



**THE PRESIDENT**

Jerusalem, March 29, 2016

WHEREAS, sixty-eight years ago, on May 14, 1948, the sovereign State of Israel was re-established in its historic homeland and, outmanned and outgunned, immediately came under attack by the invading armies of five surrounding countries, and,

WHEREAS, Czechoslovakia was the sole country to provide the State of Israel with critically-needed fighter planes, rifles, submachine guns, and millions of rounds of ammunition, and assistance to *MACHAL* volunteer pilots in transporting the arms from Czechoslovakia to Israel at a time when nations stood back by imposing a world-wide arms embargo, and,

WHEREAS, Czechoslovak Air Force personnel trained and qualified Israeli Air Force and *MACHAL* volunteer pilots at Ceske Budejovice on the Messerschmitt and Spitfire fighter planes destined for the Israel Air Force (IAF), and,

WHEREAS, the State of Israel successfully employed these aircraft and munitions to gain decisive air superiority, defeat the invading forces on the ground, and secure for its people the blessings of Freedom and Independence, as stated by Israel's first prime minister, David Ben Gurion, "the Czechoslovak arms saved the State of Israel", and,

WHEREAS, it is the purpose of American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation (AVILC) as the successor organization to the American Veterans of Israel (AVI) to remember and honor the service of those 1,250 North American volunteers (*MACHAL*) who served in Israel's War of Independence, of whom 41 gave their lives for this noble cause, and,

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the Government of the State of Israel and the American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation to publicly honor and acknowledge the undying gratitude and long-time bonds of friendship between the Government and People of the

State of Israel and the Government and Peoples of the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia, the successor states of the former Czechoslovakia,

WHEREAS, on the occasion of the 50th annual Mickey Marcus Memorial Service at the Jewish Chapel of the United States Military Academy at West Point, on the 17th of April 2016, corresponding to the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nissan 5776 according to the Hebrew calendar, we remember Colonel Mickey Marcus, an American – Israeli hero, an outstanding graduate of West Point, who served as the commander of the Jerusalem Front during Israel's war of Independence and gave his life in the defense of Jerusalem,

THEREFORE, THIS PROCLAMATION is presented to the representatives of the Czech Republic and Slovakia on this occasion as a token of grateful appreciation.



Reuven (Ruv) Rivlin