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Magazine

CHANUKAH / WINTER 2023

EDITION 44

March for Israel

Happy Chanukah

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Photos: Chris Williams

On November 14, an estimated 300 thousand people participated in the March for Israel at the National Mall in Washington D.C., demanding the release of hostages and the end of antisemitism. The peacefully event was the largest Jewish gathering in U.S. history, showing solidarity with Israel.



**חנוכה
שמח**



Chanukah 2023

Chanukah 2023 starts at nightfall on **Thursday, December 7** and ends with nightfall on **Friday, December 15**, beginning on the Hebrew calendar date of 25 Kislev, and lasting for eight days.

Chanukah (also spelled Hanukkah) is an 8-day Jewish festival marking the miraculous victory of the Maccabees, Jewish freedom fighters, over the Seleucidian Greek occupiers in the year 139 BCE. After recapturing Jerusalem's Holy Temple, which had been converted into a place of idol worship, they searched for pure oil with which to light the Temple menorah. They found just enough to burn for one day, but miraculously it burned for eight days until more oil could be brought.

The Maccabees were a band of Jewish freedom fighters who freed Judea from the Syrian-Greek occupiers during the Second Temple period. The word Maccabee is an acronym for the Hebrew words that mean "Who is like You among all powers, G-d." Led by Judah the Maccabee and his four brothers, they trounced the Greek interlopers and restored the Holy Temple in Jerusalem to the service of G-d. Their victory is celebrated during the holiday of Chanukah. (source: Chabad.org)

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Happy Chanukah

Gaby Weltman



In each edition of Shalom Magazine, my challenge is to make it better than the previous one. As I prepare the Chanukah edition, I am contemplating how to infuse it with the same positivity, inspiration, and beauty as the Rosh Hashanah issue. The massacre of October 7 has reverberated across the Jewish world, affecting us too here in Massachusetts.

Thank G-d, I have exceptional contributors who willingly express their sentiments in writing. Both Jewish and non-Jewish individuals share their opinions and offer support for the Jewish community in their articles.

While we may not always agree on various perspectives, I believe it is crucial to allow diverse voices to be heard, as long as they do not promote violence. In these challenging times, characterized by a rising tide of antisemitism worldwide, unity among Jews and our allies is paramount. I urge you to connect with our advertisers, who have chosen to support this Jewish publication, and express gratitude to them.

I now grasp the significance of what Elie Wiesel once conveyed to me - that the most agonizing aspect of the Holocaust was indifference. I remember him and other survivors recounting the pain of witnessing friends and neighbors passively observing Jews being taken by the Nazis, with some even abetting their efforts. Through conversations globally, a shared sentiment emerges: the resentment of a perceived lack of empathy from friends and the pain of witnessing support and justification for the actions of terrorists.

We are experiencing collective grief, and we are not indifferent to the suffering of Palestinians. We will only achieve peace once the Palestinian people is liberated from the oppressor among them, Hamas.

Chanukah, a celebration of miracles, serves as a reminder that the Jewish people have overcome numerous adversities. Let us join in prayer for peace and a world free from hatred.

Wishing you a joyous and healthy Chanukah.

Shirley Nigri Farber - Publisher



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Shalom Magazine 2023

Published by Farber Marketing Inc.

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Design: Farber Marketing

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**Cover photo: Stephen Jaffe for the
Jewish Federations of North America**

*Shalom Magazine has been published 3 to 4 times a year since April 2009. Free copies are distributed in Massachusetts and available online.
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Around the world, there were tributes to the 240 kidnapped victims of October 7. A display of empty beds at Jerusalem City Hall symbolized the hostages taken by Hamas (above), while the faces of the victims were projected onto a wall of the Old City of Jerusalem (below). According to the Israeli government, 138 of the hostages have foreign passports, including Germany, Argentina, France, the US, China, and the Philippines.

We pray that by the time this magazine is printed they will all be safe at home.



CHALLAH BAKE



The Young Jewish Professionals (YJP) Challah Bake on October 19 raised funds to support humanitarian efforts in Israel. All proceeds went to Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency medical service. To learn about YJP events, visit www.facebook.com/bostonYJP

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF METROWEST

As families from Haiti were relocated to Framingham, Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Metrowest took the lead in connecting them with services, providing emergency basic needs assistance, and helping them move to temporary shelter while affordable housing is secured. JFS has been resettling individuals and families from all over the world since 1979, and in recent years has resettled victims of world conflict from Syria, Cuba, and Afghanistan. As Israelis arrive in the Greater Boston area, JFS is prepared to welcome these war evacuees as they seek safe haven in our caring community. Visit JFSMW.org for links to important resources.

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Jewish community members and friends gathered in support of Israel at the Boston Common on October 9. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, Gov. Maura Healey and both Massachusetts senators Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren were among those who attended the rally.



On October 15, Congresswoman Clark spoke at Temple Beth Shalom of Melrose's public communal mourning in honor of the October 7 victims



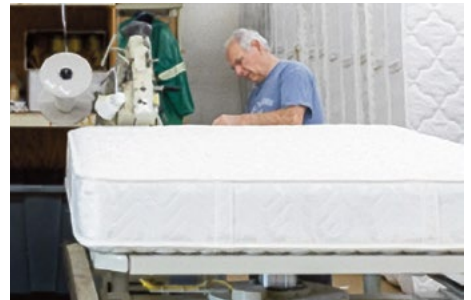
Rabbi Moshe Bleich of Wellesley-Weston Chabad speaks at the Stand with Israel event on October 26 at the Weston Club

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WE ARE ALL MACCABEES

By Rabbi Stanley Helinski, Esq.

Given the recent events in the Middle East, Chanukah comes at a time in which antisemitism in America has quadrupled, figuratively driving the Jewish population back into hiding as has occurred in so many generations of our history. Chanukah - a holiday that exists because Torah study had been outlawed by the Greeks - holds extra significance in our modern world. The reasons that the Jewish population is made to feel isolated differ between BCE times and the present times, but the decision to isolate is based on the same issue: fear of retribution. The question, which is left to the reader, is whether the modern day hiding and the historic hiding around the time of the Chanukah miracle are comparable. Are we in the same place we were thousands of years ago?

In the ancient times of the Maccabees, the miracle arose because the Jewish people insisted on keeping the Torah and on continuing to practice the Jewish religion that the Greek empire sought to eradicate. Many families faced the possibility of death for breaking a law specifically put in place to prevent Jewish worship as well as to consolidate a pantheon as the foreign power saw fit. What if those Jews so long ago had forfeited their traditions for fear of being murdered? The practice of Judaism, and more specifically the adherence to a

Jewish identity (the very concept that the Greeks sought to quash), was more important to that Jewish population than the threat to their lives. Their decision was validated when one such Jewish tradition - that of the lighting of the menorah - was made possible by the help given them by the very God they worshiped. Were it not for their faith, the festival of Chanukah would never exist.

Today, the Jewish population is once again being targeted. Most believe that one has a right to defend themselves in the face of open and violent aggression, so why is Israel targeted for fighting back? Well, why would the Greek government need to control the faith of others? The answer is power and control. Jewish people in America have little to do with the conflict in the Middle East. They hear it on the news like everyone else. Some have friends or family in Israel who have been horribly affected by October 7. Why then has antisemitism increased more than fourfold since that date? Surely, American Jewish people have nothing to do with Israel's response in Gaza. The answer may be found in the circumstances in this country that are similar to those during the Greek reign: swastikas in high school bathrooms and far right terrorists spewing Jew hate. Just as with the Greeks, they have found an opportunity to silence the Jewish population and to send us back into hiding.

I suggest that we, the Jewish population in the United States, follow the Maccabees' lead: light those candles in a window of your house and let the world know that we will not go into hiding. Increase your Torah study and spread Judaism among those who are not practicing. This year is again our time - as it has been in so many past generations. We are again under attack. It is time to come out of hiding and to have faith that HaShem will be there for us as He has always been in the past. Happy Chanukah and keep the faith. We will pull through this too, B"H (with G-d's help).

Rabbi Stanley Helinski, Esq. is a family law attorney in Massachusetts who practices in most courts of the Commonwealth and also practices law in Framingham.



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COMMUNITY EVENTS



The Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program at Brandeis University welcomed their 1st and 2nd year cohorts to Brandeis to start the year with team building activities. The participating faculty included Jonathan Sarna, Barry Shrage, Fern Chertok and Jonathan Krasner.



A Solidarity Prayer for Israel led by Rabbi Mendel Fogelman was held on October 10 at Central Mass Chabad, Worcester.



Israeli American Council Sukkah in Newton Center



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BETH EL SUDBURY TURNS OUT IN FORCE FOR VISITING ISRAELI TEENS

By Alice Waugh

More than 200 people packed Congregation Beth El in Sudbury for an October 13 "Pop-Up Israel" event, where they enjoyed food prepared by visiting Israeli students and teachers, and showed support for them and for Israel a week after the Hamas attacks.

Fifteen students and two teachers from Hugin, a public high school in Haifa, Israel, were wrapping up a week in the US as part of the HiBuR exchange program, in which they visit cultural and religious sites in New York and Boston and stay with American students from MetroWest. The American students in the HiBuR program hope to visit Israel over February break. HiBuR is one of several experiential programs offered by J-LOFT (Jewish Learning Opportunities for Teens).

The students got to Beth El early in the morning of Pop-Up Israel to begin chopping vegetables for the Israeli salad, grinding chickpeas for falafel, making vegetable soup with couscous, and spreading pita bread with za'atar seasoning. Others decorated the synagogue's sanctuary with Israeli flags and stars of David, or made signs for the silent auction of Israeli gifts they'd brought with them. Between ticket sales and the auction, the event raised nearly \$5000, which will go toward providing food and supplies for Israeli reserve soldiers and evacuated families.

"We worked for 10 hours, but it was worth it. Everyone who came and showed support really got into our hearts, and not only our hearts but [those of] our family and friends," said Elian, one of the Israeli teens. "It was very exciting, and we all had the best time in our lives

knowing we were doing what we knew best, being family to each other."

The Israeli teens arrived in America just hours after the attacks. Not surprisingly, they were in constant communication with friends and family to learn the latest news and make sure that everyone was safe for now. "The students have been doing great; they've been very

present in the experience," said Shoni Aronovich, Director of J-LOFT and Teen Education at Beth El.

The visiting Israelis had the formidable task of "balancing the joy of being here and making new friends with the anxiety for those back home," Beth El Rabbi Joshua Breindel said. It was clear at Pop-Up Israel that everyone found some uplifting together, while also holding moments of solemn remembrance for victims of violence.

In his sermon the next day, Rabbi Breindel led prayers for peace and expressed the community's conflicting feelings of grief, anger, and compassion for the suffering of innocent people caught up on both sides of the war by quoting from a poem by Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai:

*[We need] to love and to hate at the same moment,
to laugh and cry with the same eyes,
with the same hands to throw stones and to gather them,
to make love in war and war in love*

J-LOFT is still accepting donations for reserve soldiers and evacuated families. To donate or learn more about Jewish teen programs offered by J-LOFT, visit jloftboston.org.



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Our diverse range of programs includes cooking, art and music classes, movies and mitzvahs, and Jewish learning. A popular highlight is our Monday night bowling league.

