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ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

Events...

Monday, February 2, 7pm

BAYT presents International Law Expert **Natasha Hausdorff**.
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Commentary...

Why do they March for Gaza, but not Iran?

By Jonathan S. Tobin

The silence from the chattering classes, Hollywood elites, and university students and faculty has been deafening. The same people who have been conducting mass demonstrations and virtue-signaling about their devotion to the cause of human rights and their abhorrence of civilian casualties when it came to the war in Gaza have been largely silent about what is happening in Iran.

That isn't because no one knows exactly what's going on.

Despite attempts by the Islamist regime to black out the internet and halt the flow of information about events inside the country, the scale of the conflict has grown so large that it has been impossible to cover up. Some 2,500 deaths have been confirmed by the U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency, though reports on mass killings of protesters by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps have raised the potential death toll to anywhere from 12,000 to 20,000.

While the liberal mainstream media was slow to pick up the story, it can no longer downplay it. While it has had to compete with its overwrought coverage of the controversy about the Trump administration's efforts to enforce immigration laws, the Iran protests have been the top story on The New York Times website for multiple days, and have also received extensive coverage in The Washington Post and on NPR. Even leftist human-rights groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have been posting about it.

But the statistics about casualties and images of military forces shooting peaceful protesters in cold blood haven't moved the audiences of these outlets in the way they normally do about another conflict in the Middle East. In fact, the same audience that turned out in the tens of thousands to protest the war in the Gaza Strip or to broadcast their identification with Palestinians has zero interest in the Iranian struggle for freedom or the many victims of the Islamist regime.

This apathy makes itself felt on a number of different levels.

No mass street protests, demonstrations or tent encampments can be found in U.S. cities or on college campuses dedicated to supporting Iranian protesters. The opinion columnists at major outlets who have been churning out articles falsely accusing Israel of "genocide" while parroting grossly inaccurate Palestinian casualty figures are mum about Iran. At the Golden Globes awards ceremony, actors and others in past years have shown off their support for the Palestinian war against Israel via lapel pins or biting words. At the event held this past weekend, the cause de jour was protests against the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). Not a single person—either on stage or in the audience, as can be seen from the media coverage—was standing in solidarity with the people of Iran.

That's not surprising.

Concern about the way the Islamist theocracy oppresses the people of Iran has never been among its priorities. Or even a subject about which they were even minimally concerned.

The question is why—given everything heard from the crowd about how terrible it is for the innocent to be killed in conflict—they have nothing to say about Tehran? They're all very vocal about the backing of a "Free Palestine." Not so much about a free Iran.

It's true that not as much attention has been paid to the conflict in Iran as there has been for the two-year war in Gaza; however, a good number of Iranians have been fighting against the mullahs since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Another reason may be that the State of Israel is supported by the United States. It's true that even when Washington was most sympathetic to Iran, and seeking to appease its government during the Barack Obama administration, and to a lesser extent, when Joe Biden was president, America didn't formally support the government of Iran.

If anything, the fight for freedom there ought to be generating a lot more foreign support than the Palestinian cause. After all, the Palestinians have rejected compromise, peace and a two-state solution to end the Arab-Israeli conflict for nearly a century. And the recent war in Gaza wasn't an Israeli attempt to stifle democratic protests. It was a morally justified response to a cross-border invasion by Palestinian Arabs on Oct. 7, 2023, which resulted in an orgy of mass murder, rape, torture, kidnapping and wanton destruction.

The main impetus for those rallies, however, wasn't focused on ending ties between Washington and Jerusalem, though most of the protesters were surely in favor of that idea. Nor was the motivation for the protests simply a matter of backing a ceasefire in the fighting that followed the Oct. 7 massacre in Jewish communities in southern Israel. The ceasefire reached last October didn't really dampen the ardor of the anti-Israel crowd. It was also not a matter of genuine sympathy for victims; if that were the case, they wouldn't have been indifferent to the plight of Israeli hostages.

Rather, as the chants of the pro-Hamas mobs made clear, it was their support for the desire of the Palestinians to see Israel eradicated ("From the river to the sea") and for violence against Jews wherever they lived ("Globalize the intifada") that lured them to join the cause.

Despite their loud proclamations that the anti-Israel protests were rooted in concern about human rights—something that would surely cause them to speak out about Iran—that just doesn't pass muster. Nobody who actually cares about human rights can support a cause that aims at the slaughter of an entire people, no matter where they live.

