



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
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sidelined if the administration comes to believe that it is only adding to the perceived toxicity of the progressive agenda.

In other words, just as support for Israel was tainted by association with Trump, so, too, could the pressure on and

condemnation of Israel become tainted by association with all things progressive.

The possibility of this occurring should encourage Bennett to recognize that he should not charge into an embrace of the American wish list; quite the opposite.

It behooves Bennett, Lapid and all those engaging with American decision-makers to be politely noncommittal. Above all, now is the wrong time to consider compromising Israel's vital interests in the name of currying favor with a point of view that might be reassessed.

Another aspect of the Virginia election that should be informative to Israeli leaders relates to their possible interest in regarding Israeli voters as if they were Americans.

While an anecdotal and non-scientific observation, my sense is that Israeli leaders have been wondering if they should be introducing certain issues in the country to mirror the priorities that they have been seeing in many Western societies.

Climate change is an example of such an issue. Simply stated, there is virtually nothing that Israel can do or refrain from doing that will move the needle ever so slightly in terms of global warming. Israel probably pollutes less in a month than China does in half an hour.

It was one thing for Israel to engage in virtue-signaling by wringing its hands with other Western countries at the 26th U.N. Climate Change Convention (COP26) in Glasgow last week. It would be quite another to actually stop pumping natural gas, as Israeli Environment Minister Tamar Zandberg, former chair of the left-wing Meretz Party, suggested.

American voters have just shown the common sense—the pragmatism and realism—for which Americans have been famous. This description also applies to the majority of Israelis, and Israel's leaders would be well advised to use the Virginia election as a parallel.

A lot of skilled dancing is required to maintain Israel's interests while simultaneously seeking to appear cooperative, or at least not antagonistic, to the interests of its allies.

Part and parcel of this dancing is to understand when the music has changed—both abroad and at home. (JNS Nov 7)

Commentary...

Israel's Leaders Need to Listen to the Music of the Latest US Election Results By Douglas Altaberf

Israel's new something-for-everyone coalition government prides itself on its emphasis on restoring bilateral political support for Israel in the United States.

Of course, this is a not-so-subtle slap at former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whom they perceive to have unduly favored the Republicans—meaning former U.S. President Donald Trump—thereby “endangering” longstanding bipartisan American support.

In this regard, they are half-right. Clearly, any leader who was seen to be even civil to, let alone appreciative of, Trump, was regarded with suspicion by progressives. Thus, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's explicit posture of not being in the mold of Netanyahu was a start in clearing the air for Israel among Democrats.

But going in a different direction from Netanyahu fails to address what it is that Israel would have to do in order to win Democratic support.

It now gets tricky, because while there is still a significant amount of support coming from the Democratic rank and file, the headline-grabbing and seemingly agenda-setting group among the Democrats has been the hard-left bloc, guru-ed by Bernie Sanders and spearheaded by the Squad, with “amen” echoes from much of the media.

This is a group that believes in intersectionality, which holds that there are good victims and bad oppressors. The good victims are all in common cause, intersecting in their virtue and victimization against the wiles of the oppressors.

Take a wild guess where Israel falls out in this landscape. It is right up there with the most nefarious oppressors (and the Jews, as a people of privilege, are trailing not far behind).

Given this state of affairs, it seems hard to imagine what Israel could do to curry favor with the progressives, short of abandoning its principles, values and most sacred tenets, not to mention strategic policies and priorities.

In other words, Israel's leaders have been looking for love in all the wrong places. This quest might seem to come naturally to Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, who seems capable of singing by heart all the lyrics of the progressive hymnal.

But it has been an acquired taste for Bennett, who must, in the still of the night, worry that he is betraying everything that he told his constituents, and the rest of the Israeli public, that he stood for.

Having invested in talking the progressive talk and walking the Western walk, Israel's leaders need to know that they might be on the verge of chasing yesterday's fashion.

The results of Virginia's gubernatorial election last week—giving Republican Glenn Youngkin a win over Democratic candidate Terry McAuliffe—were of tectonic significance, showing the widespread disinterest, and in many cases disgust, with the progressive agenda. When given the chance, critical race theory, defunding the police and marginalizing parents of school children were all roundly rejected.

