whom have a serious stake in maintaining the integrity of the peace process.

Alan Baker is director of the Institute for

rising threat of violence that would "undermine Israel's standing in the world," harm relations with Arab states, and reduce the possibility of a peace settlement (that Palestinians have relentlessly resisted).

Left unsaid: it would leave *Times* editors upset, even angry. Too bad, but pleasing *The New York Times* is hardly a priority for Israel, nor should it be.

Jerold S. Auerbach is the author of Print to Fit: The New York Times, Zionism and Israel 1896-2016, selected for Mosaic by Ruth Wisse and Martin Kramer as a "Best Book" for 2019.

Contemporary Affairs at the Jerusalem Center and the head of the Global Law Forum. He participated in the negotiation and drafting of the Oslo Accords with the Palestinians, as well as agreements and peace treaties with Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon. He served as legal adviser and deputy director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry and as Israel's ambassador to Canada.

This article was first published by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

Impressions.

Whatever Happened to the Emergency Committee for Israel

BY JONATHAN S. TOBIN
/JNS.org

Ten years ago, it came in with a bang, but this spring, it disbanded without even a whimper.

The Emergency Committee for Israel came into existence in 2010 in response to President Barack Obama's increasingly aggressive criticism of Israel and his attempt to pressure it to make concessions to the Palestinians. In the following years, as Obama's push for appeasement of Iran culminated in a disastrously weak nuclear deal, the ECI depicted the administration's policies as not just wrongheaded or counterproductive, but an "emergency" that decent Americans should mobilize to oppose. Democrats blasted the group for what they claimed was an attempt to turn Israel into a partisan wedge issue. Yet by helping to frame the debate about Obama's push for more "daylight" between the United States and Israel, and a rapprochement with Iran, the ECI played a not insignificant role in generating dissent about such dangerous folly and electing members of the House and Senate who disagreed with the administration.

Once Obama got his way on the Iran nuclear deal, the ECI went silent. Earlier this spring, it formally disbanded. But its prime mover, former Weekly Standard publisher William Kristol has moved on to a different cause, albeit one that puzzles many of those who agreed with him about Obama's attitude towards Israel.

After leading the effort to brand Obama a threat to Israel's existence, Kristol has, along with some other celebrity pundits like The Atlantic's David Frum and The Washington Post's Jennifer Rubin, who were cheerleaders for the ECI, become the voice of the #NeverTrump movement. He leads a new organization whose purpose is to convince Republicans to support presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden. But unlike the ECI, which was often torched by the mainstream media, his new effort is gaining the same kind of sympathetic coverage in The New York Times that the left wing lobby J Street — ECI's principal antagonist during its most active period — usually receives.

Everybody has a right to change their minds, and Trump's often-vile public discourse has made him too heavy a lift for many. That's especially true for those who were once in the center ring of the political circus and now find themselves on the outs.

Though liberal outlets like the Times are pumping as much life into the Never Trump idea as they can, it's primarily a media story rather than a mass movement. The country may be badly split about Trump, but among Republicans, he has the highest favorability ratings of any modern GOP president, even in the midst of a pandemic, with Gallup showing him with a staggering 92% approval rating among Republicans.

It's likely that this also holds true for the minority of Jews who have backed the GOP. The explanation for this is simple: Trump has delivered on policy on Israel and issues that conservatives care about across the board.

But the point to ask about the journey from

the Emergency Committee for Israel to "Republican Voters Against Trump" is not how many people are coming along with Kristol. Rather, it's what we should think about the fact that some of the same people who were claiming that Obama was a threat to Israel now wish to replace Trump — who, his faults notwithstanding, is easily the pro-Israel president in US history — with a leading member of the same Obama administration in Biden.

In recent weeks, Biden has said that he won't move the US embassy back to Tel Aviv

will damage Israel and put forward claims that the president is undermining bipartisan support for the Jewish state, even though the same arguments were used against ECI's efforts to oppose Obama.