The reason for this can partly be explained by simple ideology. The indoctrination of a generation in the toxic ideas of critical race theory, intersectionality and settler-colonialism has led many young people to believe that all conflicts are essentially about race.

As such, they have come to believe that the world is divided into two groups perpetually at war with each other: oppressed "people of color" and their "white" oppressors. In that essentially Marxist formulation, Jews are, despite their history of persecution and the persistence of antisemitism, too Western and too successful to merit sympathy, and so must be defined as "white" oppressors. That makes the Palestinians the oppressed racial minority. They believe this myth, even though Jews and Arabs are the same race, and the majority of Israelis are people of color since they trace their origins to the Middle East and North Africa.

The struggle of Iranians to end the rule of tyrannical Islamist theocrats and their terrorist henchmen is irrelevant to this framework because neither side can be identified as "white." That makes it irrelevant at best, and at worst, a distraction from more interesting battles like the one against Israeli Jews.

It's equally true that those influenced by these ideas also can't identify with any struggle against a government that regards itself in conflict with the West, which the intersectional left considers to be irredeemably racist. As historian Niall Ferguson sagely pointed out in The Free Press, because the Iranian protests are an attempt at a "counterrevolution," rather than one against a pro-Western government, they are indifferent to it. In this way, the reactionary Iranian regime—which, like Hamas, oppresses women and considers gays to be worthy of the death penalty—gets a free pass.

That's as illogical as it is absurd since it leads people who would

be hanged or thrown off rooftops in Gaza or Tehran to march with “Gays for Palestine” placards. Yet it does make sense to those who consider the West, the United States and Israel to be inherently evil, and their opponents, even when they are Islamist murderers, to be somehow sympathetic.

It’s the same reason why far larger and bloodier conflicts, such as the decade-long Syrian civil war—when hundreds of thousands died, and millions were made homeless—never motivated anyone on the left to take to the streets demanding action to stop the fighting. The same was true for what is a real genocide going on in Sudan right now.

Still, there’s more to it than just that stale and intellectually vapid ideological construct. The “horseshoe” effect, in which the far left and the far right unite in their antisemitism, is at play when it comes to Iran as much as it is about Gaza.

Anti-Israel extremists on both the left and right are speaking out against any help for the protest movement in Iran. The likes of journalists Max Blumenthal, Glenn Greenwald and Ali Abunimah say they oppose the protests because the demonstrators’ foreign sympathizers just want a pro-Israel government in Tehran. That misses the point. Of course, many people in the West would prefer a government that wasn’t the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism. But apologists ignore the fact that one of the reasons why Iranians want to overthrow their Islamist tyrants is because the regime has squandered its country’s resources in its frenzy to build a nuclear bomb to obliterate the Jewish state. And that’s despite the fact that Israel and Iran have no real reason to be in conflict other than because of the mullahs’ antisemitic obsessions.

As seen in recent months, the obsessive hatred for Israel on the part of a certain segment of right-wing opinion also leads those who take this position to be supportive of anyone who claims to be an anti-Zionist, even if that leads them to back some of the most anti-American regimes and people in the world.

It’s no accident that former Fox News host and current podcaster Tucker Carlson has been adamant about opposing American efforts to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon or efforts on the part of the Trump administration to support anti-regime protesters. The same is true of former Trump staffer turned extremist podcaster Steve Bannon and neo-Nazi “groyper” leader Nick Fuentes.

Though these people claim to be American patriots and believers in an “America First” or “America Only” foreign policy, they oppose efforts by the Trump administration to rein in and stop a regime that has killed Americans and views the United States as the “great Satan,” regardless of its position on Israel.

The only thing that brings them into agreement with the left on Iran is the fact that the Tehran theocrats hate Israel.

There’s no way to look at this issue that doesn’t inevitably lead back to an age-old hatred.

As with other global struggles, antisemites on both ends of the political spectrum are never going to care about a conflict in which neither side is Jewish. As for Iran, its radical oppressors not only support efforts at Jewish genocide but spend enormous sums on terrorist groups and a nuclear program with which that evil objective could be accomplished—money its population never sees.

Under those circumstances, it is to be expected that the same crowd who write, rally and virtue-signal their anguish about Palestinians will be utterly indifferent to the plight of Iranian victims at the hands of Islamists. The explanation isn’t merely ideology or hypocrisy. It can be summed up on one basis: Jew-hatred.

