

THE IMPACT OF THE PRESIDENCY OF

DONALD TRUMP

ON AMERICAN JEWRY

AND ISRAEL



edited by Steven F. Windmueller

Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life
Annual Review, Volume 19

The Impact of the Presidency of Donald Trump on American Jewry and Israel

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**Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role
in American Life**

Purdue University Press

**Chapter entitled, “Trump: Friend Extraordinaire to Israel
and the Jewish People” by Zionist Organization of America
(ZOA) National President Morton A. Klein and ZOA Director
of Research & Special Projects Elizabeth A. Berney, Esq.**

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Introduction and Reflections of the Editor

by Dr. Steven F. Windmueller

I am particularly appreciative to Morton Klein and Elizabeth Berney, both for their important contribution to my recently edited book, *The Impact of the Presidency of Donald Trump on American Jewry and Israel*, <https://www.amazon.com/Impact-Presidency-Donald-American-Israel/dp/161249708X>, and for extending to me this opportunity to introduce their essay, and offer some perspectives on this book project, and the state of our community.

My book presents ten engaging essays that explore diverse perspectives in connection with the unique Trump presidency, and its imprint on the Jewish community and Israel.

Mr. Klein's and Ms. Berney's essay provides fascinating historical perspective, along with a thorough analysis of President Trump's achievements for American Jewry and Israel. Their essay also offers information that counters harsh views of President Trump held by some others within the Jewish community.

One of the tragedies of this moment has been the absence of civil and responsible discussion across the deep partisan divisions that define our nation and our Jewish community. Wherever one stands on the political spectrum, the benefits of thoughtful and respectful conversations seem to be an essential ingredient, if we seek to advocate for our collective interests on behalf of the State of Israel.

My hope is that Mr. Klein's and Ms. Berney's enclosed essay, and the other essays in my book, will inspire, inform and engage readers in these essential conversations.

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Trump: Friend Extraordinaire to Israel and the Jewish People **by Morton A. Klein and Elizabeth A. Berney, Esq.**

President Donald Trump is deservedly beloved by many Jews, especially, but not only, in the pro-Israel and Orthodox Jewish communities. The reasons for this sentiment include that President Trump implemented his tremendous, lengthy list of pro-Israel promises (described in this essay), raising devoted American Jews' spirits. Further, young Jews benefited from Trump's executive order and his administration's pro-active steps to protect beleaguered American Jewish students from antisemitic harassment on college campuses.¹

Trump's inclusive American patriotism encompassed Jewish Americans and all Americans, as exemplified in these Torah-inspired words in Trump's inaugural address: "*When you open your heart to patriotism, there is no room for prejudice. The Bible tells us how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.*"²

Trump's basic philosophy towards Israel and the pro-Israel community was embodied in his simple, powerful declaration during a March 2016 campaign speech: "When I become president, the days of treating Israel like a second-class citizen will end on day one."³ For the Jewish people accustomed to being accorded "second class citizen" status, this was an incredible breath of fresh air. Most significantly, President Trump recognized the Jewish people's rights to and historical connection to the Land of

Israel, including Jerusalem, the Golan and Judea/Samaria. Trump thus respected the Jewish people's historical claim, U.S. and international law, and the commonsense positions and binding commitments made to the Jewish nation by much earlier U.S. presidents and Congress. Trump thus rejected hostile presidents' (especially Obama's and Carter's) and United Nations' efforts to repudiate and undermine Israel's basic sovereign rights and the U.S.-Israel alliance.

Trump moreover stood with Israel against Iran's genocidal mullahs, the Palestinian Authority's incitement and payments to murder Jews.

I. THE ROOTS OF TRUMP'S PHILOSEMITISM

American presidents' philosemitism is often developed at an early age. A prime example is young Abraham Lincoln's upbringing by old school Calvinists who held the Jewish people and Bible in esteem.⁴ Lincoln's schoolbook, the *English Reader*, favorably depicted Esther's bravery and defeat of Haman.⁵ Lincoln had a Jewish circle of friends and supporters.⁶ As president, Lincoln promptly countermanded an antisemitic order, and planned to visit the holy land after completing his presidential term.⁷

Trump's affinity for the Jewish people and Israel was similarly deep-rooted. Donald's father Fred donated land, financing and continuing support for a Brooklyn synagogue whose congregants included many Holocaust survivors. The Trumps (including Donald) and the Rabbi's family remained lifelong friends.⁸

In February 2005, when David Friedman's father, Rabbi Morris Friedman died, a severe snowstorm required David Friedman to

sit shiva alone. Donald Trump traveled for three and a half hours through the storm to sit shiva with Friedman, even though Friedman was then simply another attorney for Trump's business. This kindness marked the beginning of the Trump-Friedman friendship.⁹ Throughout the Trump presidency, Friedman served as a superb U.S. Ambassador to Israel. Trump was the Grand Marshall of the 2004 Salute to Israel Parade.¹⁰

Trump supported his daughter Ivanka's conversion to Orthodox Judaism, and speaks adoringly about her "beautiful Jewish babies."¹¹ Trump also spoke warmly about observance of the Jewish Sabbath: "I have great respect for [the Shabbat traditions]. . . [It's actually a beautiful thing to watch. . . In a very hectic life, it really becomes a very peaceful time."¹²

II. THE JEWISH COMMUNITY'S DIVIDED REACTION

Caring pro-Israel Jews were deeply pained when sincerely philo-semitic President Trump was outrageously defamed as comparable to a "Nazi" by his political opponents (especially then-candidate Biden), and by leftwing Jewish groups, including the Democratic Jewish Council of America.¹³

It is an enormous tragedy that groups such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL),¹⁴ which is headed by a former special assistant to President Obama,¹⁵ and leftwing Reform movement and J Street also participated in maligning one of the greatest friends of the Jewish people and opposed many of Trump's pro-Israel, pro-Jewish policies.

The pro-Israel community marveled at President Trump's strength and accomplishments in the face of ceaseless attacks.

Activist Jewish leaders formed “Jews Choose Trump,”¹⁶ “Jews For Trump,”¹⁷ and “Jews Choose Four More Years PAC,”¹⁸ to support the president. Large crowds showed up at “Jews 4 Trump” rallies,¹⁹ and car and boat parades.²⁰ Many prayed to G-d to protect the President Trump from the malicious efforts to destroy him and his legacy.

III. A GOLDEN ERA – AND ITS FUTURE IMPACT

The Trump presidency was a golden era for the Jewish people. But frighteningly, the Biden administration appears to be hell-bent on rapidly dismantling many of President Trump’s pro-Israel and Jewish civil rights policies.²¹ In July 2020, then-candidate Biden appeared together with Islamist radicals opposed to Israel’s existence at the “Million Muslim Votes Summit” and promised to reverse a long list of Trump’s pro-Israel policies.²² Upon obtaining the presidency, President Biden appointed a slew of high-level officials who are hostile to Jews and Israel and who seek to appease Iran. These include appointees who justified violence against Jews, arranged for boycotts against pro-Israel organizations, and organized anti-Israel demonstrations.²³ These appointees promptly set about carrying out Biden’s promised troubling agenda.

