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The Incredible Mr. Erekat

William Mehlman

Jay Nordlinger has probably given us the first and last word on the moral contradictions, factoids and fantasies struggling for dominance over the conflicted psyche of Saeb Erekat, “Palestine’s” chief negotiator with Israel since the 1991 Madrid Conference and as of late last year, the PLO’s Secretary General.

“Erekat says all the right things—almost all the right things,” Nordlinger avers in an article for *National Review On-Line*. “Yes, he accepts Israel’s right to exist—even as a Jewish state. And yes, he would accept a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and leave the rest of Israel alone...He is a great assurer. Butter wouldn’t melt in his mouth. But can you trust him as far as you can throw him?”

The question has assumed singular relevance in light of the growing possibility that 2015 may have marked the 11th and final full year of an 81 year-old and ailing Mahmoud Abbas’ reign as President of the Palestinian Authority and his reportedly strong leaning toward the San Francisco State University alumnus as his successor. The answer, all things considered, is an emphatic, however regretful, no. Saeb Erekat cannot be trusted, neither as near nor as far as you can throw him. For the vision that once



Saeb Erekat

inspired a plea in the Palestinian daily *Al-Quds* for a dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian academics and, in the face of charges of betrayal of the “Palestinian Cause,” his follow-up invitation to Israeli students to sit in on his lectures at An-Najah University in Nablus, is no longer in evidence. While the silver tongue, the impeccable English polished to a high gloss in pursuit of a Doctorate at England’s Bradford University continue to make him an interview fixture at CNN and other media venues, he has allowed himself, at 60, to become spokesman for a zero-sum “peace process” that has never included peace, that rejects Israel as a Jewish state because recognition of that

reality would put paid to any further territorial claims against it, a process that has set its sights on Israel’s ultimate disappearance from the map of the Middle East.

Bret Stephens, foreign affairs columnist and deputy opinion page editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, bore witness to Erekat’s unraveling as far back as 2002, while serving as editor of the *Jerusalem Post*. It began, he notes, with myth-making: that, inter alia, Jewish settlers had gobbled up 42 per cent of the “West Bank,” when in fact their communities occupied barely 5 per cent of Judea and Samaria; that these same rapacious Jewish invaders were stealing Palestinian water resources, when virtually all of the settlements were already linked to the national Israel water grid and did not use local wells; that Jewish settlement activity violated international law, a charge refuted by the Fourth Geneva Convention. From this fictional springboard it was but a short hop to Erekat’s claim that “Operation Defensive Shield,” the IDF’s 2002 decontamination of a toxic Jenin terrorist camping ground, was a “war crime” resulting in the death of more than 500 innocent civilians. The actual death toll, upon investigation by the UN, was 53, more than half of them combatants.

Erekat’s disassociation from reality has progressed to a point of apparent no return. While one would hardly label “sublime” his wild charge of a 96 per cent mortality rate among Gazan civilians resulting from the IDF’s response to Hamas’s 50-day, 2014 rocket assault on Israel’s towns and villages, “ridiculous” seems the only word applicable to his claim in an interview with AFP’s Mike Smith to being “the proud son of the Canaanites who were here [in “Palestine”] 5,500 years before Joshua bin Nun burned down the Tower of Jericho.” Of this from the scion of a Saudi Bedouin family that did not turn up on Israel’s shores until the 20th Century, Pesach Benson of *Honest Reporting* observed, “but who cares about these things. Certainly not the Western media who never question his deceitful demonization, his

Jenin blood libel or his outright lies. Reporters shrug their shoulders at most, then dutifully record the whopper, making sure they spell his name right. How tall a tale does the man have to spin before the press corps has a crisis of faith in Erekat's credibility?"

Sandwiched between the ridiculous and the outright slanderous—his references to Israel with its Arab judges, ambassadors and raucous Knesset members as an “apartheid regime,” his characterization of Netanyahu as a virtual clone of ISIS murderer-in-chief Bakr al-Baghdadi, his incessant harping on Israel’s “despoilation” of the al-Aksa mosque—Erekat recently hit bottom with the dissemination to the Israel-based foreign media and outlets worldwide of a pamphlet entitled “Key Points to Remember When Reporting on Occupied Palestine.” This “incendiary document,” so labeled by Dr. Eran Lerman, former Israel National Security Council foreign policy deputy in a review for the Begin-Sadat Center, “deserves to be reconstructed word for word in order to understand the futility of the Palestinian mindset as seen through the fervid mind of Saeb Erekat.” Erekat’s lead sentence—“This is not a conflict among equals”—to a section headed “Israel Occupies the Palestinian State,” reaches beyond obfuscation of the fact that the PA has never been a state, that Israel departed Gaza 10 years ago and that it was from an unrecognized, illegal Jordanian occupier that Israel’s Judean and Samaritan heartland were recovered in 1967. It goes to the core truth that were Israel not the stronger party in June of that fateful year, there would not have been a Jew left to tell the tale.

In another section of his screed headed “International Protection is a Right for the Palestinian People,” Erekat advances the spurious notion that “belligerent occupation” and “collective punishment,” among other alleged Israeli depredations, puts the world in debt to his compatriots for international protection. “The problem here,” Lerman submits, “is not that some poorly informed Western reporter might be tricked into advancing such a claim...but that some people in high places in Ramallah really believe the world owes the Palestinians an imposed intervention!”

And so it goes with all 10 sections of Erekat’s utterly tendentious pamphlet. He cannot, of course, resist a parting riff on what he calls Israel’s “culture of impunity,” to which Lerman responds with an observation by New York Senator Charles Schumer that “it would have been a different world had the people who gave us the airline hijacking culture of the 1960s and 70s and who desecrated the 1972 Munich Olympics, did not end up being forgiven and their crimes forgotten.”

When it comes to “cultural impunity,” Mr. Erekat and his constituents could most assuredly teach us all a lesson or two.

William Mehlman represents AFSI in Israel.

From the Editor

Chutzpah

Another risible gem from our morally topsy turvy world: The Russian Foreign Ministry on Feb. 20 sent out a statement: “We call on the United States and other NATO countries to be responsible and discriminate in choosing targets, like the Russian aerospace forces are doing in Syria.”