(JNS Jan 14)

Jews at a Liberal Crossroads By Yisrael Medad

A conversation titled “The Jewish Tent at a Crossroads,” held at B’nai Jeshurun, a synagogue on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, on Jan. 6 featured Rabbi Jill Jacobs (T’ruah); Esther Sperber, the founder of Smol Emuni US, a self-described movement of Orthodox Jews committed to justice, equality and dignity for Jews and Palestinians; far-left journalist Peter Beinart; and Rabbi Elliot Cosgrove (Park Avenue Synagogue). It was moderated by Rabbi Irwin Kula, president of the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

A year ago, Kula informed that he remembers his father, who

came to America from Poland in February 1938, often telling of Menachem Begin coming to his parents’ home in Brest-Litovsk for tea. In his long composition, while sympathetically treating Israel’s post Oct. 7 moral quandary, he nevertheless writes: “The maimed and dead in Gaza, and the maimed and dead in Israeli towns and kibbutzim, are victims of the same dark lusts.”

Those words highlight the problem of the “liberal Zionist camp.” That is an inability to accept that one side can be absolutely correct in the Arab-Israel conflict, even if the means used in defense, as well as to eliminate potential future threats, sit uneasily on the crown of their liberalism. As Kula further explains: “We often act in destructive ways not because we are evil, but because of the ways we have been acted upon.” He thereby provides a justification for the Beinarts, the Jacobs and the Sperbers not only to feel bad, but to avoid placing the onus of their perceived failure of Jewish ethics on Israel, rather than Hamas and jihadi Islamism.

In another section of that January 2024 piece, he writes that the Jewish state is fighting “a war that will not make Israelis any safer in the long term—as how many terrorists are being created every day this war continues—and that will irreparably stain the Jewish psyche in blood for the foreseeable future.” For him, “being right” is a secondary factor.

He ends it with, “Will we have the psychological courage and moral imagination to dare and look into the abyss between us—whatever our rational world views and opinions—to find the hidden bonds of our shared vulnerability? For in the enemy’s gaze, we face ourselves.”

That ending line is an adaptation of the cartoonist Walt Kelly’s Pogo strip line, “We have met the enemy, and he is us.” That itself is a twist on an 1812 event when Oliver Perry, triumphant over the British at the Battle of Lake Erie, informed William Henry Harrison: “We have met the enemy, and they are ours.”

Kula wishes that we accept the status of being a reflection of evil, of terror, of death—and to live with a scarred psyche he moans about.

Back to 2026 and his chairing of the panel discussion that addressed the Jewish tent question, which was phrased not only “just what liberal Zionism stands for, but whether a tent large enough to include its supporters, its skeptics and its fiercest critics can still exist.” Despite a claim that panelists represented “distinct and diverging perspectives on Zionism, Jewish democracy and the future of Israel-Diaspora relations,” I am not sure that is the case.

The success of the panelists in blurring lines, obfuscating definitions and preferring to view their primary interest in liberalism, rather than in some form of Jewishness, limits their claim to divergency or even a distinctiveness of one from the other, except in the case of including non-Zionists. They were convened to “explore the fault lines reshaping Jewish identity, and the very practical question facing communities and institutions: How big can the Jewish tent be, and what must it hold in order to endure?”

Andrew Silow-Carroll, an editor for the New York Jewish Week and Jewish Telegraphic Agency, reported on the Bnei Jeshurun conclave, highlighting that the “rabbis and thinkers lament[ed] that young American Jews are losing faith in a model that once linked support for Israel with democratic values.” He also explained why no right-of-center Zionists were present by quoting Kula, who responded: “That’s [not] where the crisis is.”

That’s admirable in theory, but then I read that Cosgrove said the role of pulpit rabbis like him “is to make room in their congregations for disagreement.” Seemingly, Kula has no room for disagreement.

Jacobs expressed her opinion that liberal Zionism’s credibility has been undermined by institutions that claim its mantle, while abandoning their Jewish values. Her point, which parallels Beinart’s thinking, was that “major Jewish ‘legacy’ organizations instructed American Jews that supporting Israel meant defending its government, ignoring occupation and silencing Palestinian voices.”

I disagree with that portrayal. If anything, Jewish establishment organizations denied young Jews a full education—an education that informed about those in opposition to the Labour Zionist hegemony, as well as just how wrong and insidious Arab actions and their propaganda claims were. Throughout the centuries, the Jewish connection to the Land of Israel was, and remains, a subject of great

ignorance. There are many more examples of shirking their responsibilities for preparing the younger generations to confront the ideological battles they would be engaged in, whether they wished to be involved or not.

