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November 10, 2026



Though not Jewish, Michigan U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens repudiated fellow Democrat Abdul El-Sayed's Senate campaign ad, which leveled false, antisemitic accusations against Israel. When El-Sayed refused to disavow the ad, Stevens courageously withdrew support for his candidacy.

Election Hero Who Bravely Repudiated Antisemitic Ad Wasn't Even Jewish

Word count: 995; estimated reading time:3.75 minutes

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

Lifelong Democrat U.S. Representative Haley Stevens was prepared to go along to get along up to two days before last week's midterm elections. Stevens had lost Michigan's Democratic Senate primary to the

ultra-left, anti-Zionist Abdul El-Sayed, yet she loyally committed to supporting his candidacy.

Then came the "Banana Libel" TV commercial, and she broke ranks. The ad, produced by an outside PAC supporting El-Sayed, showed a couple in a grocery store returning eggs and bananas to the shelves because, as one character put it, "we have to set that $7 aside for killing Palestinians." It slanderously held U.S. aid to Israel responsible for rising supermarket prices and war deaths of innocents. It closed by casting El-Sayed's Republican opponent as aligned with Israeli leaders while El-Sayed was "for you."

The messaging was so blatantly antisemitic—reviving the ancient trope that Jews and their state are responsible for ordinary people's economic pain—that Stevens, who is not Jewish, demanded El-Sayed disavow it. She also called on him to reject his own earlier stump rhetoric that similarly linked U.S. aid to Israel with Michigan's cost-of-living problems.

El-Sayed perfunctorily refused, dismissing the demand as a "condemn game" and a distraction. He noted the ad was not produced by his campaign and said he did not agree with its contents, but he would not disavow it or apologize for the underlying argument he had advanced himself.

Stevens's Democratic colleagues, including Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, immediately piled on, accusing her of betrayal. Yet for those who place Jewish peoplehood and American values above party loyalty, Haley Stevens is a courageous hero. She stood alone as a patriot and will pay a high price for her bravery, as patriots sometimes do.

The shame is that so few American Jews have had the guts to stand up and rebuke the Democratic Party—of which some 70 percent of U.S. Jews are members—as Stevens did. Of course, the Jews are not alone. A majority of voters in last week's election also ignored the dire threat of anti-American candidates both to the safety of Jews and the preservation of our nation's fundamental political and economic principles.

Let's make no mistake. While Jews are most directly attacked by antisemites such as El-Sayed and his ilk, a greater danger looms in the disdain expressed by these rising politicians for our country and its values, which allow all of us—including minorities like Jews—to survive and thrive. El-Sayed will be joined by dozens of Democratic Socialists of America members elected to offices nationwide, as well as seven new anti-Israel additions to the U.S. House of Representatives.

El-Sayed's (and the progressive left's) anti-Israelism is fundamentally antisemitism. Jews are irrevocably associated with Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and with the star of David on Israel's flag. El-Sayed opposes Israel and supports those who traffic in antisemitic tropes, such as Hasan Piker. He, like others in this faction such as NYC mayor Zohran Mamdani, has disparaged and refused to defend Jewish communities when they face rising hostility.

His campaign's TV ad did not invent its argument, but rather dramatized one El-Sayed had made throughout the campaign. Despite the fact that aid to Israel makes up a very tiny—*one-twentieth of one percent*—portion of the U.S. annual budget, El-Sayed implies that Michiganders cannot afford schools, healthcare, or childcare because of Israel. This libel alone deserves the outrage and activism of American Jews.

Antisemitism is fundamentally an anti-American value that should be condemned by every patriotic American. To single out the Jewish state for blame over grocery prices—while ignoring far larger drivers of

inflation, domestic spending, and global markets—is not serious policy debate. It is hateful scapegoating. Haley Stevens recognized this and refused to stay silent.

Moreover, contrary to El-Sayed's campaign ad, anti-Israelism and anti-Zionism deny the immense benefit that the U.S.-Israel relationship brings to Americans. The annual military investment the United States makes in Israel delivers immense strategic returns—through intelligence sharing, joint technology development, and a reliable democratic ally in a volatile region.

The two nations' political and military cooperation advances U.S. security and prosperity, especially since Israel spends 90% of U.S. aid with American military suppliers. Aid to Israel also spares the U.S. from putting American boots on the ground, such as we fund in Germany and Japan at costs that dwarf the paltry amount of Israel aid. In short, opposing a close U.S.-Israel relationship compromises American security by weakening a key partner against shared Middle East adversaries.

Finally, to oppose Zionism—the self-determination of an indigenous people in their ancestral homeland—is itself anti-American. This opposition rejects the same principles of national self-determination that undergird our own founding.

We as Jews and as patriotic Americans can only save ourselves through outspoken activism. The next election is the big one, just a heartbeat away. That means speaking up on behalf of the Jewish people and the Jewish state. It means standing up for American security, prosperity, and national values—increasingly under attack from within. Above all, it means initiating painful conversations with Democratic faithful who put party above peoplehood and country.

Stevens showed that party loyalty has limits when core principles are at stake. Her colleagues' immediate scorn revealed how deeply the progressive wing has normalized antisemitic tropes under the guise of foreign policy critique. Voters who ignored the pattern did so at the risk of elevating candidates who view America's alliances and foundational principles as obstacles rather than assets. The greater threat is not merely to Jews—it is to the American experiment that has allowed all of us, including minorities, to thrive.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that Haley Stevens, the non-Jewish Democrat who refused to look away, has set a high standard. May the rest of us patriots—Jewish and non-Jewish alike—follow her example. Come the next election cycle, the cost of silence will be even more painful.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,
James Sinkinson, President
Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, we at FLAME are constantly fighting to defeat our enemies' slanders against Israel. But I hope you agree that it's *just as important* for us lovers of Israel to spread the word about the amazing triumphs of Zionism. I believe that in addition to defending Israel from media and politicians' lies, we need also to help the world understand Israel's righteous cause and its power for good—we need as well to trumpet Israel's miraculous achievements. God knows, Americans will never learn about Israel's good deeds in mainstream media, like the *New York Times*, CNN or NPR! I believe we need to stand tall because

of who the Jewish people are . . . be proud of what Israel does for the world. For this reason, I hope you'll approve of FLAME's new *hasbarah*—our explanatory message called "How Zionism's Miracle Benefits Us All." With your agreement and support, FLAME will soon begin running this message as a paid editorial ad in major mainstream newspapers nationwide. This ad tells the truth about Zionism's unmatched power to create economic prosperity, global security, world health and democratic freedoms. It also explains why the enemies of Zionism are not just foes of Israel, they are also the enemies of human progress. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME is about to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal, New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune, Orlando Sentinel, Houston Chronicle, Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us with a donation.