

Opinion.

COVID-19  
AND THE VIRUS OF  
JEW HATRED  
A2.



Tradition.

COMMUNITIES  
AND  
CROWDS  
A10.



LUXURY  
HOTEL  
BECOMES  
COVID-19  
CLINIC  
A11.

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## Trump and US States Ramp Up Drive to Slow Spread of Coronavirus



People enter the Bethesda Metro station in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC, during rush hour, March 16, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Tom Brenner.

BY REUTERS  
& ALGEMEINER STAFF

The White House, under pressure to escalate national action to combat the coronavirus, urged Americans on Monday to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people and called for closing bars, restaurants and other venues in states where local virus transmission exists.

But President Donald Trump

refrained from ordering sweeping public quarantines, lockdowns or curfews for the time being, even as some state and local authorities independently imposed mandatory restrictions on eateries, movie theaters and other places of leisure in a bid to contain the respiratory virus.

"We're recommending things," Trump told a White House news conference in issuing new coronavirus guidelines. "We haven't gone

to that step yet" of ordering a lockdown. "That could happen, but we haven't gone there yet."

Trump also said he felt that postponements of primary elections, like those announced in Ohio, Georgia, Louisiana and Kentucky, were generally unnecessary. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine said on Twitter his administration was ordering polls closed on Tuesday in defiance of a state court

Continued on Page A3

## Israel Imposes Cyber-Monitoring of Coronavirus Cases

BY REUTERS & ALGEMEINER STAFF

Israel invoked emergency regulations on Tuesday to deploy cyber-monitoring in the battle against the coronavirus, saying halting its spread outweighed concerns about the invasion of privacy.

The move will provide the government with cellular data to retrace the movements of people infected by the virus and locate and alert those who had been in their vicinity.

Such cyber-monitoring would normally require parliamentary ratification and judicial oversight. Prime Minister



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his Jerusalem office, March 14, 2020. Photo: Gali Tibbon / Pool via Reuters.

Benjamin Netanyahu, who announced the measure on Monday, circumvented the process by winning cabinet approval on Tuesday to put the order into effect under emergency regulations.

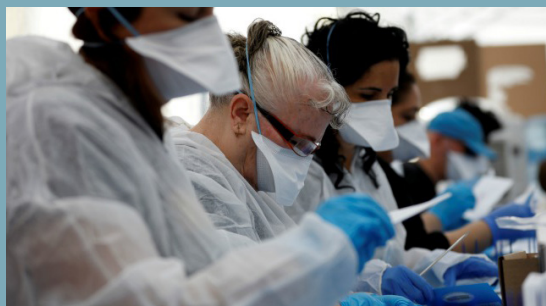
The use of anti-terrorism technology to track infected people and anyone with whom they have come in contact drew criticism from civil rights groups when Netanyahu first proposed it over the weekend.

Israeli authorities said cyber data collected by the Shin Bet internal security service would be limited to halting the

Continued on Page A3

## The War Against COVID-19

page A8



### ShabbatCalendar

Parshat VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI Times for New York City, Friday Candle Lighting  
פרשת ויקהל-פקודי Shabbat Begins: 6:51pm | Shabbat Ends: 7:50pm



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## Opinion.

# Pandemic Panic a Breeding Ground for the Virus of Jew-Hatred



JONATHAN S. TOBIN  
JNS.org

Burned into the historical memory of the Jewish people is what happened in the period when the bubonic plague swept through Europe from 1347 to 1351. The “Black Death” was one of the greatest demographic catastrophes to afflict the human race in recorded history. Historians estimate that up to 50 percent of Europe’s population died in the pandemic, with rates of death as high as 75 percent in Italy, Spain, and France, where the disease was present for four years.

But the tragedy for Jews was not just the risk of a deadly contagion. In the midst of unimaginable suffering, many European Christians wanted a scapegoat. The Jewish minority — already often set apart in ghettos, and subject to demonization from both church and state — was an easy choice, and massacres and pogroms targeting Jews across Europe followed. Though the world has changed a great deal in the intervening centuries, the impulse to find someone to blame for diseases or other calamities is still embedded in the human psyche. So it’s hardly surprising to learn that there has been a surge of antisemitic activity in which antisemites

have sought to tie Jews to the creation and/or spread of the coronavirus.

As *JNS* reported on Monday, a group of George Washington University students attended the AIPAC policy conference — and, due to fears of an affected person being at the event in Washington, DC, were briefly quarantined. Some of them found themselves being targeted on social media by other students who spread the lie that people would get the disease because of the actions of “white supremacists” and “Zionists.” Another student, who wears a kippah, reported that he was surrounded and taunted by a group who called him yahood (Arabic for “Jew”) and asserted that Jews had “started” and “produced” the virus.

The presence of an infected person at AIPAC also drew an unhealthy interest from many Israel-haters with none other than Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) reportedly retweeting (and then subsequently deleting) an account of what happened either out of a sense of *schadenfreude* or to please those fans of the hate she has spread about Israel, as well as its Jewish supporters who are an audience for conspiracy theories.

But the disturbing reactions to the AIPAC story weren’t isolated incidents. The Anti-Defamation League reported in early February that neo-Nazis and white supremacists were using the Internet to spread conspiracy theories about Jews being behind the disease. Since then, the parallel contagion

of antisemitic bile has kept pace with the spread of the virus and likely will continue to build as frustration over the shutdown of much of communal life gives idle minds even more time to waste staring at the screens of computers and smartphones.

There are some obvious conclusions to be drawn from this depressing example of humanity’s weaknesses. The first is that like all examples of Jew-hatred, the efforts of those eager to scapegoat Jews or Israel for the virus have absolutely nothing to do with anything their intended targets have actually done. Antisemitism is always about the manias of the antisemites, not the actions or words of the Jews.

In this context, it’s useful to recall that some who blamed Jews for the plague were reacting to the fact that in those instances, Jews were not as drastically affected as the rest of the population. Some have theorized that Jewish custom and law that mandated regular washing was one reason. Another was the fact that Jews rid their homes of grain (consumed by the rats that spread the plague) in the spring prior to Passover, when the plague was usually at its worst. But it may also have had to do with the fact that in many places, Jews were lodged in ghettos and physically isolated from other people. Anti-Jewish discriminatory measures had created, in effect, a quarantine that would only be broken when the mobs attacked the ghettos.

Yet in those places where Jews and Christians lived alongside each other, the toll of suffering was much the same. It should be



Members of a cleanup crew wearing hazardous material suits prepare to enter a Seattle-area nursing home in Kirkland, Washington, March 11, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Jason Redmond.

recalled that Islamist radicals have sought to blame Israel and the Jews for the 9/11 attacks in a pitiful attempt to divert attention from the real culprits. So, too, do some today cite Israel’s amazing high-tech contributions to medicine and health in order to fuel new conspiracies about the virus. If, as may well prove to be the case, Israeli scientists give the world a coronavirus vaccine, friends of the Jewish state will most likely mock those who advocate boycotts of its products. But expect the same antisemitic hatemongers to claim that it’s all part of a nefarious Jewish plot.

Of course, we shouldn’t pretend that Jews are exempt from the temptation to find scapegoats.

An example of how religious figures discredit non-observant Judaism came when Rabbi Meir Mazuz, a prominent Israeli ultra-nationalist, said last week that the virus was

*Continued on Page A3*

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## Coronavirus, Europe, and Israel

EYAL ZISSER/  
ISRAEL HAYOM/JNS.org

Now it’s official: The head of the World Health Organization says Europe has become the global epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, replacing China, which is slowly recovering from the pandemic. While transparency is far greater in Europe than in China and the continent’s modern health services can present a relatively accurate picture of the situation, there are a couple of factors rendering Europe particularly vulnerable.

First and foremost, its population is more elderly compared to the rest of the world, and therefore more susceptible to disease. In Italy, for example, 23% of the population is over the age of 65, with similar ratios in Spain and Germany. In Israel, by contrast, only 12% of the population is over 65 — half the European figure. In the Arab countries surrounding Israel the figure is even lower at only around 6-7%, due to high birth rates.

Second, Europe responded to the outbreak slowly and hesitantly. Across the majority of the continent, measures put in place to stem the spread of the virus have been partial and limited. This hesitant response stemmed at least in part from the ideology currently prevalent in Europe which emphasizes liberty and openness, but also and primarily the selfish interests of the individual, who is prioritized over the good of the many and society at large.

Moreover, there is a distinct connection

between these two factors, one which cast its shadow over Europe long before the current outbreak. The European ideal of living for today and preferring a certain quality of life and level of prosperity over having and raising children is at the root of Europe’s low birth rates. These low birth rates have led to severe shortages of workers and to the flooding of the continent with labor migrants from across the globe, mainly from Africa and the Arab world.

In 1960, the population of Europe stood at 400 million people, while the Middle East was 100 million. Today, more than 500 million people live in Europe — a growth rate largely attributed to immigration — while some 400 million live in the Middle East. By 2050, the population of the Middle East is expected to hit some 750 million people, while in Europe there will be no change in the number of residents.

The challenge facing Europe was evident as early as 10 years ago, when the threat of



A member of a medical team wears a protective face mask, following the coronavirus outbreak, as he prepares disinfectant liquid to sanitize public places in Tehran, Iran March 05, 2020. Photo: WANA (West Asia News Agency)/Nazanin Tabatabaee via REUTERS.

Islamic terrorism intensified. At the root of this threat were mostly Muslim immigrants across the continent who had failed to assimilate. The European response to this challenge, however, was denial. Instead of eradicating the threat, the Europeans — unlike Israel — opted to tolerate extremist ideologies and avoid implementing measures to protect themselves. All in the name of preserving the rights of the individual and concerns over degrading their quality of life.

The coronavirus outbreak, therefore, is a type of alarm bell for Europe, another line of writing on the proverbial wall of crisis in which Europe has been mired for quite some time now.

The Europeans have grown accustomed to criticizing and preaching to the Jewish state, but it appears that tiny Israel has something to teach Europe this time: whether in terms of finding the balance between personal liberties and the good of the many, or, primarily, in terms of adopting the Israeli way of doing things that provides us a modern Western country that remains capable of rallying society and state bodies toward a singular purpose, while maintaining dynamism, growth, and openness — and yes, a positive natural growth rate as well.

