

New Cracow Friendship Society, Inc.

3905 Arthur Avenue North, Seaford, N.Y. 11783

CRACOW FRIENDSHIP

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW CRACOW FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY



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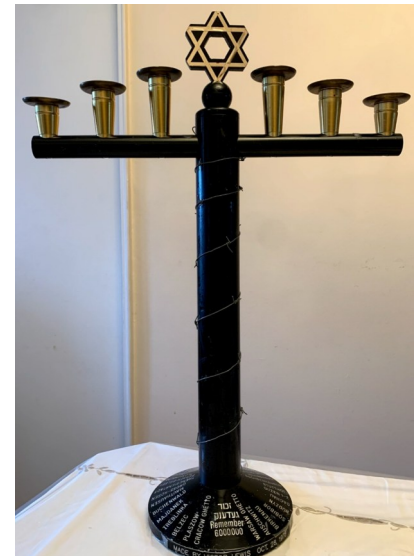
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WE WISH ALL OF OUR
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
A ZIESEN PESACH

APRIL 25, 2025



VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE: www.newcracow.org

CONTACT US AT: info@newcracow.org

תחי מדינת ישראל ועם ישראל

LONG LIVE THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

**NEW CRACOW FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER**

President, Editor Bernice Slutzman

www.newcracow.org

Email: Newsletter@newcracow.org

EDITORIAL/PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Purim has passed and now many of us are trying to prepare for Pesach. Another of our observances where we recall that they tried to kill us, we won, let's eat.

Prior to Purim, our annual Commemoration of the Liquidation of the Kraków Ghetto was held. This year, due to scheduling difficulties, we met at the Adria in Bayside.

The program included Cantor Rosner's rendition of *Es Brent, Kel Male, Ani Maamim* and the *Partisanen Lid*. This year we had as our guest speaker, Rabbi Moshe Birnbaum of the Kew Garden Hills Jewish Center who spoke most eloquently and informatively.

As is our custom, a well appointed luncheon was provided by the Society to those in attendance. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Susan Krul Caren and an anonymous donor for covering the cost of the luncheon. Other contributors to the commemoration are listed in the Sunshine Committee Report.

In this issue you will find a report from NBC News which you may find interesting and enlightening. We offer no opinion on the article and have included it for informational purposes only.

Since our last issue, conditions in the Middle East are not improved. What we all believed and feared to be true was proven correct that the Bibas family had been killed and their bodies were kept hostage. At Purim festivities this year many of those in costume, adults and children were dressed as Batman in remembrance of the redheaded Bibas boys. When will it end?

At this holiday of redemption wish for the redemption of us all, here and in Israel.

Bernice Slutzman

LISTING OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Dear Members,

We hope this spring Newsletter finds you in the best of health as we welcome the budding signs of a new season. Happy Spring!

Our annual "Commemoration of the Liquidation of the Cracow Ghetto" held on March 9th was a great success. Much appreciation to all the members who attended our significant heartfelt event. For decades, our Lake Success Jewish Center venue was filled with hundreds of survivors and their offspring, families stemming mostly from Cracow or its vicinities. With each passing year, one can't help but notice our waning population of survivors... people to whom this annual memorial was always so deeply important and so invested. We hope that more of our 2nd and 3rd generation members will be inclined to join us next year so that together, we can pay homage to our relatives whose precious lives were ended prematurely by the most abominably pervasive evil to emerge during the 20th century. And also, to honor our family members who survived the Liquidation and the war.

I can't help but reflect on another day approaching this April 24th... Yom HaShoah, where for the past 80 years Jews worldwide have been memorializing our 6 million holy martyrs. It took only 5 years for Hitler to incubate the ideas and 7 years for his "think tank" to orchestrate a complete takeover of the European continent, filling the minds of Europe's populations with heinous propaganda which resulted in the decimation of our Jewish cities, towns and shtetlach, our Jewish People, as well as other non- Jewish citizens. This led to the demise of approximately 11 million people. These are numbers, but each one is a universe! Remember them please this coming Yom HaShoah.

