

ISRAEL NEWS

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

joining the chorus of the fake peace camp. This peace owes to Netanyahu staying true to the core truths at the root of the anti-Oslo protests: You cannot make peace with people who justify your murder and seek your destruction. You can only make peace with those who accept you

Commentary...

A Tale of Two White House Signing Ceremonies

By Caroline Glick

Attending the White House signing ceremony on Tuesday of the Abraham Accords—which normalize relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain—was both moving and jarring. Standing at the South Lawn, just meters from the Rose Garden where the Oslo Accords were signed 27 years ago on Sept. 13, 1993, the comparison between the two agreements was inescapable.

That ceremony was an act of political theater unsurpassed in the history of Israel. Yasser Arafat, chairman of the PLO and architect of modern terrorism, grinned ear to ear as he received the royal treatment on the White House Lawn.

Seeking peace, Israel's then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin promised the PLO land, money and weaponry, which Arafat used to build a terror state on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Arafat in turn promised to end terrorism, accept Israel's right to exist and resolve all outstanding issues through peaceful negotiations. Arafat was lying.

I wanted to believe in the fake peace of 1993. But the grim facts made it all impossible. For the past 27 years, first as a member of Israel's negotiating team during my service in the Israel Defense Forces and then as a writer and a lecturer, like thousands of other Israelis and friends of Israel in the United States and around the world, I devoted myself to exposing the lies and warning about the danger of empowering those who seek Israel's destruction. I wrote hundreds of articles, briefed hundreds of politicians and community leaders in the United States and worldwide. I wrote a book.

And as I sat in the garden at the White House today, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. President Donald Trump, UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Bahrain Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al Zayani standing in the portico before me, the names of the victims of that previous peace agreement rushed through my head. David Biri, Nachson Waxman, Kochava Biton, Ohad Bachrach, Ori Shachor, the Lapid, the Ungars, the Fogels, the Schijveschuurders, Madhat Yusuf, Shalhevet Pas and on and on.

I have been demonized as an "extremist," a "far right-winger," an "enemy of peace" and a "fascist" by members of the so-called "peace camp." Think tanks and professionals with ties to the European Union—the co-sponsor of the fake peace process—were afraid to invite me to speak, cite my articles or to review my book.

Now, 27 years and two days later, the Palestinians were outside the White House with Israeli "peace activists" protesting the peace ceremony at the White House. The European Union is boycotting the peace ceremony. And sitting in the audience with me are politicians and leaders like Zionist Organization of American President Mort Klein; Sen. Ted Cruz; radio host Mark Levin and former presidential candidate and evangelical leader Gary Bauer, whom I met with over the past decades to discuss the dangers of fake peace to Israel, and who like me devoted themselves to ending the lie that peace is possible with people who justify the murder of innocent Israelis as a form of "legitimate resistance," only to be reviled by the "peace camp" for speaking the truth.

Many of the guests made the effort to come to the White House even in the midst of the global pandemic because it is clear that this peace is something else. As people like Mossad director Yossi Cohen have said, it only seems like this event happened suddenly. It didn't. It is the outgrowth of years of work by dedicated officials from all sides who quietly and carefully cultivated ties based not on lies but on real common interests and common concerns. The UAE, Bahrain and Israel have come together because of the courageous leadership of President Trump and his advisers who were willing to acknowledge the reality on the ground and listen to the voices of those who opposed what happened at the White House 27 years ago. Trump and his team were willing to break ranks with generations of American policymakers who insisted that terrorists are the true peacemakers, that the road to peace is appeasement and that those who look for mutual respect, human decency and shared interests as the basis of peace are right-wing warmongers.

This peace is not a function of Netanyahu changing his tune, as his Likud predecessors Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert and others did, and

as you are for what you are.

