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Torah Campaign and Tribute Honoring the Legacy of HaRav Nota (Nathan) Greenblatt



Rabbi Nathan Greenblatt, z"l

A weeks-long tribute to the life and legacy of Rabbi Nathan Greenblatt – Rav Nota, of blessed memory – will culminate in Memphis on December 3 at Margolin Hebrew Academy, the school he founded and cherished.

The tribute to Rav Nota began on November 20 with a heartfelt memorial event in New York hosted by his son, Rabbi David, and his wife, Debbie. At this dinner, which marked the launch of the Rav Nota Sefer Torah Campaign, guests were invited to inscribe letters in a Torah scroll dedicated in Rabbi Greenblatt's memory. This Torah will soon make its way to Memphis, where it will reside in the Hebrew Academy's Cooper Beit Midrash.

"The Sefer Torah, whose home will be at the MHA, is a tangible symbol of the most important ideals of Rav Nota's life – Torah-based values and education for the next generation. We hope

that this Torah will ensure the ongoing growth and vitality of Torah learning at Margolin Hebrew Academy," says Jonathan Wogan, co-chair of the campaign.

To welcome the Torah to its new home, a *Hachnassat Sefer Torah* – a joyous parade celebration with music and dancing – is planned for December 3 at the school.

"This Sefer Torah symbolizes the teachings that emanated from Memphis and spread across the Jewish world, thanks to Rav Nota," says Rabbi Yosef Braha, director of operations and Rosh Kollel of The Memphis Kollel and a campaign co-chair. "It will stand as a lasting tribute to Rav Nota's lifetime dedication to Torah."

Rabbi Greenblatt arrived in Memphis in 1948 to teach in the Talmud Torah at Baron Hirsch. At 23, he was already a distinguished student of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein and other renowned rabbis, recognized as part of New York's Torah intellectual elite. Yet Rav Nota felt a calling to serve the broader Jewish community.

Within eight months of his arrival, Rabbi Greenblatt opened his fledgling school, the Memphis Hebrew Academy, with 37 students. Each student was personally recruited by Rabbi Greenblatt to attend the day school, a novelty at the time. Despite opposition and many hurdles, Rabbi Greenblatt persevered, teaching classes himself and traveling all over to raise money. And the school



Rav Nota at Margolin Hebrew Academy in 1949.

flourished.

In an interview several years prior to his passing, Rabbi Greenblatt shared the message that fueled his mission. It came from his mentor, Rabbi Dovid Leibowitz, founder of Rabbinical Seminary of America.

"He always told me, 'Nota, if you know where you're going and you are sincere, there's no way in the world you're going to fail. It's impossible.' That's a very strong statement. But you know, he was right. I saw it with my own life."

Rav Nota's influence was not limited to Memphis. Over the course of his life, he became a highly respected *halachic* authority sought out across the United States and beyond. His unparalleled connection to Rabbi Feinstein shaped his approach and solidified his role as a leading authority in Jewish law.

Rabbi Greenblatt traveled extensively, offering guidance to Jewish communities from coast to coast, even in distant countries. Despite his prominence,

(See Greenblatt Page 2)

Seniors and Preschoolers Play BINGO Together at the MJCC



Wednesday, November 20 was a very special day for participating seniors at the MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Daily Luncheon.

They were joined by 19 children from the MJCC Early Childhood Center.

The group – kids and adults – played BINGO together. The grown-ups helped the kids and sometimes the kids helped the grown-ups.

It was a lot of fun for all!

One of the special times was watch-



ing 100-year-old Otto interacting and helping the kids with their BINGO cards.

It was without a doubt one of the most laughter-filled lunch days of the year.

The kids seemed to have as much fun

as the adults. A very competitive group overall.

Prizes were handed out to the winners and others as well. For those that missed it, keep an eye out, because this activity will surely be repeated. **HW**

Bat Mitzvah



Lyla Cenker

Lyla Cenker, daughter of Dovid Cenker and Shoshana Cenker, is grateful to celebrate her bat mitzvah Thanksgiving weekend, November 30, at Baron Hirsch Congregation. Friends and family, including her older twin brothers, Aiden and Kivi, will lead Shacharis and Mussaf, and lein Parshas Toldos plus the HafTorah. Lyla will share a D'var Torah about her parsha after services.

Lyla has been studying Parshas Toldos with two of her aunts, Devorah Katz and Sarah Malka Berkowitz, as well as with Rabbi Ian Lichter and Rabbi Joel

Finkelstein.

A 6th grader at the Margolin Hebrew Academy, Lyla loves summer camp at Ramah Darom, near Atlanta. A natural performer, she enjoys singing, dancing, acting, and all things fashion. She's also super sporty, playing basketball at MHA. A caregiver at heart, Lyla dotes on her furry friends: pups, Memphis and Piper, and cat, Felix.

Lyla has two thoughtful chessed projects. She's been collecting items for the Humane Society of Memphis and Shelby County, which she'll donate the week of Thanksgiving. She's also encouraging donations to the Israeli nonprofit Pantry Packers, which distributes boxes of food to 34,000+ food insecure people throughout the country. The Cenkers volunteered there on our Israel trip this past summer.

The family has received tremendous support and love from the Memphis community and is so thankful to everyone who helped prepare for their special weekend. They're thrilled to have many out-of-town family and friends join in as well.

Lyla is the granddaughter of Michael and Betsy Cenker of Atlanta, Dr. Butch and Pat Yaffe of Memphis, and Dina Romeo and Steve Romeo (OBM) of Memphis.

Mazel Tov! **HW**

Greenblatt...

(Continued From Page 1)

he remained accessible, ready to answer questions or give advice, whether the person asking was a great rabbi or an ordinary Jew in need of direction. His halachic contributions, particularly in areas related to conversion, kashruth, and family purity, continue to shape Jewish law and practice today.

"Given Rav Nota's lifelong commitment to guiding and teaching our generation, we chose to inscribe on the Torah covering a passage from Deuteronomy [32:7] that highlights this idea: *'Ask your father and he will teach you, the elders of your generation and they will instruct you,'*" says Jon Wogan. "Rav Nota was certainly faithful to this directive."

Though Rabbi Greenblatt's name became synonymous with Torah greatness, his personal demeanor was marked by extreme humility. He never sought recognition or honor for himself, yet his quiet leadership earned him deep respect across all strata of Jewish life. Whether he was guiding a local family in Memphis or addressing halachic matters on a national scale, Rabbi Green-

blatt's approach was always characterized by compassion, sensitivity, and an unwavering commitment to truth.

Even in his later years, when many might have slowed down, Rav Nota remained active – traveling, teaching, and advising communities across the country. He was not only a leader in halacha but also a role model in how to live a life of Torah. He was someone who embodied the highest ideals of Torah study, chesed, and service of God.

Rav Nota's passing in 2022 marked the end of an era. Yet his legacy continues to thrive through the institutions he built, the halachic rulings he issued, and the countless individuals whose lives he touched. This Sefer Torah will stand as a tangible symbol of the Torah he spread throughout the world and will provide vital support to the Margolin Hebrew Academy, ensuring that it continues to inspire future generations in the path of Torah.

"Having a Torah housed in the Margolin Hebrew Academy in memory of Rabbi Nathan Greenblatt feels so absolutely appropriate," observes Pace Co-

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Nov. 29, 2024 / 28 Cheshvan, 5785.....4:30 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. Nov. 30, 2024 / 29 Cheshvan, 5785 5:28 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Toldot

per, past president and 35-year-member of the school's executive committee leadership and co-chair of the campaign. "His founding and continued tenacious shepherding of the school was the driving force in the MHA being the anchor of our community today!"