What Israel's leaders need to see is that even though Trump was not reelected, the American public is not at all interested in endorsing his progressive nemesis. U.S. President Joe Biden might be having buyer's remorse for ceding the policy field to the hard-left, as the outcome in Virginia showed the Democrats to be in significant danger of losing both houses of Congress come next November.

How does this impact Israel?

For one thing, there might be shifts and moves that could have an indirect, yet nevertheless profound, impact on the administration's attitudes towards Israel. If the Squad is discredited as the moving ideological force at the White House, it could take the wind out of some of the diplomatic sails that are currently blowing against Israel.

Such issues as knee-jerk condemnation of building in Judea and Samaria, the questioning of Israel's designation of six Palestinian NGOs as terrorist organizations and, of course, the intention to open a consulate in downtown Jerusalem to service Palestinians might all be

Is There a Future in Bipartisan Advocacy for Israel?

By Jonathan S. Tobin

Former Ambassador to the United Nations and South Carolina governor Nikki Haley was preaching to the choir when she fired a shot over the bow of AIPAC at the annual conference of the Republican Jewish Coalition in Las Vegas this past weekend. Along with other GOP 2024 hopefuls and political celebrities, Haley was at the RJC event to reach out to the pro-Israel community and demonstrate her pro-Israel bona fides. Like the other speakers there, she was eager to deride the Biden administration, woke leftists and warn about the dangers of the Democratic Party's influential anti-Israel faction. But Haley struck a nerve when she mentioned AIPAC.

“I have spoken at AIPAC events many times, and they've always been unbelievably supportive to me,” she said. However, she then added that “if a politician supports the disastrous Iran deal, opposes moving the American embassy to Jerusalem and is embraced by anti-Semites who support the BDS movement, then your pro-Israel group should have absolutely nothing to do with him.”

That was catnip to the RJC, many of whose activists have given up on AIPAC and what they consider its unhealthy obsession with bipartisanship. They think that the lobby's belief in bipartisanship as the foundation for the pro-Israel community's influence is at best outdated, and at worst, merely a cover for a slow-motion abandonment of Israel.

Jewish Republicans view most Democrats' embrace of former President Barack Obama's Iran nuclear deal as an act of treachery that undermined the security of Israel and the West. They regard Jewish Democrats, who used to loudly cheer false promises by past presidential candidates from both parties about moving the embassy

to Jerusalem but then dismissed former President Donald Trump's historic tilt towards Israel on that issue and others, as hypocrites. Just as important, they are shocked by the tolerance that many liberal Democrats have demonstrated for influential members of their party who are open Israel-haters and anti-Semites, like "Squad" members Reps. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) and Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.). They say it demonstrates that not only do they care more about partisanship than the Jewish state but that their claims to sound the alarm on Jew-hatred are utterly insincere.

In its defense, AIPAC's focus on building a broad coalition of supporters of Israel regardless of party affiliation was the foundation of its success. The conceit of AIPAC was to encourage people across the ideological spectrum to befriend politicians from both parties. With AIPAC's help, officeholders came to understand that joining the ranks of the pro-Israel movement didn't just help them raise money from Jewish donors, but placed them in the mainstream in a country where love of the Jewish state is baked deep into America's political DNA.

That formula worked well for decades. In a country in which there are two major parties that have exchanged control of Congress and the White House several times in the last 30 years, it made no sense for supporters of Israel to concentrate on one to the exclusion of the other.

Though AIPAC's mythic status as the all-powerful "Israel lobby" that Jew-haters obsessed over was highly exaggerated—its influence did not compare to lobbies that represented various powerful industries and didn't cancel out the support that the Arab lobby could count on in the State Department and much of the government bureaucracy—the group's ability to get results was real.

But the AIPAC formula that was conceived and first achieved success in the 1970s and 1980s is no longer working.

Part of the reason for that is that the two parties have more or less exchanged identities on Israel in the past half-century. Democrats were once the solidly pro-Israel party. Now, its members are deeply divided over it with its left-wing activist wing increasingly influenced by intersectional ideology that falsely claims that the Jewish state embodies "white privilege" and that the Palestinian war to destroy it is somehow akin to the struggle for civil rights in the United States.