Fortunately, at least a few of President Trump’s accomplishments – such as moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, will likely remain intact. Shortly after President Biden took office, the Senate overwhelmingly (97 to 3) passed an amendment to keep the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem.²⁴

Even where it may not succeed, there is Congressional and other pushback against Biden’s reversals of Trump’s pro-Jewish,

pro-Israel accomplishments. For instance, after Biden’s Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that the U.S. will rejoin the antisemitic,²⁵ Israel-bashing United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC),²⁶ which Trump and his UN ambassador, Amb. Nikki Haley, had courageously left, forty-four Congressmembers immediately signed a letter, led by Texas Rep. Chip Roy, aptly calling Biden and Blinken’s plan to rejoin the UNHRC “morally reprehensible.”²⁷ Congressman Roy also introduced legislation to prohibit using taxpayer funds for the UNHRC.²⁸

Other sensible pro-Israel Trump policies, overturned by the Biden administration, will nonetheless live on as the ideals that millions of Americans and American Jews will aspire to return to.

IV. TRUMP UNDERSTOOD THE REAL IMPEDIMENTS TO MIDDLE EAST PEACE – THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY, RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORISM AND IRAN:

President Trump demonstrated that peace can best be achieved by standing with Israel and other Middle Eastern allies, instead of by appeasing enemies and terrorists. Trump promised during his inaugural address, “We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones, and unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the earth.”²⁹

A. The PA

Trump understood and acted upon the fact that the real impediments to peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (“PA”) are the PA’s incitement and “pay to slay” payments reward-

ing Arab terrorists for murdering Jews and Americans: Trump demanded that PA dictator Mahmoud Abbas end incitement and payments to terrorists³⁰; signed the Taylor Force Act;³¹ and stopped the flow of U.S. tax dollars to the Palestinian Authority (PA), so that U.S. moneys would no longer facilitate those gruesome payments.³²

Worrisomely, in April 2021, Biden announced \$235 million of aid to the Palestinian Arabs,³³ over Israel’s strong objection, without requiring the PA to end its “pay to slay” payments. (\$150 million will flow through UNRWA – see item B. below.) In addition, Biden sent \$15 million to the Palestinian Arabs in March 2021.³⁴ Further, in late May 2021, *after* Hamas launched 4,340 rockets at Israel in two weeks, and the PA incited pogroms by Israeli-Arabs on their Jewish neighbors, including breaking into Jewish homes, and burning Jewish schools and synagogues, Biden’s Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that the U.S. is “in the process of providing more than \$360 million in urgent support to the Palestinian people,” including millions of new funding to the PA and Gaza. U.S. tax dollars will thus once again enable the PA’s heinous payments to Jew-killers (likely in violation of the Taylor Force Act), and UNRWA’s support of Hamas.³⁵

President Trump also promised to close the PLO Mission in Washington if the PA/PLO failed to stop “pay to slay” payments, and followed through with his promise when the PA continued to financially reward murdering Jews and Americans.³⁶ Further, President Trump’s Vision for Peace insisted upon the sensible prerequisite for a peace deal, that the Palestinians must stop financially compensating and incentivizing violence, and end all programs

that teach hatred of Jews and Israel, including school curricula and textbooks.³⁷

In addition, Trump appropriately down-graded the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, which had catered to the Palestinian Authority, into a division of the U.S. Embassy. The consulate was an insult to Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem: No other country has a U.S. consulate catering to a non-sovereign group. Unfortunately, in late May 2021, Biden's Secretary of State stated that the administration will re-open the insulting U.S. consulate.³⁸ Biden's campaign promises also included re-opening the PLO mission, even though doing so would violate U.S. law.³⁹

B. UNRWA

Trump also appropriately cut off funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency ("UNRWA") – the corrupt⁴⁰ UN agency that teaches generations of Arabs to hate Jews and Israel; employs Hamas terrorists; perpetuates phony "Palestinian refugee" status among descendants who are not legitimate refugees; and store weapons for Hamas in Gaza.⁴¹ UNRWA's fraudulent practices have been documented since its outset.⁴² A recent U.S. report found that there are only 20,000 Palestinian Arab refugees in the world⁴³ – fewer than UNRWA's bloated 33,0000 employees, and far less than the 5.3 million such refugees that UNRWA fraudulently claims by padding the numbers. Similarly, Lebanon's census found that UNRWA massively inflated (tripled) the actual number of Palestinian Arab refugees in Lebanon, even under UNRWA's expansive refugee definition.⁴⁴ As noted above, unfortunately Biden promptly restored funding to UNRWA.

C. Iran

The Iran deal (the JCPOA) paved Iran's way to nuclear weapons and increased Iran's financial support for its terror proxies and activities. Iran moreover violated the deal from day one – and the deal was an existential threat to both the United States and Israel.

In January 2018, Trump gave Iran a last chance to fix the Iran deal's fatal flaws.⁴⁵ In May 2018, after no corrections to the deal or Iran's behavior occurred, President Trump appropriately withdrew from the disastrous Iran deal and announced, among other things, that:

“Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, and provides assistance to Hezbollah, Hamas, the Taliban, al-Qa'ida, and other terrorist networks. . . . Since the JCPOA's inception, . . . Iran has only escalated its destabilizing activities. . . . Meanwhile, Iran has publicly declared it would deny the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to military sites in direct conflict with the Additional Protocol to its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA. In 2016, Iran also twice violated the JCPOA's heavy water stockpile limits. This behavior is unacceptable, especially for a regime known to have pursued nuclear weapons in violation of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. . . .”⁴⁶

Soon thereafter, President Trump announced that “the United States has launched a campaign of economic pressure to deny the regime the funds it needs to advance its bloody agenda.”⁴⁷

Trump proved that “maximum pressure” Iran sanctions in fact work: These sanctions dramatically reduced Iran's military expenditures and funding of its terror proxies, thereby reducing the

proliferation of terror.⁴⁸ The sanctions also placed the U.S. in a position to obtain a far better nuclear deal, if the U.S. properly maintained those strong sanctions as leverage.⁴⁹

Moreover, instead of putting “daylight” between Israel and the administration (as Obama did), President Trump frequently discussed with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu their “continued close coordination on countering the malign influence of Iran.”⁵⁰

Trump also made the Middle East safer for U.S. forces, Israel and our other allies via the U.S.’ targeted killing of designated terrorist and IRGC leader Qasem Soleimani – who had murdered hundreds of Americans, Jews and others. At the time Soleimani was assassinated, Soleimani “was plotting imminent and sinister attacks on American diplomats and military personnel.”⁵¹

While it is unknown whether the U.S. had any role in the targeted assassination of chief Iranian nuclear terrorist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, this too saved an enormous number of American, Jewish and other lives.⁵²