"HaRav Nota Greenblatt, zt'l, understood that the lifeblood of the Jewish people is Toras Emes – authentic Torah – as transmitted through the generations," says Sandy Blockman, co-chair of the campaign. "The Sefer Torah, lovingly dedicated in his memory and supported by our community, will en-

sure the continued vitality of the MHA/FYOS as envisioned by Rav Greenblatt over 75 years ago."

The community is invited to partake in the *Hachnassat Sefer Torah* festivities on December 3. Faculty, students, and guests will congregate at the school at 390 S. White Station from 2 to 4 p.m.

Participation opportunities are available for any who are interested in joining us as we honor the memory and legacy of Rabbi Greenblatt. To participate, visit <https://thechesedfund.com/margolinhebrewacademy/rav-nota-legacy-torah>. **HW**



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Baron Hirsch Synagogue Dec. 4, 2024, SoShuls Luncheon

Suddenly, it is December! And Baron Hirsch SoShuls Luncheon is the place to be on December 4, 2024.

Come enjoy being with friends and celebrate the arrival of winter with food, friends and music at the Baron Hirsch SoShuls Luncheon. The luncheon starts at 12 p.m.

SoShuls Luncheons are for people who are 64 years or older, and the cost for the luncheon is \$5 per person. Luncheon participants do not have to be members of Baron Hirsch Synagogue. Just make a reservation and come enjoy a delicious lunch, listen to live music, and socialize with new and old friends.

Just thinking about December's luncheon menu of salmon croquettes, potato latkes, green beans and ice cream with toppings, will tease your tastebuds! What a good way to welcome winter

and enjoy the glow of Chanukah lights, spinning dreidels and golden gelt!

Robb Zelonky will be there to entertain us, courtesy of Creative Aging, a Memphis non-profit agency that provides artistic talent and opportunities for older adults.

And after lunch, be ready to play an engaging game of Bingo with Alvin Steinberg!

Make your reservations for the luncheon by Monday, December 2, 2024, either by calling 901-683-7485, or by emailing gwen@baronhirsch.org.

The SoShuls Luncheon is sponsored by Elaine Miner.

We look forward to having you with us and bring a friend if you want. Let's begin the season of lights with our celebration, a terrific meal and the sounds of good music. We want to see you there! **HW**

Help Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service Collect 4000 Items in 40 Days!

So far in 2024, Fogelman JFS has distributed 3,526 pantry bags to individuals who are struggling with food insecurity.

In November 2023, Fogelman JFS collected 2,287 items for our Peggy E. & L.R. Jalenak, Jr. Food and Baby Pantry during the annual food drive. That is ALL from community donations! Get involved and help us reach our goal this year as we begin our annual food drive from Thanksgiving to New Years. We are able to provide this service because of generous community donations.

Items needed include pasta and rice, tuna fish, juice, peanut butter, canned

fruits and vegetables, full-sized hygiene items, size 4/5 diapers, cereals and snacks.

Please make sure all items are certified Kosher.

DONATION BUCKETS CAN BE FOUND AT:

- MJCC Main Entrance
- MJCC's Early Childhood Center
- Bornblum Jewish Community School
- Margolin Hebrew Academy

To learn more about Fogelman Jewish Family Service programs, please call 901-767-8511. **HW**

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

Lunch is Monday–Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m. Monthly Luncheon is at noon.

Monday, December 2 Special Art Project

Aubrey Overstreet with Mid-South Hobbies brings neat art projects that the group can put together with everyone doing their own project. The last project we did was a flowerpot with a flower that was colored and assembled that afternoon. Everyone enjoyed it and those that did not finish it took it home to finish. This time we will be making a Snowflake Garland. There is no charge for the individual art project. Come have a good time with others and a nice lunch as well.

Wednesday, December 4 Field Trip: Baron Hirsch SoShuls Luncheon

MJCC Seniors will join Baron Hirsch for their SoShuls Senior Luncheon. The bus trip is only \$2 roundtrip from MJCC. The Luncheon cost is only \$5 payable to Baron Hirsch. The entertainment [provided by Creative Aging] is Robb 'Robbo' Zelonky. Robb has performed for senior communities ever since he was a child, accompanying his parents in the Chicago-Land area. For the past 45 years, he has performed for seniors all across America, specializing in an array of popular American folk songs, 50s and 60s classic rock, and even Hebrew and Yiddish favorites.

Reservations for the bus trip can be made by calling the front desk at the MJCC, 901-761-0810.

Reservations for the Luncheon can be made by calling Baron Hirsch at 901-683-7485 or the MJCC front desk. Please tell the front desk if you made the Baron Hirsch reservation directly.

Monday, December 9 Field Trip: Tour Young Israel

The Tour will be led by Rabbi Akiva Males. Young Israel moved into its new building in August of 2021. The Young Israel of Memphis is a Traditional Orthodox Shul with a vision focused on spiritual growth, a commitment to learning, a dedication to davening, and a desire for a warm and supportive community, based on Torah values. Rabbi Akiva Males grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and received his Jewish education at the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, the Wisconsin Institute for Torah Study (W.I.T.S.), and Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim (Rabbinical Seminary of America) based in Queens, N.Y. – where he received his Semicha. Rabbi Akiva and Layla Males relocated to Memphis in the summer of 2016, and they are thrilled to be part of the Young Israel of Memphis family. Reservations are needed for the tour and the preceding lunch. Please come join us.

Wednesday, December 11 Field Trip: Tour Town Village Audubon Park

With the day-to-day freedom to come and go and the convenience of any number of activities to choose from, independent living at Town Village Audubon Park is a perfect fit for an active, healthy lifestyle. Enjoy restaurant-quality dining and weekly social gatherings and feel empowered to explore personal interests. The tour will be led by Daniel Lund, sales and marketing director. Call 901-761-0810 for required reservations, as the MJCC bus has limited seating. Refreshments will be served.

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. Steve works Monday thru Thursday 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. **HW**

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IAF Intercepts Gaza Rocket Fired at Kerem Shalom

(JNS) – The Israeli Air Force intercepted a rocket launched from the southern Gaza Strip that triggered sirens in the border community of Kerem Shalom last Thursday morning, the military said.

The kibbutz is located at the Gaza-Israel-Egypt border near the crossing of the same name.

Hamas rocket fire has significantly decreased since the early days of the war as combined aerial and ground attacks have degraded the terror group's capabilities. However, terrorists are still capable of occasionally launching projectiles at Israeli territory.

A rocket fired from Gaza set off air-raid sirens in Kibbutz Erez on Nov. 13, hitting an open area. No injuries were reported in that incident.

The community is located less than a mile from the Strip's northern border and is the namesake of the Erez Crossing to Gaza. **HW**

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Your Health

Stay Healthy this Flu Season: Tips to Prevent and Manage the Flu

By Cindy Katz, DNP

Flu Season and Holiday Gatherings

The flu spreads rapidly during the holiday season as families and friends come together. This winter, clinics are seeing an influx of patients with classic flu symptoms, including fever, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, runny nose and cough. Many describe the flu as feeling like they've been "hit by a truck."

How Does the Flu Spread?

