



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

Samaria. Many of these decisions have been approved by Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit and are just waiting to be implemented.

The name of the game is prevention. To avoid another year of court-mandated evictions, like the High Court of Justice's ruling giving

the Netiv Haavot outpost in the Etzion settlement bloc 18 months to vacate, we must act quickly and effectively. The lifespan of the current government and the Trump administration with which it coordinates (for better or worse) is uncertain. Havat Gilad and the Shevach family share a story with thousands of other families in Judea and Samaria.

Over the years, successive Israeli governments were fully involved in encouraging the establishment of settlements. The Housing Ministry invested hundreds of millions of shekels in building them. The Religious Services Ministry built synagogues and mikvehs (ritual baths). The Settlement Division paved roads and highways. Almost every relevant government authority was involved.

The Israeli government has a moral obligation to the thousands of settler families, and it does not have to wait for a terrorist attack to do right by them. The Israeli government, at least according to its stated policy, has a Zionist interest in strengthening and supporting the settlement enterprise in Judea and Samaria, and the "unauthorized" outposts are an integral part of this enterprise.

Meanwhile, a critical mass of settlers must also be maintained in the recognized settlement blocs. It needs to be big enough to prevent the mere thought of evacuation in the future. Ironically, the protracted settlement construction freeze has hurt the recognized blocs more than the far-flung satellites deep in the territory. Absurdly, the freeze is still in place in the blocs that everyone agrees will likely not be evacuated even under a future agreement.

The reason for this absurd reality is Israel's commitment to the Americans. It is time, and it needs to be said, to break free of this commitment. We need to discuss it first among ourselves, and then bring it up with the Americans. (Israel Hayom Feb 5)

Commentary...

A Cruel Shared Fate By Emily Amrousi

Yael Shevach, who tore her shirt in mourning after her husband was murdered by terrorists last month, has now donned a garment that is intact. Today, Miriam Ben-Gal will tear her own shirt as she buries her husband, also murdered by a terrorist. Their clothing can be mended, but the tear in their souls will never heal. Their hearts will continue to bleed until their dying day. Instead of solace they have sisterhood. "You are my sister," Yael wrote to Miriam on the day of her husband's murder.

Two women whose souls were cut in half one evening, on the way home. Only a few kilometers apart, within the span of one month, both lost their other half; their partner; the father of their children. Newfound sisters who will now be raising orphans. Newfound sisters, strong as steel, who will now forever long for the comfort of boring, normal life. Newfound sisters who will seek revenge/comfort in settling the land, building on it, planting seedlings and flowers.

They had seen each other before, these two women. Familiar faces on paths of learning and life. Both members of such vibrant, healthy communities, staking a claim on the hills. Raziel Shevach and Itamar Ben-Gal knew each other. Their widows, Yael and Miriam, knew each other. Now they will know each other's heartache. Har Bracha and Havat Gilad – two communities in mourning. Not too far from there, in Shavei Shomron, the Lipnik family just recently lost two children in a car crash, and their mother is still fighting for her life. This is one neighborhood where the blows keep coming.

Then there are the circles farther away from the tragedy. There are circles where the murdered are just someone on the news, where you are not constantly gasping for air through the thick blood next door of friends and neighbors being murdered. In the closer circles, everything stops. The radio is silent but the soul is screaming.

It's a simple statistic: If you are from the area, you definitely know the victim. But even if you don't, the entire nation is tired of seeing their best sons murdered on security camera footage.

A 19-year-old terrorist, raised on murder, turned these women into sisters. The message that Yael Shevach sent Miriam Ben-Gal may have been short in words but it was long in warmth. It was noble. In such stark contrast with the big knife wielded by a wild savage. You are my sister, the veteran widow wrote while her husband's tombstone has not yet been set. You are my sister, she wrote to the latest widow, whose husband's blood has not yet been washed. (Israel Hayom Feb 6)

Don't Wait for the Next Murder By Nadav Shragai

Sometimes the messiah comes dancing, and sometimes crying. Havat Gilad, a settlement outpost near Nablus, should have been legalized long ago, and not just as a result of Rabbi Raziel Shevach's murder in early January.

