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Commentary…

The International Criminal Court Is a Sham By Douglas Murray

Recent years have seen a flourishing of BS institutions. There is the International Association of Genocide Scholars, an organization that suddenly leaped to prominence last year when it was reactivated in order to accuse Israel of "genocide" in Gaza; there is the International Court of Justice (ICJ), a politicized pseudo-court that seems determined to fast-track that same genocide allegation; there is the United Nations Human Rights Council, whose only standing agenda item devoted to a single country is, yes, about the Jewish state; and the list goes on.

But the institution that must win any and all awards for not being what it says on the tin is the International Criminal Court (ICC). Founded in 2002, the ICC has served as a political tool for a quarter century. In the 2000s, European signatories routinely criticized the George W. Bush administration for not signing up the U.S. to be a member of the new institution. But the Bush administration took the view that all Democrat and Republican administrations have taken before and since: No American statesman or soldier should ever find his actions judged under the jurisdiction of a foreign court. American justice is enough.

Many Europeans count this as evidence of American barbarism. Why would the U.S. refuse to recognize the jurisdiction of something as noble-sounding as the ICC? The reasons, in the years since, have become quite clear. To take only one notable example, in 2002, when the court was being established, Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón sought to call former secretary of state Henry Kissinger as a witness for an investigation into human rights abuses by South American military dictatorships. Garzón wanted to question Kissinger about what the U.S. government knew about these alleged abuses. Authorities in Britain, where Kissinger was staying at the time, denied the request. But the incident served as an important reminder: If the U.S. ever submitted to a foreign court, international or foreign criminal jurisdiction could and would be used against America and her allies.

That is why, at the end of last week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio took American opposition to the ICC to a new level: sanctioning American individuals or businesses that transact with the court. As Rubio said in a statement posted to social media, "We will ban transactions with this rogue court, cutting off their resources and crippling their ability to operate against us because our message is clear: The United States and the American people are not subject to the jurisdiction of this fake ICC."

This is the correct step. The ICC has proven its illegitimacy time and again—including in recent days. Indeed, the latest act to have outraged the Trump administration was the Friday decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to a South African judge, Navanethem "Navi" Pillay, who previously served as a judge on the ICC and is now on the ICJ. In its statement justifying the award, the Norwegian Nobel Committee said that it had chosen Pillay because "institutions of international law are under political attack." What it declined to say is that they are under political attack because these are deeply political institutions.

One need only examine Pillay's record to understand what I mean. Within days of the October 7 attacks on Israel, Pillay—then the chair of the United Nations' Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory—declared that she would be investigating Israel's "right to defense" and stated that the country's response to the Hamas-led massacre was "much more retaliation and revenge." This was before Israeli troops had even entered Gaza. Unsurprisingly, Pillay spent the succeeding months attempting to put together a case to find Israel guilty of crimes she'd already all but declared it had committed.

Just yesterday, Pillay visited the ICC, paid tribute to its work, and noted that its members' "compassion and courage continue to ensure that impunity will not be allowed to reign." For evidence of what that supposed "compassion and courage" looks like, take what the ICC did in the wake of October 7. Within seven months of Gaza's invasion of Israel, ICC prosecutor Karim Khan, a British Muslim, put himself before a camera alongside two faceless bureaucrats and, in a fantastic piece of cheap theater, announced that the ICC was issuing arrest warrants for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, along with two Hamas leaders.

Leaving aside the fact that it's ludicrous to place leaders of a sovereign state on the same plane as murderous terrorists responsible for the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, all four men were beyond the jurisdiction of the court. The Israeli leaders, because—like America—Israel is not a signatory to the ICC, and the Hamas leaders because they were first in hiding and then swiftly dead. This removed Khan's pretense that he was issuing these warrants because both sides had committed crimes and must be brought to justice. Only one side was ever in Khan's sights.

Moreover, at the same time that Khan made his intervention, there was some bemusement about his timing. By his own admission, he and the ICC had not completed an investigation into the war crimes they were alleging. Within months of the announcement, the reason for the rush became clear: Not only was Khan deeply politically biased, but he was also under investigation for allegedly sexually assaulting a female colleague. As of earlier this year, Khan has been removed from the ICC.

