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### The Importance of Israel & the United States to Jewish people

Without Israel and the United States there would ultimately be no safe place for Jewish people to live, since, Israel provides a safe haven for Jews all over the world to come and live freely without persecution from anti-Semitism in other countries; With the United States as its main ally, Israel has a strong support system in international political discrepancies and military operations; and The United States hosts a large number of Jewish people, and provides them with protection against discrimination under constitutional law. There is factual evidence to back up the argument at hand. Additionally, there are credited academics who strengthen this argument as well.

At the end of World War II, displaced Jews whom were previously taken from their homes in Europe found there was nowhere to go after being liberated from Nazi concentration camps. Traumatized by the horrific violence that had faced their relatives and close friends, survivors of the Holocaust were scared and unsure about what their next step would be after being freed. Fortunately, after survivors were liberated, the United Nations General Assembly assumed the responsibility for finding the rattled Jews a new home. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs ) As a result, the General Assembly terminated the British Mandate. This mandate held that the British owned the rights to land of Israel. After the mandate's termination, the General Assembly accepted this resolution in November of 1947 and stated:

“Accordingly we, members of the people’s council, representatives of the Jewish Community of Eretz-Israel and of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the state of Israel.” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs )

The establishment of the state of Israel resulted in Jewish refugees from all over the world claiming citizenship in the new religiously free environment of the young Jewish state. This trend of Jewish people leaving their homes to come to Israel to avoid religious persecution can be demonstrated in both the beginning of the country’s establishment, as well as in modern times.

After the war, many Jewish survivors did not know where to go. Many believed they could go back to the places they were accustomed to living in throughout Europe. One of the most common countries where Jews were taken was from Poland. As a result, many Jews returned back to their respective Polish towns, hoping that they could rebuild the life they once had. Unfortunately, they did not take into account the strong anti-Semitic presence that still existed in their towns after the war. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1946, the anti-Semitic Kielce Pogrom took place. (Gruner 356) In this event, 40 Jews were murdered in the Polish town of Kielce, and an additional 80 were injured. (Weiner) Furthermore, from September 1944 to July 1946 historical documentation portrays that 327 Jews lost their lives in anti-Semitic rallies in Poland. (Gruner 357) Due to this hatred, many citizens throughout Poland decided to leave their old homes and head for Israel in 1958. (Weiner) At this time, 50,000 Polish Jewish immigrants came to Israel hoping to finally find peace and avoid the religious persecution they had faced for many years

after the war. (Weiner) These immigrants were finally free from persecution and were able to live peacefully. This brief history of post-World War II Jewish life is not the only circumstance where Jews were persecuted and forced to flee their homes. These situations still exist in modern times.

Over the past few years, France, which has the third largest Jewish population of 500,000 people, has seen a rise in the amount of anti-Semitic attacks towards their Jewish population. (Ford and Llana 17) From January 2014 to July 2014, the Jewish Community Protection Service reported that 527 attacks, which ranged from arson and vandalism of Jewish schools, cemeteries, and groceries to rape were committed. (Ford and Llana 17) Many French Jews acted upon this anti-Jewish violence in the form of fleeing their old homes. In 2014, approximately 7,000 French Jews moved to Israel to avoid this religious hatred according to the Jewish Agency for Israel. (Ford and Llana 17) A poll was sent to these new immigrants that asked about their reasoning for moving to Israel. One third of all responses to this poll displayed that the reason for their move to Israel was to stay away from the anti-Semitism clearly present in France. (Ford and Llana 17) It is evident that Jewish people throughout the world see Israel as a safe haven for them to live freely without being persecuted for practicing their faith. To further demonstrate how vital Israel is to Jewish people, it is important to note how the United States plays a key role in providing Israel with support in its ability to protect its citizens.

From the beginning of the establishment of the state of Israel to modern times, the United States has been the strongest ally that Israel has. The United States provides Israel with military aid and international political support, which ensures the protection of Israel's citizens during times of war and on a day to day basis. The United States "guarantees by law its commitment to

preserving Israel's 'qualitative military edge,' enabling the Jewish state to defend itself, by itself, against Middle Eastern adversaries" (Oren).