Shevach, a 35-year-old father of six, was killed at the entrance to Havat Gilad, where he lived with his family, by a terrorist cell, members of which are still at large. Despite the tragic timing of the decision to declare this outpost legal, it is still a good and worthy decision.

While the declaration is currently just words, and whether it will actually be implemented remains to be seen, the declaration communicates a clear message to all terrorists everywhere that the price for murdering Jews will also be paid in settlements, and that where they cut life off, life will regrow. As the Bible says: "I passed over you and saw you wallowing in your own blood, and I said unto you, in your own blood, live!" (Ezekiel 16:6.)

But there is still much to be done. Havat Gilad is only a drop in a sea of "unauthorized" settlements: 7,000 homes are under threat of demolition in dozens of neighborhoods, outposts and other settlements in Judea and Samaria. Just recently, after a long delay, the cabinet established a team under prominent settler Pinchas Wallerstein to implement decisions reached by the Joint Committee on the Regulation of Settlement in Judea and

The West sleeps peacefully because of Israel By Giulio Meotti,

While Turkish President Erdogan and Pope Francis were in Rome complimenting each other on Jerusalem and the European Union was rolling out red carpets to Mahmoud Abbas, Israel was protecting the West.

This small state has hitherto prevented Iran from manufacturing the atomic bomb, it has ruined the nuclear plans of Saddam Hussein and Bashar al Assad thanks to two solitary bombings, it guards the security of Jordan that without Israel would collapse today like a cooked pear, it has foiled attacks by ISIS on European civilian flights and we now discover that Egypt's el Sisi has recently asked Israel to bomb ISIS' posts in Sinai.

Israel today is the fireman of the Middle East. Imagine the region, from time to time, without Israel as the anti-Semites of the whole world dream of it. A Middle East of beholders facing the Mediterranean, a Middle East of planes full of Westerners flying from Sharm el Sheikh and sinking in the Red Sea, a Middle East of a race to atomic weapons by dictatorships of all kinds, a Middle East of even more millions of refugees going to Europe. Tonight we will sleep more peacefully thanks to Israel.

What an extraordinary country is the Jewish State! Tension is rising and extensive military simulations are under way, with the participation of the US Army, in the event of a missile attack. Defense Minister Liberman has just warned that Israel will not allow images like those of 2006 to repeat themselves, when the citizens of Beirut were on the beach while the Israelis in Tel Aviv were in shelters.

Yet, this extraordinary little country has just been named the third most innovative in the world by the World Economic Forum. The others are all democracies that have known war 70 years ago, often succumbing to evil. How did Israel innovate despite the fact that it is a democracy at war since its creation? Brain, grit and the prospect of the imminent destruction.

In the air of Israel one breathes a kind of anxiety of happiness and creation that derives from the fragility of this extraordinary adventure. A miracle.

Israel does not have time to finish the announcement of the construction of a handful of houses in the post-1967 Judea and Samaria that the UN Security Council is already reunited against, that the European

Commission already sent its official declaration about, that the editorials condemning the decision are already being printed and that the lists of products to be boycotted have already been drawn up.

In the last two weeks Israel has buried two Israeli rabbis, killed in cold blood by their "peace" partners, but the same condemnation of those houses has not been seen or heard for the murder of the Jews who live there.

Are we sure that the blood of the Jews is red, that they too have children and mothers, that after the Shoah they really regained their right to exist? I begin to doubt it. Every day we watch a streamed new episode of the series "Destroying Israel, a Jew at a time". It is one of the most popular television productions in history. (IsraelNationalNews.com Feb 7)

Like Water for Gaza By Smadar Bat Adam

According to a 2016 Haaretz interview with Adnan Ghosheh, a senior water and sanitation specialist at the World Bank, the Gaza Strip will become uninhabitable for human beings by 2020.