If there are still Americans who believe that the ICC is what it says it is, then they should consider not only the outrageously political and biased work of Pillay and Khan, but notice that when it comes to the ICC, the ICJ, and other such institutions, the world falls into several distinct categories.

Firstly, there are the countries like America and Israel that believe that their sovereignty matters and do not want to see their soldiers or leaders judged by some South African pseudo-expert or a British sex pest. Secondly, there are countries that are beyond the interest of the court because, for some reason, the highly political court has no interest in them. The ICC, for example, has yet to make any meaningful intervention in bringing to justice Vladimir Putin of Russia for his invasion of Ukraine. It issued one of its "arrest warrants" against the Russian leader in 2023, but this was mere theater; the likelihood of President Putin being brought to justice in The Hague is exactly nil, and the ICC knows that. And it moved on from the Russian theater long ago to continue its obsessive-compulsive disorder activities against the world's only Jewish state.

Those who defend the ICC point to the many trials of dictators and rogue military commanders that have taken place in The Hague. But what they ignore is that these trials are almost exclusively of people from impoverished and war-torn countries in Africa. The reason is simple: African countries rely on substantial amounts of international aid. By offering up a deposed leader or two to these courts, they can kill two birds with one stone: Remove a political rival at home and continue to drink from the hose of international aid. The Europeans see this as a win; the African nations that submit to the ICC see it as a win-win.

European nations will continue to see American opposition to the ICC as evidence of American backwardness. But the reality is that America and Israel know that no army can fight a war in this era without having to fight a parallel war against politicized international institutions. But these two nations, the last major fighting powers of

today's West, are the ones that are actually moving the world toward the values for which Europe's utopians claim to stand: freedom from terrorism and tyranny, defense of the weak, the protection of human rights, and an unbending standard of justice. The international bureaucracy is a hindrance in the pursuit of those virtues, on the wrong side of nearly every urgent moral question of our time. The ICC and its ilk could not be sanctioned enough. (The Free Press Oct 13)

The Fatal Blind Spot of the Isolationist Right By Jeff Ballabon

At this week's National Conservatism Conference in Jerusalem, an ideological faction that prides itself on realism delivered a lecture steeped in pure fantasy.

Taking to the podium, Matthew Peterson, president of the Claremont Institute's Center for the American Way of Life, offered the Israeli audience a warning disguised as counsel. "Opposing endless wars is not hatred of Israel," he said. "The future of the American-Israeli relationship is not going to look like it did in the past, nor should it."

This rhetoric has become a familiar catechism among a subset of the American right. Echoing across conference panels and isolationist podcasts, the argument holds that America must turn inward, shed foreign commitments and stop getting dragged into Middle Eastern quagmires.

Supporting Israel's existential battles, we are told, is an expensive relic of neoconservative dogma. It means entanglement in "endless wars" that serve foreign countries while depleting American blood and treasure.

One would hope that the head of an institute dedicated to preserving the "American Way of Life" would grasp what actually threatens it.

To call the civilizational confrontation with Iran an "endless war" for Israel is a catastrophic failure of geopolitical awareness and strategic imagination based on a fundamental misunderstanding of American interests.

The foundational flaw of Peterson's argument and the broader isolationist argument is the false claim that U.S.-Israel strategic cooperation is an act of American philanthropic indulgence. This narrative presumes that America is the beleaguered benefactor constantly bailing out a needy client state.

But in this war with Iran, Israel has done far more to save America than America has ever had to do to save Israel.

For decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been open about its goals. It views Israel as the "Little Satan"—merely an initial obstacle—and the United States as the "Great Satan," the ultimate target. Indeed, Iran has been at war with America since the current Islamic regime took power.

Thus, Iran's revolutionaries seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days. Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, bombed the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 1983 and, six months later, a Marine barracks, killing 241 American servicemen.

Iran stood behind the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing that killed 19 U.S. airmen in Saudi Arabia. The Pentagon has assessed that Iranian-backed militias killed at least 603 American troops in Iraq. In 2011, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) plotted to kill the Saudi ambassador to the United States in a Washington restaurant.

The U.S. Department of Justice has since charged IRGC operatives with plotting to murder former U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton and U.S. President Donald Trump. Iranian agents hired hitmen to kill an Iranian-American journalist in Brooklyn, N.Y. Since February, Iranian drones and missiles have killed American soldiers in Kuwait and Jordan.

