

# The AFSI Advocate

Americans For a Safe Israel

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## AFSI's EFFORTS TO DEFEAT THE GAZA/GUSH KATIF EXPULSION PLAN

By Helen Freedman

I was in Israel at the end of February as a guest of the Prime Minister's Conference for Tourism to Israel. After participating in the traditional travel experiences planned by the Conference - all thoroughly enjoyable, but none reaching the heart of Israel, I went with a group of AFSI people to Gush Katif/Gaza to meet with Dror Vanunu, the PR representative for Gush Katif, and Avner Shimoni, the Mayor of Gush Katif. We visited the Tzadok family in their home, viewing the extensive damage suffered from a mortar attack, and marveled that despite the fact that the family was in the house when the mortar hit, no one was hurt. This was one of 4000 mortars that have fallen on Gush Katif since Sept. 2000. Discussing this with Rachel and Moshe Saperstein in their home, Moshe said, "There must be some divine intervention here, since although there have been injuries, and damage to property, there has not been one fatality as a result of the onslaught."

Back in New York, the struggle to defeat Prime Minister Sharon's Gaza/Gush Katif expulsion plan occupied a great deal of our time and effort. Herb Zweibon, Ellen Singer, Jeff Daube and I represented NY AFSI on our trip to Washington, DC, in unison with Richard Hellman and CIPAC on March 15, 16. The trip was used to emphasize to the Senators and Representatives, and aides with whom we met, that expulsion of Jews from Gaza/Gush Katif would be a victory for terrorism and would be seen that way throughout the Muslim world, endangering America and the western democratic nations. We stressed that the infamous "road map", supported by Israel's enemies, the UN, EU and Russia, as well as the United States, with its goal of the creation of a "Palestinian" state inside Israel, should be replaced by the Biblical road map, and that Israel should be given the green light to wage an all-out war against terrorism. We maintained that only with a strong Israel as its ally could the U.S. hope to achieve its goals in the Middle East.

Herb, Jeff, and I had the privilege of meeting Effie Eitam, Israel's Minister of Housing, at the home of Miriam and Richard Hellman. The Minister had made a special trip to Washington to voice his strong objection to the Sharon expulsion plan. He stressed that we must continue to work together to ensure that there is no give-away of Israeli land as a reward for terrorism.

We returned from that series of encouraging meetings, to begin planning our Hatikvah emergency meeting on behalf of the 8,000 threatened Jews of Gush Katif/Gaza. It took place on Wednesday, March 31, at 7:30 P.M. at the West Side Institutional Synagogue in New York City. Since it was just before Passover, we associated our theme with the Passover theme of freedom, and stated that our present day fight for freedom is to "LET OUR PEOPLE STAY." The link to Israel's national anthem, Hatikvah, was the hope that the words of the anthem would be realized, "To be a free nation in our land." The event was very successful with over two hundred attendees on a rainy, cold, pre-Passover evening. The atmosphere was warmed by their enthusiasm and that of our outstanding speakers. I served as Master of Ceremonies, introducing AFSI's Chairman Herbert Zweibon, ZOA President Morton Klein, Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis of Hineni, Rabbi Allen Schwartz of Congregation Ohab Zedek, Shmuel Sackett, International Director of Manhigut Yehudit, and Evangelical Christian Minister Miriam Hellman. An exciting transcontinental telephone call was made to Rachel Saperstein at her home in Neve Dekalim, Gush Katif. The evening ended with a moving prayer for Israel sung by the world famous cantor of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue, Cantor Joseph Malovany.

Inspired by the clear need that had been articulated by the speakers, many of the attendees handed AFSI representatives their tax-deductible contributions to FRIENDS OF GUSH KATIF. Readers are encouraged to continue sending contributions for FRIENDS OF GUSH KATIF to Americans for a Safe Israel, 1623 Third Ave., Suite 205, New York, N.Y. 10128. We know that despite the overwhelming grass roots defeat of the Sharon expulsion plan, the Prime Minister will continue in his efforts to remove the Jews of Gush Katif/Gaza and Judea and Samaria. The need for money to continue the mobilization efforts will be ongoing.