The flu virus spreads primarily through respiratory droplets released when an infected person sneezes or coughs. These droplets can transmit the virus through direct contact or by touching contaminated surfaces.

Incubation Period: Symptoms typically appear 1 to 4 days after exposure.

Preventing the Flu

The best way to reduce your risk of getting the flu is by taking proactive measures:

1. Get Vaccinated:

- The flu vaccine is recommended annually and is most effective when received early beginning in September and as late as March.

- Allow two weeks for immunity to develop.

2. Practice Good Hygiene:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Avoid close contact with individuals showing flu-like symptoms.

3. Seek Timely Testing:

- If you suspect flu, visit your healthcare provider for testing.

- Tests for flu, COVID-19, and strep throat help determine the appropriate treatment.

What to Do If You Have the Flu

- Stay Home:** You're contagious during the early days of symptoms. Avoid spreading the infection by staying home until you're fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication.

- Rest and Recover:** Drink plenty of fluids and get ample rest.

- Consider Antiviral Treatment:** Consult your healthcare provider to see if antiviral medication is appropriate, especially if you're at risk for complications.

- Soothe Symptoms:** A teaspoon of honey can help reduce coughing in adults and older children.

Who Is at Higher Risk?

Certain groups are more vulnerable to severe flu complications:

- Adults aged 65 and older.
- People with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart disease.
- Individuals with weakened immune systems.
- Pregnant individuals.
- Children under 5, particularly infants younger than six months.

When to Seek Medical Care

If you experience any of the following, contact a healthcare provider:

- Shortness of breath or chest pain.
- A fever or cough that improves but then worsens.
- Severe weakness or lethargy.
- Difficulty urinating.

Stay Healthy Year-Round

Support your immune system by staying current on preventive care, eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly and getting sufficient sleep.

By taking these precautions, you can enjoy a healthy and safe flu season. **HW**

Phil Lesh, Grateful Dead Bassist Who Hosted Musical Passover Seders, Dies at 84



Phil Lesh lights the candles as Jeannette Ferber, a cantorial soloist at Berkeley's Renewal congregation Chochmat HaLev, sings the blessing, and guitarist Ross James looks on. ©Bob Minkin Photography / www.minkinphotography.com

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Among the legions of Grateful Dead fans mourning Phil Lesh are a small but devoted cohort of Jewish Deadheads with memories of celebrating Passover with him.

"To life! To Phil! Our love will not fade away! Eternally grateful," the Jewish vocalist Jeannette Ferber posted on Facebook, alongside a picture showing herself with Lesh at a seder.

Lesh, the legendary jam band's bassist, died Friday at 84. His Instagram account, which announced his death without specifying a cause, said Lesh was "surrounded by his family and full of love" and "leaves behind a legacy of music of love."

That legacy includes facilitating musical Jewish holiday celebrations at Terrapin Crossroads, a restaurant and music venue that he operated with his wife in San Rafael, California, from 2011 until 2021. Lesh was not Jewish, but he was long aware of the large number of Jewish fans among the Grateful Dead's devoted following and sought to create space for them in the community-oriented venue.

"We want to honor all traditions of our fans – as what is community without its traditions and world view?" he told "J. The Jewish News of Northern California" in 2014, the year of the first seder. After the Passover meal, which featured dessert donated by a deli owner and Deadhead, Lesh's Terrapin Family Band played a two-hour set including covers of the spiritual "Go Down Moses" and Bob Marley's "Exodus."

Ferber, then the cantorial soloist at the Berkeley, California, Renewal congregation Chochmat HaLev, led most of the seder, kicking off a recurring event that always ended with an extended set featuring Lesh and regularly sold out.

"This is my family, and who I spend the most time with, so it makes sense that this is how I'd spend my Passover," Brian Markovitz, who ran the deadheadland website as well as the Facebook group Jews for Jerry, told the Jewish

Telegraphic Agency in 2016. "It's so great that Phil recognizes that."

The seders drew on Lesh's longtime ties to Jews and Jewish culture. Born in Berkeley in 1940, he was devoted to music from an early age and learned to play bass after being recruited by Jerry Garcia in 1964 to join a band that would become the Grateful Dead. The band's big break came after the famed rock promoter Bill Graham, a child refugee from the Nazis whose mother was murdered at Auschwitz, booked a gig at the Fillmore San Francisco. Its members – including one Jew, Mickey Hart – continued to play together until Garcia's death in 1995. Afterwards, Lesh performed with his own group, Phil Lesh and Friends.

Jewish affinity for the Grateful Dead has bordered on the religious, with Jewish Deadheads holding prayer and music retreats around the country. "Jews and the Dead relate in that we both wander," a Deadhead from Jerusalem told JTA during a 2012 retreat at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in Connecticut. (A contemporary successor to the Grateful Dead, Phish, is similarly entwined with Jewish cultural and religious identity, according to a recent scholarly book; Lesh performed with his former Grateful Dead bandmates for the last time in a joint concert with Phish.) The fan group behind the seders has continued coming together for holidays, including most recently for a Sukkot concert. For Lesh, who is survived by his wife and two sons, the seders were meaningful events that he returned to even when he was no longer needed to host.

"Who knew you could have so much fun at a seder?" he asked at the first seder in 2014. "Words fail me."

In 2020, with Terrapin Crossroads closed because of the pandemic, he joined a group of diehards at a virtual seder. "I wouldn't miss this for anything," he said. **HW**

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Stefanik Vows to Fight Jew-Hatred at United Nations



Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.) poses with an award she won from the Endowment for Middle East Truth with EMET president Sarah Stern and board chair David Green, Washington, Nov. 19, 2024. Credit: EMET

By Andrew Bernard

(JNS) – Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.) vowed to fight Jew-hatred at the United Nations last Tuesday in one of her first public addresses since being named by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump as his choice to be the U.S. ambassador to the global body.

Speaking at the Endowment for Middle East Truth’s annual awards dinner in Washington, Stefanik, the chair of the House Republican Conference, called the United Nations a “den of antisemitism.”

“Even before the barbaric terrorist attacks by Hamas on Oct. 7, the U.N. has continuously betrayed Israel and betrayed America, acting as an apologist

for Iran and their terrorist proxies,” Stefanik told attendees.

“You have my commitment, as I have led this fight in Congress against vile antisemitism, I will stand up for President Trump’s America-first, peace-through-strength policies and bring moral truth and crystal clear moral clarity at the United Nations on day one,” she added.

Stefanik touted her record confronting university presidents about campus Jew-hatred on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and said that she would bring renewed focus to securing the release of the hostages that Hamas holds in Gaza.

“There are still over 100 hostages, in-

cluding seven Americans, being held by Hamas,” she said. “We must not stop, and we will not stop, until every hostage is brought home.”

EMET honored Stefanik with its Speaker of Truth Award for her advocacy for Israel and the Jewish people.

Another honoree, Rep. Jared Moskowitz (D-Fla.), called on Democrats and Republicans to condemn antisemitism within their own parties.

“I don’t need Republicans to call out Democrats, and I don’t need Democrats to call out Republicans. That’s easy. That takes no courage,” the Jewish congressman said. “It’s much harder to do it when it’s within your own tent, when it’s within your own party. I want to see Republicans call out Tucker Carlson when he has a Holocaust denier on.

“Democrats have to call out the dozens of people that are in our party and the people that are in the streets and the people that are on Twitter treating us like second-class and third-class citizens,” Moskowitz said. “Students who are walking to class, who nobody knows if they support the war or support Netanyahu, but they have a Jewish star around their neck and are assaulted.

