

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 14, 2019

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For the Yachad Report Newsletter For Fubruary 2019

AMERICAN JEWS BUY FULL-PAGE AD TO THANK TRUMP: President Donald Trump's commitment to battle anti-Semitism has received a major round of applause from American Jewish leaders even as Democrats are embroiled over accusations of anti-Semitism in their own ranks. Days ago, members of the Republican Jewish Coalition took out a full-page ad in The New York Times to publicly support Trump and endorse his selection of Elan Carr as the administration's chief troubleshooter against anti-Semitism. Trump cited his determination to fight anti-Semitism last week during his State of the Union address. "We must never ignore the vile poison of anti-Semitism, or those who spread its venomous creed. With one voice, we must confront this hatred anywhere and everywhere it occurs," Trump said. The ad praised Trump under the headline, "Anti-Semitism Must Be Confronted and Defeated".

"We wish to congratulate and to thank President Donald Trump, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and the entire Trump administration for the recent appointment of Mr. Elan S. Carr to the position of State Department Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism ranks among the oldest, most destructive forms of bigotry," the ad stated. "It is a scourge that has plagued mankind. From the Nazi regime's genocide of six million Jews to the 27 October 2018, Pittsburgh synagogue shooting that claimed the lives of eleven Shabbat worshipers, anti-Semitism is responsible for a multitude of history's most heinous atrocities. We thank President Trump for his courageous, leadership in engaging in the fight to defeat anti-Semitism. While the Iranian Majlis has long demonized Israel, anti-Semitic voices can now be heard in the halls of the British Parliament and even the USA Congress," the ad said.

POPE FRANCIS, LEADING IMAM SIGN COVENANT PUSHING TOWARD ONE-WORLD RELIGION: A historic interfaith covenant was signed in the Middle East on Mon. 11 Feb. 2019 and the mainstream media in the USA has been almost entirely silent about it. Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb is considered to be the most important imam in Sunni Islam, and he arrived at the signing ceremony in Abu Dhabi with

Pope Francis "hand in hand in a symbol of interfaith brotherhood." But this wasn't just a ceremony for Catholics and Muslims. According to a British news source, the signing of this covenant was done "in front of a global audience of religious leaders from Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other faiths". In other words, there was a concerted effort to make sure that all of the religions of the world were represented at this gathering. According to the official Vatican website, a tremendous amount of preparation went into the drafting of this document, and it encourages believers from all religions "to shake hands, embrace one another, kiss one another and even pray" with one another.

There is a lot of language about peace in this document, but it goes way beyond just advocating for peace. Over and over again, the word "God" is used to simultaneously identify Allah and the God of Christianity. On top of that, the document also boldly declares that "the diversity of religions" that we see in the world was "willed by God". In essence, this is saying that it is the will of God that there are hundreds of different religions in the world and that they are all acceptable in His sight. We know that the elite want a one-world religion, but to see the most important clerics from both Catholicism and Islam make such a dramatic public push for it is absolutely stunning.

REPORT REVEALS SOUTHERN BAPTIST MINISTERS ABUSED MORE THAN 700 VICTIMS OVER 20 YEARS: An investigation revealed Sun. 10 Feb. 2019 that almost 400 Southern Baptist ministers and church volunteers sexually abused more than 700 victims across the country over the last 20 years. The investigation revealed that 380 Southern Baptist ministers and volunteers have faced allegations of sexual abuse from a collective total of more than 700 alleged victims since 1998. The majority of these accused sexual abusers have either been convicted or taken plea deals, but a number of them have continued to work in ministry. Those accused of sexual abuse include church volunteers, pastors, ministers, Sunday school teachers, and youth pastors. Some of the alleged victims, both male and female, were as young as three when they claim the abuse occurred, and the abuse allegations include claims of molestation, repeated rape, being photographed naked, and being exposed to pornography.

Of the 380 accused, 220 were successfully prosecuted and either convicted or took plea deals, and 100 of those who were convicted remain in jail. The report found, however, that at least 10 churches since 1998 had employed some 35 ministers and church volunteers and employees who faced charges of sexual misconduct and some of whom are registered sex offenders. Six former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) presidents also faced accusations of mishandling or covering up sexual abuse allegations, including by shaming the alleged victims. Current SBC president J.D. Greear lamented the revelations and the fact that SBC leaders failed to listen to victims over Twitter and pledged to do "everything possible to ensure we never make these mistakes again." Victims of sexual abuse expressed doubt that any change would actually occur.

