

What is the American dream? The American dream is that everyone has an opportunity. That you don't need to be a gentleman, a noble, a prince or a king to pursue your dreams to the fullest - you just need opportunity - in a place of liberty, rights, equality, and democracy - no matter who you are - no matter your sex or your religion or your age or the color of your skin - you have the ability to reach for your dreams.

The American dream is one which believes in the underdog - 13 colonies who stood up to the British - the superpower of its time - who in America doesn't like to root for the underdog?

Israel and the United States of America are alike in this regard - Israel began 70 years ago as a true underdog - a tiny sliver of a state, declared under siege, by a people and a land reborn under the darkest and direst of circumstances. Lacking a fully trained and supplied army, made up of people who had emigrated from all four corners of the earth, and surrounded by enemies sworn to her destruction, Israel had the gumption to declare itself a state.

11 minutes later - President Truman and the United States recognized tiny Israel - the first country in the world to do so - recognizing in Israel - an underdog, and an ally in a version of the American dream.

Besides being the only democracy in a tough neighborhood and succeeding in defending itself - Israel has accomplished amazing things in its 70 years. It has brought in thousands of immigrants from all over the world - from Yemen and Morocco to Ethiopia and Russia. Israel is a country with two official languages - Hebrew and Arabic - world leader in high tech, bio-technology, life sciences, computers, green technology, water treatment and solar power. It is the world leader per capita in start-up companies, scientists, university degrees, immigrant absorption and scientific papers. Israel has brought the world the cell phone, instant messenger, the Intel chip, antivirus software, the ingestible video camera, and drip irrigation.

But Israel has not kept its dreams and its successes to itself - Israel regularly sends its doctors, emergency personnel, and rescue experts to anywhere on the globe where there is a natural disaster and where people are in need of help - even to places that won't officially recognize it - as it did when it was one of the first countries to show up to help in Pakistan after an earthquake in 2005. Israel is sharing its drip irrigation technology with Romania and Africa - helping people to make more with less, to survive and to thrive.

A message of Israel - and a message of the American dream - and I especially say that to all the young people here - my own children among them - is that it is possible to accomplish your dreams - Israel proves - that unbelievable amazing fantastic improbable and miraculous things can be accomplished - with hard work, with perseverance, with chutzpah, and with a healthy dollop of divine intervention. That optimism, hope and faith, are not irrational wisps of smoke but rather a hard and fast part of reality. The Jewish people have said for almost two thousand years at the end of the Passover seder - lishana habaah biyerushalayim - next year in Jerusalem - and what for all those years was just a dream - a seemingly impossible hurdle - has been a reality for us in our lifetime. We have lived to see miracles and dreams come true. Today here in Milwaukee - we are witness - with the strong support of our great mayor the Honorable Tom Barrett, a celebration of the American and Israeli dreams. May we who are lucky to live a part of the American dream here in Milwaukee, be blessed to see the continuation of the great relationship between Israel and the

United States and may both countries and our city be blessed with the true blessings of peace and success and the opportunity to make our dreams come true.