For most of those decades, Washington answered with diplomatic illusions, paralysis and appeasement. Israel stood on the forward edge of the battlefront—absorbing the kinetic shocks, eliminating terror commanders and dismantling the proxy network Tehran built on Israel's borders while providing intelligence to Washington on the proxy assets Tehran had already placed within America's borders.

The Pentagon spent 15 years, starting in 2009, building a weapon that could destroy Iran's buried nuclear site at Fordow. In June 2025, the Israeli Air Force launched an unprecedented air armada and gained control of the skies over Tehran within roughly 36 hours of its first strike, crippling Iran's air defenses. Nine days later, American B-2s flew to Fordow through skies Israel had already cleared to deliver America's weapon, developed in America's interests. Not one Iranian fighter rose to meet our bombers.

That is why America's war this year is measured in months, not decades. All along, Israel has been degrading a fanatical regime whose strategic doctrine is built around the annihilation of the West and then, suddenly, Israel blew open the door and cleared the way for America.

A High-altitude Electromagnetic Pulse (HEMP) weapon can degrade infrastructure across the entire continental United States.

An isolationist ignores Iran because he mistakenly believes the Islamic Republic poses no vital threat to the American homeland. However, as Col. Stephen Chill made clear in his indispensable analysis in RealClearDefense this April, an enemy does not need to flatten a city to end a civilization.

A High-altitude Electromagnetic Pulse (HEMP) weapon—a nuclear detonation 30 to 400 kilometers above the ground—requires zero precision guidance and zero atmospheric reentry. A medium-range missile launched from a commercial container ship off the coast, or a nuclear device placed in orbit (Tehran already has orbital launch capability), is all that is required.

A single high-altitude detonation can degrade infrastructure across the entire continental United States. The E1pulse fries the microprocessors and control systems that run everything. The slower E3 pulse couples into transmission lines and drives destructive current into the extra-high-voltage transformers that form the unshielded spine of the American electrical grid.

In a flash, the American way of life vanishes.

Water pumping and treatment stations stop within hours. The just-in-time diesel and refrigerated supply chains that feed more than 300 million Americans collapse in under a week. Hospital backup generators run dry when the diesel stops coming, and more than 10 million Americans who depend on insulin, dialysis and other refrigerated medicine face death within days to weeks. Communications go dark. Electronic banking and payrolls freeze completely.

Because colossal transformers are custom-built, depend heavily on overseas manufacturing, take years to produce and the U.S. possesses no meaningful strategic reserve, the outage lasts months or years, if recovery is possible at all.

This is an attack vector aimed squarely at our survival. And who is standing between the American homeland and a messianic Islamic regime that has amassed enough enriched uranium for more than 10 warheads?

Not the think-tank theorists in Washington, but the Israel Defense Forces.

I have spent much of this past year pressing the case for hardening America's grid. That work has barely begun. Until it is done, the first line of defense against an Iranian HEMP strike is keeping Iran from ever building a nuclear weapon, and no one has done more of that work than Israel.

The Trump administration's own National Security Strategy names, as a core American interest, keeping the Middle East from becoming a base for terror against the American homeland. An Iranian nuclear weapon is the gravest version of that threat.

Confronting Iran is an indivisible mission: eliminating its nuclear capabilities and ending its regime cannot be decoupled. For decades, Western policymakers indulged the fantasy that containment, sanctions or negotiated pauses could buy peace. That era is over.

When Israel strikes Iranian nuclear architecture, dismantles Hezbollah's launch sites, eliminates IRGC leadership and exposes the Islamic Republic's catastrophic vulnerabilities, it is preempting a civilizational catastrophe that would reduce the American heartland

to pre-electricity darkness without the knowledge and ability to survive it.

To counsel restraint to Israelis in Jerusalem, months after that war, inverts cause and effect. Israel has never asked for American boots on the ground. It asks for munitions and moral clarity, and the job is not finished while the Iranian regime survives.

The outcome of this war should shape the U.S.-Israel relationship for a generation or more. Israel opened the skies over Tehran, America flew through and together they pushed back a threat that many in Washington had come to regard as nearly inevitable: an Iranian bomb capable of completely blacking out the American homeland.