ANTI-SEMITIC GRAFFITI FOUND IN PARIS FOR 2ND TIME IN 3 DAYS: Mailboxes on which a street artist was commissioned to paint portraits of the late French politician Simone Veil, a Holocaust survivor, were defaced with swastikas. In addition, anti-Semitic graffiti was found in various locations in the capital. The Paris Prosecutor's Office opened an investigation for "provocation to racial hatred," Le Parisian reported. "This is not the first time that one of my works is vandalized," said artist Christian Guémy, who was commissioned to paint Veil. "But what is shocking is that Simone Veil suffered from the Holocaust. It is very vile. This woman embodied fighting values. She defended Europeanism, women's rights, the memory of the Holocaust and her Jewishness. This is all that is flouted, in the worst possible way, since it is disfigured with a swastika." The vandalism comes two days after the word "Juden!" was spray-painted in yellow across the window of a bagel shop in Paris. The number of anti-Semitic incidents in France surged in 2018, jumping a whopping 74% compared to the number in 2017, a senior French official said Monday night 11 Feb. 2019. France's interior minister, Christophe Castaner, lamented that anti-Jewish acts were becoming increasingly commonplace. "Anti-Semitism is spreading like poison," Castaner said, warning that the surge of anti-Jewish acts constituted "an attack against hope." The interior minister noted that the number of anti-Semitic acts reported in 2018 had jumped from 311 in 2017 to 541 – a 74% increase.

DEMOCRATIC LEADERS URGE REP. OMAR TO APOLOGIZE FOR “ANTI-SEMITIC”

TWEET: House Democratic leaders, led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), on Mon. 11 Feb. 2019 accused Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) of using "anti-Semitic tropes" and called on her to apologize after she sent tweets suggesting that lawmakers defending Israel were motivated by money. Pelosi's statement was co-signed by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC), Assistant Speaker Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) and Caucus Vice Chairwoman Katherine Clark (D-Mass.). "Legitimate criticism of Israel's policies is protected by the values of free speech that the United States and Israel share. But Congresswoman Omar's use of anti-Semitic tropes and prejudicial accusations about Israel's supporters is deeply offensive. We condemn these remarks."

VIRGIN ATLANTIC ANNOUNCES DAILY LONDON-TEL AVIV ROUTE: Virgin Atlantic has announced the launch of a new daily flight route between London's Heathrow and Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion airports, starting 25 Sept. 2019. The five-hour flight – the company's shortest from the UK – will operate on Virgin Atlantic's Airbus A330-300 aircraft and offer in excess of 180,000 seats per year between Tel Aviv and Heathrow. Tickets will go on sale from 25 Feb. 2019. "The entry of one of the world's leading airlines into Israel is another expression of confidence in the Israel tourism product," said Tourism Minister Yariv Levin. "The new flights will be integrated with the marketing campaign in Europe, which highlights Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. I am convinced that with the entry of Virgin Atlantic into Israel, we will see continued growth in incoming tourism from the UK." Approximately 218,000 visitors arrived in Israel from the UK in 2018, a 10% increase over 2017, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. In 2018, Israel had a record-breaking year of incoming tourism, with entries exceeding 4.1 million visitors.

ANCIENT COIN FROM BAR KOCHBA REVOLT FOUND IN ISRAEL: An Israeli tour guide last week came across a 1,900-year-old coin from the time of the Bar Kochba revolt in the Lachish region, southwest of Jerusalem, the Israel Nature and Parks Authority said Mon. 11 Feb. 2018. The coin, from 133 AD, has an image of a palm tree with seven branches and two clusters of grapes above the name "Shimon" - Bar Kochba's first name - in ancient Hebrew. Coins of this type were minted during the Bar Kochba revolt, during which Jewish rebels regained some autonomy from Rome.

USA: ISRAEL HAD THE RIGHT TO END THE MANDATE OF INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS IN HEBRON: State Department Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino was asked on Thur. 7 Feb. 2019 why the USA blocked a statement at the UN Security Council on Israel's decision to end the mandate of international observers in Hebron. He replied: "The 1997 agreement on the temporary international presence in the city of Hebron clearly states that the consent of both the Israelis and the Palestinians is required in order to extend the mandate and presence of the TIPH. Furthermore, Oslo II and Hebron Protocol of 1997 also stated that the agreement from both sides was necessary for that to continue. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with the Israeli decision not to renew, it would be inaccurate to accuse Israel of not having the right to make this decision under the agreement."

