

Anger, alongside relief

written by David M. Weinberg | 19.10.2025

Surely every sane and feeling person shares in the joy resulting from the freedom obtained this week for Israel's hostages, who have been held barbarically in Hamas dungeons for two horrible years. I never dared imagine that Hamas ever would free all live hostages, and therefore the breakthrough release is even more amazing, gratifying, and uplifting.

Blessed be the dealmakers and peacemakers, indeed! The relief they have brought to the hostage families, indeed to the entire nation of Israel and Jewish communities worldwide, is overwhelming.

At the same time, one can only explode at the nasty narratives, distorted political predictions, and self-foolery that have accompanied the dealmaking and are now making the diplomatic rounds.

The first piece of awful and unfair discourse is the denial of any credit to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu for the hostage release deal. The "say" in most international media and much of the left-wing-dominated Israel press is that US President Trump raped Netanyahu into agreement; that Netanyahu was dragged kicking and screaming into the accord. Worse yet is the allegation that Netanyahu could have freed the hostages in a similar deal one year ago but refrained from doing so for narrow political reasons.

Neither accusation is accurate. Netanyahu deeply desired this hostage deal and end-of-war arrangement for myriad reasons, mainly because now was the right time to cash-in on the IDF's achievements in Gaza (which have gone as far as possible for this year given operational and diplomatic restraints) and on Israel's powerful strikes in Tehran and Doha.

The front-loading of the deal – whereby Israel's gains (hostage release, all hostages) came first and Israel's gives (mainly military withdrawals and allowance for some rebuilding in Gaza) are backloaded and dependent on Arab good behavior – is a sweet arrangement that was not at all possible one year ago.

The political nastiness which negates Netanyahu's navigation of the accord to completion on Israel's preferred terms is matched by a second piece of bias – the

over-attribution of credit to US President Donald Trump for the accord.

Of course, Trump is a hero of the day. Without his Machiavellian maneuvers and masterful playing of regional actors, alongside explicit threats and promised rewards, no deals could have been reached. And Trump's forceful backing for Israel through regional and international challenges as expressed so wholeheartedly in his Knesset speech this week, must be acknowledged as miraculous.

But the slavish, over-the-top tributes to Trump that were everywhere (including the front pages of this newspaper) also bore an offensive odor, a stink of spite, a cruelty directed at Israel's own leaders, a slap-down to Netanyahu in particular.

At least Trump had the honesty and grace to accord great credit to Netanyahu in reaching this blessed moment and to the brave soldiers of the IDF and their families.

A third distortion in evaluation of the accord is the near ignoring of the price paid by Israel, namely the release of thousands of bloodthirsty, convicted Palestinian terrorists. One can count on the fingers of one hand the number of stories in global media, and in much of the Israeli media, about the murderers released and the dangers this entails to every Israeli and Jew.

Dealing Palestinian terrorists for Israeli hostages might be the most necessary and moral thing in the world to do, but it also may be the most disastrous thing Israel can do. The cost will pay out over a prolonged period, and it will be steep.

The released terrorists assuredly will strike again, with God-only-knows how many Israeli casualties in the future. Their release certainly will incentivize future kidnappings, pour gasoline onto the terrorist fires already raging in Judea and Samaria, and catapult Hamas towards its intended takeover of Judea and Samaria. We know this to be a fact because this has been the case with every previous terrorist release.

But you wouldn't know this from most "expert" evaluations, political figure statements, and international reportage this week.

A fourth and infuriating aspect of the diplomatic situation brought about by the agreement is the feral rush of countries, especially European countries, to rebuild

Gaza. The “international community” is revving-up donor conference after donor conference to raise funds for Gazan rehabilitation – even under de facto Hamas rule. The talk this week was of \$70 to \$120 billion in funds to provide Palestinians in Gaza with “human dignity” and “humanitarian relief” – with passion and concern that would be admirable if it weren’t so counterproductive at this point.

The world-at-large still has said nothing at all about Hamas’s use of women and children as human shields, hospitals as weapons depots, or United Nations schools as launchpads for rockets. It has said little at all about Hamas’s violent seizure of humanitarian aid shipments into Gaza or its targeting of Palestinians approaching aid centers operated by the US- and Israel-affiliated Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

The world is incapable of admitting that Hamas’s dictatorial and genocidal regime in Gaza is responsible for every bit of ruin suffered by Palestinians, and it has nothing but platitudes to offer about how this time it might be different.

But what really gets my goat is that nobody around the world is talking about raising even one penny for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Israel; of Israel’s southern and northern areas that have been depopulated and devastated by Hamas and Hezbollah attacks over the past two years and even the past decade. Not a penny for the battered people of Israel – war widows and orphans, terrorized civilians, traumatized soldiers, and battered businesses. Except for Jews abroad, nobody is prioritizing relief and aid for Israel.

Sure, with the war over, Western countries will now return to buy Israeli technology and weapons for their own benefit, and cooperate in science and the arts too, but lavish sympathies and abundant budgets are reserved for the attacking Palestinians not the attacked Israelis.

The fifth thing that angers and frightens me about the new diplomatic accord is its distorted political predicate which “internationalizes” Gaza.

Under the accord, Egyptian soldiers or EU cops will disarm Hamas troops, and Qatari or Turkish officials will rein-in and replace Hamas officials in Gaza. This is nonsensical. A bad and costly joke.

No Western figure like Tony Blair or an international “Board of Peace” chaired by President Trump is truly going to guarantee demilitarization of Gaza, never mind

assure good governance and peace education. Only Israeli troops might have completely stripped Hamas of its weapons, and only a full-on occupation of Gaza by a foreign power (like the Allied occupation of Germany after World War II) might end the corruption, violence, and hatred deeply embedded in Gazan society.

So, what will internationalization of Gaza accomplish? It will handcuff Israel, making it impossible to operate against a resurgent terrorist threat there. That always was the main motivation behind the long-standing Palestinian attempt to “internationalize” the conflict, to bring-in foreign monitors and troops - to constrain and curb Israel.

Which brings us to the self-foolery and arrogance of the accord which once again hints at Palestinian statehood in the future. As if this is at all realistic or wise in the medium-to-long term; as if Palestinians in Gaza (and in Judea and Samaria) have demonstrated any willingness whatsoever to reconcile with Israel.

The blabbering at this moment about Palestinian statehood is the very essence of victory for Hamas terrorism and incentivizes more acts of massacre. Merely mentioning Palestinian statehood now gives Hamas more sway in Palestinian politics than it ever had, especially in Judea and Samaria.

But don't confuse the “international community” with facts - like the support of three-quarters of Palestinians in the West Bank for the October 7 Hamas-led massacre, or the support of governors in the Palestinian Authority for terrorism and the active participation of its Fatah Party in the wave of terror attacks threatening central Israel.

Instead of pushback against the increasingly genocidal Palestinian national movement, we get more perilous pablum about the “urgency” of Palestinian statehood. Instead of action to retaliate and truly deter Hamas from ever raising a hand against a hostage again, we get diplomatic rewards for Palestinian intransigence and violence.

International wags should ask themselves: Is their effort to bolster Palestinians with “recognition” of faux statehood and with oodles of aid money helping Palestinians mature? Or is it merely deepening Palestinian dependency, perpetuating Palestinian victim-martyrdom identity, prolonging the campaign to demonize Israel as a genocidal monster, and in the end, just plainly and

unabashedly weakening Israel?

Alas, one suspects that the latter motivation, tinged with a smidgen of deep-seated antisemitism, is the main impulse.

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