

Israel Today – January 8-10, 2016
Rabbi Howard L. Apothaker, Ph.D.

Encouraging Domestic/Diplomatic News

"Common Language" w/ Some Arab States (*JPost*)

A senior IDF officer told a Saudi news outlet *Elaph*: Israel had secret relations and common interests w/ a number of Arab states besides Egypt and Jordan. The officer explained: "[With] moderate countries such as Egypt, Jordan and the Persian Gulf states, Israel has a common language," to oppose (1) Iran, Syria, Hizbullah, Yemeni Houthis and other Iranian-supporting groups - Hamas and Islamic Jihad; (2) the Islamic Brotherhood; (3) *ji-hadi* groups: ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra. "We in Israel ... need to take advantage of the opportunity and work together w/ the moderate states to renew quiet in the region." Also in an *Elaph* online report, Israel FM DG Gold spoke of the common interests between Israel and the Arab states, including a nuclear armed Iran and ISIS. Israel's UN Amb. Danon: "Quietly you see that there is a lot of appreciation ... for Israel."

Time to Admit Jews - Here to Stay - Bassam Tawil

When it became clear the Israelis would not waive their demand for the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state or their objection to the right of return, the majority of Pals expressed support an armed campaign against Israel and want to see it destroyed. The Pal. leadership has not yet internalized that nothing will make the Israelis leave. We keep making the awful mistake of educating our children to hate the Jews and Israelis and to want to destroy the State of Israel, brainwash them w/ nonsense that, w/ the help of Allah, the State of Israel will eventually cease to exist. Murdering Israelis is not going to change anything. The time has come to try creating a *peaceful* and demilitarized Pal. state, which the Israelis have indicated for decades they would be all too happy to help us achieve.

Israeli Disaster Relief "Heroes" (*Jsh Chron.-UK*)

Residents in the flood-affected areas of Leeds (UK) have been helped by from IsraAID, an Israeli disaster relief charity. Volunteers are repairing homes and distributing blankets and food in the worst hit areas. "When one realized we had actually travelled from Israel ... they grin from ear to ear and then the reaction was, 'You truly came to help us from Israel?' Many have approached them to shake hands and express their gratitude.

Jordanian Security / Israeli Policy - Y. Amidror

Pilots from the Royal Jordanian AF recently conducted a "working visit" to Israel. Broad-based cooperative ventures in the strategic, security, diplomatic, economic and energy fields buttress the bond. Jordan's stability and prosperity has been a central element of Israeli nat'l security policy for generations. Israeli NGOs and youth

movements play a covert role in providing elementary support for its 1m+ Syrian refugees.

Bedouin Arabs/Christians In IDF (*Daily Mail-UK*)

Though not obligated, ~1,700 Bedouin serve in the IDF. " In 3/15, 102 Christian Arabs were inducted.

Palestinians

New "Intifada" Limited Appeal (*Times of Is.*)

The Pal. public is not thrilled by the current "intifada." The large refugee camps that drove the 1st/2nd intifadas are refusing to join. Recently PA leaders are not inciting as much. In their eyes, the events of the past 3 months belong to the "Facebook children." "Young people see no political horizon and suffer from economic crisis and unemployment," said a VP of Birzeit U. near Ramallah. "The leaders are incapable of satisfying their political and economic demands." PA security has been instructed to stop protestors from flocking to areas of friction.

Working Israel, Not Against It

Born in Jordanian J-lem, Bassem Eid founded the Pal. Human Rights Monitoring Group: "If you would come to any ordinary Pal., and ask him the 3 priorities he is seeking, he would say a job, to secure the education system and health system for my children. Nobody talks about settlements, war - nor even mentions the foundation of the Pal. state." 92,000+ Pals cross the border daily; monthly salaries in Israel are 5x higher than the average in the PA. "I want to see a BDS [proponent] go to a refugee camp and call to boycott Israel. Trust me, they'll get thrown [out]." Solving current issues means working w/ Israel, not against it.

How Not to Help Pal. Children - Andrew Percy

Pal. dolls w/ a rock in hand inspire Pal. children to throw rocks at Israelis, a form of psychological abuse. The PA nurtures an environment where a child learns that attacking Israelis is noble. Youths grow up on streets bearing the names of Pal. killers; attend soccer stadia named after murderers. ~25 schools are named for terrorists who murdered Israeli civilians. Such children are subjected to a poisonous stream of incitement and hate ... an ideology teaching that if they die trying to kill innocent Israelis they'll be heroes, lionized w/ a school in their name. *The writer is a UK MP. MEMRI:* Several Pal. intellectuals and journalists accuse the leadership of Pal. orgs of "trading in the blood of children" and sending them to die by encouraging them to carry out such attacks and praising and glorifying those who do.