ISRAELI WATCHDOG TO FACEBOOK: REMOVE ABBAS' PARTY PAGE: An Israeli watchdog group has submitted a request to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to close down Fatah's official Facebook page. In a letter, sent to Zuckerberg on Thur. 7 Feb. 2019, Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) CEO Itamar Marcus and Head of Legal Strategies Maurice Hirsch claimed that Palestinian terrorists carried out terrorist attacks in 2018 "influenced by Fatah's glorification of murder and its promotion of violence on its Facebook page. We strongly request that Facebook immediately close and delete Fatah's Facebook page and ensure that no similar page is reopened," the letter reads. PMW penned the letter after completing a 45-page report that tracks Fatah's Facebook page activity throughout the last year. The report shows how Fatah's posts glorified mass murderers and other terrorists who were responsible for hundreds of murders that include not only citizens of Israel but Americans and other countries as well. "These posts breached both Facebook's Counter-

terrorism Policy and Facebook's Community Standards," wrote PMW in its letter. It noted that Facebook standards state that the company does not allow any organizations or individuals that proclaim a violent mission or are engaged in violence to have a presence on Facebook. This includes organizations or individuals involved in terrorist activity, organized hate, mass or serial murder, human trafficking, or organized violence or criminal activity. "By repeatedly honoring terrorists through Facebook while the terror attack is still headline news, Fatah is sending the worst possible message to all Palestinians - that murdering Israelis is not only desirable, but is also the fastest path to honor and fame for the terrorist and his or her entire family," said Marcus. A spokeswoman for Facebook said that "Praise and support for terrorism is not allowed on Facebook and we remove this type of content when it is reported to us."

TIBERIAS MAYOR: 'HAREDIM HEXED ME': Tiberias Mayor Ron Kobi days ago accused members of the local haredi community of performing a "pagan ritual" designed to place a curse on him. The mayor posted a video on Facebook showing haredi men surrounding the grave of his grandfather, the mayor Rabbi Machluf Kobi, claiming the worshipers had performed a pagan ritual of pulsa d'nura. "Pagan incitement in the pulsa d'nura style," Ron Kobi said opening his Facebook post. He continued: "The haredim of Tiberias, headed by a city councilman, are involved in a strange ceremony of prayers and lamentations on the grave of my grandfather Chacham Makhluf Kobi. 'What do they want?' you ask," said Kobi. "They want Tiberias to return to being dark and black, closed and locked on Saturdays and holidays. The members of the Tiberias council simply go against the public!" Later, the haredi worshipers explained they had gone to the grave of Mayor Ron Kobi's late grandfather, "who was a scholar and a righteous man", to pray that his grandson "repent". The pulsa d'nura ("fire whip") is the name of a ritual ceremony with supposed kabalistic roots, used on occasion in Israel to call for the downfall of prominent public figures.

20 SWASTIKAS DISCOVERED DEFACING MURAL AT SYDNEY'S FAMED BONDI BEACH: Police have called for witnesses to help find the perpetrators of the "repulsive, racist, anti-Semitic and wholly un-Australian act." Twenty swastikas were painted at Sydney's Bondi Beach on Sunday, 10 Feb. 2019. Local police are investigating the incident and have appealed for witnesses to come forward. "Outrageous!" called out the Australian Jewish Association on Twitter, reporting the murals at the Bondi Beach now bearing "numerous swastikas." Vic Alhadeff, CEO of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, condemned the graffiti saying, "The Jewish community is appalled at this expression of blatant racism. The swastika represents the ultimate in race hatred and all Australians of goodwill will stand together in condemning this shocking display." Waverley Mayor John Wakefield said, "This is a disgraceful act and Waverley Council, and the community of Waverley stands against anti-Semitism and racially motivated crime. Racism has no place in our culturally diverse community and we condemn last night's incident in the strongest terms."

ISRAELIS ARE TOP USERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE WORLD: Some 77% of adults in Israel use social media, putting the country 1 percentage point ahead of South Korea, according to a Pew Research Center survey released last week. The United States was sixth at 70%. At the same time, Israel ranks second in smartphone ownership, with 88% of its adults owning smartphones. S. Korea was first with 95% of adults owning a smartphone and the USA sixth again at 81%. The two categories are related, according to Pew, because social networking sites can be accessed via smartphones, and smartphone owners are more likely to access social networking sites than those who own a basic phone or none at all. Among Israelis, smartphone ownership is on the rise for the over-50 set: 80% as compared to 50% in 2015.

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