As for the assertion that some sort of communal Jewish tent was erected, for a short time that evening at B'nai Jeshurun, Cosgrove's remark seems pertinent.

As appearing in the JTA article, "Cosgrove suggested that Beinart's views have become so toxic in many parts of the Jewish community that it was a risk for a prominent pulpit rabbi like him to share the stage. 'I'm concerned, because this is a public forum, that me sitting here quietly would signal my assent with anything that's being said here,' Cosgrove said at one point."

It is all well and good that American Jews discuss and debate issues. It would be better if a more representative group of opinions gather round the table, if not under the tent. It would also be best if American Jews realize that Israeli Jews live in a democratic state that regularly conducts elections and that those chosen to lead the country do so, albeit surrounded by all the fractious arguments.

Most of all, they should recognize that at the heart of Israel's existence is Jewish survival—physical, cultural and moral. The best way to influence our policies is by coming closer, not more distant, and to be more Jewish, not just liberal. (JNS Jan 13)

Protecting the Jewish Right to Pray on the Temple Mount

By Farley Weiss

The Israeli Supreme Court, in the 2004 case of Gershon Salomon v. Minister of Police, held that Jews have the legal right to pray on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, though it could be limited if the public order is threatened. The decision was written by left-wing Chief Justice Aharon Barak.

Israel's minister of internal security, Itamar Ben-Gvir, with the support of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has been able to enforce the Supreme Court decision and protect Jewish prayer on the Mount.

Outrageously, Israeli Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara has joined a petition to the court to remove Ben-Gvir from his job, partly because of his actions to allow such prayer as a violation of what is claimed to be the "status quo," even though her position runs contrary to a prior Israeli Supreme Court ruling on the matter. Plus, no basis under Israeli law allows the removal of a minister who is not under indictment.

It's hard to think of a more obvious case of antisemitism than to oppose Jewish prayer in a public area on the holiest site in Judaism. The Temple Mount is the location of the first two holy temples, and until recently, Muslims acknowledged the Jewish connection to this holy site. In 1925, the Supreme Muslim Council published a guide to the Temple Mount for tourists that said the site's "identity with the site of Solomon's Temple is beyond dispute."

This, too, is the spot, according to the Bible, on which "David built there an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings."

The guide further states that Muslim rule over the Temple Mount began in 637 C.E., the "year the Caliph Omar occupied Jerusalem." In 1925, it seems, Muslim leaders understood that the Jews were the indigenous people of the Land of Israel, and that the Temple Mount was Jewish and any Muslim sovereignty over the area was an "occupation."

The antisemitic canard that the Temple Mount is not holy to Jews was notoriously enunciated by PLO chief Yasser Arafat on July 17, 2000, at the Camp David Summit.

Arafat shocked then-President Bill Clinton when he denied that the Jewish Temples were ever built on the Mount. Danny Ayalon, Israeli ambassador to the United States, recounted at the time that Clinton was furious. He yelled at Arafat: "Well, let me tell you something, Mr. Chairman: When my messiah Jesus Christ walked on the Temple Mount, he didn't see any mosques. He didn't see Al-Aqsa. He didn't see the Dome of the Rock. He saw only the Jewish Temple."

The Muslim waqf has taken action to destroy the Jewish connection to the Temple Mount. Mahmoud al-Habbash, the

Palestinian Authority's minister of religious affairs (the P.A. is the successor of the PLO), has also asserted that Al-Aqsa "will not be shared with anyone, and no one besides Muslims will pray in it." In December 2021, he stated that the Western Wall is "an authentic part of Al-Aqsa Mosque only."

And at a parliamentary session, Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher Khasawneh said: "I congratulate all Palestinians and all Jordanian Islamic waqf workers who stand as tall as a turret, and those who throw stones at pro-Zionists [worshippers at the Western Wall] who defile the Al-Aqsa Mosque."

Moses Maimonides, the great codifier of Jewish law whose picture is displayed in the U.S. House of Representatives, apparently did not believe that it was forbidden to go up to the Temple Mount and pray there, since he did so on the sixth day of the Jewish month of Cheshvan.

The most famous ascension to the Mount since 1967 was that of then-Likud leader Ariel Sharon. He visited the site on Sept. 28, 2000. Within six months of that visit, in March 2001, Sharon became prime minister. His friend, journalist Uri Dan, wrote that it was that stop at the site that catapulted him to the head of government.