Yachad is a trusted agency within the Jewish community, known for its reliable programming and services. As a primary service provider, we offer a magical space for individuals with disabilities, incorporating Jewish content into all activities.

Our volunteers, alongside individuals facing diverse challenges, and staff have undertaken initiatives to support Israel, including running Zoom programs for Yachad Israel participants during their IDF service, organizing fundraisers like a challah bake, and sending messages of encouragement.

To volunteer at Yachad, contact Stuart Salzberg at SalzbergS@ou.org. For donations or more information, reach out to Liz Offen at OffenL@ou.org or NewEnglandYachad@ou.org, or call 617-209-6799 x1.



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What Can We Do In These Trying Times?

By Rus Devorah Wallen

In these challenging times, the resurgence of 21st-century antisemitism serves as a grim reminder of the lingering hatred we had hoped to overcome in our modern and “developed” world. As Jews, we remain steadfast, bound by our history and shared communal destiny, believing in our enduring existence as promised by G-d. However, individually, we grapple with fear and concern for Israeli brothers and sisters as well as ourselves globally, as this extremist mentality threatens not just Jews but the universal ideals of freedom, tolerance, safety, and security.

In the Haggadah, we recite, “In every generation, there are those who try to rise up against us, but the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hands.” While as a collective, we trust in our longevity and security, however as a therapist, daily I witness the suffering of individuals burdened with fears, anxieties, and depression in our volatile world.

So, what can we do in these trying times? Worrying and fixating on the negative won’t serve us well. As the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, rhetorically asked, “Is G-d really in need of your worry? Or will He succeed in finding a solution even without your worrying?” My grandfather, Michael F. Ellis, OBM, affectionately known as “Gramp,” used to say, “Worry’s like a rocking chair, neither gets you anywhere.” Today, I’d add that worrying is not only unnecessary or unhelpful, but neuroscience shows that it’s detrimental to our well-being. So, what’s the solution?

In a previous article in *Shalom Magazine*, *A Three-Legged Approach to the Awesome Days Ahead!* (August 2018), I introduced my *Three-Legged Stool* approach to calm nerves and reduce reactivity. In these stressful times, we must focus on what is within our control and not dwell on what we cannot change. Improving our responses to

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What Can We Do In These Trying Times?

challenging news and events, and how we support those around us, can make a positive difference.

I encourage my clients to limit exposure to distressing news and instead engage with uplifting, inspiring, and self-care content. The constant flood of negative information takes a toll on us in many ways. It can truly become addictive as well.

Let's revisit the *Three-Legged Stool* approach*:

1) **Relaxing The Body:** When the stress response is activated, the sympathetic nervous system leads to increased heart rate, blood pressure, and stress hormones. To relax the body, dedicate just two to three minutes nightly to a slow, intentional breathing technique like The Breathing Contest™.* Additionally, try to breathe through your nose as much as possible in general, slowing your exhale. I call this my “BBB” – Basic Breathing for Beginners™.* By practicing these two techniques, you will reap numerous benefits, including improved oxygen filtration, slowed pulse, lower blood pressure, and enhanced immunity.

2) **Calming The Mind:** Stress is a part of life, but our reactions to it matter more than the stressors themselves. Reframing challenges from a positive perspective and employing meditation techniques can help us navigate stress sensibly. As Dr. Viktor Frankl observed, “To detach oneself from even the worst conditions is a uniquely human capability.” Meditation and relaxation techniques slow things down, allowing us to choose our responses wisely. Dr. Frankl considered this to be the epitome of human capacity. As he said, “Between stimulus

and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” My Beginner’s Meditation on the Breath™* is a kosher meditation that is under rabbinic supervision to avoid any complications with Eastern religious elements.

3) **Soothing The Soul:** In these complex times, inner peace often requires belief in G-d or a Higher Power. The third leg of our stool is *Bitachon* - Trust, Confidence, and Assuredness. Knowing that Hashem orchestrates every circumstance can bring serenity. Reading texts like *Chovos HaLevavos - Sha'ar HaBitachon* or *In Good Hands: 100 Letters and Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on Trust in G-d** can help nurture this trust.

Let us all keep ourselves responsive to the challenges around us by taking care of the “Three Legs” - Our Body, Soul, and Mind. In this way, we will be better able to unite as a global community, transcending divisions, to usher in a more peaceful era marked by kindness and tranquility, when goodness will reign. *Am Yisroel Chai v'Kayam!*

*The materials mentioned in this article can be easily found on my website by using the handy search engine. www.Toratherapeutics.com.

Rus Devorah Wallen, LCSW, ACSW, CIMHP, specializes in healing workshops, individual therapy, and coaching. For free relaxation exercises, visit her website or contact her at RD@Toratherapeutics.com.



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The Power of Jewish Moms: Standing Against Antisemitism on Campuses

By Shirley Nigri Farber

In a climate where antisemitism and violence have been on the rise, particularly at pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses, a dedicated group known as Mothers Against College Antisemitism (MACA) has emerged on Facebook. Late October, in just over a week, this group has attracted 42,000 members, including mothers from all over the country, some of whom aren't even Jewish. The group also includes fathers, teachers, and representatives from Hillel and Chabad organizations on campus.

Founded by Elizabeth Rand, an attorney from New York, MACA has already appointed 27 moderators and 57 lawyers, with plans to transition into a non-profit organization to raise funds for their cause. One of their primary objectives is to gather information on incidents on campus and potentially sue schools that fail to protect Jewish students from antisemitism.

Members of MACA have shared their experiences about campus life and encountering of pro-Palestinian protests. Many argue that the primary concern is the safety of Jewish students, as they should be able to focus on their studies without fear of discrimination or intimidation.

The group has reported incidents from various locations across the country, shared photos and discussed outcomes. As seen on the news, UMass Amherst student Dylan Jacobs recounted an unsettling incident in which he was physically assaulted by a Pro-Palestinian protester. Jacobs explained that he was punched and kicked while holding an Israeli flag. The accused student involved in the assault was charged and banned from returning to campus, but Jacobs still expresses concerns about his safety.

Some universities have taken actions to address these issues by sending out letters in which they pledge to protect students and combat discrimination. However, there are instances where the



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The Power of Jewish Moms: Standing Against Antisemitism on Campuses

student body's approach differs from that of the school leadership. Notably, Brandeis University recently made the decision to shut down their chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine because the student group openly supports Hamas. Columbia University has suspended SJP and Jewish Voice for Peace for violating school policies.

Aside from addressing pro-Palestine protests and incidents like the tearing down of posters of kidnapped Israelis, MACA members have also raised concerns about the university's handling of incidents and even questioned the campus police effectiveness in protecting students.

For the MACA group, one immediate action they advocate is withholding donations to schools until they demonstrate through tangible actions that Jewish students will be safe and free from discrimination. Some are calling to direct their donations to Hillel and Chabad on campus. Members express concern about chants like "From the river to the sea" that call for the elimination of Jewish people from the Land of Israel, as such expressions can be deeply distressing to Jewish individuals. MACA is also a forum where mothers with kids in high school are debating which campus will be safer to send a Jewish student. For now, some parents are asking students to hide their Jewish identity, avoid wearing a Star of David or holding an Israeli Flag. We will have to wait and see how those actions will affect schools and students' choices.

Photos from MACA Facebook page.



At Northeastern University, an installation of tables with empty chairs representing 240 hostages of all ages, from newborns to seniors



Shabat table at Harvard University with 240 empty seats representing the hostages taken by Hamas



Graffiti at UMass Amherst dining hall

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IN THEIR MEMORY

By Bruce Mendelsohn

In Sderot, Netiv Haasara, and Ein Hashlosa, Israeli youngsters frolic on colorful, concrete-reinforced playground structures and wait for school buses in squat cement roadside huts that double as bomb shelters. Some are painted with peaceful pastoral images of blooming flowers and trees; others emblazoned with hopeful graffiti - *shalom, chayim, ahavah* among the most prominent words.

Residents of these tight-knit towns have opted out of Israel's fast-paced, urban-centric lifestyle. They reflect the country's pioneering spirit of moshavim, kibbutzim, and kfarim; their kinship reflects a time in the nascent nation's history when almost every village was in small-arms range of an enemy sworn to kill them.

Before October 7, most people didn't understand just how close the Hamas enemy is. Now, sadly, they do. Like many Jews, I feel like America is my country, and Israel is my homeland

In 2017 and 2019, I joined two tours of American law enforcement officers who visited several communities Hamas terrorists attacked on October 7. We received security briefings from Israel Police and visited IDF outposts at Karmiya, Netiv Haasara, and Yad Mordechai. One of our hosts in Sderot was Yigal Iluz, a police sergeant major and bomb searcher in the southern region. Yigal was killed manning his post on October 7.

In December 2022 and September 2023 I traveled to Israel for family events. During those visits I returned to Southern Israel where I was fortunate to be hosted by a senior Israel Police officer who escorted me to the wall separating Israel and Gaza and arranged informal



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IN THEIR MEMORY

visits with Israel Police and IDF units stationed there.

For context, I lived in Israel in 1982 and returned for several weeks after leaving the U.S. Army in 1993. I speak Hebrew; I know the country's history and culture. My older brother and his family currently live in Zichron Yaakov, an expat community south of Haifa. As former Executive Director of the FIDF New England Region, I was fortunate to host delegations of IDF soldiers.

Col. Roi Levy was a member of one delegation; we kept in touch and when I visited Israel in 2022 we enjoyed a run and lunch. Father of five, Roi was born in the U.S. and grew up in Jerusalem. A true Warrior of Israel, Roi commanded the Golani Brigade, the Egoz Unit of the Oz Brigade, and Unit 888 (Refaim). Roi was killed on October 7 in the battle of Re'im.

I offer this paean in memory of Yigal, Roi, and the thousands of Israeli police officers and soldiers who protect and defend our Jewish Homeland and with the fervent wish and anticipation of their ultimate triumph.

If you've visited Israel, you've driven on Kvish Arba. Highway 4 runs along Israel's Mediterranean coastal plain from Rosh HaNikra in the North to the Erez Border Crossing at Gaza. South of Ashkelon, traffic on the highly congested road drops off noticeably. This region is off the beaten path for most tourists and tour companies: Sensibly, tour companies prefer not to expose their guests to the threat of random indirect fire. This region of Israel is less visited, less populated, rural, agrarian, and much more militarized than the rest of the country.

Look West: See the verdant coastal plain, small agricultural villages, the Rutenberg Power Plant, the shimmering Mediterranean. Look East: More citrus and banana fields, the railroad track, cars and trucks speeding North. Sharp-eyed visitors may spy armored vehicles and mobile artillery, although the IDF conceals them carefully and moves them often. But what are those earthen berms about 30' high?

The land is no stranger to berms - Romans, Seljuk Turks, Crusaders, and Ottomans built them for defensive purposes. So too now Israel. While most of the country sprouts construction cranes, the D-9 armored bulldozer reigns here. The berms they build obstruct Hamas observation posts on the Gaza border and interdict Hamas indirect fire targeting highway traffic, bus stops, the railroad, and settlements. Residents of this region have mere seconds to take cover from Hamas "harassment" fire.



