

Wednesday's "News in Review" Round-Up
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WEEKLY QUOTES

"I think it is important that we in the free world not accept the occupation of Crimea, that we continue to resist, and sanction the occupation of Crimea, and that there be no return to business as usual with the Putin regime until such time the occupation of Crimea ends," —Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper,

condemning Russian President Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea during remarks in Kyiv Saturday that got wide play on Ukrainian television. ([National Post](#), Mar. 23, 2014)

"Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors, not out of strength but out of weakness... The fact that Russia felt compelled to go in militarily and laid bare these violations of international law indicates less influence, not more," —U.S. President Barack Obama, during an exchange yesterday with ABC's Jonathan Karl. ([Commentary](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

"We express our total rejection of the call to consider Israel as a Jewish state," — statement from the final day of the Arab summit in Kuwait. The Arab League announced on Wednesday its full backing of a Palestinian refusal to meet Israel's demand to be recognized as a Jewish state, a condition Jerusalem says it requires for peace. On Tuesday Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas addressed the Arab heads, reiterating his refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state and said that the Palestinians want an independent state on "all the territories that were occupied in 1967." ([Jerusalem Post](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

"I don't see how the Palestinians or the Arab world can accept that premise, that Israel is an exclusively Jewish state," — former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, in an interview with *The Associated Press*. Carter added that "this has never been put forward in any of the negotiations in which I was involved as president, or any president, before (Benjamin) Netanyahu became prime minister this time. And now it has been put into the forefront of consideration...Israel can claim 'We are a Jewish state.' I don't think the Arab countries will contradict that Jewish statement. But to force the Arab people to say that all the Arab people that they have in Israel have to be Jews, I think that's going too far." Carter accepts the absurd premise of Palestinian Arabs, as well as others across the Arab world, that if Israel is recognized as a Jewish state then it means that only Jews can live there. About a fourth of Israel's people are Arab or other non-Jewish citizens. ([Associated Press](#), Mar. 24, 2014)

"It is ugly...People are saying: 'Is this the history of Fatah? Collaborators, corruption and killers — is this us?' " —Mahdi Abdul Hadi, the director of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, an independent research institute in East Jerusalem. Palestinians say they are baffled by PA President Abbas's decision to open up another front within his own Fatah

movement by beginning a nasty, public campaign against a onetime ally, who Abbas now sees as a rival, Muhammad Dahlan, a former Gaza strongman and Fatah security chief. Arabic media has been filled with unproved accusations by Abbas about the long-ago killings of prominent Palestinians, and by both men about collaboration with Israel and financial corruption. Abbas even implied that Dahlan might have had a hand in the mysterious death of Yasir Arafat in 2004. For the most part, the two camps have not offered detailed responses to all the accusations. Months ago, through an Arab-Israeli law firm, Mr. Dahlan filed a complaint against the Palestinian Authority leadership in the International Criminal Court, accusing it of corruption, violations of human rights and political and personal persecution. ([New York Times](#), Mar. 22, 2014)

"Mr. President: I am writing for your immediate consideration. It has been reported in the press and confirmed to me by a Knesset member that President Abbas requested your assistance in securing the release of Marwan Barghouti as a condition for continued peace talks with Israel. I sincerely request that you please not assist in any way in the release of this unrepentant mass-murderer. Tomorrow will mark 12 years since our oldest son, then seven years old, and I were wounded in a suicide bombing in downtown Jerusalem. Yehonathon had the head of a screw pass fully through his right brain, while I had two screws pass through my left arm... The role of Marwan Barghouti in this attack was revealed in indictments against the heads of the Fatah terror cell behind the attack... The media have attempted to portray Marwan Barghouti as some kind of Nelson Mandela. The truth though is quite the opposite. Barghouti has never renounced violence as a legitimate means for advancing political goals, and he has never shown any remorse for his prolific terror activities that led to a forty-count indictment against him. Instead, he has encouraged additional "resistance" (i.e., terror) from his jail cell. Barghouti's release may convince the Palestinians to sit around the table for an extra couple of months, but it will not bring peace..." — Alan Joseph Bauer, in a letter to U.S. President Obama. In order to continue the "peace process," the PA has again made a ridiculous demand: the release of two major terror leaders, Marwan Barghouti and Ahmed Sadaat. The request to release the two terrorists was made directly to President Obama. ([Jewish Press](#), Mar. 23, 2014)

