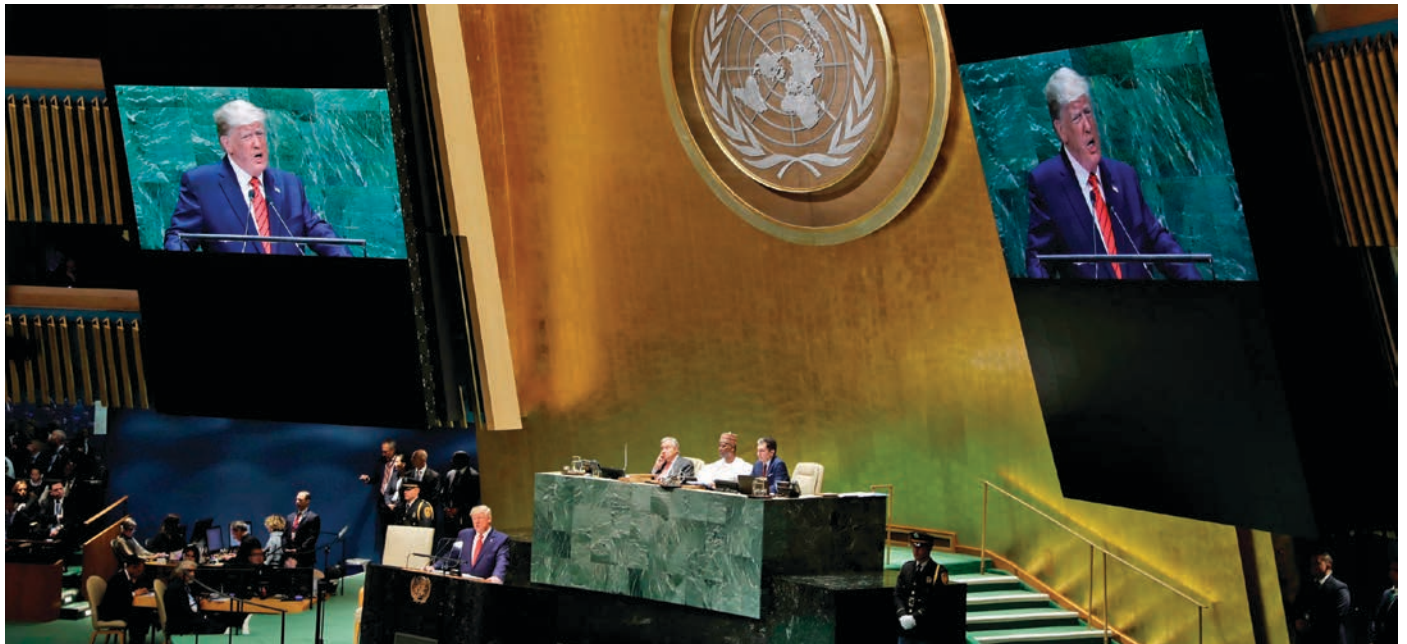




The Enmity of Your Enmity Is at the UN

FIRSTHAND REPORT OF TRUMP'S AND PENCE'S WEEK
AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Receiving admittance to the UN and gaining entry into the UN are two separate matters, as I'd come to discover on day one of an all-encompassing week of American participation at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

Essentially, there are two ways to get approved for UN press credentials. One involves weeks of advance planning and the filling out of a tedious form, which, per my recollection, is the size of a small booklet. Alternatively, any member of the White House Travel Corps can simply tick off an appropriate box up to the final days before the start of the UNGA and some White House staffers take care of all credentials and applicable arrangements. And if this weren't incentive enough, signing up through the White House includes access to events featuring the president, vice president and other senior officials, as well as a

seat at the president's press conference signaling the close of his participation in the UNGA. Among other things, one has access to a media filing center, a spacious, brightly lit chamber replete with every reasonable accommodation whereby a processional journalist can produce news, simultaneously watching as it is broadcast on one of a number of wide screens.

Early morning on the first day of this year's session finds me parking my vehicle at a 24-hour garage on the Jersey side of the river, then hopping aboard a rocky ferry before squeezing onto a stationary bus. The commuters crammed inside the bus serve as an accurate reflection of the vehicular gridlock outside the bus. The scene all around me seems reminiscent of a typical Picasso painting—an array of colors interspersed throughout myriad discordant patterns, with shapes strewn around arbitrarily. And

like a Picasso, no matter how long you stare at it, nothing moves. The city renowned for never sleeping is frozen and immobile. The handful of streets between midtown and the UN complex that aren't cordoned off are impassable due to the overwhelming volume of motorized participation. The pedestrian-saturated sidewalks fare slightly better.

Eventually, the aspirant commuters vacate the bus in search of a pair of unoccupied spots on the pavement large enough for a pair of shoes.