President Trump also showed that the American people cherish our ally Israel and oppose appeasing Iran’s dangerous mullahs. At virtually every rally, Trump elicited huge cheers from the massive crowds there when he proudly recalled moving of the U.S. embassy to Israel’s capital Jerusalem and ending the disastrous Iran deal.⁵³

Unfortunately, Biden gave top posts in his administration to Obama’s top Iran deal negotiators, including Wendy Sherman⁵⁴, Robert Malley⁵⁵, John Kerry⁵⁶, Jake Sullivan⁵⁷ and William Burns.⁵⁸ The Biden administration then promptly began talks to lift sanctions on Iran and re-enter the original deleterious Iran

deal.⁵⁹

D. Israel's Right to Self Defense

The Trump administration strongly affirmed that “Israel absolutely has a sovereign right to defend itself”⁶⁰ – and took no actions to undermine that right. Pres. Biden also voiced support for Israel’s right to defend herself. However, Biden is believed to have exerted enormous pressure on Israel to prematurely discontinue efforts to demolish Hamas’ and Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s terror infrastructure in Gaza; Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi reportedly acknowledged during the Israeli cabinet meeting agreeing to the ceasefire that Israel no longer had sufficient international support to continue the operation.⁶¹

V. TRUMP AFFIRMED ISRAEL’S LAWFUL RIGHTS TO HER LAND

A. Trump’s Pre-Inaugural Battle To Stop Obama’s Push for Anti-Israel UN Resolutions

Donald Trump’s first major, courageous presidential battle on behalf of the Jewish people occurred in December 2016, while Trump was still president-elect. Trump and his transition team – including General Michael Flynn, Jared Kushner, and David Friedman—vigorously lobbied member nations of the United Nations Security Council (unfortunately unsuccessfully) to try to stop the passage of extremely anti-Israel UNSC Resolution 2334.⁶² Leaked documents revealed that the lame duck Obama administration (including John Kerry and Susan Rice) worked with the PLO to orchestrate UNSC Res. 2334.⁶³

On December 22, 2016, President-elect Trump spoke with

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and persuaded Egypt (which was the original nominal sponsor of UNSC Res. 2334) to withdraw the resolution that day.⁶⁴ However, the next day (December 23), New Zealand, Malaysia, Venezuela, and Senegal re-introduced the resolution. UNSC Res. 2334 was adopted on the same day, due to the Obama administration's behind-the-scenes maneuvers in collaboration with the PA,⁶⁵ and abstention to enable the resolution to pass.

UNSC Resolution 2334⁶⁶ falsely and outrageously – and in violation of international law – declared that Judaism's holiest sites, including the Temple Mount, Western Wall, Jerusalem's Old City and its Jewish Quarter, the Mount of Olives and its 2,500-year-old Jewish cemetery, as well as Hadassah Hospital, Hebrew University, and the historic Jewish heartlands of Judea and Samaria, are all “*occupied Arab land.*” UNSC Res. 2334 also promoted BDS (anti-Israel boycotts, divestment and sanctions), and falsely claimed that Jewish homes in the above-listed historic Jewish areas “*have no legal validity, and constitute[] a flagrant violation of international law.*”

As the International Legal Professor Eugene Kontorovich notes, the UN Security Council has no authority to make or interpret international law.⁶⁷ Resolutions such as UNSC 2334 are moreover null and void because they contradict binding international law discussed below, including the British Mandate, the Anglo-American Treaty of 1924, and UN Charter Article 80 – which prohibit the UN (and others) from ceding the Jewish people's land to any other entity.

UNSC Res. 2334 was widely condemned.⁶⁸ The U.S. House

of Representatives overwhelmingly passed⁶⁹ a bipartisan resolution strongly condemning UNSC Res. 2334.⁷⁰ Senator Tom Cotton stated: “This cowardly, disgraceful action cements President Obama’s richly deserved legacy as the most anti-Israel president in American history. This resolution hurts the prospects for a secure and just peace by targeting Israel for building homes in Jerusalem, its own capital, while not specifically addressing Palestinian incitement of and financial support for terrorism.”

Unfortunately, despite UNSC Res. 2334’s legal invalidity, UNSC Resolution 2334 continues to enable economic boycotts against Israel and has been a potent propaganda tool to delegitimize the Jewish state and falsely delegitimize 700,000 innocent, devoted Jews, who live in the historic Jewish homeland, as “flagrant” violators of international law.⁷¹ The resolution also placed Trump in a position at the outset, in which Trump would have an uphill climb to undo serious damage done by Obama.

Shortly after passing UNSC Resolution 2334, Obama tried to orchestrate an even worse UN resolution, to impose parameters that would force establishing a Palestinian Arab state on the suicidal-to-Israel 1949 Armistice Lines. The 1949 Armistice lines are where the fighting stopped, after six Arab nations invaded Israel in 1948, killed over 6,000 Jews, and seized lands guaranteed to the Jewish state, including the historic Jewish areas of eastern Jerusalem and Judea/Samaria. The armistice agreements between Israel and her Arab neighbors specifically stated that the Armistice lines have no precedential effect.⁷²

The 1949 Armistice lines are also called the “1967 lines,” the “pre-1967 lines,” and “the green line,” and were aptly called

“Auschwitz lines” by dovish Israeli Ambassador Abba Eban,⁷³ because these lines would leave Israel with an indefensible waist of less than 9 miles across. Then-Governor George W. Bush famously commented during a 1998 helicopter ride over the area: “In Texas, we have driveways longer than that.”⁷⁴ The “Protectors of Israel” (HaBithonistim) organization, comprised of 1,700 high-ranking Israeli officers and security professionals, explain that Israel’s retention of Judea/Samaria is vital for Israel to be able to defend herself.⁷⁵ The indefensibility of the 1949/pre-1967 lines is precisely why those who wish to destroy Israel seek to push Israel back to these lines.

After Israeli Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon learned that the Obama administration was trying to enact this second disastrous resolution, Israel successfully sought a Russian veto. The Trump transition team’s General Flynn called Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak. Russia decided to veto the resolution, forcing Obama to abandon it.⁷⁶ The Obama administration then engineered baseless criminal charges against patriot General Flynn, regarding his phone calls with Ambassador Kislyak.⁷⁷

B. Background on Presidential Commitments and Policies

Regarding Israel’s Sovereign Rights

A very brief review of key past presidential policies regarding Israel’s sovereign rights is helpful for putting the Trump era into perspective. President Trump halted recent presidents’ (especially Carter’s and Obama’s) efforts to undermine the pro-Israel policies and rights guaranteed to the Jewish people by U.S. and international law. Trump thus restored the Israel’s lawful rights affirmed by predecessors such as Presidents Adams, Cleveland, Wilson,

Harding, Coolidge, Truman, LBJ and many others.

