

WEDNESDAY'S "NEWS IN REVIEW" ROUND-UP
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Contents: | [Weekly Quotes](#) | [Short Takes](#) | [On Topic Links](#)

[On Topic Links](#)

[Finding the Way Forward on Iran: Bret Stephes, *New York Times*, Jan. 5, 2018](#)

[Team Trump Finally Starts Treating Palestinians Fairly: Editorial, *New York Post*, Jan. 3, 2018](#)

[Syria's Post-ISIS Future \(Audio Briefing\): Hillel Frisch, *Middle East Forum*, Jan. 3, 2018](#)

[Canada's Top 10 List of Anti-Semitic/Anti-Israel Incidents in 2017: Avi Benlolo, *Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center*, Jan. 5, 2018](#)

WEEKLY QUOTES

"...(We're) still working with Pakistan, and we would restore the aid if we see decisive movements against the terrorists who are as much of a threat against Pakistan as they are against us." — U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis. Mattis said last week that the U.S. is still working with Pakistan to coordinate military

supply routes needed for the fight in Afghanistan, even though the Trump administration suspended security assistance to the country. President Trump last week criticized U.S. assistance to Pakistan, saying that Washington gives the country “billions of dollars” and gets “nothing” in return. ([The Hill](#), Jan. 5, 2018)

“We do not have any alliance (with the US)...This is not how allies behave.” — Khawaja Asif, Pakistan’s foreign minister. Pakistan has said it is being treated like a “whipping boy” and has no alliance with the US after Washington suspended at least \$900m in security assistance for failing to take “decisive action” against terrorist networks. The funding freeze, along with a decision to place Pakistan on a watchlist for “severe violations of religious freedom”, is the most forceful US effort in years to pressure Islamabad to rein in terrorists. Asif also described Washington as “a friend who always betrays”. ([Guardian](#), Jan. 5, 2018)

“We pay the Palestinians HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS a year and get no appreciation or respect...With the Palestinians no longer willing to talk peace...why should we make any of these massive future payments to them?” —President Trump, in a pair of tweets. The tweets, on a day Trump also took jabs at Iran, North Korea and Pakistan, echoed remarks made by UN Amb. Nikki Haley threatening that the U.S. would stop providing financial support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which assists Palestinian refugees throughout the region, unless the Palestinians returned to the negotiating table. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

“The president is fed up with this phenomena of trashing the United States at the U.N. and then asking us for money. Ambassador Haley shares that view...The process going forward is how to translate that presidential directive into actual policy.” — A senior U.S. administration official. According to four administration officials who are involved in the debate, Haley has been pushing for a total cut in U.S. funding for UNRWA in response to the Palestinian Authority’s actions following Trump’s announcement that the U.S. was officially recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Sources close to Haley said she does not advocate abolishing UNRWA altogether, as some pro-Israel Republicans have long

advocated. She simply believes that there can be no more business as usual when it comes to giving aid to countries that oppose U.S. policy. ([Washington Post](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

"We will not be blackmailed...President Trump has sabotaged our search for peace, freedom and justice. Now he dares to blame the Palestinians for the consequences of his own irresponsible actions!" — Hanan Ashrawi, a senior Palestinian official, in a statement last Wednesday. Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for PA President Mahmoud Abbas, was also angry. "Jerusalem and its holy places are not for sale," he said, "not with gold nor with silver." ([New York Times](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

"Instead of being refugees forever they could build their present and their future...But to stop all the money that is going to UNRWA overnight would be devastating. It should be a process during which the Palestinians take on responsibility and slowly, slowly UNRWA ceases to exist." — Yaakov Amidror, a former national security adviser to Netanyahu and now a fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategic Studies. The relationship between Israel and the UNRWA is complicated. Israel has accused the agency of perpetuating the Palestinian refugee problem, while at the same time valuing the education, health care and food assistance it provides to more than two million Palestinians registered as refugees in the West Bank and Gaza. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

