



**As the Jewish community celebrates the miracles of Chanukah,
please join our demand for the safe return of the remaining 130 hostages.**

The brutal atrocities on October 7th awakened many to the depravity of Hamas, the ruthless terrorist organization controlling Gaza. More than 1,200 Israelis were savagely murdered, babies were burned and decapitated, women were raped, and 240 Israelis, Americans and others were taken hostage. This was the most brutal attack on Jews since the Holocaust. While the issues are complex, the following **FACTS** are intended to provide you with a deeper understanding of the conflict.

- **What happened to the ceasefire?** Hamas broke the seven-day ceasefire by firing a barrage of rockets at Israeli homes and refusing to release additional hostages. The renewed attacks by Hamas occurred as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was leaving Israel. In his remarks at the airport, Blinken was clear, stating: “It’s important to understand why the pause came to an end. It came to an end because of Hamas. Hamas reneged on the commitments it made.” **The failure of Hamas to abide by its commitments further reinforces why calls for a ceasefire now are impractical.** Hamas leaders have threatened to repeat the onslaught of October 7th many times to systematically murder Jews and destroy Israel. Israeli citizens must be safe from terrorism, which is why the Israeli military needs to continue the war in Gaza. **As the late Golda Meir – Israel’s prime minister 50 years ago – famously said, “If the Arabs put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons today, there would be no more Israel.”**
- **Who funds Hamas?** Iran is the primary sponsor. It has sent hundreds of millions of dollars to Hamas and provides military training to the terrorists. Any solution to the conflict must include assurances that Iran can no longer supply Hamas with weapons to target Israel. How would residents of the Lehigh Valley living in Pennsylvania feel if a terrorist organization funded by Iran launched thousands of missiles at our families from UN-sponsored schools and hospitals in New Jersey (yes, the same UN now controlled by Iran, China, Russia and their allies)? **Would we be calling for a ceasefire, or would we ask our government to protect us from the terrorists targeting our homes, raping our mothers, wives and daughters, and kidnapping and murdering our children?** Israel isn’t just fighting this war for itself. Iran wants to destroy the United States and sponsors terrorism against America and our allies throughout the world. It’s important for all of us to prevent terrorism from spreading worldwide.
- **Is Israel engaged in “ethnic cleansing” or committing “genocide” against the Palestinians?** Absolutely not. While there have been protests against “ethnic cleansing” by the Israeli government, it’s just patently untrue. If the Palestinians have the ability to stay alive simply by not killing Israelis, they are not facing a threat of genocide. If the Israelis have the ability to stay alive only through comprehensive defense systems, they are facing a threat of genocide. **Think about it.** Between 1948 and 2023, the following shifts in population have occurred:

Location	Number of Jews in 1948	Number of Jews in 2023	Reason
Egypt	63,550	3	Ethnic Cleansing
Syria	40,000	0	Ethnic Cleansing
Iran	100,000	8,500	Ethnic Cleansing
Iraq	150,000	4	Ethnic Cleansing
Lebanon	20,000	29	Ethnic Cleansing
Morocco	265,000	2,100	Ethnic Cleansing
Yemen	55,000	1	Ethnic Cleansing
Algeria	140,000	200	Ethnic Cleansing
Libya	38,000	0	Ethnic Cleansing
Tunisia	105,000	1,000	Ethnic Cleansing
Gaza	7,949	0	Israel Withdrawl

Location	Number of Arabs in 1948	Number of Arabs in 2023	Reason
Israel	156,000	2,100,000	No Ethnic Cleansing
Gaza	80,000	2,000,000	No Ethnic Cleansing



Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley

- **Is the exchange of hostages for Palestinian prisoners a fair exchange?** Thankfully, 110 hostages have been released by Hamas as a result of the pressure created by brave Israeli soldiers in Gaza. But, remember this: Many of the Palestinians being released are terrorists who were in prison because they tried to murder innocent civilians. The hostages being released are innocent civilians, some taken from their strollers and cribs. Children being released from captivity by Hamas have been branded and burned by Hamas and lost up to 15% of their body weight in five weeks given the horrible treatment they have endured. Never before has a modern country needed to prepare for the release of baby and toddler hostages. **There is no moral equivalence to this exchange. Any comparison is morally bankrupt.**
- **Where was the condemnation by the feminist movement in response to the mass sexual violence against women and girls?** Israel is the only country in the Middle East where women (including Arab women) are educated, can drive cars, are permitted in public without a requirement that they comply with religious rules regarding hair or body coverings, can work in any job, and serve in the military, legislative branch and judiciary. In other words, it feels just like the United States. During the attacks on October 7th and subsequent captivity, women and girls were raped and abused. Their breasts were cut off. Their limbs were severed. Medical experts testified that the abuse was worse than anything committed by ISIS. Terrorists **FILMED** the atrocities and posted them online. The Jewish community has always supported the feminist movement, and the silence from the movement is now deafening.
- **Where is the LGBTQ+ community's support for Israeli civilians?** Israel has stood with the LGBTQ+ community for years. Israel is the only country in the Middle East where LGBTQ+ rights are celebrated. Tel Aviv hosts the largest pride events on the continent of Asia. Yet, when medievalist terrorists inflicted inhumane violence on defenseless civilians, the international LGBTQ+ community remained silent. On many college campuses, the LGBTQ+ community supported only those in Gaza, where members of the LGBTQ+ community would be executed by Hamas based solely on their sexual orientation. A group called "Queers for Palestine" has been vocal in its support for Palestinians, but it's clear that Gaza (and nearly every other place in the Middle East other than Israel) is not a welcoming place for members of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **What is the relationship between the Black community and the Jewish community?** Despite efforts by antisemites, white supremacists, and racists to divide our communities, the relationship between the Black community and the Jewish community remains strong. The Jewish community has suffered much of the same persecution and prejudice as the Black community, and we stood together bravely during the civil rights movement. American Jews played a significant role in the founding and funding of the NAACP, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Find out more at www.rac.org. Meanwhile, Israel has saved tens of thousands of Black Jews being persecuted in African countries, and Israel has provided significant support to African countries developing improvements in agriculture and technology (hence the reason some of the hostages are Black students from African countries). The relationship between the Black community and the Jewish community is incredibly special and must remain strong. We cannot allow others to divide us.
- **Did Jews colonize Israel in 1948?** Jews have lived in Israel for over 4000 years. In three weeks, Christians will celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, a Jew who lived in Israel over 2000 years ago. Still, some believe Jews never lived in Israel until it was "colonized" in 1948. **Think about it.**
- **Wonder where the billions in international aid for the Palestinian people has gone?** The majority of Palestinians in Gaza live in terrible conditions at the hands of Hamas. However, did you know Hamas leaders Abu Marzuk, Khaled Mashal, and Ismail Haniyeh are reported by Forbes to be worth a staggering total of \$11 billion and enjoy a life of luxury in Qatar? Where else did the money go? Rather than build schools and hospitals, Hamas used international aid from the United States and the UN to build miles of terror tunnels and purchase guns and rockets to use against Israel. Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (yes, the group that may take control of Gaza when the current conflict ends) uses international aid to pay "success" bonuses to terrorists for killing innocent civilians under its "pay for slay" program. **People, this is depravity at its finest.**
- **Why haven't other Arab countries supported Palestinians in Gaza?** Egypt has enforced a blockade against Gaza's southern border for decades to prevent terrorists from entering Egypt, but the world does not criticize Egypt (nor should it) for maintaining its security. Likewise, most of the Arab countries in the area convinced the Palestinians to flee their homes in 1948 and join in the wars against Israel. Those same Arab countries now refuse to support the Palestinian people through aid or efforts to improve life in Gaza.

**The Jewish community mourns the loss of life on both sides of this conflict, and we pray for peace.
Free Gaza from Hamas. PEACE WILL NEVER ARRIVE IN GAZA UNTIL HAMAS IS DESTROYED.**

For more information,
scan the QR code
or visit

jewishlehighvalley.org/swords-of-iron