A Surprising Tribute

As our campuses boil with mindless hatred toward Israel, a surprising tribute comes from a Kuwaiti columnist who titles his column in the daily *Al-Qabas* “Israel has Outdone Us in Everything—We Must Learn from It.” Excerpts:

“Since its founding, Israel has been committed to democracy while we refuse to even speak of it, let alone adopt it.

“Israel has given its minorities rights that most citizens in most countries do not even dream of. Furthermore, the freedom of worship there exceeds that in any Arab or Islamic country.

“Israel has focused its attention on science, spending large sums on research, while we are still focused on whether drinking camel urine or using it medicinally is actually helpful.

“Israel has known law and order since its first day, while we still try to comprehend the meaning of both these words.

“Israel has developed its technologies and developed its agriculture, industry and military, becoming an advanced and respected country, while we currently occupy the bottom slot in every field.”

Alas, it would be hard to find such an appreciation written by one of Israel’s own army of hyper-self-critical journalists.

“Neutrality”

Republican candidate Donald Trump has now distanced himself from the Republican field on yet another issue—Israel. He has declared himself “neutral.” This is apparently so he can devote a few weeks in the Oval office to solving the Arab-Israel conflict (hey, why not, when you are the world’s greatest ever deal-maker). Neutral is of course a euphemism for “anti-Israel.” There is no legitimate neutral stance between the Palestinian Arabs whose goal is what Abba Eban used to call “politicide” and Israel, which seeks to maintain its existence in the face of hatred and barbarism. Even the much pilloried Chamberlain did not consider himself “neutral” on the question of Czechoslovakia’s survival. He was deluded but not neutral.

Trudeau on the Holocaust



On International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued a statement—only trouble, no mention of Jews. Amusingly his statement includes the sentence: “It also reminds us that silence must never be an option when humanity is threatened.” Yet Trudeau is silent on the victims. Presumably it was “humanity” that Hitler set out to exterminate. A number of disgusted Canadians riposted on Facebook including news producer D’vora Charness: “This is what happens when you elect a 5 year old as Prime Minister. Missing words: Jew /Jewish

/Antisemitism.”

Professor Puerile

Elsewhere in this issue we have an extended account, including samples of the rhetoric, of Rutgers Associate Professor Jasbir K. Puar’s recent lecture at Vassar in which she excoriated Israel. It was sponsored by Vassar’s American Studies Association. For those who have difficulty with Professor Puar’s use of language, Ruth King offers this helpful translation:

“Political Agglutinative Phonemes from the Pentapolis. This lecture will determine the incorporational eschatology of Massenkommunikationsdienstleistungsunternehmen in macro and micro foundations of ahistorical imperative in ancient and modern Palestinian society.”

Ban Ki Moon at Park East Synagogue

Jewish “leaders,” rabbis among them, cannot resist the lure of rubbing shoulders with the famous, irrespective of their attitude toward Israel. Recent case in point: the invitation by Rabbi Arthur

Schneier to UN Secretary General Ban ki-Moon to speak at the Park East Synagogue to commemorate the United Nations International Holocaust Remembrance Shabbat on Feb. 6.



Rabbi Arthur Schneier

Lori Lowenthal Marcus describes in *The Jewish Press* how the congregation did not let this pass without protest. In advance of Ban’s visit, Park East member Julius Weil sent out a message: “To invite the Secretary General to speak in a house of God while he ignores condemning Palestinian acts of terror committed on a daily basis against innocent Israelis is just wrong. To do it under the pretext of honoring the memory of the six million who perished at the hands of the Nazis makes a mockery of their

deaths.” Actually Ban has done worse than ignore the wave of killings—he has justified them by stating that “Palestinians” are driven by frustration and despair and “it is human nature to react to occupation.”

Members of a number of groups, AFSI included, handed out flyers inside the synagogue. Marcus reports that one redoubtable lady, Hillary Barr of Mothers against Terrorism, spoke up after Rabbi Schneier ended his own speech with the words “We must not be silent” and then introduced Ban ki-Moon. As Ban approached the podium Barr spoke up: “You justified terrorism in Israel, which is justifying 9/11. There is no justification for terrorism.” Escorted out of the synagogue she re-entered, going to the room where the assorted dignitaries were by then eating, and continued to explain why the invitation to Moon was inappropriate.

At the least, Schneier was deservedly embarrassed.

Good News from Amazing Israel: Michael Ordman

The breakthrough leukemia cure is “Israeli”. Ordman reports he was suspicious of the BBC’s report on the “innovative” U.S. immunotherapy that cured 27 of 29 “no-hope” leukemia patients. Sure enough, the genetic modification of T-cells was developed by Weizmann Institute Professor Zelig Eshhar, and the US researchers accredited him.

Israeli company Kamada has reported positive interim results from a Phase 1/2 clinical trial of its proprietary alpha-1 antitrypsin (AAT) to treat steroid-refractory Graft Versus Host Disease (GvHD). Subjects responded well to treatment in the small study.



Israeli biotech Rosetta Genomics has been granted a US patent for its gene signature method of distinguishing four different types of kidney cancer. The molecular diagnostic test recognizes the profile of 29 microRNAs that are expressed in patients with renal cancer.



Itzhak Fried

Tel Aviv University Professor Itzhak Fried has completed his study of how memory neurons behave in real time when they are “remembering.” He will present his findings at an upcoming Jerusalem symposium. These have important implications for understanding dementia such as Alzheimer’s.

Teaching Antisemitism at Vassar—and Beyond

Rael Jean Isaac

The anti-Semitic hysteria on many elite American campuses (the veil of anti-Zionism now thrown off) is belatedly becoming the subject of major concern in the Jewish community. As well it should. The young people of this community, in what should be idyllic years, are being exposed, often for the first time in their lives, to unreasoning hatred. Moreover what starts on campus does not stay there. Those whose opinions are shaped in our colleges and universities move on to become the opinion shapers of the broader culture: the journalists, the academics, the professionals, the entertainers, the politicians.