Eyal Zisser is a lecturer in the Middle East History Department at Tel Aviv University.

This article first appeared in *Israel Hayom*.

## World News.

### Continued from Page A2 Breeding Ground

an act of Divine judgment aimed at humanity in order to punish it for gay-pride parades in the Jewish state. Mazuz has in the past blamed acts of terrorism on gay people, as well as asserted that a garage collapse and the crash of an Israeli satellite were due to desecration of the Sabbath. Nor was his recent act of incitement made any less disgusting when he accompanied it with a claim that the strength of the coronavirus outbreak in Iran was also a punishment for the regime's hatred of Israel.

Like disease, hateful scapegoating and attempts to implicate the Almighty in tragic events knows no boundaries — and finds willing hosts wherever ignorance and prejudice finds a home.

Just as it is deplorable for antisemites or other sorts of bigots to conflate their psychosis and hate-filled myths with the struggle against a real disease, we'd all do well to avoid trying to confuse debates about other

### Continued from Page A1 Cyber-Monitoring

spread of the disease and deleted when the emergency is over.

But The Association for Civil Right in Israel called the move "a dangerous precedent and a slippery slope."

Justice Minister Amir Ohana dismissed the criticism.

"The concerns of those disturbed by cyber-monitoring are outweighed by the threat we are facing," he said on Israel Radio.

Gabi Ashkenazi, a senior member of the centrist Blue and White party, whose leader, Benny Gantz, was tapped by Israel's president on Monday to try to form a new government following a March 2 election, also criticized the use of emergency orders.

"It's inappropriate to approve such a measure in this manner, without public and

### Continued from Page A1 Slow Spread

ruling to the contrary.

The number of known coronavirus infections and deaths in the United States has paled in comparison with hot spots of the global pandemic, such as China, Italy or Iran. But the tally of confirmed U.S. cases has multiplied quickly over the past few weeks, surpassing 4,600 and prompting fears American hospitals might soon be overwhelmed, as Italian medical centers have been strained to the breaking point.

At least 83 people in the United States had died of the virus, as of Monday, according to Johns Hopkins University and public health agencies, with the hardest-hit state, Washington, accounting for the bulk of the fatalities, including six more announced on Monday.

Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, said health officials were relying on members of the millennial generation — those in their 20s to 40s, and representing the largest living adult cohort — to alter their social behavior for the good of the public.

Millennials, she said, are "the ones that are out and about, and they're the most likely to be in social gatherings, and they're the most likely to be the least symptomatic" even if they are unwittingly infected and contagious, Birx told the briefing.

#### Coordinated national response

Release of the latest 15-day plan for slowing the spread of the virus came as state and local government officials pleaded with the Trump administration to mount a coordinated response to the pandemic, as millions of workers and students were already hunkering down at home.

Besides recommendations to limit the size of gatherings and shut down public

issues, especially those related to immigration and borders, with the question of how to stop the spread of the contagion. Shutting down travel or restricting access to borders is not an act of prejudice, but common sense at a time of peril. In this regard, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decisive actions to try to limit its reach were entirely correct.

We have no idea of how bad things will get as much of the world shuts down in order to prevent the virus from claiming more victims. But we do know that the basic instincts and fears of human beings that drove so much hate in earlier eras remain in spite of the trappings of technology and civilization that often cloak them. We may well find a cure for coronavirus, either in Israel or elsewhere. But a cure for the virus of antisemitism and senseless hate is likely to continue to elude humanity.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS — Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathans\_tobin.

parliamentary supervision," he wrote on Twitter.

Further measures announced by Netanyahu on Monday included putting most of the public sector workforce on a one-month leave and reducing private sector employees to 30 percent attendance at their workplaces.

There are more than 300 confirmed coronavirus cases in Israel. In the Palestinian territories, 41 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in the West Bank, with none in the Gaza Strip.

Israel has taken stringent steps to slow its spread, closing schools, malls, restaurants and most places of leisure, as well as limiting gatherings to 10 people.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said on Monday that anyone coming into the West Bank from Jordan must go into self-isolation for 14 days.

places in states where community spread of the virus is evident, Birx said one of the most important measures was for people who are sick to stay home.

"If everybody in America does what we ask for over the next 15 days, we will see a dramatic difference," Birx said. The guidelines also call for entire households to self-quarantine even if just one family member is diagnosed.

The unprecedented wave of closures and restrictions, which began to accelerate last week, took on fresh urgency as New Jersey "strongly discouraged" all non-essential and non-emergency travel between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., starting on Monday.

The states of New Jersey, New York and Connecticut struck a regional agreement to close all movie theaters, casinos and gyms as of 8 p.m. Monday. Restaurants and bars in the three states — where more than 22 million people live — will serve takeout and delivery only.

Officials in six San Francisco Bay Area counties on Monday ordered residents to stay at home for all but the most crucial outings until April 7. That directive came a day after California Governor Gavin Newsom urged adults older than 65, and their caretakers, to remain indoors whether or not they have underlying health conditions.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, said efforts by state and local governments were insufficient to confront the coast-to-coast crisis.

"This is a national problem. It cannot be done in a piecemeal method," Cuomo said, calling for bold action involving the military and Army Corps of Engineers to quickly create excess hospital capacity.

In the nation's capital, Washington, a deeply divided Senate was considering a multibillion-dollar emergency spending bill

# 'This Is Nothing New': Icon Natan Sharansky Addresses Antisemitic Propaganda Around Coronavirus



Natan Sharansky. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

### BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

Natan Sharansky — the former Soviet refusenik who spent nine years leading the Jewish Agency between 2009-18 — has spoken out against antisemitic conspiracy theories linking Jews to the COVID-19 pandemic, observing that these were "nothing new."

Speaking to an online gathering on Sunday, Sharansky invoked the Black Death of the 14th century as a precedent for today's woes.

"The idea that Jews are behind the virus, that Jews want to destroy markets, to make money or that Israel is behind it — there is nothing new in it," Sharansky said. "We saw it during the Black Death in the Middle Ages. There was broad belief that Jews were behind it."

Addressing the first digital awards ceremony of the US-based Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) — held online because

requiring sick leave for some workers and expanded unemployment compensation, while the Supreme Court postponed oral arguments for the first time in over a century.

Washington's mayor also announced restrictions on businesses, including curbs on bars and restaurants, in response to the outbreak.

#### Schools closed in 33 states

Some 64,000 schools were closed in at least 33 states, including in the nation's two biggest school systems — New York City and Los Angeles. School closures nationwide were disrupting instruction for at least 32.5 million students, according to Education Week.

State restrictions on restaurants and places of leisure, while in line with expert advice to slow the spread of the virus through "social distancing," will hit many lower-paid workers in the service industry.

Jessica Wilmot, owner of the Ancient Mariner pub in Ridgefield, Connecticut, said that while she felt closing shops was the right move, she worried about her mostly part-time staff who work paycheck to paycheck.

"Personally, I'm all for containment," said Wilmot, noting that her revenues had already fallen about 40% last week from the prior week. "But my business view is, I'm nauseous."

#### Airlines seek bailout

As traders on Wall Street reacted to drastic weekend measures from the Federal

of the continuing rapid spread of the virus — Sharansky emphasized that the "difference between then and now is that today the State of Israel is strong, we are fighting antisemitism and we will defeat it."

State Department Special Envoy Elan Carr — who advises US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on antisemitism — also addressed the gathering, at which the 37 winners of a contest for creative proposals to fight antisemitism were announced.

"The current administration is determined by its words and action to fight antisemitism," Carr stated. "The administration is committed to secure the physical security of Jews, to fight the spread of antisemitism on the internet, to end radicalization of students in the Middle East through textbooks, to educate about philo-semitism, and to take legal action against those who engage in antisemitism."

Reserve to stave off a global recession, US stock markets plunged anew on Monday with the S&P 500 closing down 12%.

Major airlines sought a US government bailout of more than \$50 billion as the White House drafted a financial assistance package following the steep falloff in US travel demand. "We have to back the airlines," Trump said on Monday. "It's not their fault." Separately, US airports are seeking \$10 billion in government assistance.

Trump, a Republican, declared a national emergency on Friday and has championed the US government's response, saying his administration has done a "a very fantastic job." Democratic leaders have criticized him for playing down the crisis and issuing misleading or false statements.

The outbreak also has taken a major toll on US sports. Major League Baseball said it would further delay the start of its 2020 season, originally scheduled for next week.

Organizers of the Kentucky Derby, planned on Tuesday to announce a postponement of the May 2 event to September due to the coronavirus outbreak, media reported.

Only once before in the 146-year history of the "Run for the Roses" has it been postponed from its traditional date of the first Saturday in May: it was delayed a month in 1945 because of World War Two.

# World News.



Hard at work during the fourth annual Jerusalem College of Technology (Machon Lev) "Great Minds Hackathon," December 2019. Photo: Michael Erenburg.

## The Effects of Coronavirus on Israel's Tech Sector Will Be Minimal, Says Highroad Managing Partner

BY CTech STAFF

Attempts to evaluate the scope of the damages caused to different industries by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic are limited, but according to Eyal Hoffman, managing partner at Highroad, an innovation center

and startup launchpad focused on urban tech, the effects on the Israeli tech sector will be minimal.

On Monday, Hoffman answered six questions about the crisis and its effects on the Israeli tech sector.

How is your organization addressing the

recent government directives?

While we are pretty prepared for working remotely, the nature of our day-to-day activities means we are affected; we support our companies with ongoing meetings with mentors and experts, content days, workshops, etc. All of those do continue but needed to be adapted.

At the end of each cohort, we also produce a demo day called the Highroad Show, which was set to take place in May, but we needed to find other ways to do that. At the moment it is planned to be a remote event, and we have thought of some new and creative ideas to incorporate into the online event.

In what ways do you expect the corona crisis to impact your organization in the coming months?