In this unprecedented gutting of America's multi-systems brought upon us in our recent elections, we the People of the United States of America must keep our sights on the goals of our democratic society in which the People establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity... in order to form a more perfect Union.

No matter where our political allegiances are, we must not be fooled again. When violence against our Capitol Building is perpetrated by angry mobs attempting to stop a joint session of Congress from certifying the votes of the 2020 election and those 1,270 insurgents are pardoned 4 years later on the 1st day back in office by the President they supported in an unprecedented and dangerous use of "the pardon", this is the makings of a mockery of federal law enforcement, the democratic

institution, the rule of law and of the US justice system... and a disrespect for the lives who were lost.

When Holocaust web pages are removed by the Pentagon in an effort to erase all traces of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from government platforms (see YouTube's WUSA9), then we must certainly pay more attention to what is being perceived as political ideology and ready ourselves for the future. The next four years will indeed be challenging. We may not be able to just watch the river run. Many of us may need to choose some form of "action".

And action is also called upon more in the last 1.5 years for the welfare of Israel than ever before. Presently being attacked on all sides as in 1948 and 1967... but now by Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houti's! Support for our brothers and sisters in Eretz Yisrael is urgent.

Now back to the New Cracow Friendship Society... and action.

In previous years, my father Victor Lewis (z'l), worked diligently to support our Israeli soldiers, wounded while fighting to protect the State of Israel. He collected funds for Beit Halochem (FIDV) a rehabilitation facility for disabled veterans. Services are essential for these wounded soldiers and so is our support, more now than in 50 years before. Please refer to their website (FIDV.org) to learn about the vital services Beit Halochem offers to disabled veterans, both male and female. Please contribute by making out a check to FIDV and sending it to me at the address below, or sending a contribution to them online. Your support will change lives.

Now, I know I'm not speaking only for myself but for all our Executive Board members... We would very much like to see our 2G and 3G members at our meetings, events, parties, luncheons and get to know each other. Of course, we welcome our most senior survivors though we understand physical limitations and lacking means of transportation may hinder your attendance. If a survivor would like to attend one of our functions, please let me/us know and we'll try to arrange some transport, if possible. We don't want to see our Society go the way of many other survivor landsmanschaften- Gone to flowers, everyone! We need your voices, your ideas, your commitment to never forget, to keep the memories of our forebears alive, to celebrate their labors and their accomplishments. Though humankind seems to make the same mistakes from generation to generation, a meaningful relevant education includes teaching about tolerance, prejudice, racism, discrimination and senseless hatred. This is certainly a great tool for prevention of an individual's future errors. Redemption may have to come one person at a time! However, our Society needs volunteers to spark new programs or assist in partnering with existing ones. We invite our 2G members who are retired and free of every day all-day commitments, to please join us and see where you can plug in so the memories and lessons will not be buried in the passage of time. So much can be created and accomplished with your input and participation. So much needs to be done now, as it is time to meet the present-day challenges. Antisemitism is not a passion of the past. So please consider joining us at our next event.

Members, please remember to pay your annual dues for 2025. This can be done by mailing the renewal dues card with your check to the address below or going online www.newcracow.org and using the membership tab payable thru PayPal. Please be sure to include the proper amount for couple. Family dues do not include children over 18 years of age. Adult children require individual membership.

Any member who has purchased a plot in Beth Moses Cemetery for oneself, one's spouse or children thru the NCFS... "all plot owners" must be up to date members in good standing as agreed, or permit fees will have to be levied. If a plot was purchased for your offspring, they must become individual members.

For any member who has recently suffered the loss of a loved one, we are sorry for your loss and send our most heartfelt condolences.

And now, in closing... I wish you all a zeisen Pesach! May we enjoy the taste of freedom with each bite of matzah... for all times! See you on the other side!

Regards,

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

Please inform us via email [info@newcracow.org or brei513@aol.com] if you have moved and changed your address. The forwarding of mail stops after a year and then your correspondence returns to us, hopefully with the yellow label with your new address. When this happens, we must resend to the new address, incurring a new expense for the organization. This also prevents you from receiving certain information in a timely manner.