Iran

Democracy in the Middle East? (*Politico*)

"What's missing in the Administration is the clear moral argument that this is an evil regime" in Iran, says Elliott Abrams, a Bush WH aide. "We ought to be clearer that of course we want regime change." Former CIA Dir. David Petraeus: "We must combat non-state actors ... that have genocidal and totalitarian ambitions, while simultaneously countering nation-states that have hegemonic ambitions and that seek to overturn key tenets of the existing int'l order.... It would be a significant mistake to assume that the Iranian nuclear program will be dormant under the JCPOA.... Israel has proven itself to be an exceptionally capable, resourceful and valuable ally in a very imp't and treacherous region." Josh Rogin/ Eli Lake: Treasury balked on sanctioning 11 entities and individuals it deemed responsible for helping the Iranian gov't develop its ballistic missile program. Kerry wrote to FM Zarif to assure him that the Administration could waive new restrictions that would require visas for anyone who had visited Iran to enter the US. Officials tell us Iran has extraordinary leverage at this moment, as the world waits for it to implement all of its obligations in the nuclear deal. Aaron David Miller: We are acquiescing to a certain degree to ensure we maintain a functional relationship with the Iranians."

Sanction Iran over Missile Tests (*Reuters*)

Iran's boasts are a challenge for the Administration as the US and EU plan to end nearly all int'l sanctions vs. Tehran under the nuclear deal reached in July. *Jsh Journal of LA*: Lawmakers Wed. called on the Administration to impose punitive sanctions in response to Iran's recent violations of Security Council resolutions by conducting ballistic missile tests. The nuclear agreement has "significantly increased" the threat to Israel posed by the Iran per the head of the Mossad.

Iran Sacks Another Embassy - Elliott Abrams

Iran sacked the Saudi Arabian embassy. In 2011, the target was the British Embassy and the US in 1979. Iran refuses to live by the rules of civilized diplomatic practice.

Iranian-Saudi Relations - Lt.-Col. M. Segall

The recent spike in Saudi oil production ensures that Iran will return to a depressed global oil market. Tehran will get only about half of the oil price to which it pegged its budget last year. Iran and Saudi Arabia are waging a cold war through their proxies along the length and breadth of the ME: Yemen, Syria, Bahrain and Iraq. More than they fear enriched uranium, Saudis fear Shiism enriched to high levels of subversion in the ME. Dennis Ross: The Saudis see the Iranians and their Shiite militia proxies as their preeminent threat. They are far

more ready to challenge them, particularly in the aftermath of America's nuclear deal with Iran. Will the Iranians provide additional material support to their proxies once they receive sanctions relief? Nearly all of America's friends in the region, including both Arabs and Israelis, are convinced they will and are watching to see how the US responds.

New Law on Visa Entries to US (*WSJ*)

The new budget law revises the Visa Waiver Program. Maj. Leader McCarthy: Congress "expressly refused" carve-outs for Iranian businessman during the debate over the rules. "The simplest way to eliminate this restriction is for Iran to end its support of terrorism."

Egypt/Turkey

Egypt to Israel: Keep Turkey from Gaza (*Ha'aretz*)

In light of progress in Israel's reconciliation w/ Turkey, Israeli officials say that Egypt has expressed its opposition to Israeli concessions to Turkey w/ regard to Gaza. Netanyahu worries that any concession to Turkey on Gaza will damage Israel's strategic ties w/ Egypt.

Turkey Building an Aircraft Carrier (*Daily Beast*)

Turkey is building an aircraft carrier w/ "trans-continental" capabilities, set to enter service in 2021, for take fighter aircraft, attack helicopters, tanks, troops, and landing vessels to areas.

Lebanon Border Bomb (*Ha'aretz*)

An explosive device detonated near 2 IDF armored bulldozers Monday in the Har Dov area along the Lebanese border

BDS

Compensating Isr. U. for Excluding Students (*JTA*)

Spain has paid Ariel U. in the W. Bank \$107K in compensation for damages caused by its exclusion from an int'l competition among solar-energy innovators. The nation's constitution that forbids discrimination based on nationality or place of origin. ACOM, a pro-Israel organization based in Madrid, called the decision a "legal victory against BDS."

Other News

J-em's Waldorf Astoria 7th Best in World (*JPost*)

J-em's Waldorf Astoria was ranked the 7th best hotel in the world in the Conde Nast Travelers 2015 Readers' Choice Survey. It opened 2014, formerly served as the Palace Hotel during the British Mandate and later as a gov't ministry.

Israel's Economy: Steady as She Goes (*Wharton*)

Israel's GDP in 2015 grew by 2.3%, outperforming Europe and the US.