This grim forecast is supported by the Institute for National Security Studies in a report titled "Water and Energy Crisis in Gaza: Snapshot 2017."

According to the report, the "lack of clean water for domestic use and unsafe sanitary conditions pose a serious public health threat to the two million people living in the Gaza Strip. By now, large amounts of untreated wastewater have already crossed Gaza's borders and created additional repercussions for several neighboring communities in Egypt and Israel, with Israel at one point forced to close two of its beaches."

When unlimited drinking water flows from the taps in Ashkelon, just north of Gaza, it is too easy to accuse Israel of unjustly dividing this precious resource, as self-righteous Israelis, and Europeans, sometimes do. These voices continue to condescend, absolving the local leadership of any responsibility. But it is the Palestinian leaders who actually bear the blame for this disgraceful situation.

The fact is that the deterioration of Gaza's water aquifers is a perfect reflection of the deterioration of the Oslo Accords. It is not a military or diplomatic issue, but rather a refusal to take any responsibility for providing basic infrastructure that is essential for maintaining the most fundamental aspects of life – preventing disease and death. If only they dug sewer tunnels for the betterment of Gaza rather than terror tunnels to the detriment of Israel.

It very well may be that in their heart of hearts, at least as far as water is concerned, the residents of Gaza actually miss Israeli rule. In the days of direct Israeli administration of Gaza, Arabs had access to the same good water their Jewish neighbors enjoyed, coming from 1,400 local wells. The drilling of the coastal aquifer was supervised and the water was pumped with great care.

But then, in 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza, and the water industry was left unsupervised. Unbridled drilling quadrupled the number of wells to around 6,000, with most being dug by individuals in crisis because Hamas authorities failed to provide the population with basic amenities. The lack of investment in a sewage system resulted in the contamination of the water in the aquifers. Leaky pipes now lose around 38% of the water that runs through them, according to 2017 World Bank report. No one is even mentioning the notion of recycling waste water for use in agriculture and very little has been done to increase water supply through desalination.

Residents of Israel may grumble about the cost of water, but no one imagines the tap running dry. The Israeli authorities, caught off guard by the 2008-2009 water shortage, learned their lesson. They enacted educational and economic measures that significantly reduced domestic water use. They invested in wastewater purification and agricultural water reclamation that recycles almost 90% of wastewater, making Israel a world leader (Spain is next, at less than 30%). Finally, Israel built desalination plants that provide 70% of the water designated for domestic use.

The question whether Israel should rise above the terror and, despite facing a five-year drought itself, be generous with its water, is reminiscent of Aesop's fable about the ant and the grasshopper. The ant, who slaved all summer, was well fed in the winter. The ant's generosity does not have the power to help the grasshopper. The most Israel can do is to bring the liquid of life to the border, where it will only be met with chaos and darkness.

But even if it were to receive the millions of cubic meters of water that it lacks, Gaza is ill-equipped to collect it. This colossal failure is shared by the Hamas leadership, which prefers rockets over desalination membranes, and the U.N. agency UNRWA, which, after 69 years, still can't manage to provide a third generation of Palestinian refugees the proper living environment, as it is required to do under U.N. General Assembly Resolution 302.

Unfortunately for its residents, as long as Gaza's leadership prefers to invest in Israel's destruction rather than in Gaza's independence, this situation is not likely to change. (Israel Hayom Feb 8)

UNRWA: The Greatest Obstacle to Peace By Gregg Roman

U.S. President Donald Trump's State of the Union address, alongside reports that his administration intends to put an end to the problematic definition of Palestinian refugeeism by which descendants of refugees are also granted refugee status, constitutes an important turning point in efforts to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Unlike the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, which is dedicated to helping the world's refugees, the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, the agency dedicated solely to Palestinian refugees, has created its own unique definition of who is considered a Palestinian refugee. As a result of UNRWA's criteria, there are now around 5.3 million Palestinian refugees around the world. This definition is significant in that it ensures the number of refugees will continue to grow and so make a solution to the conflict ever more elusive.

