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Dear Sirs and Mesdames,

At this writing, Israel now reports that over 240 hostages are being held in Gaza, following the worst pogrom against Jews since the Nazi Holocaust. Israel has imposed an entirely legitimate siege in order to effect the release of those hostages, and has begun to eradicate Hamas so that this genocidal terror organization no longer threatens Jewish lives. These two things are not merely acceptable, but moral imperatives.

Thus we were shocked to read your recent statement that called for a “humanitarian pause” in Gaza. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken testified before the Senate this week that a ceasefire now would “simply consolidate what Hamas has been able to do and allow it to remain where it is and potentially allow it to repeat.” Hillary Clinton went further on CBS: “People who are calling for a ceasefire now do not understand Hamas. That is not possible. It would be such a gift to Hamas...”

These statements rebuke your own. A “humanitarian pause” would be anything but humanitarian—it would permit Hamas to regroup, rearm, feed their families and their allies, while the physical and emotional torment of the Jewish captives and their families continues unabated. It would also enable them to murder more Jewish soldiers when the fighting resumed.

Your statement briefly mentioned the 1400 dead Israeli soldiers and civilians, devoted one paragraph to the hostages, and followed this with three paragraphs on the “innocent civilians in Gaza,” telling the family, neighbors, and friends of massacred Jews how they should treat the family, neighbors, and friends of the terrorists responsible for this Nazi pogrom. The vile barbarism of not only the terrorists, but the documented workers who prepared maps, and the other residents—men, women, and teenagers—who came from Gaza to loot and murder those left alive, went unmentioned.

Israel will continue to treat them much better than any other army faced with similar circumstances. The IDF has an unmatched record of avoiding “collateral damage,” and does not need the advice of Americans sitting comfortably in their homes on how to behave like a First World Army.

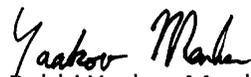
It is long overdue for many Jewish organizations, but certainly one that has arrogated for itself the title of speaking for “Diaspora Jewry,” to prioritize Israel and the safety of Jews first, foremost, and indeed uniquely in our thoughts. The reported drop in support for Israel among Reform-affiliated Jews during the current crisis (per a JPPI/WZO survey) is the one problem that you have the capability and obligation to address, yet on that you have been silent.

Statements like yours embolden our enemies, and risk both further emotional torment to innocent families and further casualties among those forced to fight for our lives. If you cannot bring yourselves to speak for the rights of Jews victimized by inhuman barbarians without equivocation, it would be best to say nothing at all.

Sincerely Yours,



Rabbi Yoel Schonfeld
President



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