

**MODERN ISRAEL AT 70 YEARS  
MONTREAL  
NOTES FOR DAVID KILGOUR  
24 MAY 2018**

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ALEX POLOWIN SPEAKING IN MONTREAL

MESDAMES ET MESSIEURS,  
AMIES/AMIS D' ISRAEL

ALEX POLOWIN OF OTTAWA WILL SPEAK NEXT ABOUT WHAT THE BIRTH OF MODERN ISRAEL MEANT FOR HIM AS A 23-YEAR-OLD CANADIAN NAVAL VETERAN IN 1948.

WHAT DOES ISRAEL REPRESENT TODAY FOR THE WORLD? IN ABOUT 930 BC/BCE, THE KINGDOM FOUNDED BY DAVID SPLIT INTO JUDAH AND ISRAEL. IN 66/CE AD, THE JEWS OF JUDAH REVOLTED AGAINST ROME, NAMING THEIR NEW STATE "ISRAEL".

LAST WEEK IN OTTAWA, LYN JULIUS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, WHOSE PARENTS WERE JEWISH IRAQI REFUGEES IN 1950, INTRODUCED HER RECENTLY-PUBLISHED BOOK: *UPROOTED*. THE SUBTITLE IS: "HOW 3000 YEARS HOW OF JEWISH CIVILIZATION IN THE ARAB WORLD VANISHED OVERNIGHT".

AS YOU KNOW, THE BALFOUR DECLARATION OF THE BRITISH FOREIGN MINISTER IN 1917 FAVOURED THE CREATION OF A JEWISH NATIONAL HOME IN PALESTINE, WHICH THE UK ADMINISTERED UNTIL MAY, 1948. ON NOV 29, 1947, THE UN ADOPTED RES. 181 THAT DIVIDED PALESTINE INTO SEPARATE JEWISH AND ARAB “PROVINCES”.

ISRAEL QUICKLY BECAME A SANCTUARY FOR MANY JEWISH REFUGEES FROM ACROSS THE REGION. SEVEN MIDDLE EAST GOVERNMENTS DECLARED WAR ON ISRAEL SOON AFTER ITS BIRTH WAS PROCLAIMED ON APRIL 18, 1948.

MUCH MORE IS IN JULIUS’ BOOK, BUT HER NGO HARIF CAN BE ACCESSED AT [WWW.HARIF.ORG](http://WWW.HARIF.ORG) . HERE ARE THREE POINTS SHE MADE:

- APPROXIMATELY 850,000 INDIGENOUS JEWS WERE FORCED TO LEAVE ARAB COUNTRIES AFTER 1948, WITH ABOUT 650,00 RESETTLING IN ISRAEL AND 200,000 FLEEING TO THE WEST;
- ANOTHER 470,000-750,000 PERSONS BECAME ARAB REFUGEES FROM ISRAEL, BUT 165,000 OF THEM ACCEPTED ISRAEL’S OFFER TO STAY AND BECOME ISRAELI CITIZENS;
- ANTI-SEMITISM WORSENERD MARKEDLY ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 1930S AND 1940S WITH THE RISE OF HITLER. MOROCCO WAS A NOTABLE EXCEPTION.

Canadian Rick Ekstein recently (Apr 17) made some important points I share in the *Globe and Mail*, including:

- *(Israel’s) unlikely friendships (with a number of nations in the Middle East) are rooted in mutual concern toward Iran’s growing influence... seen in the Shia theocracy’s massive expenditure of forces and funds in terror groups across the Middle East... The regime is bankrolling Hezbollah missiles in Lebanon and Hamas missiles in Gaza... It is building a permanent military presence in Syria...*
- *...Since (1948), Israeli leaders have been willing to share the land with their Arab neighbours in two states for two peoples, as envisioned by the UN’s 1947 partition plan. Since the Oslo Accords, Israelis have offered multiple far-reaching peace proposals... Palestinians are currently split between a Gaza-based “government” under Hamas that rejects Israel’s very right to exist and a West Bank Palestinian Authority that has lost the confidence of its people and has boycotted negotiations for years.*

Chuck Freilich, a senior fellow at Harvard’s Belfer Center and author of *Israeli National Security: A New Strategy for an Era of Change*, (Oxford Press), 2018, wrote last month (Apr 10) in the *Jerusalem Post*:

- *Israel has become a stable and prosperous democracy... A more diplomatic approach means positioning Israel as the side constantly pursuing peace. A “two state” solution, negotiated if possible, but implemented unilaterally if not,*

*should be Israel's foremost national objective. It would eliminate the demographic threat to Israel's Jewish and democratic character... and would also dramatically improve Israel's international standing, enable the Sunni states to establish open relations...*

- *...the primary emphasis must be on defense, including construction of a national rocket shield designed to neutralize the Hezbollah threat, much as Israel essentially succeeded in neutralizing Hamas's rockets during the 2014 war... (Israel) is here to stay and can adopt policies appropriate to the established, secure and prosperous state it has become. On to the next 70.*

The Most Rev. Michael Curry spoke to all 7.5 billion of us on this planet last Saturday at the royal wedding. If we could all bring the love of God and neighbour more fully into our lives many problems in the Middle East and around the world would disappear or at least shrink enormously.

### **Alex Polowin**

ALEX POLOWIN HAS SPOKEN ON ABOUT 200 OCCASIONS IN SCHOOLS, ETC AND RECENTLY HAD A STREET NAMED AFTER HIM IN OTTAWA.

HE CAME WITH HIS FAMILY TO CANADA FROM A VILLAGE IN RURAL LITHUANIA AT THE AGE OF 3 IN 1928 AND ENLISTED IN OUR NAVY IN 1942 AT 17, PARTLY BECAUSE TWO UNCLES WHO HAD SAVED HIS LIFE AS A SICK CHILD HAD BEEN MURDERED IN LITHUANIA FOR BEING JEWISH. HE THUS BECAME ONE OF WHAT WIKIPEDIA NOTES WERE ABOUT 1.5 MILLION JEWS AROUND THE WORLD WHO SERVED IN THE ALLIED MILITARY CAUSE.

THE 10-DESTROYER FLOTILLA ALEX SERVED WITH TOGETHER SANK OR DISABLED 56 ENEMY SHIPS IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL. TODAY HE IS AT 93 THE LAST PERSON STANDING FROM TWO OF THE SHIPS HE SAILED ON AND HAS RECEIVED THE LEGION D'HONNEUR FROM THE PRESIDENT OF FRANCE AND MANY OTHER MEDALS. HE REPRESENTED CANADIAN NAVY VETERANS AT THE D-DAY CEREMONY 4 YEARS AGO, WHERE HE WAS CONGRATULATED BY QUEEN ELIZABETH, PRINCE PHILLIP AND A NUMBER OF OTHER HEADS OF STATE, INCLUDING CHANCELLOR MERKEL.

PLEASE WELCOME ALEX POLOWIN...