Furthermore, instead of incentivizing initiatives that promote a culture of peace among Palestinians and pouring money into purely humanitarian efforts, UNRWA works to create and cultivate a victimhood mentality in Palestinian society through ongoing incitement and the rejection of peace. In UNRWA-run schools, students are taught to believe they will one day be able to "return" to all the lands of Israel and bring an end to the Jewish state. Here, too, the dangerous irony of a humanitarian organization, which, instead of solving the refugee problem, in fact, works to ensure its perpetuation, is apparent.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' recent remarks against Zionism and the Jews' right to self-determination make it clear that Palestinian recalcitrance is the root of the conflict. As with every other conflict in human history, this conflict will end only when the side that created it is willing to abandon its grandiose ambitions. This position has recently been presented in the Middle East Forum's Israel Victory Project, which calls for the suspension of diplomatic ties with the Palestinians until they renounce their efforts to bring an end to the Jewish state. In addition, the Middle East Forum calls for major reforms to UNRWA so as to separate its political efforts from the agency's humanitarian mission.

The United States' definition of a refugee is similar to that of other countries. According to this accepted definition, refugee status is not passed down by inheritance and is not valid for those persons who are citizens of other countries or who live in what is supposedly their own territory. In contrast, more than 2 million Palestinian "refugees" live in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, lands they claim constitute part of their territorial homeland.

If we remove from UNRWA's list of refugees those people who do not meet any of the three criteria, we will then come back to a more reasonable number of somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 Palestinian refugees from the 1948 War of Independence. The remainder could, of course, request humanitarian aid, but they would not be considered refugees by UNRWA.

If the countries of the world are interested in funding genuine humanitarian aid for the Palestinians, this can be done through a variety of alternative channels, whose aim is to create a better future for the population. But first, they must stop using the term "refugees." This is not just a question of semantics: A change in terminology could give the Palestinians hope for a better future instead of ensuring they maintain the victimhood mentality and pass it on to future generations. Second, they must only release funds for the Palestinians on the condition they are then integrated into their host countries or alternatively, those Palestinians living outside Judea, Samaria Gaza find a third country to which to emigrate. Third, they must ensure the funds do not go toward terrorism and incitement.

The implementation of these steps will lead the PA to acknowledge its defeat in the war against the Jewish people's right to self-determination and will put an end to the Palestinian leadership's cynical use of their people and their supporters for the prevention of a solution to the conflict and finally bring about peace. (Israel Hayom Feb 7)

'Outside-In' Is Inside Out By Jonathan S. Tobin

Recent strikes in the Sinai are a reminder that Israel should never count on Arab states to guarantee its safety. It's the other way around.

We're not hearing much anymore about President Donald Trump's desire to broker the "ultimate deal" between Israel and the Palestinians. But though the peace process is currently in the deep freeze, the concept that animated Trump's approach lives on. The idea was called "outside-in," and the conceit of it was that moderate Arab nations like Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia would persuade the Palestinians to make peace, and then supply the money and muscle to make it stick. It had the virtue of being rooted in the hard truths of realpolitik, rather than utopian peace fantasies, and seemed to promise the kind of paradigm change that might actually make a difference.

But the notion that Arab states can be relied upon to safeguard Israel's security in a theoretical peace deal is as much a pipe dream as Shimon Peres' "New Middle East" vision of Israel and the Palestinians acting like

Belgium and the Netherlands in the aftermath of Oslo. Far from the Arabs protecting Israel, the reality is that Israel protects them.

That's the upshot of a report from this past weekend's New York Times about Israel conducting a bombing campaign in the Sinai. The Egyptians are apparently not only cooperating with Israel in a battle against al Qaeda terrorists there, but have given their assent to Israeli air strikes against them on Egyptian territory.

This would have been unimaginable a few years ago. The peninsula was the crucible of four Arab-Israeli wars as Israeli forces repeatedly bested the Egyptians. After the Israel-Egyptian peace treaty that followed Anwar Sadat's dramatic visit to Jerusalem in 1977, the Sinai was a source of concern to those who thought the "cold peace" might disappear altogether.