This peace is real peace. It is a peace to celebrate and cultivate. It is a peace based on respecting, and missing and loving and never forgetting the victims of the political theater that happened here 27 years ago. Where this peace will lead is unclear. The sky's the limit. But unless something goes terribly wrong, it will not lead to more Jewish victims of fake peace. (JNS Sep 16)

When Rabbis should not Keep Quiet By Melanie Phillips

The former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, Jonathan Sacks, has come in for some stick over remarks he recently made about religion and politics.

In an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, he was asked what he thought about the observation by Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky, the head of the Agudath Israel Council of Torah Sages, that Jews should vote to re-elect President Donald Trump out of gratitude for the things he has done for the Jewish people.

Rabbi Lord Sacks, who was made an independent member of the House of Lords in 2009, delivered an impassioned reply. "The division between politics and religion is absolutely fundamental," he said. "It's one of the greatest things Judaism ever taught the world: Don't mix religion and politics. You mix religion and politics, you get terrible politics and even worse religion. It's an absolute and total outrage."

As he said, he himself has written numerous books about political ideas. He has achieved justified global renown for his thinking about social, cultural and political trends. But as he also said, he has never taken a party political stand, never used his pulpit for a political address and never said how he votes.

He added: "And I'm afraid I did not allow my rabbis to use the pulpit for political purposes either. And I can see that that is not the case in America. And I'm afraid American Jewry is making a

big, big, big mistake. This is not a small thing. It's a very, very big thing."

When he was the chief rabbi of the UK, Sacks drew some criticism from the Jewish community that he was politically timid. He always insisted, however, that rabbis had a duty to keep out of contentious political debate.

As he said in his recent interview, politics was inherently divisive while religion should be about bringing people together. In Israel, the mix of politics and religion was "a catastrophe and may one day threaten the very survival of the state." As soon as religion became political, it, too, inevitably became divisive.

The truth of that last remark was promptly demonstrated in the reaction to his comments. Jews who supported Trump said Sacks should have spoken in support of him. Jews who were against Trump said Sacks should have spoken against him. Ironically, therefore, Sacks's denunciation of political divisiveness produced division.

Trump is a deeply divisive figure, not least among Jews. Obviously, therefore, either saying anything or refusing to say anything about him will alienate one section of the community or the other.

There's a difference, however, between these two camps. One is empirical, the other ideological.

Jewish pro-Trumpers — many of whom swallow their distaste at various aspects of his character and performance — are empirical. They support him on account of his specific policies over such matters as Iran, or Israel and the Palestinians.

Left-wing anti-Trumpers, on the other hand, are ideological. They frame everything Trump does as bad because his uncompromising repudiation of their world-view means that he is existentially bad and can do nothing that's good. So to them, it's a total outrage that any Jew could ever support him.

That's why Ben Gould wrote in *The Forward*: "My fellow Jews: getting rid of Trump is a religious imperative."

This eschatological view of the president is usually linked to the belief on the left that no Jew should support Israel's policies on the Palestinians, or any action by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, or anything that contradicts left-wing cultural orthodoxies.

That's why Peter Beinart wrote, also in *The Forward*, that his

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previous hero-worship of Sacks had now taken a hit. Despite Sacks's unrivalled intellectual accomplishments as "the most acclaimed rabbi in the United States," wrote Beinart, he had "not challenged a single action of either Benjamin Netanyahu or Donald Trump's."

There then followed a long litany of the alleged evil deeds of both the Trump and the Israeli governments that Sacks had unaccountably failed to criticise (migrants, settlements) along with evil deeds that he had unaccountably supported (war in Iraq, moving the US embassy to Jerusalem).

For such Jews, moral responsibility is strictly a one-way street. They think that rabbis certainly should express political views, but only those that accord with left-wing dogma. And they think that rabbis should express one political view in particular: that Jews should not vote for Trump.

Many American rabbis follow this doctrine. Last year, the leaders of all 12 institutions associated with the Union of Reform Judaism accused Trump of spreading hate, levelling the unsubstantiated and defamatory charge that he was associated with white supremacy and racism.