"President Trump is not afraid to say the truth, even if it's not popular...The truth is the U.S. has no interest in funding those who act against its interest. The truth is the Palestinian leadership continues to fund terrorists, using U.S. tax money." — Naftali Bennett, education minister and leader of the Jewish Home party. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

"Look at the recent days' incidents...All those who are at odds with the Islamic Republic have utilized various means, including money, weapons, politics and (the) intelligence apparatus, to create problems for the Islamic system, the Islamic

Republic and the Islamic Revolution." — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader. Breaking his silence over nationwide protests that included calls for his ouster, Khamenei blamed the demonstrations on "enemies of Iran," saying they were meddling in its internal affairs. The protests began Dec. 28 in Mashhad over the weak economy and a jump in food prices. They have since expanded to nearly every province. Khamenei warned of an enemy "waiting for an opportunity, for a crack through which it can infiltrate." ([CTV](#), Jan. 2, 2017)

"If we're committed to helping Iran's freedom-seekers, it's time to hit the regime's propaganda organs. They managed to convince too many that Iran's popular uprising is over — even as it rages on after nearly two weeks, at least two-dozen deaths and thousands sent to notorious prison dungeons...As the state-controlled media pushes the line that anti-regime protests are winding down, Iranians are still urging President Trump to sanction Tehran's top mouthpiece, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting...Why IRIB? It controls all television and radio broadcasting inside Iran, and has several Arabic-language stations across the Mideast, as well as in other languages — including Press TV here and in Britain. In 2013, Congress sanctioned IRIB because, according to the legislation, it often broadcasts "forced televised confessions and show trials" and is used to violate other human rights. But in February 2014, President Barack Obama signed a waiver, which since has been renewed every six months, including twice by Trump, ending the sanctions." — Benny Avni. ([New York Post](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

"The Iranian authorities have an appalling track record of carrying out mass arbitrary arrests of peaceful demonstrators...Given the alarming scale of the current wave of arrests, it is highly likely that many of those held are peaceful protesters who have been detained arbitrarily and now find themselves in prisons where conditions are dire and torture is a common tool to extract confessions and punish dissidents." — Philip Luther, Amnesty International. More than a thousand people have reportedly been rounded up and detained in Iran, as authorities try to quell the largest street protests in nearly a decade. Last week, the head of Iran's Revolutionary Court warned that arrested demonstrators could face the death penalty. The unrest has claimed at least 22 lives. ([Washington Post](#), Jan. 4, 2018)

"The Iranians are coasting into the Middle East undisturbed and with very large forces, in a way that virtually creates an air and land corridor that pours fighters into the region in order to actualize the Iranian vision." — Mossad chief Yossi Cohen. Cohen spoke at a Ministry of Finance conference regarding the recent protests in Iran. He stated that "Israel has eyes and ears there, too," and added that he would be "happy to see a social revolution in Iran." In his opinion, "a revolution might happen tomorrow or in the future - but they are facing forces that are no less than death squads, against anybody who tries to raise their head in Iran." ([Jerusalem Post](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

"Foreign banks and bankers have a choice. You can choose willfully to help Iran and other sanctioned nations evade U.S. law, or you can choose to be part of the international banking community transacting in U.S. dollars. But you can't do both." — Joon H. Kim, the acting U.S. attorney. Turkish banker Mehmet Hakan Atila was convicted of taking part in a billion-dollar scheme to evade U.S. sanctions against Iran, in a case that painted a picture of high-level corruption in Turkey and heightened tensions between the United States and a NATO ally. Erdogan has denounced the charges against the banker and eight co-defendants, and repeatedly urged U.S. officials to drop the case. Atila was described by prosecutors as a "fixer" who helped Iran circumvent the sanctions and gain access to billions of restricted petrodollar funds that were being held at the bank. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

[Contents](#)

