

Push the Heritage Foundation's "Project Esther" forward

Amy Neustein | Nov 15, 2024 0

(JNS) — The Heritage Foundation rightly called the global Hamas support network an existential threat to Israel and all Jews in the Diaspora. In response, they recently conceived of "Project Esther" to serve as an antidote to the Jew-hatred sown in the meadows of higher learning and readily spread in the corridors of democratic policymaking and the mass media. This project is now needed more than ever because the damage caused by the pro-Palestinian interest groups has infected the minds of impressionable youth in the United States, clearly evidenced by the flaming diatribes launched at Jewish students since Oct. 7, 2023, on campuses throughout the country.

Unfortunately, the perils of Jew-hatred have not been confined to the hallways of academia. These dangers are now palpable in industry, corporate life and, similarly, in the medical profession. According to the American Jewish Medical Association, founded in the wake of Oct. 7 by New York plastic surgeon Yael Haas, Jewish doctors are increasingly subject to scorn, harassment and deprecation at the merciless hands of colleagues who boldly express enmity toward them.

Tuesday's election victory declaring former President Donald Trump as the winner of the highest office in the land has lifted the democratic decree that has threatened Israel's right to defend itself—holding back 2,000-pound bombs and importuning the Jewish state to cease its efforts to eradicate the terror networks abutting their borders. The democratic decree is likewise lifted by the Republican sweep of the Senate. As the majority party controlling the Senate, any of Trump's future foreign-aid packages to Israel will be less likely to face opposition from the legislative branch.

Just as Queen Esther took a proactive role in removing the decree against the Jews in Persia in the mid-fourth century BCE, we must embrace a proactive role in lifting the decree of destruction placed upon Israel. This decree caused the attrition of support for the Jewish state by a Democrat-led presidential administration and a Democrat-controlled Senate that has been influenced by the Hamas support network.

To combat the effects of the pro-Palestinian groups, we must push forward an agenda to denude college campuses, industries and media of their virulent Jew-hatred, which pose an existential threat to Israel and Diaspora Jewry.

Project Esther, defined by the Heritage Foundation as "a national strategy to combat antisemitism," has gathered religious groups across the theological spectrum. Forming the National Task Force to Combat Antisemitism, Project Esther has chosen the Coalition for Jewish Values — the largest rabbinic public-policy organization in America dedicated to restoring America's moral foundation — to represent the interests of the Jewish community. Representing 2,500 traditional rabbinic leaders in public policy, CJV has garnered the respect of lawmakers on Capitol Hill. This provides an excellent starting point for reversing the damage of the democratic decree.

Trump's victory and the simultaneous re-taking of the Senate by the Republican Party provide a welcomed opportunity to undo the harm caused by the pro-Palestinian policymakers to Israel's viability. To that end, it is imperative that we advance a comprehensive plan that assures the Jewish state receives the fiscal, military and practical support it sorely needs.

As part of that plan, we must crack down on the biased credit-rating firms that have unfairly and unjustly lowered Israel's credit status in the global bond markets. A strong rating is essential for allowing Israel to borrow money when needed and to encourage foreign investments. Exposing Israel to such biased and tendentious rating agencies, noticeably propelled by anti-Jewish sentiment, must cease forthwith. The downgrades that have placed Israel on a negative credit outlook allow these agencies to further downgrade Israel's credit status at any point, which would leave the Jewish state vulnerable to falling below investment grade. However, now that the Republicans control the Senate, they can schedule a hearing to investigate this matter using the full force of government subpoena powers and legislative inquiry, something that would never have been possible while the Democrats had served as the majority party in the U.S. Senate.

We need to forge ahead with a plan to dispel the critics of Israel whether they are found in the university lecture halls, on the streets in busy intersections or at the global credit firms. To do anything less would be to squander a heavenly gift that is meant to assure the Jewish state and Jews throughout the world that our existence is vital in the eyes of God and in the eyes of the American voters. Let's embrace Project Esther's doctrines and policies. By doing so, we are proactively combatting antisemitism in American life.