

Opinion.

COMEDIANS UNDERSTAND THE MIDEAST  
A2.



Tradition.

WORDS THAT HEAL  
A10.



CAST OF 'FAUDA' TALKS SEASON 3  
A11.

# THE **algemeiner** JOURNAL

\$1.00 - PRINTED IN NEW YORK

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2020 | 30 NISSAN 5780

VOL. XLVII NO. 2452

## In Midst of Coronavirus Pandemic, Israel Remembers Holocaust Victims



People stand still in Tel Aviv as a two-minute siren marking the annual Israeli Holocaust Remembrance Day is heard, April 21, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Corinna Kern.

### BY ALGEMEINER STAFF & AGENCIES

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Israel paused on Tuesday to remember the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis on Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Across the country, sirens blared for two minutes, while the few pedestrians who were out in public despite lockdown restric-

tions paused, and drivers pulled their cars over on streets and highways.

Israel has been under strict lockdown measures for more than a month in efforts to stop the spread of the coronavirus, with most public life shut down, and many people working from home or out of work.

Others observed a moment of silence at homes from their balconies.

According to the Finance

Ministry, 75 years after the end of World War II, there are still 189,500 Holocaust survivors in Israel. About 70 percent of them are above age 80 — making them particularly at risk from the Covid-19 disease as long as there is no vaccination.

“In this challenging period, when quarantine is necessary to protect their health, it is important that Holocaust survivors in partic-

*Continued on Page A3*

## Coronavirus Lockdown Deepens Holocaust Survivors' Loneliness

BY REUTERS & ALGEMEINER STAFF

Elias Feinzilberg, a 102-year-old Holocaust survivor, had to commemorate Israel's annual memorial day for the six million Jewish dead on Tuesday separated from his family because of the coronavirus lockdown.

From his third-floor Jerusalem home, he blew kisses to his daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who stood in the street below to be with him, at a safe distance, as a siren sounded across Israel to honour those who perished.

“It pains me that I cannot be with my family, with my friends,” said Feinzilberg from his window.



Janny Brodesky, the daughter of Elias Feinzilberg, a 102-year-old Holocaust survivor, and other family members, wave as they stand by his home in Jerusalem as Israel marks Holocaust Remembrance Day under coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions, April 21, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Ronen Zvulun.

Below, his family members, including five of his 19 great-grandchildren, brandished a sign that read “Remembering close-by, embracing from afar,” part of a nationwide campaign to show solidarity with Israel's roughly 190,000 Holocaust survivors at this time of coronavirus lockdown and enforced separation.

As the siren sounded, his family bowed their heads and  
*Continued on Page A3*

## We Can't Just 'Reopen' Our Nation

page A8



### ShabbatCalendar

Parshat TAZARIAH - MEZORAH  
פרשת תזריע-מצורע  
Times for New York City, Friday Candle Lighting  
Shabbat Begins: 7:27pm | Shabbat Ends: 8:30pm



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## Opinion.

## Comedians Understand the Middle East Better Than Experts

MITCHELL BARD  
NEW YORK

Nearly 20 years ago, comedian Larry Miller (not Dennis Miller, as some believe) explained the Mideast conflict better than any expert. He said: “Five hundred million Arabs; five million Jews. Think of all the Arab countries as a football field, and Israel as a pack of matches sitting in the middle of it. And now these same folks swear that if Israel gives them half of that pack of matches, everyone will be pals.”

Miller reminded people of the history that two-state advocates ignore, such as the fact that Gaza was occupied by Egypt, and the West Bank was controlled by Jordan. Now the Palestinians say they want their own country. “No, they don’t,” observed Miller. “They could’ve had their own country any time in the last 30 years, especially ... at Camp David. But if you have your own country, you have to have traffic lights and garbage trucks and chambers of commerce, and, worse, you actually have to figure out some way to make a living. That’s no fun. No, they want what all the other Jew haters in the region want: Israel.”

Just in time for Passover, Jackie Mason also had some words of wisdom. In an inter-

view with Brigit Grant for the *Jewish News*, Mason noted that “Jews are often the biggest supporters and unwitting allies of antisemitism. If you go to any university today you’ll find a ‘Professor Silverstein’ preaching about intersectionality, being ‘woke,’ and the oppression of the Palestinian people.”

Mason observed that “all you ever hear is if only Israel didn’t do this or that the Palestinians would act differently” and suggested that those professors and BDS advocates should contemplate “what would happen IF the Palestinians... Didn’t fire rockets into towns in Israel; Acknowledged the Jews’ right to exist in their ancestral homeland; Remembered with the Arab states and the rest of the world that they rejected the partition plan in 1947 and invaded with five armies; Remember the hundreds of thousands of Sephardic Jews who were ejected from Arab countries and sent into exile;” and many other facts.

Then there’s Bill Maher, who said of the BDS movement after Israel banned Congresswomen Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) and Ilhan Omar (D-MN) from visiting the country: “It’s a bulls— purity test by people who want to appear woke but actually slept through history class.”

Maher quoted one of the BDS movement’s leaders, Omar Barghouti, who said, “No Palestinian, rational Palestinian, not a sell-out Palestinian, would ever accept a Jewish state in Palestine.” Maher added: “So

that’s where that comes from, this movement, someone who doesn’t even want a Jewish state at all. Somehow this side never gets presented in the American media.”

“Congresswoman Omar has said things like, ‘It’s all about the Benjamins,’ ‘Israel has hypnotized the world,’ ‘May Allah awaken the people and help them see the evil doings of Israel,’” Maher added. “She apologized for it, but it’s out there: Jews control the world, control the money. I can see why they don’t get a hero’s welcome.”

Typical of BDS hypocrites who believe the First Amendment entitles them to attack Jews and Israel, but does not apply to anyone who criticizes them, Tlaib called for a boycott of Maher’s show.

In one of the best ripostes to the preachers of intersectionality and their claim that Jews are among those who enjoy “white privilege,” Maher said, “It’s predicated on this notion, I think — it’s very shallow thinking — that the Jews in Israel [are] mostly white, and the Palestinians are browner, so they must be innocent and correct, and the Jews must be wrong. As if the occupation came right out of the blue, that this completely peaceful people found themselves occupied.”

Maher, who loathes President Trump, gave him credit for recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital: “I hate to agree with Donald Trump ... it doesn’t happen often, but I do. I don’t know why Israel — it has been their



A Palestinian rioter hurls stones at Israeli troops in the West Bank city of Hebron, Feb. 6, 2020. Photo: Reuters / Mussa Qauasma.

capital since 1949, it is where their government is. They’ve won all the wars thrown against them. I don’t understand why they don’t get to have their capital where they want.”

When *New York Times* columnist Michelle Goldberg, appearing on his show “Real Time,” replied, “When you win a war you don’t get to take the other side’s land,” Maher responded, “Actually, you do, especially because [the Israelis] were attacked.” He added, “They were attacked more than once and they took land in those wars that they won and there has been peace offers on the table ever since to give part of that land back.”

Maher also seems to understand better than the foreign policy mavens the problem with the two-state solution. He asked why it should be up to the Israelis to come up with a plan, since anything they propose is rejected and then they are blamed for making it “impos-

Continued on Page A9

aj.com  
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Algemeiner Journal

(USPS 927800) is published weekly (except for the week of Passover and Succos)

Subscription rate \$40 per year

Algemeiner Journal  
208 E 51st Street, Suite 185  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Periodicals Postage  
Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.  
and at additional mailing offices

POSTMASTER:  
Send address changes to

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New York Times Seder-Shames  
Ivanka TrumpIRA STOLL  
BOSTON

The *New York Times* wants everyone to know that Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner had a Passover seder in New Jersey, not Washington, DC — and that the *Times* disapproves of the decision.

A *Times* news article published online and later in print plays gotcha with the presidential daughter’s Passover plan. Online, the article is headlined, “Ivanka Trump, Disregarding Federal Guidelines, Travels to N.J. for Passover.” The subheadline is, “Ms. Trump herself has not followed the federal guidelines advising against discretionary travel, leaving Washington for another one of her family’s homes.”

The *Times* even uses anonymous sources to prop up its seder scoop, reporting in a kind of breathless, Bob Woodward style: “Ms. Trump and her husband, Jared Kushner, who is also a senior White House adviser, traveled with their three children to the Trump National Golf Club Bedminster in New Jersey to celebrate the first night of Passover this month, according to two people with knowledge of their travel plans, even as seders across the country were canceled and families gathered remotely over apps like Zoom.”

Well, in our experience, at least, not many seders were “canceled.” On a net basis, there were probably more seders, if smaller ones, than there ever have been, as people who usually are guests at large seders wound up leading their

own. The *Times* doesn’t say whether the Trump family seder involved Zoom, or what relatives, if any, were in attendance beyond the five-person Kushner-Trump family. The federal guidelines about the novel coronavirus are just that — guidelines. There’s no statutory definition of what travel is “discretionary” and what is not. If the *Times* thinks that Trump’s action poses any Covid-19-related public health risk, it doesn’t explain how it does. If anything, it’s the *Times* creating the public health risk by publicizing the travel, turning a private move by two White House aides into an international news story.

Who knows, maybe the Trumps have a Passover kitchen at Bedminster, or were able to observe the holiday there while putting themselves, their children, or their staff at less personal risk. Maybe they consulted medical or rabbinic authorities — or both — before deciding to make the trip, and weighed various considerations to decide what would be best for their family and for the country.