3,400-Year-Old Fortress Found in Nahariya

The remains of a Canaanite fortress dating back 3.5 millennia were uncovered during an archaeological dig in Nahariya. Artifacts: human and animal statuettes, bronze weapons and imported pottery. (*Times of Israel*)

Arab-Israeli Offers Reward (*Ynet*)

The head of the merchants' committee in the Old City offered a \$10K reward for info leading to the capture of the suspect in a Tel Aviv deadly shooting attack. "Revenue is down 70%.... We're cousins. We need to forget this nonsense about Arabs and Jews. We are all human beings, no matter your religion is, we are one people. We give you a hand, you help us and we help you."

Neck Armor as Answer to Stabbing (*Times of Is.*)

The IDF will soon distribute a neck guard to better protect soldiers against knife attacks.

Israel Approves New Druze Town (*Ynet*)

Israel approved the establishment a new Druze town near Tiberias in the Lower Galilee, the first new Druze community in the territory of what is now Israel in 130 years. There are currently 14 Druze towns in the Galilee and four in the Golan.

UN Rights Monitor Resigns (*NYT*)

The UN rapporteur for human rights in the Pal. territories resigned, citing Israel's refusal to grant him access to the W. Bank and Gaza. Israel's FM cited "a lack of balance characterizes not only the mandate of the rapporteur but the conduct of the Human Rights Council as a whole... Israel acts accordingly."

Tragic Failure of Arab World (*Ha'aretz*)

The 21st century is ever characterized by Arab states splitting at the seams, crumbling, while *ihadists* gain footholds throughout Arab lands. Arabs needed to to create sovereign states with functioning nat'l institutions w/ cooperative citizens; to produce technology, to secure a competitive position in the world economy; to handle Islam in a way that instills values to unite society in common identity and solidarity, while neutralizing violent elements; to get rid of the neocolonialist influence of superpowers, and act independently in the int'l arena. Toppling an authoritarian regime leads not to democracy, but prompts the whole system to collapse into chaos. Aaron D. Miller: Whatever responsibility US action or inaction bears for the state of the ME, it pales next to that of a region that lacks leadership, representative institutions, moderate ideologies, a commitment to functional governance, and a willingness to face its problems

Chaos/Defensible Borders (*J-lem Ctr Pub. Affairs*)

The ME is imploding in violence whose impact has reached Israel. Syrian Islamists linked to ISIS and al-

Qaeda are approaching Israel's border in the Golan and threaten Jordan as well. Iran is sending thousands of rockets w/ increasingly accurate guidance systems to Hizbullah in Lebanon to attack Israeli cities. ISIS in Sinai threatens both Israel and Egypt.

A Reason for Israelis to Celebrate (*Is. Hayom*)

Israel was ranked 18th out of 188 countries and territories on the UN 2015 Human Dev't Index. From 1980 to 2014, its life expectancy at birth increased by 8.3 years (82.4 years); mean years of schooling increased from 9.8 to 12.5 years; expected years of schooling increased from 12.6 to 16 years. Israel's GNI per capita increased by ~111.6% from 1980 (to \$30,676). In the OECD. Israel has the highest labor force participation rate (63.4%) and a lower total unemployment rate. Israel compares well to other First World democracies.

Israel Technology

Auto Driving - Israel's MobilEye (*Int'l Bus. Times*)

The Israeli MobilEye offers automated driving solutions for cars: parking, lane departure warnings, crash avoidance. Its "Roadbook" is a detailed cloud-based map constantly updated in real time. It has enlisted GM and Volkswagen to its Road Experience mapping system. The US Dep't of Trans. awarded it its Smart City Challenge: Mobileye that retrofits cameras on existing buses, helping drivers "avoid and mitigate imminent collisions and protect road users including cyclists, pedestrians, and motorcyclists." Alerts warn drivers when they're about to collide; the alerts are aggregated to build a map to see where the most dangerous hotspots are to help city planners make better decisions.

Israel's Tech Innovation Summit in China (*Xinhua*)

Hundreds packed the conference hall at the first China-Israel Tech Innovation and Investment Summit on Jan. 5-6 in Beijing. ~40% of all venture capital flowing into Israel came from China in 2015. W/ growing academic cooperation, collaborative programs, and shared vision from both governments, "the golden age for Israel-China innovation cooperation has come," per China's Vice Minister of Sci.and Technology.

Israel: Leader in "Smart" Weapons (*Is. Defense*)

Israel Mil. Ind. manufactures of state-of-the-art weapon systems, making "it possible to hit the target w/ the first shot, thereby denying the enemy the ability to reorganize," says an IMI VP. "IMI is an excellence center in the field of warheads for different applications: against bunkers, armored vehicles and personnel target.... Including a bomb w/ 98% reliability.... You can use it to knock down a floor in a building, and the next-door building will not be affected in any way."