Thank you.

URGENT: SUPPLIES FOR THE IDF

Supplies are still being sent to assist the IDF. Specific supplies can be ordered on Amazon and shipped directly to the location where duffel bags are packed for shipment to Israel.

Among the items most requested by IDF commanders both in Gaza and in the North are:

- WETSOLS Multitools \$23.99 each
- Risen Israeli Bandage Vacuum Sterile Compression Bandages \$12.99 EACH
- JUSAID Tourniquet, \$19.99/3 pack, or other similar brand
- NOOLA 3-liter Hydration Backpack \$35.99 each
- DURACLEANSE Shower Alternative Body Wipes 100 (2-pack of 50) \$30.99

- RHINO-RESCUE Hemostatic Gauze 4" x 35" \$19.99 each
- WADEO 7200w Windproof Camping Stove \$37.99

You can open the link

<https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/12ZQ2DVTVIQPK>

registries/gl/guest-view/12ZQ2DVTVIQPK

Just be sure that you have any items ordered shipped to:

Duffel Bags for Israel
c/o Terry Ackerman
SYJCC
74 Hauppauge Road
Commack, BY 11725

There are many other items on the Amazon registry as well, so I encourage you to refer to the list. I realize that many of these items are costly, but they will make it for our soldiers and for some of the items, they will save precious lives.

Bernice Slutzman

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

March 30, 2025, 12:10 PM EDT

By Kristen Welker and Megan Lebowitz

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump did not rule out the possibility of seeking a third term in the White House, which is prohibited by the Constitution under the 22nd Amendment, saying in an exclusive interview with NBC News that there were methods for doing so and clarifying that he was “not joking.”

“A lot of people want me to do it,” Trump said in a Sunday-morning phone call with NBC News, referring to his allies. “But, I mean, I basically tell them we have a long way to go, you know, it’s very early in the administration.”

“I’m focused on the current,” Trump added, in some of his most extensive comments to date about serving a third term.

When asked whether he wanted another term, the president responded, “I like working.”

“I’m not joking,” Trump said, when asked to clarify. “But I’m not — it is far too early to think about it.”

When asked whether he has been presented with plans to allow him to seek a third term, Trump said, “There are methods which you could do it.”

NBC News asked about a possible scenario in which Vice President JD Vance would run for office and then pass the role to Trump. Trump responded that “that’s one” method.

“But there are others too,” Trump added.

Asked to share another method, Trump simply responded “no.”

Amending the Constitution to abolish the two-term limit would be exceedingly difficult, requiring either a two-thirds vote of Congress or two-thirds of the states agreeing to call a constitutional convention to The

president pointed to his poll numbers, saying that “a lot of people would like me to” hold office for a third term.

Trump has previously commented on running for a third term in office, though Republicans have seen these comments as jokes or the president trolling his critics.

Rep. Andy Ogles, R-Tenn., crafted a resolution calling for the extension of presidential term limits, which would allow Trump to seek another term in office.

Meanwhile, Trump ally Steve Bannon said in an interview on News Nation that he believes Trump will “run and win again in 2028.” Bannon said in the same interview that he thought “we’ll have a couple of alternatives” in determining how Trump could seek a third term despite the two-term maximum for holding the presidency.

The White House has amplified Trump’s comments likening himself to royalty, posting a picture of a fake magazine cover depicting the president with a crown after the administration shot down congestion pricing in New York City.

The White House’s post to X quoted Trump’s previous comments on Truth Social: “LONG LIVE THE KING!”

CEMETERY INFORMATION

Periodically I make a run to Beth Moses Cemetery. On my visits there I check on all three of our sections. I regret to inform members whose family is there that their graves are not being maintained. I have noticed that some don’t even have any plantings on the site.

Please understand that it is not the responsibility of the Society to care for these graves. Arrangements can be made with the cemetery for perpetual care or maintenance on a per year basis.

The cemetery does offer cleaning services, power washing for monuments. The prices listed are as of 2024. They may be raised in 2025.