I assume some things will be canceled, but most of the activity will probably be shifted to remote activity, including daily working time, as well as meetings and events. Unfortunately, I think we will also see a slowdown in the entire industry, though the startup sector will suffer the least impact since they are, in most cases, more prepared to work anywhere, anytime.

How do you see the corona crisis impacting the Israeli tech sector?

I think that the Israeli tech sector will be one of the sectors that will be impacted the least from this crisis, especially in the long run, since it is fundamentally more flexible, and the state of mind of tech workers is also flexible.

As sad as it is, some sectors will suffer severely from the situation and might also collapse, but there might be an upside. I see an opportunity for the tech sector to assist

those industries using technological solutions, especially in sectors that previously were more reluctant to receive different types of technological advancements.

What can be done to minimize the damage?

That is a difficult question since the damage itself is hard to predict. The most important thing is to keep business as usual as much as it is technically — and technologically — possible. The rest is speculations and things we cannot affect.

What are the top three rules to follow to endure the crisis?

1. People come first
2. See the opportunities within the situation
3. Business as usual

Do you believe the coronavirus pandemic will have a lasting impact on social, economic, and cultural norms?

Yes, I believe that the longer this situation lasts, the more people get used to this type of living, in terms of interactions, both business and social, work, consumption, etc. Again, this is more of an opportunity rather than a disadvantage in my opinion. It is fertile ground to disrupt some yet-undisrupted aspects of our everyday lives. This also has a strong connection to Highroad's vision, which is to redesign the daily lives of all of us, wherever this disruption is able to improve people's lives. That's a difficult mission, but hard times are also an opportunity for big positive changes, and we must see how we do it right.

## BETH SHIFRA

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Honorary President: Rabbi Shmaryahu Shulman  
Dear Friend:

In years past, Beth Shifra maintained a Free Soup Kitchen all year round, open seven days a week, serving free meals three times a day, without charge. During the week of Pesach, Beth Shifra sponsored free Kosher for Pesach Sederim and daily meals around the city. We are personally familiar with their significant work and urge you to help Beth Shifra with any support that you can, including publicizing their inspiring work in your Shul or organization.

This year, Beth Shifra is sponsoring free Kosher for Pesach Seders and meals daily from Wednesday, April 8th through Thursday, April 16th, at The White Shul, 2102 Avenue T & East 21st in Brooklyn. Free Kosher for Passover food packages will be offered on Wednesday, April 8th, at the White Shul, 2102 Avenue T & East 21st in Brooklyn from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

We proudly invite you to join us in making this year a memory of a lifetime for those in need. Take the time now to have the merit and joy of helping a hungry family celebrate Passover. Please help Beth Shifra with any assistance that you can, including publicizing their good work in your Shul or organization.

May all those that participate in this holy effort be blessed from Heaven. On behalf of the Igud/RAA Presidium and of the Beth Din, I extend greetings of Torah.

Sincerely,  
**Mondy Miroznik**  
Executive Vice-President, Rabbinical Alliance of America

Director of Medical Halacha Commission: Rabbi Aaron Glatt, MD  
Vice Presidents: Rabbi Avraham Amar, Rabbi Nachum Bernstein, Rabbi Eli Hecht, Rabbi Joseph Satmon

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February 26, 2020

Rabbi Chaim Prusman  
Executive Director  
Beth Shifra Institution  
Brooklyn, NY

Dear Rabbi Prusman,

I am aware that for fifty years, your organization, Beth Shifra, has provided year-round, daily free meals to those who are most needy in the New York Jewish community. My office staff is personally familiar with the outstanding work that you do, and I would like to urge everyone to help Beth Shifra in any manner possible, including publicizing the work they do in your Shul or organization.

During the Pesach holiday, Beth Shifra will be sponsoring Kosher for Passover sederim, food packages, lectures and programs to hundreds of people who would otherwise be unable to celebrate the holiday.

In 2020, these free Kosher for Passover Seders and daily meals will take place from Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at the White Shul located at 2102 Avenue T (East 21<sup>st</sup> Street) in Brooklyn. Pesach food packages will be distributed on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at the synagogue between the hours of 12:00-2:00PM.

Please take the time to help a hungry family celebrate Pesach. Join in making this year a memory of a lifetime for those in need.

In the merit of helping the hungry and poor, may you only receive the choicest blessings from Heaven.

Sincerely,  
**Simcha Eichenstein**  
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"We are personally familiar with their important work." RABBI GERSHON TANNENBAUM ZT"L, Director, The Rabbinical Alliance of America

**SCHEDULE**  
2102 Ave. T

Date	Time	Activities
Wed. 4/8	12-2 pm	Pick up packages
Wed. 4/8	8:00 pm	Doors Open
4/8 Sedar I	8:30 pm	Ancient Secrets of Judaism
Thurs. 4/9	12:00 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Q & A: Judaism
	8:30 pm	Doors Open
4/9 Sedar II	8:30 pm	Exodus: Legend or History
Fri. 4/10	12:00 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Lecture- 7 Wonders of Our Jewish Nation
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Defending The Faith
Shabbat 4/11	12:00 pm	Meal
	lecture	Oral vs. Written Torah
	7:30 pm	Meal
	lecture	The Deeper Beauty of Shabbos
Sun. 4/12	12:00 pm	Meal
	lecture	What is kosher food?
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	The Power of Prayer
Mon. 4/13	12:00 pm	Meal/Seuda
	program	Spectacular Children's Program: Arts and Crafts
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Popular Aish HaTorah Speaker: Matzah = Affliction = Redemption Shomer Shabbos Singles Program With Live Music, Matchmakers & Smorgasboard.

- Catered Meals  
- Free food packages

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For Opportunities To Get Involved:  
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**SCHEDULE cont.**

Date	Time	Activities
Tues. 4/14	12:00 pm	Meal
	lecture	"Friend or Foe: Torah & Science"
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Why Bad Happens to Good People?
Wed. 4/15	12:00 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Moral Relativism & Torah
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Post Holocaust - 2 Million
Thurs. 4/16	12:00 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Jews Vanished- Why? Solution?
	7:30 pm	Meal/Seuda
	lecture	Open Forum

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### Bogus Purim Service Broken Up

Reprinted from the Jewish Press • Friday, March 20, 1987

A group of missionaries in Brighton Beach who rented Public School 225 on the premise they were holding a social, attempted to hold a bogus "Purim Megilla" reading. The missionaries widely advertised their program in Russian as well as English throughout the Manhattan Beach and Brighton Beach area in an effort to entice young people to their service. However, when the real purpose of the "service" was discovered, groups from Boro Park, Flatbush, Crown Heights and Monsey descended on the area to help the

staff of the Beth Shifra Institutions break up the rally. Since many of the protesters missed the Megilla reading, the staff of Beth Shifra held to Megilla readings, so those who were instrumental in breaking up the rally could observe the Mitzva properly. The Beth Shifra rally, held at the Jewish Center of Ocean Parkway, was termed a huge success by the children and parents who attended. There was a live band and a puppet show to entertain the children.

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## U.S. News.

## Amazon Restricts Sales of Hitler's 'Mein Kampf' and Other Nazi Publications

BY BEN COHEN

Sales of *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle") — the antisemitic manifesto penned by Nazi leader Adolf Hitler in 1924 while he was serving a prison sentence in Germany — have been severely restricted by online retailer Amazon, it emerged on Monday.

According to a report in the British newspaper *The Guardian*, booksellers have been informed by Amazon in recent days that they will no longer be allowed to sell a number of Nazi-authored books on the website, including Hitler's screed and children's books designed to spread antisemitic ideas among children.

Most editions of *Mein Kampf* have been delisted from Amazon's site, *The Guardian* reported. The academic edition of the book — published by American imprint Houghton Mifflin and featuring an introduction by Abraham Foxman, the former national director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) — remains available.

Holocaust commemoration groups and Jewish organizations have been pressing Amazon to clamp down on sales of Nazi books since the 1990s. Other Nazi publications including the children's book *The Poisonous Mushroom* written by Nazi publisher Julius Streicher have also recently removed from Amazon's listings.

Until recently, customers looking to purchase another title by Streicher, *The Mongrel*, were able to buy the illustrated children's guide to "the Jewish question" for about \$10, according to *The Guardian*. The book described itself as offering a "dozen stories about dangerous or harmful animals, each followed by an unflattering comparison to Jewry."

Streicher, the notorious publisher of *Der Sturmer*, a Nazi rag infamous for its pornographic antisemitism, was executed after World War II for crimes against humanity.

*The Guardian* disclosed that "Amazon would not comment on what had prompted it to change its mind on the issue but a recent intervention to remove the books by the London-based Holocaust Educational Trust received the backing of leading British politicians."

The paper added Amazon had acknowledged the charity's fears last month, when it said that the company was "mindful of book censorship throughout history" but was taking "concerns from the Holocaust Educational Trust seriously."

## Israel to Award Companies Grants for Coronavirus Research

BY REUTERS & ALGEMEINER STAFF

The government will grant Israeli companies an initial amount of 50 million shekels (\$13 million) for research and development of products and technologies to help fight COVID-19.

The Israel Innovation Authority, Ministry of Economy and the Manufacturers' Association of Israel also called on factories to submit R&D plans to help develop or expedite production of technologies to combat the virus, the ministry said on Tuesday.

"Every company with a solution, whether it is in the proof of concept stage or a complete product that can be immediately installed at our health services, are invited to contact the Israel Innovation Authority as soon as today," Economy Ministry Eli Cohen said.

Requests will be evaluated in a fast-track process.

Financial support for up to 75% of the approved projects' expenditures will be provided.



An Amazon spokesperson in the US told *The Hill* on Monday, "As a bookseller, we provide customers with access to a variety of viewpoints, including titles that serve an important educational role in understanding and preventing antisemitism. All retailers make decisions about what selection they choose to offer and we do not take selection decisions lightly."

Houghton Mifflin paid the US government almost \$40,000 in 1979 to secure the publishing rights to *Mein Kampf*. Sales of the book have since netted the company approximately \$700,000 in profits.

In 2000, Houghton Mifflin announced that all profits from *Mein Kampf* would be donated to charity. Beneficiaries have included Facing History and Ourselves, an educational institution whose mission is to "address racism, antisemitism, and prejudice

at pivotal moments in history," so as to "help students connect choices made in the past to those they will confront in their own lives."