While their children may not be subject to the intimidation and bullying Jews encounter, non-Jews should also be deeply worried. Most would be horrified to see our colleges descend into what Victor Davis Hanson calls places “as foreign to American traditions of tolerance and free expression as what followed the Weimar Republic.” Parents hope their children will be introduced to what Matthew Arnold called the best that has been thought and said, not mired in impenetrable thickets of verbiage, behind which lie ignorance, falsehoods and malice.



Take the lecture on Feb. 3 by Rutgers Associate Professor Jasbir Puar at Vassar College. Under the title “Inhumanist Biopolitics: How Palestine Matters,” the invitation declared: “This lecture theorizes oscillating relations between disciplinary, pre-emptive and increasingly prehensive forms of power that shape human and non-human materialities in Palestine....If Gaza, for example, is indeed the world’s largest ‘open air prison’ and experimental lab for Israeli military apparatuses, infrastructural chaos and metric manipulation, what kinds of fantasies (about power, about bodies, about resistance, about politics) are driving this project?”

Ignoring for the moment the verbal sludge, what are Puar’s credentials to hold forth on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Arabs? She teaches Women’s and Gender Studies and “has written widely” (so says the invitation) on such subjects as gay and lesbian tourism, bio and necropolitics, queer theory disability and debilitation, theories of intersectionality, affect and assemblage ; homonationalism etc. etc. Equally mysterious, why should American Studies, the Vassar department which invited Puar, find the Middle East a topic that fits into its bailiwick? The answer lies in a word the reader probably didn’t even notice in the mind-blowing flood of jargon: intersectionality. Richard L. Cravatts, author of *Genocidal Liberalism: The University’s Jihad Against Israel and Jews*, explains that intersectionality conflates seemingly unrelated instances of oppression so that to know one victim group is to know any victim group. As a result, says Cravatts, “someone who is a gender studies professor, or queer theorist, or American studies expert can, with no actual knowledge or expertise about the Middle East, readily pontificate on the many social pathologies of Israel, based on its perceived role as a racist, colonial oppressor of an innocent indigenous population of Arab victims.”

As for what Puar actually said, we are indebted to members of Fairness to Israel, a group of alumnae and parents that monitor the routine bashing of Israel at Vassar, which recorded and transcribed the talk. While a lot was unintelligible, what could be understood was vile, defamatory and false. To Cravatts the most alarming part of Puar’s talk was her “explicit support for terrorism against Israeli citizens as a corollary aspect of the BDS movement.” Of Israel delaying the return of the bodies of 17 knife wielding intifada attackers, Puar said “Some speculate that the bodies were mined for organs

for scientific research. “She described legitimate assertions of self-defense against those in the act of murdering Jews as “field assassinations.” Some of Israel’s invented sins only someone with a mind as ingenious as Puar could dream up (her next book is on “the relations between biopolitics, disability and forms of active debilitation pivotal to the operations of war machines and racial capitalism.”) One of Israel’s most nefarious deeds, in Puar’s account, is to let Palestinians live. According to Puar “They need the Palestinians alive in order to keep the kind of rationalization for their victimhood and their militarized economy.” Cravatts notes that “In her [Puar’s] speech the central, repellant theme was that Israel is also intent on ‘targeting youth, not for death but for stunting’ as a ‘tactic that seeks to render impotent any further resistance.’” Apparently when Israeli soldiers wound rather than kill attackers, they are engaged in “maiming masquerades” and this is “part of a sadistic, imperialistic militancy on the part of Israel.”



It bears emphasizing that Puar was not invited by Students for Justice in Palestine or any other of the assortment of student hate groups ostensibly fighting “oppression”. Her talk was sponsored by academic departments, American Studies in the first instance, but also --as co-sponsors-- by Africana Studies, English, International Studies, Political Science, Religion, Women’s Studies and yes, Jewish Studies. The last named, given the nature of that department at Vassar, is not as astonishing as it seems. Retired English professor Edward Alexander (whose most recent book is *Jews Against Themselves*) in an unpublished letter to the *Wall Street Journal* observes: “Jewish Studies faculty includes such luminaries as Joshua Schreier, who is a tribune of the BDS movement to expel Israel from the family of nations, and who boasts that his course on the Arab-Israeli Conflict presents only the Arab ‘narrative.’ There is also Andrew Bush, who in 2003 defined Intifada II, in which Palestinian pogromists and lynch mobs slaughtered a thousand people and maimed 10,000 more, as a ‘critique of Zionism.’ There is, to be sure, a technical problem in having Prof. Puar lecture at Vassar: if her spoken English resembles her stupefyingly opaque writing, Vassar students must have thought she was speaking in tongues. Not to worry, however: another late arrival among the co-sponsors of her lecture was Vassar’s English Department.”

No one spoke up at the lecture to challenge the speaker. If no one objected to the vicious assault on Israel, a member of one of those eight sponsoring academic departments might at least have risen to protest Puar’s massacre of the English language, as for example in her description of her project “How Palestine Matters.” “How Palestine Matters situates the geopolitical that has been obliterated in the resurrection of the ecological and the geographical in emergent fields of new materialisms and anthropocene studies.”

In *Anti-Education*, his sharp criticism of the German educational system, Nietzsche wrote: “The one place where true education begins [is] the mother tongue.” What he would say of the ghastly hash Puar makes of it defies imagination. And even if their standards are not as high as his, what parents want to pay \$63,280 a year, the current cost of a Vassar education, for their child to be exposed to this assault on language, truth, reason and intelligibility.