While Kvish Arba ends at an obscure industrial park abutting the border wall, almost all civilian vehicles exit at Netiv Haasara—a small moshav with a pre-October 7 population of 900. Netiv Haasara's Southernmost houses are a few hundred meters from the wall, making it a prime soft target for Hamas' surprise attack. On October 7, Hamas terrorists killed at least 20 people there, including members of the same family. Netiv Haasara's civilian population is now zero.

For generations, Jews were refugees to Israel. Today, Jews are refugees in Israel. While many Israelis have opened their homes to refugees from active combat zones in Southern and Northern Israel, not one Arab country has opened its borders

to Palestinians seeking similar (relative) safety.

The civilian population of almost every town within 10 kilometers of the Gaza border is also now zero. The Hamas butchery emptied these villages; with the exception of some police and IDF soldiers, they stand empty - silent sentinels to the slaughter of almost a month ago.

Half-eaten breakfasts on tables, children's toys bathed in blood, destroyed furniture in houses pockmarked by bullet holes. The burned and mutilated bodies of the residents of these villages may have been removed but the scarred buildings, silent playgrounds, and charred furniture silently judge us. The murdered innocents who once populated these bucolic villages cry out to the living for justice. Never again is now.

Bruce Mendelsohn is a U.S. Army veteran and Junior Vice Commander of the Jewish War Veterans Department of Massachusetts. A resident of Central Massachusetts, he works for the City of Worcester.

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THE MIRACLE OF CHANUKAH

By Yosef Rodrigues



Chanukah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a joyous and meaningful Jewish holiday that holds a special place in the hearts of Jewish communities worldwide. This festival, which typically falls in December, commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days despite only enough oil for one.

As we celebrate Chanukah, it's important to remember that this holiday carries a memo of hope and miracles. This message resonates deeply in the hearts of many, especially during times of hardship and conflict. As Chanukah approaches, it's an opportunity to reflect on the significance of the holiday in the context of the ongoing conflicts in Israel and the broader Middle East.

Chanukah celebrates hope and resilience in the face of adversity. The holiday's central theme revolves around the oil miracle lasting eight days in the Holy Temple despite all odds. This can serve as a symbol of hope for a brighter and more peaceful future in the region.

Thus, it is vital to go back in time. The historical context of Chanukah involves the Maccabean Revolt and the struggle for religious freedom against oppression. It's time to reflect on the importance of preserving cultural and religious identities while respecting the rights and identities of others in the region. It is a time to contemplate the importance of peace and actively seek avenues for dialogue, reconciliation, and diplomacy toward peaceful solutions to the conflicts in Israel and the Middle East.

In late 2023, the world has been watching closely as Israel faces challenges and conflicts while trying to protect its land. The ongoing

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THE MIRACLE OF CHANUKAH

conflicts in the region are a poignant reminder of the importance of unity and understanding. Just as the Maccabees fought for the freedom to practice their religion, Israelis hoped for peace, freedom, and protection in the territory.

The story of this fantastic Jewish event brought us the challenges faced by Israel today, which are intertwined with their themes of resilience and the belief in the possibility of miracles. However, the situation in Israel is more complex and has been marked by long standing disagreements and misunderstandings between various parties. Misconstructions often arise due to differing historical narratives, cultural perspectives, and political agendas. Inflammatory rhetoric, stereotypes, and propaganda also contribute to these misapprehensions.

The history of Israel is woven with the rich tapestry of the Jewish people, dating back to 2000 BCE. Despite enduring periods of captivity under various rulers - the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, and Crusaders, and the tragic destruction of both Temples - the resilience of the Jewish people in Israel prevailed. Throughout these events, there was never a moment when the land was devoid of Jewish presence. In 1948, the United Nations recognized this enduring connection, and established the State of Israel - the nation of Jews.

What is the root of the problem then? Hate! This is a war of hate - history repeating itself. It is easy for the ignorant to mischaracterize what is going on 'behind the scenes.' But hatred from those seeking to eradicate the Jews from this planet won't win the combat. *Am Israel Chai* (the People of Israel live!). Words have wings. Words hold power. They matter. We continuously saw how to die together. The time has come for us to triumph in living together!

The miracle of Chanukah teaches us that even amid struggle, we can

find moments of light and inspiration and that small acts of courage and determination can lead to significant change. As we light the Chanukah candles, we can't help but think about the modern-day miracles and the resilience of the Israeli people. Chanukah is a reminder that miracles can happen even in the face of adversity, and the light of hope can shine through the darkest times.

We are reminded that miracles are not just events from the past; they can also happen in the present and future. It's time to take a moment to reflect on the human toll of war and conflict. Consider the people on all sides who have been affected and the importance of finding ways to prevent further suffering. The lighting of the menorah signifies unity and the coming together of the Jewish community. Statements matter. They truly do. And so, do deeds. Now, more than ever, claiming "never again" is imperative to ensure the world never forgets.

Chanukah is the most authentic inspiration for this never-too-late and never-again lesson. Our ability to change is ever-present. It doesn't simply get the last word. It paces the next one. This beautiful holiday can also serve as a time to recommit to these values and to actively seek ways to contribute to a more peaceful and just world. May the Festival of Lights illuminate our hearts with hope and inspire us to work towards a more peaceful and harmonious world where the miracles of unity and understanding can be realized. Chag Urim Sameach!

Yosef Rodrigues Ph.D. is the Director of the Portuguese Language Center Camões, I.P. at UMass Boston. He is a faculty member at Boston College and UMass Boston and the author of the Portuguese book "À Luz da Kabbalah" (publ. Guerra & Paz).



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ANOTHER VICTIM: HOPE

The cheers, and the silence, over the slaying of civilians inflicts a fatal blow to hopes for a joint future

By Ron Salpeter

It is far from an unfounded suspicion that the Palestinian individuals I employed as CEO of a food tech company (its main production facility is in Kibbutz Beeri) played a role in drawing the maps Hamas terrorists used when going from one home to another to butcher more families.

These Gazan workers - I am still able to recall some of the names and faces - were welcomed by us at "Hinoman," where they could earn a decent living, enough to take good care of their families.

I recall in particular a meeting we had when I visited them in their residential quarters inside our 25-acre production compound during COVID. I heard from them that when faced with the dilemma of contracting COVID, being confined to Gaza, or staying for the duration of the pandemic in Israel, they preferred to stay with us, thereby giving up visiting their families who lived no more than four miles away on the other side of the fence.

For about two years, Gazan workers lived in our kibbutz. The Hinoman premises, by the way, are now burned to the ground.



How naïve we Israelis have been

This was an enterprise set to bring to the world a high protein, high-B12 natural source to treat, amongst other conditions, malnutrition.

But what are burned offices when over 200 bodies of civilians remain unidentifiable for weeks, given the atrocious disfiguration, the chopping off of limbs, and the burning of entire families?

Aside from the black holes in our chests over the brutal massacre in which thousands of Palestinians, Hamas terrorists and also supporters took part, this barbaric attack casts a fatally despairing effect on me (and on most Israelis). We now realize how our coexistence-driven acceptance of these workers at Hinoman, along with many other workplaces across the 22 villages and Kibbutzim adjacent to the Gaza Strip (the

"OTEF AZA" villages belt) was reciprocated by the rejoicing of so many in Gaza over the killing of babies, kidnapping of the elderly, raping of young women to cheering crowds, and the sadistic chopping off of hands and other body members of parents and children in the same living room. This reaction in Gaza, as in many other places in the Arab world, is a sight that tells us that we have nothing in common with the societies that breed these barbarians and cheer them on.

We should probably not really be that shocked, as this reaction is commensurate with those seen in Syria over the killings of former neighbors during the long years of the civil war there. Or the same

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ANOTHER VICTIM: HOPE

in the face of the slaughtering of Christians by Muslims in Lebanon, mass rape and murders of young girls by Buka Haram in Africa, and other atrocities.

How naïve we Israelis have been: our “wishful thinking” to finally be accepted by the Arab world deafened us from listening to recurring declarations in Hamas manifestos and gatherings stating loudly and clearly that eventually the Muslims would obliterate the Jewish presence in the Middle East, as part of carrying out Allah’s war over all “infidels” in ferocious jihads.

We kept “filtering” this because it did not match our deeply-rooted desire to be accepted and integrated in the Middle East, better known as: the “New Middle East,” soon to include Saudi Arabia, as we had been informed.

The fatal blow to my belief in a joint flourishing future of collaboration and mutual respect was further enhanced when most Arab countries (with the exception of the UAE, Oman, Bahrain and Morocco) failed to denounce Hamas for their hideous assault on peaceful civilians. The fact that the Arab world is not alienating itself from a group that planned and carried out mass murder of over a thousand civilians at their homes and at a peaceful music festival is telling me and all of us in Israel what the core “values” are that create the fabric of these societies and their regimes.

The awakening this causes is all the more horrifying to the many Israelis and Jews in America who have been working to advance a joint future for Israelis and Palestinians in many ways, like driving sick Palestinian kids from the border posts to Israeli hospitals for care.

All this is now terminated due not only to security needs to close the borders, but no less so due to hearts closing out the other side’s pain in light of the rejoicing and the silent reactions alike.

The lack of condemnation of missile attacks by the Arab and Muslim world is not new to us. But its prevalence now in the face of a disaster that is 15 times larger than 9/11, that includes so many shootings in the backs of fleeing youngsters at a music festival, so many homes burned with families inside, so many tortures and rapes of young women, and the kidnapping of 20 elderly people in their 70s-90s - some suffering from Alzheimer’s, and of close to 30 children is unprecedented.

The abettance of this has made me, and so many others, lose any hope or desire to try to build a future with these people.

Ron Salpeter is an Israeli venture capitalist who moved to Boston 3 months ago and who is now, amongst other activities, helping raise funds to rebuild “Hinoman” as a symbol of the recovery of Beeri and its surroundings.



Before and after photos of kibbutz Beeri



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BEING JEWISH DOES NOT ABSOLVE YOU FROM PRAISING HAMAS, OR ATTACKING ISRAELI VICTIMS

By Douglas Sandoval

In October 2023, CAMERA on Campus began to document a new vile phenomenon, where anti-Zionist student groups, namely Students for Justice in Palestine and their supporters, openly praised Hamas and argued that Israeli civilians massacred on October 7 got what they deserved.

Following the Hamas massacre, Israeli artists Dede Banaid and Nitzan Mintz started "Kidnapped," - a campaign to raise public awareness of the more than 220 known Israeli hostages taken into Gaza by Hamas.

Their call to action? To raise awareness by spreading and sharing posters with the names, photos, and details of Israeli hostages in Hamas custody in public areas.

Like many pro-Israel groups on campus, Boston University Students for Israel (BUSI), a student group that participates in the CAMERA on Campus Coalition program, took part, posting flyers of the hostages on corkboards, lamp posts, and common areas of the university.

On Friday, October 13, members of BUSI spotted a group of students tearing down the posters, which included Noora Lahoud, an active member of Boston University Students for Justice in Palestine, and Anna Epstein, co-president of Politica, a self-identified global affairs club and publication run by Boston University students.

After witnessing Noor Lahoud tear down several posters, a member of BUSI began filming. She then continued to tear away at more posters on video. As Lahoud walked away, she claimed the posters were "spreading propaganda - fake news." She flagrantly denied well-documented Hamas war crimes that included the kidnapping of more than 220 Israelis.

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When a member of Boston University Students for Israel confronted Anna Epstein, she absurdly attempted to justify her actions of tearing down the flyers by saying that any support for the Israeli victims was propaganda. She tried to justify this by stating that she is Jewish.

