

MEDIA-OCRITY OF THE WEEK: NO LONGER A WILD CONSPIRACY THEORY: THE POSSIBILITY OF TRUMP AS RUSSIAN AGENT — “On Friday, *The New York Times* released a blockbuster exclusive: When U.S. President Donald Trump fired FBI director James Comey in May of 2017, law enforcement became so concerned by his behaviour that they began an investigation into whether the President was, in fact, operating as a Russian agent...unfortunately this is now a real possibility, and its implausible nature is partly to blame for how long we ignored it in the first place...Mr. Trump’s behaviour has not been strange. It’s not been outlandish or puzzling. It’s been a living and breathing narrative on our television screens. We have seen a man who plausibly shoulders a debt that may require him to be obedient and necessitate submission of our national goals and character...The possibility that the President of the United States is working for Russia is now real - and it may have worked because Americans wanted to believe in the best of people and the strength of our institutions. To return to that hope, to set that trajectory right again, we must stare the possibility of our failure in the face and name it. We simply cannot afford to look away any longer.” — Jared Yates Sexton. ([Globe & Mail](#), Jan. 14, 2019)

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WEEKLY QUOTES

“In the past 48 hours, Israel attacked an Iranian weapons warehouse at the international airport in Damascus. This reflects our consistent policy and strong determination to prevent Iran from entrenching itself militarily in Syria. If

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necessary, we will step up these attacks...At the same time, the IDF has exposed a sixth tunnel - the largest of all - that crossed into Israeli territory. This brings Operation Northern Shield to a successful close. We will continue to monitor all activity by Hezbollah, and by Iran and its proxies. We will do whatever is necessary to ensure the security of Israel." — Prime Minister Netanyahu. Netanyahu visited the area where Operation Northern Shield is destroying Hezbollah tunnels. Questioned as to whether the residents of the area can live in peace, he said: "I think everyone understands that a very serious threat was averted here. Hezbollah's operational plan was to use the tunnels weapon to infiltrate many fighters, between 1,000-2,000 terrorists, into the Galilee, to seize communities here. Everyone understands how the war would look if Hezbollah battalions were in the Galilee, and with the Iranian army opposite the Golan Heights. We have prevented this - and will continue to prevent it." ([Globe & Mail](#), Jan. 7, 2018)

"I can say with confidence that as we speak Hezbollah does not possess accurate [missile] capabilities except for small and negligible ones...They were hoping to have hundreds of missiles in the mid- and long-range." — Gadi Eisenkot, outgoing IDF Chief of Staff. Eisenkot feels Hezbollah and its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, had devised a three-pronged strategy to invade and conquer at least a part of Israel's northern Galilee: building factories in Lebanon that could produce precision-guided missiles, excavating attack tunnels under the Israeli border and setting up a second front on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights. So far, the plan has failed. The factories were publicly exposed and the tunnels destroyed. Israel continues to attack Hezbollah positions on the Golan, most recently last month against an intelligence position in the village of Tel el Qudne (previously unreported). ([New York Times](#), Jan. 11, 2019)

"Now, as it is my turn, and I have received the responsibility of leading the army, I commit to dedicating all my energy, with a critical and demanding approach, to strengthening our defensive wall, to training for present and future threats - which focuses upon strengthening our attack capabilities towards our enemies, and presenting an army that is deadly, efficient and modern, that preserves its mission and its uniqueness." — Incoming IDF chief of staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi. Kochavi was appointed as the Israel Defense Forces' chief of staff, replacing Lt. Gen. Gadi Eisenkot. Kochavi was promoted from deputy chief of staff by Prime Minister Netanyahu in a ceremony at the Israeli army headquarters in Tel Aviv, also attended by Eisenkot. Eisenkot and Kochavi, visited the gravesites at Mount Herzl of Israeli soldiers and officers who fell in battle. This is a new tradition

honoring the exchange of power within the Israeli army. ([Ha'aretz](#), Jan. 15, 2019)