But the aftermath of the Arab Spring protests that brought down Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, led to a change. The rise of the Muslim Brotherhood brought the most populous Arab nation to the brink; however, when a coup backed by a mass uprising brought the military back into power, they knew who they could count on. The current Egyptian government understood that the Obama administration, which had helped pushed Mubarak out, was not a reliable friend. Israel was its main ally in the struggle against Islamist terror and the Muslim Brotherhood.

That led to a joint effort to isolate Gaza, which is governed by Hamas, an offshoot of the Brotherhood. And when the Egyptians lost effective control of the Sinai where al Qaeda terrorists operate, cooperation with Israel became even more important.

Despite the size of Egypt's military and the fact that it has, as part of the deal that led to the peace treaty with Israel, been given \$1.5 billion in US aid every year, it needs Israel if it's to maintain control of the Sinai. As the Times reports, for more than two years, Israel has conducted weekly strikes on the area via drones, helicopters and jets. All of them were apparently carried out with the direct approval of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

The same is true of the much vaunted under-the-table alliance between Israel and Saudi Arabia. The Saudis couldn't persuade PA leader Mahmoud Abbas to engage in peace talks with the Israel and the United States. But they look to the Israelis as a strategic ally in their struggle with Iran, which is just as, if not more of, a threat to the desert kingdom and other Gulf emirates than it is to the Jewish state.

Given its pose as the guardian of Islam, the Saudis are unlikely to convert their closeted relationship with Israel into an open one. Nor will Egypt or Jordan, whose government is even more dependent on Israel for its survival, stop supporting anti-Israel resolutions at the United Nations as they try to appease the antisemitic sentiments of their populations. But that won't stop them from looking to Israel to save them from their enemies.

With Iran now firmly established in Syria and Lebanon under the effective control of Tehran's Hezbollah auxiliaries, the region is a tinderbox. Yet the ability of Israel and the Arab states to cooperate acts as a deterrent against a bad situation that's growing worse, even though expectations that these alliances can positively impact the peace process with the Palestinians remain unfounded.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry proposed that Egypt and Jordan would guarantee Israel's security as part of a peace deal in which it would be expected to give up the West Bank and part of Jerusalem. Others have mooted the same role for the Saudis. But if neither Egypt nor Jordan can guarantee their own security, how can they be expected to protect Israel against terrorism and the implicit threat that a terrorist state in the West Bank, like the one that currently exists in Gaza, would pose to its future?

Seen in that light, the "outside-in" strategy touted by the Trump foreign policy team is, at least as far as the peace process is concerned, just as much of an intellectual snare as anything produced by the Obama administration. The cold hard reality is that as long as the Palestinians refuse to concede defeat in their century-old war against Zionism, all such clever strategies are a waste of time.

That makes Israel's role as the defender of moderate Arabs — and America's sole reliable and democratic ally in the region — even more important. What's going on in the Sinai proves this surprising, but irrefutable, principle: While Israel can trust no one but itself to safeguard its security, its former Arab enemies can now trust no one but Israel to ensure their survival. (Algemeiner Feb 7)

Aliya from Western Countries By Isi Leibler

The founders of modern Israel originated from contrasting ideological movements. Since their dispersion into exile, Jews who for centuries endured Christian and Muslim persecution maintained spiritual (and in a few cases physical) links with their barren Jewish homeland, praying for their return to Zion and the advent of the Messiah.

In the late 19th century, the East European secular utopians who sought to escape persecution and murderous pogroms came to Palestine with the objective of engaging in agriculture and transforming the Jewish homeland into a socialist haven.

The British conquest of Jerusalem and the dissolution of the Ottoman

Empire ushered a series of mass migratory movements, and for the first time, large numbers of Jews in distress turned to Israel as a haven.

The Russian civil war and the bloody pogroms associated with it were followed by the rise of Nazism which led to a growing immigration of Eastern European and subsequently German refugees, which, apart from a trickle of illegal immigration, was frozen in 1939 until the end of the British Mandate.