Many progressive rabbis go much further than merely demonising Trump himself. They support the enemies of the Jewish people — whether these are "The Squad" of venomously anti-Israel congresswomen, or the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish activists of Black Lives Matter, or the Democratic Party which is increasingly embracing these and other enemies of the Jewish people.

Such rabbis have bought into the whole package of identity politics, victim culture and intersectionality. These doctrines are all based on a repudiation of the core Jewish ethical principles of moral responsibility, resisting abuses of power and upholding truth against lies.

Yet such Jews tell themselves that these doctrines conform to Jewish ethical principles. In other words, these rabbis aren't just Jews expressing political views. They have replaced Judaism by politics.

While rabbis should indeed avoid divisive political partisanship, they surely have a political duty to stand up for their own community if it is under threat. That's why Rabbi Sacks's successor as chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, denounced the Labour Party's previous leader, Jeremy Corbyn, for promoting antisemitism.

America's wartime rabbinic leader, Stephen Wise, was a baleful example of a rabbi who failed to fulfil this duty.

As Rafael Medoff observes in his devastating book, *The Jews Should Keep Quiet*, Wise allowed himself to be so compromised by his friendship with President Franklin D. Roosevelt that, in the early 1940s, he suppressed any disclosure of Roosevelt's apparent indifference to the fate of the Jews in Nazi Europe and his refusal to allow desperate Jewish refugees into America.

Instead, Wise sanitised Roosevelt's policy, allowed no public criticism of the president and tried to undermine those who were desperately trying to sound the alarm about the Holocaust.

In order to stifle Jewish criticism of Roosevelt's appeasement of Nazi Germany and his refusal to rescue large numbers of European Jews, the president exploited and manipulated Wise "to help ensure that the Jews would keep quiet."

Rabbis surely have a duty to speak up against any danger that threatens either the Jewish community or the fundamental precepts of civilised life. What's crucial, however, is that they make a correct judgment-call on such matters — one that accurately reflects Jewish ethical principles of truth and justice.

While it may well be unwise for rabbis to speak in favour of Trump, it's therefore wrong for them not to speak out against the threat posed by the Democrats' lurch into far-left policies that threaten both Jews and the core values of the west.

The tragedy is that so many American rabbis and other Jews, making the wrong judgment-call that the greatest danger comes not from the enemies of the Jewish people and the west but from their true defenders, not only keep quiet but actually support the enemies of civilisation. (JNS Sep 11)

Hell Hath No Fury Like Peaceniks Upstaged By Ruthie Blum

Israeli protesters gathered on Sunday night along the highway to Ben-Gurion International Airport, where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was headed to board a flight to the United States.

With their usual chants of "crime minister" and other trite anti-Bibi mantras, these self-anointed guardians of freedom and democracy—members of the so-called "peace camp"—were livid that the premier was on his way to Washington, D.C.

That the purpose of his trip was to sign the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords—a peace treaty with the United Arab Emirates and declaration of peace with Bahrain—didn't matter to them. On the contrary, it became another excuse for their outrage.

A mere two or so hours earlier, Netanyahu had announced that the steep and steady rise in coronavirus morbidity made a three-week countrywide lockdown necessary. As if this weren't sufficient cause

for exasperation, even among his supporters, his detractors took the opportunity to rail against him for going off to a "cocktail party" at the White House, leaving Israelis ill in every sense of the word, thanks to his government's failed COVID-19 policies.

Yes, they insist, he is responsible simultaneously for the increasing mortality rate and disintegrating workforce—for opening up the economy too soon on the one hand and for not "having a proper plan" to prevent the spread of the virus on the other.

Their anger at Netanyahu is nothing new. For the past three months, they have been spending their Saturday nights demonstrating near his official residence on Balfour Street in Jerusalem, demanding that he resign or—better yet—go to jail. Though it's hard to keep track of their many and disparate gripes, it's very easy to spot their hypocrisy.