Footstone \$115	credit card \$120
Single Stone (Headstone) \$188	credit card \$196
Granite Bench \$188	credit card \$196
Ledger \$188	credit card \$196
Double Stone \$334	credit card \$347

I shall investigate as to whether we can get a better price from outside contractors.

Bernice Slutzman
Cemetery Chairperson

DEBORAH LIPSTADT: WHY I WON’T TEACH AT COLUMBIA

I was Biden’s antisemitism envoy. I had been considering an academic appointment at the Ivy League institution. Not anymore.

Until last week, I had been seriously considering teaching at Columbia University next year as a visiting professor. But I’m now convinced that to do so would be folly—to serve as a prop or a fig leaf. Moreover, I feel

doing so would mean putting myself and my students at risk.

I have spent most of my professional career on American campuses, teaching courses on religion and history. I took a brief break to serve in the Biden administration as the United States' Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism from May 2022 to January 2025.

It was from that perch that I watched the alarming unraveling of campuses that claimed to be dedicated to the pursuit of truth transform themselves into places where basic morality had been inverted. Following Hamas's attack of October 7, 2023, things went from bad to worse.

These outrages began while I was working as a diplomat and State Department employee, and I was enjoined from involving myself in domestic matters. But I watched—often with horror—as university administrations coddled anti-Israel protesters who broke university regulations, harassed other students, and prevented the normal learning process from proceeding.

President Biden did condemn the violence, often unequivocally. "Destroying property is not a peaceful protest. It is against the law. Vandalism, trespassing, breaking windows, shutting down campuses, forcing the cancellation of classes and graduations, none of this is a peaceful protest." But there were too many moments that were met with silence.

So I was pleased and surprised last week when Barnard, the women's college of Columbia University, expelled two students who had participated in an assault on a Columbia course on the history of modern Israel in January of this year, on the first day of classes. The students marched into the room, disrupted the session, prevented it from proceeding, and distributed antisemitic flyers. One of the flyers read "Crush Zionism," and had an illustration of a boot stomping on a Star of David. Another depicted an Israeli flag on fire and bore the caption "Burn Zionism to the ground."

The class's professor, Avi Shilon, modeling true academic inquiry, invited them to join the class and the conversation. But rather than engage, they preferred to disrupt, doing so with undisguised glee and self-righteousness. But as Barnard took action, I wondered if the college would stand by its decision.

I had good reason to wonder. Over the past two years, universities have been overwhelmingly weak in their response to those clearly breaking university rules and even the law. When they have meted out punishments, often they have wound up walking them back, turning their responses into a farce.

Consider what happened at MIT in November 2023 when MIT student protesters, ignoring specific university instructions, conducted a demonstration that the university described as "disruptive, loud, and sustained" and which was "conducted in defiance" of previously issued warnings. The protest prevented research and learning. MIT "partially suspended" the students.

"Partial" meant they could not attend nonacademic events. In other words, they remained enrolled at the school.

In explaining this "partial" action, MIT's president said it had not fully suspended them because it had "serious concerns about collateral consequences for the students, such as visa issues." In other words, the protesters were foreign students and might be thrown out of the United States if they lost their student visas.

I, along with many others, thought that is exactly what should have happened. In fact, why should any student have that right?

Last year at Columbia we witnessed the same weakness when anti-Israel protesters forcibly took over Hamilton Hall, trapped custodians in the building, built encampments in violation of the university's rules—and upended school life as it existed before October 7, all with little to no consequence both from the institution and ultimately from the city of New York, which dropped all charges.

Given all this, you can understand why I wondered about Barnard's willingness to stick the landing. I was right to. Less than 24 hours after the university's expulsion of two rule-breakers—two students who had disrupted Avi Shilon's class—I had my answer.

On February 26, a group of protesters—it's unclear how many were Barnard students—outraged by the expulsions, took over Milbank Hall, which houses both the dean's office and classrooms, and demanded the reversal of the expulsion and amnesty for all those involved in the protest. They entered the building—masked and screaming—with such ferocity that an employee who confronted them was physically abused and had to be taken to the hospital. Students trying to go to class were locked out by university officials.