“Does anyone actually believe if that wasn’t a Jewish student, but it was a minority student, that any of this stuff would have gone past lunch on the first day?” he said. “You can be sure if it was a minority student or an LGBTQ student, my party would have led the effort, and they didn’t.”

Moskowitz told JNS after his speech that combating Jew-hatred and supporting Israel needs to remain a bipartisan focus.

“On this issue, on antisemitism and Israel, we have to come together, because we can’t fight amongst ourselves while we’re the target,” he told JNS.

Moskowitz added that he was not concerned about the Biden administration making anti-Israel moves in the closing days of the administration, as the Obama administration did when it allowed the passage of Security Council Resolution 2334 in December 2016.

“It’s not going to matter. I[t]’ll be undone in two months,” he said, referring to Trump’s impending inauguration.

“It’s a mistake if they do that, because I think they’ve had a really good record on this,” Moskowitz said. “If it’s announced all of a sudden to sully that record – which I don’t think they’re going to do, I don’t think that’s what Joe Biden’s going to want as a proud Zionist – if there are things that happen in the next couple of months on this issue, they’ll be undone.”

The United States vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution last Wednesday that would have called for an immediate Israeli ceasefire, because the resolution did not directly condition the halt in hostilities on the release of hostages.

All of the 14 other members of the Security Council voted in favor of the resolution. **HW**



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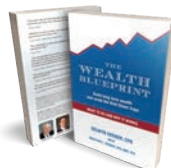


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Massachusetts Man Pleads Guilty to Blocking FBI Probe of Arson Attacks on Boston-Area Jewish Sites

(JNS) – Alexander Giannakakis, 37, pleaded guilty last Monday to hiding information and otherwise tampering with a federal investigation of his now-deceased brother, who set fires at four Massachusetts synagogues and assisted living homes.

Giannakakis, who was extradited from Sweden, is slated to be sentenced on March 11, 2025. He faces up to 60 years in prison for the combined three counts, and three years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine.

“This defendant obstructed justice about hate crimes directed at Jewish people living in greater Boston,” stated Joshua Levy, acting U.S. attorney for the District of Massachusetts. “These attempted arsons at Jewish houses of worship and senior living facilities sent ripples of fear throughout the region.

“We must be vigilant in holding accountable every single person who engages in or facilitates acts of hate like this,” Levy added. “Alexander Giannakakis chose to destroy evidence and conceal these hate crimes and for deciding to stand on the side of acts of vile antisemitism, he now stands convicted and awaiting sentencing.”

The defendant’s younger brother, whom the Justice Department did not name, was the main suspect in a February 2020 probe of four May 2019 fires set in the Boston area – two at a Chabad Center in Arlington, one at a Needham Chabad and the fourth and at a Jewish business in Chelsea.

“At the time Giannakakis’s brother was identified as a suspect, he was hospitalized in a coma,” per the Justice Department. “He remained in a coma until his death later that year.” Shortly after his brother became a suspect, Giannakakis traveled to Sweden and took his brother’s documents and electronic devices, the Justice Department said.

“When Giannakakis returned to the United States in March 2020, he was questioned by investigators and made false and misleading statements. He later concealed and destroyed physical evidence being sought by investigators that implicated his brother in the arsons,” it added. “Within hours of concealing and destroying that evidence, Giannakakis fled the United States for Sweden.”

Swedish authorities arrested him in February 2022.

Jodi Cohen, special agent in charge of the FBI Boston Division, stated that “fire is a dangerous and indiscriminate weapon,” which the FBI believes that “Giannakakis’s brother used to express his hatred for Jewish people four times.”

“By lying to our investigators and trying to obstruct our investigation into his brother, Mr. Giannakakis only made matters worse,” Cohen stated. “If people think there’s no downside to deceiving FBI agents, critical lines of investigation will be compromised, and our justice system stalled. Our Joint Terrorism Task Force can’t afford to be deterred in this way.” **HW**

Welcome Back, Memphis Hadassah!

Hadassah is back! After a dormant period during the COVID pandemic, the Memphis Hadassah chapter has been recharged with new energy, ideas, programs and leadership. Everyone is invited to join.

From social events to social responsibility and service to Memphis, the Jewish community and Israel, Hadassah aims to contribute to a better society. Its mission is to enhance the health and lives of people in Israel, the United States and the world through education, advocacy, youth development, and medical care and research.

“We’re excited to invite Jewish women of all ages to meet new people, build connections, have fun and help with meaningful projects,” says Freda Brode, past president of the Memphis Hadassah chapter and the Southern Region.

“I’m pleased to announce that Ronda Robinson will be Memphis chapter president for 2025. She is supported by an advisory committee of past leaders who provide a wealth of experience, including Barbara Hellman, Emily Steinberg, Elaine Miner and myself.”

Ronda is a Hadassah lifetime member who grew up in Knoxville, lived in Israel and holds dual American-Israeli citizenship. She moved to Memphis from Atlanta, where she worked as a health communication specialist for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A veteran journalist, she freelances for



Ronda Robinson

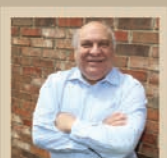
Jewish publications worldwide. Ronda is passionate about serving the Jewish people and the global community. She also loves travel, yoga, swimming, hiking, biking, music and exploring Memphis.

Please email:

hadassahmemphis2025@gmail.com if you’d like to participate in Hadassah or plan programs (mah jongg, health events and more). Help continue the storied legacy of Memphis Hadassah, which has a 100-year history and more than 600 lifetime and chapter members.

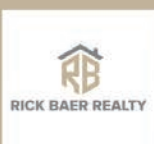
Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, was founded before Israel was a state and before women could vote. With 300,000 members, male Associates and supporters nationwide, Hadassah helps to advance women’s health, support a strong Israel and instill Jewish values in future generations. **HW**

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Christopher Columbus was Genetically Jewish, Spanish Researchers Say



People visit the tomb of Christopher Columbus at the Cathedral of Seville, Oct. 11, 2024, shortly after forensic researchers from the University of Granada said they had confirmed that the bones buried there are in fact Columbus'. Credit: Cristina Quicler/AFP via Getty Images

version or death.

Undisputed is the fact that several members of Columbus' crew were Jewish or prominent Marranos.

The new documentary came on the Spanish national holiday marking Columbus' exploration. It also came on the eve of what was long known as Columbus Day in the United States, the date chosen to commemorate Columbus' arrival on the continent. The date is increasingly known as Indigenous People's Day in honor of the native people whose communities, health and culture were decimated by European expansionism. **HW**

– to the date on which the Alhambra Decree, issued by his sponsors King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in March 1492, went into effect. The decree gave Jews a choice among expulsion, con-

By **Philissa Cramer**

(JTA) – Christopher Columbus was likely Jewish, Spanish researchers have announced in a splashy new documentary aired on Spain's national broadcaster [in October].

According to the documentary, the researchers spent 22 years researching Columbus' national origins before concluding that bones buried in a Seville cathedral are in fact the famed explorer's – and that his DNA suggests that he likely came from a Jewish family.

"We have DNA from Christopher Columbus, very partial, but sufficient. We have DNA from Hernando Colón, his son," the lead researcher, José Antonio Lorente at the University of Granada, said in the documentary, according to Reuters. "And both in the Y chromosome (male) and in the mitochondrial DNA (transmitted by the mother) of Hernando there are traits compatible with Jewish origin."