In the aftermath of Puar’s lecture, the silence on campus continued. Two faculty members voiced disquiet on a Facebook page called Vassar4Israel set up after an article on the debacle, “Majoring in Anti-Semitism at Vassar,” was published in *The Wall Street Journal*. But there were no open letters, no TV or radio appearances, and no public protests. The reaction of Vassar’s President Catherine Hill was pallid to say the least. She posted a defensive letter in the alumni magazine saying some may have found the talk “objectionable.” She followed up with the promise of an hour online audio discussion about “issues and tensions on campus related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

If Puar's lecture was an outlier, it could be dismissed as one more instance of campus follies and academic gobbledygook. But this is far from the case. From New York to California—and in Canada as well—the situation is growing worse, with Jewish students, especially those who stand up for Israel, bullied, threatened, intimidated, sometimes physically attacked. The absurd lengths to which the hate-Israel cult has gone was apparent on Feb. 18 at the University of Chicago where Palestinian human rights activist Bassem Eid spoke. As the *Jerusalem Post's* Caroline Glick notes, Eid was a darling of the far left when he was co-director of B'Tselem and focused his criticism on Israel. But he provoked outrage in Chicago by speaking of human rights abuses by the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. From the audience came yells: "You must never again speak about the Palestinians"—this at the man who had spent his life pursuing their rights. In her account for *The Jewish Press*, Lori Lowenthal Marcus reports that the shrieks grew so loud no one could hear anything and the event had to be shut down in the middle of the question and answer session. Eid himself had to be escorted from the room by campus police after one of the students threatened him with physical harm.

While students have thus far borne the brunt of outright intimidation, anti-Israel activists are beginning to target faculty. *The Jewish Week* reports that at Brooklyn College, which, despite its large Jewish student body has long been the scene of anti-Israel demonstrations, a group of students shouting slogans including "Zionists off campus" broke up the meeting of the Faculty Council, which is headed by an Orthodox Jew. One professor said she left the meeting "trembling." At least in this case Brooklyn College President Karen Gould was quick to condemn the protest as "unacceptable" and the "hateful anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish comments" as "especially abhorrent." But that the students responsible will be punished—the only way to deter repeat performances—is doubtful.

What can be done? The Zionist Organization of America has sent a letter to CUNY's chancellor and board of trustees demanding that the chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine, the culprit in the campus attacks, be shut down on all 23 CUNY campuses. As Caroline Glick points out, this is no ordinary student group. One of its tactics, laid out in an internal document obtained from the SUNY Binghamton chapter by the Amcha Initiative, which documents anti-Jewish campaigns on U.S. campuses, is to disrupt and shut down pro-Israel (or insufficiently anti-Israel, as in the Bassem Eid case) events on campus through, in the words of the document, "political theater to protest the events" as well as acts of "disruption." An outfit whose purpose is to shut down free expression does not belong on American campuses.

Rachel Lefkowitz in an article entitled "Jewish Donors: Stop Funding Anti-Semitism—Divest from Universities" zeroes in on an obvious way to obtain the attention of administrators. She points out that "staggering amounts of Jewish money" continue to be pumped into academic institutions "as they simultaneously explode with anti-Jew and anti-Israel hatred." She reports, for example that at the height of "Jew hate tensions" at Canada's York University between 2005 and 2010 "which included the hosting of Hamas-loving speakers, mini-riots against Jews, swarming of pro-Israel tabled events, storming events of pro-Israel speakers, physical violence, barricading of Jews and shouting profanities and anti-Semitic slurs, 'Die Jew,' 'get the hell off campus,' and 'Zionist pigs'" a well-known Jewish donor who was also a member of the school's board of directors made a substantial donation. Lefkowitz points out the huge amount of Jewish money being poured into Columbia—\$250 million from one donor, \$200 million from another, \$100 million from a third—despite its employing some of the most virulently anti-Semitic professors (like Rashid Khalidi) and the disgraceful number of anti-Israel events on campus. As Lefkowitz says "Why should universities acknowledge how horrifically antisemitic their campuses have become when Jewish supporters have ignored all of it and continue to give?"

Lefkowitz singles out as a hero Paul Bronfman, chairman of Pinewood Toronto Studios, who recently gave York University 24 hours to take down an anti-Semitic mural or forfeit his support. York refused and Bronfman followed through, pulling money, production equipment, seminars, open houses with students, learning labs and training programs—everything. A hundred faculty members signed an



Bronfman

open letter criticizing Bronfman and defending the mural (contrast this with the silence at Vassar), but Bronfman stood firm.

If something is not done to stem the tide, many American campuses, including those most attractive to Jews, will become intolerable. A Jewish donor strike is a good place to start.

This appeared in American Thinker on February 27. Isaac's most recent book is Roosters of the Apocalypse: How the Junk Science of Global Warming is Bankrupting the Western World.

Weimar America

Victor Davis Hanson

2016 is a pivotal year in which accustomed referents of a stable West are now disappearing. We seem to be living in a chaotic age, akin to the mid-1930s, of cynicism and skepticism. Government, religion, and popular culture are corrupt and irrelevant—and the world order of the last 70 years has all but collapsed.

Neither the president nor his would-be successors talk much about the fact that we are now nearing \$20 trillion in debt—in an ossified economy of near-zero interest rates, little if any GDP growth, and record numbers of able-bodied but non-working adults. (The most frequent complaint I hear in my hometown is that the government lags behind in their cost-of-living raises in Social Security disability payments.)

No one can figure out how and why America's youth have borrowed a collective \$1 trillion for college tuition, and yet received so little education and skills in the bargain. Today's campuses have become as foreign to American traditions of tolerance and free expression as what followed the Weimar Republic. To appreciate cry-bully censorship, visit a campus "free-speech" area. To witness segregation, walk into a college "safe space." To hear unapologetic anti-Semitism, attend a university lecture. To learn of the absence of due process, read of a campus hearing on alleged sexual assault. To see a brown shirt in action, watch faculty call for muscle at a campus demonstration. To relearn the mentality of a Chamberlain or Daladier, listen to the contextualizations of a college president. And to talk to an uneducated person, approach a recent college graduate.

If all that is confusing, factor in the Trimalchio banquet of campus rock-climbing walls, students glued to their iPhone 6s, \$200 sneakers, latte bars, late-model foreign cars in the parking lot, and yoga classes. Affluence, arrogance, and ignorance are quite a trifecta.

Bernie Sanders—a proud Eugene Debs-like socialist whose campaign in normal times would have been the stuff of caricature—is now running neck and neck with Hillary Clinton for the Democratic Party nomination. He rails like an Old Testament prophet at Wall Street, often oblivious that Wall Street's totem stands a mere three feet away on the debating stage.