At the same time, the GOP is now nearly unanimous in its affection for the U.S.-Israel alliance. That trend reached its apotheosis under Trump, who can lay claim to being the most pro-Israel president to date, even if Democrats and the majority of Jewish voters give him no credit for it.

While the congressional leadership of the Democrats still firmly identifies as pro-Israel—as demonstrated by the determination of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer not to let the opposition of the so-called progressive wing of their party stop funding of the Iron Dome missile-defense system earlier this year—members of the party as just as likely to be found among Israel's most fervent ideological opponents as its friends.

It is wrong to label all Democrats as being as bad as the "Squad." But when push has come to shove on key issues of interest to the pro-Israel community, most of them fell short. That meant that some who are not only Jewish but who have long claimed to be Israel's most ardent defenders either joined the other side on the Iran deal—as did former Democratic National Committee Chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-Fla.)—or simply acquiesced to their party's betrayal, as Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer did.

With courageous exceptions to this standard few and far between, such as Rep. Ted Deutch (D-Fla.), who both opposed the Iran deal and called out Tlaib and others for their anti-Semitic invective during the House debate about Iron Dome, it's possible to argue that perhaps those cheering Haley's comments are right about AIPAC's failure and the need to reject bipartisan advocacy.

Yet it's both premature and unwise to completely write off AIPAC.

It is deeply wrong for Jewish Democrats to accuse their GOP counterparts of politicizing the issue of Israel since it was their party, and not the Republicans, which failed on Iran and Jerusalem, as well as by their cowardly refusal to reject the anti-Semitism of the progressives. But the goal of pro-Israel advocacy can't be to convince all Jews to become Republicans. That would be true even if it were possible, which it isn't, given the fact that most believe so-called social-justice issues are actually more important than Israel and fail to see that anti-Semitism is as much a danger on the left as it is on the right.

The objective for the pro-Israel movement is not to destroy the Democrats, but to get them to return to their former stance of strong support and revive a consensus that the left is destroying. That means

that efforts to cultivate moderates and even some progressives—and to convince them to back the Jewish state—is still both the right thing to do and good politics must continue. At the moment, that looks like a losing battle, as the party's growing progressive wing has fallen under the spell of toxic ideas like critical race theory that give a permission slip to anti-Semitism.

In American politics, change is a constant. The left may have thought the future was theirs after the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and the defeat of Trump. But the party's radical tilt may herald its impending defeat in future elections and a necessary course correction that will eventually bring it back closer to the center. At that point, if AIPAC is still doing its job, pro-Israel Democrats will be there to reap the benefits.

That doesn't mean Republicans shouldn't continue to oppose the left's anti-Israel invective and Biden administration policies that undermine the alliance. Yet in the long run, the pro-Israel community will be stronger if AIPAC is capable of vindicating its bipartisan strategy. If it can't, then that will be a tragedy for the Democrats, the lobby and Israel. (JNS Nov 8)

Sheikh Jarrah Explains Why Palestinians will Never have a State By Mitchell Bard

Many critics of Israel have joined Hamas and the Palestinian Authority in denouncing Israel because courts have determined that a group of Palestinian families are illegally living in homes owned by Jews in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem. Rather than accept a compromise offered by the Supreme Court that would have allowed them to stay in their homes, the families turned it down and now face eviction (As of Wednesday, one of the families that did not appeal the eviction order reached a deal with the property owners that will allow them to remain in their homes for at least 10 years as long as they pay rent). This is a microcosm of the entire conflict as the Palestinians prefer no loaf to any part of a loaf.

In brief, Jordan sequestered "enemy property" owned by Jews in Sheikh Jarrah after the 1948 War of Independence. Jordan never gave the Palestinians title to the land it seized. When Israel captured the area in 1967, the government released the sequestered properties. In 1972, the Israeli Supreme Court validated the Jewish claims to owning the property they had been forced to abandon, but ruled that Arab families living in homes on those lands could not be evicted if they agreed to pay rent to the owners.