It is important to note that U.S. President Donald Trump and members of his administration have not criticized the protection of the right of Jews to pray on the Temple Mount, as prior Democratic presidents have done. It represents a stand against antisemitism to protect Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount and works to increase Jewish visitors there.

Unfortunately, Israel has an attorney general siding with antisemites and against the opinion of Israel's Supreme Court. It's not Ben-Gvir who needs to be replaced, but Baharav-Miara, who holds a personal political agenda against Israeli law. (JNS Jan 12)

Time to Take Civil War Seriously By Thane Rosenbaum

Who would ever have guessed that frigid Minneapolis, situated in America's great north, would become the battleground for the kind of rising national temperature that in 1861 precipitated a civil war? Minneapolis may become the new Antietam.

The city, after all, is where rioting ensued after the death of George Floyd in 2020. And this past week Renee Good, a mother of three, was shot and killed there by an ICE agent while obstructing the roundup of local illegal immigrants. Her death set off violent clashes in New York, Oakland, Kansas City and Portland, where two illegal immigrants with Venezuelan gang affiliations were shot and killed, as well.

Overall, American solidarity seems a bit shaky these days. Patriotism is at an all-time low. It's entirely fashionable to downgrade American exceptionalism and achievement. If the Trump administration is behind it, nearly half the country can't stomach it.

Peaceful protest in America has gone the way of the respectful debate. It simply is no longer done. Earlier generations of political crusaders would be ill-equipped for today's sanctioned bloodbaths. Martin Luther King, Jr. would find himself helpless in Minneapolis; Malcolm X would fit in quite nicely.

Notice how Malcolm X's "By any means necessary" became the rallying cry of pro-Hamas agitators who defaced posters of Israeli hostages, turned college campuses into pogrom programs, and shut down Christmas tree lighting ceremonies and public thoroughfares.

Immigration roundups required calling out the National Guard, and even military troops, in several major cities.

The CEO of a health insurance company was murdered in Manhattan while his assailant is treated like a folk hero to be feted, not imprisoned. Last week protests erupted in support of a communist Latin American dictator who was abducted to stand trial for narcoterrorism and drug trafficking against the United States. Obviously, some believe he was deserving of a Nobel Peace Prize.

Nihilism has become the new national ethic. There were two assassination attempts on the life of then presidential candidate Donald Trump. And an actual assassination of Turning Point USA founder, Charlie Kirk.

Nihilism has become the new national ethic.

The Unite the Right Rally and the storming of the United States

Capitol on January 6 revealed the other side of what might become a looming civil war. Both political extremes are comfortable causing chaos—whether it involves torching police precincts, desecrating monuments or crashing federal buildings.

Mask-wearing in such heated environments is positively de rigueur. Islamist and socialist mayors and city councils are redefining the contours of American freedom. Illiberal, Sharia-friendly, anti-white, anti-capitalist, anti-American policy planks surely would have surprised the Founding Fathers who staked everything on free markets, liberal ideals and representative democracy.

New York City's newly appointed housing czar doesn't believe in the ownership of private property. That won't go well in arguably the priciest real estate market in the world. Crime is spiking in sanctuary cities governed by officials who are dubious of law enforcement. A critical mass will flee such municipalities seeking safer streets and tax havens.

All told, these social upheavals and cultural tensions have resulted in a rewiring of American minds and a rewriting of the rule book for radicals.

The pro-Hamas college encampments and the more recent anti-ICE mobs are not mere protests. The participants are openly provoking fights with federal officials. They arrive at the scene planning aggressive resistance, encouraged to bring items that can be used to barricade streets—especially automobiles. Renee Good was at the wheel; and that's how she ended up dead.

The Department of Homeland Security reports a 3,200 percent increase in cars being used to impede ICE agents from doing their job. Vehicular attacks against ICE agents have surged, too. Was that on the mind of the ICE agent in Minneapolis last week?

Was Renee Good "murdered," or was she the tragic victim of a species of activism that refuses to follow the directions of arresting law enforcement officials?

Was Renee Good "murdered," or was she the tragic victim of a species of activism that refuses to follow the directions of arresting law enforcement officials?

She was allegedly a member of ICE Watch, a group dedicated to disrupting ICE raids. Another, more radical group in Minneapolis is called Twin Cities Ungovernables.

So much for law and order.

What is it that is so precious about people who are in the United States illegally? Aren't there more noble causes out there? Social activism these days resembles a death wish. Many of those being sheltered possess rap sheets that disqualify them as productive members of society and even less worthy as good neighbors. Throughout the Biden administration, between 10 and 15 million people entered the United States illegally. Of course, not all were lawbreakers, but surely some have made up for lost time while in the United States.