In the first place, they behave as if their "democratic right" to demonstrate makes them immune to the coronavirus. While accusing Netanyahu of "caving" to his ultra-Orthodox coalition partners—one of whom, Housing Minister Yaakov Litzman, just resigned over restrictions on synagogue gatherings—they themselves practice zero social distancing during regular mass protests.

Meanwhile, their masks are costume-like contraptions shaped like pigs' snouts, genitalia and other animal or human body parts.

Secondly, rather than being happy that Netanyahu is forging close ties with Muslim states—not only the UAE and Bahrain, but also Kosovo, which is on the verge of recognizing Israel and opening an embassy in Jerusalem—they are blaming him, as usual, for the Palestinians' unwillingness to get with the peace program.

Third and equally ridiculous is their assertion that Netanyahu is using his skill at international relations, which they refer to snidely as "PR," to distract the public from his looming trial on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

This claim is not only ludicrous due to the nature of the indictments, two of which involve his ostensible attempts to receive positive coverage from hostile media outlets, while a third surrounds his receiving pink champagne and cigars from billionaire friends abroad.

Far more important is new information, revealed last week by Israeli Channel 12's Amit Segal, which exposes a serious conflict of interest exhibited by one of Netanyahu's investigators.

It is no wonder, then, that most Israelis do not side with the "peaceful," "peace-loving" protesters. Indeed, polls show that Netanyahu's Likud is still the largest single party in the Knesset, and any support it might lose is being picked up by Yamina, farther to the right.

In other words, while the "anybody but Bibi" crowd is great at huddling together en masse and shouting about the government's inability to protect them from microbes and bankruptcy, they do not constitute a majority.

Nor are most Israelis indifferent to the major shift in the Middle East that is taking place before their eyes, and would not belittle it in order to debase Netanyahu by saying that it's a ploy of "distraction."

This brings us to similar sour grapes on the part of "progressive" Americans, who cheered the nuclear deal with Iran—orchestrated by former U.S. President Barack Obama and ripped up by his successor—yet turn their noses up at the actual peace agreements brokered by Donald Trump.

Take House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), for example. When asked on Friday by CNN's Wolf Blitzer how much "credit" she gives Trump for the agreements, she stammered that she hoped they'd be "beneficial for the region," but promptly pooh-poohed them by raising the issue of the Palestinians.

"We've been waiting for a very long time for the president's proposal for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement that honored the two-state solution," she said. "It was coming in two weeks; it was coming in two months; it was coming in six months—it still hasn't come in any way that has brought peace."

She concluded sarcastically, "So, good for him for having a distraction on a day when the numbers of people who are affected and the numbers of people who are dying from this virus only increases [sic]."

Like her left-wing counterparts in the Jewish state, Pelosi and her crew are in a funk over the historic events unfolding at this very moment, courtesy of Netanyahu's long-term plan and the Trump administration's crucial backing.

She would be most welcome at the anti-Netanyahu demonstrations organized by the ex-pat Israeli movement "UnXeptable" to put a damper on Tuesday's treaty-signing ceremony. After all, the group is none too fond of Trump either.

Whether they keep a safe distance from one another at the rally remains to be seen. One thing is clear, however: Hell hath no fury like peaceniks upstaged by their nemeses. (JNS Sep 15)

Our Guest Speaker Today, Class, is a Jew-Hating Terrorist

By Jeff Jacoby

In an online program next week, the College of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University will host "A Conversation With Leila Khaled," an event it is promoting as a "historic" encounter with a prominent "Palestinian feminist, militant, and leader." One of the program's two moderators, Professor Rabab Abdulhadi of the college's Race and Resistance Studies Department, extols Khaled for her "steadfastness" and "resilience," and hails her "stubborn commitment to an indivisible sense of justice." In an enthusiastic Facebook post, the professor describes Khaled as "a huge inspiration" and a "feminist icon," and declares that she "wanted to grow up to become another Leila Khaled."