Throughout Israel's history, it has been threatened by its neighboring Arab governed countries. These countries have declared war on Israel several times throughout its short existence. There are times when rockets are fired into Israel which harm and sometimes murder innocent Israeli civilians. Luckily, the United States has given Israel tools to defend itself during situations such as these. During Israel's Operation of Pillar Defense in November of 2012, militant Palestinians from Gaza constantly fired rockets towards innocent Israeli citizens across the country. (Dombrowski, Kelleher and Auner 49) To help defend Israeli citizens, the United States helped Israel create the Iron Dome. This anti-missile detection machine gave Israeli citizens comfort since they knew that in the event that rockets were fired at them, the Iron Dome would destroy the rockets before ever crashing down on them. Of the 1,500 rockets that were fired from Palestinian militants during Operation of Pillar Defense, 84 percent were intercepted by the Iron Dome. (Dombrowski, Kelleher and Auner 49) Additionally, the United States has helped Israel develop the X-band Radar Station in Israel's Negev Desert. (Oren) This station has helped defend Israel from potential Iranian missiles that may be fired at any times notice. Assistant Secretary of State Andrew Shapiro was quoted saying, "Israel is a vital ally and a cornerstone of our regional security commitments..." (Oren) These circumstances are few of the many situations that show how the United States has helped Israel defend its people. The United States ensures that Israel will exist and abide by its core value of keeping its Jewish and even non-Jewish citizens safe from enemies that want nothing more than to see them depleted. The United States has also attempted to help Israel in the form of peace negotiations between different countries.

The 2000 Camp David Summit is a prime example of how the United States has done everything in its power to ensure Israel would be able to live peacefully with its Arab neighbors. In 2000, former President Bill Clinton invited Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat to negotiate peace between the two sides. (Shyovitz) On one side of the negotiation, Israel proposed a plan for peace with the Palestinians, offering them land and a stable system of clean water. On the contrary Chairman Arafat rejected all of these suggestions, wanting nothing of peace with Israel. President Bill Clinton tried reasoning with the Chairman, but in the end these negotiations ended up resolving nothing but more violence between the two sides. Nonetheless, this event portrays how the United States has been vital in attempting to help Israel stay safe from enemies that try to harm its civilians.

Israel is not the only country where Jewish people are safe. The United States has been one of the very few places in the world where Jewish people can live without being frightened of persecution. Before the United States was even proclaimed the United States, it was merely a settlement of British colonialists. The main reason for why British immigrants came to North America was to be able to practice their religion freely without being persecuted by the English government at the time. This idea of religious freedom became the backbone for one of the main laws the United States' was found upon. According to Leo Pfeffer, a famous American Jewish Lawyer in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, "Jurisdiction over religion, however, was never entrusted to government and, indeed, being inalienable, could not be entrusted to it." (Pfeffer 139) In this quote, Pfeffer referred to the idea that religion could never be associated with law under any circumstance in the United States. It is this sole reasoning that underlies the concept of why Jewish people throughout the United States' history have lived freely without any instances of religious persecution. To further promote this concept that the United States is a safe haven for

Jews, Leo Pfeffer is quoted saying, “It is probable that few, if any, nations of the world are more hospitable to the free exercise of religion on the part of Jews and other religious minorities than is the United States.” (Pfeffer 137)

From statistics gathered in 2014, the United States hosted approximately 5.7 million Jews, which comprised 40.1 percent of the world Jewish population at the time. (Jewish Virtual Library ) It is evident that since the United States hosts the second most number of Jews in the world, it must be a place where Jews feel safe. If Jews did not feel safe in the United States, this statistic would not hold true since Jews would have fled, which is shown in prior examples in history such as the anti-Semitism present in France. To further demonstrate Jews awareness that the United States is a safe haven for them to live in, one can observe the Jewish immigration statistics of a few years prior to World War II. “During the years leading up to and including World War II, a little over 110,000 Jews were accepted into the United States.” (Feng) This shows how Jews perceived the United States as a place where they can live freely without having to worry about being persecuted.

It is evident that Israel and the United states are vital for Jewish people to live freely from persecution. If the United Nations General Assembly and the strong alliance between the United States and Israel did not exist, the well-being of Jews across the world would be in jeopardy. It is important to note that although there are efforts to stop all anti-Semitism throughout the world, it is almost impossible to control even in modern times. It is vital that the United States and Israel maintain a strong relationship to ensure Israel’s citizens are safe from enemies. It is also crucial that the United States maintain a strict obedience to its laws that enforce religious tolerance and freedom for all its citizens since this concept is one of the foundations the country was founded

upon. If these circumstances are to remain constant, then it will stay that the United States and Israel are of utmost important for the security of Jewish people across the world.

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