The *Times* print headline is “President’s Daughter Ignores Travel Guidelines.” That’s inaccurate, because maybe she didn’t “ignore” them, maybe she thought about them, and decided her own travel was not discretionary, or that she should go anyway, given the competing considerations. It’s also weird to frame the whole thing as if it were entirely Ivanka’s decision and to focus the article and the main headline on Ivanka, as if Jared were just some kind of suitcase that Ivanka threw in the trunk of the sport utility vehicle on the way to the Garden State.

In seder-shaming Jared and Ivanka, the *Times* is joining one of the more unattractive trends that has gone along with the novel

coronavirus — the practice of spying on people who are observing the Jewish religion, and rattling them out publicly for doing so.

The *Miami Herald*, for example, reports that in Miami Beach, “The city banned formal religious services at places of worship on March 27. Violations of the order are considered a criminal offense.” How that is consistent with the First Amendment is totally beyond me. What happened afterward, the *Herald* reports, is that when Jewish prayer gatherings moved into private homes, neighbors hired a private investigator to report the home-based prayer services to the city.

The *Herald* article, headlined “Neighbor hires detective to spy on Jewish prayer groups after coronavirus closes temples,” quoted a Miami Beach Commissioner, Ricky Arriola, who: *said it was “troublesome” to see neighbors turning on each other to disclose the locations of religious gatherings.*

“These are very stressful times for folks,” Arriola said. “Many people find comfort in religion and observing religious traditions and ceremonies. I think we have to be respectful of their individual decisions.”

Troublesome indeed.

Even some *Times* readers didn’t think much of this story. As one *Times* commenter, “CC” from Nevada City, put it in a comment that won a “*Times* Pick” gold medal, “C’mon. This is a ‘tempest in a tea pot.’ I have no affinity at all for Trump or his family, but this isn’t worth your time or the readers.’ The family stayed together in the car; no one in the public was affected. ... What’s the problem?”

Ira Stoll was managing editor of *The Forward* and North American editor of *The Jerusalem Post*.

## World News.

# Unity Deal Allows Netanyahu to Push Trump's Peace Plan

BY ISRAEL HAYOM/JNS.org

The unity government agreement finalized on Monday evening by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Blue and White Party leader Benny Gantz allows Israel to promote the annexation of parts of Judea and Samaria as early as July, sources privy to the details of the deal told Israel Hayom.

According to Article 29 of the 14-page agreement, Netanyahu, who under the rotation deal with Gantz will retain the premiership for the next 18 months, "will be able to present the agreement reached with the US on the application of sovereignty [in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley] for the approval of the government and the Knesset starting July 1, 2020."

The Trump administration presented its Middle East peace plan in late January. Gantz was previously hesitant to support any annexation move, but under the unity deal, his party has pledged to vote with the coalition on the issue.

Moreover, the deal states that both leaders "will act in full agreement with the



US President Donald Trump shakes hands with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, US, January 28, 2020. Photo: REUTERS/Joshua Roberts.

US, including on the issue of the maps, and in dialogue with the international community."

The agreement further outlines two legislative paths to enact annexation, seeking to bypass any objections in parliament.

The Trump administration has also linked Israel's sovereignty moves in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley with Israeli support for a demilitarized Palestinian state.

Netanyahu had already agreed to the issue in principle in his 2009 speech at Bar-Ilan University, but has refrained from endorsing it in the 11 years that have since passed.

# Israel's Coronavirus Death Toll Rises to 181, Total Number of Cases at 13,883

BY JNS.org

Israel's COVID-19 death toll rose to 181 on Tuesday, after four more people succumbed to the disease overnight Monday and on Tuesday morning.

Among the four fatalities was Aharon Turchin, a 48-year-old father of 14 with no preexisting health conditions. Turchin, who lived in the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak, passed away at the Ichilov Medical Center in Tel Aviv after being transferred there over the weekend from Mayanei Hayeshua Medical Center in Bnei Brak after his condition deteriorated.

According to Israel's Health Ministry, there have been a total of 13,883 confirmed cases of coronavirus infection in the country since the beginning of the pandemic,

including 170 new cases since Monday night. While 4,353 Israelis have officially recovered, 142 are still in serious condition, 113 of whom are intubated. However, the number of Israelis recovering from the virus has exceeded the number of new infections for four days in a row, according to the ministry.

The update comes just days after officials tentatively rolled back some of the strict limitations placed on movement and commerce in the last several weeks, as well as lockdowns on Bnei Brak and two dozen neighborhoods in Jerusalem with particularly high coronavirus infection rates.

Bnei Brak continues to have the highest per capita coronavirus infection rate in the country, but residents are now subject to the same regulations as all other Israelis.

'A great inspiration'

Feinzilberg was packed aboard a cattle train and sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where more than a million Jews were murdered. He survived months of forced labor before being marched by the Nazis from one concentration camp to another in the final weeks of the war.

He and his wife moved to Israel in 1969 and opened a shoe store. She died in 2008 and Feinzilberg now has a full-time care worker living with him.

The Holocaust survivors, like other elderly Israelis, are confined to their homes under the country's partial lockdown and find themselves far from their usual network of support.

Continued from Page A1  
Loneliness

then waved to Feinzilberg.

The average age of the survivors today is 84, putting them in the highest risk group for COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

Israel, which has about nine million people, has reported 13,833 confirmed COVID-19 cases to date, including 181 deaths.

Feinzilberg, born in Poland in 1917, was imprisoned with his family in the Lodz ghetto after the Nazi German invasion at the start of World War Two in 1939. His father perished there and his mother and sisters were murdered at the Chelmno death camp.

# Holocaust Survivors 'Nothing Short of Living Heroes,' Britain's Prince Charles Says



Britain's Prince Charles addresses the National Yom HaShoah UK Commemoration via video, April 20, 2020. Photo: National Yom HaShoah UK Commemoration.

BY BENJAMIN KERSTEIN

Britain's Prince Charles addressed the annual National Yom HaShoah UK Commemoration via video on Tuesday, saying that the story of the resilience of Holocaust survivors could serve as a role model for the world as it struggled with the coronavirus pandemic.

"My heart goes out to you all as you remember the Shoah," Charles told those who gathered online due to the coronavirus restrictions, marking not only Holocaust Remembrance Day, but also the 75th anniversary of the British liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

He paid tribute to the survivors of the Holocaust, saying, "Despite the unimaginable horrors that they endured and the losses they suffered, the survivors and refugees who found a welcome in Britain somehow

managed to piece their lives back together to become the leaders and builders of your community, active citizens and dedicated contributors to wider British society."

"They have been and continue to be shining examples to the world of how it is possible to triumph over adversity," he said.

"To us they are simply nothing short of living heroes," Charles added, "who were determined not just to survive but to thrive."

Addressing the ongoing coronavirus crisis, he said, "For 75 years survivors, refugees, and liberators have inspired us with their positive messages of hope, which now, at such an unprecedented, anxious, and strange time in all our lives, can perhaps remind us that through faith, resolve, and determination, the day will soon come when we will all be safely together again."

Continued from Page A1  
Israel Remembers

ular, and the entirety of the older generation know that they are not alone," said Knesset Speaker Benny Gantz in a speech on Tuesday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also posted a pre-recorded message on Tuesday commemorating survivors of the Holocaust.

More than 13,880 people are confirmed to be infected with the coronavirus, with the country's death toll at 181, according to the Health Ministry. More than 4,350 have recovered, the ministry added.

Many institutions and museums were holding online ceremonies to mark the event. The Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem had streamed a state opening ceremony that was recorded without an

audience on Monday night online, with translation in five languages.

Yad Vashem invited people from around the world to participate in a virtual name-reading ceremony by recording themselves reciting the names of victims and sharing the video on social media. "Although the circumstances this year are unique, the message is still the same: We will never forget them," said chairman Avner Shalev.

The coastal city of Tel Aviv was promoting online events, such as sharing survivors' stories on Facebook.

It was announced last month that a traditional memorial march between the Auschwitz I and Birkenau death camps that usually takes place on Holocaust Remembrance Day had been cancelled for the first time.

"Loneliness is one of their greatest sources of distress," said Offir Ettinger, a spokesman for Israel's Authority for Holocaust Survivors' Rights, which provides thousands of survivors with regular support through dedicated NGOs.

"Every Holocaust Day we see an increase in survivors turning to us for help, but this year, because of the coronavirus isolation, it's different," said Ettinger.

"Even a mere word like 'curfew' can bring back painful memories for some," he added, because of its associations with draconian

wartime restrictions in the ghettos and camps.

Therapy sessions, led by social workers and psychologists, have been increased since the outbreak, said Ettinger, and are being conducted by phone and video chats.

Jenny Brodsky, Feinzilberg's daughter, said her father was dealing with isolation relatively well.

"(The coronavirus) is nothing compared with what he's been through," she said. "The most difficult part for him is knowing that his family are okay, but he has a lot of patience, he is very optimistic. He's a great inspiration to us."

## World News.



Israel Defense Forces soldiers helping to fill and deliver oxygen tanks as part of the country's efforts to combat the coronavirus epidemic. Photo: IDF Spokesperson's Office.

## The New Normal at Jerusalem Venture Partners: Robots, Temperature Taking Tech, and 3D Printed Masks

BY ELIHAY VIDAL/CTech

The Startup Nation is back to work, but not without taking the necessary precautions. In the Jerusalem Venture Partners' Media Quarter of Jerusalem, for example, each employee that arrives at the office undergoes an advanced temperature check, completes an online health questionnaire, prints out a 3D face mask, and is allocated special space in the complex to ensure social distancing.

