

THE READERS SPEAK

Physician's view on Proposition 106

Editor:

I wanted to comment on Rabbi Hillel Goldberg's "Death without dignity" (View from Denver, Oct. 14).

I completely agree with his perspective and as a physician I voted against proposition 106.

In fact, as physicians, we can do a pretty good job of managing suffering these days with pain medications, antidepressants and various non-pharmacologic therapies.

Our faith communities are critically important as we individually face serious illness and contemplate our personal mortality (as I am doing with a relatively new diagnosis of advanced cancer).

In the physician's role, I believe it is my responsibility to respect the gift of life, which means listening to the patient and their family and doing everything possible to relieve their suffering at the end of life.

But I am not G-d and fortunately the final hours are in G-d's hands, not mine. Our lives are ultimately a gift from G-d and our journey together a blessing. While suffering is certainly part of the human condition we do have the capability to provide comfort, which is part of the physician's responsibility. But in contrast, ending life is not.

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Trump is a threat to our country

Editor:

I couldn't disagree more with the recent letter written by Colorado state chair of Jews Choose Trump, Janna Blanter, "Trump is a Safe Vote" (Oct. 28). Her letter supports Trump mainly on the basis of the recent Iran deal.

Her premise is that Trump would somehow have negotiated a better arrangement, and will do so in the future. For that reason, he is the logical choice for president of the US.

Donald Trump has absolutely no experience or aptitude in foreign policy and has a totally inadequate working knowledge of it. As an example, he recently admitted that he had no clue about the model of the US tactical nuclear triad (strategic bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles).

Is this a person we want with access to the nuclear trigger button?

His temperament shows he has no ability to rationally deal with foreign leaderships. Does any reasonable, thinking person believe he has the capacity to negotiate with other countries other than from the standpoint of a playground bully?

Donald Trump is an ideological demagogue who represents a threat to all minorities in this country, including Jews. We should all appreciate and understand that there are blue collar and rural whites who have legitimate grievances. Neither major party has addressed their needs. But The Donald appeals to them by inciting racial animosity to promote his agenda.

Substitute any of his speeches about Muslims or Mexicans with "Jew." It takes a short attention span not to see the similarities between Trump's appeal to racial bigotry and parallel firebrands of the European 1930s.

Even conservative commentators around the country have denounced Trump. George Will recently referred to him as a "venomous charlatan." Charles Krauthammer (a Board Certified psychiatrist) has called him

"unstable." Referring to his denunciation of a Gold Star family, he states, "it reveals a shocking absence of elementary decency and of natural empathy for the most profound of human sorrows — parental grief."

It is my deep disappointment to see any Jew supporting Donald Trump. He has none of the values we love and cherish. He is a threat to us and to our country. Vote for a third party candidate if you will. But do not provide moral sustenance to this dangerous demagogue.

ALLEN D. ADINOFF, MD
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Reject bad policies of Clinton and Obama

Editor:

It seems that the American Jewish community has been largely silent about the July, 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called this deal a "historic mistake."

The deal made it possible for Iran to have access to \$150 billion in frozen assets. It did not end their nuclear weapons program. It did not require any nuclear facilities be destroyed. It allows Iran to acquire nuclear weapons in about a decade, assuming they don't cheat on the deal.

In addition, the Obama administration "secretly" authorized a \$1.7 billion cash ransom payment in exchange for five American hostages held in Iran. This money will be used by Iran to fund their terrorist proxies throughout the Middle East, including Hamas and Hezbollah, which seek to destroy Israel.

Simply put, American taxpayer money will be used to murder Jews, thanks to Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and the Democratic Party.

This payment also created an incentive for Iran to take more hostages.

Obama has quietly dismantled a key part of the ballistic missile sanctions against Iran. The ballistic missile program, according to the administration, was not supposed to be a part of the Iran deal.

Earlier this year, Iran launched two missiles, with one of the missiles having a message in Hebrew that read "Israel must be wiped out."