Kristol didn't respond to my request for comment, but one member of the ECI board did speak to me. Gary Bauer, a conservative Christian who is chairman of American Values Action said he regarded the mission of the Emergency Committee as an important one, and is surprised that some of those associated with the group have



Former US President Barack Obama. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

from Jerusalem. But he's also made it clear that he intends to revive the same failed policies of pressure on Israel to make concessions to the Palestinians and will adamantly oppose the stances of the government of Israel.

Biden has a long history of seeking to dictate to Israel and thinking he knows better than the Jewish state's elected leaders when it comes to its security. That stretches from confrontations with Menachem Begin to those with current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Indeed, it was during a Biden visit to Jerusalem in 2010 that the Obama administration ginned up a dispute with Israel over the right of Jews to build in their ancient capital that helped motivate Kristol and his friends to found the ECI.

Just as important, Biden has pledged to reenter the Iran nuclear deal that he loyally supported during a debate when the ECI was correctly denouncing it as an act of appeasement of a genocidal Islamist regime.

It's hard to fathom how people who were telling us that stopping the same policies that Biden will revive was a matter of life and death are now shrugging their shoulders about them. Indeed, at a conference earlier this year, many of the same people who embraced the ECI were rationalizing voting for Bernie Sanders if he won the Democratic nomination, even though he is even more hostile to Israel and every principle these former conservatives once held sacred.

Some claim that the association with Trump

now taken the position that standing with Israel is no longer a priority.

"It will be especially damaging to Israel to go back to dealing with an administration that is soft on Iran," said Bauer. "I don't see how that comes out in a way that adds to the security of Israel." Referring to Biden's embrace of J Street, Bauer said, "If J Street supports you, you ain't pro-Israel."

While acknowledging the criticisms of Trump, Bauer said he is "flabbergasted" that people who once stood with him in opposition to Obama's policies are now seeking to bring them back. Citing all the issues on which Trump has governed as a conservative, as well as his historic stand on Israel, he said, "If somebody would throw that overboard because they don't like the president's tweets, I have a hard time seeing that as a rational way to look at the choices in American politics."

It's understandable that the overwhelming majority of Jews who are politically liberal and believed in Obama's policies would wish to oust Trump and replace him with Biden. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to treat as credible those who previously assured us that the Obama policies that Biden loyally supported were a threat to Israel's existence, but now say they don't matter. If Obama's policies were an "emergency" in 2015, what do you call the prospect of their revival in 2020?

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS-Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter @jonathans_tobin.

Legals.

LEGAL NOTICE



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Despite Coronavirus, BDS Debate Continues on Campus and Elsewhere



ALEXANDER JOFFE
NEW YORK

The academic year ended with colleges and universities locked down due to the coronavirus pandemic. The impact on BDS activities, especially Israeli Apartheid Week and Nakba Day, was significant — but incidents continued.

In an unusual case at George Washington University, an avowed BDS advocate, Ilana Feldman, was appointed interim dean at the Elliott School of International Affairs. Feldman, a Middle East specialist, was a leading supporter of a BDS initiative in the American Anthropological Association.

Pro-Israel students and groups including Hillel International immediately opposed Feldman's appointment and called for her removal, while the college's J Street U chapter supported it. Some commentators noted that calls for her removal mirrored those from BDS supporters regarding pro-Israel advocates, and suggested she would not be in a position to impose her views on the faculty. Others claim this ignores the chilling effect on speech and behavior that her appointment implied, as well as the potential means at her disposal to discriminate against pro-Israel students.

In a statement, however, the university responded that it officially opposed BDS and that Feldman would adhere to all existing policies. It also added that Feldman would not be a candidate for the permanent position of dean.