In 1993, the owners sought to evict the tenants for failure to pay rent, but it was not until 2001 that the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court agreed with them. The Supreme Court, however, sought a compromise to allow the Arabs to stay and suggested they could enjoy the status of protected tenants, retain the right to try to prove ownership of the properties, and stay in their homes if they agreed to pay rent that amounted to about \$62.50 per month.

The Palestinians rejected the offer, preferring eviction to remaining in their homes—much like the tens of thousands of Palestinians who preferred to flee their homes in 1948 in hopes that the Arab armies would drive out the Jews rather than becoming Israeli citizens.

Not surprisingly, the Palestinian leadership endorsed the families' decision. The Palestinian Legislative Council issued a press release that said "the Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Committee in the Legislative Council affirmed that the people of all of Palestine, from its sea to its river, and its armed resistance stand behind the people of Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood." It also said, "Al-Quds and the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, like all of Palestine, are a purely Islamic endowment and sanctuary in which the Jews have no historical, religious or cultural right" (emphasis added).

Read those emphasized words again. Where do you see the opportunity for a two-state solution?

If you look at the Palestinians' views, they are as recalcitrant as they were nearly a century ago. To this day, the Palestinians do not accept the legitimacy of a Jewish state in what they consider Palestine.

The Palestinians refused to compromise in 1937, 1939, 1947, 1979, 1993, 2000, 2008 and 2020. That's eight opportunities they missed to achieve independence. Need further proof "the Arabs never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity"?

As early as the 1950s, Israel offered to accept as many as 100,000 Palestinian refugees in exchange for peace, but it wasn't worth it because the Palestinians still expected Israel would be destroyed. Today, the Palestinians imagine 5.9 million "refugees" have an

unconditional “right of return.”

After Israel withdrew from 40 percent of the West Bank, then-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—the supposedly right-wing opponent of any compromise—agreed to withdraw from an additional 13 percent of the West Bank in return for a Palestinian promise to outlaw and combat terrorist organizations, prohibit illegal weapons, stop weapon smuggling, and prevent incitement of violence and terrorism. Israel withdrew from 2 percent of “Area C” and transferred 7 percent of “Area B” to full Palestinian control but Netanyahu said there would be no further withdrawals until the P.A. satisfied its commitments. The Palestinians reneged on their promises and lost the opportunity to expand the territory of the P.A.

In addition to offering to withdraw from nearly all the West Bank, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak was prepared to allow the Palestinians to have the capital they say they want in eastern Jerusalem. One reason PLO leader Yasser Arafat rejected the offer was because it would have meant ending the conflict with Israel.

How many people are even aware that except for a brief meeting between Mahmoud Abbas and Netanyahu, the Palestinians have refused to negotiate with Israel since 2008? They wouldn’t even accept the initiative of the friendly Obama administration.

Palestinians maintain that Arabs have the right to live in Israel but deny the right of Jews to live in Judea and Samaria. A Palestinian state that is Judenrein is far worse than an apartheid state. None of the two-staters or supporters of the Palestinians care, but Jews are supposed to support their ambition.

Palestinians complain about settlements, but did they really expect Israel to prevent Jews from moving to parts of their homeland while they plotted Israel’s disappearance?

Consider that when they rejected autonomy in 1979, there were fewer than 10,000 Jews in the territories. When their terror attacks destroyed the 1993 Oslo Accords, there were about 150,000. There were 200,000 when Arafat rejected the Clinton Parameters in 2000 and about 275,000 when Abbas walked away from former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s offer in 2008. In the years since then, the Jewish population has increased to 475,000, not counting the 200,000 Jews living in Jerusalem that the Palestinians also consider settlers.

Do the Palestinians, their supporters and two-staters seriously believe those Jews are going to disappear or that any Israeli government will force them out of their homes as part of an agreement that, like Oslo, won’t be worth the paper it’s written on?

The Arab states couldn’t force the Jews into the sea, and now, they are more interested in peace with Israel than helping the Palestinians who they view as ungrateful and obdurate. Do the Palestinians think the E.U. or the U.N. can force Israel to capitulate to their demands? Do they listen to the insignificant members of “The Squad” repeating their propaganda and expect the United States to abandon its ally?

