



GOD BLESS AMERICA because America's two major party nominees are competing – again – over 'who's best for Israel,' says the writer. (Marco Bello/Jeonah Moon/Reuters)

KEEP SAYING:

God bless America

CENTER FIELD
• By GIL TROY

These last few weeks have been volatile emotionally – again. We keep reliving October 7's horrors and heroism, as new horrors threaten us and new heroes emerge – some, alas, posthumously.

Amid the cascade of well-deserved articles about how Israelis saved Israel, I am donning my American historian's PhD robes to utter that magical phrase gracing the English language and the Zionist lexicon: "God bless America."

God bless America because America's two major party nominees are competing – again – over "who's best for Israel." God bless America because US President Joe Biden receded on October 7, visited Israel, and has since authorized over 500 much-needed munitions deliveries to boost Israel's war effort. And God bless America because, in a divided republic, Americans united against Hamas, repudiated the academic lunatics "exhilarated" by Jew-killing, and supported Israel, Israelis, and the Jewish people.

True, academic decadence confronted Hamas's depravity on October 7, and the devil won. The feminists' silence, the Social Justice Warriors' sick glee, the rampaging snowflakes' aggression, represented the triple double-cross. They stabbed Jews in the back – as such Jew-haters have done for millennia. They threw Western civilization under the bus – as these liberal liberals have done for decades. But they also violated their defining principles as educators, as feminists, as progressives.

Fortunately, when all-American decency confronted Hamas's depravity, the red-white-and-blue angels wept, sang, prayed, and

shipped weapons, helping us wallop our enemies.

Many forgot today, but as Israel reeled, most Americans rallied around their Jewish friends, the embattled Jewish state, and President Biden. The December Harvard CAPS Harris Poll found 69% of Americans following the war closely, 73% characterizing Hamas's massacre as "genocidal," with 84% calling October 7 a "terrorist attack," and 81% supporting Israel, not Hamas.

Defying media and social media exaggerations demonizing Israel's self-defense campaign, even in May, 69% still recognized that "Israel is trying to avoid civilian casualties" in Gaza. Those numbers resisted the media's ever-escalating sanctimony storm.

These poll numbers echoed Galup polls over years 20 showing that 70% and 80% of Americans support Israel – despite the hysterical headlines.

From coast to coast, Americans empathized with Israel. On October 9, the White House National Security Council spokesman, John Kirby, choked, live on CNN, after seeing the disturbing rape and murder images on video, which, unlike too many feminists, he wouldn't deny or excuse. A record 425 members of Congress co-sponsored a resolution proclaiming that Congress "stands with Israel as it defends itself against the barbaric war launched by Hamas and other terrorists."

Six weeks later, dozens of senators went silent while watching Israel's film depicting Palestinians' claims that Congress "stands with Israel as it defends itself against the barbaric war launched by Hamas and other terrorists."

A nationwide alliance of Hispanic Christian leaders joined Israel's more prominent Evangelical

church supporters in defending the Jewish state and demanding Hamas free the hostages, whose plight moved millions. On Broadway, dozens of stars, including Billy Porter, Debra Messing, and Jeremy Jordan, adapted "Bring Him Home," from *Les Misérables*, to honor the hostages.

Madonna was devastated, declaring during a London concert: "I turn on social media and I want to vomit. I see children being kidnapped, pulled off motorcyles; babies being decapitated, children at peace raves being shot and killed." She posted a heart-breaking video of the invasion on Instagram, while proclaiming: "My heart goes out to Israel" and "I am aware that this is the work of Hamas."

True, Madonna needed to hire extra security after that. But she had the security as an American that in key moments you stand for goodness, knowing that the overwhelming majority of Americans will have your back.

Over 2,000 Hollywood actors, producers, and screenwriters, including Jerry Seinfeld, Jamie Lee Curtis, and Amy Schumer, embraced Israel while denouncing Hamas's "evil." And in New York, when two non-Jewish construction workers, identifying themselves as proud Americans, confronted a neighbor tearing down a neighbor's house, the video of the confrontation went viral.

That's the America I know! True, a small, rabid, well-organized group of anti-Jewish anti-Zionist dominated the headlines, giving cover to the twisted minority of Jew-hating anti-Zionists. It's a structural problem – extremists command attention. But it's an existential problem, too. Too many Jews, and, well-meaning, fair-minded pro-Israel Americans are so demoralized by media shrillness, they withdraw – on this issue and many others. This Silenced

Majority's passivity obscured the rare bipartisan consensus recognizing that America and Israel share common values, interests, challenges, enemies, and a common fate, especially now.