Why would a mother of three risk her life by flooring the gas pedal and swerving her car with a federal law enforcement officer pointing a gun right at her? Failing to follow the instructions of law enforcement has caused far too many meaningless deaths.

What we clearly see on the streets during the Black Lives Matter, pro-Hamas, anti-ICE demonstrations are agitators engaged in full provocation: antagonizing, egging on, throwing rocks and garbage cans, blocking traffic, resisting arrest. This past October, Border Patrol agents shot an armed woman in Chicago who tried to run them over with her car. They were hemmed in by ten other vehicles all revved up.

How many have ever been in that predicament—just doing their job?

Ironically, these anti-ICE actions are reminiscent of the Boston Massacre of 1770, when 300 Colonialist civilians surrounded, shouted at and threw clubs and oyster shells at eight British soldiers—literally daring them to shoot. In the heat of that moment, the soldiers fired and killed five. Represented by future president John Adams, six of the soldiers were acquitted of all crimes, and two received light sentences. The jury found that the crowd instigated the shooting.

You don't need to be a social justice savant to know we are in desperate need of a refresher course on what constitutes lawful protest in America. Somewhere along the line, we lost our way with the First

Amendment.

Antagonizing federal officers to scuffle with and sometimes fire upon citizens who are there to pick a fight, never ends well. And local politicians prejudging dicey law enforcement scenarios and inflaming crowds might score votes but will not contribute to the marketplace of ideas.

If things don't change sometime soon, we'll end up having to pray for the second coming of Appomattox. (Jewish Journal Jan 11)

Israel Won the Information War By Abe Greenwald

We're not even two weeks into the new year, and two American synagogues have been attacked in different ways by different parties. Last Thursday, a group of anti-Semites descended on a synagogue and Jewish school in Queens and chanted their loyalty oaths to Hamas.

Early Saturday morning, a man set fire to the oldest synagogue in Mississippi, the Beth Israel Congregation, in Jackson. The fire destroyed large portions of the structure and two Torah scrolls. The main sanctuary, thankfully, was spared, as was a Torah rescued from the Holocaust.

Today, the FBI released the name of the alleged arsonist and some details about his motive. Stephen Spencer Pittman apparently told agents that he set the fire "due to the building's Jewish ties," and he described it as the "synagogue of Satan."

Israel's war has been over for months, and the country has been thriving since its victory. But American Jews are facing an increase in naked anti-Semitism from both Hamasniks and "right-wing" Jew-haters.

Here's a thought: Maybe Israel did win its so-called information war—and American Jews lost theirs.

We've heard endlessly about how Israel failed to articulate its side of the story throughout the war with Iran and its terrorist proxies and how it ceded the information space to Hamas and its allies.

The problem with that analysis, however, lies in the story it assumes Israel should have articulated.

Those who fret about the issue believe that Israel needed to continually explain the reasons for its military actions: It should have been more forceful in demonstrating that Hamas hides behind civilians and operates from civilian structures. It should have debunked Hamas casualty figures in real time, proved that there was no famine, explained the unparalleled effort the IDF makes to spare civilian lives, and so on.

But that's not the story Israel needed to tell. There's little point in the Jewish state trying to prove that it's innocent of all the calumnious charges against it. Why? Because if Israel's devoted critics could be persuaded that it's a good and just country under continuous assault by barbaric fanatics, they would have been convinced by the decades of evidence—culminating in October 7—showing just that.

The vital information that Israel needed to disseminate, rather, was this: We will not perish. We are fiercer in battle than you could ever imagine, more accomplished in intelligence and operational execution than any nation in history, peerless in the art of war, and unapologetic in our commitment to survival. We don't bend to public opinion; we stop at nothing to defend our existence.

And that message came across loud and clear.

Too many American Jews, on the other hand, spent two-plus years swallowing Hamas propaganda and publicly agonizing over Israel's actions to varying degrees. Their story was: We're just so sorry for all this ugliness.

And while they explained and apologized, they also bent over backwards to give the Jew-haters the benefit of the doubt. Some went so far as to kasher the mob.

We know exactly how that's worked out. It's long past time for Diaspora Jews to tell a different story of their own—one of bravery rooted in reverence for the Jewish tradition. But first they must believe it themselves. The Israelis do, and the world found that out. (Commentary.org Jan 12)
