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November 8, 2022



## Hysterical American warnings against Israel's new government show more *chutzpah* than wisdom

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Americans—especially American Jews—have expressed dismay at the results of last week’s Israeli elections. They seem to believe that Israel has been transformed suddenly from a thriving democracy into a “semi-fascist” state (to borrow a Joe Biden coinage).

*New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, clutching his pearls, shrieked that “the Israel we knew is gone.”

Yet Americans distraught at the results of last week's Israeli elections are at a profound disadvantage: They don't live in the Jewish state.

Many Americans can't understand why Israelis voted for the parties they did . . . or hysterically misinterpret the implications for Israel's democracy.

If Americans actually shared the Israeli experience every day, they might have sympathy for why Israeli voters—in a record turnout—overwhelming elected Benjamin Netanyahu’s rightist Likud party and several further-right parties that are predicted to govern with him.

While I did not vote for any of the parties in the presumed winning coalition, I understand—and sympathize with—why so many did. Nor am I in the least worried about Israel's political health.

Let's start with five recent stories in Israeli media:

✓ Two Palestinian terrorists armed with a knife and an axe attacked seven religious Jews in Elad, Israel—three men, fathers all, died in the bloody attack. (Police captured the killers, with their axe, a week later.)

✓ At a light-rail station in Jerusalem, a Palestinian terrorist stabbed a 20-year-old man—the attacker was killed.

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✓ A Palestinian driver intentionally runs over the five Israeli soldiers waiting at a bus stop—a bystander fatally shoots terrorist.

✓ September sees a record of more than 200 terrorist attacks against Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria (aka, “the West Bank”).

✓ A Hamas official vows that the Palestinians will “return” the entire land of Israel to its “original” owners.

It’s no wonder that voting Israelis in general are in the mood for more law and order. It will be no surprise if Tuesday’s American election shows the same dramatic shift toward fighting crime.

But Americans should appreciate another background factor in the Israeli elections. Unlike in the United States, where the Left and the Right battle each other bitterly in a 50-50 tug-of-war—in which the power equation flips every 2-4 years—in Israel, the right has come to dominate the playing field.

These days, some 60% of Israeli voters usually cast their ballots for right-leaning parties. That is to say, most Israelis embrace right-wing values—more Zionism, more Judaism, more security.

Why have Israeli Jews come to take a harder line on Palestinian violence than American Jews? Because those Palestinian attacks are just two or ten or 20 miles from their front doors.

Why do the majority of Israeli Jews scoff at the illusive two-state solution, while their American counterparts continue to nurture the idea? Because Israelis see and hear every day the consistent, decades-long refusal of Palestinians to make peace . . . or even *speak* of peace.

They feel the terror daily. It makes them afraid. It makes them determined to fight back.

If you don’t live here and read those headlines, you’re not going to feel that. If you didn’t serve in the Israeli army and fight terrorists, if you don’t get goosebumps when you hear “HaTikva”—the Israeli national anthem—you’re not likely to feel that.

Finally, why do most Israelis accept without question the right of Jews to create communities in Judea and Samaria?

Because most all Israelis have friends and colleagues who live in those territories—not in squalid “settlements,” but in beautiful, peaceful cities and towns in the Biblical Jewish homeland.

Because they know that Jews are the majority population in a huge part of these territories.

Because they know these territories are where Jews have lived for thousands of years—and that as a fact they have never belonged to the Palestinians.

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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But what of Israel's democracy? Why has Israel had five elections in the last four years? Why does it have such a big problem electing a stable, right-wing government?

The reason Israeli governments have been so shaky and tentative—even seating a blended left-center-right-Arab coalition after the last election—is because many on the Israeli right so disdain Netanyahu politically that they will never support him. They may share his values, but they distrust the man.

The question now is whether Israel will experience and survive the political implosion predicted by leftist American politicians and media—as well as a good number of leftist Israelis.

To answer, first consider this fact: Israel is ranked the 23<sup>rd</sup> most successful democracy on earth—scoring higher even than the United States. Its electoral process is secure and inclusive; its government functions reliably; its political culture is vibrant; it aggressively protects civil liberties; and it has a high degree of citizen participation—which in last week's election was over 71%, much higher than that of the normal U.S. turnout.

Give this robust strength—measurably superior to that of the U.S.—it's a real show of *chutzpah* for American leftists to be doomsaying Israel's democracy. One is tempted to believe that this prediction is more based on political distaste for Israeli rightist *values* than hard analysis.

What's more, the ultra-right Religious Zionist party—now Israel's third largest—whose hard-line positions on immigration, terrorism, and judicial reform so offend the leftists, has no planks in its platform that oppose the structure of Israel's democracy.

What's more, much criticism against Religious Zionists attributes to them positions not in their platform, but which critics claim are hidden by “spin” and “ambiguity.”

Remember, too, that many American leftists who condemn the Israeli elections also frivolously warn that a Republican win in the midterms will spell the demise of American democracy and the rise of Mr. Biden's “semi-facists.”

Please point out to friends, family, colleagues—and in letters to the editor—that just as the American Congress accommodates radical legislators like Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Rashida Tlaib and Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, who advocate extreme socialist schemes and anti-Zionist measures, so should Israel be allowed its fringe elements.

Emphasize, too, your confidence in both the American and Israeli systems to temper—and even quash when necessary—measures and people who seek to overturn the protections firmly embedded in our democratic systems.

I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME's lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign

—"Democracy Thrives in Israel"—which exposes false claims that Israel deprives Arab Israeli citizens and Palestinian Arabs of their rights.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, President

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Despite Israel's guarantee of civil liberties and equal treatment for all its citizens—including two million Arab Israelis—Israel is still falsely accused of being an apartheid state. Despite Israel and the Palestinians agreeing that the Palestinian Authority will administer its own civil affairs, including elections, Israel is accused of violating human rights because Palestinians can't vote in Israeli elections. I think you'll agree that truth is the only antidote to this lie. FLAME's new hasbarah message—called "[Democracy Thrives in Israel](#)" publicizes a new, independent "Democracy Index" in which Israel is named the world's 23<sup>rd</sup> most successful democracy—ahead of the United States, Italy, Spain and 139 other nations. This new editorial message also clarifies that Palestinians' repression is due overwhelmingly to their two ruling dictatorships. (Palestinians are ranked #109 in the Democracy Index—as "authoritarian.") I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which is scheduled to run nationwide in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Miami Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Los Angeles Times* and *San Jose Mercury News*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a [donation](#) now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate now](#). Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting antisemitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

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Facts and Logic

About the Middle East

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