Leila Khaled is a terrorist.

For decades, Khaled has been a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or PFLP, which is designated as a terror organization by the United States, Canada, and the European Union. In August 1969, she was one of the hijackers of TWA Flight 840, which was en route from Rome to Tel Aviv before being diverted at gunpoint to Damascus. A year later, Khaled took part in an attempted hijacking of El Al Flight 219 from Amsterdam to New York City. A horrific mass murder was averted when the grenade Khaled carried aboard the plane failed to detonate and the hijackers were overpowered by Israeli sky marshals. The plane landed in London, where Khaled was arrested by British authorities. She was later released in an exchange for hostages seized in another PFLP hijacking.

She has spent the years since then avidly promoting "armed struggle," spreading anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, and encouraging BDS, the campaign to attack Israel through boycotts, disinvestment, and sanctions.

Antisemitism in modern times frequently takes the form of incendiary anti-Zionism, with Israel scurrilously likened to Nazi Germany and accused of grotesque crimes against humanity. Khaled regularly traffics in such poisonous libels. "You can't compare the actions of the Nazis to the actions of the Zionists in Gaza," she told a Belgian audience in 2017. "The Nazis were judged in Nuremberg but not a single one of the Zionists has yet been brought to justice."

Convicted hijacker, would-be killer, hater of Jews: This is the "feminist icon" and "huge inspiration" for whom San Francisco State is providing a Zoom platform next week. Its advertisement for the event features an illustration based on a famous photograph of Khaled as a 21-year-old, smiling broadly as she brandishes an AK-47.

As a matter of academic freedom and the First Amendment, the university has every right to glorify a terrorist. The school's president, Lynn Mahoney, characterizes the program as an example of how college provides opportunities "to hear divergent ideas, viewpoints, and accounts of life experiences." As a marketplace of ideas, she told a critic, "SF State supports the rights of all individuals to express their viewpoints."

But can anyone imagine San Francisco State — or any university — inviting Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston Marathon terrorist, to be the featured speaker at a campus program? Would Mahoney like to see her university host a "conversation" with Dylann Roof, the white supremacist terrorist who gunned down nine black churchgoers in a South Carolina church? Or with Terry Nichols, an accomplice in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing? Or Khalid Sheikh Mohammed? Or Derek Chauvin?

Terrorists from Leila Khaled's organization, the Popular Front for the Liberation, attacked a Jerusalem synagogue in November 2014, murdering worshippers with knives, a meat cleaver, and a pistol.

"The right of all individuals to express their viewpoints" is an estimable principle, but it does not impose an obligation on any institution to promote every opinion. Khaled's appearance at San Francisco State doesn't illustrate a courageous commitment by the school to air the unpopular views of terrorists and haters. It illustrates the admiration to be found on the hard left for one specific kind of terrorist and hater: the kind who targets Jews and demonizes Israel. Khaled is being celebrated for her violent career, not reluctantly tolerated out of deference to First Amendment principles.

Far from protecting the right of all to be heard, San Francisco State has repeatedly failed to protect free speech rights. For example, when the mayor of Jerusalem was invited by a campus group to deliver a speech, university officials allowed screaming protesters to mob the room and prevent him from speaking. Conversely, when the College Republicans chapter organized an anti-terrorism rally at which students stepped on makeshift Hezbollah and Hamas flags, the university launched disciplinary proceedings, which ended only when a federal district judge ruled that the school's speech code was unconstitutional.