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In spite of the lockdown, a variety of BDS and other antisemitic incidents took place, including in student governments. At Stanford University, a student government member apologized for social media postings attacking Israel and supporting BDS, but claimed they were "taken out of context." The student government at the University of California at Irvine also repealed a 2012 BDS resolution. This prompted bitter complaints from the local Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) chapter. The student government at Santa Monica College passed a resolution expressing "solidarity" with Jewish students, but after debate, declined to endorse the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

A number of SJP chapters have also rebranded Israeli Apartheid Week as Palestine Awareness Week, while presenting the same anti-Israel and antisemitic content. Antisemitic social media postings were also noted from various SJP chapters, such as at Cornell University, while the chapter at Occidental College complained bitterly regarding criticism of its posts. Traditional antisemitism was also well represented with the vandalizing of the Ohio University Hillel House and a commons room at Middlebury College.

Fallout continued at Tufts University, where the local SJP chapter was given a "Collaboration Award" by the Office of Campus Life in April, only to be disavowed by higher levels of the administration. The university's president rejected the award — and said it never should have happened.

A similar situation, where a semi- or unaccountable academic entity endorsed BDS, occurred as the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) gave an award to Rabab Ibrahim Abdulhadi of San Francisco State University (SFSU). Abdulhadi is best known for saying that Zionists were not welcome on the SFSU campus, and for feuding angrily with the university administration over her views.

The AAUP endorsed her, saying that as "director of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies Program she brings together scholars, activists, academics, and organizers to create justice-centered knowledge, build broad-based coalitions, and advance the agenda for social change in Palestine, the United States, and internationally. Her leadership transcends the division between scholarship and activism that encumbers traditional university life."

In another example of the BDS movement claiming special rights, in this case by alleging government favoritism toward a "Zionist group," the BDS



The campus of George Washington University. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

lawfare group Palestine Legal has filed a complaint with the Department of Education's Inspector General against Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Kenneth Marcus. The complaint alleges that Marcus "deviated from established Department of Education policies and practices to carry out his career agenda of shutting down campus advocacy for Palestinian rights" by reopening a case at Rutgers University regarding an event that created a hostile environment for Jewish students.

The complaint alleges the re-investigation creates a "chilling effect" and, further, that Marcus' advocacy of the IHRA's "distorted definition [of antisemitism] can encompass virtually all criticism of Israel, inviting the government to unconstitutionally censor advocacy for Palestinian freedom and equality in violation of the First Amendment."

Several BDS support groups co-signed the complaint, including the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

In other legal news, the far left National Lawyers Guild (NLG) settled a lawsuit with an Israeli organization that had unsuccessfully sought to place an ad in the NLG's annual dinner journal. The NLG had refused the ad on the basis of a resolution that prohibited it from doing business with Israeli organizations. The NLG was then sued for discrimination under New York State's human rights statutes. As part of the settlement, the NLG will display an ad from the Israeli organization on its website indefinitely, and issue guidelines regarding non-discrimination to all its chapters.

BDS continued to develop in the political and international spheres. Israeli plans to extend sovereignty or "annex" parts of the West Bank have raised the threat of government sanctions from leaders of European states and the European Union (EU). Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, stated that the EU would work to "discourage" Israeli annexation, while reports indicate Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Ireland, and Luxembourg could support sanctions against Israel. The threat of these unspecified sanctions comes in the context of longstanding EU and more recently UN efforts to blacklist companies and individuals doing business across the "Green Line."

Opposition to calls for EU sanctions on Israel (which must be adopted unanimously) came

from Austria and Hungary, whose leaders called on Israel and the Palestinians to resume negotiations. But the Czech government, normally favorable to Israel, has been split on the issue. More interestingly, "annexation" has also split the Jewish communities in Britain and the US. Members of the UK Labour Party have also called for possible sanctions.

US Democrats, including senators normally favorable to Israel, have denounced the idea, while Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden warned against "annexation" stating that it would "choke off any hope of peace." At the same time, the Biden campaign released a statement aimed at the Jewish community, touting his "solidarity with Israel, combating antisemitism, and fighting for social justice pillars of his decades-long career in public service," and condemned "the BDS movement, which singles out Israel — home to millions of Jews — and too often veers into antisemitism, while letting Palestinians off the hook for their choices." The statement enraged the BDS movement.

