



# Rabbinic Recap

The week of January 20, 2017

## U.S. - ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

### **Israeli Air Force receives first Arrow 3 interceptors**

The first interceptors of the Arrow 3 missile defense system were delivered to the Israel Air Force (IAF) on Wednesday. The system's development over the past few years included a number of test launches of missiles and interceptors into space, reports [Ynet](#). Now, after the Defense Ministry's Weapons and Technological Infrastructure Development Administration delivered the interceptors, the IAF will begin the process of integrating the system so it can become operational immediately. Arrow 3 joins Israel's three-tiered air defense system, which also includes the Iron Dome, which is capable of intercepting short-range rockets; David's Sling, set to be used against heavy medium-range rockets and enemy drones, which is currently in an advance stage of integration ahead of becoming operational; and Arrow 2, capable of shooting down long-range ballistic missiles. Arrow 3, which was developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) together with the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, is in the upper tier, and can intercept missiles capable of leaving the earth's atmosphere before making their descent toward their target. According to the Defense Ministry, "the Arrow 3 interceptor is considered one of the best interceptors in the world, equipped with breakthrough technology on a global scale." As part of the process of making the system operational, its developers—together with their American partners—are expected to conduct further testing for Arrow 3 in the coming year.

### **Senators introduce bipartisan anti-BDS bill**

On Tuesday, Sens. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., introduced the Combating BDS Act, which would increase legal protection for state and local governments that ban, limit or divest from companies "engaged in commerce-related or investment-related BDS activity targeting Israel." According to [JTA](#), under the measure, Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions-related activity includes boycotting or limiting business with those in Israel and "Israeli-controlled territories." Manchin praised the bill as a way to protect American and Israeli security and economic priorities in a statement announcing the bill. "This legislation is an important step forward in reassuring Israel that we are protecting our shared national security interests, while also protecting our joint economic interests," Manchin said. Rubio in a statement alluded to the recent passage of a resolution condemning Israeli settlements by the United Nations Security Council that he termed "a deplorable one-sided measure that harms Israel and effectively encourages the BDS movement's campaigns to commercially and financially target and discriminate against the Jewish state."

### **In Memoriam: Ben Gilman**

On Dec. 17, 2016, Ben Gilman, the former chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a longtime friend of the U.S.-Israel relationship, passed away at the age of 94. "Throughout his 30 years in Congress, Ben Gilman has been a leader on virtually every issue important to the pro-Israel community," said AIPAC's Chief Executive Officer Howard Kohr in a 2002 news article on Gilman's retirement from Congress. "He brought passion to the issues, integrity to Congress, a spirit of bipartisanship to all his work, and he will be sorely missed." First elected to Congress in 1972 from Middletown, New York, Gilman served as the chairman of the House Task Force on Emigration of Soviet Jewry and as an executive member of the Human Rights Caucus. From 1995 to 2001, he served as the chairman of the International Relations Committee, now called the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Gilman supported and spearheaded numerous pro-Israel initiatives during his 30-year career, to include leading efforts in

favor of foreign aid to Israel, disapproving the AWACS aircraft sale to Saudi Arabia, and urging recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. In 1995, Gilman led a bipartisan group of 200 lawmakers in pledging support for relocating the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and he also authored several bipartisan letters advocating this move. "I was saddened to learn of the passing of former Committee Chairman Ben Gilman. My thoughts are with his family," said Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), the current chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. "As Chairman of this Committee, Ben led in a truly bipartisan fashion and enjoyed respect from his colleagues on both sides of the aisle...A committed supporter of Israel, Ben strove tirelessly for peace." Responding to the loss of Gilman, Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), a fellow member of the New York delegation, hailed Gilman as a "true legislator and patriot who honorably served the Hudson Valley in Congress for 30 years." Also, Rep. Sean Maloney (D-NY) called him a "true statesman." May his memory be a blessing.

## IRAN

### **House bill would target Iran's airline and test its nuclear deal**

House Democrats and Republicans are considering a bill that would require the incoming president and his intelligence chiefs to investigate Tehran's use of its state-run civilian airline to ferry military equipment and fighters to the battleground in Syria. The bill is part of a larger effort by Rep. Peter Roskam (R-Illinois) to interrupt Iranian business with two of the world's largest airplane companies, Boeing and Airbus. His new bill, titled the terror-free skies act, was introduced with Reps. Brad Sherman (D-California) and Lee Zeldin (R-New York). According to [The Jerusalem Post](#), Iran argues that blocking or impeding its access to Boeing and Airbus products would violate a nuclear deal it brokered with world powers in 2015. That agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, includes a provision which commits the U.S. to "allow for the sale of commercial passenger aircraft and related parts and services" for "exclusively civil aviation end-use." But that last clause, "exclusively civil aviation end-use," has some members of Congress convinced that Iran's airline deals can legally be halted, in full compliance with the JCPOA. That's because the U.S. Treasury Department, State Department and intelligence agencies all assess that Iran Air and its subsidiary Mahan Air are complicit in illicit arms transfers to Lebanon-based terrorist organization Hezbollah and in the assistance of Syria's embattled president, Bashar Assad. The Treasury Department marked Iran Air in 2011 for providing services to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. "Commercial Iran Air flights have been used to transport missile or rocket components to Syria," the department warned. Roskam and Sherman's bill would require the president and his national security team to submit to Senate and House committees on armed services, intelligence and foreign affairs "a report on use by the government of Iran of commercial aircraft and related services for illicit military or other activities on or after the date that is the beginning of the five-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this act," the bill reads. According to its authors, the bill is meant to notify Boeing and Airbus that its dealings with Iran might be found in violation of the nuclear accord by Congress.

## ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

### **Israeli teen wins 2017 Africa Eco Rally**

Gev Teddy Sella, an Israeli teenager living in South Africa, surprised the world of motorsports by winning first place in the 2017 Africa Eco Rally, a 12-stage, 6,500-kilometer (4,038-mile) desert marathon. Contestants began the first stage on January 2 in Morocco, speeding on to Mauritania and finally ending on January 14 in Senegal. It was Sella's first appearance in the rally, which has been won by Norwegian Pål Anders Ullevålseter the past two years. Sella, who will celebrate his 18th birthday next week and plans to return to Israel for his military service, took the lead at the beginning of the race and maintained it for most of the time. In a Facebook post in Hebrew, Sella thanked his parents for seeing him through the rally, which he finished without any serious mistakes. At the end of the race, Sella told [Ynet](#), "The excitement is huge, it's unbelievable. It's going to take me a long time to digest it."