Being Jewish does not absolve someone from being antisemitic, as CAMERA has documented. There are Jewish groups like Jewish Voice for Peace and public figures like cartoonist Eli Valley that identify as Jewish yet disseminate antisemitic tropes. One can be intolerant toward their own people group.

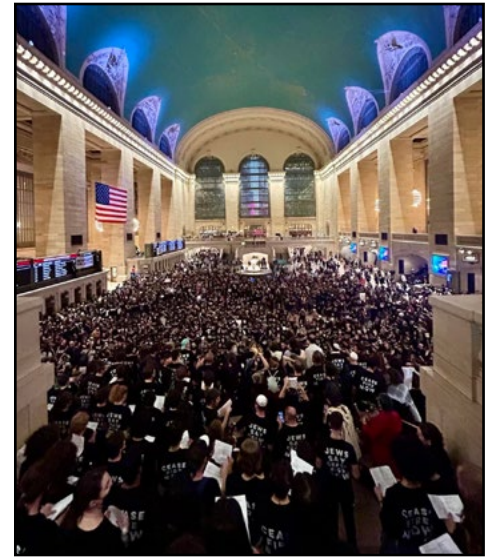
Of course, students can express their opinions, but tearing down posters and effectively silencing the speech of other students is a violation of the basic tenets of free speech. It is hypocritical to believe that their speech triumphs over someone else's.

Members of Students for Justice in Palestine at Boston University and their supporters are not satisfied with celebrating the mass murder, rape, and kidnapping of Jews and calling for the elimination of the State of Israel in public rallies.

Instead, they also insist on hiding the atrocities committed by Hamas, including the abhorrent detainment of hundreds of Israeli civilians, including women, children, and the elderly.

Let's be clear: Jewish and pro-Israel advocates on, and off campus must not relent in our efforts to give voice to the voiceless. We must continue to advocate for the innocent people brutally attacked and held hostage at the hands of Hamas. No one, especially terror apologists on campus, will keep us quiet.

Douglas Sandoval is Managing Director for CAMERA on Campus. A similar article was originally published in the Algemeiner.



In New York, two very distinct factions of Jews protested Israeli actions at separate locations. Orthodox Jews, critical of Zionism and the secular State of Israel, marched with Pro-Palestinians. Jewish Voice for Peace staged a sit-in protest at Grand Central on October 27, emphasizing a shared demand for an immediate ceasefire, irrespective of the hostages' return.

(Photos: Facebook and Instagram)

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE WAR

By Rabbi Moshe Y. Bleich of Wellesley-Weston Chabad

Q: Rabbi, some of my friends protested this week, blaming Israel for the atrocities of Hamas. Can you answer some of the questions posed?

A: Absolutely. I wish every one of us would familiarize ourselves with the facts, not the myths, so we can each become ambassadors for truth and peace.

Q: Instead of firing back at Hamas, why does Israel not concede to Hamas' demands so they would stop killing Jews and stop firing rockets?

A: Hamas openly calls and aims for the death of every Jew in Israel, as clearly stated in their charter, written in 1987 (which you can read online). Should Israel concede to this demand? Should we murder every Jew in Israel and then there will be no more terror and no more rockets? Hamas is a genocidal terrorist organization that wants to wipe Israel.

Q: Why do you say it is about genocide? Maybe it is just about occupation? Israel is occupying Gaza and has created a siege around it, so in desperation, the Gazans need to kill Jews and shoot rockets to fight the injustice.

A: I believe in Hamas. They state clearly in their charter and all their messages that the goal here is the eradication of the Jewish people. If someone just hates Jews and Israel with no rationale, there is little to be said in defense of truth. But if someone is looking for some truth, here it is: In August of 2005, Israel expelled ten thousand Jews from their homes in Gaza, their communities demolished by the Israel Defense Forces. Not a single Jew or Israeli soldier was left in Gaza. The siege Israel created was not to block any essentials, but only to stop (unsuccessfully) weaponry from being smuggled into Gaza to be used against Jews in Israel.

Q: Why not just withdraw to the pre-1967 lines, and create a

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE WAR

Palestinian State, and all will be fine?

A: Israel did just that with Gaza! Gaza was the first Palestinian State, created back in 2005, and it became a center of terror. It became instantly clear that the demand for a Palestinian State was not to live side by side with Israel, but to replace Israel. Following the Oslo Accords, when Israel gave autonomy to Palestinians in the West Bank, Israel saw the worst terror attacks against its citizens. Conceding territory, sadly, is an invitation for war, not peace.

Q: How can Israel justify killing civilians if their intent is to destroy Hamas?

A: The death of every innocent human being is horrific. But what is the reason for all these tragic casualties? Because Hamas places its fighters among the civilian population, using them as human shields, and launches its rockets from schools, hospitals, and homes. The Palestinian people are being held hostage by Hamas. If Hamas would not be sending murderers and shooting rockets into Israel, would even one child in Gaza die? Never. So why are we blaming Israel for deaths caused by Hamas?

Q: But Israel is shooting rockets into Gaza and killing these innocent people?

A: If someone declared war on your country, and it is waging the war amidst its civilian population, do you try to defeat your enemy or do you just allow your people to die? If you really care about the safety and future of Palestinian children, you should embrace Israel and combat Hamas. If only Hamas would love their own children a little more than they hate Israeli children, there would be peace.

Q: Still, isn't Israel's response disproportionate? Can't they show more restraint?

A: When you are trying to end a war, you try to end it as swiftly as you can. Remember, if Hamas would not murder and kidnap Jews, this war would have never begun. Israel's moral duty today is to eliminate

Hamas completely and take full control over Gaza, so that no more innocent people die. This is not about being proportionate. This is about ensuring that 6 million Jews in Israel are not slain.

Q: Doesn't Israel understand that they are creating more terrorists? The fury at Israel as a result of bombing Gaza will make more people want to join Hamas.

A: First of all, feelings of frustration and rage do not make you into a terrorist. A culture of death and education of hate does. Israel doesn't need to do anything to create terrorists - Islamic extremism does that, but Israel must act to destroy those who threaten its people. There is one great mistake Israel has made: It allowed the terror organizations and cells around it and inside of it to flourish. Israel showed weakness for years and we saw the consequences on October 7.

May G-d protect every Jew living in Israel, and may He protect all innocent people, the world over. May G-d give our leaders the wisdom and courage to do what they need to do to protect our people and our homeland.



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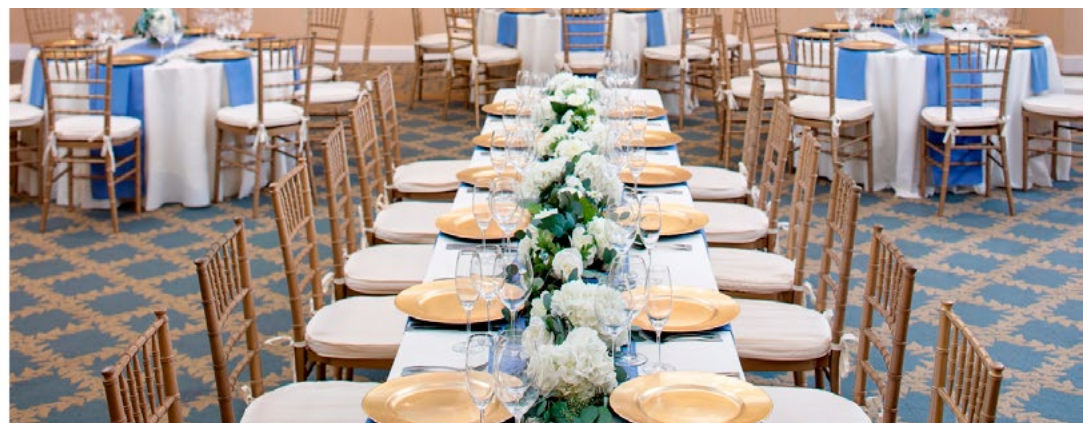
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Helping Students Locate Their Resilience in Times of Uncertainty

By Brian Cohen

One of the hardest things to manage as an educator or school leader is keeping the school environment positive, engaging, and predictable for children at a time when we ourselves feel deeply disturbed. I've lived through versions of this throughout my career, such as: Oklahoma City, September 11, Boston Marathon bombing, and the murder of Ezra Schwartz in Israel. When we are in positions of authority in schools, when we create the very structures that allow students, staff, and families to feel a sense of order and calm, we must focus our attention on those things that make us feel safe.

To a large degree, for Jews across the world and especially in Israel, the events of October 7 and all days hence have felt like something more foundational has changed. A seismic shift that is reshaping the landscape of what it means to be a Jew in this day and age, let alone to work or study in a Jewish school environment. It has permeated our minds, our hearts, our spirit. And our students, regardless of age, know and feel it, too. Whether it is an 8th grader who can articulate his or her feelings on the matter or pose insightful questions, or a 1st grader who comments that she can see on the faces of the adults that something is very wrong, our children are absorbing the impact of this collective trauma.

According to the American Psychological Association:

Current events are often uncertain for children. They look to parents as well as teachers to make them feel safe in a time of war. As children start to study subjects that teach them about the world outside of their home, they will need your help to sort it all out. You may wonder how you can teach your child to move beyond the fears that a time of war brings. The good news is that, just as your children learn reading and writing, they can learn the skills of resilience - the

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ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

On the evening of October 9, the day before our students returned to school following that horrific weekend, I gathered my staff together on a Zoom. We had to see each other and begin speaking about what we were feeling, how the next day of school might go, how to care for ourselves and support one another, and most importantly how to support students. We decided to take a varied approach based on the developmental levels of the children. Notice, I didn't say based on age. In our school, true to our dynamic individualized approach across grade levels and subjects, we try to meet each student where they are at in their thinking and skills.

Some students had little to no clue what had unfolded in Israel, while others of all ages began speaking about what they had heard or read. Our younger students began making cards for Israelis in general and soldiers in particular. Through their card making they would often ask clarifying questions or express thoughts or feelings. Without directly discussing the topic in this way we were able to hear what was on their minds and address that appropriately given the context. Our middle school students had a more in-depth conversation based on a structure we share with many other institutions when speaking about complex events: the head (thoughts), the heart (feelings), and the hands (actions). We gathered for communal prayer and to sing Hatikva regularly. We have continued on with different moments of creative expression through art and voice. We try to guide each individual toward resiliency so that they can feel less helpless, more hopeful, and more safe.

It's not that we can guarantee without a doubt that they will be safe and secure at all times. That would not, in fact, be fair or true. But we can make them feel safe and secure, and the physical and psychological benefits of that will greatly impact how they learn to adapt and experience life. Maintaining a school environment that is safe, predictable, supportive, engaging, and kind is the most important action schools can take for their children at this time and at all times.

Brian Cohen is the Head of School at MetroWest Jewish Day School in Framingham. He received his Masters degree in School Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



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1773: When the Rabbi from Hebron meets the Reverend from Newport

By Rabbi Shlomo Pereira

From the 13th to the late 19th century, Jewish communities in the Land of Israel relied on charity funds from the Diaspora for their livelihoods. Most Jews resided in the so-called four Holy cities of Safed, Hebron, Jerusalem, and Tiberias, dedicating their time to prayer and the study of Torah, Talmud, or Kabbalah, with limited opportunities for earning a living.