Whether the findings are accurate may never be known. The forensic scientists have not yet released their raw data, and their report was not peer-reviewed before the documentary aired, a standard in scientific research. A Spanish report says the research will appear in an international scientific journal in the near future.

Researchers who study Columbus say the purported findings are of only limited significance, even if true: DNA evidence would show only Jewish heritage, not identity. And Columbus' own writings express both Christian beliefs and praise for the decree expelling Jews from Spain.

"I encourage people to read his own writings to appreciate his complex identity – he was an autodidact, who took advantage of the explosion of knowledge after the birth of printing to create an eclectic theology that had many Judaic elements – but in a deeply Christian, mystical vein," Ronnie Perelis, a Yeshiva University professor who has written about Sephardic Jews of the era, told the Jewish News Syndicate after the documentary aired. "Genetics doesn't make someone Jewish."

Still, the claims add a sheen of scientific credibility to longtime speculation about Columbus' national origins, which has included repeated arguments that he may have been Jewish.

Ninety years ago, a prominent Spanish historian charged that Columbus was not Italian, as had long been believed, but Spanish, and the son of Marranos, Jews who converted to Christianity to escape the Spanish Inquisition.

More recently, a Georgetown University professor named Estelle Irizarry analyzed Columbus' known writings and concluded that marks on some pages and other quirks suggested that his native tongue could have been Ladino, a Jewish language.

Others have noted the proximity of Columbus' departure – Aug. 3, 1492



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What’s Your Real Return?

*Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments
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**Questions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151 or
 Michael.Stein@WellsFargoAdvisors.com
 fa.wellsfargoadvisors.com/michael-stein**

As an investor, you probably track the return on your investments. But it’s likely that you look at the **nominal return**, which is the percentage increase or decrease in the value of an investment over a given period of time, usually expressed as an annual return. To estimate actual income or growth potential in order to target financial goals — for example, a certain level of retirement income — it’s also important to consider the **real return**, which includes the effects of taxes and inflation.

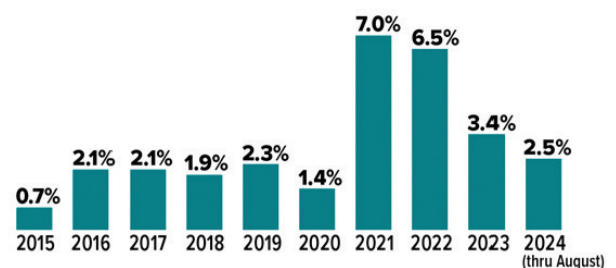
Let’s say you want to purchase a bank-issued certificate of deposit (CD), because you like the lower risk and fixed interest rate that a CD can offer. CD rates rose substantially with the Federal Reserve’s aggressive increases in the federal funds rate but began to decline with the Fed’s first rate cut in September 2024. Just as an example, let’s say you find a CD that offers 5% annual interest. That could be attractive. However, if you’re taxed at the 22% federal income tax rate, 1.1% will be gobbled up by federal income tax on the interest.

That still leaves an interest rate of 3.9%, but you should consider the purchasing power of the interest. After hitting 40-year highs in 2021 and 2022, inflation has slowed and was down to 2.5% as of August 2024 (see chart below). But a 2.5% inflation rate would leave a real return of just 1.4%. And as the Fed lowers the benchmark federal funds rate in response to lower inflation, rates on CDs and other fixed-income investments are likely to decline, reducing the real return on future CD and fixed-income purchases.

This hypothetical example doesn’t represent the performance of any specific investment, but it illustrates the importance of understanding what you’re actually earning after taxes and inflation. In some cases, the lower risk offered by an investment may be appealing enough that you’re willing to accept a low real return. However, pursuing long-term goals such as retirement generally requires having some investments with the potential for higher returns, even if they carry a higher degree of risk.

Eroding Purchasing Power

Annual rate of inflation, based on change in the Consumer Price Index



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024

The FDIC insures CDs and bank savings accounts, which generally provide a fixed rate of return, up to \$250,000 per depositor, per insured institution. All investments are subject to risk, including the possible loss of principal. When sold, investments may be worth more or less than the original cost.

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Former Hamas Hostage Confronts UCLA Protest Leader in Campus Debate



Anti-Israel activist Aiden Doyle (left) and former Hamas captive Moran Stella Yanai at the debate at UCLA. Credit: TCC/X.

By Adi Nirman

(JNS) – A survivor of the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas-led onslaught on Israel delivered powerful testimony about her 54 days in captivity as she faced off with a student protest leader at a campus debate at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The confrontation, captured in a video segment from earlier this year that was released last Monday by The Gr8 Debate and filmed by Trusted Confidential Coverage (TCC), brought together for-

mer hostage Moran Stella Yanai, UCLA encampment leader Aidan Doyle and Mosab Hassan Yousef, son of Hamas co-founder Sheikh Hassan Yousef.

Yanai, who was kidnapped during the terrorist attack on the Supernova music festival, confronted Doyle in an emotional exchange where she detailed the brutal violence she endured after being taken to Gaza.

Doyle, who had previously expressed support for the Oct. 7 attack, avoided

eye contact throughout much of Yanai's testimony.

"We went to dance. We didn't attack," Yanai said of the festival, as Doyle shook his head. "Don't get annoyed. I'm really asking you as a person: Do you support those actions? If you didn't support those actions and Oct. 7, didn't happen, would we sit here, talking right now?"

Doyle replied: "Well yeah, actually, we probably would be."

Yanai described how her ordeal began when she broke her leg while trying to escape the massacre at the music festival. She recounted the horror of being taken into Gaza, where she witnessed civilians celebrating her capture despite her visible injuries.

"When I was entering Gaza, I saw 100% of civilians celebrating me being taken," she said, describing her broken leg and extensive bruising. "I didn't know about the other hostages; I thought it was only me."

Her family learned of her kidnapping through a viral TikTok video discovered by her 12-year-old niece, which showed Yanai pleading for her life as her captors shouted in the background.

During 54 days in captivity, Yanai

was moved between seven heavily guarded locations where she faced constant surveillance, limited access to food and water, and needed permission to use bathroom facilities.

She revealed that her captors told her they "planned to move on and kill as much as they could and slaughter everybody." More than 3,000 people were present at the festival. Nearly 400 festival attendees were killed in the attack.

Yanai was released in November 2023 as part of a hostage exchange agreement.

She emphasized her desire for dialogue and understanding, telling Doyle, "I really want to hear your side, that's my agenda, of coexisting."

Currently, 101 hostages remain in captivity in Gaza.

Following the debate, Doyle took to X dismissively commenting on Yanai's presence, writing, "They brought a hostage to a debate."

Hassan Yousef later offered a scathing critique of Doyle's performance, saying mockingly, "He came really prepared. He memorized the narrative, even perfected it more than those who have been claiming it for 70 years. He knows a lot more than Yasser Arafat on Palestine." **HW**

House Passes Resolutions to Combat Jew-Hatred, Strip Funding from Terror-Linked Nonprofits

By Andrew Bernard

(JNS) – The U.S. House of Representatives passed resolutions last week condemning antisemitism and moving to strip the tax-exempt status from organizations that provide material support to designated terrorist organizations.

A resolution "Condemning the global rise of antisemitism and calling upon countries and international bodies to counter antisemitism" passed last Wednesday by a vote 388-21.