Early U.S. Presidents were sympathetic to restoring the Jewish nation in her homeland. President John Adams wrote to a member of the Spanish Portuguese synagogue in New York that he wished he could be at the head of “a hundred thousand Israelites . . . & marching with them into Judea & making a conquest of that country & restoring your nation to the dominion of it. For I really wish the Jews again in Judea an independent nation.”⁷⁸

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson pre-approved the Balfour Declaration. Wilson’s pre-approval was a pre-requisite for Britain’s issuance of the declaration embracing the reestablishment of the Jewish homeland.⁷⁹ President Wilson later told his friend Rabbi Stephen S. Wise (a former Zionist Organization of America president), “How proud I am that because of the teachings instilled in me by my father, it has been my privilege to restore the Holy Land to its rightful owners.”⁸⁰ Moreover, regarding anti-Zionist Jews who opposed the Balfour Declaration, Wilson stated: “My waste-basket is big enough to take care of all such letters.”⁸¹

In 1922, President Warren Harding signed the Lodge-Fish resolution, also approving the establishment of the Jewish homeland in the area of the former Ottoman Empire referred to as Palestine, which included Israel within the “green line” as well as Judea/Samaria and all of Jerusalem and Jordan.⁸²

In 1925, Calvin Coolidge and the U.S. Senate ratified the Anglo-American Treaty of 1924,⁸³ which reiterated and consented to the 1922 British Mandate for Palestine.⁸⁴ The 1922 Mandate (and the Anglo-American Treaty of 1924) recognized “*the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine*”; designated the

area (including Judea/Samaria and Jerusalem) as a “*sacred trust*” for “*reconstituting*” the Jewish homeland; and made the Mandatory (Britain) responsible to “*secure the establishment of the Jewish national home,*” and “*for seeing that no Palestine territory shall be ceded or leased to, or in any way placed under the control of, the Government of any foreign Power.*”

In 1945, President Harry Truman agreed to the UN Charter, which, in Article 80, preserved intact all rights granted to the Jewish people under the Mandate, even after the Mandate would expire in 1948.⁸⁵ Article 80 prohibits the UN from transferring rights over any part of Palestine to any non-Jewish entity, such as a “*Pal- estinian state.*” UN resolutions (such as UNSC Res. 2334) that contradict the Charter are thus void.⁸⁶

In June 1967, Israel regained territories (Judea/Samaria and eastern Jerusalem) that Jordan illegally seized and held for 19 years, from 1948-1967, after six Arab nations invaded Israel in 1948. President Lyndon Johnson promptly declared that Israel was entitled to “*recognized boundaries and other arrangements that will give them security against terror, destruction, and war,*” and that an Israeli withdraw to the 1949 Armistice lines “*is not a prescription for peace but for renewed hostilities.*”⁸⁷ Johnson and his Ambassador to the United Nations, Arthur Goldberg made certain that unanimously-adopted UN Security Council Resolution 242 guaranteed Israel “*secure and recognized borders*” and did *not* require Israel to withdraw from all territories that Israel liberated in the defensive Six Day War.⁸⁸

President George W. Bush, in his April 14, 2004 letter to Israel’s prime minister, reiterated Israel’s entitlement to “*secure and*

recognized borders,” and affirmed that, “In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli populations centers [Jewish communities in Judea/Samaria], it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949.”⁸⁹

C. Carter and Obama Attempted to Undermine Israel’s Sovereign Rights

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter ran roughshod over the policies and the binding international legal rights enshrined in the forgoing agreements. Carter’s State Department legal adviser, Herbert Hansell, authored the infamous “Hansell letter,” which wrongly claimed that Israeli civilian “settlements” (Jewish homes and communities) in the “West Bank”, Gaza, the Golan and Sinai were in “occupied territories” and were “inconsistent with international law.”⁹⁰ (Jordan renamed Judea and Samaria the “West Bank” after Jordan illegally seized and occupied Judea/Samaria and eastern Jerusalem from 1948 to 1967.)

By its own terms, the Hansell letter’s conclusions that Israel’s presence in Judea/Samaria and Gaza was an “occupation” expired when Israel signed peace agreements with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994. Yet anti-Israel activists continue to cite and attempt to resuscitate the Hansell letter’s false claims that Jewish communities in the Jewish homeland are illegal and an “occupation.”

Subsequent administrations disagreed with the Hansell letter. Reagan flatly stated, “I disagreed when the previous [Carter] Administration referred to them [settlements] as illegal, they’re not illegal.”⁹¹ Reagan also noted that the first hurdle to peace was the refusal of Arab nations to recognize Israel’s right to exist.⁹²

However, even before he orchestrated UNSC Resolution 2334, Obama tried to delegitimize the right of Jews to live in the Jewish historic heartlands which are guaranteed to Israel under international law and are essential to Israel's security. In his infamous June 2009 Cairo speech, Obama stated that “[t]he United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements,” and falsely complained about Israeli “occupation.”⁹³ In another notorious speech on May 19, 2011, Obama again falsely complained about “occupation” and called for pushing Israel back to the Auschwitz lines, saying: “we believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps.”⁹⁴ Similarly, at his 2016 speech at the United Nations, Obama called for Israel to “recognize[] that it cannot permanently occupy and settle Palestinian land.”⁹⁵

The Obama administration even condemned Israel for approving apartments in *Jerusalem* – calling them “settlements.” Obama also refused to honor the George W. Bush administration’s 2004 agreement approving natural growth within the existing area of “settlements,” and instead demanded a stop to *all* building of Jewish homes in “settlements.”⁹⁶

Obama also instigated or maintained numerous additional biased policies to undermine Israel’s sovereignty – including not moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem; re-issuing anti-Israel Clinton-era product labeling guidelines⁹⁷; supporting antisemitic EU labeling guidelines⁹⁸; attacking the pro-Israel portions of a Congressional trade law⁹⁹; and not allowing Americans born in Jerusalem to list “Jerusalem, Israel” on their passports. At a White House meeting in 2011, Obama urged leaders of America’s 50

major Jewish organizations to “search their souls” about Israel’s seriousness for peace¹⁰⁰ – thereby wrongly placing the onus for the lack of peace on Israel – at the same time that the Palestinian Authority continued to pay terrorists to murder innocent Jews. Trump changed all this.

D. Trump Reinstated and Effectuated American Support for Israel’s Sovereign Rights

The Trump transition team’s efforts to block the Obama-orchestrated anti-Israel UN resolutions was only the first of many Trump administration efforts to reinstate and implement American support for Israel’s sovereign rights.