"Electing Yemen to protect women's rights is like making a pyromaniac into the town fire chief... How could the UN choose Yemen, a country that tolerates female genital mutilation, denies women hospital treatment without the permission of a male relative, and counts a woman's testimony as worth half that of a man? We remind the UN that women in Yemen cannot marry without permission of their male guardians, and face deeply entrenched discrimination in both law and practice, in all aspects of their lives, including employment, education and housing...The election of Yemen as vice-president at UN Women is an insult to women's rights activists worldwide who struggle against the persecution exemplified by Yemen's misogynistic laws and practices." — Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch and former *CIJR Dateline Middle East* Editor. UNWatch condemned the UN's election of Yemen, the worst-ranking country in the world on gender equality, to be vice-president of the Executive Board of UN Women, which is the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Yemen was ranked 149th out of 149 in last year's Global Gender Gap Report, produced by the World Economic Forum. ([UNWatch](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

"We have to be very careful as a society and as a government and as a country not to sanction this new frame around anti-Semitism and undue criticism of Israel." — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Speaking at one of a series of election-year townhall meetings across the country, an audience member asked if Trudeau would retract his condemnation of the anti-Israel boycott, divestment, sanctions movement — BDS. The Liberal leader would have none of it. The problem, he said, is that resurgent antisemitism has become widespread — much of it directed at Israel — and the BDS movement on Canadian campuses has made some students feel threatened. ([City News](#), Jan. 15, 2019)

"I've been warning for many years now that Israel is backing away from confrontations it can win until it might back itself into a confrontation it can't win, or can only win at exorbitant cost. By embarking on an ill-advised policy of restraint, Israel has allowed terrorist nuisances to evolve into strategic threats. In this regard, one of the dangers of a nuclear Iran, even if Iran doesn't use the weapons, is that it can spread a nuclear umbrella over terrorist entities operating in the north, in the south, and if we make ill-advised territorial concessions, in the east as well." — Martin Sherman, founder and CEO of the Israel Institute for Strategic Studies. Sherman, who recently spoke at the Canadian Institute for

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Jewish Research office in Montreal, was interviewed by David Levy, author of *The Zionist Entity: The Jewish State In the 21st Century* (2015). ([PJ Media](#), Jan. 15, 2019)

"I began employing Palestinian and Israeli Arab workers at the first Rami Levy location, a stall in Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market that opened in 1976. Arabs were among my first employees...Those employees continue to work for Rami Levy Hashikma — our supermarket outlets — and many have seen their careers flourish with the company...Rami Levy does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, gender, or religion when hiring and promoting employees. All employees, Palestinians and Israelis, are treated equally and receive equal benefits." — Rami Levy, owner of the third-largest Israeli supermarket chain. Levy invested \$50 million in the construction of a mall northeast of Jerusalem. Despite the boycott calls, some Palestinians have rented stores in the mall, which is described as a model for coexistence between Arabs and Jews. ([United With Israel](#), Jan. 13, 2019)

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SHORT TAKES

ISRAEL ATTACKED IRANIAN WAREHOUSE IN DAMASCUS (Damascus) — Missiles fired by Israeli warplanes struck a warehouse at Damascus International Airport Friday, Syrian state media reported. Israeli aircraft fired several missiles at areas near Damascus. This was the first Israeli airstrike on the Damascus area in 2019. The last time the IAF hit the same area was on December 25, 2018. ([Jewish Press](#), Jan. 12, 2019)

TERRORIST ATTACK IN NAIROBI LEAVES 14 DEAD (Nairobi) — All the gunmen who staged a deadly attack on a luxury hotel complex in Nairobi, Kenya were killed, while fourteen "innocent lives" were lost in the attack on Tuesday, President Uhuru Kenyatta said. Al-Shabab, which is based in Somalia and allied with al-Qaida, claimed responsibility. The Islamic extremist group also carried out the 2013 attack at Nairobi's nearby Westgate Mall that killed 67 people, and an assault on Kenya's Garissa University in 2015 that claimed 147 lives, mostly students. While U.S. airstrikes and African Union forces have degraded the group's ability to operate, it is still capable of carrying out violence in retaliation for the Kenyan military's campaign against it in Somalia. ([Washington Post](#), Jan. 16,

