

Post-election musings: Whither America? Whither US Jews?

My anti-racist colleagues seem to oppose every racism save one: that of Jew-hatred, aka anti-Semitism, but I bear the DNA of all my relatives whose descendants I never got to meet because they were murdered in pogroms and in the Holocaust.

by Phyllis Chesler



Michigan's Rashida Tlaib and Minnesota's Ilhan Omar both won seats in Congress

I am very uneasy, a bit out of sorts. Post the mid-term election, the nation seems merely, depressingly, just a bit more polarized. All that lies before us may be political logjams, continued Civil War, and increased contempt for one's opponent. But the elections also seem a bit anti-climactic. Nothing truly dramatic happened. The mood is subdued. Trudging hard work on both sides of the aisle, and impressively long and tired lines of voters at the polls.

I'm a feminist and I'm glad that so many women ran and were elected. However, as a feminist, I am more concerned with one's agenda than with one's gender.

On the one hand, assuming they are qualified, (and that is not always the case—House-bound Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez comes to mind), the ascension of the formerly disenfranchised is long overdue and very welcome. On the other hand, where they stand on issues is the only thing that interests me.

Some women politicians may support Sharia law and Minister Farrakhan—and oppose Israel's right to exist. Michigan's Rashida Tlaib and Minnesota's Ilhan Omar immediately come to mind. Tlaib was seen dancing with the flag of Palestine when she made her victory speech; Omar wears hijab, which is fine—but, since I know something about Somali culture in Minnesota, I wonder where she stands on issues such as FGM, forced marriage, and polygamy.

Although female, some politicians support the further evisceration of Roe v Wade. Here, Tennessee's Marsha Blackburn, Alabama's Martha Roby, and West Virginia's Carol Miller come to mind. All won seats in the Senate or the House and all oppose women's reproductive freedom as do at least two new Governors, Kristi Noem of South Dakota, and Kay Ellen Ivey of Alabama.

Guess what? The same women politicians who are anti-Choice are all pro-Israel.

I am pro-Choice and I refuse to choose between these two issues; however, I live in a country and at a time where I am expected to do so.

Can we judge politicians on the basis of their race, religion, class origins, ethnicity? I fear not/I fear we sometimes can. But the way in which we currently Balkanize Identity is very worrisome.

Who am I? Who are any of us? What single label can define a human being?

I'm a daughter, a sister, a mother, a spouse, a friend, a mother-in-law, and a grandmother; but defining myself in these terms tells you very little about *me*