The same administration that had expelled two students a few days earlier engaged in multi-hour, drawn-out negotiations. The dean offered to meet with three representatives of the group—the group insisted on four—but stipulated that they come unmasked and provide identification to prove that they are indeed Barnard students. The students refused. The dean asked for permission to use the bathroom, which the student protesters were blocking. After some discussion, the students agreed. She was greeted with a chorus of boos as she made her way to and from the facility.

Classes that were to be held in that building were canceled. Consequences? None.

And so, the negotiations dragged on, effectively putting the university administrator and the protesters on equal ground. Faculty members who were present insisted that they were neutral and only wanted to prevent an escalation. Farcical. The students had already escalated the situation by their takeover and assault.

Finally, after some six hours, the students were told by the dean's office that "we will not pursue disciplinary action for your presence in the building" if they left by 10:30 p.m.

They left. Consequences? None.

There have been too many humiliating dramas like these to count over the past year and a half. But I

watched this saga with particular interest because Columbia has been urging me to consider taking a leave of absence from Emory University, where I'm a professor, to spend a semester teaching on its campus.

But watching Barnard capitulate to mob violence and fail to enforce its own rules and regulations led me to conclude that I could not go to Columbia University, even for a single semester.

I conveyed this to Columbia's administration on Friday, which prompted Columbia's interim president, Katrina Armstrong, to call me. She pointed out that the two institutions, Barnard and Columbia, while affiliated, have separate administrations, security teams, and policies. I know this is true. But its recent history regarding demonstrations suggests that it has far less than a firm commitment to the free exchange of ideas, or to preventing classroom disruptions or even condemning disrupters and their demonstrations.

During the Barnard protest, Columbia issued an anodyne statement disclaiming responsibility because the "disruption" was on Barnard's campus, not Columbia's, and asserting its commitment "to supporting our Columbia student body and our campus community during this challenging time." No condemnation.

This all occurs despite what I had seen as positive progress at Columbia. The university created an Antisemitism Task Force to explore the problem on campus. Led by three distinguished faculty members and with the participation of a number of longtime Columbia professors, the task force took its assignment with great seriousness and integrity. They interviewed hundreds of Jewish and Israeli students and repeatedly heard complaints that the university community has not treated them with the standards of civility, respect, and fairness it promises to all its students. Its report, issued in August 2024, makes for stunning reading. It found that the problems were "serious and pervasive." The faculty members who wrote it did not flinch from facing Columbia's shortcomings. They are trying to improve matters and deserve the administration's, if not the entire university's, gratitude and support.

Columbia's Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies, and its Institute of Global Politics, a subset of its School of International and Public Affairs, are bright lights at the university. SIPA is now home to former Secretaries of State Mike Pompeo, Hilary Clinton and former Ambassador Jack Lew. Many outstanding Israeli scholars, shunned by other universities because they are Israeli, have found homes there.

My decision to withdraw my name from consideration for a teaching post at Columbia is based on three calculations.

First, I am not convinced that the university is serious about taking the necessary and difficult measures that would create an atmosphere that allows for true inquiry.

Second, I fear that my presence would be used as a sop to convince the outside world that "Yes, we in the Columbia/Barnard orbit are fighting antisemitism. We

even brought in the former Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism." I will not be used to provide cover for a completely unacceptable situation.

Third, I am not sure that I would be safe or even able to teach without being harassed. I do not flinch in the face of threats. But this is not a healthy or acceptable learning environment.

On too many university campuses, the inmates—and these may include administrators, student disrupters, and off-campus agitators as well as faculty members—are running the asylum. They are turning universities into parodies of true academic inquiry.

We are at a crisis point. Unless this situation is addressed forcefully and unequivocally, one of America's great institutions, its system of higher education, could well collapse. There are many in this country—including those in significant positions of power—who would delight in seeing that happen. The failure to stand up to disrupters who are preventing other students from learning gives the opponents of higher education the very tools they need.

Meanwhile, absent direct and comprehensive action to protect Jewish students and the campus environment, I will not be teaching on Columbia's campus.