2019)

CANADA GRANTS ASYLUM TO SAUDI TEEN (Vancouver) — Rahaf al-Qunun, an 18-year-old Saudi woman who said she is fleeing abuse from her family, has been granted asylum in Canada. Qunun arrived in Thailand and was initially denied entry. She soon started posting messages on Twitter after barricading herself in a room in a hotel saying her life would be in danger if forced to return to Saudi Arabia. Authorities eventually allowed her to enter the country. Qunun had previously expressed wanting to come to Canada on her Twitter account, which was deleted on Friday after getting death threats. The 18-year-old has said she was fleeing from her family out of fear they would kill her for renouncing Islam, something that is punishable by death in Saudi Arabia. ([Global](#), Jan. 11, 2019)

U.S. NAVY VETERAN HELD IN IRANIAN PRISON SINCE JULY (Tehran) — An American Navy veteran has been held in an Iranian prison on unspecified charges since late July. Michael R. White, 46, was detained in Iran after visiting his Iranian girlfriend. Joanne White said her son was scheduled to return to the U.S. from Iran through Dubai, but her son never boarded his flight. According to the *New York Times*, there are at least three other Americans currently being detained in Iran. Two of them are of Iranian descent while the other Americans have been missing in Iran for over a decade. ([Fox News](#), Jan. 8, 2019)

DNC DROPS PARTNERSHIP WITH WOMEN'S MARCH (Washington) — The Democratic National Committee has dropped its partnership in the Women's March over antisemitism concerns, according to a Democratic source. This development comes amid accusations of antisemitism within the movement's leadership. There have been calls for firms to back out. A number of progressive groups have withdrawn their support for the march, including the National Council of Jewish Women, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Human Rights Campaign, and Greenpeace. Moreover, local marches, such as in Chicago and New Orleans, have been cancelled. ([JNS](#), Jan. 16, 2019)

PRO-HEZBOLLAH ACTIVIST POSTS PHOTOS WITH TLAIB (Washington) — Rep. Rashida Tlaib, Michigan Democrat, was called out after Palestinian activist Abbas Hamideh, a staunch defender of Hezbollah, posted photos of the two of them posing at her swearing-in ceremony in Detroit. Hamideh tweeted a photo of himself with Tlaib along with the caption, "I was honored to be at Congresswoman @RashidaTlaib swearing in ceremony in #Detroit and private dinner afterward with the entire family, friends and activists across the country." Critics were quick to

point out that Hamideh, a co-founder of the pro-Palestinian group Al-Awda, which means "right of return," has a history of praising Hezbollah leaders and declaring that Israel has no right to exist. ([Washington Times](#), Jan. 14, 2019)

TRUMP WARNS TURKEY OF ECONOMIC DEVASTATION IF IT ATTACKS KURDS (Washington) — President Trump warned Turkey that it faces economic devastation if it attacks Kurdish forces in Syria after a planned U.S. pullout. Trump said his government was starting the "long overdue pullout" from Syria while "hitting the little remaining ISIS territorial caliphate hard," and would attack it again if the jihadists regroup. Turkey has been massing troops on its border for weeks in preparation for an operation to eradicate Kurdish forces that the U.S. has vowed to protect. The U.S. outsourced much of the fighting against I.S. to a group called the YPG, which Turkey views as an extension of the PKK, a separatist group that both Turkey and the U.S. consider terrorists. ([Bloomberg](#), Jan. 13, 2018)

POLL: 58% OF ISRAELIS FEEL SYRIA WITHDRAWAL HARMED THEIR COUNTRY'S SECURITY INTERESTS (Jerusalem) — A majority of Israelis — 58% — believe that Trump's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria harmed their country's security interests, a survey found. However, 72% of Israelis also feel the Jewish state can defend itself "very well," according to Israel Democracy Institute. IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Gadi Eizenkot called the move "significant" but noted there was "no need to overstate it." On Friday, a US military spokesperson confirmed the drawdown of the U.S. force — consisting of more than 2,000 soldiers who had been working in northeastern Syria with an alliance of Kurdish and Arab militias in areas once held by I.S.— had begun. ([Algemeiner](#), Jan. 11, 2019)