For the Trump administration's part, the State Department announced the appointment of David Peyman as Assistant Special Envoy for Eurasian Affairs and Strategic Projects in the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism. Peyman's responsibilities include "certain strategic projects, including the global Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel."

Finally, in the cultural sphere, there has been backlash against the Whitney Museum of Art for its capitulation to BDS-related demands. The institution is accused of orchestrating the resignation of a board member, Warren Kanders, the owner of a company that makes non-lethal equipment for law enforcement and security forces including the US and Israeli militaries. A radical anti-capitalist group, Decolonize This Place, led by a Palestinian-American activist, demanded the museum remove Kanders, a noted art collector and philanthropist, from its board.

Kanders was forced to resign. This has now prompted a legal effort to remove the museum's tax exempt status with the IRS. Pro-BDS sources responded by attacking the lawsuit and alleging "anti-Palestinian bias."

Dr. Alex Joffe is an archaeologist and historian specializing in the Middle East and contemporary international affairs. A version of this article was originally published by SPME.

Tradition.

The Blessing of Love



JONATHAN SACKS
LONDON

I confess to a thrill every time I read these words:

Tell Aaron and his sons, "This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

"May the Lord bless you and protect you.

May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord turn His face toward you and grant you peace."



Let them put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them. (Numbers 6:23-27)

These are among the oldest continuously-used words of blessing ever. We recite them daily at the beginning of the morning service. Some say them last thing at night. We use them to bless our children on Friday nights. They are often used to bless the bride and groom at weddings. They are widely used by non-Jews also. Their simplicity, their cumulative three-word, five-word, seven-word structure, their ascending movement from protection to grace to peace, all make them a miniature gem of prayer whose radiance has not diminished in the more than three thousand years since their formulation.

In previous years I have written about the meaning of the blessings. This time I ask three different questions: First, why Priests? Why not Prophets, Kings, Sages or saints?

Second, why the unique form of the *birkat ha-mitzvah*, the blessing made by the Priests over the commandment to bless the people? The blessing is, "who has sanctified us with the sanctity of Aaron and commanded us to bless His people *with love*." No other blessing over a command specifies that it be done with love.

There is an argument in the Talmud as to whether commands must be performed with the proper intent, *kavannah*, or whether the deed itself is enough. But intent is different from motive. Intent merely means that I am performing the command because it is a command. I am acting consciously, knowingly,

deliberately, in obedience to the Divine will. It has nothing to do with an emotion like love. Why does this command and no other require love?

Third, why have human beings bless the people at all? It is God who blesses humanity and His people Israel. He needs no human intermediary. Our passage says just this: "Let them put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them." The blessings come not from the Priests but from God Himself. So why require the Priests to "put His name" on the people?

In answer to the first, *Sefer ha-Hinnuch* says simply that the

Priests were the sacred group within the people. They ministered in the House of God. They spent their lives in Divine service. Their life's work was sacred. So was their habitat. They were the guardians of holiness. They were therefore the obvious choice for the sacred rite of bringing down God's blessings upon the people.

Rabbi Aharon Walkin, in the preface to his *Matsa Aharon*, offered a more prosaic explanation. The Priests had no share in the land. Their sole income was from the *mattenot kehunah*, the gifts of the Priests, that was their due from the people as a whole. It followed that they had an interest in the people prospering, because then they, too, would prosper. They would bless the people with a full heart, seeking their good, because they would benefit thereby.

Rabbi Avraham Gafni offered a third explanation. We read that on the consecration of the Tabernacle, "Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them" (Lev. 9:22). Rashi says that the blessing he gave the people on that occasion was indeed the priestly blessing as specified in our parsha. However, Ramban suggests that perhaps Aaron's blessing was spontaneous, and because he showed such generosity of spirit, he was given by God the reward that it would be his descendants who would bless Israel in future.

What then about the reference in the blessing to love? There are two different interpretations: that the reference is to the Priests, or that the reference is to God.

The second reverses the word order of the blessing and reads it not as "who commanded us to bless His people with love," but rather, "who in love commanded us to bless His people." The blessing speaks of God's love, not that of the Priests. Because God loves His people, He commands the Priests to bless them.