JVP employs around 250 people in about 20 start-ups and incubators in Jerusalem. By using the latest technological solutions, they decided to build on the new Israeli Ministry of Health Guidelines to ease the restrictions on economic and social activity. At the entrance to the complex, each employee goes through a special temperature-screening technology tool developed by Thermogate, which detects body temperature in seconds. Then, within minutes, a "Good Thought" 3D printing machine produces a plastic face protector to reduce the chances of infection.

In addition, everyone who enters the complex completes a short questionnaire developed by the Weizmann Institute, entrance to the building is granted or denied based on the results. The elevator in the building has been programmed to ensure that only those granted access can use it, and each

door in the building has sanitizing materials at hand. All door handles in the compound are disinfected every hour by the cleaning staff.

Once inside the building, in order to minimize contact between employees, a robot manufactured by TEMI Personal Robots transfers documents between the offices. Guests arriving at the complex are not allowed into the building and conference rooms, but only to a dedicated guest building with a separate entrance. Guests enter from one side of the building and the compound workers from the other. Pitches from startup companies raising money for the JVP fund will be presented in this space, ensuring both parties do not come in direct physical contact.

"Israel's tech sector provides solutions for people across the globe dealing with the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, but beyond that, we are producing a higher level of best practices and standards for a return to work, which can be applied worldwide," said Erel Margalit, JVP's chairman and founder. "First of all, we need to make sure our workers come to work and return home healthy."

JVP was recently selected by New York City to establish the city's International Cyber Center. The model for a return to work being implemented in Jerusalem will serve as a pilot for the New York center, which is expected to reopen in the coming month.

## German Jewish Group Slams Festival Invite to Prominent Academic Accused of Antisemitism

BY BEN COHEN

One of Germany's leading cultural festivals was at the center of a row over antisemitism on Tuesday, as a German Jewish organization joined in with earlier demands to cancel the opening address at the event by an academic charged with "antisemitism" and "Holocaust relativization."

In a letter to the elected leadership of the North-Rhine Westphalia state in western Germany, the Jewish Values Initiative asserted that the invitation to Prof. Achille Mbembe to speak at the renowned Ruhrtriennale festival

on Aug. 14 should be revoked.

The group said that Mbembe — a Cameroonian sociologist currently teaching in South Africa — had in his writings made the "antisemitic" equation between the former apartheid regime in South Africa and the Israeli government, endorsed the anti-Zionist campaign to boycott, divest from and sanction the Jewish state, and diminished the Holocaust by bracketing it with the apartheid system.

"As Mbembe accuses Israel of apartheid and compares the former South African apartheid system to the Shoah, this leads to the legitimate assumption that he equates

## Amid Coronavirus Pandemic, Palestinian Authority's Indoctrination of Children With Anti-Israel Hatred Moves Online

BY BENJAMIN KERSTEIN

Despite the coronavirus pandemic shutting down schools operated by the Palestinian Authority, a new report showed that educational materials containing incitement, hatred and violence are now being used extensively online.

The materials were revealed by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Textbooks (IMPACT-se), and showed numerous instances of the disturbing lessons being taught to Palestinian children.

One video shows a teacher using the story of Palestinian terrorist Dalal al-Mughrabi, one of the perpetrators of the 1978 Coastal Road Massacre, in which 38 Israeli civilians were killed, to teach reading comprehension to ten-year-old kids.

The presentation used graphic images of violence, and the teacher at one point praises "the suicide operation that caused the deaths of many of the Occupation's soldiers."

In another video lesson, Sir Isaac Newton's theories are taught to seventh-graders using the example of slingshots used to launch projectiles at Israelis.

An answer to a question refers specifically to stone-throwing, saying, "The forces that influence the stone are the weight of the stone and also the resistance of the atmosphere that influences the stone."

Images from an eighth-grade science textbook also appear on an educational Facebook page that show Palestinian students actually using slingshots in class.

An e-learning portal operated by the Palestinian Authority's Education Ministry even uses the example of rockets fired at Israeli



Images from an educational Facebook page showing Palestinian children using slingshots in Palestinian Authority schools. Photo: IMPACT-se.

civilians to illustrate a Newtonian principle, asking, "Do the rocket launchers of the Palestinian resistance have potential energy?"

IMPACT-se CEO Marcus Sheff commented on the materials, saying, "Even when studying at home, Palestinian children cannot escape the hate. The violence and incitement of the official Palestinian curriculum is being neatly migrated online by official and unofficial educational initiatives and fed into their living rooms."

"If anything, the online versions make the hate even more graphic and awful than before," he added. "If the donor community thought this global pandemic would lead to the Palestinian Ministry of Education leaving the hate behind, they were wrong."

"It is clear that teaching Jihad is too important to the Palestinian Authority to be stopped by anything as mundane as a global pandemic," Sheff said.

"This is what happens when the Palestinian Authority makes a strategic decision to encourage over a million Palestinian children to sacrifice themselves and when the international community funds it," he concluded.

the position of the democratic State of Israel towards the Palestinian Arabs with that of the National Socialists during the Shoah — an antisemitic picture in its purest form," the letter argued.

The Jewish Values Initiative protest came a few days after Germany's top federal official dealing with antisemitism called for Mbembe's appearance at the festival to be nixed.

"Delivering the opening speech to such an important event is a task of responsibility, not least given the fact that the festival is financed with public funds," Felix Klein — the German government's antisemitism commissioner — told the WAZ news outlet last Friday. "The person selected should be someone who lives up to this responsibility, not someone who has been criticized in the past for the relativization of the Holocaust."

Klein said that Mbembe had "questioned Israel's right to exist and also compared South Africa's apartheid system to the Holocaust — something that is out of the question in view of the unprecedented crimes during the Nazi era, and especially given Germany's historical responsibility for it." He warned that the Ruhrtriennale festival would suffer "considerable damage" if Mbembe's speech went ahead.

The controversy has stemmed largely from a lengthy essay Mbembe wrote in 2016 titled "The Society of Enmity." Arguing that the present state of world politics was "characterized by forms of exclusion, hostility, hate movements, and, above all, by the struggle against an enemy," Mbembe went on to state that "the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories can be seen to serve as a laboratory for a number of techniques of control, surveillance and separation, which today are

being increasingly implemented in other places on the planet."

Later in the same essay, Mbembe argued that the "metaphor of apartheid" — the brutally-enforced segregation of the black-majority population in South Africa for much of the twentieth century — could not "fully account for the specific character of the Israeli separation project."

Wrote Mbembe: "[G]iven its 'hi-tech' character, the effects of the Israeli project on the Palestinian body are much more formidable than the relatively primitive operations undertaken by the apartheid regime in South Africa between 1948 and the early 1980s."

Mbembe was also criticized for his statement that the "apartheid system in South Africa and the destruction of Jews in Europe — the latter, though, in an extreme fashion and within a quite different setting — constituted two emblematic manifestations of this phantasm of separation."

In an email on Monday to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper, Mbembe vigorously denied that the charges against him had any validity.

"I am not a member or supporter of BDS or any other organization involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," Mbembe stated, adding: "I don't believe in a general boycott of Israeli academics."

Furthermore, he disputed the accusation that he had relativized the Holocaust, saying that he knew of "no serious social scientist who would compare the apartheid system in South Africa with the Holocaust."

U.S. News.

# New Jersey Judge Releases Neo-Nazi Behind 'Operation Kristallnacht' Without Explanation

BY ALGEMEINER STAFF

A convicted neo-Nazi who planned a campaign of vandalism and desecration against synagogues and fantasized about murdering black people has been freed from jail by a judge in New Jersey.

Richard Tobin, 19, was released on a \$100,000 bond last Wednesday, according to Matthew Reilly, a spokesman for the US Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

A federal magistrate ordered Tobin to remain under house arrest, prohibited him from accessing the internet and barred him from having any contact with current or former members of two neo-Nazi groups — one called The Base, and the other called Atomwaffen Division.

From his home in Brooklawn, New Jersey, Tobin communicated online with other members of The Base and directed them to vandalize synagogues in Michigan and Wisconsin last year. He later told investigators that he had launched "Operation Kristallnacht," a reference to the deadly

pogrom in 1938 when Nazis looted and burned synagogues and Jewish-owned homes and stores in Germany.

He also told federal agents that he fantasized about killing black people, and once became enraged at the sight of large crowds of African-Americans shopping at a mall in New Jersey.

"That day, he had a machete in his car and he wanted to 'let loose' with it," the criminal complaint against Tobin said.

His animosity also extended towards LGBT+ people and he was reportedly "triggered" by Pride parades.

"Richard Tobin said that he was triggered by the state of the country, such as when he saw a Pride parade or a large number of African Americans in one location. For example, simply being in Times Square in New York caused Tobin to have these feelings,"



White supremacists at the 'Unite the Right' rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, August 12, 2017. Photo: Anthony Crider via Wikimedia Commons.

wrote FBI special agent Jason Novick.

Court records did not disclose why US Magistrate Judge Karen Williams in Camden, New Jersey, chose to release Tobin, who was arrested by the FBI last November. The magistrate sealed court records related to Tobin's bond request.

# MSNBC Graphic During COVID-19 News Shows 'Palestine' in List of Countries

BY JACKSON RICHMAN/JNS.org

A background graphic on MSNBC last week showed "Palestine" in a rolling list of countries depicting numbers associated with the coronavirus pandemic, despite it not being an independent nation.

The graphic was displayed during "The 11th Hour With Brian Williams" on April 16 while internal medicine physician Lipi Roy was analyzing the number of COVID-19 cases, as well as discussing the debate over whether or not some parts of society should reopen. Media critics criticized MSNBC for the background listing "Palestine" as a country.