Ambassador (ret.) Deborah Lipstadt was the United States Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (2022–2025). Lipstadt teaches at Emory University as a University Distinguished Professor.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Last night (March 17), the IDF resumed its attacks on Gaza. It was inevitable. There is no way we can let Hamas remain in power, to rebuild and serve as a threat in the future. There is no way such monsters who not only committed the horrors of October 7th but continue to use hostages as bargaining chips to achieve their goals can stay in power so that they can reorganize and do it again. It is a scenario that wouldn't be acceptable by any government, or any Israeli government, let alone the current one.

During the period of the recent ceasefire, the Israeli government was willing to concede quite a bit in order to get back hostages, both living and dead. It released countless terrorists from jail including hundreds of killers serving life sentences, freeing them back into a world from which they are likely to quickly revert back to their violent ways. The IDF allowed hundreds of thousands of Gazans to return to northern Gaza and the IDF withdrew from the hard fought Nitzarim corridor. It pulled out of all the territory it had taken other than the Philadelphi Road and a perimeter along the entire Gaza border. It let in tons and tons of humanitarian aid, much of which was confiscated by Hamas. Reports say there is enough aid in Gaza for at least six months after additional aid was cut off (last week). The aid that flowed freely these past months of the ceasefire funded Hamas to rebuild its forces (now estimated again to be more than 20,000 fighters) and strengthen its positions, as they confiscated the aid and then distributed it to the population at exorbitant fees.

During the recent ceasefire, Israel was able to get back 30 live hostages. A total of 147 people has now been

returned alive from these deals, or from rescue missions. But there are still an estimated 24 hostages still alive in the dark tunnels of Gaza. And their lives are very much at stake right now.

It is hard to know how things will develop. As these articles have shown, spaced several months apart, developments in the interim move at a dramatic pace. Since I last wrote, President Trump's Administration has taken over and his actions in this short period have turned the world upside down. In the Israeli context, most of this has been for the better. Israel now has full American support to "open the gates of hell" on Hamas and finish them off. The pressure to reopen the floodgates of humanitarian aid (the main enabler of allowing Hamas to survive and continue the war) won't come from the US this time. The chorus of Israeli detractors, from the UN to the known suspects in Europe, to Turkey, South Africa and others, has already started since Israel opened fire last night. But none of this really matters as long as the US is giving Israel its backing. Keep in mind, for the most part, the world was happy to have a ceasefire and fully buy into the concept that Israel needs to pay, and pay high, to get back its hostages and dead bodies. A truly unprecedented situation in world history. There was little demand beyond lip service and calls for balance between Hamas and Israel to let out the hostages immediately and without extortion. For most of the world, they were willing to go along with the narrative that a permanent ceasefire that released the hostages, would leave Hamas in power in the Day After.

This is no longer the American position. The Israeli government hasn't been able to successfully articulate a position for what will happen in Gaza the Day After, but one thing is clear: Hamas can't remain in power, not militarily nor from a civilian point of view. That is a clear war aim. Whatever the Day After will look like, it cannot include Hamas.

Trump threw out his political grenade about evacuating the Gazan population in order to rebuild it. It certainly sounded like it would be a forced evacuation, one that would not allow them to return, with the US taking responsibility. Since that highly unrealistic idea was floated, he has backed off a bit, only people who want to relocate would leave, it is only temporary till Gaza is rebuilt, etc. It's still a non-starter. However, and this was the main goal of the statement, it is an earth shaker, forcing other forces to come up with better ideas. The Arab world, led by Egypt, put a different plan on the table in which the Gazans wouldn't have to relocate during reconstruction. Hamas was not mentioned in the proposal, but nor was the demand that they disarm and leave Gaza. In its current form, it too is a non-starter. And here's the thing: Israel may not have a solid plan yet for the Day After, but it does hold the cards to allowing any reconstruction and rehabilitation in the future. After all, if Hamas rebuilds and continues its terror ways, the IDF would just destroy the place all over again. No one will want to invest the trillions of dollars required to rebuild if it will just wash away to sea the next time battle erupts.