That evening was followed by a call to Christian friends of Israel to participate in a "Pray for Gaza" day. It was timed to precede President Bush's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on April 14. We asked that our President not be a party to Sharon's planned surrender of Gaza to a terrorist regime, and that he not violate scripture in pursuing a road map that delivers Bethlehem, Hebron, BethEl, Shilo, parts of Jerusalem, and most of the biblical promise, to Islam. We quoted Pat Robertson from his Herzilya speech on Dec. 2003: "If G-d's chosen people turn over to Allah control of their most sacred sites; if they surrender to Muslim vandals the tombs of Rachel, Joseph, the Patriarchs, and the ancient prophets - then in that event, Islam will have won the battle. Throughout the Muslim world the message will go forth... We can now, in the name of Allah, move to crush the Jews and drive them out of the land that belongs to Allah."

On Wednesday, April 21, a delegation from Israel arrived in New York, hosted by Americans For a Safe Israel. The four who arrived were: Member of Knesset Arieh Eldad, former advisor to PM Yitzchak Shamir, Yossi Ben Aharon, and Gush Katif residents Moshe Saperstein and Dror Vanunu. They came to raise funds and consciousness in a last ditch effort to prevent the Sharon Gaza expulsion referendum to succeed. AFSI had prepared a whirlwind tour for them which took them to Washington Heights, to Brooklyn, to Long Island, to New Jersey, with the center of their activity in New York City. With the cooperation of many good, caring people, they had a series of very successful meetings. The foursome actually had to split up in order to get to all the events planned for them. They returned to Israel on Sunday, April 25 in time for the Yom HaAtzmaut celebrations which saw 150,000 Israelis attempting to reach Gush Katif in order to show their solidarity with the community. This demonstration carried over to the Likud vote on May 2 which gave a smashing victory to the Jews of Israel. This was a great testament to the power of the people to mobilize their grass roots strength and win in a democratic battle against those who would do them harm. AFSI was very proud to have been an active part of this struggle, and to have helped to the extent that we did.

We pray that the Prime Minister will acknowledge the will of the people, and end his torturous threats against them. Let him plan ways of rewarding the Jews for building the thriving, beautiful land which is now Israel. Let him work at punishing the terrorists for their unrelenting war against Israel, including the unbearably cruel murder of Tali Hatuel, a 34 year old, eight month pregnant mother, and her four daughters, on the morning of May 2. Let terrorism be defeated, and may America and the world profit from Israel's victory.

In a concrete demonstration of support for the Jews of Gaza, Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem, Hebron, and indeed, all of Israel, AFSI's Chizuk mission to Israel will be in Israel from May 16-24. We will visit the communities in Gaza upon our arrival there, and will stay overnight at a guest house in Gush Katif. The week will be filled with celebrations of Yom Yerushalayim and Yom Hebron, Shabbat in Yerushalayim, and visits to so many of our friends in the threatened areas of Israel. A full report with pictures will be part of our next AFSI ADVOCATE.

## CHAPTER REPORTS

*Complete contact information for all the chapters is available on our website. Please visit [www.afsi.org](http://www.afsi.org)*

**Albany: Jack Lauber, Chair: [jlpe@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jlpe@nycap.rr.com)**

The recent meeting of the Palestinian Rights Committee, PRC, in Albany was appalling. We heard their lies and deceptions about Palestinian terrorism. Their ISM, International Solidarity Movement video by Ms. Kelley, touted Palestinians as victims, and falsely blamed Israel for every conceivable Palestinian grievance. These people are victims of their own hatred and radical Islam-fascist ideology against Americans, Jews and Christians. The PRC might not believe what we say, but they should listen to Walid Shoebat the former PLO terrorist who spoke at Temple Israel, March 22, about the lies and deceptions of the PLO, in their unholy terrorist war to destroy the State of Israel. AFSI was the co-sponsor of the Walid Shoebat program. We held a breakfast meeting on March, 14 at Cong. Beth Israel Schenectady that featured the AFSI Chizuk Mission and made the case for the legitimacy and importance of retaining Gaza, Judea and Samaria for a strong, viable Israel.

**California, Los Angeles: Jerry Hecht: [jambo49@aol.com](mailto:jambo49@aol.com)**

AFSI had a very successful presence at the Israel 56th Independence Day Festival. Those who worked on the event were: Prof. Irving Kett, Eric Goldman, Benny Mathews, Dr. Gerson Friedman, Max Kessler, and Jonathan Perlman.

**California, Los Angeles Valley: Dr. Irving Kett, Chair: [iketrt@calstatela.edu](mailto:iketrt@calstatela.edu)**

Shmuel Sackett, International Director of Manhigut Yehudit (New Jewish Leadership) was a speaker at Shaarey Zedek Congregation in N. Hollywood on April 20. He spoke about the Jewish Roadmap for Israel and the Jewish people.