The presence of a Jewish population in the Land of Israel fostered a stronger connection for the Diaspora to their ancestral roots, solidifying its general and Jewish identities. In return, the Diaspora provided the communities in the Land of Israel with financial support through a worldwide communal system known as *Chalukah*, or “distribution.”

Beginning in the early 17th century, four major Jewish communities regularly sent emissaries to the

Diaspora to collect and facilitate the transfer of funds needed for their sustenance. In the latter half of the 18th century, this system achieved a high level of coordination and efficiency under the authority of the Committee of Officials for Palestine, based in Istanbul.

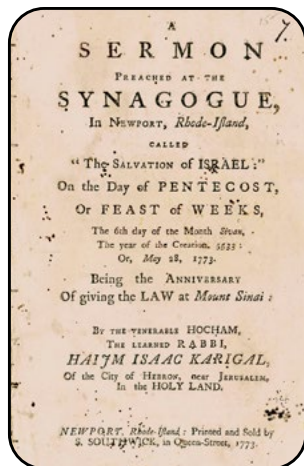
At around the same time, these communities in the Land of Israel, primarily Sephardic, began dispatching emissaries to North America. The Jewish community there, also largely Sephardic, was entering a period of stability and prosperity. It is within this context that R. Karigal, an emissary from Hebron, established a close friendship with Rev. Stiles during his visit to Newport, Rhode Island, in 1773.

R. Raphael Chaim Yitzchak Karigal (1733-1777) was born in Hebron in 1733. His academic journey led him to the Chessed L’Avraham V’emes LeYaakov Sephardic yeshiva in Hebron, and then briefly to

Jerusalem. He demonstrated extraordinary talent by achieving rabbinic education and ordination at the remarkably young age of 17.

R. Karigal’s appointment as an emissary of Hebron to the Diaspora in 1754 was equally impressive. His appointment at the young age of 21 demonstrated the high regard in which his contemporaries held him. Although the primary mission of an emissary was to fundraise, its role extended to bringing the teachings of the Land of Israel to the Diaspora, addressing complex Jewish legal questions, resolving communal disputes, and helping with the development of the local Torah institutions, all of which required substantial knowledge and maturity.

Un 1754, R. Karigal’s travels took him first on a two-year journey



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1773: When the Rabbi from Hebron meets the Reverend from Newport

across the Middle East that included visits to Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Persia, Syria, and Turkey, and then, in 1757, on a five-year trip through Europe, making stops in Italy, England, Germany, and Holland.

In 1761, he departed from Holland to Curaçao, where he spent two years at the behest of the Dutch Jewish communities, temporarily replacing R. Rafael Mendes de Sola, who had just passed away. In 1764, R. Karigal returned to Holland, eventually moving on to Germany and Italy.

Still, in 1764, after a ten-year absence, he returned to Hebron, where he spent the next four years. In 1768, he ventured to France and England, where he taught in London for over two years. His journey continued with stops in Jamaica for a year (1771–72) and then in the British colonies of North America for another year (1772–73). Here, he visited for a month, first Philadelphia and then New York City, and finally Newport, where he stayed for about four and a half months.

Following his stay in the American colonies, R. Karigal sailed to Suriname and subsequently took on a rabbinic role in Barbados in 1775. This appointment was significant for the Barbadian Jewish community, which had been without a rabbi for over two decades. R. Karigal served as their spiritual leader until his passing in 1777.

Notably, during his visit to Newport, R. Karigal formed a close friendship with Rev. Ezra Stiles (1727-1795), an educator, theologian, and ordained Christian minister. Rev. Stiles, a founder of Brown University in 1764 and later president of Yale University from 1778 to 1795, first encountered R. Karigal during the 1773 Purim service

at the by then already venerable Newport synagogue Khal Kadosh Yeshuat Yisrael.

On March 30, 1773, impressed by R. Karigal's depth of knowledge and character, Rev. Stiles invited him and respected local Jewish merchant Aaron Lopez to his home. R. Karigal and Rev. Stiles developed a profound connection, meeting 28 times in four and a half months until R. Karigal's departure.

Their discussions spanned a wide range of topics, from Holy Land politics to Jewish mysticism. R. Karigal also tutored Rev. Stiles in Hebrew, resulting in extensive correspondence in Hebrew between them.

In his diary, Rev. Stiles documented their interactions in great detail, expressing deep admiration for his Jewish friend. He described R. Karigal's attire, manner, and personality, dedicating many pages to detailing his passage through Newport. In 1781, Rev. Stiles commissioned a portrait of R. Karigal by artist Samuel King for Yale University, which is still on display.

In addition, in 1773, two of R. Karigal's sermons were published in Newport, marking the first Jewish sermons printed in North America. R. Karigal's legacy lives on as a scholar, emissary, and most of all, as a bridge between communities across continents.

Rabbi Shlomo Pereira is the director of adult education at the Chabad of Virginia, Richmond. He can be reached at shlomo@chabadofva.org.

Photos: Rabbi Raphael Haijm Isaac Karigal (1733–1777) Yale University and Cover of R. Karigal first sermon.



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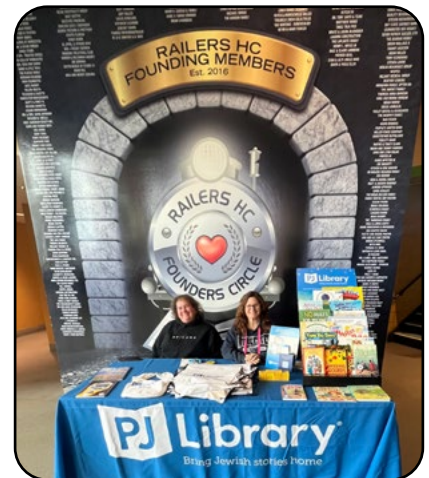
Members of the Chaverim, a Jewish Federation of Central Mass group, celebrated the Jewish New Year at the home of Eli and Iris Kraus

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CENTRAL MASS



The Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts' Annual meeting and Community Gathering for Israel took place on October 12 at the Worcester JCC. The event included remarks from Israel Consul General for New England Meron Reuben and a tribute to Steven Sosnoff.



Steven Sosnoff received the Toby Richmond z"l Leadership Award

Photos: Bruce Wahle



Israeli Flag Raising at half-mast at Worcester City Hall, "We Stand With Israel" event, on October 11



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“NEVER AGAIN”

By Lew Finfer

It's often the rallying cry against the Holocaust ever again being contemplated. People vowing to not let it happen. We hear it now after Hamas's actions on October 7.

But I heard the words, “never again” from a Muslim woman in a class I'm teaching at Harvard Divinity School on faith-based community organizing.

She was talking about the discrimination and targeting of Muslims that happened after 9/11, and now she is fearful it's starting again because of the reactions against Hamas' slaughter of 1400 Jews and taking of 250 hostages.

And an estimated 8000 Palestinians have been killed by Israel's bombing and we're only maybe at the beginning of the war. That's Hamas's estimate (as of Oct.30), which may not be accurate, but I'm sure too many thousands of Palestinians have died from the bombs dropped on Gaza.

People want to be seen and empathized with.

We see that in the strong reactions against statements from organizations, universities, hospitals, governments and politicians that refer more to the Jews killed or more about the Palestinians killed. Yet talking about both doesn't make anyone feel better either.

Meanwhile, the “Never Again” pledge has not been fulfilled by our world when we look at subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Darfur, Myanmar, etc. That's on all of us. But, I'm digressing.

I was impressed reading about the Brothers in Arms group in Israel. They are mostly veterans and reservists who have been leaders in the groups who protested in huge numbers against Prime Minister Netanyahu's major changes to the legal system. But after the Hamas carnage, they quickly pivoted to vast relief work for the 60,000 Jews displaced from land nearby to Gaza, helping the military get vests and helmets, and researching social media to verify who are hostages. Reportedly 15,000 people a day are part of their efforts. This is impressive.

This issue is like the ancient Gordian Knot. Killing civilians, whether by Hamas or Israel, is indefensible. Yet Hamas can't be allowed to continue, or they will do this again. And this leads to killing civilians in Gaza while hunting for Hamas. And that results in inflaming antisemitism greatly in our country and abroad.

We need to find ways to act to overcome this huge dilemma. It will take wisdom, guts, common sense, charity, empathy, and prayers. That's a lot to ask of anyone and from all of us. I don't know the way forward, but enough of us together may. And G-d gave us the tools by which to accomplish this.

Lew Finfer is a community organizer with Massachusetts Action for Justice. He can be reached at LewFinfer@gmail.com.



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The Escalation of Antisemitism Amidst the Israeli-Hamas Conflict

By Colette A. M. Phillips

As a Black, Jewish progressive woman, I am appalled and sickened by the Jewish hate and vile commentary coming from some corners of the progressive community in the US and other democracies across the world. I now have a glimpse into what Nazi Germany must have felt like for Jews in the 1930's. The underlying anti-Israel and Jewish bias is evident in the fact that these progressives are calling on Israel to deescalate but not for Hamas return the hostages.

The horrific barbaric attack on Israel by the terrorist organization Hamas in October has ignited a disturbing rise of antisemitism, in America on college campuses in particular. A recent poll conducted by The Jewish Federation of North America has shed light on the sentiments and concerns of the American Jewish community in the aftermath of October 7th, with 70 % of American Jews saying they feel unsafe in America.

The Israel-Hamas conflict has shone a spotlight on how deeply embedded antisemitism is within both America and the world. Within the first 24 hours, while Israel and Jewish people around the world were still grappling with the shock and horror of the slaughter, rape, burning, beheading and kidnapping of innocent Israeli civilians including infants, the elderly, young people and families, in America and around the world, pro-Palestinian rallies were already taking place.

One troubling manifestation of the surge in antisemitism is the rallying cry "from the river to the sea," which has gained traction in protests and social media campaigns. While some argue that the slogan represents a call for a single unified state with equal rights for both Israelis and Palestinians, its historic connotation traced back to calls for the annihilation of Israel all together. The use of such a slogan, coupled with the alarming frequency of calls for Israel's destruction, has contributed to an atmosphere, where antisemitism thrives.

The impact of this surge in antisemitism extends beyond the virtual realm, infiltrating real world spaces and putting all Jews at risk, and in particular Jewish students on college campuses. Jewish students report feeling unsafe, isolated and fearful for their lives. They have been the victims of harassment, physical and verbal assault and death threats including chants calling for the genocide of Jews. But beyond this, what has been even more disturbing is the failure and lack of action by college presidents and their administrations to protect their Jewish students. It's a fact that if these students were Black, Latino, Asian or



Colette Phillips with Rabbi Tamar Manessah and JALSA ED Cindy Rowe

members of the LGBTQ community that the institutions would have taken instant action to protect them.

Educational institutions play a critical role in fostering, understanding, inclusion and acceptance. They are also a place where free expression should take place, but "hate speech" is not "free speech" and just like you cannot call out fire in a theater, there should be zero tolerance for hate speech on campuses. Universities and colleges must take action immediately to implement robust policies to ensure the safety of Jewish students, by addressing and preventing antisemitism, harassment

and discrimination. Jewish students must have safe spaces to discuss their beliefs, celebrate their culture as well as promote peaceful discussions surrounding Jewish identity, including Zionism. I urge all Institutions of Higher Education to adhere to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism (a requirement to receive Title VI federal funding).