Obama may have wrecked his party by losing the Congress and most of the state legislatures, but he certainly has moved it to the hard community-organizing left. Sanders has little appreciation that he is an artifact of free-market capitalism, which alone has created enough bounty for such a demagogue to call for massive redistribution—in a way impossible for socialists any longer in exhausted Cuba, Greece, Venezuela, or any other command-economy paradise. Where does Sanders think his statism has worked—China, North Korea, Bolivia, Cuba, or the ossified European Union?

Bill Clinton on the stump has reminded us that there need not be any dignity to the post-presidency. He offers a blueprint to becoming fabulously wealthy by monetizing a mere eight years in office with lifetime quid pro quos and Putin-like leverage. He has managed to make the sanctimonious

scold Jimmy Carter seem reverential in comparison. The mystery of Hillary Clinton is not that she should be indicted on charges that are routinely filed against lesser miscreant bureaucrats, but that her entire corrupt career has always somehow been exempt, from cattle speculation to withholding subpoenaed evidence.

Mrs. Clinton is now like a tottering third-world caudillo—she can't really continue on in politics and she can't quit trying if she wants to stay out of jail. Her possible indictment depends entirely on her political viability and utility. She and the once disbarred Bill Clinton might appear like tired, tragic dinosaurs, bewildered that politics have left them behind in their late sixties—were it not for these aging egoists' routine petulance and sense of entitlement.

Donald Trump is probably not a serious student of the European 1930s, but in brilliant fashion he has sized up the public's worries over a Potemkin economy, exhaustion with wars, and namby-pamby leadership. His own remedy is 1930s to the core: nationalism, crude bombast, mytho-history, and sloganeering without much detail. Trump's trajectory is predicated on the premise that a jaded public cares more about emotion than logic, and how a leader speaks rather than what he says.



In European 1930s street-brawling fashion, no one knows quite whether Trump is a 1990s Clinton Democrat, a 1980s Reagan Republican, or a Perotist misfit. He has thrown a ball and chain through the pretentious glass of American campaigning. Trump excites voters because he can profane, smear, interrupt, and fabricate—on the premise that as a performance artist he reifies what they think but don't dare say about a corrupt political class and its warped, politically correct

values. Trump reminds Americans what deterrence is: the supposedly courageous media, the so-called truth-to-power leftists, and the sober and judicious careerist politicians are all terrified how he might reply or react to their criticism. None of them want to spend 2-3 days trading smears with Donald Trump.

The president has a strange tic: the more he lectures about either the peaceful tendencies or impotence of an Iran or ISIS, or the more he explains how an aggressive Russia or China is stupidly not acting in their own interests, the more we know that the world is becoming ever more dangerous to the United States. He peddles mythologies about Cuba's Castro, Iran's aspirations, non-Islamic jihadism, and hands-up, don't-shoot racializing, on the premise that even as all else has failed him, he wins exemption from reasoned cross-examination due to his "transformative" and iconic status.

Israel is now a neutral at best—a sort of forgotten Byzantine outpost in a dangerous neighborhood, forsaken by the medieval West. China brazenly has established the principle that a superpower can create territory ex nihilo—along with territorial jurisdiction anywhere it wishes. The only brake on Putin's Russia is his own energy level and whether he believes that routinely taking advantage of Obama's United States is getting boring. ISIS did not wait for its full-fledged caliphate to start slaughtering its ideological and religious enemies, given that it assumes a corrupt world has no worries about its genocide and religious cleansing. It is baffled only because after raping, beheading, dismembering, strangling, smashing, drowning, and incinerating, it still cannot win the attention of the West—and is running out of methods to torture and slay the innocent.

Not since Pius XII has a pope proved as mysterious and exasperating as Francis. He seems not to have transcended the parochial time and space of Peronist Argentina. The well-meaning and kindly pope acts as if he is unworried about the historical wages of leftwing authoritarianism and government-mandated redistribution. Why would a pontiff, protected by medieval walls and Vatican territorial security, blast U.S. immigration policy toward Mexican illegal immigrants?

Since Obama's reelection, the southern border has been wide open, in naked efforts to recalibrate American electoral demography. The U.S. has taken in more immigrants, legal and illegal, than has any other country—the only impediment for entry is being educated, skilled, with resources, and insisting on legality. The U.S. last year allowed nearly \$80 billion to be sent in annual remittances to Mexico and Latin America, mostly from those here illegally. Certainly, Mexico, in a most un-Christian fashion, has built walls on its own southern border to prevent unlawful entry, published comic-book manuals to instruct its emigrants how to violate U.S. immigration law, and written into its own constitution repulsive racial prerequisites for emigrating to Mexico—all to the apparent ignorance of the otherwise intrusively editorializing pope. Mexico's own obsession with exporting its indigenous people to the U.S. is predicated on historic Mexican racism, always emanating from grandees in Mexico City.

Popular culture has become a 1930s collective Berlin cabaret. Apple—whose iPhones cause more fatal distractions than driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs—refuses to help the FBI to open one phone of a dead Islamic terrorist. It protects the last calls of a mass murderer as if the logs were records of Apple's \$180 billion stashed in offshore investment schemes.

To walk on an upscale bike path today is to see more pets than toddlers in baby carriages (I counted yesterday). Swerving semis on the freeway used to mean high blood alcohol levels, now they reflect text messaging. Is there some rule that demands that only movie stars, investment bankers, and tech moguls, who live in houses of more than 5,000 square feet or fly on private jets, have earned the right to lecture *hoi polloi* on their bad habits that lead to global warming? Is barbecuing a steak worse than burning up 5 gallons of aviation fuel a minute?

Segregation, not integration and assimilation, is the new trajectory of racial relations. "White privilege" is said to be such an insidious aid to career success that careerist whites like Elizabeth Warren, Ward Churchill, Shaun King, and Rachel Dolezal will do almost anything to insist that they are really non-white. The president of the United States invited a rapper for a White House visit. The rapper's latest album cover shows a dead white judge lying at the feet of celebratory African-American men, with fists of money and champagne held in triumph—in front of the White House. Reality imitates art. Could the president give another Cairo speech about such symbolism?