"Now, more than ever, it's important for the media to engage in careful and thoughtful reporting," Sean Durns, senior research analyst at CAMERA, the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, told JNS. "And the facts are clear: 'Palestine' is not, and has never been, an independent state."

He said "that's what negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority are about—negotiations that the media has reported on for years, and which the PA [Palestinian Authority] has, in recent years, declined," he continued. "MSNBC's decision to grant de facto recognition of statehood is but another example of careless reporting at a time when we can least afford it."

HonestReporting CEO Daniel Pomerantz told JNS, "When news outlets prematurely recognize a Palestinian state, they are not only being factually inaccurate, but also undermine prospects for peace by rewarding unilateralism and intransigence by the Palestinian government. Journalists have a duty to behave responsibly and to ground their work in factual reality: Israelis, Palestinians and news audiences deserve nothing less."

Dan Gainor, vice president of business and culture at the Media Research Center, a media watchdog group, told JNS that "even the 'breaking news' on MSNBC ends up as propoganda."

"There is no place called 'Palestine,' yet MSNBC wants to include it in the official list of places because it's not news, it's agenda," he said. "The interesting question is what place does MSNBC consider to be part of Palestine? Gaza? Or is it claiming Jerusalem?"

An MSNBC spokesperson told JNS that the listing was "an error that has been corrected and will not be included in the graphic moving forward."

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## Opinion.

# Bias Gives Way to False Claims on Israel, Gaza, and Coronavirus



SEAN DURNS  
WASHINGTON

On April 15, 2020, *The Washington Post* published an op-ed entitled “Gaza is an open-air prison. As covid-19 spreads, it’s time to life the siege.” The author, Tarek Loubani, was identified as an “emergency room doctor” and “associate professor at the University of Western Ontario.”

In fact, Loubani is a veteran anti-Israel activist. And the op-ed itself is replete with outright lies and omissions.

The *Post* fails to inform readers that Loubani was one of eight “activists” working with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) who were deported from Israel in 2003 for obstructing the construction of a security barrier during the height of the Second Intifada terror wave (2000-2005). ISM is a group that sends foreigners to interfere with Israeli counter-terrorism efforts.

As the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (CAMERA) has documented, ISM’s website has lobbied for freeing convicted terrorist Marwan Barghouti, who was sentenced to five consecutive life terms and an additional 40 years in prison for his role in attacks against Israel.

Indeed, ISM participants have even admitted to working with members of terrorist groups. On March 20, 2003, *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported that ISM activist Susan Barclay told the paper “she knowingly worked with representatives from Hamas and Islamic Jihad,” which are designated as terrorist organizations by the US State Department.

Loubani himself has a long history of anti-Israel activism that should have been disclosed by the *Post*. In 2013, he was arrested in Egypt while trying to enter the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. In 2014, he was detained at Ben Gurion Airport.

And in 2018, he took part in the Hamas-orchestrated Great Return March, in which armed terrorists, interspersed among unarmed civilians, sought to break into Israel to “tear out the hearts” of Israelis, as Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar phrased it. An April 2018 analysis by the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center identified most of the slain “protesters” as belonging to US-designated terrorist groups, and Hamas official Mahmoud al-Zahar admitted to *Al Jazeera* on May 13, 2018, that the group was “deceiving the public” when it claimed that the March was one of “peaceful resistance.”

It is unsurprising then that in 796-words about Israel’s “siege” on Gaza, Loubani failed to mention Hamas once. In keeping with his history and agenda, he merely echoed the US-designated terrorist group’s talking points. Loubani lied, claiming that Israel doesn’t allow medical supplies and doctors into Gaza. He writes, “If Israeli authorities do not act immediately to lift the siege and allow in medical and other supplies,” although, as CAMERA pointed out to *Washington Post* global opinion editor Karen Attiah, Israel has already supplied COVID tests to the Gaza Strip — and, *as always*, transfers medical supplies to the Hamas-ruled territory. As *The New York Times* put it, “the import of medicine is not restricted.”

Indeed, the *Associated Press* recently corrected a March 18th news story that similarly implied that Israel doesn’t allow in medical supplies (“Ravaged by war, Middle Eastern countries face a new scourge”). The *Post*, which carried that AP dispatch, followed suit and corrected as well. That CAMERA-prompted correction noted that “in the Gaza Strip, medical infrastructure has been strangled by mismanagement by the Islamic militant Hamas rulers” — an important fact that Loubani omits.

Following contact from CAMERA, *The Washington Post* changed Loubani’s wording to read “If Israel authorities do not act to immediately lift the siege and allow

in more urgently-needed medical and other supplies...” But there are many other problems with the *Post*’s op-ed.

Indeed, Loubani fails to note that although the Gaza Strip is a major beneficiary of international aid, its kleptocratic rulers have chosen to invest in rockets, missiles, and terror tunnels instead of essential public health infrastructure. For anti-Israel activists like Loubani, it’s always better to blame the Jewish state instead of acknowledging the responsibility and actions of Palestinian leaders.

Further, not only does Israel’s blockade not prohibit medical supplies as Loubani implied, but the nation has provided Gaza with coronavirus aid well beyond test kits.

As *The Times of Israel* reported: “Dozens of doctors, nurses and medical personnel in Gaza have been trained by Israeli teams in techniques to treat patients infected with the coronavirus, the *Kan* public broadcaster reported Saturday. A training session was conducted for several hours for around 20 medical staff from Gaza at the Erez Border Crossing by a team from the Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan. In addition, a group was allowed to leave Gaza for training at the Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon and medical staff from both sides have held conference calls together, according to the report.”

Indeed, as *The Jerusalem Post* reported on March 21, 2020: “In the last month, COGAT [Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories] has been seen delivering hundreds of testing kits into Gaza, as well as 20 tons of disinfectants used to maintain hygiene and sanitation into the West Bank.”

Nor does Loubani mention that Egypt also maintains a security blockade to prevent armaments from reaching the Gaza Strip. Instead, in keeping with Hamas disinformation campaigns, he targets the Jewish state alone for the “blockade,” which is really in place to prevent the free flow of weapons into the Strip.

One can’t blame Loubani, however. His record and agenda are clear. But one should blame *The Washington Post*.



Workers pack food supplies to be distributed and delivered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to the homes of Palestinian refugees as a precaution against the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in the northern Gaza Strip March 31, 2020. Photo: REUTERS/Mohammed Salem.

The *Post*’s decision to publish Loubani’s error-laden piece violates its standards and guidelines, which claim that “reporters and editors of the *Post* are committed to fairness.” “No story is fair,” the *Post* standards assert, “if it omits facts of major importance or significance. Fairness includes completeness.”

The *Post* standards also include “The Seven Principles for the Conduct of a Newspaper.” The “first mission of a newspaper,” the *Post* intones, “is to tell the truth as nearly as it may be ascertained.” The second is to “tell ALL the truth so far as it can learn it, concerning the important affairs of America and the world.”

The *Post*’s failure to vet Loubani’s op-ed is part of a pattern — a pattern that suggests that the ideology and agenda of an opinion writer is more important than the newspaper’s own standards.

In recent years, *The Washington Post* has published opinion columns by the head of the Houthis, an Iranian-backed militia whose motto is “Death to Israel, Curse the Jews.” On August 30, 2015, it even published a column by a former Iranian diplomat who, German courts allege, ran a veritable hit squad out of Iran’s Berlin embassy, a crime for which he was expelled from the country.

This small sampling is suggestive of a pattern. Failing to address it will come at the cost of the *Post* opinion section’s credibility.

At a time of international crisis, *The Washington Post* is not “bringing people all the facts.” Indeed, it’s not even abiding by its own standards and guidelines.

Sean Durns is a Senior Research Analyst for CAMERA, the 65,000-member, Boston-based Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis.

## The Fauda Effect: Israeli Active Defense on the Screen



ASAF ROMIROWSKY  
WASHINGTON DC

The Israeli concept of “active defense” has long been used by the film industry as a tool with which to showcase the Israeli perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Col. David “Mickey” Marcus, as portrayed in the film *Cast a Giant Shadow* by Kirk Douglas, is given the line, “The olive branch hasn’t worked around here since Noah ran the ark into a mountain.” The iconic character Ari Ben Canaan in the film *Exodus*, portrayed by Paul Newman, expressed the same idea: “Each person on board this ship is a soldier. The only weapon

we have to fight with is our willingness to die.”

Generations of American Jews were raised on these images and messages. They personalized the conflict and stoked the collective emotional attachment of American Jews to Israel in the early years of the state. This was particularly true after World War II, when Jewish identity and Israel went hand in hand.

The relationship has changed a great deal in the decades since the war. Biblical Israel serves as a touchstone from which to be either attached or removed. Modern Israel is either a chimera to be slain or a mythical comrade to be supported. The art of film has attempted to capture these visions, but they are inconsistent. Some break with the past in order to control the future and others are shaped and constrained by the past.

Recent attempts, such as Nancy Spiel-

berg’s documentary *Above and Beyond: The Creation of the Israeli Air Force*, focused on another aspect of Jewish identity: the 1947-48 efforts by Jewish mobsters led by Meyer Lansky to raise money to help the Haganah obtain weapons in the face of an international arms embargo. Spielberg defines the movie, correctly, as “not just a Jewish story but an American one.”

