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Is This What Peace Looks Like?

Today in our small synagogue in Be'er Yaakov, Shabbat, the place was packed. This is a small building, maybe 60 feet by 40 feet, looks like a pillbox. It is masonry with four windows, steel bars across each. It is modest, but very well attended.

Everyone was in a good mood. The press is saying that the innocent hostages taken by murderous terrorists may be released and a ceasefire with Hamas may be at hand.

During the holiest part of the dovening, called the kiddusha, sirens sounded loud and clear. The Rabbi hesitated but kept up running the service. Virtually everyone stayed. No doubt this violated every rule of safety but this congregation, entirely made up of Sephardi Jews, was not about to go anywhere. These people are of Israeli and Middle Eastern origin, including North Africa, and they are tough.

After the sirens sounded, perhaps 30 second later, two large booms were heard. One man nonchalantly said to me: "Well, you know it is just the Houthis."

This is what peace looks like for the Jews. No matter how many wars they have fought for their survival since Babylonian times, there is always someone new on the block out to drink the blood of the Jewish people.

The ceasefire deal looks worse with each passing day.

One of the oldest Jewish communities outside the land of Israel was in Yemen. The dark-skinned Yemeni Jews are a proud and noble people. They were evicted from their country *en masse* more than 75 years ago. Most of the Jews left, but a few remained, virtual hostages to a hostile regime.

When the Houthis gained control of most of Yemen, backed by Iran thanks to American largesse, things only got worse for the minorities in Yemen. It is now another hellhole, controlled, financed and encouraged by the Mullahs in Iran.

Yemen is firing ballistic missiles at Israel supplied, paid for, and utilized by Iran. Where does Iran get the money to stir the pot in the Middle East and all over the world? They get lots of it from us. America, Western Europe and many other countries buy Iranian oil both directly and on the black market. Russia and North Korea, along with Qatar, form a substantial alliance of evil.

Significant attacks on the Houthis in Yemen by Israel, the United States, and even Great Britain have been largely ineffective. Why? Because bombing the Houthis is only part of the equation. The missiles provided by Iran can be shipped on trucks and launched from different locations. They are large, dangerous, and easily transportable. Unfortunately, the Biden Administration lifted many of the sanctions against Iran which helped to keep Iran somewhat under the covers.

The United States has naively attempted to bribe the Muslim Jihadists who run Iran into being peaceful. It has not worked. Their nuclear program has accelerated, and they continue to spread murder and mayhem throughout the Middle East and anywhere else in the world their tentacles can reach.

The attack during the Jewish Sabbath was yet another wakeup call. The enemies of civilization and human decency cannot be partners in a peace treaty, a ceasefire, or any other organized effort to tamp down the bloodshed of innocents.

Israel, we are told, has agreed to release between 250 and 350 convicted murderers in return for innocent hostages. What message does that send to those intent on evil behaviors? The message is that taking hostages works. Oddly, Israel is the only nation expected to deal with hostages as though they were currency. Innocent Jews are held in horrible conditions, are treated with disrespect, starved, and the women are raped while the people in Gaza get sympathy from the world due to "civilian" casualties within Gaza

itself. Who are these civilians? These are the people who put Hamas in power. These are the people who keep Hamas in power.

The people of Gaza have cooperated in hiding the hostages and not in providing any information concerning their whereabouts. The people of Gaza have permitted and sometimes even encouraged Hamas to place their missiles, rockets, and other firepower in the basements of homes, the gardens adjacent to apartment buildings, in Mosques and, of course, in hospitals. As a woman on a Kibbutz told me who had been raped and watched her family murdered: "There are no innocents in Gaza." She was a former artist, trying to get back to her trade, who worked with the people of Gaza to help them obtain medical treatment in Israel.

This should not be a surprise to anyone. While visiting my grandson in an Israeli children's hospital, I noted how many Arabs worked there. I asked my son-in-law about that, and he responded that: "Well, of course, the hospital is full of Arab doctors, nurses, and others. This is Israel!" He said that the Muslim Arabs who live in Israel fully understand that they have the best life in the Middle East. The Arabs from Judah and Samaria, who live under the dictatorship of the Palestinian Authority, are not quite as appreciative of Israelis, but they are happy to have the jobs and to be treated well. The Arabs from the Arab world, outside of Israel, have a much more negative attitude. My son-in-law noted that when the sirens went off, not all the patients could be moved to safety quickly enough. My grandson was one of those who could not be. Some of the Muslims who worked in the hospital would go to shelter and others would not: "I guess they want to be martyrs," my son-in-law noted.

Think about this. Israel is a country that treats its Muslim Arab population extremely well, providing them with some of the best and most respected jobs in the nation. Yet, no Jew can safely live in any Arab country. A Jew cannot even live within any degree of security in the areas administered by the Palestinian Authority, the so-called West Bank of the Jordan River. When Gaza was given its independence almost 25 years ago, the Jews were forcibly evicted from Gaza by.... guess who? The Israel Army.

What did the people of Gaza do with their new country? They kicked out the Palestinian Authority and elected Hamas, a terrorist group. They then took the hundreds of

millions of dollars in aid given to them by the world, including Israel, and built a terrorist tunnel system larger than the New York subway system. Virtually every dollar that was raised by Hamas from foreigners, and from their own people, went not to building hospitals, schools, and mosques but rather to developing a terrorist attack system that would be the envy of the most evil people who have ever lived.

Nevertheless, Israel continues to thrive, to be a beautiful place, and to be a nation of equality, fraternity, and decency to all those who live here regardless of race, color, nationality or religion. It is too bad the rest of the world cannot follow suit.

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