SHORT TAKES

ISRAELI KILLED IN WEST BANK DRIVE-BY SHOOTING (Jerusalem) — A resident of the Havat Gilad outpost in central Samaria was killed on Tuesday night close to his home, in a drive-by shooting attack on Route 60. Rabbi Raziel Shevach, 35, a

***mohel*, was married with six children, four daughters and two sons, ages 11 to eight months. Hamas issued a statement late Tuesday night praising the attack. "We bless the heroic Nablus operation which comes as a result of the Zionist occupation's violations and crimes at the expense of our people in the West Bank and Jerusalem." ([Jerusalem Post](#), Jan. 9, 2018)**

SYRIA CONFIRMS ISRAEL STRIKES NEAR DAMASCUS (Damascus) — Israel attacked an arms depot of a Syrian army base near Damascus on Tuesday with jets and ground-to-ground missiles, the Syrian army confirmed. The Syrian army added that their air defense systems prevented three separate strikes, saying that the incident proves Israel's support for anti-regime organizations. The Israeli military declined to comment on the matter. On Sunday, the Israeli security cabinet convened on the situation on the Lebanese and Syrian borders. Senior Israeli officials expressed concerns over developments on the northern front amid Iran's growing influence in the region. ([Ha'aretz](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

I.S. SETS ITS SIGHTS ON GAZA (Jerusalem) — For several years now, Hamas in the Gaza Strip and I.S. in Sinai have been cooperating with each other in smuggling weapons and terrorists over the border between Egypt and Gaza. It appears, however, that the honeymoon between the two terror groups is over. Last week, I.S. published a video documenting the execution of one of its men after he was found guilty of smuggling weapons to Hamas in Gaza. The execution of Musa Abu Zmat, a former Hamas terrorist who fled the Gaza Strip to join I.S., took place in Sinai. ([Gatestone Institute](#), Jan. 10, 2018)

TAPES REVEAL EGYPTIAN LEADERS' TACIT ACCEPTANCE OF JERUSALEM MOVE (Cairo) — As Trump moved to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, an Egyptian intelligence officer quietly placed phone calls to the hosts of several talk shows in Egypt. "Like all our Arab brothers," Egypt would denounce the decision in public, the officer, Capt. Ashraf al-Kholi, told the hosts. But strife with Israel was not in Egypt's interest, Captain Kholi said. He told the hosts that instead of condemning the decision, they should persuade their viewers to accept it. Palestinians, he suggested, should content themselves with the town that

currently houses the PA, Ramallah. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 6, 2018)

EGYPT SETS VOTE AS EL-SISI RIVAL BACKS OUT (Cairo) — Egypt's election body said that the a presidential election will be held in March. So far the race has only one contender: incumbent Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. His most serious possible challenger to date, former premier and air force general Ahmed Shafiq, backed out of contention after a mysterious string of events. Shafiq had announced his intention to compete in a video recorded from the UAE. But shortly after his return from the UAE, Shafiq disappeared, and his family had feared he'd been kidnapped. Shafiq — Mubarak's last prime minister — re-surfaced, saying that he was fine, but was reconsidering his candidacy. ([Bloomberg](#), Jan. 8, 2018)

PA ARRESTS BROKERS WHO SOLD LAND TO JEWS (Jerusalem) — According to *Ma'an*, the PA General Intelligence Service (GIS) in Qalqilya arrested four Arab real estate brokers suspected of attempting to "divert land to the occupation," or, more simply, sell land to Israeli customers. "Palestinian land laws" cover the ownership of land under the Palestinian Authority. These laws prohibit PA Arabs from selling Arab-owned lands to "any man or judicial body corporation of Israeli citizenship, living in Israel or acting on its behalf." Land sales to Jews are considered treason by the PA, because they encourage "the spread of moral, political and security corruption." Arabs who sell land to Israelis may be sentenced to death, although death sentences have only rarely been carried out. ([Breaking Israel News](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