"Twitter, schmitter...I don't care what the international community says. Everyone will witness the power of the Turkish Republic." —Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in a speech to supporters in the northwest town of Bursa, vowing to "root out" the social media platform. Last week Turkey's telecommunications authority served court papers on internet companies, ordering them to pull the

plug on Twitter. Turkey had become only the second country - along with China - to try to block it entirely. From a technical perspective, the ban hasn't worked well. Millions of tweets continue to come from Turkey, despite the fact authorities have been implementing increasingly tighter controls. Turks have become adept at tweaking their internet settings by installing and using anti-censorship software. ([CBC](#), Mar. 24, 2014)

"We, the members of the Christian Lobby in Israel, found it appropriate to turn to you and cry out about the human and citizens' rights condition of our Christian brothers across the Middle East. The slaughter, persecution, discrimination, apartheid, the ethnic cleansing, and all the crimes committed against the Indigenous Aramaic & Christians of the Middle East, in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Gaza, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority, among others, and continue to be committed without any intervention of the Western countries," letter from the Christian Lobby in Israel to the EU Ambassador in Israel and 18 other western Ambassadors, protesting the EU's silence in relation to what they termed "the ethnic cleansing of Christians throughout the Middle East." ([Jewish Press](#), Mar. 23, 2014)

"Unfortunately, antisemitism at U.S. colleges, and, especially, in California, is growing at an alarming rate," Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, a University of California professor and Jewish advocacy group AMCHA Initiative cofounder. "It is a concern we hear about daily from members of California's Jewish community, including university alumni, rabbis, professors, religious school principals and, of course, students, parents and grandparents." The leadership of the AMCHA Initiative will testified Friday, March 21, before a California Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate, urging members to examine campus antisemitism and to take the proper steps to ensure Jewish students feel safe and welcome at California's colleges and universities. ([Jewish Press](#), Mar. 21, 2014)

SHORT TAKES

US WON'T RELEASE POLLARD TO AID ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN TALKS (Washington) — Jonathan Pollard will not be released by the U.S. government in a move to extend the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. "There are currently no plans to release Jonathan Pollard," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told

the *Jerusalem Post*, adding that Pollard was convicted "of a very serious crime, was sentenced to life in prison, and is serving his sentence." The statement came after Israel's *Army Radio*, citing diplomatic sources, reported Wednesday that the U.S. had agreed to free Pollard in a deal to extend the April 30 deadline on negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Pollard pleaded guilty in 1986 to passing U.S. national defense information to the Israeli government, and is serving a life sentence. ([Newsmax](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

MOLDOVA FEARS TERRITORY'S TILT TOWARD RUSSIA (Tirasopol) — The Russian annexation of Crimea is threatening to reignite a conflict in an often forgotten corner of Europe. This week, lawmakers in Transnistria, a thin strip of land sandwiched between Ukraine and the former Soviet republic of Moldova, formally asked the Duma, Russia's parliament, if it could follow Crimea and join the Russian Federation. Transnistria declared independence from Moldova in 1990, but no U.N. member recognized it. Some two decades after a brief war flared between Transnistrian separatists and Moldovan government forces, the territory has autonomous status inside Moldova, with its own government, flag, police, military and currency. Its 509,000 inhabitants are a mix of ethnic Russians, Moldovans, Ukrainians and Bulgarians. ([Wall Street Journal](#), Mar. 21, 2014)

'MOST ADVANCED' GAZA-ISRAEL TUNNEL IS FOUND (Jerusalem) — The Israeli military announced that it had uncovered a sophisticated tunnel that stretched hundreds of yards into its territory from the Gaza Strip and could have been used to attack or kidnap Israelis. Lt. Col. Peter Lerner, a military spokesman, told reporters that fresh footprints and tools found inside the tunnel from southern Gaza suggested it had been worked on even "in the last few days," and that its design, with many offshoots, made it "the most advanced tunnel that we've exposed." The IDF found three similar tunnels under the Gaza border fence last year, but Colonel Lerner described the recently discovered one as "the most substantial." In 2006, Palestinian militants used a tunnel to enter Israel, kill two soldiers and kidnap a third, Gilad Shalit, who was held for five years. ([New York Times](#), Mar. 21, 2014)