The non-binding measure welcomes the decision by 40 countries, led by the United States, in July to adopt the Global Guidelines for Countering Antisemitism, which includes the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

"The spiritual cancer of antisemitism is metastasizing – not only in our own country but in many others as well – at a rate that is both shocking and sickening," said Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), who co-sponsored the resolution with Rep. Kathy Manning (D-N.C.).

"The Global Guidelines for Countering Antisemitism constitute a program

of best practices that can be adopted by countries and organizations to formulate policies that boldly and effectively respond to this pernicious hatred," Smith said.

The 21 "nay" votes on the resolution came from three Democrats – Reps. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) and Cori Bush (D-Mo.), all of whom are members of the so-called "Squad" of left-wing progressives – and 18 Republicans.

The group of Republicans who voted "nay" overlapped almost completely with the list of Republicans who voted against the Antisemitism Awareness Act in May, including Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) and Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), on the grounds, they said, that the IHRA definition is contrary to the principle of free speech or because it labels as antisemitic the claim that Jews killed Jesus.

Last Thursday, the House passed the Stop Terror-Financing and Tax Penalties on American Hostages Act, which strips the tax-exempt status of nonprofits that support terrorism and amends the tax

code so that Americans taken hostage don't face tax penalties from their time in captivity.

Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-N.Y.), one of the bill's co-sponsors, said that included one of her own constituents, who is being held by the Taliban in Afghanistan, as well as the American hostages taken by Hamas in Gaza.

"The last thing these Americans should have to face when returning home is tax penalties from the government," Tenney stated. "The Stop Terror-Financing and Tax Penalties on American Hostages Act corrects this flaw in our tax code, ensuring that individuals returning home from unimaginable hardship are not penalized with back taxes by the IRS."

The bill passed with bipartisan support, 219 to 184, with the 15 Democratic "yea" votes mostly coming from pro-Israel and Jewish members, including Reps. Jared Moskowitz (D-Fla.), Ritchie Torres (D-N.Y.) and Brad Schneider (D-Ill.). The lone Republican "nay" vote came from Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.), a libertarian who fre-

quently votes against legislation relating to foreign policy issues.

Some opponents of the bill, including the Council on Islamic-American Relations, argued that it could be used to arbitrarily target groups that hold anti-Israel views.

Lawmakers and Jewish groups have raised questions about the funding links between antisemitic and anti-Israel protest groups – many of which have tax-exempt status and unknown funding sources – and foreign terrorist organizations.

In October, the United States and Canada designated the "sham charity" Samidoun, which has helped organize anti-Israel protests in both countries, as a front group for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization.

In July, Avril Haines, the U.S. director of national intelligence, announced that Iran is also providing money to anti-Israel protesters, though she added that recipients of the money may not have been aware that they were receiving aid from a foreign power. **HW**

Iran Still Ramping Up Uranium Enrichment, UN Nuclear Watchdog Finds

(JNS) – Iran has continued to expand its stockpile of uranium enriched to near-weapons-grade levels, the Associated Press reported last Tuesday, citing a confidential report by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The nuclear watchdog of the United Nations said as of Oct. 26, Tehran had 182.3 kilograms (401.9 pounds) of uranium enriched up to 60%, an increase of 17.6 kilograms (38.8 pounds) since its last report in August.

This level of enrichment is just a technical step from 90% enrichment, considered weapons grade. According to the IAEA, it is possible to create an atomic bomb with roughly 42 kilograms (92.5 pounds) of uranium enriched to 60% if the material is further enriched to 90%.

Last Tuesday's report was said to have estimated that the Islamic Republic's total stockpile of enriched uranium stands at 6,604.4 kilograms (14,560 pounds) –

an increase of 852.6 kilograms (1,879.6 pounds) since August.

Earlier last week, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said Tehran hopes that [last] Wednesday's IAEA meeting, which is expected to pass a resolution against the Islamic Republic, will remain free of "political pressure."

Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei Baghaei told reporters at a press conference that the regime hopes that Britain, Germany and France will "allow the issues between Iran and the [IAEA] agency to continue in a technical way and away from political pressures and considerations."

The remarks came after Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said last Saturday that "there is still an opportunity for diplomacy" over the nuclear program. But he warned that the opportunity was "limited."

He added that Iran was prepared for "confrontation" or "cooperation," de-

pending on the path chosen by the international community.

During a news conference in Tehran week before last, IAEA director Rafael Grossi cautioned against a military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

"I say this with regards to Iran ... , nuclear installations should not be attacked," he said, in an apparent message to the Israel Defense Forces.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz stated earlier the week prior that Iran was "more exposed than ever to strikes on its nuclear facilities. We have the opportunity to achieve our most important goal – to thwart and eliminate the existential threat to the State of Israel."

The IDF is believed to have knocked out Iran's air defenses during its retaliatory attack on Oct. 26. In addition, a recent Axios report suggested that the Israeli airstrikes on Iran last month destroyed a secret nuclear weapons research facility in Parchin, 19 miles

southeast of Tehran.

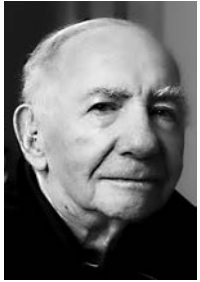
The clandestine site held sophisticated equipment used for testing explosives needed to detonate nuclear devices, Axios said, citing three U.S. government sources, as well as current and former Israeli officials.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee meeting last Monday that Jerusalem will review its ability to act against Iran once the new U.S. administration headed by President-elect Donald Trump takes office on Jan. 20.

At the start of the discussion, the prime minister said that while the war is being waged on seven fronts, "It has one source – Iran ... [whose] goal is the destruction of the State of Israel," according to a Knesset readout.

"Our ability to act against these three threats will be evaluated in the near future together with the incoming administration in Washington," he said. **HW**

Faith and Folly in Zomzach



*Editor's note:
This story is being
reprinted in memory
of Ted Roberts in
appreciation of his
longtime service
as a newspaper
columnist.*

Ted Roberts

If I was a bona fide, highly paid, Pulitzer winning novelist, I'd write a blockbuster historical novel entitled, "Poor Daddy Jacob and His Twelve Sons." (And by the way, when G-d wrote the Chumash He completely forgot about Dinah and her ultimate fate. A great mystery – after her degradation by Shechem we hear no more of her except that her attacker was slaughtered by her vengeful brothers; which leads me – pardon me, Rabbis – to the digression that the G-d of our Tanach picks justice over mercy every time. Yes, He is

merciful, but He loves justice as well as mercy. He, symbolically, does not turn the other cheek – he smacks you down.)

You know the Shechem/Dinah story:

1. Shechem rapes Dinah. ("But he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to her." Lust and sweet whisperings in the valley.)

2. Dinah's brothers sharpen their swords and meet with the Schemites, Shechem and his father, Hamur. Shechem drops to his knees. It wasn't only a carnal affair, pleads the romantic rapist – I love her. I want to marry her. (Remember, the Lord tells us more than once not to honeymoon with the people of the land.)

The brothers say well, OK, if you want to marry her, we guess it's OK. But first you must be circumcised. The Schemites groan, but comply. And here's the shocking part. While the Schemites are writhing in pain, Dinah's brothers, Shimeon and Levi, kill them all and plunder their belongings. Not a

Snow White, Cinderella, rosy love story.