In his introduction to the edition of *Mein Kampf* published by Houghton Mifflin in 1999, the ADL's Foxman argued that keeping Hitler's text in the public domain was regrettably necessary to gain a proper understanding of the Nazi era.

"When we encounter things of beauty, it is natural to want to display them; here the tendency is reversed and the desire is to blot out this work of ugliness and depravity," Foxman wrote. "We should not let ourselves succumb to this temptation ... '*Zakhor*,' we are taught, 'Remember' — not just the victims but the evil that was done to them. Commit the evil to memory in order to reject it; reject the evil, but do not let yourself forget it. *Zakhor*, and so we keep the Nazi bible in print."

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## Opinion.

# No Need to Fear Shin Bet Technology for Curbing Corona



RUTHIE BLUM  
TEL AVIV

During the wee hours of Tuesday morning, the Israeli government unanimously approved an additional emergency measure to track and trace the steps of citizens infected with COVID-19.

The decision to use the Shin Bet internal security agency's digital technology as a weapon in the war on the coronavirus did not come as a surprise. Indeed, in one of his many press conferences to update the public on the global pandemic in general and on specific directives to prevent its spread in Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that discussions were underway on how best to implement the controversial move without egregiously violating civil and human rights. Netanyahu acknowledged the problematic nature of employing methods normally reserved for surveilling terrorists to monitor everybody. This, he said, was why he was in consultations with legal and security experts to come up with a formula that safeguards public health and provides guarantees of minimal privacy invasion.

Falsely calling the move "clandestine"—because the decision on its immediate

implementation was taken in the middle of the night—critics are going wild, attacking it and Netanyahu from every direction. Although the technology in question tracks cell phones, the argument about individual liberty has been upstaged by coalition politics and legalese. The 23d Knesset was only sworn in on Monday, for example, and the next government has yet to be formed. Of course, the fact that the number of corona patients continues to rise—with former Ichilov Hospital/Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center director Professor Gavriel Barabash estimating that it will reach 10,000 in the next three weeks if Israelis don't start taking the rules and recommendations more seriously—does not leave much room for the slow turn of the wheels of justice.

As Netanyahu's office wrote in a statement on Tuesday, "The pandemic is spreading at an enormous pace. A delay of even a single hour in using these [surveillance] tools could result in the death of many Israelis, as is happening ... in Italy and in other places in the world."

Anyone who is terrified that Netanyahu has nefarious motives—or that tracking phones for health reasons is a slippery slope to an Orwellian dystopia—should get a grip. The sole purpose of enlisting the aid of the Shin Bet is to keep corona at bay.

According to the protocol, the Shin Bet will follow the movements of those diagnosed with the virus in the days leading

up to their quarantine or hospitalization. In addition, it will be able to detect the identity of the people who were in the vicinity of those patients during the incubation period in order to inform them directly that they were exposed to the virus and need to quarantine themselves or get tested.

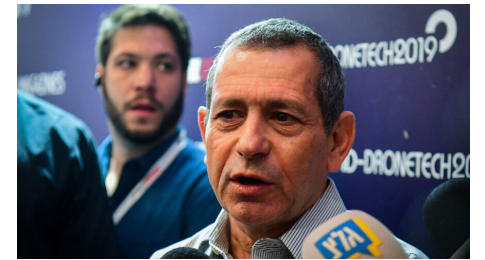
The Artificial Intelligence technology not only enables the swift processing of the above data, but can detect whether those who are infected or exposed are adhering to their quarantines. After a period of 30 days, the information will be deleted.

Shin Bet chief Nadav Argaman confirmed this on Tuesday, saying that his agency accepted the request of Health Ministry experts out of a sense of "national responsibility and the understanding that we possess the ability to assist in the saving of lives."

Argaman explained that the reason the government turned to the Shin Bet was because "other state authorities do not have the necessary technological capability to help in this particular effort."

He also assured that many discussions were held with Justice Ministry representatives and the attorney general, who gave the green light for the use of the technology.

"As the head of the Shin Bet, the sensitivity of this issue is very clear to me, and as such, I ordered that only a limited group of our staff will deal with it, and also that the information will not be kept in [our] databases," he said.



Head of Shin Bet security service Nadav Argaman visits at the 8th International UVID Conference at the Avenue Convention Center in Airport City, on November 7, 2019.  
Photo by Flash90

Instead, he added, it will be transferred directly to Health Ministry officials for use in handling the corona crisis.

"At no stage will the Shin Bet engage in the monitoring or enforcement of quarantines," Argaman stressed.

He and Netanyahu can be believed. This is not some kind of trick to slip in a Big Brother regime while the public is vulnerable to a virus. Even if it were, the ploy would never work. The abundance and genius of computer nerds in the country—and hyper-hysteria of the media—far outweigh government efficiency and performance in all realms.

Furthermore, as every smartphone owner knows, the privacy ship sailed long ago. At this point, every nail salon and car manufacturer is able to target us through our contact lists and apps. To fret over the Shin Bet helping the Health Ministry to locate us during an outbreak of a contagious disease is as anachronistic as it is ridiculous.

*Ruthie Blum is an Israel-based journalist and author of "To Hell in a Handbasket: Carter, Obama, and the Arab Spring."*

# Dangerous Streamlining in the IDF



GERSHON HACOHEH  
JERUSALEM

Each year, amid budget deliberations, Finance Ministry officials demand that the IDF do some streamlining. The streamlining processes conducted in recent decades, which focused on the ground forces, led to cutback after cutback and reduced the order of battle to the point of weakening the army's preparedness for war.

When the IDF began eliminating brigades and divisions more than two decades ago, it suited the political and military echelons because it meant the IDF was indeed paring itself down and would be able to allocate more resources to the units that remained. In a familiar organizational dynamic, however, among the remaining brigades and divisions as well, a new gradation of quality emerged that later called for a further cutback.

The logic that guides this process is driven by a familiar methodological error: in keeping with a fundamentally sound principle used to run production plants and companies, IDF commanders are expected to carry out streamlining processes using managerial criteria that have not been adjusted to the uniqueness of a military organization. Whereas the main test of a business occurs in market competition that is ongoing and constantly developing, the main test of an army's force buildup for war is war

itself — which, as long as it has not begun, is not present in its full implications. Given the profound uncertainty about the possibly unprecedented nature and magnitude of the war, military force buildup requires substantial emergency supplies.

Risk management for an economic enterprise also requires planning to ensure that supplies will be available, but the proportions are very different. Accordingly, the IDF strategy document published by the previous chief of staff, Gadi Eizenkot, set out a guiding principle for force buildup:

*The buildup of capabilities will entail creating or maintaining a critical mass. Apart from the importance of achieving qualitative and technological superiority, the quantity of the means available is of great importance. Quantity affects quality and flexibility of use. Mass, along with flexibility, is a way of coping with the uncertainty about the future challenges on the battlefield.*

Evident here is the perennial dilemma between quantity and quality, especially in the ground forces. Unlike in the air force, where there is rapid flexibility in transferring aircraft from arena to arena, in the ground forces flexibility is cumbersome and depends critically on the quantity of the units. That is why the reserve forces were established: to enable a resource-strapped country to provide a reasonable response to an array of security threats with the necessary large-scale order of battle in time of emergency while also tending adequately to the other needs of Israeli society. Hence, after the War of Independence, the now-familiar idea emerged of permanently

maintaining a standing army of limited size that relies on a large, rapidly-available reserve force. Despite the many changes that have occurred since that time, this basic notion of ensuring a critical mass for ground forces is relevant today as well.

Keeping the IDF operationally flexible and available, particularly the ground forces, is more of a challenge today than during the past two decades.

In each of the conflicts since the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the IDF has operated in only one arena where it could concentrate most of its forces. Given the reality of the threats now taking shape — with Hezbollah and Iranian forces in the north and Hamas in the south — along with the unprecedented accumulation of missile/rocket-fire threats to the Israeli home front, there is a growing likelihood of a scenario where the IDF will have to operate in two arenas at once.

The need to focus combat on well-

defended built-up areas and on underground fortified facilities requires a large-scale order of battle that is quantitatively greater than anything known in the past. Meeting this challenge depends on the right integration between an elite, top-quality strike force and a large-scale quantitative mass at a medium level of quality. And while the IDF has been renewing and strengthening itself in those regards, when it comes to ground combat, which continues to require a quantitative mass, a worrisome gap is growing.

*Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacoheh is a senior research fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies. He served in the IDF for 42 years and commanded troops in battles with Egypt and Syria. He was formerly a corps commander and commander of the IDF Military Colleges.*

*A version of this article was originally published by The Liberal and The BESA Center.*

# Islamists Call Coronavirus a Zionist-American Conspiracy

HANY GHORABA  
EGYPT

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic sweeps across the world, some Islamists are pushing a theory that God is punishing infidels for disobeying his commands. They note that

the virus broke out in Wuhan, China, and that the Chinese government is repressing Uyghur Muslims. ISIS reportedly issued "Shariah directives" in its latest newsletter, telling followers to stay out of Europe.

The coronavirus is a "torment sent by God on whomsoever He wills," the newsletter said. "Illnesses do not strike by themselves but by the command and decree of God."

When initial reports about the virus came

*Continued on Page A7*

## Opinion.

# 'Rebranding' BDS on the African Continent



BEN COHEN  
/JNS.org

The BDS movement, whose goal is for rest of the world to quarantine the State of Israel as though it were the coronavirus, is undergoing a "rebranding" in its South African heartland.

Last week, BDS South Africa — an NGO that enjoys significant influence within the ruling African National Congress — announced that it was adopting a new name, a new logo and a new(ish) mission. Henceforward, the group will be known as "Africa for Palestine." Its understanding of what constitutes "Palestine" is displayed in its logo, which shows a Palestinian *keffiyeh* carefully folded into a map of the entire territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan.