The half-time Super Bowl spectacle was Petronian to the core. Beyoncé, in apparent reaction to heightened racial tensions over the absence of a black Oscar nominee, performed an incoherent tribute to the Black Panthers, with a non-integrated retinue, damning the police and canonizing a fallen felon with a long history of violent criminal offenses. In the age where "cultural appropriation" is damned, a multimillionaire, decked out in dyed blond hair and bullet-stuffed bandoleers, is messaging to an apparently new segregated racial universe—perhaps in tune with the periodic racist outbursts of the multimillionaire Kanye West. If in the past, jazz, soul and Motown offered a positive corrective to crude, heavy metal white American music, today rappers vie to trump the raunchiness of Miley Cyrus, Lady Gaga, and Madonna. Certainly to watch the Super Bowl, Oscar, or Grammy festivities is to receive a pop sermon from mansion-residing multimillionaires about just how unfair are the race, class, and gender biases of the world in which they somehow made fortunes. In Weimar America, that Will Smith has a 25,000 square-foot mansion, but not a 2016 Oscar nomination, is proof of endemic racism and deprivation.

I wish all this could end well. But history's corrective to 1930s chaos was a different—and deadlier—sort of chaos. And so ours may well be too.

Victor Davis Hanson is a military historian, columnist, and former classics professor. This appeared on February 21 in pjmedia.



Scalia and the Jews

Yvette Alt Miller



US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died on February 13, 2016. Justice Scalia was a strong-willed and polarizing figure on the bench. Here are five little-known facts about Justice Scalia as they relate to the Jewish community.

“Chutzpah” in the Supreme Court

Justice Scalia—a Roman-Catholic judge from an Italian-American background—was the first judge to use the Yiddish word *chutzpah* in a decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. He employed the word—meaning audacity or nerve—in a 1998 case, *National Endowment for the Arts v. Finley*. Interestingly, in his concurrence with the majority opinion, Scalia felt moved to define some other words: “decency” and “respect”, using the American Heritage Dictionary. He apparently felt that “chutzpah” was sufficiently well known to need no such explaining in his written comments.

Jerusalem is the Capital of Israel

Scalia was one of three dissenters in the 2015 case of *Zivotofsky v. Kerry*, which heard arguments that the United States should describe the place of birth of Americans born in Jerusalem as “Israel”. Americans born in Jerusalem have had their place of birth described on their passports as “Jerusalem” since Israel’s founding. Menachem Zivotofsky, an American born in Jerusalem, had petitioned to have his passport reflect his place of birth as “Israel” instead. The case went to the Supreme Court, and many legal scholars thought the Court would recognize his plea, allowing “Jerusalem, Israel” to describe the place of birth on passports of Americans born in Jerusalem. Instead, the Supreme Court ruled that Jerusalem continue to be listed without the word Israel on US passports. Criticizing his fellow justices, Scalia wrote that their reasoning was a “leap worthy of the Mad Hatter”, and firmly stated his belief that Americans born in Jerusalem should have “Israel” listed as their place of birth on their passports.

Public Menorahs

In 1989, Scalia was part of a majority on the Court that ruled that a menorah had the right to stand on public property. The case—*County of Allegheny v. ACLU*—was brought by prominent U.S. attorney Nathan Lewin, an Orthodox Jew who has defended Jewish rights before the Court—and was an old Harvard Law classmate and sparring partner of Justice Scalia.

Unlikely Friendship—and Opera

Despite their radical differences on the bench, Justices Scalia (one of the Supreme Court’s most conservative members) and Ruth Bader Ginsburg (a liberal judge, and one of the Court’s three Jewish Justices) were fast friends. The two brought their families on vacations together, regularly went out together, and met up each New Year’s Eve. “Call us the odd couple,” Scalia recently said. “She likes opera, and she’s a very nice person. What’s not to like?” (Then added with his trademark wit: “Except her views on the law”.)

In 2015, a one-act opera, *Scalia/Ginsburg* by Derrik Wang debuted, chronicling the pair’s unlikely friendship. 82-year old Justice Ginsburg is the heroine of the piece, with Scalia, who was 79, presented as her comic foil. The two judges made a series of joint appearances together, promoting the opera, and pleading for unity and civility across the political divide in increasingly bitter partisan times.

Reading the Talmud

While Justice Scalia was known for his strong Catholic faith, he also found time to learn about other legal traditions—including Jewish law. Visiting the University at Buffalo Law School in 2002, he met with Adjunct Law Professor and Rabbi Noson Gurary and learned about what Judaism has to say on some pressing legal issues. Justice Scalia later wrote to Rabbi Gurary, expressing his appreciation of learning about Jewish law. “Knowledge of another legal system helped him to understand [the U.S. legal] system” better,” Gurary said about Scalia’s correspondence.

Later that year, Scalia was one of only three Supreme Court Justices (along with two Jewish Justices, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer) who attended and spoke at the inaugural meeting for the National Institute for Judaic Law. That organization—founded by Scalia’s old law school colleague Nathan Lewin and his daughter Alyza—provided regular classes and events to educate people about Jewish legal issues. The kick-off event was another first—a kosher dinner for 200, the first served in the Supreme Court.

The author has a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics, and is author of Angels at the Table: a Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat. This appeared on aish.com on February 16.

The Voice of Israel

***Abba Eban: A Biography* by Asaf Siniver**

Reviewed by David Isaac

There has never been a UN delegate to equal him. When it was time for Abba Eban to speak, delegates rushed to fill the hall at the General Assembly. It was said that housewives put down their vacuum cleaners when his distinctive voice emanated from radio or television. Henry Kissinger said of



him: “I have never encountered anyone who matched his command of the English language. Sentences poured forth in mellifluous constructions complicated enough to test the listener’s intelligence and simultaneously leave him transfixed by the speaker’s virtuosity.” *The Washington Post* zeroed in on an important aspect of his appeal. “It is probably Abba Eban’s supreme achievement that he always judges the grievance and rights of Israel against the ennobling perspectives of history and conscience. He is a people’s advocate—but his theme is universal justice.” A less elegant but pithy tribute came from

then U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles who was overheard saying to U.S. ambassador to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge: “It’s a pity we can’t have him instead of you as our delegate here.”

