

Notes from Be'er Yaakov

As I sit here on the balcony at 5 Odem Be'er Yaakov in the sultry but extremely pleasant early evening heat, it takes some imagination to appreciate what is going on in the outside world. While Americans are preoccupied with inflation and the upcoming elections, Israelis are primarily focused on the impending "bad deal with Iran." Israel also has an upcoming election which may be impactful with respect to the power blocks that control this country's fate. However, Iran is always Number 1 on everyone's list. It was not too many years ago when the civil war in Syria, just to the north, was the primary concern of Israelis. Since then, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq have become countries occupied by Iran, with a strong backing of Russia, Korea and a little bit further in the background, China.

So, what is this terrible Iran deal that Israelis fear? The talk here is that it is even worse than the deal President Obama made when he was outgoing President of the United States. Iran, being the Number 1 procurer of terrorism, would get billions of dollars under the "deal." They would make worthless promises about uranium enrichment, while building better, faster centrifuges, designed to create nuclear weapons. Iran has only one goal, and is outspoken in its pursuit of that destiny. Iran's Muslim mullahs seek a modern caliphate, control of the Middle East, and the destruction of both Israel and the American Satan.

One must remember that a mere 1,000 years ago or less, Islam threatened Europe from the east, Russia, and was invading Spain and France from the southwest. Christianity in Europe was almost finished. A 760-year war took place between Christianity and Islam, that resulted in Europe being rid of the Mohammadian threat.

To the West, this history is barely known or even studied. To Iran, it is yesterday's news. Just as Putin in Russia wants to reestablish the Soviet Empire, which is why he snubbed the funeral of Mikhail Gorbachev, Iran thirsts for a world dominated by its Islamic views.

The United States and Europe, desperate for oil energy, seem ready to bend to Iran's will. This is about nothing more than oil. The United States and Europe do not want to drill for oil in its own backyard, but is happy to accept the energy from those who seek to destroy western civilization.

Israelis are fully conversant with the issues. Israel is now selling natural gas to Europe, but it cannot alone replace what Iran has to provide. The west also has a habit of a very short-term memory.

What is at stake with the so-called Iran deal is nothing less than empowering Iran to obtain nuclear weapons, and possibly the hydrogen bomb, in 7 years when the provisions of the "deal" would sunset as opposed to putting Iran out of business through serious sanctions and developing our own energy independence.

My juris doctoral thesis concerned the "oil import crisis of the United States." In 1969, Richard Nixon abolished oil import quotas, with the thought of bringing cheap foreign oil to the shores of the United States. In reality, it was a benefit to consumers,

while lining the pockets of the oil industry. However, the abolishment of oil import quotas made the United States so dependent upon Arab oil that by the early 70s, those third world nations had a stranglehold on the United States.

It is not sufficient, for Israelis and Americans who care, simply to say that "Iran will never have a nuclear weapon." That is what Joe Biden says, but under the deal which he is negotiating, Iran will not only have a nuclear weapon, but in addition, will have the money to promote terrorism against the United States and westerners in general. It is hard to imagine how tone-deaf western democracies are to this threat. Israel gets it because they live in the very bad neighborhood from which the threat to the west emanates.

The election in Israel is heating up, even though all of the players claim that national security is the Number 1 issue. The current temporary Prime Minister, Yair Lapid, claims that he is working with the United States, in a cooperative way, to defeat a deal with Iran which would be detrimental to the free world. His opponent, Benjamin Netanyahu, claims that Lapid is nothing more than a placing of the left, good on promises, a failure on substance. For Israel, this election, like almost every election, implicates its survival. If Lapid is correct and the United States can be convinced that its own destiny is linked to isolating Iran, he will be a hero. If Netanyahu is accurate, the world is continuing to slide into a harmonious relationship with the left which will only result in the demise of our way of life.

Notwithstanding these threats, life goes on in Israel among a surprisingly happy, incredibly hardworking, joyful nation. I sit in Synagogue in Be'er Yaakov among people of color, Jews native to this Holy Land, as well as the ancestors of Jews unceremoniously kicked out of the Arab world. The western European and American Jew, cannot be found in Be'er Yaakov. This is thoroughly Sephardic Israel. The people could not be nicer, more welcoming or more enjoyable to be around.

The United States has a lot to learn about how to reestablish itself as a melting pot where people really get along, emphasize the importance of family, and consider ethics to be of Number 1 importance. We in the United States are a great nation, and Israelis respect us as such, but we are losing our leadership and predominance in the world by focusing on issues that matter not when it comes to the importance of a strong America. The world needs a strong, moral and well directed United States. We do not have that now, and that is a threat not only to the United States, but to the rest of the free world. Our friends in Israel and the rest of the world are looking to us for leadership and good judgment. We need to show that by isolating our enemies, remaining strong and rejecting the values of those who do not appreciate the greatness that America has to offer in the way of leadership.

Clifford A. Rieders, Esquire

Rieders, Travis, Dohrmann, Mowrey

Humphrey & Waters

161 West Third Street

Williamsport, PA 17701

(570) 323-8711 (telephone)

(570) 323-4192 (facsimile)

Cliff Rieders is a Board-Certified Trial Advocate in Williamsport, is Past President of the Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association and a past member of the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority. None of the opinions expressed necessarily represent the views of these organizations.