(1) Jerusalem Recognition/US Embassy Move: In December 2017, President Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and directed the move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem.¹⁰¹ Trump’s announcement affirmed that Israel was entitled to the sovereign rights enjoyed by all other nations, saying: “Israel is a sovereign nation with the right like every other sovereign nation to determine its own capital. . . . It was 70 years ago that the United States, under President Truman, recognized the State of Israel. Ever since then, Israel has made its capital in the city of Jerusalem — the capital the Jewish people established in ancient times.”¹⁰²

Trump’s announcement occurred 23 years after Congress overwhelmingly passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995,¹⁰³ which recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and called for moving the embassy to Jerusalem no later than 1999. Throughout those 23 years, Congress passed additional laws calling for presidents to comply with the Jerusalem Embassy Act¹⁰⁴ – and yet U.S. presidents repeatedly waived implementing the Jerusalem Embassy

Act.¹⁰⁵

Following Trump's announcement, the U.S. Embassy opened in Jerusalem in a record six months, on May 14, 2018, the seventieth anniversary of modern Israel's independence.¹⁰⁶ Trump's move received significant bipartisan support,¹⁰⁷ and demonstrated that U.S. policy should not be determined by radical Islamist terrorist threats. Trump also encouraged and welcomed other nations' move of their embassies to Jerusalem.¹⁰⁸

(2) Passports: Showing further respect for Israel's sovereign capital, the Trump administration allowed Americans born in Jerusalem to finally list "Jerusalem, *Israel*" on their U.S. passports – voluntarily becoming the first administration to comply with the law Congress passed in 2002 requiring the State Department to allow Americans born in Jerusalem to list their birth country.¹⁰⁹ (In 2003, the ZOA initiated the first case for an American seeking to have "Jerusalem, Israel" listed on his passport, and fought long legal battles challenging the Bush '43 and Obama administration's refusals to comply with the passport law.¹¹⁰)

(3) Golan Recognition: The Golan Heights' Jewish history dates back to Biblical times continuing through the ninth century CE. Thirty-eight ancient synagogues' remains were found there. In the 1880s, Jews purchased large tracts of land and farmed in the Golan. The Golan was guaranteed to the Jewish people in the British Palestine Mandate; but then, without authorization, England traded the Golan to France in return for British rights to Iraqi oil fields.¹¹¹ Syria (created in 1946 from the French Mandate) used the Golan to launch deadly attacks on Israel. Israel recaptured the Golan in 1967. The Golan provided the buffer that

saved Israel from being entirely overrun by Syria's invasion of Israel in the surprise 1973 Yom Kippur War. Today, Israeli sovereignty in the Golan enables Israel to defend against Iranian, Hezbollah and other terror groups' attacks from southern Syria. Israeli sovereignty over Israel's portion of the Golan is thus historically warranted, stabilizing, and a security necessity.¹¹²

On Purim (March 21), 2019, Trump cheered the pro-Israel community by announcing, "After 52 years it is time for the United States to fully recognize Israel's Sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and Regional Stability!"¹¹³ Five days later, with Israeli Prime Minister at his side, Trump formally recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, noting that "Iran, terrorist groups in Southern Syria, including Hezbollah, continue to make the Golan Heights a potential launching ground for attacks against Israel. Very violent attacks. Any possible future peace agreement must account for Israel's need to defend itself from Syria, Iran, and other regional threats."¹¹⁴

Alarmingly, the Biden administration promptly unraveled and refused to confirm U.S. recognition of Israeli sovereignty in the Golan. Instead, Biden's Secretary of State Blinken stated that "legal questions" about the Golan are "something we'd look at" if the situation in Syria changes.¹¹⁵

(4) Recognizing Judea-Samaria Communities' Legality: In November 2019, Secretary of State Pompeo announced that the Trump administration was reversing the Carter and Obama administrations' attempts to delegitimize the legality of "settlements" (Jewish communities in Judea-Samaria). Secretary Pompeo fur-

ther explained, “After carefully studying all sides of the legal debate, this administration agrees with President Reagan. The establishment of Israeli civilian settlements in the West Bank is *not* per se inconsistent with international law. . . . [C]alling the establishment of civilian settlements inconsistent with international law hasn’t . . . advanced the cause of peace.”¹¹⁶

Pompeo’s announcement was a vital development. As international Law Professor Eugene Kontorovich wrote, Israeli settlements do not in fact violate international law, and the Trump administration’s recognition of this fact busted the baseless “occupation myth” employed by Israel’s detractors.¹¹⁷

The Trump administration also ended the Obama administration’s antisemitic policy of condemning Jews for building homes in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Jewish homeland.

(5) Visits to Judean Winery and the Golan: In November 2020, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo’s visited the Psagot Winery in Benjamin in the Judean Hills near Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. These visits underscored Israel’s sovereign rights to Judea-Samaria and the Golan and counteracted the delegitimization of Israel’s rights. Secretary Pompeo tweeted, “Enjoyed lunch at the scenic Psagot Winery today. Unfortunately, Psagot and other businesses have been targeted by pernicious EU labeling efforts that facilitate the boycott of Israeli companies. The U.S. stands with Israel and will not tolerate any form of delegitimization.”¹¹⁸

(6) Scientific, Industrial and Agricultural Research In Judea-Samaria and the Golan: During a ceremony at Ariel University in Samaria, Israel in October 2020, U.S. Ambassador

David Friedman and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signed three revised scientific, industrial, and agricultural research cooperation agreements that removed previous restrictions on funding scientific projects in Judea, Samaria, and the Golan Heights.¹¹⁹ The Trump administration thereby recognized that scientific knowledge and cooperation between the U.S. and Israel should not be limited by artificial boundaries that deny Israel's sovereign rights.

(7) Trump's Vision For Peace: A few months after the Trump administration recognized that "settlements" are legal, the newly unveiled Trump "Vision for Peace" or "Peace to Prosperity" plan likewise recognized Judea-Samaria as "territory to which Israel has asserted valid legal and historical claims, and which are part of the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people."¹²⁰

The Trump peace plan further acknowledged that UN Security Council Resolution 242 did *not* legally require Israel to provide the Palestinians with 100% of pre-1967 territory, and that Israel has already withdrawn from 88% of the territory Israel (re-)captured in 1967.¹²¹

Trump's "Vision for Peace" moreover insisted that Israel would not need to uproot any settlements, and that the 97% of Israeli settlements would be incorporated into contiguous Israeli territory (with the remaining 3% of Israeli "enclaves" connected via roads).¹²²

Trump's peace plan also acknowledged the Jewish people's long religious and historical connection to Jerusalem¹²³; praised Israel "for safeguarding the religious sites of all" for the past 50 years¹²⁴; recommended that peaceful worshippers of all faiths –

including the Jewish people – should be permitted to pray on the Temple Mount (Judaism’s holiest site, now under control of the Jordanian Wakf)¹²⁵; and stated that “Jerusalem will remain the sovereign capital of the State of Israel” and should remain an undivided city.¹²⁶

Numerous other positive aspects of Trump’s “Vision for Peace” also moved the “peace paradigm” away from the disastrous, suicidal-for-Israel parameters that Obama tried to impose, and went a long ways towards recognizing Israel’s rightful sovereignty and security needs.¹²⁷

There were, however, several drawbacks to the Trump plan. The Trump plan’s conceptual maps only allocated 30% of Judea-Samaria to Israel (half of Area C – the area now under Israeli jurisdiction) and left some key roads under Arab control.¹²⁸ This would have allowed a Palestinian Arab state to build hostile communities surrounding certain Jewish communities in Area C – even though Areas A and B, which are under Palestinian Authority control, have plenty of open space available for Arab growth. Fortunately, the maps were merely “conceptual” and remained subject to negotiation.