The mass immigration of Holocaust survivors was augmented after the War of Independence by the airlift of Jews fleeing persecution in Muslim countries. They were subsequently joined by other, smaller communities such as the Ethiopians, climaxing with an influx of over a million Jews from the former Soviet Union.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, kibbutz galuyot — the ingathering of the exiles — as predicted in the Bible, has been realized at a dramatic pace. From a fledgling community of 600,000 in 1948 when the state was proclaimed, Israel's population has increased more than tenfold. It is now unquestionably the most successful and powerful state in the region, despite being an oasis in a turbulent Middle East engulfed in a brutal civil war in which hundreds of thousands of civilians have been butchered like animals.

However, more than half of the world's Jewish population remains in the Diaspora — the bulk in the United States but with smaller communities in Canada, Europe, Australia, South Africa and Latin America.

While there has always been a trickle of highly motivated, largely idealistic and religious Western immigrants, kibbutz galuyot was hardly a feature of the more affluent and less discriminated-against communities.

But today the time has come for Jews in these communities to objectively re-evaluate their position.

It is clear that the majority will not pack up and come to Israel, even if there is a significant deterioration of their condition and dramatic escalation of antisemitism.

But committed Jews must ask themselves one basic question: is Jewish continuity important to me and my children?

Sadly, unless the response is positive, there is little further contemplation.

But those remaining in the Diaspora must recognize that even with the best of intentions, the chances of their grandchildren remaining Jewish are slim. In today's open society, suffused with post-modernism, it is almost impossible to build solid barriers against acculturation. Any objection to intermarriage that is not based on religious grounds is condemned as racist. Many young people identify Judaism exclusively with liberalism and universalism, and are totally ignorant of core Jewish values.

In addition, the cost of Jewish education has skyrocketed in recent years and only the most committed are willing to sacrifice their standard of living to provide their children with a decent Jewish education. Not surprisingly, the level of Jewish education in the US and most Diaspora Jewish communities has never been so abysmally deficient.

With the passage of time, the Holocaust no longer impacts on the identity of youngsters as it did with their parents. It has been reduced to unemotional historical statistics devoid of contemporary relevance.

Likewise, support for Israel, which served as the greatest unifying element, has declined steeply among those with little or no traditional Jewish upbringing. Some even consider it socially advantageous to regurgitate the anti-Israeli agenda promoted by the liberal media.

In this environment, it is not surprising that intermarriage figures have escalated dramatically. Today, over 70% of unions among non-Orthodox Jews involve a gentile partner, with the overwhelming majority of children from such mixed marriages remaining, at best, Jews in name only.

Clearly, the likelihood of Jewish continuity among non-observant Jews is minimal. Today, even the Orthodox minority is becoming affected.

The statistics indicate that, other than the strictly Orthodox, Diaspora Jewish communities will significantly shrink.

But there now is an additional factor that should make committed Jews consider aliya, if not for themselves then for their children.

The current global explosion of feral antisemitism and anti-Israelism displays no signs of abating. On the contrary, it continues to expand with increasing intensity and violence. The governments may seem moderate but it is the antisemitic masses who ultimately influence lawmakers.

In this context, the US and Australia are the least affected but even there, the growth of antisemitism, principally from the extreme Left but also from the extreme Right, has risen dramatically, despite the cushioning impact of the passionate love of Israel displayed by Evangelical Christians.

The hatred displayed against Israel and Jews on campus, in both Europe and the US, and the viciously biased anti-Israeli liberal media have a particularly traumatic impact on those Jews who, until recently, believed that antisemites were an extinct species.

In America, there are also grounds for concern with the radicalization of the left wing of the Democratic Party, much of which has become hostile to Israel. Most liberal American Jews abhor US President Donald Trump, but the more sophisticated realize that a change of administration

could have very negative consequences for Israel.