While Israelis have embraced American pop culture in all its aspects, Israeli movies have not really penetrated the American psyche. This is mainly because their appeal to American audiences is so often diminished by their attention to inaccessible aspects of Israeli culture. For example, the 1986 *Two Fingers from Sidon* dealt with Israel during the first Lebanon war in 1982. It captured what Israelis felt while serving on Israel’s borders, but its message didn’t penetrate American Jewish sensibilities. Israeli filmmaker Ari Folman’s 2008 animated documentary *Waltz with Bashir* about Israel’s invasion of Lebanon and his own subsequent struggle with PTSD was more successful. *Waltz with Bashir* was more psychological than historical, and its historical elisions were especially prominent with regard to Sabra and Shatila — an event that has been co-opted by Arab-Palestinian propaganda as a tool with which to blame and shame Israel.

The Arab-Israeli conflict does continue to interest and attract fans worldwide, as can be seen in the great success of the Netflix hit series *Fauda* (Arabic for “chaos”). *Fauda* is Israeli active defense at its best. It showcases the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, provides a voice to both Jewish and Palestinian characters, and shows the multiculturalism of the Middle East and Israel that is so often overlooked. In contrast to Leon Uris’s *Exodus*, about which David Ben-Gurion said that “as a piece of propaganda, it’s the greatest thing ever written about Israel,” *Fauda* is not hasbara but a slice of cold reality.

In the age of infotainment, the danger is when entertainment completely rewrites both reality and history. Today’s American Jewry is fragmented and conflicted in its relationship to Israel. Film and television can be useful tools in changing the trajectory of American Jewish identity and easing its confusion and discomfort about Israel.

Asaf Romirowsky is executive director of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME), a senior non-resident fellow at the BESA Center, and a fellow at the Middle East Forum.

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

## Opinion.

# UN Treaty Body Promotes BDS at Urging of Norwegian NGO



ANNE HERZBERG  
JERUSALEM

During the 67th session of the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), in which the committee was supposed to review Norway's compliance with the International Covenant on Social Economic and Cultural Rights, the Committee used the session as an opportunity to promote the BDS movement. Its concluding report singled out Norwegian business activity in the West Bank, and recommended that Norway reexamine its investment policies. The recommendation coincides with a current review of its ethical investment guidelines by the Norwegian government to be published in June 2020.

Government funders of UN frameworks must establish oversight mechanisms to ensure that UN treaty bodies adhere to their mandates and are not used to advance discriminatory political campaigns and agendas. For the past decade, NGO Monitor has documented the phenomenon of UN treaty bodies that violate their mandates to evaluate state compliance as part of discriminatory anti-Israel campaigns. Last month, the CESCR embraced this disturbing trend, adopting a BDS agenda after some campaigning by the NGO Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).

UN treaty frameworks are often targeted as platforms for anti-Israel propaganda. For instance, the Committee Against Torture adopted NGO efforts to grossly expand the definition of "Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment" (intended to address disproportionate use of force against the detained that doesn't rise to the level of torture) to include "settler violence," delays at checkpoints, and house demolitions. Similarly, in 2018, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued a statement on the Gaza riots that was completely outside of its area of competence.

NGO Monitor has shown how these bodies extensively rely on and repeat unverified claims from NGOs in setting their agendas and in their final reports. Indeed, exploiting UN treaty bodies for anti-Israel political warfare is listed as the number one strategic objective of the Palestinian Authority's United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which was devised in cooperation with UN agencies and officials.

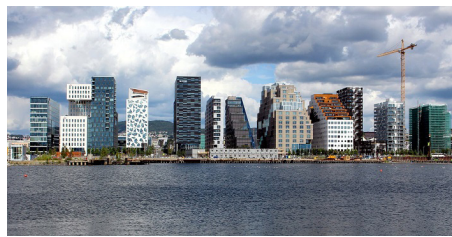
During CESCR's 67th Session, held on February 17 to March 6, 2020, the Committee reviewed Norway's compliance with the International Covenant on Social Economic and Cultural Rights. Committee members/staffers, prompted by NGOs, also used the session as an opportunity to promote BDS.

In its March 6, 2020 report and a February 26, 2020 press release, the Committee singled out supposed Norwegian business activity in the West Bank. It did not specifically address Norwegian business operations in any other conflict zone in the world, or in any other countries where there are alleged human rights abuses.

In reference to the Government Pension Fund of Norway, the Committee stated that it

was "concerned about serious human rights implications of some investment portfolios of the Fund, which include companies found to be engaged in home demolition, Israeli settlements or other activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It is also concerned that not all investments of the Fund are subject to the ethics assessment process of the Council on Ethics."

The Committee then recommended, again singling out Israel from all other international areas where Norway does business, that Norway "review the investment of the Government Pension Fund Global in business entities involved in operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, in the light of its obligations stipulated in the International Court of Justice' advisory opinion of 9 July 2004 on the legal consequences of the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It also recommends that the State party ensure the ethically motivated guidelines for observation and exclusion from the Government Pension Fund Global are in line with its territorial and extraterritorial obligations under the Covenant. ... It further recommends that the State party pursue a



Skyscrapers in Oslo, Norway. Photo: Max Pixel.

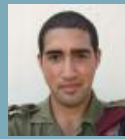
rigorous process of ethics assessment by the Council of Ethics."

In the pre-session List of Issues provided to Norway to guide the drafting of the State Report to the Committee, the CESCR had asked Norway to describe its general policies in the realm of Business and Human Rights. After NGO intervention, however, notably by NPA, the Committee chose to focus exclusively on Israel, and to recommend in its report that Norway revise its policies in effect to mandate anti-Israel divestment.

NPA has a history of political campaigns in conjunction with the discriminatory BDS movement that single out Israel for attack. In 2019, the NPA issued a publication containing numerous factual and legal errors calling on the Norwegian Pension Fund to cease all business activities in the "Occupied Territories." The NPA submitted an abridged version of this publication to the CESCR, and it clearly served as the source material for the Committee's comments and conclusions.

Committee member Olivier De Schutter was responsible for raising BDS during the Committee hearings. De Schutter, a Belgian academic, was formerly the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, a mandate established by Cuba and criticized as a tool with which to whitewash dictatorships and attack Western democracies. According to documentation published by UN Watch, De Schutter used his position as Special Rapporteur to promote radical anti-trade policies. In addition, he used it to attack Israel over counter-terror policy in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. Prior to that, De Schutter was General Secretary of FIDH, one of the leading

# IfNotNow Spreads More Lies About Israel



JONATHAN MICHANIE  
JERUSALEM

The trope that Jews (or in this convenient case, the Jewish state) are the cause of another people's suffering is not a new one. In fact, *New York Times* author Bari Weiss has traced it back to the time of Jesus' crucifixion in Roman-occupied Jerusalem, and explains:

*In the New Testament, it is a small band of Jews who get Rome — then the greatest power in the world — to do their bidding by killing Christ. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, speaks to the Jews about Jesus in the book of John: "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your own law." But the Jews punt the decision back to Pilate: "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." And so, Pilate does the deed on their behalf. In the book of Matthew, the implications of this manipulation are spelled out: "His blood is on us and our children," the Jews say — a line that has been so historically destructive that even Mel Gibson cut it from his *Passion of the Christ*.*

That is why the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), adopted a working definition of antisemitism which includes the following two clauses:

1. Accusing Jews as a people of being respon-

promoters of anti-Israel BDS and demonization, and led an FIDH-PCHR "fact-finding" mission to Gaza in 2006.

During the Committee proceedings, De Schutter promoted the NPA claims, despite their lack of foundation in business and human rights standards and law:

*Mr. De Schutter, noting that the Government Pension Fund Global was the largest sovereign wealth fund in the world, controlling around 1.4 per cent of all stock holdings, said that the Committee had continuing concerns about some of the fund's investment choices, which included the multinational company, Caterpillar, whose bulldozers had been used to demolish buildings and homes in the occupied Palestinian territory, the Heidelberg Cement Group, which was involved in quarrying activities in the occupied territory, and five Israeli banks that helped to finance settlements in the territory. The International Court of Justice had clearly stated that all States had a duty to contribute to efforts to end the serious violations of the peremptory norms of international law, which included the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. That duty was also set out in the Committee's general comment No. 24 on State obligations in the context of business activities (E/C.12/GC/24). He would like to know whether the pension fund's investments would be reviewed in the light of those obligations.*

Norway responded:

*With regard to investments made by the Government Pension Fund Global, the Council on Ethics, which was an independent body, made recommendations on the exclusion of companies that engaged in gross or systematic violations of human rights. In line with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, exclusion was used as a measure of last resort. While the Council*

sible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

2. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

It should therefore come as no surprise that IfNotNow, a self-proclaimed Jewish-American "progressive" organization, violated both of these clauses on the eve of Passover.

In a tweet, IfNotNow proposed the following question to its nearly 60,000 followers in the context of condemning the alleged uprooting of olive trees by Jewish settlers:

*On the eve of Pesach, our US Jewish community must ask itself a crucial question: Will we harden our hearts to the daily suffering of those under Occupation, or will we stand in solidarity with the dispossessed Palestinians, like Moses did with the Hebrew slaves?*

Despite IfNotNow's unfounded assumption that the alleged incident is a direct result of Israel's military presence in the disputed territories, let's take a minute to dissect this rather sickening post.

First, IfNotNow is explicitly insinuating that the American Jewish community holds the key to ending Palestinian suffering.