At least, thinks father Jacob, I didn't break G-d's ban against intermarrying, and I saved a pile of shekels on the wedding. Nevertheless, he is a man of morality and is outraged at Judah and Simon, his sons who led the slaughter – a mixture of practicality and decency. "Dummy," he tells his two sons, "all the people shall hate us." And the Chumash is quiet about Dinah. We hear no more of her.

Our ancestors, the sons of Jacob, are a strange bunch. Just to cite a single example, Judah – for whom we're named – gets in trouble (the kind between men and women) with Tamar, his sister-in-law. It's an interesting story. (See Chapter 38, Genesis.)

The Benjamites fight with their brothers.

And eventually, as I'm sure you know, the brothers – continually bickering – split into two nations: Israel and Judah. It's amazing that given our ancestry we

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turned out so well.

The moral: When it comes to family relationships, not much has changed in 3300 years.

The syndicated humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the roof, has appeared in newspapers around the U.S., on National Public Radio, and numerous websites. HW

Teens with Strong Jewish Education Show More Support for Israel

(JNS) – Jewish teens involved in Jewish camps, schools and other programming are more likely to hold positive views of Israel and less likely to harbor negative sentiments about the conflict, according to a new study.

The global survey of teens aged 14-18 was conducted by Mosaic United, an initiative of Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, in the wake of the Oct. 7, 2023, attack. Of the 1,600 responses collected, half were disqualified for various reasons. The final sample consisted of 80% American Jewish teens with various levels of Jewish engagement.

Among the key findings: While 94% of Jewish teens report feeling emotionally connected to Israel, 36% believe

Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. This stark contradiction underscores the need for education to combat misinformation and strengthen Jewish identity.

Teens with strong Jewish educational backgrounds (e.g., attending Jewish schools or camps) show significantly higher support for Israel and are less likely to sympathize with Hamas. Only 6% of these teens expressed sympathy for Hamas, compared to 65% of those with weaker Jewish backgrounds. Teens who participated in encounters with Israelis demonstrated the strongest support for Israel.

U.S. Jewish teens are more likely to hold critical views of Israel than their international peers. For example: 37% of U.S. teens sympathize with Hamas

compared to 7% of teens from other countries, and 42% of U.S. teens believe Israel is committing genocide versus 9% internationally.

Older teens exhibit more positive and nuanced views of Israel. Among 14-year-olds, 60% sympathize with Hamas compared to just 10% of 18-year-olds. This suggests that as teens mature, their perspectives become more supportive of Israel, highlighting the importance of sustained engagement.

"In these challenging times, strengthening the bonds between Jewish teens in the diaspora and Israel is more important than ever. We are heartened that 94% of Jewish teens feel connected to Israel and will continue to support global Jew-

ish youth," said Israeli Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism Minister Amichai Chikli of the study's findings.

"This survey underscores the resilience of teens with richer Jewish backgrounds against anti-Israel sentiment and misinformation. Meaningful programming is critical for fostering Jewish identity and connection," remarked Alana Ebin, director of Mosaic Teens.

While the survey highlights concerning trends, the overwhelming majority of Jewish teens maintain a connection to Israel. With continued education, engagement and meaningful programming, there is optimism for a stronger Jewish youth identity and a deeper connection to Israel, the study concluded. HW

ISRAEL INSIGHTS Speculation

By Howard Weisband

Since the election of former President Donald Trump and his return to the White House on January 20, political pundits in the United States, Israel, and throughout the Middle East have been enjoying a field day speculating on the forthcoming nature of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

What changes might be expected? Will they favor Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu? If so, what might be expected of the PM and his Government? What will be the impact on the war in Gaza and Lebanon in the coming months and on eventual governance in those areas? Will there be new demands on settlement policy in Judea and Samaria, also referred to as the West Bank, or is the possibility of annexation in some measure possible? Is an expansion in the cards of the Abraham Accords, acknowledged as an acclaimed Middle East achievement during Trump's first Administration, and if so what may be expected of Israel?

The overarching questions relate to the incoming Administration's policies toward Iran, which poses a critical existential threat to Israel, and also toward the U.S. and the West, in Iranian terminology, Little Satan and Big Satan. Will Trump reimpose tough economic sanctions on Iran? What will be his policy regarding their recognized advancement toward nuclear weapons?

On November 17, "The Jerusalem Post" published an editorial titled "Trump's pro-Israel appointments: Dream team or a tightrope for Jerusalem?" It stated: "Although the appointments have been hailed by Israel advocates, especially those on the Right, as comprising 'a dream team' for both the United States and the Jewish state, the Israeli government must brace itself for a future in which the new Trump administration could be warm and supportive, but also tight and tough.

"Ultimately, the administration will act in accordance with American interests, not Israel's, and it might be more difficult for Israel to turn down Trump's Republican team than the Democratic administration of President Joe Biden."

David Horowitz in "The Times of Israel" on November 20 personalized the speculation. He asked: "Does Trump really see 'eye to eye' with Netanyahu on Iran, Gaza and the settlements? While these two leaderships are emphatically allied, they may not be thoroughly aligned."

Horowitz went on to write: "Trump has said loud and clear that Israel needs to get the war won quickly in Gaza, and that 'the killing has to stop.' And in his victory speech in Florida, the U.S. president-elect stressed that he intends to 'stop wars,' not start them.... Those kinds of comments hardly constitute a

ringing endorsement of current Netanyahu thinking and policy."

These are critical arenas to follow and explore. I recommend a November 20 article by Nathan Klabin in "The Media Line:" "Trump's Return: A New Military Equation for Israel and the Middle East."

Klabin writes: "To provide a nuanced perspective on how Trump's presidency may alter the Middle East's military landscape, 'The Media Line' interviewed six experts from the U.S., Israel, Iran, and the UAE. Their insights suggest a potential for significant regional shifts."

One of those experts interviewed is Jeff Tieg, a retired U.S. Army officer with 28 years of experience in Special Operations and Delta Force. Tieg is quoted among his other comments: "The upcoming administration is expected to reinforce and clarify U.S.-Israel military relations, especially in areas of military cooperation, including increased arms sales, intelligence sharing, and possibly even joint military exercises. U.S.-Israel military ties, rooted in enduring strategic, security, and political interests, will return to a predictable and robust level under a second Trump presidency, building on his previous term's initiatives."

Shahin Modarres, director of the Iran Desk at ITSS Verona, predicts significant changes in the Middle East's military landscape. "His [Trump's] return to

office is expected to impact the Islamic Republic and its network of proxy groups, including Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and numerous militant factions in Iraq and Syria. Trump's likely reactivation of hardline policies against the Islamic Republic – through economic sanctions, military support for its regional adversaries, and diplomatic pressure – will reshape the strategies of these proxy groups."

Forecasting or speculation? I think more the latter. Journalists, pundits, experts; all indulge.

In conclusion, I'll borrow from my own fondness for following sports, which I enjoy mainly as a diversion. However, I much prefer to watch the actual game. I do not do fantasy sports, nor do I predict who will be drafted or what free agents will be signed. Tell me when it happens.

After January 20 it happens. Speculation ends.

Howard Weisband served as Assistant Executive Director (1975-77) and Executive Director (1977-84) of the Memphis Jewish Federation. Following Aliyah with his family in 1986, he served as Secretary General of the Jewish Agency for Israel through 1997, and then in other senior professional positions in Israel. Now retired, he and Kayla live in Jerusalem. He can be reached at hweisband@gmail.com HW

Hamas Welcomes ICC Warrants for Israeli Leaders

“The truth that has been revealed is that international justice is with us, while it is against the Zionist entity,” said senior Hamas figure Izzat al-Risheq.