That should be the single-most important talking point for the Israeli government in every conversation with Washington, Trump and those who support him as they head into the midterms.

If national conservatives truly care about safeguarding the American way of life, they need to go beyond isolationist sloganeering. Defending the United States requires more than building rhetorical walls; it requires recognizing where the perimeter fence actually lies.

The future of the U.S.-Israel relationship should indeed look different from the past. It should finally be recognized as an indispensable alliance in which a courageous frontline democracy has been doing the heavy lifting to ensure that the American homeland survives. (JNS Oct 15)

The Democrats Have Abandoned Israel, Not Just Netanyahu

By Jonathan S. Tobin

At a debate this week with his Republican opponent, State Treasurer Stacy Garrity, Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro attempted to articulate a position that might appease his party's anti-Israel left-wing base while at the same time upholding a stand that he has held throughout his life: support for Israel.

His attempt to thread that needle consisted of, on the one hand, reaffirming his strong, even emotional backing for the Jewish state and noting that while Jews were grieving the third anniversary of the Oct. 7 attacks, they were also under siege from an unprecedented surge of antisemitism. But he balanced that with a denunciation of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who, he claimed, was making it impossible to maintain the U.S.-Israel alliance. He said he hoped that Netanyahu would not be re-elected later this month, thus removing a major obstacle to the presidency for him.

The popular governor is currently cruising toward an easy re-election victory. But most political observers are looking past November and pondering whether his plans to run for president in 2028 will be derailed by what he describes as his "love" for the State of Israel.

We won't know the answer to that for another 12 to 18 months. But given everything happening in American politics in 2026, it's hard to make a case for optimism for Shapiro or, more importantly, winning back the Democrats for the pro-Israel cause.

In primary after primary conducted by Democrats, a stance such as Shapiro's or even far more lukewarm affirmations of support was a kiss of death for candidates. It even applied to those like Rep. Dan Goldman (D-N.Y.): an incumbent, reliably liberal and fervently opposed to President Donald Trump.

Even more important is how the party is rallying around the most notorious and prominent opponent of the Jewish state running in 2026—Democratic U.S. Senate nominee in Michigan Dr. Abdul El-Sayed. In the last month, he has received endorsements and even financial support from a host of Democrats, including Jews like Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Sen. Elissa Slotkin and Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel.

Schumer has also taken the same line about the dispute between Democrats and Israel being about Netanyahu. But for El-Sayed and an entire rising generation of "progressives," you hear more about the usual litany of blood libels about the Jewish state being guilty of "genocide" than the prime minister.

With El-Sayed still locked in a close race against Republican Mike Rogers, Democrats just rolled out their version of political royalty to help him: former President Barack Obama.

El-Sayed's obsessive attacks on Israel and its Jewish supporters, as well as demonizing the AIPAC lobby as part of a plot to capture America for a foreign power, haven't played as well among African-Americans as they do among college-educated liberal whites. And so, Obama campaigned with El-Sayed this week to help shore up that key Democratic constituency for him.

Obama's intervention on behalf of an openly antisemitic candidate caused little surprise. But it does bring to mind when the breach between Israel and the Democratic Party became a serious problem.

Netanyahu's domestic political foes, as well as American liberals like Shapiro, have argued for years that it was the prime minister who blew up bipartisan support for Israel. They say it can be primarily traced to the eight years when Obama and Netanyahu were locked in a long-running duel of clashing personalities and policies when the two were leading their respective countries.

That culminated in the unprecedented address Netanyahu gave to a joint meeting of Congress to oppose Obama's disastrous 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

Most members of his party were opposed to appeasement of Iran before Obama decided to betray his 2012 re-election promise not to allow Tehran to have a nuclear program. But even though his signature foreign-policy accomplishment would have guaranteed that Iran would eventually get a nuclear weapon rather than preventing it, he was able to make support for the measure a litmus test of loyalty to his party and himself.

Netanyahu was widely bashed for his chutzpah in going to Capitol Hill to make the case against the pact. But he alerted Americans and those in moderate Arab nations to the danger—and to the fact that Israel wouldn't allow itself to be put in the crosshairs of an Iranian nuclear program that had been preserved by Obama. In doing so, he prepared the way for its reversal by Trump and for the joint military campaigns in 2025 and 2026 by Israel and the United States that destroyed much of Tehran's nuclear facilities.