The alarming resurgence of anti-Jewish bigotry in the United States is reflected in the growing number of anti-Semitic acts on college campuses. That trend is raising red flags now, but it showed up early at San Francisco State. In an essay that went viral in 2002, faculty member Laurie Zoloth wrote of how the university was

evolving into "a venue for hate speech and antisemitism" and of "how isolating, how terrifying" it was becoming "to live as a Jew on this campus." Now, 18 years later, the university prepares to feature a notorious terrorist who doesn't want Jews to live in the Middle East, either. Anyone not consumed by anti-Jewish bigotry should be appalled, but Leila Khaled ought to feel right at home. (Boston Globe Sep 16)

Why Jews would Vote for Trump: Answering Abe Foxman

By Norman Coleman

This Republican president has a strong pro-Jewish and pro-Israel record. The Democratic Party, meanwhile, has mainstreamed anti-Semitism

The "more in sadness than in anger" trope is on full display in a recent Times of Israel op-ed by Abe Foxman about Jewish voters and President Trump. Foxman, who served as head of the Anti-Defamation League for decades and oversaw its shift from mainstream community defense organization to a shill for the left, offers a harsh critique of President Donald Trump's record of unparalleled support for Israel and fails to make mention of the virulent anti-Semitism that now flows from the lips of the ascendant "progressive leadership" of the Democrat party; including Ilhan Omar, Rashid Tlaib and AOC. Let me set the record straight.

President Trump's record is a story of perseverance and success in the face of overwhelming opposition — and his every success has benefited the United States and the Jewish community.

By removing onerous regulations at home and negotiating fair trade agreements abroad, President Trump pushed open the door to the greatest period of economic growth we've seen in this country in decades. Unemployment fell to historically low levels, in particular for minorities, improving the lives of millions of American families. Likewise, the Trump administration has opened educational opportunities for underserved students, safeguarding the rights of parents and students to choose the education that is best for them, including Jewish students.

Foxman pays lip service to President Trump's pro-Israel actions, such as moving the US embassy to Jerusalem. But there is much more to praise in the President's Middle East policy. First is the President's decision to take the US out of the disastrous Obama-Biden Iran nuclear deal, a badly conceived effort that let Iran continue to cheat its way toward nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to carry them. Trump's "maximum pressure" policy against Iran has deprived the mullahs of the resources to pursue their nuclear dreams and limited their ongoing nefarious deeds as the largest state sponsor of terrorism — which was funded by American cash as part of the nuclear deal.

Next was President Trump's decision to buck the warnings of failed diplomats and show true friendship to Israel. He recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, and began discussions with the Israeli government about the extension of Israeli sovereignty in the West Bank, moves that made it clear that the US backs Israel's national and sovereign rights. Trump's policies implicitly called on the Arab world to recognize the State of Israel's legitimacy and permanency. This not only strengthened the US-Israel alliance, but made possible the incredible diplomatic successes of the UAE-Israel peace treaty and the Bahrain-Israel agreement. Real, concrete peace has begun between Israel and Arab states, for the first time in 25 years. That is truly historic.

Democrats try to paint President Trump — the man who did all this for Israel, the man with Jewish family members and decades of good relations with the Jewish community in his native New York — as someone who condones and encourages anti-Semitism. That is rank nonsense. The President has spoken out forcefully against anti-Semitism, racism and bigotry over and over again, and has taken steps to combat those evils. His administration adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of anti-Semitism, which specifically includes both traditional anti-Semitic tropes and anti-Israel elements such as dehumanizing and demonizing Israel, blaming all Jews for the actions of Israel, and seeking the destruction of the Jewish State by the BDS movement. The President also extended Title VI protections against discrimination to Jewish students fighting anti-Semitism on America's college campuses.

While aiming accusations of anti-Semitism at President Trump, Foxman makes the laughable statement that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will stand up to enemies of Israel and the Jewish community. In fact, the virulent anti-Semitism that once lived only on the fringe of the Democratic Party is now very much at the center of that party, as self-styled "progressives" like Ilhan Omar and her "Squad" become increasingly powerful gatekeepers, declaring who is and is not acceptable in the new Democratic Party. Biden and Harris have done nothing to push back against the open anti-Semitism in their party, nor against the support for BDS and the hate mongering

against Israel that is now acceptable on their side of the aisle. The historically bipartisan support for Israel is ailing, if not dying, and Foxman is blind if he can't see that reality. Sadly, every poll will tell you that the Democrat base no longer stands with Israel.