(JNS) – Hamas last Thursday welcomed the International Criminal Court’s decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant, “Al Jazeera” reported.

“We welcome the International Criminal Court’s issuance of arrest warrants for terrorists Netanyahu and Gallant on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity,” said the globally designated terror group.

“We urge the International Criminal Court to hold all Israeli leaders accountable,” the statement continued. “We call on the countries of the world to cooperate with the court to bring war criminals Netanyahu and Gallant and stop the crimes of genocide against civilians in Gaza.”

Israel’s “Ynet” news outlet cited Izzat al-Risheq, a senior member of Hamas’s politburo based in Qatar, as saying that “regardless of the possibility of implementation, the truth that has been revealed is that international justice is with us, while it is against the Zionist entity. This increased awareness and the exposure of the true terrorist face of the occupying entity is in the interest of the Palestinian cause and its future and strengthens our future goal of liberation.”

The ICC’s Pre-Trial Chamber “issued warrants of arrest for two individuals, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu and Mr. Yoav Gallant, for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed from at least 8 October 2023 until at least 20 May 2024, the day the Prosecution filed the applications for warrants of arrest,” it said in a [last] Thursday statement.

In a separate statement, the court ordered the arrest of Mohammed Deif, the supreme commander of Hamas’s “military wing,” who according to the Israel Defense Forces was killed in an airstrike in Gaza on July 13.

Regarding Deif, the court said it had “reasonable grounds to believe that senior leaders of Hamas, comprising at least Mr. Deif, Mr. [Yahya] Sinwar, and Mr. [Ismail] Haniyeh, agreed to jointly carry out the 7 October 2023 Operation.”

Khan had requested warrants against former Hamas political leader Haniyeh and terrorist chief in Gaza Sinwar, but dropped the legal proceedings after their deaths on July 31 and Oct. 16, respectively.

Roughly 1,200 civilians were murdered by Hamas-led terrorists on Oct. 7, 2023. Thousands more were wounded, and 251 others were taken into the Gaza Strip.

The ICC has no jurisdiction over Israel as Jerusalem is not a signatory to the Rome Statute, which established the court. But in a legalistic sleight of hand, the court has asserted jurisdiction by accepting “Palestine” as a signatory in 2015, even though no such state is recognized under international law.

The 123 countries that are signatories to the Rome Statute are obligated to act on any arrest warrant it issues, raising the possibility that Netanyahu and Gallant could be placed under arrest while visiting these places. **HW**

Hours After ICC Issues Warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant, Biden Recycles Six-Month-Old Statement

(JNS) – U.S. President Joe Biden stated last Thursday evening that the International Criminal Court’s decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant is “outrageous.”

“Let me be clear once again: whatever the ICC might imply, there is no

equivalence – none – between Israel and Hamas,” Biden said. “We will always stand with Israel against threats to its security.”

The U.S. president didn’t name either Israeli official in his statement, in which he referred only to “Israeli leaders.”

Biden stated nearly the same thing on May 20, when he said: “The ICC

prosecutor’s application for arrest warrants against Israeli leaders is outrageous. And let me be clear: whatever this prosecutor might imply, there is no equivalence – none – between Israel and Hamas. We will always stand with Israel against threats to its security.”

The ICC is a stand-alone court in The Hague, which is not part of the United Nations. **HW**

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Bill Clinton Reflects on Oslo's Failure and the Current Gaza War



U.S. President Bill Clinton looks on as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO head Yasser Arafat shake hands at the signing of the Oslo Accords on Sept. 13, 1993. Credit: William J. Clinton Presidential Library/ National Archives & Records Administration.

(JNS) – Bill Clinton, the 42nd president of the United States, recently shared his thoughts on the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and the failed Oslo Accords, expressing deep regret over missed opportunities for peace in the Middle East.

Speaking about his new memoir, “Cit-

izen: My Life After the White House,” at an event with actor Billy Crystal at the Beacon Theater in New York City last Tuesday, Clinton offered a nuanced perspective on the situation in Gaza and its historical context.

Clinton, 78, described the failure of the Oslo Accords as “heartbreaking,”

saying that he thinks about it every day. The peace process, which aimed to establish a two-state solution, collapsed just weeks before the end of Clinton’s presidency. He recounted a pivotal moment when Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat visited the Oval Office, promising to sign an agreement that would have given Palestinians a state in 96% of Judea and Samaria and 4% of Green Line Israel, along with an international airport and seaport. However, Arafat never followed through.

Addressing the current war in Gaza, Clinton emphasized the importance of understanding its triggers. He pointed to the Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7, 2023, in which Gazans killed some 1,200 Israelis and took 251 hostages to the Strip.

Clinton said, “When Hamas decided to do what they did and made a deal with Iran, Hezbollah and the Houthis, it was like all bets are off. While I do not agree with Mr. Netanyahu’s policy – I don’t think we can kill our way out of this – it’s no accident that the most devastated area in Israel on October 7 were the kibbutzim along the border. That’s where Israelis were more likely to favor a Palestinian state like the one we had

During a live interview with comedian Billy Crystal, the former president laments missed opportunities for peace, defends Israel’s right to self-defense.

offered when I was president.”

In a previous speech made as part of Vice President Kamala Harris’s presidential election campaign, Clinton spoke about the historical presence of Jews in the region, noting that they were there “before their [Hamas’s] faith came into existence.”

The former president said Hamas had made a deal with Iran, Hezbollah, and the Houthis, aiming not to create a Palestinian state but rather to kill every Jew in Israel and blame Israel for it, effectively nullifying previous progress toward peace. “Essentially, we’re going to have to start the peace process again,” Clinton said during the speech in Michigan. **HW**

GOP Senators Reintroduce Bill to Ban ‘Antisemitic’ Country of Origin Labels

(JNS) – Sens. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Bill Hagerty (R-Tenn.), Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and John Boozman (R-Ark.) reintroduced the Anti-BDS Labeling Act, which would require all goods made in the Jewish state to continue to be labeled “made in Israel,” including if they were produced in Judea and Samaria.

Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-N.Y.) in-

troduced the legislation in the House, where it passed by a vote of 231-189 on Sept. 18, 2024. Cotton first tried to introduce the bill to the Senate in 2021, but it never made it out of committee.

“Left-wing activists abuse country-of-origin labels in order to stigmatize products made in Israel,” Cotton stated. “Our bill will defend the integrity of the Jewish state by ensuring that

Israeli products may proudly bear the label ‘made in Israel.’”

The bill would prohibit the Biden administration from changing current policy back to that of the Obama and Clinton administrations when goods made in Judea and Samaria had to be labeled “made in the West Bank.”

Donald Trump overturned that policy in his first administration.

The U.S. government treats these articles as Israeli goods for trade purposes.

“The Anti-BDS Labeling Act reinforces U.S. policy, ensuring that goods produced in Israel are accurately labeled while blocking federal funds from supporting the discriminatory BDS movement,” Tenney stated. “This legislation reaffirms our commitment to our greatest ally, Israel.” **HW**

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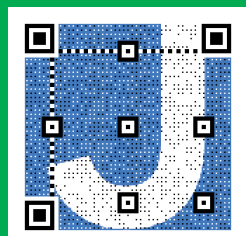
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