The Trump plan also conditionally recommended some form of Palestinian Arab state – and virtually any such state would likely end up as a terror launching pad. Fortunately, the peace plan also set forth important conditions that the PA had to meet before such a Palestinian Arab state could be negotiated – including ending the PA’s incitement and “pay to slay” payments to murder Jews.¹²⁹

Despite such drawbacks, the Trump plan was far better than the parameters that Obama tried to impose – which disastrously

tried to carve off all of Judea-Samaria for a Palestinian-Arab terror state, with only agreed-to swaps. Moreover, the Trump peace plan's acknowledgement of the legal validity of Israel's capital, territory and Jewish communities helped end the delegitimization of Israel's rights.

(8) Trump's Respectful "Facilitator" Role: The Trump administration also respected Israeli sovereignty by only acting as a facilitator. The administration made it clear that the parties could take, leave or negotiate Trump's Vision for Peace. This was a stark contrast to the previous administrations' attempts to impose parameters that would endanger Israel's security.

(9) Labeling Regulations: The Trump administration also *reversed* Clinton and Obama-era labeling regulations that had discriminated and facilitated boycotts against Israeli products made in Judea-Samaria, harming 500,000 Jews living in these areas, Jewish businesses, and all employees (both Arab and Jewish) of these businesses. The Trump administration's new guidelines properly allowing products from Israeli territories in Judea Samaria (Area C and H2) to be labeled "Made in Israel."¹³⁰

Sadly, shortly after Biden took office, six leftwing Jewish groups, including J Street¹³¹ and New Israel Fund ("NIF," which funds groups that boycott and demonize Israel¹³²), urged the Biden administration to rescind the non-discriminatory pro-Israel Trump labeling regulations, and to re-enact the harmful Obama regulations.¹³³ ZOA promptly spearheaded a letter to the Biden administration from 31 authentically *pro-Israel* Jewish and Rabbinic organizations calling for maintaining the Trump "Made in Israel" labeling regulations.¹³⁴

The labeling issue is unfortunately endemic of certain leftwing Jews' harmful attempts to turn the clock back to the era when Jews and Israel were "second class citizens," and the pro-Israel community's efforts to maintain the Trump administration's pro-Israel advances.

(10) Standing Up for Israeli Sovereignty by Condemning and Combating PA's Instigation of Illegitimate ICC Investigation of Israel: The Trump administration strongly and repeatedly condemned the Palestinian Authority's filing of phony "war crimes" charges against Israel at the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the ICC's politicized, illegitimate attempts to assert jurisdiction over Israel (and over the U.S.).¹³⁵ The ICC's assertion of jurisdiction violated Israeli and U.S. sovereignty. The Rome statute that created the ICC limits the ICC's jurisdiction to parties to the Rome statute. Israel and the U.S. are not parties. Trump's Secretary of State Michael Pompeo noted: "A court that attempts to exercise its power outside its jurisdiction is a political tool that makes a mockery of the law and due process."¹³⁶

The Trump administration also took action to combat the Palestinian Authority's and ICC's abuses: In September 2018, the U.S. ended the waiver that had allowed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)'s office in Washington, D.C. to remain open (and thus required the PLO office to close), in part because the PLO took no steps to negotiate with Israel, and in part because of "Administration and Congressional concerns with Palestinian attempts to prompt an investigation of Israel by the International Criminal Court."¹³⁷

Also, in June 2020, the Trump administration announced that

it was imposing economic sanctions and visa restrictions against ICC personnel investigating the U.S. or America's allies (Israel). That announcement described the ICC's lack of due process and corruption, and noted:

“We’re also gravely concerned about the threat the [ICC] poses to Israel. The ICC is already threatening Israel with an investigation of so-called war crimes . . . Given Israel’s robust civilian and military legal system and strong track record of investigating and prosecuting wrongdoing by military personnel, it’s clear the ICC is only putting Israel in its crosshairs for nakedly political purposes. It’s a mockery of justice.” “More than 300 members of Congress – Republicans and Democrats alike – recently sent me letters asking that the United States support Israel in the face of the ICC’s lawless, politicized attacks. That’s what the U.S. is dead set on doing, and with good reason. They’re a trusted and wonderful partner and a buttress of American security. If a rogue court can intimidate our friend or any other ally into abrogating its right to self-defense, that puts Americans at risk as well.”¹³⁸

In March 2021, Biden’s Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that the U.S. “firmly opposes and is deeply disappointed by” the ICC’s decision to investigate Israel.¹³⁹ Fifty-three U.S. Senators then signed a bi-partisan letter urging the Biden administration to do more – to use the “full force” of America’s influence against the ICC’s illegitimate investigation of Israel, and “to defend Israel against discriminatory attacks in all international fora.”¹⁴⁰

But, unfortunately, in April, Biden revoked the U.S. sanctions on ICC personnel, thus ending a key enforcement action needed to stop the ICC’s unlawful investigation of Israel.¹⁴¹ It is also concerning that during his campaign, Biden promised to re-open the PLO office in Washington D.C. – another move which would un-

dermine efforts to stop the unlawful PA/PLO ICC investigation of Israel.¹⁴²

(11) Peace Agreements: The Abraham Accords that the U.S. brokered between Israel and the U.A.E., Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan were also an important step in recognizing Israeli sovereignty, as well as enhancing regional stability, peace and a united front against. Secretary Pompeo tweeted: “I am highly confident that many, many more nations will choose to do the right thing and recognize Israel as the rightful homeland of the Jewish people.”¹⁴³

Following the signing of the initial accords, the Trump administration also facilitated agreements and MOUs establishing diplomatic, trade, telecommunications and other relations and forms of cooperation between Israel and its Arab neighbors.¹⁴⁴

(12) Standing Up for Israel at the United Nations: During Trump’s presidency, the U.S. consistently voted with Israel, and stood up for Israel’s sovereign rights at the United Nations. In addition, after trying to reform the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) – which spends its time passing resolutions bashing Israel and denying Israel’s sovereign rights, while ignoring real human rights’ abusers, the Trump administration appropriately withdrew from the UNHRC. (As noted earlier, the Biden administration unfortunately announced plans to rejoin the UNHRC.)