But the impending crisis emanates from Western Europe, where Jews in many countries feel like pariahs. The massive Muslim immigration, which includes many people with antisemitic inclinations, exacerbates the situation, as does Islamic terrorism, which frequently selects Jewish targets.

In many areas, particularly in France, armed guards protect Jews in synagogues and schools. Lately, French Jews have been obliged to provide their own security.

Many Jews, fearful of being assaulted, are reluctant to wear kippot or display Jewish symbols like the Star of David, and in some cases, even conceal their real names.

Substantial numbers of French Jews have decided to come to Israel. But what of the British and other West European Jews?

In the United Kingdom, Opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn proudly boasts of his friendship with Hezbollah and other antisemites. There is a real possibility that the next British prime minister could be an antisemite. As a foretaste of what is to come, Amnesty International UK canceled an event on its premises, initiated by the Jewish Leadership Council, to critique the UN Human Rights Council. The reason given was that Amnesty considered it inappropriate to include Jewish organizations that oppose boycotting the Israeli settlements.

One must consider the impact on young people of living under such adverse conditions. It is surely impossible to lead a normal Jewish life when continuously bombarded by the anti-Israel and antisemitic rhetoric that pervades the media and the street.

Those who care about their Jewish future should now carefully consider their options.

Granted, many who do not have the accumulated capital or means, or having reached middle age would have difficulty in launching a new career, would face serious challenges in making aliya.

But Israel is one of the most successful economies in the world and those who consider Jewish continuity important should seriously contemplate aliya now – or at least encourage their children to do so.

Aliya is the only long-term solution to acculturation and antisemitism. An additional incentive is the availability in Israel of a Jewish education, which the state provides in a wide range to include secular, Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox streams.

We cannot expect hundreds of thousands of Jews from the Western world to make aliya, but those concerned that their grandchildren retain their Jewish identity should be contemplating whether to remain in the Diaspora – with all that entails – or become a vibrant and active component of the Jewish nation.

The storm clouds are gathering and the time for decision making is now. (Jerusalem Post Feb 7)

It's OK to deport By Rabbi Prof. Dov Fischer

Do you remember the story a few decades ago, back in the mid-1970s, about the 40,000 Ukrainian Jews whom Leonid Brezhnev let out of the former Soviet Union? No country in the world would take them in except for Saudi Arabia and Syria, who agreed each to take in half of them for humanitarian reasons.

Do you remember that news story? Neither do I. Because it never happened.

Israel is a small country, comprised of some 6.5 million Jews (approximately 74.5% of the population) and nearly two million Arabs (almost 21%). It does not have the luxury of having 40,000 outsiders sneaking into its boundaries illegally, settling in a few of its neighborhoods (where, by the way, crime statistics suddenly explode), and expecting permanent residence.

No country on earth would allow such a thing, not even the United States with its currently chaotic situation along America's southern border, a problem that finally is slated for serious resolution. And the American chaos, by the way, is not about humanitarianism but about cynical, raw politics. Illegal immigrants from south of the American border vote reliably Democrat because they typically need Big Government handouts. Therefore, the Democrats — who are the party of food stamps, Government handouts, welfare, and “free” everything (paying for it all by raising taxes endlessly on those who do work) — want them to stay and vote, while the Republicans want them out.

As a result, in a quarter century the State of California, which once was so Republican that it regularly elected conservative Republican governors like Ronald Reagan, George Deukmejian, and Pete Wilson, now is solidly Democrat liberal. A conservative Republican cannot win state office any more in California; the elections literally now pit one Democrat against another.

And if the Illegals in America voted reliably Republican instead, then the Republicans would want them to stay and the Democrats would want them out.

During the eight years that George W. Bush was President of the United States, America deported more than 2,000,000 — two million! —

people. Think that was tough? Under the oh-so-liberal Obama and the Democrats, more than 3,000,000 were deported. Yes, that is more than three million!

Like America, Israel also is allowed to survive. True, not everyone agrees with that premise. However, they and their opinions may be disregarded. Do you know why?

Because. That's why.