BOMB-LADEN REBEL DRONE KILLS 6 IN YEMEN (Aden) — A bomb-laden drone launched by Yemen's Shiite rebels exploded over a military parade for the Saudi-led coalition, killing at least six people. The Houthi attack near the port city of Aden with a new drone variant also raised more questions about Iran's alleged role in arming the rebels with drone and ballistic missile technology, something long denied by Tehran despite researchers and U.N. experts linking the weapons to the Islamic Republic. ([Washington Post](#), Jan. 10, 2019)

HUNDREDS RALLY IN KHARTOUM FOR AL-BASHIR'S OUSTER (Khartoum) — Hundreds of protesters marched in and around Sudan's capital Khartoum, the fourth week of unrest that began over skyrocketing prices and a failing economy but which now calls for the ouster of autocratic President Omar al-Bashir. Bashir is also wanted by the International Criminal Court for genocide in Darfur. An Islamist

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who has been in power since he led a military coup in 1989, he has said those seeking to oust him can only do so through elections, and he is running for another term in office next year. He has insisted that the protests are part of a foreign plot to undermine Sudan's "Islamic experiment" and blamed the country's worsening economic crisis on international sanctions. ([Washington Post](#), Jan. 13, 2019)

IRAN EXPLORING NEW URANIUM ENRICHMENT: NUCLEAR CHIEF (Tehran) — The head of Iran's nuclear program said Sunday that Iran has begun "preliminary activities for designing" a modern process for 20% uranium enrichment for its 50-year-old research reactor in Tehran. Restarting enrichment at that level would mean Iran had withdrawn from the 2015 nuclear deal it struck with world powers, an accord that Trump already pulled America out of in May. However, Ali Akbar Salehi's comments appeared aimed at telling the world Iran would slowly restart its program. If it chooses, it could resume mass enrichment at its main facility in the central Iranian town of Natanz. ([Arutz Sheva](#), Jan. 14, 2019)

ELDERLY COUPLE FOUND STABBED DEAD IN JERUSALEM (Jerusalem) — A couple in their seventies were found dead from stab wounds in their apartment on Mordechai Elkehai street in the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood of Jerusalem on Sunday. Police do not yet have a motive for the attack. On January 9th, a 14-year-old girl was stabbed by an unknown assailant on that same street as she made her way to school in the morning. The terrorist who attacked her was not found. It is unknown if there is a connection between the two attacks. The Armon Hanatziv neighborhood is adjacent to several Arab neighborhoods, and has been the site of a number of terror attacks, some of them lethal. ([Jewish Press](#), Jan. 13, 2019)

CANADIANS TARGETED IN THWARTED 2018 TERROR PLOT IN ISRAEL (Jerusalem) — A Canadian delegation was among a group of targets that a man planned to attack in Jerusalem last year, according to the Israel Security Agency. Muhammad Jamal Rashdeh was sentenced to 11 years in prison in connection with the plot. Shin Bet, said in a statement issued in June, 2018, that Rashdeh had also been planning to assassinate Prime Minister Netanyahu and Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, and attack buildings belonging to the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem (which has now been converted into the new U.S. embassy). The statement said Rashdeh, a resident of a Palestinian refugee camp in eastern Jerusalem, received orders from a Syria-based terrorist group. ([Globe & Mail](#), Jan. 10, 2019)

'TRADITIONAL MASCULINITY' DEEMED HARMFUL, APA SAYS (Washington) — For

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the first time, the American Psychological Association (APA) released guidelines concerning men and boys, saying that so-called "traditional masculinity" not only is "harmful" but also could lead to homophobia and sexual harassment. "The main thrust of the subsequent research is that traditional masculinity - marked by stoicism, competitiveness, dominance and aggression - is, on the whole, harmful," reads the news release. It notes that "traditional masculinity is psychologically harmful and that socializing boys to suppress their emotions causes damage that echoes both inwardly and outwardly." The document goes on to coin "masculinity ideology," and claims that it harms boys and men. ([Fox News](#), Jan. 9, 2019)