The first reading, grammatically more plausible, is that it is the Priests who must love. This is the basis of the statement in the Zohar that "a Priest who does not love the people, or a Priest who is not loved by the people, may not bless." We can only bless what we love. Recall how the blind and aged Isaac said to Esau, "Prepare me the tasty food that I love and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die" (Gen. 27:4). Whether it was the food that Isaac loved, or what it represented about Esau's character – that he cared enough for his father to find him the food he liked – Isaac needed the presence of love to be able to make the blessing.

Why then does the blessing for this mitzvah and no other specify that it must be done with love? Because in every other case it is the agent who performs the *ma'aseh mitzvah*, the act that constitutes the command. Uniquely in the case of the priestly blessings, the Priest is merely a *machshir mitzvah* – an enabler, not a doer. The doer is God Himself: "Let them place My name on the children of Israel and I will bless them." The Kohanim are merely channels through which God's blessings flow.

This means that they must be selfless while uttering the blessings. We let God into the world and ourselves to the degree that we forget ourselves and focus on others. That is what love is. We see this in the passage in which Jacob, having fallen in love with Rachel, agrees to Laban's terms: seven years of work. We read: "So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her" (Gen. 29:20). The commentators ask the obvious question: precisely because he was so much in love, the seven years should have felt like a century. The answer is equally obvious: he was thinking of her, not him. There was nothing selfish in his love. He was focused on her presence, not his impatient desire.

There is, though, perhaps an alternative explanation for all these things. As I explained in *Covenant and Conversation Acharei Mot – Kedoshim*, the ethic of character.

The key text of the holiness ethic is Leviticus 19: "Be holy for I, the Lord your God, am holy." It is this chapter that teaches the two great commands of interpersonal love, of the neighbour and the stranger. *The ethic of holiness, taught by the Priests, is the ethic of love*. This surely is the basis of Hillel's statement, "Be like the disciples of Aaron, loving peace, pursuing peace, loving people and bringing them close to Torah."

That ethic belongs to the specific vision of the Priest, set out in Genesis 1, which sees the world as God's work and the human person as God's image. Our very

existence, and the existence of the universe, are the result of God's love.

By blessing the people, the Priests showed them what love of one's fellow is. Here is Rambam's definition of what it is to 'love your neighbour as yourself': "One should speak in praise of his neighbour, and be considerate of his money, even as he is considerate of his own money, or desires to preserve his own honour." Blessing the people showed that you sought their good – and seeking their good is what loving them means.

Thus the Kohanim set an example to the people by this public display of love – or what we would call today "the common good." They thus encouraged a society in which each sought the welfare of all – and such a society is blessed, because the bonds between its members are strong, and because people put the interests of the nation as a whole before their own private advantage. Such a society is blessed by God, whereas a selfish society is not, and cannot, be blessed by God. No selfish society has survived for long.

Hence our answers to the questions: why the Kohanim? Because their ethic emphasised love – of neighbour and stranger – and we need love before we can bless. Love is mentioned in the blessing over the commandment, because love is how blessings enter the world. And why have human beings bestow the blessing, instead of God doing so Himself? Because the Kohanim were to be role models of what it is for humans to care for the welfare of others. I believe that Birkat Kohanim contains a vital message for us today: A society whose members seek one another's welfare is holy, and blessed.

Shabbat Shalom

**Continued from Page A2
Second Thoughts**

fundamentally evil and nationalism leads straight to fascism – that the independence of the European nation state had to be obliterated.

That's another reason why the EU is so hostile towards Israel, the paradigm nation state that has such a strong cultural and national identity – and, worse still for an EU that has a neuralgic aversion to military action, whose people are prepared to fight and die to defend their nation.

This is precisely why the former communist states, which are so anxious to retain their newly won independence and freedoms, identify so strongly with Israel and feel such an affinity for it.

Some other countries which similarly have been experiencing a resurgence of national spirit share this affinity.