The problem with the thesis blaming all of this on Netanyahu's Republican partisanship, which was laid out in a recent article in The Atlantic by Franklin Foer, is that it is largely false. Throughout the eight years of the Obama-Netanyahu duel, it was Obama and a party that he was increasingly pushing toward the left on a host of issues that was pressuring Israel to make policy moves its voters had elected the prime minister to oppose in terms of the conflict with the Palestinians.

Obama's obsession with pressuring Israel to accept a two-state solution was always the main source of tension between Israel and the Democrats. He was determined to force acquiescence to the creation of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and part of Jerusalem, while Hamas's separate terror state already existed in the Gaza Strip. He had repudiated the promises made by his predecessor, former President George W. Bush, to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2004 to help persuade him to withdraw from Gaza. That included America recognizing Israel's right to retain the areas where Jewish communities existed in Judea and Samaria.

The blowup between Obama and Netanyahu in May 2011, when the latter supposedly insulted the former, is seen as a seminal moment in the breakup between Israel and the Democrats. But few remember that the prime minister's insistence on defending Jewish rights and Israeli security in Obama's presence came a day after the president ambushed Netanyahu on the eve of his visit with a speech declaring his intention to pursue negotiations intended to force Israel back to the 1967 armistice lines. That reset American policy to one in which Washington was implicitly endorsing the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Jews in the territories to gratify Palestinian ambitions and the division of Jerusalem.

As it turned out, Obama's efforts to tilt the diplomatic playing field in the direction of the Palestinians produced nothing but a

pointless quarrel with Israel, as well as more support at home for Netanyahu from a public that recognized Obama as an unreliable ally. As was true in previous decades and in the years since he left the White House, the Palestinians—both the "moderates" of the Palestinian Authority and the "extremists" of Hamas—had no interest in a two-state solution. Their sole goal was and remains the destruction of Israel, as the support for the Oct. 7 massacre and the genocidal intent of the terrorist organization has demonstrated.

The purpose of dredging up this history is not so much to vindicate Netanyahu as to point out that the criticisms of the prime minister by Democrats like Shapiro—who, as a Pennsylvania state assemblyman in 2008, was an early supporter of Obama and personally reassured me that, if elected, he would be a great ally to Israel—are largely rooted in myths about the events of the last two decades.

At every step, it was Democrats like Obama, former President Joe Biden and others who took positions at odds with the overwhelming majority of Israeli voters, both before and after Oct. 7. Whatever critiques can be made about Netanyahu and his case for remaining in charge, few Israelis are opposing him because he fought back robustly against Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran in a war that many Democrats like El-Sayed, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani and others now claim was "genocide." Nor do they want to topple him because a decade ago and more, he held the line against foreign pressure to withdraw from Judea and Samaria, let alone Jerusalem, to create a Palestinian state from which terrorists could have inflicted the same horrors on communities in central Israel as happened to those near Gaza.

Indeed, in the weeks after Oct. 7, Obama's qualified statement of support for Israel in the wake of the slaughter of 1,200 men, women and children focused as much on its guilt—and that of its American supporters—as being "complicit to some degree" for the war Hamas started because those parties had refused to empower the Palestinians.

Other Democrats preparing to run in 2028 are listening to the chorus of Israel-bashers on the left, who claim their party lost in 2024 because it was insufficiently hostile to the Jewish state. Speaking in South Korea this week, former Vice President Kamala Harris said that Biden was wrong to tolerate Israel's "horrific conduct" in Gaza during the war, which is to say that he didn't save Hamas from defeat. This also ignores the fact that the Biden administration actually worked hard to hamstring the Israeli war effort, slow-walking arms deliveries as well as making false claims that efforts to root the terrorists out of crucial strongholds like Rafah would create massive civilian casualties. This pressure on Israel only strengthened Hamas's resolve to hang on and keep fighting and undermined their own efforts to end the war and release Israeli hostages.

Harris's statements weren't just another instance of her second-guessing her old boss and blaming him and others in the administration for her being defeated by Trump. It was an effort to ingratiate herself with the bulk of Democratic voters who are pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel.