ISRAEL PUBLISHES BDS BLACKLIST (Jerusalem) — Israel published the full list of organizations whose activists will be barred from entering the country. Members of the 20 organizations on the list will not be allowed to enter the country due to their support for the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement. The list includes European and U.S. organizations as well as groups from Latin America, a group from South Africa and an international umbrella organization. Those who hold senior positions in blacklisted organizations will be denied entry, as well as key activists. Establishment figures who promote boycotts will also be prevented from entering. Read the list of organizations [here](#). ([Ha'aretz](#), Jan. 7, 2018)

ISRAEL TO EXPEL NEARLY 40,000 ILLEGAL AFRICAN MIGRANTS (Jerusalem) — Israel began implementing a plan to expel tens of thousands of illegal African migrants by April, and officials are threatening to detain those who stay. Under the program, some 38,000 migrants who entered the country illegally, mainly Eritreans and Sudanese, have until the end of March to leave. Each person will be given a plane ticket and \$3,500 to do so. After the deadline has passed, this amount of money will decrease and those who continue to refuse to go will face arrest. Holot, a facility in Israel's desert south where migrants can stay when they're not working is also set to be closed. ([Fox News](#), Jan. 4, 2018)

I.S. ATTACK KILLS AT LEAST 20 IN KABUL (Kabul) — A suicide bomber working for I.S. attacked a market where shopkeepers were protesting against the police in Kabul, killing at least 20 people and wounding more than two dozen others. A government spokesman said that civilians and members of the security forces were among the casualties. In recent months, the group also carried out what officials called the deadliest terrorist attack in modern Egyptian history, which took the lives of more than 300 people at a Sufi mosque. Last week, the group claimed an attack on a Shiite cultural center in western Kabul that left at least 40 people dead and dozens wounded. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 4, 2018)

AHMADINEJAD ARRESTED FOR 'INCITING VIOLENCE' IN IRAN (Tehran) — Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was reportedly arrested for "inciting violence" as the protests against the Tehran government and skyrocketing food prices began. Ahmadinejad was busted for comments he made during a Dec. 28 protest in the western Iranian city of Bushehr, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* reported. Ahmadinejad, whom Iranian officials will seek to keep under house arrest, was critical of the regime and President Hassan Rouhani. News of the arrest of the 61-year-old Ahmadinejad, who served as president between 2005 and 2013, come as the powerful Revolutionary Guard on Sunday said the protests had ended and again blamed the violence on the United States, Britain and Israel. ([New York Post](#), Jan. 7, 2018)

ROHINGYA MILITANTS CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR ATTACK (Rangoon) — A resistance group in Myanmar claimed responsibility for an ambush of government forces in Rakhine State that left three people wounded, saying it had no choice but to defend the Rohingya from “state-sponsored terrorism.” The commander of the rebel group said the attack in Maungdaw had been in response to efforts by Myanmar’s security forces to drive the Rohingya, a Muslim minority in a Buddhist-majority country, from the area. More than 650,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since the Myanmar military began its campaign in August, joining roughly 87,000 who had fled earlier. ([New York Times](#), Jan. 7, 2018)

COURT REJECTS OTTAWA'S BID TO HALT SAUDI ARMS DEAL LAWSUIT (Ottawa) — A Federal Court judge has rejected the Trudeau government's attempt to sink a fresh legal challenge of the \$15-billion sale of armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia, saying evidence showing Canadian-made machines being deployed in a Saudi neighbourhood has breathed life into the matter. This means a new lawsuit to block these arms exports will be allowed to proceed and Ottawa will be forced to shed light on what happened in the summer of 2017 when Canadian-made armoured vehicles were filmed taking part in a fight between Riyadh and residents of the Saudi kingdom's Eastern Province. ([Globe & Mail](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