EGYPT SENTENCES 529 MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD MEMBERS TO DEATH (Cairo) — An Egyptian court sentenced 529 members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood to death for murder and other offenses on Monday, in a sharp escalation of a crackdown on the Islamist movement. Family members stood outside the courthouse screaming after the verdict - the biggest mass death sentence handed out in Egypt's modern history. Supporters set fire to a nearby school in protest, state television reported. Turmoil has deepened since the army overthrew Egypt's

president, Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, in July. Security forces have killed hundreds of Brotherhood members in the streets and arrested thousands. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Mar. 24, 2014)

PAN-ARAB UNITY NOT EVIDENT AT THIS WEEK'S SUMMIT (Kuwait City) — Pan-Arabists claim that Arabs belong to one nation, and Arab summits tend to play lip service to such lofty ideological rhetoric, though it mostly rings hollow. Presenting this line, Kuwait's emir and the host of this week's Arab League summit, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, said Tuesday, "The dangers around us are enormous and we will not move towards joint Arab action without our unity and without casting aside our differences." However, on almost every issue, the Arab states are divided on how to proceed, whether it be on Syria, Iraq, Egypt or on how to deal with Iran. Because of the divisions among the Gulf states, the US canceled a meeting scheduled for later this week between President Barack Obama and Gulf leaders. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

CANADIANS AMONG NINE KILLED IN KABUL HOTEL ATTACK (Kabul) — A Taliban assault on the restaurant of a luxury hotel, considered one of the safest places in Kabul and frequented by foreigners and Afghan officials, has swelled a tide of violence sweeping Afghanistan two weeks before a presidential election. Three children between two and five were found with bullets in their heads. Four of the nine dead were foreigners. The Interior Ministry gave conflicting accounts of their nationalities, but by late Friday said they included citizens of Canada and Paraguay. The Islamist Taliban movement has ordered its fighters to use "full force" to disrupt the vote, and threatened to kill anyone who participates in what it calls a Western-backed sham. ([Reuters](#), Mar. 20, 2014)

CSIS TRACKS 80 'FOREIGN FIGHTERS' BACK IN CANADA (Ottawa)— Intelligence officials are aware of about 80 Canadians who have returned home after going overseas for "terrorist purposes," according to speaking notes prepared for the director of the nation's spy agency. The document does not offer explicit information about their activities, though it makes it clear that not all were involved in combat. While some individuals may have engaged in paramilitary activities, others are believed to have studied in extremist Islamic schools or provided logistical or fundraising support. Others never achieved their goals and simply returned home. The so-called "foreign fighter" phenomenon has become a growing concern for the intelligence community, stoking fears that individuals could return to Canada more radicalized than when they left. ([National Post](#), Mar.

23, 2014)

BDS RESOLUTION DEFEATED AT UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN (Ann Arbor) — A resolution to begin a process to divest from companies that invest or operate in Israel was defeated by the U of M student government Wednesday morning. After a six-hour session, which included speeches by dozens of students, two Jewish professors and the anti-Israel journalist and author Max Blumenthal, who used the forum to repeatedly pitch his new book, the Central Student Government voted down the resolution, 25 to nine, with five abstentions. The vote was taken by secret ballot, as some members of the CSG had said they were intimidated by proponents of the resolution at its previous meeting. *The Washington Free Beacon* reported on Monday that at least one pro-Israel student "received death threats and that others have allegedly been called 'kikes' and 'dirty Jews'" by proponents of the resolution. ([Algemeiner](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