The Palestinians created fantasyland long before Walt Disney.

Two state advocates refuse to acknowledge not only this history but the present, which is not just reflected by the Sheikh Jarrah case but also by the broader Palestinian rejection of compromise. According to recent polls, for example, 66 percent support annulling the Oslo Accords, 54 percent oppose returning to negotiations, 54 percent believe a return to an armed intifada is the best way to achieve their goals and, by a 62 to 36 percent margin, oppose a two-state solution (and support has been steadily declining).

The Sheikh Jarrah residents’ intransigence may lead to their homelessness just as their fellow Palestinians’ obstinance has guaranteed their statelessness. (JNS Nov 10)

Ra’am Lawmakers Wage ‘Civil Jihad’ By Nadav Shragai

The great journey is over: Israel finally has a budget. However, when the lights went out in the Knesset last weekend, a new and incomparably more dangerous journey began. A campaign by the Islamist Ra’am Party, now equipped with billions, to transform Israel from a Jewish state into a state of all of its citizens.

Ra’am leader Mansour Abbas spoke about his “civil jihad” just a few months ago—to Arabic-language media.

“When we talk about land, housing and demolitions, are we talking about a civil issue? This is a national issue that forms the base of our struggle for our homeland,” he said in a moment of honesty.

He explained to his listeners that which the Jewish public refuses to hear: “The Islamic Movement started as part of the jihad family. But the political experience has taught us that due to the Israeli reality we cannot say today that we want to take up arms and wage jihad. We aspire [to] and we engage in civil jihad. We maintain our presence in

the country. We preserve our identity. We make the best of our existence through knowledge and action.”

This is how the Muslim Brotherhood, which opposes Zionism, operates in Israel. It challenges the Jews’ right to self-determination in their historical homeland and maintains close ties with anti-Zionist entities.

When Abbas and his colleagues talk about Israel becoming a “state of all its citizens,” they’re not talking only about civil rights. They are not content with equal rights but want national rights in the state as well. Many also share the far-fetched dream of establishing an Islamic caliphate.

They seek to destroy Israel’s Jewish character and align with Israel’s biggest enemies. And now they also hold the Bennett-Lapid government hostage politically.

The one who paved the way for Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid to justify this reckless political cooperation is former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Omitting this piece of information would be tantamount to tainting the truth.

It should therefore be mentioned again and again: Israel is a state for every single one of its citizens, but it is only a national home for the Jewish people. Israel is a Jewish state, in which only the Jewish people find their self-determination.

The great Israeli historian Ben-Zion Dinur said it best: “The Arabs of the land of Israel have all rights, but over the land of Israel they have no right.”

There is no inherent problem in having Arab lawmakers in the Israeli government, and not even anti-Zionist parties—but there is one in giving legitimacy to political entities that seek to destroy Israel’s Jewish character and who publicly sympathize with Israel’s greatest enemies.

Lawmakers who have created an alliance with Ra’am certainly do not want Israel to end up as the Arab party wishes, but they have just formed a political partnership with a party that, had it existed in November 1947, would have undoubtedly voted against the establishment of the State of Israel. (Israel Hayom Nov 8)

Tension in the Fatah Camp: The End of the Abbas Era?

By Pinhas Inbari

In a surprising development, Mohammed Dahlan, the leader of the Palestinian “Democratic Reform Movement,” met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow on Nov. 2, 2021. Dahlan, a former Fatah official who now resides in the United Arab Emirates, is a bitter foe of Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas; there are some in the P.A. who accuse Dahlan of facilitating the Abraham Accords.

In a statement released on the Dahlan website Fatah Voice, the meeting focused on building a Palestinian national partnership. Dahlan told the Russians, “We are ready for reconciliation, and we have no demands and no conditions that go beyond the wishes of all patriots ... Fatah continues to say that it is the vanguard and the supposed leader, and this is true historically, but today it is a broken vanguard.”

Another report by Fatah Voice stated that the two delegations discussed the latest Palestinian developments and the possibilities of “inviting the International Quartet [the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia] to reestablish its role and revive the peace process.”