American Jews have better memories, and more smarts, than Abe Foxman gives them credit for. President Trump will win Jewish votes in this election because he has fought for us – for all of us – and we have seen the results. There has never been a better friend of Israel and the Jewish community in the White House, and with our community's help, Donald Trump will continue his good work there for another four years. (Times of Israel Sep 13)

The writer is president of the Republican Jewish Coalition.

Abraham Accords are a Paradigm Shift of Biblical Proportions

By Alex Traiman

The signing of normalization agreements between Israel and Muslim-majority Sunni Gulf States the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain represents the end of an era of pan-Arab belligerence towards the Jewish state, and the formal acknowledgment that it is a permanent fixture in the Middle East.

Before boarding a plane to attend the historic signings at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated, "This is a new era of peace, for which I've worked for 25 years. These agreements will be a fusion of diplomatic and economic peace and will bring in billions of dollars to the Israeli economy."

According to Netanyahu's strategic advisor Aaron Klein, "for too many years, regional peace has been stalled by the tried and failed paradigm of Israeli territorial concessions in exchange for promises of peace." "Now we have peace from strength between Gulf states and an Israel that under Netanyahu has become an even greater global economic and military powerhouse," he told JNS.

For Israel's longest-serving prime minister, these accords represent the intersection of multiple parallel strategic initiatives in the realms of economics, diplomacy and security.

Klein says this merger represents "the culmination of the Netanyahu Doctrine, which can be summarized as peace in exchange for peace and peace from a position of strength."

Netanyahu has successfully pivoted Israel's economy from a resource-poor developing nation with socialist principles into a bustling free market that now operates at a dramatic trade surplus. GDP has grown exponentially, and a small country with less than 10 million citizens has grown into a top 10 global economy.

With dramatically increased tax revenues, the Israel Defense Forces has acquired the world's best military hardware and developed the world's most advanced missile-defense systems. Much of this equipment has been purchased with critical military assistance from Israel's greatest ally, the United States.

And while Netanyahu has been averse to starting or escalating conflicts, Israel is no paper tiger. Israel routinely strikes its enemies wherever they may be operating via traditional military and covert operations. The country has similarly emerged as a world leader in military intelligence and cybersecurity. Enemies and neighbors recognize that Israel is the region's superior military superpower.

Even more critical to Israel's emergence as a regional power has been the Jewish state's standing up to the Middle East's most malign actors, in particular: Iran. Netanyahu's insistence that Iran never acquires nuclear weapons has flipped the balance of power in the Middle East.

"The seeds for today's historic deals were planted by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's unrelenting campaign to stop Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons," says Klein.

One of the key elements in establishing Israel's position was a trip by Netanyahu to Washington in early 2015, where he addressed a joint session of Congress to warn about the dangers of the proposed nuclear deal being discussed with Iran. And while that address placed further strain between Netanyahu and former President Barack Obama—and failed to prevent America from signing on to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA—the address sent a powerful message to Iran's regional opponents that Israel could be counted to counter Iranian nuclear ambitions.

"It was precisely Netanyahu's heroic actions to isolate Iran for more than a decade that shifted the Gulf nations' attitudes towards Israel," says Klein, noting that the prime minister's actions have not always been popular. This staunch opposition is "something Netanyahu at times did totally alone, even among other politicians here in Israel."

Netanyahu's opposition has not only been rhetorical. Israel has consistently acted to reduce Iranian presence in Syria and to strike hard against illicit Iranian weapons transfers. Furthermore, Israel is widely believed to have engaged in numerous covert actions to hinder Iran's nuclear-weapons program.

The scope of Israeli penetration deep into Iranian nuclear infrastructure was revealed in the Mossad's stunning secret raid of

Iran's nuclear archives in 2018.