**California, Orange County: Dr. Howard Garber, Chair: [DrHGarber@aol.com](mailto:DrHGarber@aol.com)**

AFSI had a booth at the Orange County community "Israeli Fun Fair" in Irvine on May 23, 2004, and distributed AFSI information. We've had a booth most years. I'm finishing my 7th year on Orange County Cable TV, and have done many 1/2 hour programs regarding Israel. We had many good replies to my email regarding Holocaust Remembrance.

**Chicago: Ira Kahn, Chair: irakahn@intereaccess.com**

On March 16, twelve members of the Midwest chapter of AFSI, in conjunction with CIPAC and other AFSI chapters, went to Capitol Hill and met with Congressional aides explaining to them the dangers associated with an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and how it will lead to the creation of a Palestinian terrorist state. The aides were very receptive and concerned that the Sharon unilateral withdrawal plan appears to be a reward to terrorism and that a Palestinian terrorist state would result from the plan. Briefing materials were supplied to the Congressional offices to support our arguments. The Midwest chapter will continue its efforts to educate Capitol Hill on this important issue.

**Florida: Bunny Horowitz, Chair: stella1807@aol.com**

Daniela Weiss, Mayor of Kedumim visited Miami on January 28. She spoke on the issue of violence throughout Judea, Samaria and Gaza and the growing challenges for the Kedumim community to ensure the ultimate safety and protection for her citizens.

Prof. Xu Xin, Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, People's Republic of China, spoke on the topic of Israel- China Relations, Monday, Feb. 2.

The Rev. Malcolm Hedding, Executive Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ), was a guest speaker at Temple Emanu-El of Greater Miami on Shabbat morning, February 7. Rev. Hedding spoke from the perspective of one who lives in Jerusalem about how current events in Israel affect both Jews and Christians.

Congressman Bill McCollum, U.S. Senate Candidate(R) addressed AFSI members on the Growing Threat of Radical Muslim Terrorism on Sunday, April 18 at Tower House, 5500 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach.

**Jerusalem, Israel: Bill Mehlman, Bernie Smith, Chairs: wmehlman@zahav.net.il**

Bill Mehlman and Bernie Smith did a fabulous job arranging media interviews for Herb Zweibon when he was in Israel. See the section on Herb Zweibon In the News in this same issue for details. In addition, AFSI Jerusalem printed 200,000 flyers shouting, VOTE NO! on the Gaza-Northern Samaria Evacuation Folly. The flyer listed six reasons why Sharon's plan was a clear and present threat to the future security and well-being of Israel. In a letter from Mattot Arim, a pro-Israel grass-roots movement, Susie Dym, their spokesperson, writes: "Your material hit the field when there were endless volunteers streaming out to work, innocently sure that there would be material for them to hand out, and absent your flyer, frankly, in many locations there was essentially nothing for them to work with. The timing was perfect, the content was perfect, and I am very relieved to say that the results were perfect."

**Oregon: Inez Weissman, Chair: inezsydney@aol.com**

Oregon AFSI is preparing for the months before the elections to focus on the Gaza situation by gaining support for Israel retaining it and its communities for religious and security reasons. Our radio program, heard several times a week on a prominent evangelical Christian station, and our newsletter, distributed by the thousands to libraries, supermarkets, synagogues, churches, bookstores, and other places will focus on the Gaza issue. Tables with petitions, copies of "Battleground," and AFSI material, will be put in many places including, whenever possible, in churches. Meetings with evangelical pastors are taking place daily, and a "Pastors Leadership for Israel" is being created to plan a pastors' conference before the election. Speakers on "The Right Road to Peace," based on the Elon plan, will be speaking in churches and organizations with speakers on why Gaza cannot be made Judenrein. Included in material distributed are English translated fliers of those 200,000 distributed by AFSI Israel. We are continuing to work with Northwest Medical Team to send more medical equipment to Israel, this time to the Negev with the aid of the Israel AFSI Chairman Bill Mehlman. Our e-mail is used to contact the White House and our Congress whenever necessary. We meet monthly with committee reports, volunteers called for when needed, and the latest news from Israel as reported from weekly telephone calls with the Israel AFSI chapter.

