

A Diaspora mentality or a Jewish disease?

Know before Whom you stand – and conduct your politics accordingly.

by Matthew M. Hausman

The Hebrew phrase “*Da Lifnei Mi Attah Omed*” appears above the Ark in many synagogues and means “know before Whom you stand.” These words come from the Talmud (Tractate Berachot 28b) and remind us that we are always in the presence of G-d and to conduct ourselves accordingly. For Jews, this includes remembering the commandments, resisting assimilation, and safeguarding the religious and national integrity of the Jewish people. But when community leaders and professionals express deep concern for the sensitivities of those who deny Jewish history and nationhood, one has to wonder whether they’ve forgotten before Whom they stand, or whether they ever knew in the first place.

This dictum hovered over a recent forum held at a Massachusetts synagogue. The program was entitled, “National Security Chaos: Are We Passing the Tipping Point,” and featured a distinguished panel that included: retired three-star general William G. Boykin, former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence; Frank Gaffney, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and Director of the Center for Security Policy; retired Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann, former member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and Tom Trento, founder of the United West. The program took place shortly before Election Day and generated a bit of controversy with some local clergy...

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