US PURCHASES ISRAELI MISSILE-DEFENSE SYSTEMS (New York) — The U.S. military has completed an \$80 million purchase of the Israeli-developed missile-defense system Trophy to protect tanks and armored-personnel carriers. As part of the agreement, the U.S. is expected to pay an additional \$120 million for more defense systems, bringing the sum of the two contracts to around \$400 million, according to a Rafael spokesperson. The Trophy consists of a radar-detection system that recognizes incoming missiles and projects their trajectories, with launchers that shoot metal pellets, causing the incoming missile or rocket to explode away from the tank. ([Jewish Press](#), Jan. 12, 2019)

FRANCE JOINS US, WARNS IRAN TO STOP WORK ON BALLISTIC MISSILES (Paris) — France has called on Iran to immediately cease all work on ballistic missiles capable of carrying a nuclear payload. The move comes in the wake of an announcement that Iran will send two satellites (space launch vehicles) into orbit in the coming weeks. Iran responded by telling France to avoid repeating "irresponsible and incorrect" claims about Tehran's missile work made by other nations who opposed the 2015 JCPOA nuclear deal. The United States issued a warning to Iran earlier this month on its violations of UN Security Council resolution 2231 after the Iran Ministry of Defense announced its plans to launch three space launch vehicles in the coming months. ([Jewish Press](#), Jan. 11, 2019)

LAST NAZI IN US DIES AFTER DEPORTATION (New York) — The last known Nazi in the U.S. has died at the age of 95 in the town of Ahlen, Germany, months after being deported from his home in Queens. Former concentration camp guard Jakiw Palij, an ethnic Ukrainian, entered the U.S. in 1949 under the Displaced Persons Act and told officials he worked during the war in a woodshop and farm in occupied Poland. In 2003, he was stripped of his U.S. citizenship for "participation in acts against Jewish civilians" and ordered deported. Germany, Poland, Ukraine and others refused to accept him. It wasn't until 2018 that Germany finally acceded.

[*Jewish Press*](#), Jan. 13, 2019)

EX-PM PAUL MARTIN RECOMMENDS IRWIN COTLER FOR A NOBEL PRIZE (Montreal) — Former Prime Minister Paul Martin and former Jewish Agency chair Natan Sharansky have endorsed Irwin Cotler for this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Cotler was nominated by Gerald Steinberg, founder of NGO Monitor, an Israeli-based academic research institute. Cotler served as justice minister and attorney general in Martin's Liberal cabinet from 2003 to 2006. Steinberg cites Cotler's lifelong human rights advocacy, especially on behalf of political prisoners. After leaving politics in 2015, Cotler founded the Montreal-based Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights. ([*CJN*](#), Jan. 10, 2019)

[*On Topic Links*](#)

[A Look at Large-Scale Extremist Attacks in Kenya: *National Post*, Jan. 15, 2019](#)—Here is a look at large-scale extremist attacks in Kenya over the years...

[Is Rashida Tlaib Guilty of Bigotry?: Alan M. Dershowitz, *Gatestone Institute*, Jan. 9, 2019](#) —If Congress were considering legislation prohibiting boycotts directed against gays, women or Muslim owned companies, would Senator Bernie Sanders be arguing that such a ban would violate the First Amendment?

['Jewish Voice for Peace' Group Showcases Palestinian Woman With Assault Rifle, Defends 'Right to Resist Military Occupation': *Algemeiner*, Jan. 11, 2019](#)—An anti-Zionist Jewish group shared a drawing on Wednesday of a Jewish woman holding hands with a Palestinian counterpart who was armed with an assault rifle and bullets, before defending what it described as "the right to resist military occupation."

[The Man Who Humbled Qassim Suleimani: Bret Stephens, *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2019](#)—"We struck thousands of targets without claiming responsibility or asking for credit."