Feet meet pavement with determined strokes, not unlike Khrushchev's shoe against a UN podium, only many thousands of times in a row. I complete the mile-long trek in due time. I celebrate my arrival with a glance at my phone. An email informs me that the benevolent folks at the White House Travel Corps office have decided



to collect all our credentials from the UN office—for our everlasting convenience—and relocate them to the media filing center located in midtown, not far from whence we had disembarked in the first place. I make my way toward midtown, then back toward 1st Avenue, and I'm not handling things well.

"Come on, three miles in 87-degree weather isn't that bad," whispers my 60-plus-pound backpack. I say nothing because I've made a determination not to stoop so low as to respond to the snark of inanimate objects. That backpack sure has some nerve talking to me like that, I muse, especially as it's never more than a two-minute abandonment removed from being fed to the bomb squad. "And you're never more than one conversation removed from being restrained by a straitjacket," my backpack remarks, practically reading my mind.

Along the way, some of the more politely persuasive protestors can be seen offering all kinds of paraphernalia. I flash them a blank expression and mumble something in Yiddish. That seems to do the trick.

I encounter one protestor holding up a huge sign proclaiming Google and Facebook to be "a Jewish-invented monopoly." He twirls the sign to reveal what he claims to be the Jews' motto—"Lie, cheat and steal." Strange. That's our motto? I don't remember this ever coming up in all my years of schooling. We make eye contact. Instantly he drops his sign and avoids my gaze. Oh, well, at least the anti-Semites *inside* the UN don't bother to hide their feelings.

THE PUNDITS PUNT

The State of Church vs. State

I don't suppose I find the fact that the UN has never bothered to hold a global gathering to protect religious freedom to be particularly shocking. But then again, perhaps that's why I'm not the president of the United States.

"I was shocked when I was given that statistic that I would be the first," President Trump said in his opening remarks before a packed hall filled with clergy members, faith leaders, UN delegates and noted survivors of religious persecution. "That's very sad in many ways," the president adds. Sad? Yep. Shocking? Nah. Which, in a way, makes it even sadder.

The president set things in motion by highlighting actions taken to improve religious liberty in the US, before reminding us how good we've got it here. "Regrettably, the religious freedom enjoyed by American citizens is rare in the world," POTUS exclaimed. "Approximately 80 percent of the world's population live in countries where religious liberty is threatened, restricted or even banned... As we speak, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Yazidis and many other people of faith are being jailed, sanctioned, tortured and even murdered, often at the hands of their own government, simply for expressing their deeply held religious beliefs."

The president issued a call to action, urging "the nations of the world to end religious persecution, to stop the crimes against people of faith, release prisoners of conscience, repeal laws restricting freedom of religion and belief, protect the vulnerable, the defenseless and the oppressed."

The president then praised the survivors of religious persecution for being "an inspiration to the world" and for reminding us "that no force on earth is stronger than the faith of religious believers."

Among those survivors of religious persecution were two Jews, Mrs. Irene Weiss, a Holocaust survivor from Hungary, and Rabbi Faiz Algaradi, formerly of Yemen.

"I was pleased to see people from around the world participating to identify helpful ways to combat religious persecution and anti-Semitism, Rabbi Algaradi told *Ami* after delivering an address at the UN. "The world needs a lot of activists, advocates and knowledgeable people to build together a safe future for new generations."

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FROM THE CORPS' CORE:

The World at His Tweet

At the UN, it's not all dud and bore. Sure, the speeches are. Even the least enthusiastic words ever to have come out of Trump's mouth pale in comparison to the monotonously passionless address he delivered before the UN General Assembly (and while one can call Egypt's President Sisi many things, a good follow-up act to Trump isn't one of them). But aside from the dreary speeches, there was much real action going on at other times, especially at the bilateral meetings.

Bilateral meetings are so called because two world leaders engage in them. (There are also trilateral and multilateral meetings, but those are not as common.) Now, these inter-international meetings are comprised of two components. For world leaders, the more important of the two takes place in a side room behind closed doors and is closed to the press. For the press, the more important part is when the leaders issue public remarks—either about what's about to be discussed or what was just discussed, and sometimes both—and then members of the press have the opportunity to ask both leaders questions.

I speculate that Trump, too, considers the part where the press bombards him with questions as being more productive (and certainly more enjoyable) than that which takes place in private, but I never got around to asking...

Anyway, during his week at the UN, President Trump got to meet privately with leaders from more than a dozen countries. Following (oftentimes more or less identical) statements put forth by both POTUS and his counterpart, reporters got to ask questions. What resulted ranged from a full-fledged press conference engaged in by both leaders to a few mumbled words on the part of the sheepish counterparts, and many shouted commands from aggressive aides directing the press to vacate the premises.

So what have we learned from these

exchanges? There is much to be gleaned well beyond the enunciated verbiage. Also playing important roles were body language, how comfortable or uncomfortable the leaders felt answering questions in each other's presence, how they handled being put on the spot, which leader decided when

to end the press conference, and which question brought about this decision.

See below for a detailed description of the leaders who met with President Trump and made time for the press, and one interesting observation I gleaned from each exchange.