By fostering open dialogue, promoting education and strongly condemning acts of discrimination and antisemitism, we can work towards a future where differences are embraced rather than used as a catalyst for hate. It is only through a collective effort that we can hope to dismantle the barriers that perpetuate bigotry and prejudice and build a world where all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds can coexist in peace.

Colette A.M. Phillips is a member of the American Jewish Committee leadership board and author of The Includers: The 7 Traits of Culturally Savvy, Anti-Racist Leaders. She is President and CEO of Colette Phillips Communications, Inc.

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TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE FOR ISRAEL

By Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.

As one who moved to Israel with my wife in 2016, I was shocked and saddened by the intelligence and other failures that led to the brutal massacre of 1,400 Israelis and the kidnapping of 230 Israelis on October 7. I hope and pray that Israel wins a very decisive military victory so that Hamas is completely destroyed and that Israel will never face such a threat again. Fortunately my family is safe, but, as I write this on November 1, 2023, I am very concerned about the safety of my three grandchildren who have been called up for military service, as well as the many other Israelis who are now in harm's way.

Among the many other worrisome considerations related to the current tragic situation are:

- Israel might become bogged down in a long, difficult, and very painful war in Gaza. That would very negatively affect our economy as hundreds of thousands of Israelis have been called to military service.
- Hezbollah might open up a new front in northern Israel. This could be especially harmful as they are far stronger militarily than Hamas, with many more rockets that have far greater destructive power.
- Relations between Israeli Jews and Arabs might deteriorate to the point that it could cause conflicts in mixed Jewish/Muslim cities. Already, some Arab bus drivers are refusing to come to work because they have been harassed or threatened and some Israeli Jews are urging supermarkets to fire their Arab workers. Israel's economy depends on Arab workers so this could have very serious consequences.

• The above factors might result in increased conflicts between Jews and Palestinians in the already volatile West Bank (Judea and Samaria), where there has already been a significant increase in attacks from both groups.

• There has already been a reported 12-fold increase in antisemitism in many areas of the world and this could continue and even worsen.

Because of these worrisome concerns and the present extremely difficult conditions, it is important to consider "the day after," Israel's future after hopefully Hamas is no longer a threat and the situation in Israel has been stabilized. Along with many world leaders, including US President Joe Biden and Israeli military and strategic experts, I think Israel should make it a priority to pursue a two-state resolution of its conflict with the Palestinians. This would not be easy and would involve painful compromises but such a resolution is essential for Israel to be able to avert continued and possibly increased violence and diplomatic criticism, effectively respond to our economic, environmental, and other domestic problems, and remain both a Jewish and a democratic nation.

As long ago as 2013 an Israeli Academy Award-nominated



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TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE FOR ISRAEL

documentary, *The Gatekeepers*, provided interviews of the then six-living retired heads of the Shin Bet, Israel's security service. The six strategic experts unanimously were critical of Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and felt that Israel should be doing more to help resolve the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in order to provide Israel with a decent future.

These views are shared by Commanders for Israel's Security (CIS), which includes over 300 Israeli retired generals and leaders of Mossad, Shin Bet, and Israel's police force. They believe that advancing Israeli separation from the Palestinians into two states, as part of a regional initiative, is the best way to maintain Israel as a Jewish democracy.

Most of the world's leaders and strong majorities of US Democratic politicians and US Jews also favor a two-state resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

Of course, any agreement would need to include security guarantees for Israel and involve territorial swaps that would involve over 70 percent of West Bank Jewish residents to become residents of Israel.

The achievement of peace between Israel and the Palestinians and nearby Arab states is essential to a decent future for Israel. Pursuing it puts into practice essential Jewish values and mandates: to seek and pursue peace (*Psalms* 34:14), to turn enemies into friends (*Avot d'Rebbe Natan* 23:1), and to work cooperatively for justice (*Deuteronomy* 16:20) and the preservation of God's world (*Genesis* 2:15).

In addition, a resolution of the conflict would serve as a model for other trouble spots throughout the world.

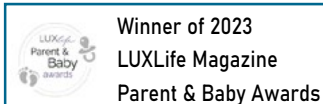
Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D. is Professor Emeritus at College of Staten Island. He is the author of *Vegan Revolution: Saving Our World, Revitalizing Judaism; Judaism and Vegetarianism; and over 250 articles at JewishVeg.org/schwartz. Learn more at www.facebook.org/JewishVeg.*



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A CHRISTIAN CONFRONTS ANTISEMITISM

By Prof. John J. Michalczyk

The journey has been long and winding, with the most recent experience being the terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel on October 7. It marked the loss of approximately 1400 Jewish lives, and indicated that the hatred of Jews continues, as if the Nazi work in the Shoah had not yet finished.

This obliged me to ask why this hatred of Jews rears its ugly head time and time again. My thoughts turned to my own journey toward understanding antisemitism. It began for me at Harvard, writing a doctoral thesis on fascism, art and propaganda in 1970. I saw fascism in Germany through a political lens, as it destroyed the lives of the Jewish community in Germany and trickled into Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

However, it was a decade later that I saw visually the impact of German fascism and totalitarianism reflected in the Shoah. Through the kindness of Sharon Rivo and the National Center for Jewish Film at Brandeis, I had the opportunity to view their entire Holocaust film collection with graphic works like Death Mills and Nuremberg. I saw close up on a small screen what racism, prejudice, and a mindset that some peoples are inferior can do in a genocidal attempt to eliminate 11 million European Jews, a goal for the Nazi government at Wannsee in 1942. I presented my findings on *The Origins of the Holocaust Film* at a conference in the early 1980s.

However, the turning point came in my Christian-Jewish relations understanding in 1991. A student in my Freshman Honors Program class raised a question from our classic studies of 5 books of the Hebrew Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Job, Isaiah and Psalms) and

the Christian Testament (Gospels of Matthew, John and Acts of the Apostles). She asked why the Jews were the heroes in the first semester and the villains in the second semester, especially in the readings of Matthew and John. We pursued this question in depth.

This troubling quest for me, a former Jesuit priest dedicated to education and social justice, impacted the rest of my career as a teacher, documentary filmmaker and author focusing on the Holocaust, genocide and conflict resolution. It resulted in a conference and my first feature documentary film, *The Cross and the Star: Jews, Christians and the Holocaust*, and then a series of films and books on Jewish themes, drawing together local Bostonians like Lenny Zakim, Nat Hentoff, Rabbi Harold Kushner, Larry Langer, and a host of Holocaust survivors such as poet Sonia Weitz, Cantor Gregor Shelkan, and Schindler's List survivor Rena Finder.

These were my guides as I penetrated deeper into the tragic arena of antisemitism, the Holocaust, and later the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In my film on the latter conflict and the tragedy of 9/11, I began to see how Jews and Arabs were both Semitic peoples and considered that their shared humanity was at stake.

Earlier on, I was delighted when at last the Catholic teaching about the Jews took a radical turn for the better in the 1960s Vatican Council teaching of *Nostra Aetate (In Our Times)* with Boston Cardinal Archbishop Richard Cushing taking a lead. He was a strong voice in changing Catholic teaching about Jews and the accusation of deicide, which my parents were unfortunately exposed to on Good Fridays.

In our several taped film interviews with Holocaust survivor Cantor Gregor Shelkan, he expressed pride in Cardinal Cushing's coming to Congregation Mishkan Tefila to speak about the goodness of his Jewish brother-in-law. Cantor Shelkan also repeated, "Don't forget, Jesus was a Jew!"

In 2003, my collaborative work on the six-part film series *Walking God's Paths* with Rabbi Gil Rosenthal and Professor Phil Cunningham opened my eyes to more important dialogue that had to be conducted on Christian-Jewish relations.

Along with producing documentaries such as *Nazi Medicine*, *In the Shadow of the Reich*, and *Of Stars & Shamrocks: Boston's Jews & Irish*, narrated by Brian O'Donovan, my courses on *Propaganda Film and Holocaust and the Arts* have helped convey how the visual image – whether in Nazi Germany or the dark corners of the web in white supremacists antisemitic podcasts and manifestos – spread messages of hate.

The strident chant of white supremacists in Charlottesville in 2017, "Jews will not replace us!" and the Nazi slogan "Blood and Soil," still echo today. The Jewish blood spilled in the Tree of Life synagogue still haunts me.

In 1955, only a decade after the death camps emptied, the Holocaust survivor Jean Cayrol, narrator of Alain Resnais' powerful documentary *Night and Fog*, comments over the images of the remnants of the crematoria on screen: "We survey these ruins with a heartfelt gaze, certain the old monster lies crushed beneath the rubble. We pretend to regain hope as the image recedes, as though we've been cured of the plague of the camps," Cayrol said. Yet unfortunately, the mythic and unfortunately real hatred of Jews continues to plague me today.

Prof. John J. Michalczyk is the Co-Director of the Jewish Studies Program at Boston College.

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IT IS NOT TRUE THAT WE NEVER FORGET

By Cynthia Stead

My father Nils Stead was a member of the U.S. Army's Yankee Division at the close of WW2. He fought in northern Europe under the command of General Patton. He was among the troops who discovered The Camps. It changed his life.

When I was a teen, we talked about this in a very oblique way. He spoke of the evil genius of the Nazi system. All children must join the Hitler Youth. The adults were told to be on the lookout for the bullies, the intimidators, who liked to push a weaker kid off a swing. They were promoted to a more elite group, and the education about the darkest side of the Jewry began there. The instructors were also told to look out for those who like to hurt animals, or taunt weaker children. Those were educated in the evil and corruption of the Jewry, and it was suggested that they could feed their appetites to their hearts content abusing them. If they had to work hard and learned techniques, they could have a very special patriotic duty. The most brutal of that cadre was sent to administer and guard the camps.

One camp they liberated in Poland was a special example. As the Army tanks approached, the guards were still herding the captives in the barracks, lining them up in front of the pits, and machine gunning them. They then quickly spread quicklime to process the next batch of Jews. There were tears running down their faces as the US troops wrestled the guns out of their hands – because they knew they would never be able to satisfy their urges to maim and kill in such a way again.

My father abhorred all forms of racial and religious prejudice, because he saw how it could be used to pervert the young and create a lifelong hatred. No slur or word denigrating another person for race, or religion, or gender was ever tolerated in my house. My family was Swedish, and we looked like the posters for the upstanding Aryan family. But as my father said, we were not immune. No matter how blond my hair or blue my eyes, I would not satisfy the eugenics behind the extermination of the Jews. I am epileptic and have seizures, so I would not have been acceptable for breeding the Super Race. I would be exterminated like a Gypsy, or an African, or a Jew. The Nazi ideal of purity was paramount, as it is in the Intifada.

As with the Nazis, the control of the youth is essential. In some Middle Eastern countries, there are cartoons like Sesame Street for the preschoolers. They often feature brave Palestinian children, saving an elderly lady from having her house robbed and burned by Jews. A brave adult explains why it is so important to fight the Jews, to end their corrupt religion and violent oppression. You must begin early to be taught correctly. Sadly, this has permeated some of our academic institutions as well.