What's with the organization's redefined mission? According to a statement last week from BDS South Africa, the newly branded group — whose acronym, AFP, is suspiciously similar to that of Africans for Peace, a local grassroots group that is firmly opposed to the boycott of Israel — "will seek to build alliances and partnerships across the continent, reinforce direct support to Palestine and assist the Palestinian Diaspora." The main means of achieving this is through "pushing back against Israel's creeping infiltration into our continent."

Leaving aside the "creeping" medieval echoes of this latter statement, one is struck by the sheer resentment underlying it. After the Jewish state developed close economic and political ties during the 1950s with African nations newly liberated from the shackles of European colonialism, Arab pressure forced Israel out of the continent for several decades. During this century, however, a combination of creative Israeli diplomacy, cutting-edge Israeli technology and development expertise, and a new determination among African leaders to set relations with Israel on their own terms (as opposed to those of pan-Arab or pan-Islamic organizations) have brought that period of isolation to a decisive end. The Israeli presence has mushroomed across the continent, and Jerusalem now has full diplomatic relations with 41 of the 44 sub-Saharan states.

Though the organization would never admit it, BDS South Africa/Africa for Palestine increasingly looks like a relic desperately pushing back against another "wind of change" sweeping the continent. Where Israel offers technology and material assistance from clean-water supplies to AIDS prevention, from post-natal clinics to higher education, the local allies of the Palestinian cause offer ideology — and nothing more.

But for the leaders of the BDS campaign in South Africa, ideology is all that matters. In a speech to the Islamist-backed "Palestine Expo" in London last July, Nkosi Zwelivelile Mandela — a South African parliamentarian and a leader of BDS South Africa — railed against Israel as the embodiment of "neo-imperialism." He went on to quote an article written for the Egyptian press in 1964 by Malcolm X, which argued that the "ever-scheming European imperialists wisely placed Israel where she could geographically divide the Arab world, infiltrate and sow the seed of dissension among African leaders and also divide the Africans against the Asians."



Supporters of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign. Photo: Alex Chis.

Quite the global conspiracy, then.

In case there was any doubt about how the BDS movement views Israel's legitimacy — there are still some people out there who think its purpose is to end only the Israeli "occupation" begun in 1967 — here is how Nkosi Mandela put it: As Israel's main supporter, the United States would never, he told his London audience, "recognize the view that the cause of the conflict dates back to 1948 with the creation of Israel (rather than Israel's views of 1967 being the crucial point and the return of occupied territories being central to peace negotiations), and that the conflict has been a fight to bring home refugees to a Palestinian state." In other words, this is a zero-sum game: If you are for Palestine, you must be against Israel.

It won't have escaped notice that Nkosi Mandela shares the same name as — and is the grandson of — the late South African President Nelson Mandela. Nkosi Mandela regularly invokes his grandfather's legacy in his bombastic speeches about the Palestinians, and dishonestly so. For while there is no dispute that Nelson Mandela was a supporter of Palestinian independence and an ally of the late PLO head Yasser Arafat, he was not — in marked contrast to his grandson — an eliminationist, but an advocate of two states side-by-side. As I wrote in this column in 2013, on the occasion of Nelson Mandela's passing, "Mandela's memoirs are full of positive references to Jews and even Israel. He recalls that he learned about guerilla warfare not from Fidel Castro, but from Arthur Goldreich, a South African Jew who fought with the Palmach during Israel's War of Independence. He relates the anecdote that the only airline willing to fly his friend, Walter Sisulu, to Europe without a passport was Israel's own El Al. And the ultimate smoking gun — the equation of Israel's democracy with apartheid — doesn't exist."

BDS South Africa's shameful misrepresentation of Nelson Mandela as a militant anti-Zionist is simply one aspect of its broader campaign of defamation, in which no misconception, half-truth or outright lie is too wild if it helps with the demonization of Israel and Zionism. But justified anger at these tactics should also be tempered with the realization that the statements of BDS advocates become more strident after every failure they experience. For example, last November, BDS South Africa failed to persuade the University of Cape Town, one of the continent's most prestigious institutions of higher education, to cut ties with Israeli academic institutions. In the same month, the group also failed to block the multi-million-dollar takeover of South African dairy giant Clover by an Israeli-led conglomerate, while another post-takeover campaign urging South Africans to boycott Clover products has been summarily ignored. No amount of rebranding will camouflage that.

Ben Cohen is a New York City-based journalist and author who writes a weekly column on Jewish and international affairs for JNS.

# After Coronavirus, the Mask Is Off at the Quincy Institute



DEXTER VAN ZILE  
BOSTON

We ought to thank Sarah Leah Whitson, Managing Director for Research and Policy at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft — the gathering place for Israel-haters established by Andrew Bacevich in 2019.

Whitson, who was well known for promoting hostility toward Israel under the guise of human rights activism during her tenure at Human Rights Watch, revealed an astonishing and troubling desire to see Israeli Jews suffer.

Whitson took off the mask in a reply to a tweet by Mairav Zonszein, a contributor to the *Columbia Journalism Review* and *The Nation*, who expressed glee that Israeli Jews were forced to live under quarantine as a result of the COVID-19 virus.

In the March 14 tweet, Zonszein wrote, "6 million Jewish Israelis will now get a taste of what around the same number of Palestinians have experienced for over a half a century."

So here we have an Israeli-American journalist who covers Israel expressing glee that six million of her fellow Jews are going to be under quarantine isolation to limit the effects of a deadly virus. She suggests that the isolation that Israelis will endure over the next few months is punishment for all the bad things that the Israelis have done to the Palestinians over the years. Just another opportunity to demonize Jewish self-defense, and not attacks on Jews.

The problem with this type of thinking is how easily it can be flipped. Someone on the other side of the debate could, and probably will, argue that the suffering endured by Palestinians as a result of the COVID-19 virus is just punishment for the terror attacks perpetrated by groups like Hamas and PFLP over the years. Fortunately, most Israelis and Palestinians understand what's at stake and are working together to constrain the virus, Zonszein's thoughts notwithstanding.

Most responsible public figures would condemn Zonszein's crazy tweet or pass it over in silence, but not Sarah Leah Whitson. She picked up Zonszein's tweet like a fumbled football and ran it into the end zone. She did this by hitting "reply" and typing, "Such a tiny taste. Missing a tablespoon of blood."

With this now-deleted tweet, Whitson hearkened back to the medieval blood libel,

## Continued from Page A6 Zionist Conspiracy

out of China, Salafists in Egypt, Morocco, and elsewhere dubbed it a "Soldier of God" targeting those infidels who work against him. "The power of God strikes upon China, Communism and Buddhism: Crowded Hospitals. China declared war on Islam and Muslims and persecuted our brothers Uyghurs."

Abdul Razzak al-Mahdi, a Syrian Salafist, tweeted on Jan. 20. "God gave them a soldier (virus). And many of God's soldiers said, Glory be to Him ... O God, increase their suffering and affliction until they stop fighting your religion and worshipers."

An Egyptian cleric celebrated that the "power of God strikes upon the Buddhist



Palestinian police officers stand guard outside the Church of the Nativity that was closed as a preventive measure against the coronavirus, in Bethlehem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank March 6, 2020. Photo: REUTERS/Mussa Qawasma.

which accused Jews of using the blood of gentle children to make Passover matzah, just a few weeks before Passover. After some serious pushback, Whitson said she deleted the tweet to "prevent misinterpretation" because her message "didn't come out right" and she "should've emphasized I abhor all violence."

Forgive me, but I have a tough time taking Whitson's explanation seriously. No one with the least bit of knowledge of Jewish history would have "accidentally" put in a reference to a "teaspoon" of blood without warning bells going off in the back of her head.

It doesn't help that Whitson's employer, the Quincy Institute, is a gathering place for all manner of Israel haters. Its list of experts reads like a who's who of the Walt and Mearsheimer crowd. (And guess what? Both Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, authors of the infamous Israel Lobby book serve as advisers to the Quincy Institute.)

Then we've got Trita Parsi, the former staffer for the *National Iranian American Council*, with ties to the Iranian regime. Then there's retired US Army Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, who once suggested that Israel perpetrated gas attacks on civilians in Syria as part of a "false-flag" operation. Exactly what is Wilkerson doing serving as an expert for an organization dedicated to "responsible statecraft"?

This brings us back to Whitson, the Managing Director for Research and Policy at the Quincy Institute. Does posting ugly tweets redolent of antisemitic blood libels qualify as promoting peace and tranquility in both the United States and the international arena?

Again, we should all be thankful to Whitson for taking the mask off. Behind the façade of responsible statecraft at the Quincy Institute, there's an ugly visage of anti-Israel scapegoating.

Dexter Van Zile is the Shillman Research Fellow for the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis.

communist China. China launched a war against our Muslim Uyghur brothers and God sent his soldier [coronavirus]. God is not unjust to his worshipers."

Videos of Islamist clerics praying for the demise of Chinese communists were common. "After China isolated more than 5 million Muslims," one wrote on January 25, "the whole world is isolating China because of the outbreak of the coronavirus among Chinese in fear of contamination."

The tenor of Islamist comments changed after the outbreak spread into other countries, particularly Iran. Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami suggested that the coronavirus might

Continued on Page A10

## Impressions.

# The War Against COVID-19 Can Unite Us

BY JOSEPH FRAGER/  
JNS.org

The past decade has witnessed perhaps the greatest degree of polarization of the American public in the country's history. It has permeated and impacted society in far-reaching ways.

When road rage leads to murder, as happened in New York's Park Slope neighborhood this past week, society has to recognize there is a problem.

When expletives are hurled at a president of the United States by movie stars, NBA basketball players, and the like, introspection is required.

When the media pumps out news that is not fit for print, and cannot be backed up by facts and multiple sources, then there has been a breakdown in civilization. Unfortunately, social media platforms are not kind to truth or fact. They tend to superheat an already overheated environment.

COVID-19 has already done extensive damage. Worldwide, 156,433 people have contracted the disease to date, 5,821 of whom have died. Although most who contract COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms, it can be lethal for susceptible individuals.

However, the sharing of health information the world over to combat the pandemic has brought us all closer and ultimately will help all of us overcome.