VI. TRUMP’S VITAL PRO-ISRAEL APPOINTMENTS

Personnel is policy. In the mid-1880s, President Grover Cleveland fired an antisemitic U.S. consul to Jerusalem, Selah Merrill, and eventually replaced him with an American Jew, Henry Gill-

man, who supported Jerusalem's Jewish community. Cleveland also appointed Jewish, Zionist consul Oscar Straus to the Ottoman Empire to help protect Jewish (and Christian) communities in Jerusalem.¹⁴⁵ President William McKinley re-appointed Straus to the same position.¹⁴⁶

Over a century later, President Trump's appointment of David Friedman as U.S. Ambassador to Israel restored having a friendly-to-Israel Jewish diplomat represent the United States in Israel, after years of less-than-friendly or even hostile U.S. ambassadors to Israel.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, at the conclusion of Trump's and Friedman's terms in office, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said: "there was never a better ambassador than David Friedman in establishing the deep ties between Israel and the US, in correcting the diplomatic injustices that were created over the years in global diplomacy regarding Israel and in establishing the status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and many other things some of which have yet to be told."¹⁴⁸

But sadly, American certain leftwing Jews tried to derail David Friedman's confirmation as ambassador and continued to condemn Friedman's pro-Israel positions throughout his term. The Reform movement wrote a public letter that urged Senators to vote against Friedman, condemned Friedman's wish to follow the law by moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, and called Friedman's understanding of Israel's sovereign rights "extreme views."¹⁴⁹ The anti-Israel group J Street also ran a vicious "Stop Friedman" campaign.

Friedman's opponents also organized and featured in their "Stop Friedman" campaign a letter by five former U.S. ambassa-

dors to Israel (Dan Kurtzer, Thomas Pickering, Edward Walker, Jr., James Cunningham and William Harrop) condemning Friedman. ZOA quickly responded, by sending a letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, detailing those five former ambassadors' hostility to Israel, inexperience, and sympathies for Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah.¹⁵⁰

Another key Trump appointment was his US Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, who eloquently spoke out on Israel's behalf. This revived the days of assigning strong U.S. pro-Israel champions to the United Nations, such as President Lyndon Johnson's appointment of Arthur Goldberg; President Gerald Ford's appointment of Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan; President Bush's appointment of Ambassador John Bolton; and President Ronald Reagan's appointment of Jean Kirkpatrick.

Trump made numerous other strong pro-Israel appointments and nominations, such as Ambassadors Ric Grenell (who pushed German businesses to comply with sanctions on Iran), John Bolton and Elan Carr; Secretary of State Mike Pompeo; NSA Robert O'Brien; Jared Kushner; Dr. Sebastian Gorka; Steve Bannon; General Michael Flynn; Jason Greenblatt; Special Representative for International Negotiations Avi Berkowitz; and many more. Such appointees were a stark contrast to other administrations' too-often hostile-to-Israel appointees.¹⁵¹

VII. TRUMP'S STRONG OPPOSITION TO ANTISEMITISM, NEO-NAZIS, WHITE SUPREMACISTS, ETC. – AND THE CHARLOTTESVILLE HOAX TRAGEDY

Certain media outlets, political opponents and [leftwing] Jewish groups repeatedly falsely painted President Trump as a neo-Nazi- and white-supremacist-sympathizer. Tragically, to this day, many people, including many in the Jewish community, believe this defamation, and do not know the truth that President Trump frequently specifically condemned and denounced neo-Nazism, the KKK, white supremacists, and antisemitism, in the strongest possible terms – and took strong action against these scourges.

A. Trump Protected Jews Suffering From Antisemitism on College Campuses

For years, university and government officials did little to address growing antisemitic harassment of Jewish and pro-Israel students on college campuses. While perpetrators of attacks and harassment against other minority groups were swiftly disciplined, similar attacks were often ignored or downplayed when the victims were Jews or pro-Israel students.

Amcha Initiative's database of almost 4,000 antisemitic campus incidents, from 2015 to early 2021, reveals the anti-Israel hate group, Students for Justice in Palestine ("SJP") and its allies perpetrated most such incidents.¹⁵² Similarly, over the past 17 years, ZOA's Center for Law and Justice (which provides free legal services to Jewish and pro-Israel students who are attacked and harassed) received hundreds of complaints about SJP's attacks.

The Trump administration dramatically stepped up enforcement of Jewish and pro-Israel students' rights under to a harassment-free environment, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq. ("Title VI"). In 2018, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights ("OCR") re-opened a seven-year-old case against Rutgers University, which alleged that Jewish students were subjected to a hostile environment in violation of Title VI. OCR also agreed to also review Rutgers' current environment, and to use the helpful IHRA definition in its assessment.¹⁵³ OCR also obtained groundbreaking agreements with University of North Carolina (UNC) and Duke University, to take specific steps to address antisemitism on their campuses.¹⁵⁴

President Trump also issued an extremely helpful "Executive Order on Combatting Antisemitism" declaring "the policy of the executive branch to enforce Title VI against prohibited forms of discrimination rooted in anti-Semitism as vigorously as against all other forms of discrimination prohibited by Title VI."¹⁵⁵

Trump's executive order also required enforcement agencies to consider the helpful International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance ("IHRA") working definition of antisemitism.¹⁵⁶ This definition accurately addresses how antisemitism is expressed today, by recognizing that Jew-hatred can be camouflaged as anti-Israelism or anti-Zionism.

We are concerned that the Biden administration will revert to the pre-Trump days of not addressing discrimination against Jewish students. Biden's new Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division has a long history of antisemitic and anti-Israel activity. She invited Tony Martin to speak at her college, after he

wrote a conspiracy book falsely accusing Jews of dominating the slave trade. Martin’s speech denounced Jewish tradition and the Jewish people and called the Talmud’s sages “the earliest racists” – and then Clarke stated that Martin’s speech was based on “indisputable fact.” Clarke recently condemned Israel for denying entry to promoters of anti-Israel boycotts, violence and Hamas; “proudly” supports Linda Sarsour (who calls throwing rocks at Israelis “the definition of courage”); condemned the Trump administration for leaving an anti-Israel UN group; supported required classes that teach white children that they are privileged oppressors; and more.¹⁵⁷ Tucker Carlson succinctly noted: “*in a sane country, someone like Kristen Clarke would be under investigation by the Civil Rights Division, not running it.*”¹⁵⁸

B. Trump Deported the Last Nazi War Criminal in the U.S.

In 2018, the Trump administration implemented a 2004 order to deport the last known Nazi war criminal from the United States, Jakiw Palij. Previous administrations failed to deport Palij for fourteen years after the U.S. courts issued his deportation order. Palij was an armed guard at the Trawniki Labor Camp, where 6,000 Jewish children, women, and men were shot to death in one of the single largest massacres of the Holocaust. The White House announcement noted that: “To protect the promise of freedom for Holocaust survivors and their families, President Trump prioritized the removal of Palij,” and encouraged the public to come forward if they knew of others who had committed war crimes and then lied to enter the United States.¹⁵⁹

Deporting Palij was a difficult process, involving tough negotiations by U.S. Ambassador to Germany Ric Grenell, propelled by

President Trump. This would not have been undertaken by a president who had Nazi sympathies.