Last February, six European member states, including Italy, Hungary, Austria, and the Czech Republic, successfully thwarted the EU's proposed condemnation of the Trump "peace plan." EU foreign-policy declarations must have the agreement of all 27 member states.

Some of the hostile measures being considered over "annexation," however, do not require

unanimous consent. Nevertheless, does the EU really think it's still in its interest to pursue this vendetta?

It's been reported that the EU Commission is considering proposals to include Israel in a series of funding and cooperation projects on education and science with high academic and research significance.

And there are signs that the EU is hesitating over its punishment of Israel. Earlier this month, after the EU Foreign Affairs Council discussed its response to Israel's sovereignty move, its High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, was cautious in his language.

The issue, he said, was complex, as were sanctions against Israel. Although some member states wanted to consider how to prevent "annexation," "that doesn't mean we'll do it tomorrow."

Moreover, asked whether Israel's proposed action was similar to Russia's annexation of Crimea, he said there was a difference between annexing territory that belongs to a sovereign state and that of the Palestinians.

Quite so. And coming from an EU official, such a statement of the obvious is a significant step away from its customary knee-jerk legal legerdemain.

It would hardly be surprising if the EU is now recalibrating just where its interests lie. Support for the Palestinians in the Arab world has collapsed; Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states badly need Israel and the United States to defeat Iran.

The only support for the Palestinian cause now comes from an alliance of Western liberals, Iran, and other rogue states and tyrannies. Is that really an alliance of which the EU can be proud?

Taking punitive action against Israel would also expose it to the wrath of US President Donald Trump. And all this against the background of the catastrophic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which threatens to hammer the final nail in the coffin of European economic health and may even accelerate the disintegration of the EU altogether.

If Israel with its stellar scientific record were to come up with either a vaccine or an effective antidote to the coronavirus, would the EU really want to jeopardize its own ability to benefit from this?

At the moment, though, the widespread fury over the proposed extension of Israeli sovereignty constitutes merely shadow-boxing. No one even knows the precise details of the territories involved because it seems these have not yet achieved final agreement.

If and when this does eventually turn into a concrete proposal, the European Union and the United Kingdom will finally have to decide how to react. And at that point, we will discover whether or not the unthinkable has actually happened and the world really has changed.

Melanie Phillips, a British journalist, broadcaster, and author, writes a weekly column for JNS. Her work can be found at www.melaniephillips.com.

Social.



Jeremy Piven participating in a Zoom call with other comics organized by Creative Community for Peace. Photo: Screenshot.

Jeremy Piven on Performing Stand-Up Comedy in Israel: 'It Was the Best Set I Ever Had'

BY SHIRYN GHERMEZIAN

Jewish American comic and actor Jeremy Piven performed his best stand-up act ever when he was in Israel last year, he said on Wednesday.

The "Entourage" star participated in a panel of comedians who discussed their past trips to the Jewish state and the comedy industry in a Zoom call and Facebook Live event organized by the non-profit group Creative Community for Peace.

Piven traveled to Israel for the first time in 2016 on a trip sponsored by the Omri Casspi Foundation. He was part of a delegation of NBA players and celebrities and during the trip he had his "second bar mitzvah" celebration in Jerusalem.

He went back to Israel in 2019 and performed as a stand-up comic. He said on Wednesday about the experience, "It was the best set I ever. I'm not just saying that. I don't know what it was...for some reason it kind of felt really incredible, and I had a great time and so did

they [the audience]."

He added, "I think because they are so incredibly present, and they're dealing with danger on another level, as an audience I've never seen an audience that was more present than that."

Piven — who currently does over 200 stand-up shows a year — also cited Jewish-American comedian and actor Elan Gold as a mentor.

Piven additionally elaborated on his bar mitzvah at the age of 13, which he said took place in a church. He explained that he was comfortable being on stage during his Torah reading, but that his Hebrew was "viciously mediocre."

Regarding his "second bar mitzvah" in Jerusalem in 2016, he said it "was the greatest time of my life."