The moderate Arab countries (Egypt, UAE, Saudi, etc.) want to see Hamas go. But the question is how to do it. The ceasefire's Phase A (completed) and Phase B (always a non-starter and now irrelevant) was never the path to ensure Hamas disarms and departs Gaza. The only way to do that is militarily, with a good old "unconditional surrender" approach, because nothing short of that will force these guys to give up their weapons. Even with such an approach it is likely that they will go down with the ship, taking the entire Gazan population with them, something they never cared about anyway and no one in the world seems to care about. After all, it is they who started the war, it is they who built their entire military infrastructure and tunnel system in civilian centers. It is their doctrine to force Israel to harm as many civilians as they can as a means of putting pressure on them to stop (and as we know, in that context at least, this worked out pretty well for them during the war until now). But now, with Trump in power, with the US army hacking away (finally) at the Yemeni Huttis, with Hezbollah removed as a player and Iran itself in a very difficult spot, and with Hamas, severely degraded though not destroyed, Hamas is very much on their own. Civilians will once again pay the price, but this time Israel has a freer hand to accomplish what it needs to accomplish militarily.

But all this brings us back to the point that cannot be forgotten. There are still 24 hostages alive in Gaza and some 30+ bodies that need to be returned for burial. No country can forfeit its future or commit national suicide in order to pay a ransom such as the one being demanded. But Israeli isn't just any other country and the schism inside the country is severe. Not getting back these people will leave a scar that will likely never heal. The government has been accused throughout this war (much of the time with justification, at least in my view) for not doing enough to get these people out, for not taking responsibility for the incredible calamity that took place on Oct 7 (keep in mind that every other institution outside the government has taken responsibility and yet this has not happened at the government level which continues to fight tooth and nail against an Inquiry Commission into the War); many of its ministers have spoken without empathy for the hostage families, even attacking them and accusing protesters who demand the release of the hostages as collaborators with Hamas. All of this, and a lot more which is beyond the scope of this article, has contributed to a toxic environment inside the country which is reminiscent of the pre-Oct 7 days when the country was teetering on Civil War due to the government's judicial reform program. The division in the country was one of the reasons Hamas viewed the timing of its attack to be opportune. The detailed investigations conducted by the IDF and the Shin Bet show that while Hamas was preparing this assault for years, they saw opportunity in the division of the country and jumped on it.

The war brought unity to the people to confront a common enemy, but that unity has all but dissipated and, in many ways, the situation is worse now than before. Not only has the Judicial Reform returned in earnest, not only has the government more or less declared war on most of

the other democratic bodies (the supreme court, the IDF, the Shin Bet – or at least against the leaders of those institutions), but all this is taking place during a war that has stretched the country's resources to the limit. The IDF needs at least 10,000 new soldiers to fill the ranks and accommodate for the new threats, but the main untapped manpower source, the ultra-orthodox community, is still trying to pass a law to provide mass exemptions from service and the government is still trying to pass that law to accommodate the Haredi parties who threaten to leave the government if that law isn't passed. It is true that the government is trying to pass a law which will increase the number of Haredi conscripted men but it doesn't come close to meeting the needs of the IDF and even that is unacceptable to the Haredi parties, so there is a deadlock on that issue. But the discontent among those Israelis who have been serving this last year and a half, some without a break and will now be called on to do even more, is reaching a boiling point....

Leaving these remaining hostages behind, even if there is sound logic to it (as described above) may very well bring the country to the breaking point. Morally, it is also a bankrupt position since the government is responsible for these people who did nothing wrong but get kidnapped from the Nova festival or from their beds in Nir Oz and Kissufim. Leaving people behind will destroy the well-known principle in Israel of never leaving anyone behind. It may undermine future generations of soldiers who will go to battle not knowing if the government that sent them will do whatever it can to bring them home. There is tremendous danger in this scenario. And the cost of not bringing these people home

has to be weighed against the price of bringing them home as described above. To say it is the moral dilemma of our time and a no-win situation at best, is a dramatic understatement.