Despite the fact that Israel's presence in the West Bank has — as is empirically proven — increased the standard of living for the majority

*Continued on Page A9*

*on Ethics took the position that companies should not be excluded from the Pension Fund solely because they engaged in activities in the West Bank, it had recommended the exclusion of a number of companies that had built Israeli settlements there. An expert commission [was] appointed to assess the existing ethical guidelines and [will] submit its report in June 2020.*

NPA has also provided a submission to the Norwegian government as part of this review process along with several other NGOs. It will be important to engage with the Norwegian Commission to counter the BDS narrative and to ensure that Israeli perspectives are included in the review process.

The UN's Human Rights Treaty Body System is predicated on treaty committees adhering to their mandates and promoting compliance with the respective treaties. Oversight mechanisms are needed to safeguard the system. Confidence in these bodies is weakened, as is the rule of law, when NGOs and committee members succeed in convincing committees to improperly exceed their role and allow themselves to be used for narrow and discriminatory political campaigns and agendas.

More broadly, government funders of UN agencies operating in the Palestinian Authority need to reconsider their largess, given that they are being exploited to advance Palestinian rejectionism, economic warfare, and maximalist nationalist goals rather than conflict resolution, human rights, or humanitarian objectives.

*Anne Herzberg is the Legal Advisor of NGO Monitor and the UN Liaison for the Institute for NGO Research, an NGO in Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC since 2013.*

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

## Impressions.

# No One Can Just ‘Reopen’ Our Nation

BY DAVID SUISSA/JNS.org

There’s been a lot of debate lately over how and when our political leaders will “reopen” the country. When can retail shops resume business, and which ones? When can restaurants reopen? When can schools, religious institutions, movie theaters, malls, etc., come back to life?

Well, I have news for our fearless leaders, whether they be the president, governors, mayors, health authorities, or civic and commu-

Stapp, who is director of technology policy at the Progressive Policy Institute, writes, “In this crisis, the FDA bet big on a single testing protocol from the CDC and burned its ships. And when the ‘perfect’ test failed spectacularly, everyone was left wishing for a way to retreat.”

Eventually, as Stapp writes, “The FDA did the right thing when it expanded the EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) exemption to all labs and manufacturers and devolved regulatory oversight to the states. The Department of Health and Human Services did the

resourcefulness are needed above all. And we’re especially aware that the COVID-19 virus is a mysterious, deadly, and elusive target. There are still way too many unknowns, and way too many people who need to be tested.

So while we’re glad to hear some of you may be ready to boldly and gradually “reopen” our country, for many of us, it will take a lot more information before we can feel safe enough to reopen our front doors.

For example, we’ll need to know from our local authorities: How many people are you



US President Donald Trump answers questions about his administration's plans for “Opening Up America Again” during the daily coronavirus task force briefing at the White House in Washington, US, April 16, 2020. Photo: REUTERS/Leah Millis.

nity leaders: They can announce all the gradual “openings” they want, but none of it will matter, because it’s not up to them.

It’s up to us.

It’s up to the people who will actually go out and do the mingling and consuming

When will we decide to reopen our front doors?

When will we decide it’s safe enough to go back into the world and get physically close to other people who may be infected?

People seem to forget that many of us started quarantining ourselves before political leaders decided to “announce” it. We instinctively sensed the danger. For those of us who did our research, we also saw how health authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) utterly failed us before this pandemic erupted.

While the virus began to spread in late January and throughout February, our government squandered six precious weeks dithering over COVID-19 testing procedures. If you can tolerate disheartening reading, check out Alec Stapp’s detailed timeline of this epic breakdown in *The Dispatch*.

right thing when it waived certain provisions of the HIPAA Privacy Rule. But all of these actions were six weeks too late.”

“Six weeks too late” is the phrase that will forever haunt me when I look back at the devastation of COVID-19.

When every minute and every second counts, when a nasty virus spreads virtually like wildfire, it’s little consolation to hear that it took six long weeks of deadly and rampant contagion for our bureaucracy to finally “get it right.”

By then, of course, that same bureaucracy was forced to implement the draconian measures that have put us in lockdown and shut down our economy.

Our leaders will need to forgive us, then, if many of us are taking our lives in our own hands. Yes, we are grateful for your sincere efforts over recent weeks to make up for your initial blunders and combat this disease. We will continue to be in lockdown and to follow orders. But make no mistake. We know that the societal nightmare we are living through could have been prevented had our leaders moved fast enough when the disease first landed on our shores.

We are acutely aware of the weaknesses of lumbering bureaucracies when speed and

testing every day and is that enough to make a difference? What is the best estimate of the death rate? Who will still need to be quarantined and how will you make those distinctions? How will you secure public and work areas to minimize the risks of contagion?

And, maybe most importantly, how quickly are you moving?

As *The New York Times* reported on April 15, “Most of the country is not conducting nearly enough testing to track the path and penetration of the coronavirus in a way that would allow Americans to return safely to work.”

Don’t get me wrong — we are devastated to see our economy crumbling and are eager to restart it. But you need to show us a smart and pragmatic plan that balances medical priorities with economic ones, and, above all, that makes us feel safe.

The ball’s in your court. We’ll let you know when we’re ready to reopen the nation.

*David Suissa is editor-in-chief and publisher of Tribe Media Corp and Jewish Journal. He can be reached at [davids@jewish-journal.com](mailto:davids@jewish-journal.com). This article was first published by the Jewish Journal.*

## Legals.

## LEGAL NOTICE



Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: CLJ DEVELOPMENT LLC Articles of organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York(SSNY) on 02/14/2020. 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: Chuleung Leo Joo 67 West Street #319 Brooklyn, NY 11222 Purpose: all lawful activity AJ; 4/10/17/24; 5/1/8/15

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: AINMHIRE PROPERTIES,LLC . Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York(SSNY) 03/20/2020. 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: Nicole Convery 264 Cumberland Street APT.13 Brooklyn, NY 11205. Purpose: all lawful activity AJ; 4/17/24; 5/1/8/15/22

Notice of formation of limited liability company(LLC) Name: LAST LETTER 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: Last Letter LLC 348 Hancock St., Brooklyn, NY 11216. Purpose: all lawful activity AJ; 4/17/24; 5/1/8/15/22

Continued from Page A2  
Comedians

sible." He said of the Palestinians, "the essential thing that is making the two-state solution impossible is that one party is perpetually hostile, a coiled snake."

When Goldberg ranted about the settlements and Palestinians having to go through checkpoints, Maher schooled her: "But this is always what happens. We talk about what happened as a result; we don't look at the beginning of it. Like the Israelis just put up those checkpoints for no reason. They put up those checkpoints because there was an intifada and they were having bombings every day – a pizza parlor or a bus stop was getting blown up, that's why they built it, not for no reason."

Goldberg persisted in arguing how bad life is in the West Bank, and Maher reminded her of what so many two-state advocates ignore. "Israel gave back Gaza and what was the result?" he said. "Did they use the funds to build schools and hospitals? No. They used them to build tunnels to get weapons and they invited Hamas in to shell Israel across the border."

Maybe it's time to replace the Arabists at the State Department with comedians.

Continued from Page A7  
IfNotNow

of Palestinians, one should certainly appreciate the difficulties that many Palestinians experience under the status quo. Checkpoints have made commutes more difficult and limited budgets have significantly reduced the amount of welfare projects that the Palestinian Authority has been able to undertake.

But appreciating these difficulties does not mean that we ignore their historical context.

Checkpoints were established by Israel following the Palestinian leadership's sponsoring of the Second Intifada (2000-2005), which saw endless terror attacks on civilians — and left over 1,000 Israelis dead.

The Palestinian Authority in 2017 spent nearly 50% of its foreign aid on its "pay-for-slay" policy, which pays salaries to imprisoned Palestinian terrorists as well as their families. In fact, in 2019, the Palestinian Authority spent approximately \$14,000,000 on payments to jailed terrorists and the families of those killed.

Based on figures from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, that figure could buy 387,143 coronavirus test kits, or 465 low-cost MIT ventilators. Not only that, the Palestinian Authority has opted to pay the salaries of terrorists before those of teachers and social welfare recipients. It's easy to see why the Palestinian Authority lacks the funds to work on social welfare programs for their own people.

IfNotNow's assertion that American Jews hold the cards to end Palestinian suffering is in direct violation of the IHRA's working definition of antisemitism because it disregards the leading role that the Palestinian Authority has had in shaping the difficulties that Palestinians are subjected to on a day-to-day basis.

Secondly, IfNotNow's assertion that American Jews are responsible for the security measures adopted by the State of Israel is yet another violation of the IHRA working definition on antisemitism.

Whether you agree or disagree with Israel's security apparatus in the West Bank, it is fundamentally unethical to hold Jews in America accountable for a foreign government's security considerations. It's even more unethical when considering that American Jews will not have to experience the potential waves of Palestinian terrorism that could follow if Israel were to dismantle its security establishment in the disputed territories.

IfNotNow's rhetoric, if left ignored, will undoubtedly contribute to the rise of antisemitism in America. Equally important, it will perpetuate Palestinian suffering by refusing to hold Palestinian leaders accountable for their decades-long violation of human rights against their own people.

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## Opinion.

## China's Hallowed Status at the United Nations Human Rights Council

BEN COHEN  
JNS.org

If you are looking for an international institution that brazenly fawns over the world's most despotic regimes regardless of how low they might sink on the moral scale, then the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) never fails to disappoint.

On April 2, the UNHRC appointed China's Communist regime to a panel that selects investigators to take on some of the world's key human-rights challenges — from freedom of speech to arbitrary detention to basic food security. UN Watch, the respected Geneva-based NGO that monitors the proceedings of the world body, rightly pointed out in response that it was "absurd and immoral for the UN to allow China's oppressive government a key role in selecting officials who shape international human rights standards and report on violations worldwide."

