Jewish unity requires understanding Jewish identity

by Matthew M. Hausman

There is an indelible bond connecting all Jews no matter where they fall on the spectrum of tradition and observance. Hamas terrorists perversely recognized this when they attacked men, women, and children on October 7th simply because they had Jewish blood, not because of what they believed or how they worshiped. And Hamas's progressive cheerleaders in the US recognized this when they began targeting Jews and their businesses indiscriminately, vandalizing Jewish property, and publicly calling for their genocide.

American Jews initially responded by showing strength in their shared heritage and presenting a united front. In recent months, however, cracks have begun to appear in the façade, with assorted voices questioning Israel's actions in defending herself or legitimizing her enemies.

This is especially apparent on the Jewish left, where many now rationalize Hamas's atrocities as "resistance," condemn Israel, and demand that Joe Biden force a ceasefire to prevent the IDF from completely routing the terrorists. And also in Congress, where Senate Democratic majority leader Chuck Schumer called for the ouster of Israel's duly elected government and pushed a two-state "solution" that most Israelis reject. Though such voices were outliers in the beginning, they have since become more numerous and vocal in their criticisms of Israel, denial of Jewish sovereignty, and/or validation of a revisionist Palestinian mythology that denies Jewish history.

It is all the more ironic and disgraceful when progressives who mock religious observance now invoke Jewish rituals (e.g., fasting, public mourning, and the recitation of Kaddish) on behalf of the people of Gaza — without any empathy for dead, wounded, or captive Israelis…

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