That trend is what made the rise of someone like El-Sayed possible. In the eyes of Israel's Democratic critics, it isn't just Netanyahu who is guilty of "genocide." They view the broad consensus among Israelis, which stretches from right to left in opposing a Palestinian state and insisting on disarming Hamas in Gaza, as responsible for "genocide" and view it as an "apartheid" state.

El-Sayed made it clear this week that he regarded Israel as being as great a threat to the United States as an Iranian state that had been at war with America for 47 years.

The idea that an Israeli prime minister not named Netanyahu could fix relations with a Democratic Party that treats antisemites like El-Sayed as worthy of support is just wishful thinking on the part of people like Shapiro.

That's because this issue is not just a matter of the positions taken by radicals like El-Sayed and Mamdani or far-left "Squad" members in the U.S. House of Representatives like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), who is also considering a 2028 presidential run.

Democrats like Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.), who are perceived as moderates, are also signaling that the alliance with Israel will undergo a "thorough re-examination" in the coming years. Coons, who is in line to become chairman of the powerful Foreign Relations Committee if the Democrats regain control of the Senate in November, is already planning on proposing discriminatory sanctions on Israelis similar to those already put forward by British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband.

None of this is because, as Foer claims, Netanyahu cultivated ties with Republicans while neglecting to do the same with Democrats. To the contrary, it was the Democrats who have aligned themselves against Israel's interests and—under the influence of a base that has swallowed the toxic ideas of critical race theory, intersectionality and settler-colonialism—view the Jewish state and Jews in general as "white" oppressors who must be suppressed. The claim that Netanyahu should have rejected the support of conservative Republicans (who were not under the spell of these ideologies) to placate Democrats is not a serious argument.

Shapiro may hope this will all fade away if Netanyahu is defeated on Oct. 27. But his problem is not just the possibility that Israeli voters will reject his advice. It's that the same Democratic primary voters who elevated people like El-Sayed, Mamdani and a host of other "progressive" candidates in the last year view those who express "love" for Israel, even if it is qualified with Netanyahu-bashing, as simply beyond the pale.

In the recent past, Shapiro's combination of political liberalism, largely successful governance and record of electoral success would have put him among the frontrunners in a presidential race. But over the course of the last year, even the most enthusiastic supporter cannot have missed the shift in the opinions of Democrats.

To them, a figure like Gadi Eisenkot, the former Israel Defense Forces chief of staff who is Netanyahu's principal opponent, is just as much of a "war criminal" deserving of sanctions as the prime minister. No conceivable concessions that Eisenkot could make to the Palestinians will be enough to win back Democratic voters indoctrinated in left-wing ideologies or the officeholders they want to send to Washington to blow up the alliance with the Jewish state.

The remnants of a once-dominant pro-Israel faction of Democrats prefer to blame Netanyahu. But the responsibility is theirs. It was Democrats like Schumer and Shapiro who abetted the rise of Obama and who looked the other way as he set in motion the train of events that created so much "daylight" between their party and Israel. They were the ones who refused to anathematize members of the "Squad," like Reps. Ilan Omar (D-Minn.), Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) and AOC when they helped legitimize antisemitism and Israel-bashing. And they are now the ones who, in the hope of appeasing their left-wing critics, are bolstering the candidacies of Jew-haters like El-Sayed.

Democrats who are blasting criticism of El-Sayed's radicalism and Islamist opposition to Israel's existence as "Islamophobia" while ignoring or downplaying his bigotry aren't open to rethinking their opposition to Israel. Nor are they likely to embrace a Democratic presidential candidate who is emotionally committed to the U.S.-Israel alliance but just wants a different prime minister in Jerusalem.

Simply put, Shapiro's pro-Israel/anti-Netanyahu stand is not likely to satisfy a party base that now regards hostility to the Jewish state, along with opposition to enforcement of immigration laws, as the organizing principle of politics in the second quarter of the 21st century. And it's likely that neither he nor any other Democrat is going to be able to get past that problem with the sort of nuanced position articulated at his debate. The collapse of the pro-Israel wing of the Democratic Party is a liberal failure of nerve and principle that won't be undone, regardless of who wins the next election in Israel. (JNS Oct 14)