He added, "it was incredible to also share this experience to all these pro athletes that had never been to a bar mitzvah. They were using the yarmulkes as frisbees, no one knew what to do with them."

record-breaking 13 Emmy Awards in a single year. His many other credits include "Anne Frank: The Whole Story" for ABC, which he received an Emmy nomination for.

"Bibi" will be the first TV series about the life of Israel's longest-serving prime minister, who has been in office since 2009.

The show is being produced by the Tel Aviv-based TV production company Abot Hameiri, most popularly known for producing the Israeli series "Shtisel." It will be based on Israeli journalist Ben Caspit's best-selling biography The Netanyahu Years.

"Benjamin Netanyahu is one of the most complex figures in modern history," said Ellis. "His is a life lived on a Shakespearean scale. Ben Caspit's



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stands next to his wife Sara as he waves to supporters following the announcement of exit polls in Israel's election at his Likud party headquarters in Tel Aviv, Israel, March 3, 2020. Photo: REUTERS/Amir Cohen.

insightful reporting demonstrates how private life always shapes public affairs, and there's no shortage of conflict — or opinions — when it comes to Benjamin Netanyahu. I'm thrilled and honored to be working with Guy and the entire Abot Hameiri team to bring this story to life."

Abot Hameiri stated that "Bibi" would be "an epic political story with a very big philosophical and psychological undertone," adding, "At the same time, it will be a scandalous family melodrama that explores how the personal can become political, and vice versa."

Guy Hameiri, co-founder of Abot Hameiri, said, "the series is the biggest IP we can deliver out of Israel today to the world, and with Kirk's esteemed catalogue of work, particularly in exploring the lives of high-profile figures, it makes him a perfect addition to this series looking at one of the most influential figures in modern geo-politics."

First TV Series About Benjamin Netanyahu, 'Bibi,' to Be Penned by Emmy-Winning Writer

BY SHIRYN GHERMEZIAN

Two-time Emmy Award-winning screenwriter Kirk Ellis has been signed by the global production and distribution company Fremantle to write the screenplay for the

new TV series "Bibi," based on the political and personal life of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

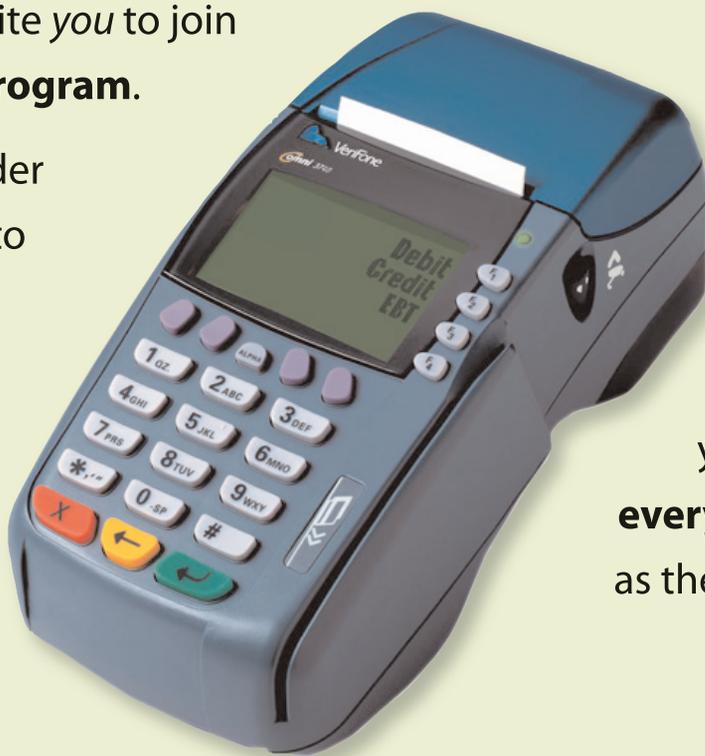
Ellis, also a Writers Guild Award and Humanitas Prize winner, is best known for adapting for HBO David McCullough's biography John Adams, which won a

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