Shortly before he died, my father asked that I have the rabbi from the local synagogue come and visit him. It was important to him that he testify, that he validate the reality of the Holocaust. He was deeply distressed by deniers. I was not there for the conversation, as he did not want his only daughter to hear some of the things he wanted to describe. At his apartment he had packed a box I was never allowed to touch. They were things he had brought home from the war, and they had been kept in the attic for decades. He directed me to bring the box to

the rabbi, and under no circumstances should I open or look into the box. It was the evidence of his testimony and he wanted it preserved. I obeyed him. But in an old desk, I later found a small photo, only 3 x 2 inches long. It shows pale white bodies in a ditch. I put it back in the desk, as my bit of evidence for his testimony.

Because we need to remember to Never Forget.

Cynthia Stead lives on Cape Cod, serves as a trustee of the Perkins School and currently works at Catholic Charities in Hyannis.

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THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION FOR THIS

By Seth Spiegel

What happened to Israeli citizens on October 7 was a horrific tragedy. Hamas took complete advantage of Netanyahu's divisive governance, which had the Israeli government paying more attention to Likud's opposition than a chaotic, threatening Gaza where anything could erupt at any time – as it did.

Those of us who do not support Israel's further actions are often labeled as supporting Hamas. That is untrue. In fact, we are the ones truly supporting the future of Israel, and here is why.

While I can understand the fury driving the desire for a long and aggressive attack on Gaza, that action would actually work against what Israel is trying to accomplish, the defeat of Hamas. With all its military might, Israel could wipe out most if not all members of Hamas in Gaza in a few months. However, Hamas' leadership and funding are not in Gaza. Hamas is more than its localized leaders and fighters; it is an ideology that is ever widening, and attracting sympathy by the hour.

The massive civilian casualties that cannot be avoided with such an action will be utilized by Hamas and its allied groups to recruit more extremists. Each day that it goes on with meager and insufficient humanitarian aid going in creates a widening pool of desperate people for Hamas, Jihad, Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and the remnants of the Islamic State to recruit. Israel is also threatening US national security, as its military action is fomenting new suicide bombers who could be used against us, too.

There is no military solution for this. Israel must either agree to the global call for a ceasefire, or immediately scale back to a special forces war, while publicly allowing a flood of humanitarian aid to get into Gaza. Israel must also recognize a full Palestinian state in the West Bank and get the US, EU, and Arab League to do the same (likely, not difficult). This concerted action would politically dry up Hamas, instead of creating thousands of new suicide bombers. It's not worth hundreds of Israeli soldiers to go on a wild goose chase.

Netanyahu must leave the Al-Aqsa mosque alone. Jews have been allowed to pray at the Wailing Wall for all of the time since the Ottomans had it. It was only after the riot of 1929, stoked by the British and the French, that Jews were banned from it, until 1967. There is no reason to keep raiding, restricting, and periodically shutting down the mosque (which has resulted in shootings and deaths of praying Palestinians) other than to purposely provoke Islamic extremists. It's easy to react and blame; it's harder to think about why things occur, just as with a disease. What are the contributing factors? Life has not been easy for the millions crowded into the tiny Gaza Strip, but nor has it been for the West Bank, with their lands appropriated by settlements and their civilians routinely killed by settlers especially over the past year, a deplorable situation that President Joe Biden said last week must end.

Of course, this does in no way excuse what Hamas did on October 7. But President Biden has been joined by Representatives Seth Moulton and Jake Auchincloss in calling for Israel to formulate an end plan and extend a hand to the Palestinians. There's an old saying, "War is not the answer."

Israel doesn't want to pay for Palestine forever and Palestinians don't want to be dependent either, and unless this situation is resolved, it will always heat up and boil over. There is no need for it, as Palestinians are resourceful on their own. According to the Middle East Eye

THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION FOR THIS

News report of May, 2021, Palestinians represent 50 percent of all pharmacists, transport and construction workers in Israel, 11 percent of civil servants and members of the police, 23 percent of doctors and 21 percent of nurses, and 9.2 percent of tech employees.

Which means the US, EU, and Israel have to invest in building a private sector and do it right, by incentivizing small or midsize companies to invest in Palestinian peer companies. Big to Big Business would skip over a middle class, instead of creating one. Recognizing Palestine might allow the Palestinian Authority to obtain more development resources, and encourage an exodus from Gaza to the West Bank for ordinary Palestinians.

You cannot get rid of Hamas as long as they attract broad low-level support across the region, and in some European countries. The only way to dry that up is to recognize the West Bank as a full Palestinian state with UN and Arab League seats and other positions at the international table. Fatah could potentially receive Arab League backing to forcefully take back Gaza on their own.

Rather than focusing on increased antisemitism (which I believe is more anti-Israel policy-ism) and ignoring the thousands of deaths in Gaza and the corresponding increase in Islamophobia is dismissing the other half of the coin. As I write this, the funeral for the 9-year-old boy in Chicago is being held. We live in a country that took away Native American land and culture and fought integration, often tragically with the noose, and so should especially know that it is G-dly to recognize the value of all human life and condemn discrimination toward all. We all have the right to peace, safety and security, which are rarely won by battle.

More bloodshed of innocents will only bring more bloodshed of innocents. The way out is a negotiated two-state solution. Bring on the negotiating parties and end this endless war.

Seth Speigel, M.B.A., is a historian who resides in New Hampshire.



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Congressman Richard Neal

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YOU ARE NOT ALONE

By Daniel Joslyn-Siemiatkoski

In the weeks following the deadly attacks on southern Israel by Hamas on October 7, a great sense of anxiety has roiled my Jewish friends and colleagues. As a Christian, I have seen the pain and anguish of so many I care about, and of members of communities to which I feel a connection. Their anxiety about the future and their grief and concern for loved ones in Israel is palpable. Some lost family members or know the kidnapped. Others pray and watch as the news unfolds. Many are simply waiting for the other shoe to drop.

Amidst the horrors of October 7 and the military actions that followed, I also saw how so many around me began to worry that they were alone, that public support was shifting away from them, if it was ever there. I heard their cries of support, implicit or explicit, regarding the actions of Hamas, the labeling of victims as occupiers, the unwillingness to acknowledge the extent of atrocities perpetrated against the innocent. All of this made some of my close friends and colleagues feel isolated and alone.

I want to say clearly to the Boston Jewish community that you are not alone. There are many non-Jews like myself who stand with you. We see your suffering and your pain. We mourn with you and grieve the death of innocents. We too want the hostages released. Some of us, like myself and those at the center I direct, have been able to use our resources to issue statements, and to be allies and advocates with our Jewish partners. We bear witness to the events of October 7.

Some of us are motivated by religious convictions, and many of us stand with the Jewish community because of friendships and personal connections. We also feel pulled in other directions. We don't want to see any innocent lives lost. The Christians among us are concerned for our co-religionists in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank, whose positions are already precarious. We see the suffering of fellow human beings but we also refuse to be pulled into the polarizing forces around us. We saw what happened on October 7 and we won't look away. We offer a hand, a hug, a prayer. We will stand beside you. And we wish to simply say, "You are not alone."

Daniel Joslyn-Siemiatkoski is the Kraft Family Professor and Director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Relations at Boston College.

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A MODEL OF PEACE, LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Rabbi Susan Abramson of Temple Shalom Emeth, Burlington and Imam Shakeel Rahman of the Islamic Center of Burlington have issued a joint statement of unity and the common need for peace and friendship, both between their two communities and with the Burlington community as a whole. The statement includes ways the schools can help their children during this difficult time. Below is the transcript of their statement, which can be viewed at

<https://youtu.be/6ueAI1xR40g>

Rabbi S.A.: Shalom. I'm Rabbi Susan Abramson of Temple Shalom Emeth in Burlington. This is a conversation with Imam Shakeel Rahman, from the Islamic Center of Burlington.

Imam S.R.: We and our communities have been friends and neighbors for many years. We have enjoyed special meals and events and learning about each other's faith traditions.

Rabbi S.A.: At this moment of tremendous suffering and loss, we felt that it was important to explain to those who are not part of our communities how we are feeling about the current situation in Israel and Gaza.

Imam S.R.: We would also like to speak to those who are part of our faith traditions about how we are commanded to treat each other during this very dark time.

Rabbi S.A.: The Jewish community is suffering, fearful and angry about the vicious attack of the Hamas terrorists. On October 7, more of my people were killed and tortured than any time since the Holocaust. At the same time, the State of Israel has been under constant bombardment with tens of thousands of missiles raining down on all parts of the country, causing virtually all of its citizens to constantly be seeking shelter.

Imam S.R.: The Talmud says, if you kill one person it is as if you have killed the entire world. And if you save one life it is as if you have saved the entire world. Similarly, the Quran says, "Whoever kills an innocent life is as if he has killed all of mankind." We mourn the loss of every single innocent Palestinian whose life was lost because

of this conflict. We grieve the suffering of all Palestinian people who are now in a desperate situation, whose homes have been lost, who have been forced to flee, who lack basic necessities, and who have been marginalized because of this conflict.

Rabbi S.A.: The children in our communities are aware of this situation and their parents' reactions to a greater or lesser degree depending on their age and circumstances. It is hard for adults to grasp the complexities of what's going on and the constantly changing scenario. What they do pick up on is anger and fear. They need to feel that they are part of a supportive environment, while at the same time not wanting to be singled out as being different.

Imam S.R.: To add to this misery, we have also experienced a sharp rise in Islamophobia and Antisemitism.

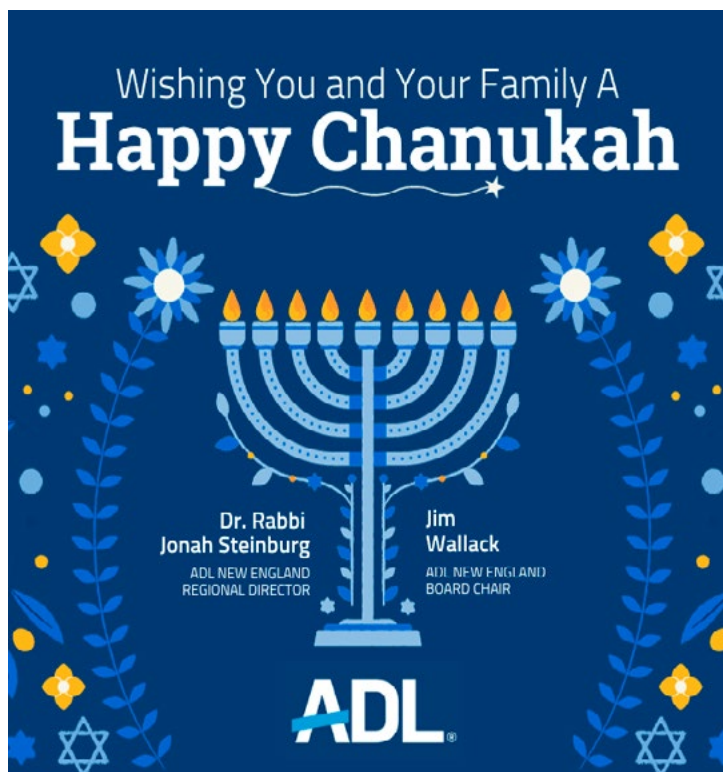
Rabbi S.A.: There have already been a couple of incidents where kids from our communities have unfortunately reached out to each other in hateful ways on social media. We want to spread the word that even though our two communities are embroiled in a horrible conflict in the Middle East, we here desperately need to model peace and friendship as our two faiths command.