ACADEMIA'S NEWEST TARGET: 'WHITE-INFORMED CIVILITY' (Chicago) — Two professors from the University of Northern Iowa published a study that purports to show how “whiteness-informed civility” works to “create a good White identity,” “erase racial identity,” and “assert control of space.” The study, in the *Howard Journal of Communications*, claims that “civility within higher education is a racialized, rather than universal, norm.” The study reportedly shows that “civility, as currently practiced in America, is a white construct,” and that, “in a campus setting, the ‘woke’ white student’s endeavor to avoid microaggressions against black peers is itself a microaggression—a form of noblesse oblige whereby white students are in fact patronizing students of color.” ([The College Fix](#), Jan. 4, 2018)

ISRAEL PREPARING FOR HEZBOLLAH ATTACK ON ITS GAS RIGS (Tel Aviv) — Last November, the Israeli Navy and the Air Force’s air defense corps carried out a

successful test of an Iron Dome system mounted on a Navy Sa'ar 5 corvette. The IDF noted that the system is expected to provide a defensive response against rocket fire for Israel's economic assets on the high seas. The Iron Dome system placed on the Sa'ar 5, as part of the Navy's preparations against Hezbollah threats, is capable of intercepting missile fire going in the direction of the platforms. ([Jewish Press](#), Jan. 3, 2018)

ISRAEL SEEKS TO REVIVE ABANDONED RAILWAY TO GULF (Haifa) — On Dec. 13, Israeli Minister of Intelligence and Transportation Yisrael Katz announced Israel's intention to revive the Hejaz railway project linking the Israeli port of Haifa to the Gulf states. The Hejaz railway was built in 1908 to link Damascus to Medina through the Hejaz region of Saudi Arabia. It was supposed to extend to Mecca to facilitate pilgrimage to the holy city. A branch was added to the railway to Haifa. But when World War I broke out, the railway and its branches were partially destroyed and the rest closed. Katz pointed out that the project's studies have been completed and its designs and plans are ready to execute within a year or two if approved by both Jordan and the Gulf states. ([Al-Monitor](#), Jan. 9, 2018)

500-THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE UNCOVERED IN ISRAEL (Tel Aviv) — A 500,000-year-old prehistoric site was exposed in the Arab town of Jaljulya in central Israel, according to the Israel Antiquities Authority and Tel Aviv University. Hundreds of thousands of flint-stone tools from the lower Paleolithic era were uncovered in an area spanning nearly 2.5 acres, a rare find that is one of very few of its kind in the Levant region. Most of the tools found are hand axes, almond-shaped instruments that demanded much technical ingenuity and technological creativity of the people who made them. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Jan. 7, 2018)

[On Topic Links](#)

[Finding the Way Forward on Iran: Bret Stephes, *New York Times*, Jan. 5, 2018](#)—Last May an article in this newspaper asked, “Is Iran a democracy or a dictatorship?” After more than a week of protests in as many as 80 Iranian cities, it’s safe to say we have the answer. Again.

[Team Trump Finally Starts Treating Palestinians Fairly: Editorial, *New York Post*, Jan. 3, 2018](#)—In yet another sign that he’s no longer wedded to the failed policies of the past, President Trump just threatened to cut funding to the Palestinians, who are “no longer willing to talk peace.”

[Syria's Post-ISIS Future \(Audio Briefing\): Hillel Frisch, *Middle East Forum*, Jan. 3, 2018](#)—With the demise of the Islamic State, Syrian President Bashar Assad defeated the foremost threat to his regime thanks to Russian and Iranian support.

[Canada's Top 10 List of Anti-Semitic/Anti-Israel Incidents in 2017: Avi Benlolo, *Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center*, Jan. 5, 2018](#)—The Simon Wiesenthal Center released its Top 10 List of Worst Global Anti-Semitic and Anti-Israel Incidents in 2017. Aptly, the hate and intolerance which manifested in Charlottesville this past summer topped the list. It's still incomprehensible for any sensible person to imagine that in 2017 a massive group actually marched with torches in hand yelling "Jews will not replace us."