Democrats and Republicans passed a sweeping,



Israeli election monitors wearing protective gear count votes cast by Israelis in home-quarantine over coronavirus concerns following Israel's national election, in Shoham, Israel, March 4, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Ronen Zvulun.

bipartisan relief bill designed to alleviate much of the hardship associated with the pandemic — a good sign.

COVID-19 does not differentiate between Democrat and Republican. All are equally affected. America, as a whole, must wage war on coronavirus. This is a life and death struggle — and a dramatic wake-up call.

Forget the bickering, the petty feuds, the soapboxes, and the microphones. This is real life, in real time.

This challenge requires facts and truth, not half truths, misinformation, and delusions. Life and survival depend only on the facts. Fiction is the enemy.

COVID-19 has brought us all down to earth again.

The more we work as a team, the more people will live. It's that simple.

This pandemic has become the great uniter. If we indeed unite we can beat COVID-19. If we continue to point fingers, quarrel, and play the blame game we all lose.

Dr. Joseph Frager is first vice president of the National Council of Young Israel.

# Russia's Shift From 'Greater Europe' to 'Greater Asia'

BY EMIL AVDALIANI

When the Ukraine crisis broke out in 2014, political analysts pointed out, quite rightly, that Russia without Ukraine would become more Asian. With the country's borders now more in Asia than in Europe, Moscow would inescapably focus more on the Middle East and China. The latter would become Russia's primary ally in global politics, but there would also be fears that Beijing would overshadow Moscow's role in their bilateral relations. In other words, analysts believed Russia would turn into a Chinese appendage that provided energy resources to the Asian giant.

Years have passed, and there have been some interesting twists in this analysis. Russian analysts and many in the West have started to develop the idea that the Ukraine crisis and the ensuing deterioration of relations with the West freed Russia from its Euro-centrist views on foreign policy. For the first



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu attend the Victory Day parade, marking the 73rd anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in Moscow, Russia May 9, 2018. Photo: REUTERS/Maxim Shemetov.

time since Peter the Great, Russia would initiate a "de-Europeanization" of its geopolitical outlook and once again be truly Russian in terms of the way it conducted its foreign relations. In this analysis, Beijing is viewed as a facilitator for Moscow.

Because the two countries share a desire to limit US influence across Eurasia, there is indeed a sympathy among the Russian political elites for the idea of growing and formalizing Russia-China relations beyond the current level. Some even hesitantly approve of an alliance.

This juggling of ideas about Russia's foreign policy since 2014 is intriguing, but it obscures a crucial development: Russia is slowly being turned into an Asian state.

Many call this assertion far-fetched and claim that Moscow now has more avenues through which to project its power across the Eurasian landmass. This "new diversification" idea misses the simple fact that Russia has always had a diversified foreign policy. Moscow was heavily involved in the Middle East for centuries. This applies not only to the Ottoman Empire of the 18-19th centuries, but also to Russian interests in Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan (if we consider it as separate from Central Asia), northern China, the Korean Peninsula, and elsewhere. This was true during the time of the Romanovs as well as during Soviet times. The idea that Russian foreign policy since the Ukraine crisis has become more diversified does not correspond to the reality of the past two centuries.

What we are seeing today is declining Russian political clout in eastern Europe. There might

be talk of Russia's pipeline geopolitics (often successful), successful annexation of Crimea, and thwarting of Ukraine's, Moldova's, and Georgia's NATO/EU aspirations, but the ultimate success of all those measures remains open to question. The West is much more powerful than Russia in terms of economy, soft power, and more.

Russia is becoming more Asia-focused (including the Middle East) not because of a Kremlin master plan, but because playing the China card is inevitable.

About 10 years ago, the Russian political elite was enthusiastic about the prospect of creating a greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok. This would have been a more or less unified economic space extending all the way to the borders of China. Putin himself publicly advocated this idea.

But after a few years, Russia's vision completely changed. In geo-economic terms, Putin's greater Europe idea was gradually replaced by the concept of a greater Asia from St. Petersburg to Shanghai.

In 2014, China displaced Germany as Russia's number one trade partner — but Russia is only tenth among China's trade partners. China has also replaced Germany as Russia's biggest supplier of machinery and equipment.

It is commonplace in Russia for grand geopolitical ideas to shift. A decade ago, Russians envisioned closer political and economic relations with Europe. Now many think about near-strategic cooperation with China, while still others think about being independent of China.

Moscow will maintain relations with Europe. Many military, security, and economic problems across Europe can only be solved with Russian participation. But there are economic and cultural shifts that limit Russia's projection of power into Ukraine, the Baltic States, and even the South Caucasus. Russia has a freer hand in Central Asia, through military moves in the chaotic Middle East and Africa. This illustrates how Russia without Ukraine and the Baltic States now has more frontiers in Asia than in Europe.

It has become fashionable among Russia analysts to point out how in the past two decades under Putin, the country regained much of its internal strength, which resulted in foreign policy successes. In fact, what has been more pivotal within the context of Russian history is that the Russian political elite in the past 20 years has been seeking the country's new place in Eurasia.

This development was easily foreseen. After losing large swathes of former Soviet territory, Russia was forced to find its place in 21st century Eurasia.

Moscow would like to portray itself as independent, but it isn't. Russia, unable to accommodate itself with Europe, has little choice but to turn to Asia.

Emil Avdaliani teaches history and international relations at Tbilisi State University and Ilia State University. He has worked for various international consulting companies and currently publishes articles on military and political developments across the former Soviet space.

A version of this article was originally published by The BESA Center.

# Legal Notice.

## LEGAL NOTICE



Notice of formation of limited liability company (LLC) Name: JAMONIX GLOBAL LLC Articles of organization filed with the secretary of state of New York (SSNY) on: 01/27/2020 . Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: Matthew Rogers 26 Bergen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 2/14/21/28; 3/6/13/20

Notice of formation of limited liability company (LLC) Name: MIKEGEEZ FITNESS BOUTIQUE LLC . Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York(SSNY) on : 01/29/2020 . Office location: Richmond County. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: MIKEGEEZ Fitness Boutique LLC 318 Nelson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10308. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 2/14/21/28; 3/6/13/20

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF KINGS U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, on behalf of the holders of the Asset Backed Securities Corporation Home Equity Loan Trust, Series NC 2005-HE8, Asset Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series NC 2005-HE8, Plaintiff AGAINST Alisa Smith a/k/a Allisa Smith Skeffers; Arieta Smith; et al., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated August 16, 2018 I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, 360 Adams Street, Room 224, Brooklyn, NY 11201 on April 2, 2020 at 2:30PM, premises known as 525 East 38th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11203. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings, City and State of NY, Block 4955 Lot 66. Approximate amount of judgment \$706,479.39 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index# 521173/2016. Gregory Laspina, Esq., Referee Shapiro, DiCaro & Barak, LLC Attorney(s) for the Plaintiff 175 Mile Crossing Boulevard Rochester, New York 14624 (877) 430-4792 Dated: February 12, 2020 68214  
AJ; 2/28; 3/6/13/20

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK - COUNTY OF KINGS FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION (FANNIE MAE), A CORPORATION ORGANIZED AND EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, V. ELDA M. MANGROO, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS ADMINISTRATIX AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF

## LEGAL NOTICE

VICTOR MANGROO; ET AL. NOTICE OF SALE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 12, 2019, and entered in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Kings, wherein FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION (FANNIE MAE), A CORPORATION ORGANIZED AND EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA is the Plaintiff and ELDA M. MANGROO, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS ADMINISTRATIX AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF VICTOR MANGROO; ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the KINGS COUNTY COURTHOUSE 360 ADAMS STREET, ROOM 224, BROOKLYN, NY 11201, on April 2, 2020 at 2:30 pm, premises known as 260 ARLINGTON AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11208: Block 3940, Lot 12: ALL THAT CERTAIN PLOT, PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN, COUNTY OF KINGS, CITY AND STATE OF NEW YORK Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 510961/2014. Gregory M. LaSpina, Esq. - Referee. RAS Boriskin, LLC 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff.  
AJ; 2/28; 3/6/13/20

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: THE FIX LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 02/07/2020. Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: The LLC 315 3RD Avenue, 2ND floor Brooklyn, NY 11215. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 2/28; 3/6/13/20/27; 4/3

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: MKE BY DEE, LLC. Articles of organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York on 01/07/2020. Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: Diana Perez 226 97th St. Apt. C3 Brooklyn, NY 11209. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 3/6/13/20/27; 4/3/10

NOTICE OF SALE Supreme Court County Of Kings The Bank of New York as Trustee for the Certificate-holders of the CWABS 2005-06, Plaintiff AGAINST Woodrow Lynch, Albi B. Etoh, et al, Defendant Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated 8/16/2018 and entered on 9/12/2018, I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY on April 09, 2020 at 02:30 PM premises known as 883 Herkimer Street, Brooklyn, NY 11233. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the County of Kings, City and State of New York, BLOCK: 1704, LOT: 67. Approximate amount of judgment is \$497,543.45 plus interests and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 509810/2015. Jageshwar Sharma, Referee FRENKEL LAMBERT WEISS WEISMAN & GORDON LLP 53 Gibson Street Bay Shore, NY 11706  
AJ; 3/6/13/20/27;

Notice of formation of limited liability company (LLC) Name: TRILLIAN VFX LLC. Articles of Organization

## LEGAL NOTICE

filed with the secretary of state of New York(SSNY) on 12/23/2019. Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: Victoria Osborn 836 Bergen St., Apt. 402, Brooklyn, NY 11238. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 3/13/20/27; 4/3/10/17

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC).Name: JK SYCAMORE LLC. Articles of organization filed with the secretary of state of New York(SSNY) on 12/17/2019. Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: The limited liability company 316 10th Street. Apt. #1 Brooklyn, NY 11215 purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 3/13/20/27; 4/3/10/17

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF KINGS, HIC ACQUISITIONS I, INC., Plaintiff, vs. NELSON RODRIGUEZ, ET AL., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale with Bill of Cost duly filed on August 22, 2016, and an Order for Extension of Time to Conduct Foreclosure filed January 22, 2020, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, Room 224, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY on April 16, 2020 at 2:30 p.m., premises known as 42 Eldert Lane, Brooklyn, NY. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings, City and State of New York, Block 4112 and Lot 67. Approximate amount of judgment is \$691,093.16 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 876/2014. Scott Harris Klein, Esq., Referee Greenspoon Marder LLP, 590 Madison Avenue, Suite 1800, New York, NY 10022, Attorneys for Plaintiff  
AJ; 3/13/20/27; 4/3/