Ukraine

After a few failed attempts to answer on behalf of President Zelensky, POTUS agreed to give his counterpart a shot. In regard to action he might consider taking in response to Trump's request that he investigate Biden and his son, Zelensky affirmed: "We have [an] independent country and [an] independent general security. I can't push anyone, you know? That's it."

Iraq

President Salih affirmed that Iraq will not permit the US to use its soil to launch attacks against a "neighboring country." Instead of addressing this, President Trump chose to focus on boosting Iraq's economic and security independence.

Pakistan

President Trump decided to add Kashmir to his shortlist of otherwise impossible-to-solve ongoing conflicts worth taking a crack at by encouraging Pakistan and India to work out the details. Perhaps as a matter of diplomacy, Trump seemed to cut in on any mention of words like "aggressor" or "terrorism" by the press.

India

President Trump referred to President Modi as the

"father of India," claiming that before his rise to power, India was "very torn," with "lots of dissent" and "lots of fighting."

United Kingdom

As his way of encouraging Prime Minister Johnson in the wake of a recent Supreme Court ruling that his suspension of parliament was unlawful, President Trump brought up challenges with his own Supreme Court, which he claimed ruled against him in the first seven cases (but practically never on anything major since then).

South Korea

After President Moon wished President Trump success on a likely third summit with Kim Jong-un, POTUS remarked, "I want to know what's going to be coming out of it," adding, "We can know a lot before the summit takes place."

Egypt

President Trump dismissed reports of anti-Sisi protests, pointing out to one reporter, "Even your best friend in the whole world, President Obama, had a lot of demonstrations."

Singapore

Were you aware that the US does \$55 billion worth of trade with this tiny island nation? Well, we all know that now.

Poland

Part of the cooperation agreement signed by the US and Poland would see additional US troops sent to Poland, with the Polish government picking up the tab.

New Zealand

Although worlds apart, New Zealand can always count on the US being close by when it comes to combating online extremism.

Japan

A "fair and reciprocal" trade agreement was discussed, which opens Japan's markets to \$7 billion in American agricultural products. Furthermore, it's apparent that as Japanese "investment projects" in the US keep increasing (including eight new projects since the summer and more than 30 anticipated in the coming months), so does the roll played by Japan's Prime Minister Abe as an arbitrator between the US and hostile players in the Middle East.

El Salvador

POTUS touted an agreement recently reached with El Salvador whereby the Central American country will agree to absorb migrants seeking to make their way up to the US.



DI-VISION

The Impeach Speech Rambles On

It was in the Midtown Hilton, then the location of the Trump campaign headquarters, that my colleagues and I first learned that Trump would be the next president of the United States. It was in the same Midtown Hilton, now the site of the press filing center during President Trump's visit to the UN, that my colleagues and I first learned of the impeachment inquiry that had been launched by House Democrats against POTUS.

Just how likely is it that an impeachment inquiry will end with the removal of President Trump from office? About as likely as a first date ending in divorce. Meaning, it's happened before that things have gone from A to Z, assuming the ample passage of time and the meeting of appropriate conditions. About as many days remain between now and the 2020 elections as there are pages in the Mueller report, which is enough time to give the appearance of a rushed investigation in a bid to score base points, but which is undertaken by a party that clearly has no regard for winning bipartisan support.

But why now? Weren't Democratic leaders against taking such measures? Sure they were. But all that changed once Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer were taken out of the picture and House committees chose to begin the early stages of the impeachment process without Pelosi. And with impeachment hearings already under way, an announcement to launch the inquiry was an unnecessary formality.

So who comes out on top? In terms of the short term, the Democrats—for the

first time since Trump escalated his way into the political arena—seem to be in control of the news cycle. To Trump, this might be a bigger danger than (or might become the catalyst for) impeachment.

As for the long run, the White House remains confident that these proceedings will only boost voter turnout on the Republican side. As Jay Sekulow, President Trump's lead counsel, told *Ami* in an interview, "It would be political suicide if they did it... Historically, what happens when you do that, [is that] it doesn't

work out for the party that did it."

Aren't the Democrats concerned about winning in 2020? According to Trump's former campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, not necessarily. As he told *Ami* after that contentious hearing before the House Judiciary Committee, which many highlight as the first impeachment hearing, "I believe Congressman Nadler would rather continue to be called 'Congressman Nadler' in the minority than 'former Congressman Nadler' in the majority."

THE QUOTE QUOTA:

"When they spoke about the suppression of religion around the world, Vice President Pence, President Trump and UN Secretary-General Guterres all began with anti-Semitism and the oppression of Jews. This was a refreshing change from the US Congress that, when confronted with anti-Semitic expression from one of its own, listed Jews as number seven, after Pacific islanders, on a list of targeted groups. The Trump Administration demonstrated a clear awareness that Jews remain the 'canary in the coal mine,' always the first to be targeted by hateful regimes."

— Rabbi Yaakov Menken, managing director of the Coalition for Jewish Values, sharing his views with *Ami Magazine* following the UN Conference to Protect Global Freedom