From 1950 to 1959, along with leading Israel’s UN delegation, Eban served as Israel’s ambassador to the United States. He went on to serve as Israel’s foreign minister from 1966 to 1974. Given his significance for Israeli politics, it’s surprising that this biography by Asaf Siniver, a professor at the University of Birmingham, is the first serious attempt to chronicle his extraordinary life. The only

other biography was published in 1972 by journalist Robert St. John. It, as Siniver rightly observes, “sits more comfortably in the company of unapologetic hagiographies” than scholarship.

The young Eban’s meteoric rise as what David Ben-Gurion called “the Voice of Israel” (he was only 32 when he was dispatched to the UN in 1947) would not have surprised those who knew him as a student at Queens’ College, Cambridge in the 1930s. Eban scored a triple first in classics and Oriental languages, which means little to American readers, but which Siniver makes clear is nothing short of incredible. He honed his debating skills in the Cambridge Union Society, known as “the nursery of statesmen.” Eban was the best of the best. Siniver quotes one Cambridge newspaper reporter: “I am getting tired of repeating all the time that Mr. Eban is the best speaker in the Union.”

Siniver notes that Eban could have settled down to the quiet life of a university don, but Zionism was in his bones. His father, who died when he was an infant, had made a habit of starting Zionist societies wherever he went. His mother worked as a secretary for the Zionist offices in London during World War I and helped translate the Balfour Declaration into French and Russian. After serving as an intelligence officer in World War II, against the advice of friends and family who warned him that he would never be heard from again, Eban chose to join the Jewish Agency. Ironically, his decision ensured that the world would do nothing but hear from him.

There can be no quarrel with Siniver’s choice of theme: The enormous gulf between the way Eban was seen abroad and in Israel. As Siniver writes, “Abba Eban was, and remains, a unique phenomenon. There is no modern comparison to the huge dissonance between the utter reverence that Eban enjoyed abroad and the travails he endured at home.” When Eban and his family left Washington and New York for Israel in 1959, expectations for his future were high. Siniver quotes Lawrence Spivak, journalist and host of Meet the Press: “I am sure, also, that I shall interview you one Sunday in that not too distant future as prime minister of Israel.”

It was not to be. The Israeli press inquired, “Would his demeanor become more Israeli-like and less foreign? Would he be willing and able to connect with the average Israeli, the sabra?” The answer, it would turn out, was not really. He didn’t dress like ordinary Israelis. His perfect but long-winded and high-flown Hebrew was the subject of jokes. “Abba Eban is the only politician in Israel who can finish a sentence—but when!?” It would take seven years before Eban would rise to the post he had so long desired, that of Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Even then, Siniver shows, he was never fully embraced by the leaders under whom he served. Prime Minister Levi Eshkol referred to Eban in Yiddish as *der klug nar* (the smart fool) and once noted that “Eban never gives the right solution, only the right speech.” Eshkol’s successor, Golda Meir, told a group of journalists she had a “fantastic foreign minister ... he lives in a fantasy land!” Distrust of Eban was heightened when, just prior to the Six Day War of 1967, Eban gave what the cabinet later deemed a misleading report of his meeting with President Lyndon Johnson, claiming that Johnson had committed to opening the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping. Such was her distrust that during the Yom Kippur War in 1973 Meir completely bypassed Eban. Siniver quotes Israeli journalist Matti Golan’s book on that war: “She made it a custom, enforced on her own staff as well as personnel in the Washington embassy, that Eban was the last person to be informed of anything important.”

When, after her resignation in 1974, Meir was told that Eban was considering running for leadership of the Labor Party (and thus prime minister) she responded acerbically “in which country?” Eban’s slide accelerated after Yitzhak Rabin, Meir’s successor, ousted him from the cabinet in 1974. During the 1980s, he seemed more an advocate for the Arabs than the Jews, even writing in *The New York Times* of the oppression of Palestinians. In 1987, he said he would never call Israel “a light unto the



nations” as he had at the UN in 1948. By 1988—when, in a final humiliation, he lost his place on the Labor list for the Knesset—he was considered a fringe radical, assailing Israel for superstition, intolerance and xenophobia. In 1989, in what the Israeli government considered an act of near-treason, he accepted an invitation to an Israel-Palestinian symposium in the Hague attended by senior PLO officials with whom Israeli law at that time forbade Israeli citizens to meet. A few years later the political winds changed in Eban’s direction, and Israel elected to negotiate with the PLO, a development that led to the Oslo Accords, which Eban, not surprisingly, enthusiastically supported.

Eban’s later years on the far left of Israeli politics are clearly his chief attraction for Siniver, and the book is marred by the repeated intrusion of the author’s political bias and feeble knowledge of Israel’s history. This is unfortunate because the biography has merit, and Eban’s story is of course worth telling. Siniver writes clearly and absorbingly of his triumphs and failures. On some matters he writes with surprising cogency. For example, his account of the labyrinthine Lavon Affair (an intelligence caper gone awry) which resulted in Ben-Gurion’s final fall from Labor Party leadership and the party’s split, is the best I have read for making intelligible who did what, and why, in its immensely confusing aftermath.

The book’s flaws are apparent early on. Siniver’s brief overview of Palestine under the Mandate is shallow at best. Incredibly, Siniver writes as if Britain only retreated from implementing the Jewish National Home in 1939, when the retreat started with the British military administration of Palestine at the end of World War I. Siniver also buys the line that partition—and a Jewish State—was on the cusp of realization if it had not been aborted by Lord Moyne’s assassination in 1944 by the terror group Lehi. But even the Anglophile Chaim Weizmann said at the time that the assassination was merely a convenient excuse for England to implement anti-Zionist policies it had no intention of abandoning. Siniver’s superficial and distorted account of the Mandate is not surprising, given that he relies on revisionist historian Avi Shlaim, who calls Israel’s establishment “a monumental injustice to the Palestinians” and sees even Hamas as Israel’s victim.

