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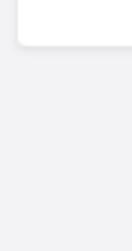
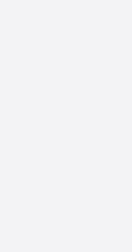
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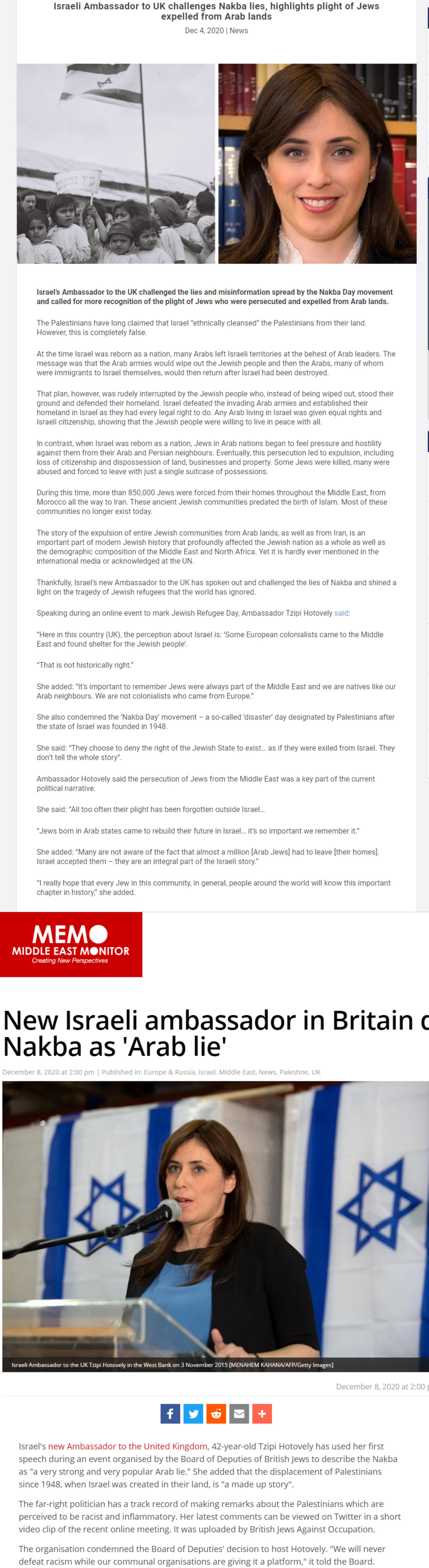
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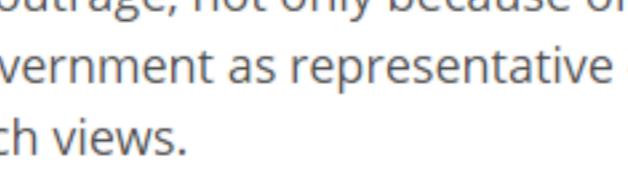
Creating New Perspectives

New Israeli ambassador in Britain describes Nakba as 'Arab lie'

December 8, 2020 at 2:00 pm | Published in: Europe & Russia, Israel, Middle East, News, Palestine, UK



December 8, 2020 at 2:00 pm



Israel's new Ambassador to the United Kingdom, 42-year-old Tzipi Hotovely has used her first speech during an event organised by the Board of Deputies of British Jews to describe the Nakba as "a very strong and very popular Arab lie." She added that the displacement of Palestinians since 1948, when Israel was created in their land, is "a made up story".

The far-right politician has a track record of making remarks about the Palestinians which are perceived to be racist and inflammatory. Her latest comments can be viewed on Twitter in a short video clip of the recent online meeting. It was uploaded by British Jews Against Occupation.

The organisation condemned the Board of Deputies' decision to host Hotovely. "We will never defeat racism while our communal organisations are giving it a platform," it told the Board. "Hotovely's views cannot be allowed to be normalised in our community with invites to celebratory events."

Hotovely's remarks have sparked outrage, not only because of their racism but also because an organisation recognised by the government as representative of mainstream Jewish thought in Britain provided a platform for such views.

British Jews Against Occupation has circulated a petition urging Jews in Britain to write to the Foreign Office to reject her accreditation. Hotovely has demonstrated a complete disregard for international law throughout her political career, and has an appalling record of racist and inflammatory behaviour, it explains. "This includes inviting the far-right organisation Lehava to speak in the Knesset, supporting campaigns to prevent relationships between Jews and Arabs, and referring to Israeli human rights activists as 'war criminals' and 'an enemy within'."

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Senior Reform Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner also criticised Hotovely's record. "Her political views on Palestinians, annexation and religious pluralism clash with our core values," she told the *Guardian*. Labour peer Lord Jeremy Beecham told the *Jewish Chronicle* that, "The appointment of an ultra-right wing peer [as ambassador] will be typical of the present government of Israel, will do nothing to win friends in the UK – or indeed any other reasonable country."

In June, when Hotovely's appointment was first announced, it looked as though her views were too extreme even for the Board of Deputies. According to the *Jewish Chronicle*, she launched an outspoken attack on the Board over its support for a Palestinian state in its 2019 Jewish Manifesto. She accused the 260-year-old body of failing to consult "Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, our ambassador, [or] any other political authority" ahead of the manifesto's release.

Despite the apparent disagreement, the Board has tended to support the views of the Israeli far-right in opposition to internationally accepted positions. A recent example was to put pressure on the British government to change the status of Jerusalem.

The Nakba describes the forced expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians by Zionist paramilitary groups from 1947 onwards. Around 600 Palestinian villages have since been wiped off the map in order to create a Jewish majority in Israel. Israeli historians have called this process "ethnic cleansing".

Despite volumes of evidence, Nakba denial has been mainstreamed by far-right Zionist groups.

READ: Racism in Israel isn't going away, it's getting worse