The two sides, the report continued, stressed the importance of achieving Palestinian reconciliation and mobilizing Arab and regional support as an essential step in “advancing the negotiations under the auspices of the International Quartet to reach a just agreement that will grant the Palestinian people their hopes and aspirations for an independent state.”

Abbas and the Russians

This development should not be taken lightly, since a strong relationship with Russia is one of the cornerstones of Abbas’s policy.

Dr. Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez, two researchers at the Truman Institute, even uncovered Soviet documents showing that when Abbas was in Damascus for a time [around 1983], he served as a “loyal, cooperative, and informative” Russian agent.

Today, one of the stumbling blocks to resume talks with Israel is Abbas’s steadfast denial of the United States’ leading role in the peace talks. Instead, he seeks to give the Quartet this role. As a result, Russia would have equal status to the United States, and the Quartet would convene an international conference with parties closer to Russia’s views than the United States.

In Abbas's eyes, Dahlan is a red flag. He ousted him from Fatah, nearly arrested him in Ramallah [Dahlan fled for his life], accused him of corruption and asked Interpol to arrest him.

If Russia is moving toward Dahlan, a consensus must have emerged among world powers and leading Arab countries pointing to the end of Abbas's political career. It may also indicate why Abbas, too, is now seeking Russia's aid to reinvigorate the Quartet. (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs Nov 7)

RJC Confab Questions Declining Democratic Support for Israel and Role of Nonpartisan Groups By Alex Traiman

The Republican Jewish Coalition held its annual Leadership Summit at the Venetian hotel in Las Vegas this past weekend with more than 700 attendees. It was one of the organization's largest-ever gatherings and the first in two years since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

The unapologetically pro-Israel atmosphere at the Republican confab raises renewed questions about the bipartisan nature of support for Israel in American politics—and, as a consequence, which organizations are the most influential in garnering political support for the Jewish state.

According to Matt Brooks, director of the RJC, “there is a clear difference between where the Democrats are today and where the Republicans are today. Every single leading Republican participating in this conference today is quite frankly [pro-Israel]. Any Republican can go to a Republican gathering and can say, ‘I stand with Israel,’ and it’s an automatic applause line. And I think it’s sad that Democrats can’t do that. If they stood up at a democratic group and said, ‘I stand with Israel,’ more likely than not they would be booed.”

Several key policy differences now exist between the two parties on issues that affect the security and stability of the State of Israel. The first is Iran. Democrats roundly support America's participation in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran nuclear deal signed in 2015 under the Obama administration. Israel has always opposed the deal, and favored strict sanctions aimed at crippling the regime and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—moves supported by Republicans.

Democrats are now pushing to reopen the U.S. Consulate for Palestinians in downtown Jerusalem that was shuttered by the Trump administration and want Israel to restart the defunct Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Israel has no faith in the Palestinian Authority, led by Mahmoud Abbas, as a possible peace partner, due to continued incitement to violence, terror financing, and the promotion of international anti-Israel delegitimization and boycott movements. Republicans favor isolating the P.A. diplomatically, as well as cutting off funding, as long as payments to terrorists and their families continue.

Yet in an ironic form of abuse that adds insult to injury, as Democrats drop the long-held banner of Israel support, Republicans and even Israel's government are now roundly accused of turning support for the Jewish state into a wedge issue.

“Democrats continue to talk about the strong bipartisan support for Israel in Congress. It’s a Kabuki dance,” Brooks told JNS.

“Everybody is painting this picture that everything’s great, there are no problems, and both parties are strong friends,” explained Brooks. “But the reality is that there is a real problem metastasizing within the Democratic Party as it relates to Israel. You have Democratic members standing in the hall of the United States Congress calling Israel an apartheid state and accusing them of ethnic cleansing and genocide.”

According to Brooks, Democratic support for Israel is not likely to return to the levels of the past and certainly not to the levels present within the Republican Party. The only way that full-fledged support for Israel would return is “if the rise of the progressive left within the Democratic Party comes to an end. Unfortunately, I think the trend is the exact opposite. I think the progressive wing is going to get more influence, more power and an even greater hold over the Democratic Party.”