Imam S.R.: We hope that all parents will continue to teach and emphasize the importance of respecting and loving our neighbor. The teenagers in our two communities will be getting together in a couple of weeks to create two posters of peace, one for the Islamic Center and one for the temple.

Rabbi S.A.: As for our educators in our community, we humbly ask that instead of taking sides, projects can be worked on together that help bridge the gap instead of creating a divide.

We are all fervently praying for peace. In the meantime, we are hoping that everyone in our community understands the awful stressful time we are experiencing. Your support means the world to us. We are not OK and your outreach is meaningful and powerful.

The two of us pledge to do what we can to bring our peoples together and to be a model of peace and love and friendship.





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AFTER THE WAR

By Rabbi Jessica Lowenthal

I spend a significant amount of my life speaking about Israel to diverse, non-Jewish groups. After October 7, my work has felt even more urgent.

Lately, I find myself praying before these sessions – praying that they can hear my message. Jews have always been in Israel, have always desired to return to their homeland, and immigration has been happening for hundreds of years. That this is a complex and deeply painful issue and anyone who says it is simple is wrong.

At the same time, when we arrive at the late 1800s and the beginning of organized Zionism, I try my best to give the Palestinian perspective.

We must understand - every empire that had ruled the area had been the same - send us your tax dollars and you can continue doing whatever you are doing. The same families had picked the same olive trees for generations. How would they know that Jewish migration was not another empire that would eventually leave? Why would they be aware of the long Jewish history of abuse in Europe, or how every Jew looks to Jerusalem as they pray? It should have been the responsibility of their leaders to understand the differences and prepare their community accordingly.

Instead, Palestinian leadership has consistently refused to acknowledge Jewish connection to the land, refused to negotiate a two-state solution, and continued to tell their people not to move forward - we will kill the Jews and you will go back to your homes. This is the same leadership that supported radical Islamic movements in neighboring countries, was ousted from Jordan for terrorism, and supported the civil war in Lebanon, demolishing the only Christian Arab country in the Middle East.

When Hamas took over Gaza in 2007, promptly massacring their opponents and creating a terrorist state, the world said this was fine. As Hamas funneled aid money to their terrorist operations, leaving their civilian population in continual danger, the world ignored it.

When Israel found an extensive tunnel operation, cement lined with electricity and a full armory, with the sole intent of invading Israel and killing Israelis, the world told Israel to use restraint. As Hamas has continually fired rocket after rocket toward the closest Israeli towns and communities - the very communities engaging in peace work with Gazans, who drove Gazan children to Israeli hospitals when they were sick, who protested Israeli government policies, the world was silent.

And now, when Hamas managed to take down Israel's security and communication in order to rape, murder, and burn as many Israelis as possible, film it and gleefully celebrate their inhuman actions, the world calls on Israel for a cease fire.

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AFTER THE WAR

I cannot ask Israel for a cease fire. After 15 years, Israel cannot have Hamas next to them. They cannot look at their citizens, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim, and say we just need to die quietly and maybe they will leave us alone. No. Israel will engage in this war and try to wipe Hamas power from the strip.

But what happens after the war?

I pray that the international community takes a hard look in the mirror, especially all those who have piled into their streets calling for Palestinian rights. I hope they realize that they have been propping up Hamas, they have been fighting for the oppression of Palestinian people by their own leadership, they have been calling for the destruction of the only democracy, no matter how flawed, in the Middle East. I pray real pro-Palestinian movements can form, focusing on changing the narrative and accepting a Jewish presence in the land.

I will be curious to see how many people will care so deeply about Palestinians after the war. I, and so many in the Jewish community, do care, and am heartbroken and pained about the innocent Palestinian lives that have been lost.

After the war, I will still care, and I will continue to work with organizations promoting conversations between Palestinians and Israelis. I hope to see those who vehemently protest against Israel today in those communities, doing the long and challenging work of peace. We will see - after the war.

Rabbi Jessica Lowenthal is the Rabbi and Education Director at Temple Beth Shalom of Melrose.

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The Lethal Indoctrination

By David Bedein

Tragically, the visuals the Israeli government has been using - dead and maimed bodies - are too easy for the PLO and Hamas to counter.

It was not hard to predict that the Arabs would now line up their mangled bodies from our air raids in response to mangled Jewish bodies.

What the Arabs cannot counter: Clear presentations of lethal indoctrination to murder Jews by the U.N.'s Palestinian Arab refugee agency UNRWA, as we at the Bedein Center for Near East Policy Research have documented for 36 years.

Our footage and studies of UNRWA schools show that UNRWA arms and brainwashes Arab children as young as nine years old with a curriculum of premeditated genocidal murder.

Tragically, numerous agencies that promote Israel's cause have not shared this lethal incitement with journalists who cover the war.

I have spoken with dozens of reporters. Not one journalist has even glanced at the new UNRWA textbooks that glorify the murder of Jews.

Not one reporter has seen our movies that depict Arab children trained to murder Jews in cold blood.

I and my colleagues who work to document lethal incitement to massacre Jews predicted the current war.

On Sept. 27, I brought four Arabic-fluent journalists with whom we have worked for 25 years to brief Israel intelligence on how UNRWA indoctrinates a new generation to murder Jews in a cold and systematic manner, devoid of emotion.

That is precisely what occurred on Oct. 7, when 3,000 highly trained and well-disciplined Palestinian Arab UNRWA terrorists traversed the porous Gaza fence and went on a killing spree, attacking anyone in their path - men, women, children and babies. Many of the UNRWA terrorists knew their victims by name.

This fact is worth reiterating: Testimonies showed that as the UNRWA attackers killed children, often in front of their parents, many of the killers knew each victim by name.

Our new movie will depict how UNRWA mesmerizes youngsters in Bethlehem and Jerusalem to engage in the kind of killing spree that the world witnessed on Oct. 7.

The world needs to know that UNRWA teaches murder.

David Bedein is director of the Nahum Bedein Center for Near East Policy Research, more info at <https://israelbehindthenews.com/>. This opinion article was published at JNS.org.

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***The Nazis and the Jews of Rome*
by Patrick J Gallo
Purdue University Press**

Black Saturday, 1943

The Shoah happened not by accident or chance, but by design. Central to this study is the perilous period between 1943 and 1945 during which the Jews of Rome were arrested and deported. It is imperative to determine what courses of action most likely would have spared Italian Jews from the gas chambers.

The events and principle actors during this period must be carefully examined in the historical context of their time. The period before and after 1943 is essential for understanding the actual constraints and concessions that were made.

The roundup and deportation of the Jews of Rome took place on October 16, 1943 ("Black Saturday"). Realistically, there were no options to alter the decision set by Berlin when we consider the world of occupied Rome.

Moral condemnations would not have worked. The overwhelming force of the Wehrmacht, the Gestapo, and the SS in Rome precluded direct, open confrontation. Secrecy and clandestine action networks had the best chance of success.

Within that framework, survival depended on several factors. It was essential to assess the danger, and to act quickly and secretly. The Chief Rabbi of Florence and the Chief Rabbi of Ancona acted decisively, and warned their communities to disperse and go into hiding. Their quick action would serve as a model for their counterparts in Rome, who were slow to perceive and respond to the danger.

Why was this the case?

Why and how were the Jews lulled into a false sense of security? What role did Herbert Kappler, Gestapo Chief of Rome, play in deceiving the Jewish leadership? With what results? What was his plan to extort gold from the Jews?

On Black Saturday at 5 a.m., the Germans executed their plan and methodically proceeded to arrest 1259 Jews, regardless of age, sex, or condition of health. How did the Germans know each Jew by name and where they lived? Did Pius XII intervene to halt the ongoing roundup? Why did the roundup come to an abrupt end at 2 p.m.?

Professor Gallo provides new documentation to answer these and many perplexing questions. He puts a human face on the Jewish victims, and follows them on the five-day train ride directly to Auschwitz.

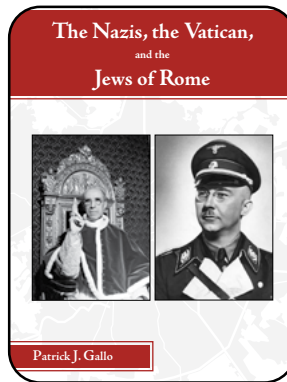
Prior to and during the roundup, convents, churches, monasteries, and extraterritorial properties sheltered Jews. Jews also found refuge in hospitals and the homes of everyday Romans who risked their lives. Were any of these efforts at the direction of the Pope?

With antisemitism on the rise today and the last remaining witnesses passing away, it is essential to understand what happened in 1943. *The Nazis,*

the Vatican, and the Jews of Rome grappled with this particular and awful episode within the larger, horrifying story of the Holocaust. To fathom the unfathomable is responsibility and memory. The imperative to remember drives the story of the Jews of Rome during this fateful period.

Patrick J. Gallo was an adjunct professor of history and political science at New York University until his retirement. He is the author of nine books, including two classic works about the Italian American experience: *Ethnic Alienation: The Italian-Americans* and *Old Bread, New Wine: Portrait of Italian-Americans*. His published works also include *For Love and Country: The Italian Resistance and Pope Pius XII, the Holocaust, and the Revisionists*.


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CJP ISRAEL EMERGENCY FUND: <https://ma.cjp.org>
100% of your donation will go toward supporting victims of terror and addressing the unprecedented levels of trauma caused by these horrific attacks.

American Friends of Magen Dayid Adom: <https://afmda.org>
Israelis depend on Magen David Adom to save lives every day.

ZAKA: <https://zaka.org.il>
Haredi-operated organization of unpaid volunteers, which handles the holy burial of Israel's murdered and fallen.

Friends of the Israel Defense Forces: www.fidf.org
Champion the courageous men and women of the IDF and care for their needs as they protect the State of Israel and her people. <https://>

United Hatzalah in Israel: <https://israelrescue.org>
Committed to providing the fastest response to medical emergencies across Israel via 6,500 volunteers.

American Jewish Committee: Visit AJC.org/AttackOnIsrael
AJC's Israel Emergency Campaign 100% of donations received will be distributed to frontline Israeli NGOs.

Keren Hayesod: <https://www.kh-uia.org.il/soi-war>
United Jewish Appeal: Brother's Keeper Emergency Campaign.

KKL-Jewish National Fund: Support communities impacted by terror. <https://my.jnf.org/gaza-emergency>

The Association for Israel's Soldiers: <https://www.ufis.org.il/en>
Jewish Family Service of Metrowest: Visit JFSMW.org

JFS has been resettling refugees since its inception and as Israelis seek shelter in our caring community, JFS is prepared to make referrals, assist with basic needs and housing, help with benefits and services, and provide other assistance as needed. for important resources.

Israeli American Council: Visit israeliamerican.org
Wartime Community Resources.

Feed Israel: <https://donate.feedisrael.org>

ORT America: <https://ortamerica.org/israel-emergency-response/>

Happy Hanukkah


In this time of darkness, may we illuminate the way to a brighter future together.





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A portrait of Colette Phillips, a Black woman with braided hair, smiling and wearing a colorful patterned shawl and large yellow earrings. The portrait is positioned on the right side of the image, partially overlapping the text and quote boxes.

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