Obama also provided sanctions relief to Iran that will allow foreign companies to do business with Iranian companies owned by senior figures in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, who have been involved in crimes against humanity and various human rights violations.

Obama also agreed to remove sanctions on several Iranian banks involved in various illegal activities, and on Oct. 7 Obama loosened restrictions on Iran's ability to use American dollars in its business dealings, which will make it easier for Iran to transfer money for whatever purposes it chooses.

This concession was also not required by the Iran nuclear deal, and days after this concession was announced, Iranian-backed Houthi rebels fired missiles at the USS Mason, an American ship, off the coast of Yemen.

This is madness. This is insanity. The president of the US continues to make more and more concessions to the most anti-Semitic regime on the face of the earth. The Iran nuclear deal represents a serious threat to American national security and an existential threat to the nation of Israel.

Any candidate or candidates, such as Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine, who support these outrageous policies must be shunned, rejected and condemned.

Why aren't American Jews speaking out against these policies? Do they approve of these policies? Do

All Jews, even prisoners, are part of Klal Yisrael

For the last 30 years I have celebrated Pesach and Rosh Hashanah while incarcerated at the Fremont Correctional Facility in Canon City. Each year I waited with anticipation for the second day of the holiday, for this was when the late "Uncle Max" Frankel would make the annual trek to bring his special light into this place of darkness.

He began his pilgrimage shortly after WW II, and continued for the next 60 years until his passing in 2005. He was supported in his efforts by members of B'nai B'rith. Those visits were the one thing that could be counted on in a place of chaos and inconsistency.

Many things changed over the years, but Pesach and Uncle Max were an anchor to our Jewish community, providing for some the only seder they knew, or reawaking memories of tradition and family in many a *baal teshuvah*.

One of the memories of those seders that stands out in my mind is when Uncle Max would announce that he would hide the *afikomen* somewhere between the prison and Denver and he hoped that one day we would find it.

Hope and self-worth is the real gift brought by Uncle Max every year.

After his passing, the mem-

bers of B'nai B'rith continue his legacy: Visiting us here, not just in memory of Uncle Max, but in the same spirit to remind us that all Jews are part of *Klal Yisrael* and that every Jew is important to Hashem, no matter your place in the world.

GARY LIGGETT #55870
Fremont Correctional Facility
Canon City



B'nai B'rith Denver volunteers made their semi-annual 110-mile trek to the Fremont Correctional Facility in Canon City to celebrate Rosh Hashanah and enjoy kosher food with inmates. STANDING, l-r: Alfredo Dalli, James Leach, Jonnie Pizer and Ed Koplin (B'NAI B'RITH), Michael Stein, lay Rabbi Marvin Goldman (B'NAI B'RITH), Justyn Tyme, Michael Anderson, Jamie Grayson. SEATED, l-r: Jesse Zachary, Jacob Lahr, Gary Liggett, Gerald Rosenblatt (B'NAI B'RITH), Joshua Dovie, James Wardwell, William Redding. The inmate visitation program was established nearly 70 years ago by the late Max Frankel.

they know about them? Do they care? I do. That's why I am voting for Donald Trump.

He and the entire Republican Party have been very critical of the deal, the ransom payment to Iran, and all of the "secret" side deals and concessions that the administration made to Iran, which Congress and the American people were never informed of. It is time to stop these dangerous policies. Vote for Donald Trump.

DAN FEINREICH
Atlanta, Ga.

Jury out on Iran deal, but not on Trump

Editor:

I read the letter from Janna Blanter, the Colorado state chair of "Jews for Trump" (Oct. 28) with a mixture of disbelief and surprise.

From her point of view, the old question of "Is it good for the Jews?" has metamorphosed into "Is it good for Israel?" It seems her belief is that Trump is a better negotiator and thus would have struck a better (translate "more favorable to Israel") deal. She also seems to feel that Pres. Obama, Sec. Clinton and Gov. Kaine have all demonstrated disrespect and a lack of support for the State of Israel, and thus we should vote for Mr. Trump based on that single issue.