As UN Watch knows better than most, the "absurd" and the "immoral" are what defines the UNHRC. The flip side of UNHRC's supine approach to regimes like China's is its well-documented fixation with Israel's alleged crimes — a permanent subject of its agenda infamously known as "Item Seven." At its 40th session this past February, the council passed five resolutions under this item, including one that endorsed an arms embargo against the Jewish State.

And now this same body has selected China — where being suspected of "espionage" or being accused of a "new crime" while you are held on an earlier charge are among the myriad rationales that allow the state to detain suspects arbitrarily and indefinitely — to assist the rest of the world with the problem of arbitrary detention.

Irrespective of the coronavirus pandemic, this latest UNHRC decision offends the most elementary standards of justice. Above all, it is a further example of how the various bodies and agencies that compose the UN system can be twisted to

favor one member state even as they discriminate against another.

But the ongoing pandemic certainly amplifies concerns about China's status at the UNHRC — and within the United Nations more broadly. By the time the council made its decision to appoint China to its panel in April, the timeline of the Chinese Communist Party's willful deception of the international community over the impact and spread of COVID-19 within its borders was well established. Indeed, in the very same week that the UNHRC's decision enabled China to perpetuate the fiction that it is a lawful, responsible state on matters of human rights, American intelligence officials revealed that the Beijing regime was "intentionally" misleading the world over the true number of coronavirus cases and deaths in China itself. Among those who willingly swallowed the Communist Party's line was the leadership of the World Health Organization (WHO), which had been warned as early as December 31 by doctors in Taiwan that the virus could be transmitted between humans, but which didn't declare a global health emergency until January 30 — emphasizing, as it did so, its unwavering confidence in "China's capacity to control the outbreak."

There is also the matter of how the Chinese regime is restarting its economy with the rest of the world still in lockdown. Throughout this month, activists belonging to the persecuted Uyghur (pronounced: Weeg-ur) Muslim minority have amassed hundreds of videos that show thousands of young Uyghur men wearing anti-virus masks gathered at transport hubs around their region, from where trucks and buses transport them to factories in eastern parts of China. "These videos came out at the time when coronavirus was spreading in China and around the world, when most Chinese companies were shutting down and no one was working," one analyst told the US-supported broadcaster Radio Free Asia. "And we only see the mass transfer of Uyghur laborers to other parts of China at this time."

Although it's unclear whether



US President Donald Trump and China's President Xi Jinping in Beijing, China, November 9, 2017. Photo: REUTERS/Damir Sagolj/File Photo.

these transfers are forced or voluntary, the same analyst pointed out the widespread fear that refusal to participate would lead to detention in one of the brutal "re-education" camps operated by the regime. As has been the case since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, fear of its excesses remains the state's most powerful weapon in dealing with its subjects.

What, finally, of the US administration's response? It's instructive to observe that the two very different UN bodies discussed here — the UNHRC and the WHO — have both been the target of unilateral actions by President Donald Trump. In 2018, pointing the finger at "Item Seven," America deemed the UN Human Rights Council beyond redemption and withdrew from it, while last week, Trump announced that the United States would no longer fund the WHO, citing its collusion with the Chinese regime as the primary reason.

Sadly, while China is poised to continue its exploitation of the United Nations, Western countries have failed to produce a unified response. Trump has long been clear that his foreign policy disdains America's established alliances — in that sense, he is more like his Democratic predecessor, Barack Obama, than the previous Republican incumbent, George W. Bush — so any future American measures against China will likely be imposed or lifted unilaterally. The spectacle of Western leaders coming together to address the Chinese Communist Party's culpability for the coronavirus pandemic is not something that we can expect to see, much as we might wish otherwise.

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

## Imperfect Friends: Quakers and Jews

HAROLD BRACKMAN  
LOS ANGELES

There has been a spate of articles about the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) serving as the preeminent Quaker apologist group for Palestinian rejection of

Israel's right to exist, as well as for the BDS movement.

Usually, accounts begin in 1948, when the UN invited the AFSC

*Continued on Page A10*

## Tradition.

## Words That Heal



JONATHAN SACKS  
LONDON

At the risk of disclosing a spoiler, I would like to begin this week's *Covenant & Conversation* by discussing the 2019 film *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*. Tom Hanks plays the beloved American children's television producer/presenter Mister Rogers, a legendary figure to several generations of young Americans, famous for his musical invitation, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

What makes the film unusual is

trains and a miniature townscape. It is a moment ripe for big-city cynicism. Yet Rogers, when they meet and talk, defies any conventional stereotype. He turns the questions away from himself and toward the journalist. Almost immediately sensing the core of unhappiness within him, he then turns every negative question into a positive affirmation, and exudes the calmness and quiet, the listening silence, that allows and encourages the journalist to talk about himself.

It is a remarkable experience to watch as Hanks' gentleness, immovable even under pressure, slowly allows the journalist – who had, after all, merely come to write a 400

power of speech to heal or harm. This, according to the Sages, is what Tazria and *Metzora* are about. *Tsara'at*, the skin condition whose diagnosis and purification form the heart of the parshiyot, was a punishment for *lashon hara*, evil speech, and the word *metzora*, for one suffering from the condition, was, they said, an abridgment of the phrase *motzi shem ra*, one who speaks slander. The key proof-text they brought was the case of Miriam who spoke badly about Moses, and was struck with *tsara'at* as a result (Num. 12). Moses alludes to this incident many years later, urging the Israelites to take it to heart: "Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam along the way after you came out of Egypt" (Deut. 24:9).

Judaism is, I have argued, a religion of words and silences, speaking and listening, communicating and attending. God created the universe by words – "And He said ... and there was" – and we create the social universe by words, by the promises with which we bind ourselves to meet our obligations to others. God's revelation at Sinai was of words – "You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a Voice" (Deut. 4:12). Every other ancient religion had its monuments of brick and stone; Jews, exiled, had only words, the Torah they carried with them wherever they went. The supreme mitzvah in Judaism is *Shema Yisrael*, "Listen, Israel." For God is invisible and we make no icons. We can't see God; we can't smell God; we can't touch God; we can't taste God. All we can do is listen in the hope of hearing God. In Judaism, listening is high religious art.

Or it should be. What Tom Hanks shows us in his portrayal of Fred Rogers is a man who is capable of *attending* to other people, listening to them, talking gently to them in a way that is powerfully affirming without for a moment being bland or assuming that all is well with the world or with them. The reason this is both interesting and important is that it is hard to know how to listen to God if we do not know how to listen to other people. And how can we expect God to listen to us if we are incapable of listening to others?

This entire issue of speech and its impact on people has become massively amplified by the spread of smartphones and social media and their impact, especially on young people and on the entire tone of the public conversation. Online abuse is the plague of our age. It has happened because of the ease and impersonality of communication. It gives rise to what has been called the disinhibition effect: people feel freer to be cruel and crude than they would be in a face-to-face situation. When you are in the physical presence of someone, it is hard to forget that the other is a living, breathing human being just as you are, with feelings like yours and vulnerabilities like yours. But when you are not, all the poison within you can leak out, with sometimes devastating effects. The number

of teenage suicides and attempted suicides has doubled in the past ten years, and most attribute the rise to effects of social media. Rarely have the laws of *lashon hara* been more timely or necessary.

*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* offers a fascinating commentary on an ancient debate in Judaism, one discussed by Maimonides in the sixth of his *Eight Chapters*, as to which is greater, the *chassid*, the saint, the person who is naturally good, or *ha-moshel be-nafsho*, one who is not naturally saintly at all but who practices self-restraint and suppresses the negative elements in their character. It is precisely this question, whose answer is not obvious, that gives the film its edge.

The Rabbis said some severe things about *lashon hara*. It is worse than the three cardinal sins – idolatry, adultery, and bloodshed – combined. It kills three people: the one who speaks it, the one of whom it is spoken, and the one who receives it. Joseph received the hatred of his brothers because he spoke negatively about some of them. The generation that left Egypt was denied the chance of entering the land because they spoke badly about it. One who speaks it is said to be like an atheist.

I believe we need the laws of *lashon hara* now more than almost ever before. Social media is awash with hate. The language of politics has become ad hominem and vile. We seem to have forgotten the messages that Tazria and *Metzora* teach: that evil speech is a plague. It destroys relationships, rides roughshod over people's feelings, debases the public square, turns politics into a jousting match between competing egos and defiles all that is sacred about our common life. It need not be like this.

*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* shows how good speech can heal where evil speech harms.  
Shabbat Shalom

*Continued from Page A9*  
**Quakers**

to run Palestinian relief in Gaza – a thankless task because of Palestinian resistance to resettlement.

Then the AFSC concentrated on the push for US unilateral nuclear disarmament and sympathy for anti-American dictators, starting with Castro. The AFSC also offered interfaith seminars propagandizing against Israel. Jewish pupils attending the network of fine Quaker schools and summer camps were indoctrinated.

Most recently, a Palestinian-American, Joyce Ajlouny, has been appointed as the AFSC's new General Secretary.

Before 1948, some in British and American Quaker officialdom – despite the anti-Nazi heroism of individual Quakers – came perilously close to being propaganda shills for Hitler's Reich.

After World War I, Quakers had won German gratitude for opposing the Versailles Peace Treaty as well as helping feed starving Germans. As Rufus Jones



Quakers Photo: Genealogical.com

proudly put it in 1940: "the Quakers are the only religious people who have been undisturbed during the entire Hitler Regime."