Siniver is steeped in moral equivalence. Both sides are at fault, only Israel more so. He has no understanding of the asymmetric nature of the conflict, with Israel seeking an end to the fighting, her Arab foes an end to Israel. So at every turn Siniver sees Israeli hubris, militarism, adventurism, political intransigence, and pathological infatuation with the use of force, to use a few of the epithets with which he liberally sprinkles his book.

And so, in the end, Siniver gets the story wrong. To him Eban’s legacy is as “the most brilliant articulator of the symbiosis between Zionism and peace.” As Siniver sees it, Eban failed to persuade his countrymen, but the onus of this failure lies on his compatriots, who failed to appreciate him, “as much as it weighs on Eban’s own shoulders.” What Eban actually illustrates is a man who rose early to his level of incompetence. A great advocate, he was neither strategist nor political thinker, talents required as foreign minister. Even the dovish Moshe Sharett, Eban’s ally, friend, and mentor, did not consider him suited for the job. In 1953 he rejected the suggestion that Eban replace him as foreign minister. “He is brilliant to the outside world, but lacks roots and weight at home.”

None of Eban’s flaws, however, can take away from his achievement. For decades, pro-Israel supporters have complained about the sad state of Israel’s public relations. Eban was a public relations powerhouse, an army of publicists rolled into one. It is doubtful we’ll ever see his like again.

This appeared in the Washington Free Beacon (<http://freebeacon.com/culture/the-voice-of-israel/>) on February 28. David Isaac is the creator of [zionism101](http://zionism101.com/), an online film history of Zionism.

Who's to Blame?

Ruth King

Oh my! Jewish liberals are having vapors at the mounting anti-Semitism on American campuses as the bully, bash, sanction and divest movements gain more and more adherents throughout the nation.

The Jewish culprits of whom I speak go beyond familiar radical Jewish groups like Jewish Voice for Peace and J Street. (Even some of them are now "shocked, shocked" that the anti-Israel stance they happily endorsed in company with their "progressive brethren" has morphed into anti-Semitism directed *against them*.)

I also refer to the liberal "establishment" Jews who now voice dismay and apprehension--but not a tad of contrition at their complicity in laying the groundwork for this bigotry that has developed to the point that they feel its bite.

When they supported a two state delusion did they not see where it was all going?

Did they not understand that the so called "peace process" was a means for destroying Israel's legitimacy? Did they not realize that only a safe and secure Israel was the guarantor of the safety and security of Jews throughout the world, including America, the most benign corner of the Diaspora?

How did they voice their frustration at the failure of all the so called "peace processing?"

By blaming Israel for "intransigence," for not turning the lights off and committing suicide.

They supported libel instead of facts and history and their ignorance and moral preening is astonishing.

Example: The "occupation" is illegal.

Fact: The so-called "occupation" is legitimate occupation of land deeded to the Jews but taken by Arab force in 1948, and illegally occupied by the Arabs until the area was liberated in 1967.

Example: Jerusalem should be shared with the Arab/Moslems.

Fact: Jerusalem was illegally occupied by Arab Jordan which routinely pilfered and destroyed ancient religious shrines, synagogues and cemeteries, and blocked access to churches, in total contravention of international law. Only when the city was liberated and annexed by Israel was it restored with scrupulous respect for the shrines of all religions.

Example: Something must be done about the "refugees."

Fact: Indeed, something was done about the "refugees" of 1948. Israel accepted over 600,000 Jews from Arab countries and made them citizens instead of *dhimmi*s. By contrast, the Arab nations abandoned the smaller number of Arab refugees, left them in squalor in camps created by UNRWA, where their number grew from about 500,000 to four million!!

Example: Israel must make territorial concession for "peace."

Fact: Are they kidding? In giving up the Sinai Peninsula in the Camp David agreement, Israel gave up 92% of all territories won in 1967. Another slice of territory was ceded in 2005 when Gaza was relinquished to the Arabs, who destroyed productive farms and lovely homes, and made that land a launching pad for deadly rockets aimed at Israel.

Example: The Palestinians only want a state and sovereignty of their own.

Fact: In sermons, broadcasts, and resolutions, Arab and Islamic leaders routinely use the designation "occupied Palestine" to press religious claims over the whole former British Mandate including all of Israel which they view as part of their caliphate.

Example: (This one is a hoot.) Israel responds "disproportionately" to Arab aggression.

Fact: It sure has, by releasing a "disproportionate" number of terrorists in exchange for nothing and by indulging a "disproportionate" number of seditious Arabs, including those in the Knesset and in mosques who use their platform to praise terrorists.

Israel's enemies and anti-Semites and useful Jewish idiots repeat the libels that morphed from hand wringing "dissidence" on Israel to naked anti-Semitism.

It has happened before. How many Jewish liberals were participants in the anti-war agenda in the seventies? How many supported the Black Panthers? As David Horowitz, the former radical and editor of *Ramparts* magazine—in its day the bible of the anti-American agenda—disclosed, the movement became anti-Israel and subsequently anti-Semitic.

In America it's still "cool" to be Jewish. There is all that pride in achievement and excellence in the arts, science, and national culture. So Jews don't seek conversion as a remedy.

They might learn a lesson from European Jews at the turn of the last century.

In Arthur Schnitzler's 1908 novel *Road to the Open* a young Jewish woman who has joined the Social Democrats is berated by a young Jewish man who resists assimilation.

"Exactly the same thing will happen to you as happened to the Jewish Liberals and German Nationalists....Who created the Liberal movement in Austria?....the Jews. By whom have the Jews been betrayed and deserted? By the liberals. Who created the National-German movement in Austria?...the Jews. By whom were the Jews left in the lurch?....What--left in the lurch!...Spat upon like dogs!....By the National-Germans, and precisely the same thing will happen in the case of Socialism and Communism. As soon as you've drawn the chestnuts out of the fire they'll start driving you away from the table. It always has been so and always will be so."

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