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: PEACHES PRIME LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the secretary of state of New York(SSNY) on 02/04/2020. Office location: Kings county. SSNY has been designated as the agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to: peaches prime LLC 590 Fulton Street Brooklyn, NY 11217. Purpose: all lawful activity  
AJ; 2/21/28; 3/6/13/20/27

SUPREME COURT - COUNTY OF KINGS JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION S/B/M CHASE HOME FINANCE LLC, Plaintiff against CAROLINE THUNDER, Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered on January 28, 2020. I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction in Room 224 of the Kings County Courthouse, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY. on the 16th day of April, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. premises described as follows: All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the County of Kings, City and State of New York. Said premises known as 711 Schenck Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. 11207. (Block: 4308, Lot: 32). Approximate amount of lien \$ 938,870.75 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment and terms

## LEGAL NOTICE

of sale. Index No. 14657-13. Bruno Codispoti, Esq., Referee. FEIN SUCH & CRANE, LLP Attorney(s) for Plaintiff 28 East Main Street, Suite 1800 Rochester, NY. 14614 (585) 232-7400  
AJ; 3/13/20/27; 4/3/

SUPREME COURT - COUNTY OF KINGS THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON TRUST COMPANY, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FKA THE BANK OF NEW YORK TRUST COMPANY, N.A. AS SUCCESSOR TO JPMORGAN CHASE BANK N.A. AS TRUSTEE FOR RAMP 2005SP3, Plaintiff against HURBY L. GIBBS, et al Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered on August 21, 2018. I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction in Room 224 of the Kings County Courthouse, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. on the 23rd day of April, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. premises described as follows: All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings and State of New York. Said premises known as 2179 Clarendon Road, Brooklyn, NY. 11226. (Block: 5165, Lot: 51). Approximate amount of lien \$ 606,491.17 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment and terms of sale. Index No. 27190-09. Kent D. Arthur, Esq., Referee. McCabe, Weisberg, & Conway, LLC Attorney(s) for Plaintiff 145 Huguenot Street - Suite 210 New Rochelle, New York 10801  
AJ; 3/20/27; 4/3/10

NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC AUCTION Supreme Court of New York, KINGS County. WILMINGTON TRUST, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY, BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE OF MFRA TRUST 2015-1, Plaintiff, -against- JOSE VALDEZ; COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK SOCIAL SERVICES DISTRICT; CITY OF NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL BOARD; CITY OF NEW YORK PARKING VIOLATIONS BUREAU; CITY OF NEW YORK TRANSIT ADJUDICATION BUREAU; GENESIS VALDEZ; NADIA COLON; EMMANUEL VALDEZ; NADIA VALDEZ; ISABELLE VALDEZ; YOLANDA RUIZ; MERIAM RUIZ, Index No. 510698/2016. Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated, June 25, 2019 and entered with the Kings County Clerk on July 3, 2019, Steven Z. Naiman, Esq., the Appointed Referee, will sell the premises known as 44 Hemlock Street, Brooklyn, New York 11208 at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, Room 224, on April 23, 2020 at 2:30 P.M. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings, City and State of New York known as Block: 4106; Lot: 60 will be sold subject to the provisions of filed Judgment, Index No. 510698/2016. The approximate amount of judgment is \$515,177.38 plus interest and costs. FRIEDMAN VARTOLO LLP 85 Broad Street, Suite 501, New York, New York 10004, Attorneys for Plaintiff.  
AJ; 3/20/27; 4/3/10

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF KINGS, MTGLQ INVESTORS, L.P, Plaintiff, vs. MERLEY ALLEYNE A/K/A MERLEY C. ALLEYNE, ET AL., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly filed on June 1, 2017

## LEGAL NOTICE

and an Order Pursuant to CPLR 2004 Extending the Time to Set Sale and to Ratify Sale Nunc Pro Tunc filed June 14, 2019, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, Room 224, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY on April 23, 2020 at 2:30 p.m., premises known as 9101 Avenue N, Brooklyn, NY. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings, City and State of New York, Block 8275 and Lot 9. Approximate amount of judgment is \$365,355.18 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 510655/2015. Jageshwar Sharma, Esq., Referee Knuckles, Komosinski & Manfro, LLP, 565 Taxter Road, Suite 590, Elmsford, NY 10523, Attorneys for Plaintiff Cash will not be accepted.  
AJ; 3/20/27; 4/3/10

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF KINGS, WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY, FSB, D/B/A CHRISTIANA TRUST, NOT INDIVIDUALLY BUT AS TRUSTEE FOR PRETIUM MORTGAGE ACQUISITION TRUST, Plaintiff, vs. BOLIVAR LUNA, ET AL., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly filed on January 28, 2020, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Supreme Court, Room 224, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY on April 23, 2020 at 2:30 p.m., premises known as 1090 Hancock Street, Brooklyn, NY. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough of Brooklyn, County of Kings, City and State of New York, Block 3395 and Lot 33. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 12443/14. Doron Aviram Leiby, Esq., Referee Berkman, Henoch, Peterson, Peddy & Fenchel, PC., 100 Garden City Plaza, Garden City, NY 11530, Attorneys for Plaintiff  
AJ; 3/20/27; 4/3/10



## Tradition.

# Communities and Crowds



JONATHAN SACKS  
LONDON

Melanie Reid is a journalist who writes a regular column for *The (London) Times*. A quadriplegic with a wry lack of self-pity, she calls her weekly essay *Spinal Column*. On 4 January 2020, she told the story of how she, her husband, and others in their Scottish village bought an ancient inn to convert it into a pub and community centre, a shared asset for the neighbourhood.

Something extraordinary then happened. A large number of locals volunteered their services to help open and run it. "We've got well-known classical musicians cleaning



the toilets and sanding down tables. Behind the bar there are sculptors, building workers, humanist ministers, Merchant Navy officers, grandmothers, HR executives and estate agents... Retired CEOs chop wood for the fires; septuagenarians ... wait at tables; surveyors eye up internal walls to be knocked down and can-doers fix blocked gutters."

It has not only become a community centre; it has dramatically energised the locality. People of all ages come there to play games, drink, eat, and attend special events. A rich variety of communal facilities and activities have grown up around it. She speaks of "the alchemy of what can be achieved in a village when everyone comes together for a common aim."

In her column describing this, Melanie was kind enough to quote me on the magic of "I" becoming "we": "When you build a home together ... you create something far greater than anything anyone could do alone or be paid to do." The book I wrote on this subject, *The Home We Build Together*, was inspired by this week's parsha and its name: Vayakhel. It is the Torah's primer on how to build community.

It does so in a subtle way. It uses a single verb, *k-h-l*, to describe two very different activities. The first appears in last week's parsha at the beginning of the story of the Golden Calf. "When the people saw that Moshe was long delayed in coming down the mountain, they gathered (vayikahel) around Aharon and said to him: get up, make us gods to go before us. This man Moshe who brought us out of Egypt – we have no idea what has become of him" (Ex.

32:1). The second is the opening verse of this week's parsha: "Moshe assembled (vayakhel) all the community of Israel and said to them: these are the things the Lord has commanded you to do" (Ex. 35:1).

These sound similar. Both verbs could be translated as "gathered" or "assembled." But there is a fundamental difference between them. The first gathering was leaderless; the second had a leader, Moshe. The first was a crowd, the second a community.

In a crowd, individuals lose their individuality. A kind of collective mentality takes over, and people find themselves doing what they would never consider doing on their own. Charles Mackay famously spoke of the madness of crowds. People, he said, "go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses slowly, one by one." Together, they act in a frenzy. Normal deliberative processes break down. Sometimes this expresses itself in violence, at other times in impulsive economic behaviour giving rise to unsustainable booms and subsequent crashes.

Crowds lack the inhibitions and restraints that form our inner controls as individuals.

Elias Cannetti, whose book *Crowds and Power* is a classic on the subject, writes that "The crowd is the same everywhere, in all periods and cultures; it remains essentially the same among men of the most diverse origin, education and language. Once in being, it spreads with the utmost violence. Few can resist its contagion; it always wants to go on growing and there are no inherent limits to its growth. It can arise wherever people are together, and its spontaneity and suddenness are uncanny."

The crowd that gathered around Aharon was in the grip of panic. Moshe was their one contact with God, and thus with instruction, guidance, miracle and power. Now he was no longer there and they did not know what had happened to him. Their request for "gods to go before us" was ill-considered and regressive. Their behaviour once the Calf was made – "the people sat down to eat and drink and then stood up to engage in revelry" – was undisciplined and dissolute. When Moshe came down the mountain at God's command, he "saw that the people were running wild for Aharon had let them run beyond control and become a laughing stock to their enemies." What Moshe saw exemplified Carl Jung's description: "The psychology of a large crowd inevitably sinks to the level of mob psychology." Moshe saw a crowd.

The Vayakhel of this week's parsha was quite different. Moshe sought to create community by getting the people to make personal contributions to a collective project,

the Mishkan, the Sanctuary. In a community, individuals remain individuals. Their participation is essentially voluntary: "Let everyone whose heart moves them bring an offering." Their differences are valued because they mean that each has something distinctive to contribute. Some gave gold, other silver, others bronze. Some brought wool or animal skins. Others gave precious stones. Yet others gave their labour and skills.

What united them was not the dynamic of the crowd in which we are caught up in a collective frenzy but rather a sense of common purpose, of helping to bring something into being that was greater than anyone could achieve alone. Communities build; they do not destroy. They bring out the best in us, not the worst. They speak not to our baser emotions such as fear but to higher aspirations like building a symbolic home for the Divine Presence in their midst.