I HAVE my criticisms. I am appalled that America didn't start bombing Iranian nuclear facilities back in April, to show Taiwan, China, and everyone else that America protects its allies. I don't understand the aversion even many American Jews have to giving Israel a clear victory over evil jihadists who are anti-American, antisemitic and anti-Zionist.

In short, politicians, left and right, infuriate me. And, yes, I'm especially annoyed by the Biden-Harris "experts" so fearful of "escalation" that their hesitations fueled and prolonged this conflict. And, yes, we Israelis better understand that democracies need backbones because the lesson of World War II still holds: you don't negotiate with dictators, you crush them. But that other World War II takeaway still holds, too – never underestimate the American people's decency, and its capacity to distinguish between good and evil.

While processing this roller-coaster year, noting a feckless Canadian prime minister, a sorry British prime minister, and a hostile French president, we Israelis should thank America and thank American Jewry, appreciating these deep, enduring, strategically essential, enduring friendships.

The writer, a senior fellow in Zionist thought at the Jewish People Policy Institute, is an American presidential historian. He is the author of *The Essential Guide to October 7th and Its Aftermath: Facts, Figures, History, and an In-Depth Book, To Resist the Academic Intifada: Letters to My Students on Defending the Zionist Dream, was just published.*

The past year as a time capsule

Why Israel is the envy of the Western world

• By AMY NEUSTEIN

For many Jews, the past year began on Simchat Torah, when a joyous holiday of celebrating the annual conclusion of the Torah readings turned into a bloodbath of epic proportions.

A music festival and towns in southern Israel on October 7 were ambushed by Hamas terrorists who murdered 1,200 innocents and took 251 hostages. Universities around the world ignited vociferous attacks on the Jews reminiscent of 1930s Europe.

With the one-year remembrance of October 7, to occur shortly after Rosh Hashanah, we will begin the year on a far different note. Israel's triumph over the intelligence gathering, military superiority, and technical prowess realized a major feat against Hezbollah in its long-term efforts to eviscerate the axis of resistance. Its military prowess and intelligence-gathering capabilities have proven, once again, to be the envy of the Western world.

In fact, so much so, that the same day that Hassan Nasrallah – the redoubtable terrorist responsible for the killing of 238 US marines in October 1983 and for the March 1985 kidnapping of Associated Press Bureau Chief Terry Anderson, held captive for seven years – was assassinated by the IDF's bombing of the Hezbollah command headquarters hidden beneath a building in Beirut.

MOODY'S, THE international credit ratings agency, downgraded Israel two notches to a Baa1 from an A2 rating. By doing so, Moody's placed Israel in the lowest of categories, placing it in league with countries such as Spain and Bulgaria, whose GDP per capita are remarkably below those of other European Union member states.

With the stroke of a pen, Moody's hammered Israel, hours after the news of Nasrallah's (later confirmed) demise was simmering in media outlets, intelligence communities, and among denizens in countries in four hemispheres.

Was this a coincidence? I think not. My proof is that to justify the unsubstantiated and undeserved credit downgrade, Moody's revived the judicial reform dispute in media outlets, intelligence communities, and among denizens in countries in four hemispheres.

Certainly, this was not a new phenomenon, nor is it incomprehensible to have a debate of this intensity in a country that accords with democratic principles of free speech and the right to assemble. Most notably, among countries that benefit from large defense spending budgets and military sophistication.

Envy by others is unfortunately the inevitable consequence of success. Israel has succeeded in the past year to prove it can overcome an existential threat to its survival.

We should not allow the envy expressed by our neighbors to deter, dampen, or our commitment to Israel's security above all else. Let the New Year release us from a time capsule and begin our journey toward permanent security for Israel and all Jews in the Diaspora.

The writer, a PhD, is the author/editor of 10 academic books with leading publishers. Her two most recent books, *From Madness to Mutiny* and *Moral Schisms*, will be published by Oxford University Press. She resides in Fort Lee, NJ.

Hatred and violence

Regarding "New York Times' eulogizes Nasrallah" (October 6): We should not be surprised at the rise of antisemitism when a so-called newspaper of repute had the audacity to eulogize terrorist leader Hassan Nasrallah, who in his time was responsible for the heinous killing of hundreds of innocent US citizens.

This publication also failed to mention his numerous crimes acting as a mafia organization in Lebanon, which has an independent parliamentary elected majority that had been hijacked by Nasrallah's Hezbollah.

His elimination by a mixture of Israel's premier intelligence and accuracy of the IAF should receive the highest of praise for ridding the Middle East of a virus that had the infectious ability to replicate itself and spread hatred and violence across the world.