Although I am no fan of the Iran agreement either, I believe it came

from a sincere effort to reduce tension in the Middle East and to help improve the quality of life for Iranian citizens, which is a noble goal. We have yet to see whether the agreement will work in the long run.

Moreover, it should be noted that the US has also agreed to a \$10 billion aid agreement to Israel, which doesn't strike me as a lack of support whatsoever. Perhaps it should also be noted that some of Prime Minister Netanyahu's behavior hasn't been particularly conciliatory either, and perhaps it is personal offense being demonstrated by Pres. Obama and Gov. Kaine, not lack of support for Israel. Even on that single issue alone, Trump doesn't appear to have a clear advantage based on his actions.

From a Jewish perspective, I would hope that we make our decision based on the actions of the candidates, not their words. It seems the lens we as Jews should use are the values we share as a people; honesty, ethical behavior, humility and generosity, some of the *middot* of musar. When I view Sec. Clinton through that lens, I see someone who has spent her adult life working to help others. While many people attempt to assail her and her husband irrationally, the facts remain clear.

On the other hand, we have Trump, who claims to have given to charity but there is little evidence of his claimed gifts. We have a man

who has reneged on contracts, refusing to pay his contractors essentially on a whim, which is evidence of a lack of ethical behavior. He has denied saying things and doing things that have been clearly recorded. Given all of that, how can we take him at his word when he says he'll support Israel?

To make matters worse, Trump has consistently incited his supporters to act in ways antithetical to Jewish values. Today it may be Muslims and Mexicans and Syrians he opposes and desires to oppress. Given those who support him, how long will it be before his supporters demand he turn his attention to the "Jewish Cabal" and other "conspiracies" against a white male majority? I doubt that Trump is xenophobic or anti-Semitic, but he is very Machiavellian in his behavior, and seems to seek the adulation of those who support him. Many of those who support him are not "good for the Jews" or "good for Israel" at all.

Rabbi Hillel once said (I paraphrase), "In a place where people are acting inhuman, we must strive to be human." As you consider your vote, which of the candidates seems the most human? Which candidate best represents the values that we as Jews hold? Which candidate do you believe Rabbi Hillel would support? It would be my hope that all your readers strive to be human.

ALAN RUBIN
Golden

J Street failure to act against sexual harassment 'deeply disappointing'

The Committee on Ethics in Jewish Leadership is deeply disappointed that officials of J Street knew of Ari Shavit's sexual harassment of women, yet "did not report [Shavit's harassment of one of its staffers] to other national Jewish organizations that host Shavit," according to the **Forward** (Oct. 30, 2016).

In a statement, the committee said:

"We strongly applaud the decision by Hillel International and AIPAC to cancel their planned speaking dates for Ari Shavit, following the revelation that Shavit sexually assaulted Danielle Berrin of the **Los Angeles Jew-**

ish Journal.

"At the same time, we are deeply disappointed that J Street reportedly failed to alert any other Jewish groups about his behavior, after Shavit sexually harassed one of its staff members in 2014, resulting in J Street's decision to quietly sever its ties with Shavit. Keeping quiet is not the way to combat sexual harassment.

"We urge all American Jewish organizations to adopt a policy of zero tolerance with regard to sexual harassment and assault, and to share information about predators with each other. For too long, there has been an inclination among some American Jewish

leaders to sweep sexual abuse cases under the rug. The time has come for a serious change in the culture of American Jewish attitudes toward sexual harassment and assault."

The Committee on Ethics in Jewish Leadership is a grassroots movement that promotes accountability, transparency and democracy in Jewish organizations and institutions.

The members of the steering committee are Prof. Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth College), Prof. Shulamit Magnus (Oberlin College), Dr. Rafael Medoff and Prof. Thane Rosenbaum (New York University).