If Israel fails to straighten out the mess that unfolded as it overlooked the massive border infiltration a few years ago, then the 40,000 now illegally in the country will be nearly 200,000 in twenty-five years as they have children. And then those 200,000 will be a million twenty-five years later. Our Rabbis teach: Who is wise? He who can foresee developments.

By building a wall along the border with Egypt and stepping up border security, Israel finally has taken the steps needed to stop the illegal influx of law-breakers. Now she must undo the damage that escaped her watchful eye initially. It is perfectly OK to deport the 40,000 who entered illegally.

Let us be clear: a strong, compelling, humanitarian argument can be made to offer extended, though temporary, asylum to people who came to Israel from Africa to escape persecution and torture. But the vast majority of the 40,000 Illegals came to Israel for economic reasons, to better their finances. That is fine, but that does not entitle them to have come in illegally or to remain.

Israel has to decide: Are we a serious country, or are we a shtibl? In a shtibl (a little house where people pray), some people sneak into the Shabbat prayer services five or ten minutes before the end of the two-hour (or longer) prayer service just so that they can stay and grab a free lunch meal of chulent and kugel at kiddush.

That is how shtibls operate: you sneak in and grab a free lunch. But shtibls do not have a Parliament, defense forces, a national education system, a national health system, and predators and murderers lurking on every surrounding border waiting to infiltrate your land and destroy you.

It is strange. The United Nations declares Israel racist. The Arab world declares Israel racist. The liberal campus professors everywhere from the political science department of Ben Gurion University to Oxford to the American Ivy League and University of California declare Israel racist. Jewish leftists from J Street to Jewish Voice for Peace to Peace Now and Yesh Gvul to the rats of Ratz, reeking with so much self-hate that the stench could fill all the washing machines of 40,000 laundromats, declare Israel racist. Reform rabbis declare Israel racist. African nations vote with the Arabs in the General Assembly, declaring Israel racist.

And then, to where did these 40,000 Africans race, whatever the cost, whatever the risk to life and limb, to seek opportunity? They raced to Israel. Hasn't anyone read them any United Nations resolutions lately?

Israel was not created to be the place for ingathering people who seek better jobs. That is not called “Israel”; that is called “Employment Office.” Israel was created, resurrected from the ashes after the Holocaust martyred six million Jews and fulfilling G-d's promises to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov to be the national homeland of the Jewish people. That is why Israel's laws include Chok HaShvut (the “Law of Return”) guaranteeing instant citizenship for Jews hailing from anywhere else in the world — but not for non-Jews. Certainly some Israel-haters may — and do — call that Law of Return racist. However, they and their opinions may be disregarded. Do you know why?

Because. That's why.

The same voices — too many of them pathetic self-hating ultra-liberal Jews, in Israel, in America, who could not read a word of Rashi if their lives depended on it and would not know the difference between Ben-Gurion and Ben-Gay — lecture Israel on “Jewish values.” These voices of Jewish values do not observe the Shabbat, a core Jewish value. They do not observe the laws of mikveh, a core Jewish value. They eat non-kosher. And then they lecture Israel on “Jewish values.”

When Prime Minister Menachem Begin opened Israel's borders to allow 66 Vietnamese boat people to enter and live in Israel, that was the embodiment of Jewish values. Their lives were in dire peril. They were on the same terrifying seas, fleeing persecution but facing imminent death in the perilous waters — reminiscent of those who waited on the “Struma” until it capsized. Therefore, it devolved on the Jewish people, through the instrumentality of Israel, to save their lives. And sixty-six people did not impact Israel's demographics.

By contrast, it does not devolve on Israel to have 40,000 people stream across once-unguarded borders in search of better pay, and to stay. For goodness sakes, look at this chart: Every year since Obama became President in 2008, America deported more than 300,000 people a year — and each year the majority of those deported were non-criminals. Obama, the hero of the Jewish liberals who would lecture Israel on ethics, deported more Illegals than did any other President in American history. And do you know why Obama deported three million people from America in only eight years?

Because. (IsraelNationalNews.com Feb 5)