I sincerely don't envy those who make these decisions. I can say, like most Israelis and I would venture to say, most Jews around the world, I feel the pain of these hostages and their families as if they were my own family. I feel guilty continuing my life as usual while these people rot away in the tunnels. How do we all go on with our lives while they suffer like this?

Given Hamas was not willing to budge any further nor release any additional hostages at a price the Israeli government believed it could live with, the renewal of hostilities was just a matter of time. So here we are, back in battle, this time with the objective of pushing Hamas militarily into a position from which it has only one option, disarm and leave Gaza. It will be backed by the Trump Administration (we will see how far that backing will go) and accompanied by other moves in the Middle East (attacks in Yemen, actions against Iran, etc.) We can only hope that this will lead to a decisive Israeli victory and one that will also ultimately bring our people home.

As we enter the last stretch before the Pesach holiday, is it not fair to invoke Moses' words to Pharaoh all those years ago: Let my people go?

Still hoping for better times.

Barry Spielman
Oranit, Israel March 18, 2025



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SUNSHINE COMMITTEE REPORT

HAPPY EVENTS

Anniveraries

March

Steven & Toby Radwan 51

April

Melvin & Jill Bukiet

Oskar and Rosalind Matzner 67

Stephanie & Frederic Rothenberg-

Richard & Michelle Sass

Mazal tov! Blessings for many more healthy and happy years together!

Mazal tov to all our members who are celebrating simchas. Please do inform us online at membership@newcracow.org of your anniversary dates, and any/all happy events so that we can share your good news in future Newsletters. Your joy is our joy and we love to share good news!

REFUAH SHELAYMAH: To any of our members presently in need of healing. Blessings are extended for a complete recovery and healing... and may it come soon. "May you go from strength to strength".

CONDOLENCES- Our Society sends its most heartfelt condolences to family members who have recently experienced a loss. We are notified of a member's passing only if one owned a plot at Beth Moses Cemetery. If not, please inform us personally as we have no other way of knowing.

DONATIONS:

Arnold & Myra Berlin- \$18

Susan Krul Caren & Larry Behar- \$36.

Abe & Helene Dortheimer- \$18

Jack & Fay Gingold- \$200.

Leon & Dena Hilfstein- \$38.

Dorothy Hoffman- \$75.

Jeffrey Krul- \$25.

Pauline & Marty Leitzes- \$36.

Jeffrey & Pamela Lieberman- \$18.

Michelle Ores- \$500

Gisele Rappaport-\$36.

Barbara Rosenstock- \$18.

Zigmund Rosenstock- \$75.

Simon Salamon- \$\$18.

Sara Schanzer- \$25.

Gloria Slawin- \$36

Bernice Slutzman- \$55.

William Solz & Loretta Gross- \$14.

Arthur Spielman- \$54.

Ruth Steif- \$54.

Commemoration

Bagel Boss of Roslyn

Renee Fleischer \$36

Jemi Goldstein \$118

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Gonen \$100

Jeffrey Krul \$50

Mr. & Mrs. William Nusblat \$100

A very generous donation of \$5000 was bequeathed to us upon the unfortunate passing of member George Hoffman (zlv). His wife, Dorothy, related how much George who was a child survivor, enjoyed attending our Society celebrations throughout the decades. So much gratitude is felt that George remembered us with such generous support.

We wish to thank all our members and friends for their generous contributions. Our Society survives on your dues and donations. Please donate to NCFS to memorialize the yahrzeits of relatives and friends, to celebrate a birth, bar/bat mitzvah, engagement, wedding, anniversary, to honor a friend, well wishes for recovery, or simply to fulfill the mitzvah of giving tzedaka.

Donations by check should be payable to "New Cracow Friendship Society" and mailed to the address below...or online through PayPal payment on our website www.newcracow.org (donation tab). Please be sure to earmark what your contribution is for and also consider that PayPal charges a fee which reduces your amount to us. (Donations received after submission of Committee Report will be posted in the next issue.)

We love to share good news with our members. Please send us your news.

Chairperson Ida Lewis
147-17 78th Rd
Flushing NY 11367
membership@newcracow.org
(718)380-3574

Co-chairperson Eva Pfau (718)464-0932



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