STEPHEN VISHNICK
Tel Aviv

The talking must stop

Regarding "Iran will be met with significant retaliation – Israeli sources" (October 6): Iran launched 201 missiles at Israel, some of which impacted targets. While our "friend" President Biden makes his views very clear: Do not strike nuclear sites and oil facilities, Prime Minister Netanyahu assures us that we have an obligation to respond. Of course we do and have already waited too long. Why do we always wait to be attacked, whether by Hamas or Hezbollah or Iran? Even worse, we often do not even retaliate if there are no deaths. Why are we having discussions with Biden about how we respond to the continuous slaughter of our people on our land? We had those discussions about how to respond to Hamas and are still suffering the consequences and with the hostages still in Hamas captivity.

The talking must stop. If the world is so full of hate for Israel that it prefers to stand by as it did during the Holocaust, it is better that we stand alone with pride

and faith and prosecute the war with Iran and its proxies as a strong sovereign Jewish nation, and if not now, when? Only when we are for ourselves, can we fulfill our reason for being returned to our historical homeland to build and settle it for the Jewish people. It is really a no-brainer, or should be.

EDITH OGNALL
Netanya

Not the only issue

Boaz Golany's point ("October surprise" for the US election?") (October 8) is indeed valid, and there have been more than a few instances when elections in the United States – at all levels – have been decided on the basis of last-minute decisions by the voters. More often than not, those fence-sitters were swayed by a candidate's sudden change of position or policy.

I wonder, though, if what is going on in this part of the world – the multi-front war, the growing hostilities with Iran, the imprisoned hostages, the controversy over a ceasefire – is sufficiently important to mainstream America that it could potentially be a game-changer. There are, to be sure, other factors – domestic and international – that influence which button gets pressed in the privacy of the voting booth. As seen in the recent presidential and vice presidential debates, Israel was not the only issue on the agenda. Immigration, abortion, and a concern over basic civil liberties, too, were given attention. And dare we not forget that the state of the economy more often than not is what wins (and loses) elections at the national level.

So, yes, how the two candidates view the coming weeks of this horrific war will most certainly play a significant role as November 5 rapidly approaches. I'm not so sure, though, that it will have the impact of providing an "October surprise" for the benefit of either Donald Trump or Kamala Harris.

BARRY NEWMAN
Ginot Shomron

Generally true

Regarding "No, settlers aren't messianic radicals" (October 6): While this is generally true, Aliza Pilichowski might as well have written: "Palestinians are not terrorists."

While generally true in both cases, far too many Palestinians are terrorists and too many Israelis living in small communities, many unauthorized, are indeed radical and have engaged in acts of vandalism and terrorism.

That's not right and it hurts the rest of the law-abiding citizens, Palestinian or Israeli.

BARRY LYNN
Efrat

Aliza Pilichowski is correct. Back in the 1980s, it was governmental encouragement and benefits which enticed many families to spread out into the new areas to build homes and communities. The movement gained impetus as the prospect of larger houses and gardens in landscapes which evoked biblical images brought more new olim and longtime Israelis, including those born here, to the new areas.

This is not to say that some did not become giddy with joy. I recall a visit on Independence Day, when I was greeted by carfuls of young men celebrating by randomly shooting guns into the air. After two intifadas took their toll, the pure enjoyment of building a home morphed into tightening a grip to hold on to the territory. Some took it upon themselves to create new settlements, not sanctioned by the government, with resulting conflicts.

It is not "messianic" to love the land and to build legally sanctioned homes, but, as in all things political, the rules of law and common sense must prevail.

MARION REISS
Beit Shמש

Urban myth

I read Alan Freishtat's "It's shopping season" (October 6) and was astounded to read his criticism of MSG in foods. Because he describes himself as a wellness coach and personal trainer, he should know better than to continue propagating this urban myth.

The myth that MSG is bad for health has been debunked many times already, since it spuriously sprouted regarding Chinese restaurant syndrome in 1968.

Here are the facts. Of the 20 amino acids, from which every single protein we need or use is created, nine are essential, meaning we can't produce them on our own and need to eat them to survive. Eleven can be produced internally. One of these 11 is glutamic acid.

Glutamate is glutamic acid which has lost a hydrogen atom, but both substances are interchangeable. Glutamic acid has many uses in the body. It helps cells create energy; it is a key player in how we get rid of waste through urea; it is also a key neurotransmitter used by neurons in our brains to pass messages.

MSG is really glutamic acid to which salt is added to make a solid; hence monosodium glutamate. MSG is what gives food its umami flavor.

Many studies have shown that it is not harmful. Moreover, MSG continues to be used in many Asian countries to enhance the flavor of food.

This urban myth about MSG must be put to rest. My source for this information is a book titled *The Bad Food Bible* by Aaron Carroll, MD, which debunks many urban myths about food. I recommend it to Mr. Freishtat and your readers.

ROD MCLEOD
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