**Seattle: Isabella Ariel, Chair: isabellaariel@earthlink.net**

The Washington State Chapter of AFSI continues to generate a one hour television program via Public Access every week. Please check your TV guide and newspaper listings for: OVER THE BACKYARD FENCE with Malkah Magadoff, Channels 77/29 Public Access - Scan. Our aim at this time is to present productions which focus on MILITANT ISLAM, as featured in our latest series of three films which started on March 30, 2004 at noon, and continued through to April 6th and 13th. This series is from The Christian Coalition of America's Symposium, featuring Daniel Pipes as well as many other experts on this subject. We also go to great lengths in featuring actual films of the Holocaust, countering the denial of this horrific crime by many Arab Leaders, as well as others. In order to inform as many people as possible, we mail fliers regarding our program to a large membership base. We also deposit our fliers in as many public places as possible, and where appropriate.

**Toronto, Anne & Marvin Maurer: mannie1234@rogers.com**

The Gush Katif delegation was introduced to the Toronto Jewish Community thanks to Rabbi Moshe Stern and the Toronto Zionist council, led by Anne Maurer and Izzy Kaplan. In addition, a successful fundraiser was held at a private home.

**Washington, DC: Richard Hellman, Chair: rahmercl@starpower.net**

The Christians' Israel Public Action Campaign held an Israel- U.S. Solidarity Awards Reception in recognition of Members of Congress, including Rep. Tom Delay, Rep. Eliot L. Engel, Rep. Todd Tiahrt, and Rep. Anthony Weiner, honoring them for their efforts to support Israel and to call Israel's enemies to account. We also recognized other attendees for leadership in these respects. The reception took place March 16 in Washington. The meeting highlighted issues which were brought to Members of Congress, asking that they re-examine U.S. Middle East policy, finding less costly, more secure paths to assure Israel's rights fully.

## AFSI CHAIRMAN, HERBERT ZWEIBON, IN THE NEWS

Herb returned from an active three weeks in Israel where he addressed an overflow crowd of the AFSI Jerusalem Chapter at the home of Dr. Robert Goldstein. Herb also spoke at the Rabbi Stuart Wise synagogue in Ra'anana. Bill Mehlman, AFSI's Jerusalem Chairman, arranged an interview for Herb with Herbert Keinon of the Jerusalem Post. It appeared in the paper on April 24, headlined, "Gaza Withdrawal Could Repel US Evangelical Christians." Herb spoke about AFSI's placement of 130 billboards, at a price of \$75,000, in the US Bible Belt, calling on people to phone the White House to tell Bush to "honor God's Covenant with Israel." He spoke about AFSI's ongoing effort to get church leaders in Florida, Ohio, Tennessee and Missouri to encourage their congregations to reach President Bush with their message.



On Friday, April 30, the Jerusalem Post carried an article by Herb Keinon asserting that "Evangelicals Will Stand By Israel Despite Withdrawal," in response to Zweibon's statement that Christians might withdraw their support "if the Jews give up on their part of the covenant." This was followed by Herb's letter to the editor of the Jerusalem Post, published on May 2, wherein he wrote, "The support of even the best of friends has its limits. In embracing a "road map" mandating the creation of what can only result in a violent, corrupt Arab dictatorship in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the Sharon government risks exceeding those limits with an increasingly important, increasingly bewildered American Christian Zionist constituency."

The New York Forward newspaper carried an article on April 26 by E.J. Kessler entitled, "Hardliners Knock Bush for Endorsing Sharon Initiative." Herb was quoted as follows: "Herbert Zweibon said in a statement that Bush was displaying "double vision" by backing divergent policies toward the terrorist factions operating in Iraq and in the West Bank and Gaza. "The paltry 'victory' of keeping some of the Jewish towns of Judea and Samaria and refusing Palestinian Arabs the so-called right of return to Israel is mere gift-wrapping on a box of explosives."

In addition to the above, Bill Mehlman arranged for a two hour interview with Herb and Chris Mitchell, Jerusalem bureau chief of the Christian Broadcasting network. Herb was also interviewed on CNS, a major internet news service, as well as IBA - Israel television. The latter interview was shown Saturday night, May 1, the night before the referendum vote. We do believe that the widespread media coverage in which Herb was a key element, made a contribution to Sharon's smashing defeat.

Herb returned from Israel on May 6, in time to attend the Twenty- Third Annual International Christian Prayer Breakfast on May 11, at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, TN. The Prayer Breakfast is organized by Mr. Ed McAteer, founder of the Religious Roundtable, and its purpose is to honor Israel and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.



### **AMERICANS FOR A SAFE ISRAEL**

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