ASSAILANTS BREAK JEWISH TEACHER'S NOSE IN PARIS, DRAW SWASTIKA ON CHEST (Paris) — A Jewish teacher from Paris told police that three men had assaulted and cursed him in Arabic before drawing a swastika on his chest, according to a report by the Drancy-based Bureau for National Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism (BNVCA). "They pressed him to the wall and hit his face, around the eyes and on his chest," the report said. "One of the perpetrators opened the victim's shirt and with a black marker drew a swastika on the man's bare chest," BNVCA president Sammy Ghozlan wrote in the report. The victim, who was wearing a kippah at the time of the attack, told police that the three men who attacked him appeared to be of North African descent and were in their twenties. They shouted "death to the Jews" and called him "dirty Jew" in French and also shouted insults in Arabic. BNVCA has recorded a spate of antisemitic incidents in France in recent weeks. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Mar. 23, 2014)

NORWEGIAN MUSEUM TO RETURN LOOTED MATISSE (Oslo) — A Norwegian museum says it has agreed to return a Henri Matisse artwork once looted by Nazi leader Hermann Goering to the family of Jewish art dealer Paul Rosenberg. The 1937 painting, *Woman in Blue in Front of a Fireplace*, has been the centerpiece of the Henie Onstad Art Center near Oslo since the museum was established in 1968. The museum said in a statement Thursday that although it acquired the painting in good faith, it has "chosen to adhere to international conventions and return the painting to Rosenberg's heirs." Norway is a signatory of the 1998 Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, which requires museums to review

their collections for potentially looted works and when such a work is found, to try to locate rightful owners. ([CBC](#), Mar. 21, 2014)

MOSSAD BRINGS AN END TO THE MYSTERY OF MISSING IRANIAN JEWS (Tel Aviv)— Mossad has brought an end to the mystery surrounding the disappearance of eight Iranian Jews in the 1990s, the Prime Minister's Office announced on Thursday, saying they had been murdered. The families of eight out of 11 Iranian Jews who went missing two decades ago received notifications that their relatives had been slain while trying to immigrate to Israel. In a statement, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's office said that Mossad had investigated and "received from a reliable source, privy to the details, information that these Jews were captured and murdered while escaping [Iran]." The statement did not elaborate on who might have carried out the killings. The investigation into the fate of the remaining three Iranian Jews, who disappeared in 1997, remains ongoing. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Mar. 20, 2014)

EUROPEAN RABBIS COMMEMORATE THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXTERMINATION OF HUNGARIAN JEWRY (Budapest) — More than 200 rabbis on Monday commemorated the 70th anniversary of the extermination of Hungarian Jewry by the Nazis, during a memorial in Budapest. The commemoration was organized in the framework of the two-day annual conference of the Rabbinical Center of Europe, an organization dedicated to assist rabbis across the continent. The conference brought more than 200 rabbis from across Europe and Israel in the Hungarian capital in order to discuss issues relating to assimilation and communal attrition. Singing "Ani Maamin," a Hebrew song affirming belief in the coming of the Messiah, the Chief Rabbis, heading a long train of black clad ultra-orthodox Jews marched several blocks along the banks of the Danube River to the Shoes on the Danube Promenade, a Holocaust memorial site. ([European Jewish Press](#), Mar. 26, 2014)

[On Topic Links](#)

[Before Peace Now: Palestinian Democracy First: Gil Troy, Jerusalem Post, Mar. 25, 2014](#) — President Barack Obama's disproportionate pressure on Israel in the peace talks is both one-sided and shortsighted.

[It's Always 'Groundhog Day' With the Israeli-Palestinian 'Peace Process': Nicole](#)

Brackman & Asaf Romirowsky, *Washington Examiner*, Mar. 19, 2014 –The 1993 movie "Groundhog Day," in which the character played by Bill Murray relives the same day over and over again, is an apt description of official Palestinian attitudes toward Israel and the peace process.

Obama Loses Complete Touch with Reality: Peter Wehner, *Commentary*, Mar. 26, 2014 – Last week I wrote that President Obama, having been bested by Vladimir Putin at virtually every turn, has retreated into a world of his own making.

Russia Threatens More Than Neighbors: Jonathan S. Tobin, *Commentary*, Mar. 25, 2014 – Today while speaking at The Hague during a meeting of the newly contracted G-7 Nations, President Obama threatened Russia with expanded sanctions.

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