The Quakers' record regarding German Jews was mixed. In 1931, the German Yearly Meeting wrote a sympathetic letter to a Berlin synagogue attacked by storm troopers. The Quakers also tried to protect "Non-Aryan Christians" – Christians of Jewish origin and children of mixed Christian-Jewish parentage – from Nazi persecution. But initially, the AFSC was reluctant to finance shelters for Jews who fled Hitler.

In Berlin, American Quaker Corder Catchpool at first confronted Nazis directly for mistreatment of Jews. Soon, he decided that cultivating friendships with the Nazi elite would do more good. During the early years before Pearl Harbor, American Quakers stepped up the refugee relief efforts, especially in Vichy and German-occupied France. They also established "hostels" to help thousands of refugees adjust to the US.

Unfortunately, influential British Quakers like George Lansbury and Lord Hurtwood had openly favored appeasing the Hitler regime. They tried to use Eleanor Roosevelt's friendships with Quakers like AFSC Executive Director Clarence Pickett to convince President Roosevelt to hold a summit with Hitler. They supported the Munich settlement. After war broke out, Quaker emissary Benjamin Heinrich Unruh pleaded with Hitler to be merciful by deporting four million Jews to Madagascar!

In December 1938, the Quaker representative in Berlin, Howard Elkinton, met with three American Quakers who arrived in Germany on what was supposed to be a secret mission. News got out, with Goebbels ridiculing "the three wise men." They were granted a meeting at Gestapo headquarters, where Nazis gave them empty promises not to interfere with Quaker operations. Quaker publications in the US seized on this as "a miracle wrought by the way of love."

In 1947, the AFSC and British Friends Service Council were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a publicity bonanza for Quakerdom. Yet despite their mixed record, Quakers did some good during the Holocaust – if not after.

Historian Harold Brackman is coauthor with Ephraim Isaac of *From Abraham to Obama: A History of Jews, Africans, and African Americans* (Africa World Press, 2015).



that it is an unabashed celebration of the power of human goodness to heal broken hearts. Today such straightforward moral messages tend to be confined to children's films (some of them, as it happens, works of genius). Such is the power and subtlety of the film, however, that one is not tempted to dismiss it as simplistic or naïve.

The plot is based on a true story. A magazine had decided to run a series of short profiles around the theme of heroes. It assigned one of its most gifted journalists to write the vignette about Fred Rogers. The journalist was, however, a troubled soul. He had a badly broken relationship with his father. The two had physically fought at his sister's wedding. The father sought reconciliation, but the journalist refused even to see him.

The jagged edges of his character showed in his journalism. Everything he wrote had a critical undercurrent as if he relished destroying the images of the people he had come to portray. Given his reputation, he wondered why the children's television star had agreed to be interviewed by him. Had Rogers not read any of his writings? Did he not know the obvious risk that the profile would be negative, perhaps devastatingly so? It turned out that not only had Rogers read every article of his that he could get hold of; he was also the only figure who had agreed to be interviewed by him. All the other "heroes" had turned him down.

The journalist goes to meet Rogers, first sitting through the production of an episode of his show, complete with puppets, toy

word profile – to acknowledge his own failings vis-à-vis his father and to give him the emotional strength to forgive him and be reconciled to him in the limited time before he died. Here is a fragment of their conversation that will give you a feel for the tone of the relationship:

*Journalist:* You love people like me.

*Fred Rogers:* What are people like you? I've never met anyone like you in my entire life.

*Journalist:* Broken people.

*Fred Rogers:* I don't think you are broken. I know you are a man of conviction. A person who knows the difference between what is wrong and what is right. Try to remember that your relationship with your father also helped to shape those parts. He helped you become what you are.

Note how in a few brief sentences, Rogers helps reframe the journalist's self-image, as well as his relationship with his father. The very argumentativeness that led him to fight with his father was something he owed to his father. The film reflects the true story of when the real Fred Rogers met the journalist Tom Junod. Junod, like his character 'Lloyd Vogel' in the film, came to mock but stayed to be inspired. He said about the experience, "What is grace? I'm not certain; all I know is that my heart felt like a spike, and then, in that room, it opened and felt like an umbrella." The film is, as one reviewer put it, "a perfectly pitched and played ode to goodness."

The point of this long introduction is that the film is a rare and compelling illustration of the

## Social.



(From top left, clockwise) Rona-Lee Shim'on, i24News anchor Michal Divon, Boaz Konforty and Yaakov Zada Daniel during a webinar on April 17, 2020, hosted by the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces. Photo: FIDF.

## Cast of 'Fauda' Talks Season 3, Filming in Areas Resembling Gaza and Coronavirus Isolation

BY SHIRYN GHERMEZIAN/JNS.org

Cast members of the hit Israeli series "Fauda" opened up on Friday about the thrills and obstacles filming the show's third season, now streaming on Netflix, a possible season 4 and how they're coping with the government-mandated coronavirus lockdowns in Israel.

Presented bilingually in Hebrew and Arabic with subtitles, "Fauda" tells the story of an elite undercover unit in the Israel Defense Forces with a focus on Israeli agent Doron Kavillio, played by the show's co-creator, Lior Raz. The last two seasons took place primarily in the West Bank, but in the new one, the action moves to the Gaza Strip.

During a webinar hosted by the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) one day after the third season of "Fauda" launched on Netflix, actors Yaakov Zada Daniel, Boaz Konforty and Rona-Lee Shim'on discussed filming season 3 mostly in Israeli-Arab villages in Israel, but also in Jaffa and in IDF training zones.

Local populations were "unbelievably friendly and cooperative," according to Konforty, who mentioned the idea of having a tour for "Fauda" fans to see the locations used for filming.

Daniel, who plays Eli, one of the members of the undercover unit in the show, said the IDF helped make the scenes taking place in Gaza as realistic as possible.

"Of course, we cannot get into Gaza, or there would be no season 3 today or season 4," explained Daniel. "But the IDF really helped us and supported us. They gave us helicopters, and we worked together closely. I think we both benefited from this."

Daniel said his real-life experience as an undercover operative in the IDF is similar to the role he plays; it helped him understand the mindset of his character. He has experienced undercover missions in Israeli-Arab villages, similar to those in the show, but said real missions are quicker—"in and out," as opposed to lasting days or months in enemy territory.

Konforty, who plays Avihai—a sniper who is part of the counter-terrorist unit in the show—was a tank commander during his IDF service. He said "being in the military, when you come to a series like this, for us things are very, very familiar. It's like a language that

we know, even though it's not our day-to-day now. But it's a language we don't forget. The things that we say to each other, I believe, if someone would listen to our conversations and he was not in the military, he would have to ask for explanations. We didn't have to ask. We understood what we have to do and the role in a very, very deep way."

**'We bonded really quickly'**

Season 3 of "Fauda" took about three months to film. Regarding a fourth season, Daniel said, "I heard that they are writing something. I hope it will happen. We really want it, and I hope it will happen."

Shim'on, who plays Nurit, the only woman in the Israeli counter-terrorism unit, said the cast does all their stunts in the show, and their training included how to fire a weapon, Krav Maga and kickboxing. About being the only female among the main characters, she said it was a lot of fun—"we bonded really quickly. I think there are very few moments where I felt like 'the woman' with the guys."

She added, "They tell dirty jokes all the time; we just had a lot of laughs. I know that by now if I call each one of them at like two in the morning and say, 'I need you, come help me,' they would. I earned five really amazing big brothers."

Shim'on said "Fauda" has helped build a bridge between Arabs and Israelis. "The situation we've been in for many years has been one of divide. I think it's hard to humanize the people on the other side for some people, and I think that's what the show has done. It kind of opened a window to a way there. Of course, we wrote it, and we're Israelis, and it is from our point of view. But it gave a lot of room that wasn't there before and just pushed the conversation forward in that sense."

Shim'on, Konforty and Daniel also reminisced about the last time they were together before being forced to self-quarantine due to the coronavirus. They recalled gathering to watch a few episodes of the latest season, saying they missed spending time together eating, drinking and going out in the evenings in Tel Aviv.

During the lockdown, Shim'on said she is trying to maintain her ballet routine and do yoga, Pilates and meditate. Konforty shared that his two young children, ages 2 and 4, are keeping him busy during the quarantine, while Daniel said he is spending his time cooking, cleaning and writing.

## 'Unorthodox' Star Shira Hass Calls Her Survivor Grandmother on Holocaust Remembrance Day

BY SHIRYN GHERMEZIAN

Israeli actress Shira Haas, the star of the new Netflix mini-series "Unorthodox," shared on Instagram a screenshot of her family's video call to her grandmother, who is a Holocaust survivor, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, which began Monday evening.

Haas, 24, explained that her 86-year-old grandmother was in quarantine without any family members, but added "today we did a zoom call



Israeli actress Shira Haas in 2018. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

together because even in Corona times and especially on this day – We will never leave her alone. Never forget. Always remember."



[View More on Instagram](#)



28,878 likes  
shirahaas

Today is the Holocaust Remembrance Day. My grandmother, the love of my life and a 86 years old Holocaust survivor is in quarantine, without any family member. Today we did a zoom call together because even in Corona times and especially on this day - We will never leave her alone. Never forget. Always remember.

[view all 487 comments](#)

This year marks 75 years since the end of the Holocaust. Because of restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic, many Holocaust remembrance events throughout the world have been cancelled, with commemorations and exhibits shifting online.

Holocaust survivors typically attend remembrance ceremonies and participate in memorial marches, such as the March of the Living, at former Nazi concentration camps in Europe, but this year survivors are mostly staying indoors at home.

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