

Israel is clear-eyed, not traumatized, by October 7

written by David M. Weinberg | 08.10.2026

Israel just went through a somber, heavy week in Israel, filled with agonizing and loving remembrances of the many civilians slain by Hamas in their bedrooms and the soldiers killed combating the jihadist Palestinian stormtroopers ever since.

But through it all, the overwhelming sentiment I heard and felt was patriotism, not depletion; resilience, not resignation; defiance, not defeat.

Alas, you would not know this from the enervating and depressing narrative that accompanied much of the left-wing Israeli and global media coverage on the third *yahrzeit* (death memorial) of the Hamas invasion of Israel.

Jaundiced journalists described Israel as traumatized by the massacre and exhausted by three years of war; as a broken and immobilized society.

This infuriates me because it is an erroneous, even nefarious reading of the Israeli mood. It is wicked and insulting take on Israel's national psyche.

The reality is that Israelis are neither crushed nor dispirited. Instead, they are appropriately angry and motivated to win against all enemies.

In fact, Israelis are animated and alert in valuable ways, with their anger energetically directed both internally and externally.

On the domestic front, Israelis caustically hold their leaders accountable for the diplomatic and defense failures of the Oslo era which eventuated in October 7, and for the intelligence and military malfunctions that allowed Hamas to surprise and temporarily overwhelm the IDF.

They neither forget nor forgive the officers and politicians who carry deep culpability for the long-brewing disaster of three years ago, and this naturally is the dominant issue at play in the final days of the current Israeli election campaign.

In this regard, Israelis are indeed angry – Left against Right, Right against Left,

and everybody against the anti-Zionist Arabs and Ultra-Orthodox Jews (haredim).

I say that the anger is good, for it is reenergizing Israeli public life with many young and new players, breathing spirit and pumping fresh blood into politics (– as long as we also know how to moderate the discourse with a bit of civility and amity).

All Israelis, left and right, are proud of the brave reservists who threw themselves into battle against Hamas, and the selfless volunteers who mobilized to strengthen their families, tend to the wounded, orphaned, and dispossessed, till the fields, and manage the homefront.

These are the believing, nationalist, gallant, military and societal figures who will give Israel staunch and principled leadership for generations to come. Let their ardent anger and passionate commitment drive the country upward and forward.

One thing is certain: No one in this noble cohort is drained, defeated, or paralyzed by trauma.

ON THE GLOBAL front, Israelis are furious at the hostility and hypocrisy of the Western world, which has largely turned its back on Israel – denying this country weapons to defend itself, and falsely accusing it of genocide and other war crimes even as Hamas and its supporters celebrate the genocide that its terrorists had attempted to commit.

Classic antisemitic stereotypes, which stipulate the Jewish People's proclivity for vengeance or its thirst for children's blood, have saturated Western media. Exactly as Jews have experienced throughout history, the deranged demonization of Jews has once again been renamed as morality itself.

So yes, Israelis are angry at all this: At the politically malign accounts of their just, successful wars against Iran and its Hamas and Hezbollah proxy armies; at the raw antisemitism rebecoming mainstream discourse; and at the corrosive ideologies such as radical Islam that seek to undermine Western societies while destroying Israel.

Israelis will resist all this, with justifiable anger; and again, this is good anger. Anger, and powerful currents of Jewish/Zionist identity, fuel resilience – and resilience is essential commodity for facing bleak global realities.

Consequently, Israel intends to hunt down its enemies, not be hounded by them or hemmed in by fickle and foul allies.

Whoever they may be over the coming years, Israel's political leaders will not return to containment policies that prioritize restraint over military triumph. This approach allowed enemies to develop attack capabilities under the cover of diplomatic breathing time. Instead, Israel will maintain a proactive defense posture including strategic ascendancy against enemies near and far.

ANOTHER NASTY narrative that follows on the false storyline of Israeli fatigue is a demeaning accusation of Israeli blindness; the notion that Israelis are too shell-shocked by the Hamas attacks of October 7 to think straight; that they are too disturbed by the massacres to move smartly towards the "necessary and inevitable" two-state solution.

In this account, Israelis are 'too angry and revengeful to realize that Palestinian statehood is in their own self-interest.' Accordingly, the politically correct class of international experts believed it must impose Palestinian statehood on Israel for its own good – because, again, Israel is too "traumatized" to see clearly.

Such patronizing and condescending analysis has become standard fare in European capitals and the pages of *The New York Times*. The well-meaning world, you see, whose statesmen are thinking astutely – unlike Israel's ostensibly backwards leaders and tormented public – have to "shift Israeli attentions" from the "traumas" of attack by Hamas.

They must massage Israeli feelings, give Israelis a big hug, offer soothing "guarantees" of Palestinian demilitarization (even though Israel has been given such generous, ridiculous assurances before), and then nudge Israel "forward" towards the good-old, supposedly prudent, two-state "solution." And if that doesn't work, a bit of punishing sanctions on Israel and boycotts of Israel might help a bit too.

This is where Western arrogance fails. What if Israelis are not "traumatized" by October 7, but smartly alert? What if Israelis are not wounded babies that must be coaxed or compelled into making adult decisions, but are indeed thinking straight?

Perhaps after 30 years of peace process perfidies and assaults, Israelis have

reached mature, realistic conclusions that are different than those of the great strategic minds of the Western world, people like, say, UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez?

Perhaps Israelis have judiciously determined that at least in the near-term, Palestinian statehood is the wrong policy; that this would only lead to more genocidal terrorism?

What if Israelis think that only when the well-armed (by Iran) enemies on their southern and northern borders are resoundingly defeated (and this may take a decade of warfare) can a moderate compromise peace emerge?

What if Israelis have coldly concluded that only when the Palestinian national movement is deradicalized (and this might take decades of tough medicine) might a diplomatic deal be possible?

And what if a grand takeaway is that less-threatening long-term alternatives must replace the so-called EKP (“Everybody Knows Paradigm”) involving full-scale runaway Palestinian statehood?

So yes, Israelis indeed are wounded and angry. However, this has sharpened their thinking, not clouded it. They hold pertinent, well-rooted understandings of their diplomatic challenges and opportunities.

The heroism in the skies above Saudi Arabia last week stands as a metaphor for three years of war. Israelis are mature and resilient – not enfeebled, immobilized, or confused. They are reenergized patriotically, determined to defeat all enemies and rebuild Israel more magnificently than ever.

To the world I say: Keep your chutzpah in check. Do not try to lord over Israel with mistaken assumptions, smug solutions, and disgusting sanctions. Israel more than deserves the benefit of the doubt as it fights for its long-term security and makes apt decisions about the right radius of diplomacy. Israel will not brook global contempt.

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