With once bipartisan support shifting squarely to the side of the Republicans, American Jewish organizations, which have attempted to maintain bipartisan support for Israel, find themselves in a difficult bind. Key organizations are now forced to decide between the Brooks' termed “kabuki dance” of outright support for pro-Israel policies and risking the further alienation of Democratic members of Congress.

Mainstream, nonpartisan organizations such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which for decades has sought to

ensure that pro-Israel candidates get elected to the House and Senate, has often found itself in the difficult position of choosing whether to support policies Jerusalem wants to see advanced and not angering Democrats who don't want Israel to have any sway over American foreign policy.

Recent examples include AIPAC's refusal to outright oppose the Iran nuclear deal and lukewarm support for the Taylor Force Act, which reduced funding to the P.A. over its direct financial support for terrorists and families of those killed in the act of pre-meditated murder of Jews—an appalling pension scheme termed by opponents as “pay for slay.”

Longtime financial supporters of key Jewish organizations have grown increasingly frustrated with many longtime pro-Israel organizations, accusing them of lessening their support in the hopes of maintaining their political influence, status and access. As a result, many AIPAC supporters have reduced their financial contributions.

It is an issue that for the first time came to the plenary of the RJC during a keynote address by a non-Jewish leader. Former Ambassador to the United Nations (and a possible future presidential hopeful) Nikki Haley openly called out AIPAC.

“There's one thing I don't get about AIPAC ... Why do they invite politicians to their conference who strongly support the Iran nuclear deal?” she said. “Bipartisanship is important, but if you make bipartisanship your whole reason for existence, then you lose sight of the policies you're fighting for in the first place.”

Haley added that “if a politician supports the disastrous Iran deal, opposes moving the American embassy to Jerusalem, and is embraced by anti-Semites who support the BDS movement, then a pro-Israel group should have absolutely nothing to do with him or her.”

Explaining her remarks, Haley told JNS, “I love AIPAC, and AIPAC has always been incredibly supportive of everything that I've done, but I care about the future of AIPAC. I've said this to their leadership for a long time.”

She added that she wants support for Israel “to always be bipartisan.” “I want as many Democrats to support Israel as Republicans,” she said. “So if there's someone that does support the things that will keep Israel strong, have them on the stage, but you've got to stop having these bad actors on the stage because all you're doing is rewarding them for bad behavior. And I hope AIPAC sees that. Because if all you are doing is trying to do is to appease other people, you lose sight of actually accomplishing the goal.”

Yet the current polarized political climate in America—in which there are very few, if any, bipartisan issues anymore—leaves nonpartisan organizations out in the cold for both parties. It also raises the influence of organizations like the Republican Jewish Coalition.

RJC is guiding Jewish donors to place sizable donations behind the campaigns of Republican candidates that it can be 100 percent certain will support Israel and pro-Israel policies, and fight against anti-Semitism and anti-Israel boycotts.

“That RJC is being dubbed affectionately by some, as the kosher cattle call, indicates how important the RJC is in terms of its role within the Republican Party and the impact that we have,” said Brooks. “But there's another issue: how strong the Republican Party is in terms of standing with the Jewish community and combating anti-Semitism, and standing with Israel and making sure that our most important ally in the region has the support that it needs to defend itself.”

Meanwhile, the mood at the conference was upbeat despite a Biden-Harris White House that is methodically attempting to roll back the decidedly pro-Israel policies of the Trump administration, and a Democrat-controlled House and Senate that has waffled in its support of the Jewish state.

Optimism reigned over the feeling that Democrats have overplayed their hands with unpopular policies that led to key Republican electoral victories this past week, and the hope that Republicans may make sweeping gains in the House and Senate in 2022.

AIPAC, on the other hand, has already canceled its upcoming 2022 policy conference.

“I am extremely confident,” Brooks said just a week after the 2021 elections and a year before the midterms. “If I were a Democratic political operative, I would be petrified as to what happened last week. I think more telling is the anger and the frustration that the electorate is showing with the current policy.” (JNS Nov 9)