By its subtle use of the verb *k-h-l*, the Torah focuses our attention not only on the product but also the process; not only on what the people made but on what they became through making it. This is how I put it in *The Home We Build Together*: "A nation – at least, the kind of nation the Israelites were called on to become – is created through the act of creation itself. Not all the miracles of Exodus combined, not the plagues, the division of the sea, manna from heaven or water from a rock, not even the revelation at Sinai itself, turned the Israelites into a nation. In commanding Moshe to get the people to make the Tabernacle, God was in effect saying: To turn a group of individuals into a covenantal nation, they must build something together."

"Freedom cannot be conferred by an outside force, not even by God Himself. It can be achieved only by collective, collaborative effort on the part of the people themselves. Hence the construction of the Tabernacle. A people is made by making. A nation is built by building."

This distinction between community and crowd has become ever more significant in the 21st century. The classic example is the Arab Spring of 2011. Massive protests took place throughout much of the Arab world, in Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan, Oman, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, Iraq, Bahrain, Libya, Kuwait, Syria and elsewhere. Yet it turned rapidly into what has been called the Arab Winter. The protests still continue in a number of these countries, yet only in Tunisia has it led to constitutional democracy. Protests, in and of themselves, are never enough to generate free societies. They belong to the logic of crowd, not community.

The same is true of social media even in free societies. They are great enhancements of existing communities, but they do not in and of themselves create communities. That takes face-to-face interaction and a willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the group. Without this, however, as Mark Zuckerberg said in 2017, "social media can

contribute to divisiveness and isolation." Indeed, when used for virtue signalling, shaming or aggressive confrontation, they can create a new form of crowd behaviour, the electronic herd.

In his new book *A Time to Build*, Yuval Levin argues that social media have undermined our social lives. "They plainly encourage the vices most dangerous to a free society. They drive us to speak without listening, to approach others confrontationally rather than graciously, to spread conspiracies and rumours, to dismiss and ignore what we would rather not hear, to make the private public, to oversimplify a complex world, to react to one another much too quickly and curtly. They eat away at our capacity for patient toleration, our decorum, our forbearance, our restraint." These are crowd behaviours, not community ones.

The downsides of crowds are still with us. So too are the upsides of community, as Melanie Reid's Scottish pub demonstrates. I believe that creating community takes hard work, and that few things in life are more worthwhile. Building something with others, I discover the joy of becoming part of something greater than I could ever achieve alone.

Shabbat Shalom

*Continued from Page A7  
Zionist Conspiracy*

be a biological weapon developed by the United States against China and Iran.

Iran now is suffering one of the world's worst coronavirus outbreaks, with a reported 853 people killed by the illness as of Monday. The actual number could be dramatically higher. Its victims include high-ranking government officials and senior clerics.

Scientists throughout the world, meanwhile, are racing to develop a vaccine to end the crisis. An American-developed vaccine started clinical trials Monday. An Israeli laboratory is reportedly on the cusp of a similar formula. Should either prove successful, a new dilemma faces those who insist the two countries are the root of the world's evils.

Algerian news outlet *Al Masdar* published a conspiracy theory under the headline, "A Zionist organization is behind the coronavirus and the Zionist entity (Israel) claims to have found the vaccine."

Iranian mullah Nasser Makarem Shirazi declared it is prohibited to take any Israeli medication for the virus unless there is no alternative. Even Western Israel-haters couldn't wrap their heads around the prospect.

"I'd rather take my chances with the virus than consume an Israeli vaccine," wrote Roshan M. Salih, an Iranian *Press TV* journalist and editor of the British Muslim news site *Five Pillars*.

When people reacted angrily, he wrote that he "activated the Israel lobby."

*Press TV*, meanwhile, published an article by American conspiracy theorist Kevin Barrett to back the claim that the coronavirus is a

US-Israeli conspiracy using biological warfare to hurt Iran. "US, Israel waging biological warfare on massive scale," was the March 7 story's headline.

Barrett, a "9/11 truther," got crazier in the story:

*The United States waged biological warfare against its own Congress in 2001 with the anthrax component of the 9/11 anthrax false flag operation, which terrorized Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy, the leaders of the movement that blocked the Patriot Act, into giving up and allowing the Patriot Act.*

*So the United States is run by lunatics, by psychopaths who are entirely capable of launching World War 3 by way of a biological warfare attack on China and Iran, with the Iran component presumably led by Israel. That's the most likely explanation for what we're seeing.*

This is the kind of rot *Press TV* publishes.

In Iraq, prominent Shiite political leader Moqtada al-Sadr refused any vaccine coming from the United States, accusing President Donald Trump of "spread[ing] this virus especially [since] most who suffer from it are America's enemies."

"O Trump if you are an atheist and think yourself as a healer, we don't seek anyone's help but God," al-Sadr said. "Any cure that comes from you or your infested companies, we don't accept it. You are not just an enemy of God but an enemy of nations and a virus that spreads wars and pestilence."

Hizballah's *Al Manar* TV published an op-ed by Ali Abadi saying that the United States could benefit from downsizing in the Chinese economy.

"At least we know that the United States is experiencing a feverish anxiety about the continued growth of China's economy, and it has tried for many years to curb this growth through political pressure to force Beijing to take steps such as raising the value of Chinese Yuan," Abadi wrote. "American think-tanks fear that the USA will lose its global leadership position through the rapid growth of China."

Muslim Brotherhood historian Mohamed Gawady believes that the group's ideology will prevail as a result of the virus, though his logic wasn't clear. "As Egypt was the first country in the world and it was the first country that was headed by a Brotherhood member [Mohamed Morsi] despite his martyrdom," he wrote. "God willing after the coronavirus passes, all the presidents of the world will be Muslim Brotherhood as the world has matured."

The global COVID-19 outbreak gave Islamists a new opportunity to spew antisemitism and conspiracy theories about their perceived enemies. Even though the virus has hit the United States and Israel, many Islamists insist on seeing a conspiracy behind everything.

*Hany Ghoraba is an Egyptian writer, political and counter-terrorism analyst at Al-Ahram Weekly, author of Egypt's Arab Spring: The Long and Winding Road to Democracy and a regular contributor to the BBC.*

*A version of this article was originally published by The Investigative Project on Terrorism.*

## Social.



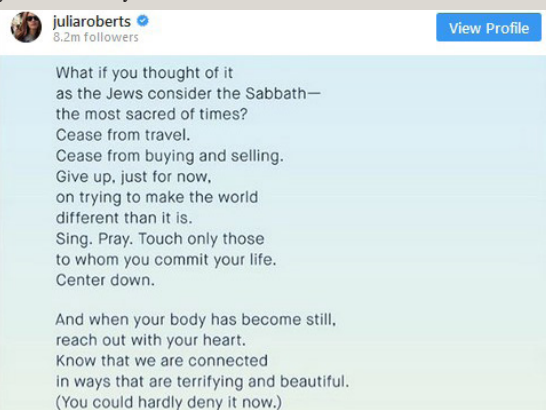
Julia Roberts. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

## Actress Julia Roberts Shares Poem on Shabbat Observance, Coronavirus Quarantining

BY SHIRYN GHERMEZIAN

Amid the ongoing coronavirus crisis, US actress Julia Roberts posted on Instagram on Sunday a poem about quarantining and social distancing that begins by discussing Shabbat.

“What if you thought of it as the Jews consider the Sabbath — the most sacred of times?” the poem by Lynn Unger asked. “Cease from travel. Cease from buying and selling. Give up, just for now, on trying to make the world different than it is. Sing. Pray. Touch only those to whom you commit your life. Center down.”



Know that we are connected  
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.  
(You could hardly deny it now.)  
Know that our lives  
are in one another's hands.  
(Surely, that has come clear.)  
Do not reach out your hands.  
Reach out your heart.  
Reach out your words.  
Reach out all the tendrils  
of compassion that move, invisibly,  
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—  
for better or for worse,  
in sickness and in health,  
so long as we all shall live.

—LYNN UNGAR 3/11/20

Unger wrote the three-paragraph poem, titled “Pandemic,” last week. She said thinking about the “restrictions” observant Jews face during Shabbat helped her form her poem.

“We generally think of restrictions as being a negative,” she told the *Chicago Tribune*. “But the idea of the Sabbath is that accepting these restrictions — you can’t exchange money, drive a car, work — can be a spiritual discipline that is a source of beauty, a source of the holy, as opposed to just being a pain in the ass.”

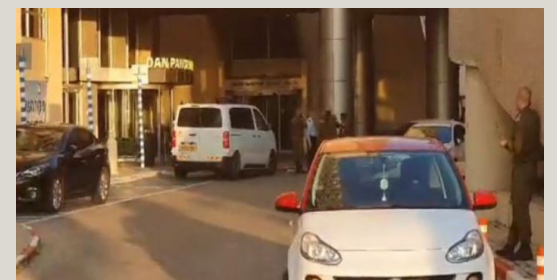
## Luxury Tel Aviv Beachfront Hotel Being Converted Into Coronavirus Clinic

BY BENJAMIN KERSTEIN

A luxury beachfront hotel in Tel Aviv is being turned into a clinic for coronavirus patients, the Israeli news site N12 reported Monday.

Officials from IDF Home Front Command, emergency medical service Magen David Adom and the Israel Police are already at the Dan Panorama Hotel in Tel Aviv and making arrangements to isolate and secure the building in order to prevent infection when the patients arrive.

A special sterile area has been set up, a CCTV network has been installed to monitor patients, and



Police and medical officials are seen at the entrance to the Dan Panorama Hotel in Tel Aviv, which is being converted into a coronavirus clinic.

Photo: Screenshot.

signs have been put up warning of possible infection.

The hotel will not be used to house patients in serious condition, but will allow for treatment of patients whose condition is moderate but cannot care for themselves in home quarantine.

A medical official on the premises confirmed to N12 that the hotel was set to be used as a clinic.

Israel's Channel 13 reported that the hotel would be converted at the request of the Ministry of Defense, in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

In addition to the Dan Panorama, the Dan Hotel in Jerusalem will begin accepting coronavirus patients. Together, the hotels have 2,000 rooms, which could potentially accommodate thousands of people.

It is expected that other Dan hotels in Haifa and Jerusalem will soon be converted into clinics as well.

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