Netanyahu's actions demonstrated strength that resonated with Obama's successor, President Donald Trump. The prime minister's lobbying played a significant role in Trump's decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and reinstate harsh economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

"The UAE, Bahrain and other Gulf States must know that if it weren't for Netanyahu's heroic leadership, then Iran would already likely possess nuclear weapons," says Klein. "And if Netanyahu didn't repeatedly act, Iran would have a much larger terrorist footprint throughout the region."

Now the trust that Netanyahu has built with Trump and his senior advisor, Jared Kushner, are reaping further dividends. The prime minister successfully convinced the administration to recalibrate peace efforts in the Middle East—from the failed land for peace paradigms of the Oslo Accords.

Klein says "the peace deals with the UAE and Bahrain were fueled by President Trump's revolutionary 'Peace to Prosperity' plan, the most realistic formula for Mideast peace."

A tenet of the Netanyahu doctrine has always been that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not the source of all or even most of the problems in the Middle East. He has consistently worked to reverse the notion that greater peace in the region can only come from ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"Gulf nations continue to nudge the Palestinians to change their ways, but the UAE and Bahrain—and hopefully, many others—won't wait around any longer," says Klein. "These countries are ready to advance a regional normalization and peace anchored in the best interests of every forward-leaning nation that opposes the regional extremism propagated by Iran."

Netanyahu has repeatedly insisted that peace will come from the outside in; that generating peace between Israel and its other Arab neighbors will dramatically increase the prospects for a peaceful resolution between Israelis and Palestinians.

The signing of the Abraham Accords may ultimately lead to peace with Palestinians if they decide to follow their Sunni brethren in recognizing that the Jewish state is in the Middle East to stay. Israelis, says Klein, are ready to make progress on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"The Trump plan was immediately accepted by Israel as a basis for talks," says Klein, "while the Palestinians rejected out of hand a plan that would have given them a much better life and put their economy on steroids."

Palestinians, meanwhile, who have for years been convincing nations to boycott the Jewish state, may recognize that these efforts have failed to stop Israel's economic and diplomatic progress, while they themselves continue to regress.

The Abraham Accords "deal a decisive blow to the illegitimate, anti-Semitic boycott movement singling out the world's only Jewish state," says Klein.

Klein insists that the era of peace that is being ushered in will be genuine, as it is solidly rooted in "mutual interests," including immediate ones. "It's clear that we are seeing a warm peace between nations that truly want a relationship with Israel," says Klein, who notes that Gulf states seek cooperation "in the fields of economy, security, technology, energy, health care, culture, the environment and fighting coronavirus, among other areas."

Credit must go to the forward-thinking leaders of the Persian Gulf states, who could just have easily remain entrenched in what are quickly becoming outdated anti-Israel positions. The accords "demonstrate the strong leadership and moral clarity of the leaders of the UAE and Bahrain," says Klein.

Working in sync with a friendly United States administration to isolate Iran, hold the Palestinians accountable for decades of rejectionism and enhance diplomatic relations with nations that once refused formal diplomatic ties is now bearing fruit.

Klein notes that peace between Israel the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain would not be possible without the American president. "Today, we are witnessing the results of President Trump's bold leadership actions."

Tuesday's White House signing being Jewish and Muslim nations is a paradigm shift of biblical proportions. Klein similarly suggests that by continuing on the path of peace, more formerly unthinkable achievements are likely on the way.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu and the U.S. administration have repeatedly expressed confidence that more peace deals with Arab nations will follow," says Klein, adding that "Netanyahu already previously made advancements in relations with such countries as Sudan, Oman and other nations in the Gulf."

He points to the recent "Saudi decision to open the country's airspace to Israeli flights," as a hint of what may yet be to come.

"It's clear the Mideast peace train has left the station," says Klein, "and we are ushering in a new era of peace between Israel and the other children of Abraham." (JNS Sep 15)