C. Accord With Arab Nation to Combat Antisemitism

Following the Abraham Accords, the Trump administration, led by U.S. Department of State Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Elan Carr, also brokered a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) on Antisemitism with Bahrain, “to eradicate antisemitism and promote respect and peaceful coexistence between Arab and Jewish people through education and programs.” Special Envoy Carr explained that the MOU “is groundbreaking in that it is the first time in history we are seeing Arab partners formally join the United States in combatting antisemitism and the delegitimization of the State of Israel; and employing the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism. This partnership will build a future of tolerance, harmony, and peace for generations to come.”¹⁶⁰

D. The Charlottesville Episode; Trump in Fact Combated Neo-Nazism and Antisemitism

The Charlottesville episode was a stunning example of defamation of a president who in fact opposed, repeatedly denounced and combated antisemitism, neo-Nazism and white supremacy. Trump’s opponents shamelessly falsely accused him of calling neo-Nazis “very fine people.” But, in fact, Trump had made it clear that the phrase “very fine people on both sides” merely referred to people with differing views as to whether a statue should be removed. In the very same breath as his statement that there were “very fine people” on both sides of the statue removal pro-

test, President Trump said: *“I’m not talking about the neo-Nazis and the white nationalists, because they should be condemned totally.”*¹⁶¹

Trump also took strong actions to combat the Charlottesville neo-Nazis, etc. He ordered opening a top-priority civil rights investigation into the murder of Heather Heyer; made good on his vow to hold those involved fully accountable; signed and publicly supported S.J. Res. 49, the Charlottesville Joint Resolution, which specifically “reject[ed] white nationalists, white supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups”¹⁶²; and *again* specifically denounced neo-Nazis and other hate groups at Charlottesville, saying:

“Racism is evil. And those who cause violence in its name are criminals and thugs, including the KKK, neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and other hate groups that are repugnant to everything we hold dear as Americans. . . . We will spare no resource in fighting so that every American child can grow up free from violence and fear.”¹⁶³

Yet, the Charlottesville calumny defaming President Trump ran amok. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) issued a press release falsely claiming that “President Trump went beyond the pale today in equating racist white supremacists in Charlottesville with counter protesters who were there to stand up against hate.”¹⁶⁴ (ADL, which is now headed by a former Obama administration official, also wrongly blamed President Trump for emboldening extremists to make bomb threats against Jewish institutions – when the bomb threats were actually made by a disturbed Israeli teenager¹⁶⁵; opposed ardent friend-of-Israel Mike Pompeo’s nomination and wrongly accused Pompeo of anti-Muslim bigotry¹⁶⁶; and signed joint letters with radical Islamist groups CAIR, MPAC, and ISNA

and Iranian regime lobbyist NIAC.¹⁶⁷)

Then-candidate Biden's campaign launch "soul of the nation" video repeated the "very fine people on both sides" statement out-of-context, and falsely claimed: "the president of the United States assigned a moral equivalence between those spreading hate and those with the courage to stand against it."¹⁶⁸

The Jewish Democratic Council of America ("JDCA") also released a video ad, retweeted by JDCA Executive Director Halie Soifer, which falsely portrayed President Trump as a "hater" who endangers Jews' future, accompanied by Nazi swastikas and Charlottesville and Holocaust imagery.¹⁶⁹ The JDCA also retweeted a post accusing President Trump's campaign of "*similarities to the uprising of Hitler.*"¹⁷⁰ We believe that these posts were appalling.

The ubiquitous repetition of the Charlottesville lie could very well have cost Trump the election. In retrospect, in addition to all his other efforts, Trump should have mounted a major advertising campaign to set the record straight, and to call out those who falsely painted this most philosemitic of presidents as an antisemite and neo-Nazi/white supremacist sympathizer.

Sadly, the left also falsely maligned other strongly pro-Israel officials in the Trump administration as antisemites and neo-Nazi sympathizers. As Rabbi Heshie Billet said, in his article debunking the false Nazi claims leveled at Trump adviser Dr. Sebastian Gorka, "To smear an innocent man is immoral and politically dishonest."¹⁷¹

The Charlottesville calumny may have concerning future consequences. False accusations of antisemitism against those who combat antisemitism can have a chilling effect on our best friends.

Will public officials continue to go out of their way to stand up for Israel and the Jewish people, if some Jewish groups respond by falsely accusing those officials of being neo-Nazis?

E. Trump Made Numerous Additional Strong Statements

Opposing Antisemitism

In addition to his substantive efforts to combat antisemitism and the statements cited above, President Trump made numerous other statements opposing antisemitism, neo-Nazism and white supremacy, in the strongest possible terms.¹⁷² For instance, immediately after the Pittsburgh massacre, President Trump made one of the strongest statements against antisemitism ever uttered by a world leader, saying: “The vile, hate-filled poison of anti-Semitism must be condemned and confronted everywhere and anywhere it appears. There must be no tolerance for anti-Semitism in America or for any form of religious or racial hatred or prejudice.”

And in his 2019 State of the Union address, President Trump denounced Iran’s shouts of “Death to Israel” and the Pittsburgh massacre, and made this stirring vow to confront every instance of antisemitism: “We must never ignore the vile poison of anti-Semitism, or those who spread its venomous creed. With one voice, we must confront this hatred anywhere and everywhere it occurs.”¹⁷³

And during an address at the Israel American Council, alongside Special Envoy for Combatting Antisemitism Elan Carr, Trump repeatedly condemned antisemitism, including saying: “Throughout history, anti-Semitism has produced untold pain, suffering evil, and destruction. We must not ignore the vile poison or those who spread its venomous creed. My administration is com-

mitted to aggressively challenging and confronting anti-Semitic bigotry in every resource and using every single weapon at our disposal.”¹⁷⁴

And, in his remarks when signing his Executive Order on Combatting Anti-Semitism, President Trump declared: “With one voice, we vow to crush the monstrous evil of anti-Semitism whenever and wherever it appears. And we’re working very hard on that. (Applause.) And I can tell you that — that we have a lot of people in government working very, very hard on that, and we appreciate their work.”¹⁷⁵

And there are many more examples.

CONCLUSION

Prior to Donald Trump's presidency, several U.S. administrations had been tightening a vise around Israel's neck, producing fear and worry among many pro-Israel Americans. Prior administrations also did little to counteract the harassment of Jewish and pro-Israel students on college campuses. Then along came Donald Trump – who kept his promise, that when he became president, “the days of treating Israel like a second-class citizen will end on day one.”¹⁷⁶

President Trump's numerous demonstrations of friendship and support for the Jewish people, Israel and Israel's sovereign rights were truly extraordinary. We believe that history will ultimately recognize Donald Trump as one of the greatest presidents ever for the Jewish people, Israel and America.

At least some of Trump's policies and philosophy will last in the coming years. But the next few years will be marked by many battles to try to prevent Trump's friendly policies from being reversed. We will then need to work hard to reinstate President Trump's pro-Israel and pro-Jewish policies as soon as possible.

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