

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

War Needs A Real Resolution

By Yonatan Hamburger and Tzali Reicher

On Sunday, February 11th, over 120 million people tuned in to watch a captivating drama play out in a Las Vegas stadium. Two teams, coming off a grueling six-month season to make this final stage, duked it out in Super Bowl LVIII for the right to be called victors, in a heart stopping contest that wasn't decided until the very last play. Ultimately, the team that embraced lessons from their past seasons, both winning and losing, and played till the final whistle, won.

At the exact same time, on a real battlefield in Gaza, a fraction of CBS's audience watched something even more consequential unfold. In a daring and brave operation, a team of Israel Defense Force special forces went into Rafah, the last remaining Hamas stronghold in Gaza, and rescued two Jewish hostages abducted on October 7th, right under the noses of the terrorists guarding them in captivity.

Rafah may sound familiar to some readers following the ongoing Israel-Hamas war. It's the city where thousands of Hamas militants are suspected of being embedded in the civilian population that fled there after Israel began operating in Gaza following the Hamas massacre in October. In what can only be described as a capitulation to terrorism, several leading political figures have announced that Israel must not enter Rafah, amongst them Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez saying going into Rafah is not war, but "an outright attack on the innocent." Even President Joe Biden, who until recently was supportive of Israel protecting itself from the genocidal terror organization on its borders, has come out much more forcefully against Israel's announced moves into the city.

Even if Israel hadn't demonstrated the need for an incursion into Rafah hours after Biden's statement through the successful rescue of innocent Israeli hostages, there is no historical precedent for what many are asking Israel to do: stop a war they are clearly winning and have the moral high ground in, and just give it up for nothing in return.

Finishing the enemy that began a fight is crucial to ensuring they never do it again, and this is a principle that has proven true throughout our entire human history. Consider the absurdity it would have been if the Allies, having successfully repelled the Nazi invasion in World War II, halted just outside Berlin to negotiate a mutually agreeable end to the disaster Germany had unleashed on the world. Israel ensuring total demilitarization and deradicalization of Gaza, the surrender of Hamas leaders and the return of the innocent hostages is the only way to guarantee the atrocities of October 7th never happen again, and the region can move toward a productive and prosperous future. Exactly like Europe did following WWII.

War is tragic and war is brutal, and it always has been so. Were Hamas to surrender and give up the hostages, there would be no more loss of civilian life except at the hands of Hamas' perpetual brutality against its own people. Israel cannot be expected to let Hamas get away and leave the war unfinished, rewarding them for employing tactics including the horrific use of human shields and embedding terrorists in hospitals, schools, mosques and civilian centers. Not only is there nothing resembling "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing," even John Kirby, of the National Security Council in the White House, said that he doubts anyone would do as good a job as Israel at protecting civilian lives, including the U.S.

Additionally, it's not as if Israel is the only party affected by a potential surrender. The United States' deterrent capabilities used to protect our interests in the Middle East have been degraded as terrorist-aligned forces backed by Iran have attacked U.S. armed forces hundreds of times, including the recent tragic deaths at the hands of Iranian proxies of Sgt. Kennedy Sanders, Staff Sgt. William Jerome Rivers, and Sgt. Breonna Alexandria Moffett, from our home state of Georgia.

Caving into unreasonable demands for a unilateral surrender to organizations committed to the destruction of Israel and the U.S., simply because we're tired of war, is an untenable position that will only encourage our enemies to attack us again and again until we're completely at their mercy. To regain our international credibility and authority, a muscular and peace-through-strength approach is needed, with a conclusive end to the war on Israel's and the United States' own righteous terms.

As the war between Israel and Hamas continues, the lessons from history echo loudly. It's a lesson as old as Biblical times, when King Saul didn't heed God's warning to finish the war against Amalek and instead let the wicked enemy live, allowing them to return with a vengeance seeking to harm the Jewish people, time and time again, for generations. Wars are not won through half-measures or hasty retreats, and they are not won by calculating domestic political considerations and pandering to a loud, minority base. Conflicts are won, and ended, by confronting and neutralizing threats decisively, and playing till the final whistle.

Yonatan Hamburger is a rabbi with Chabad of Rural Georgia. Tzali Reicher is a rabbi and writer currently living in New York.

Echos from Sinai
"Torah for Everyone"
Rabbi Yonatan Hamburger



Chill Hours

This week I'm going to talk about chill hours and the affect that cold has on plants. The cold weather can feel very dreary and like there is no life with plants not growing, trees without leaves, and wildlife holing up for the winter. However, winter is a very important and necessary time of the year for plants. Without there's a number of important fruits and flowers that would not bloom every year. Let's talk about the effect that cold weather can have on plants and why it's so important.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



For some plants they are not just responding to the cold, but they are also responding to the change in day length as the days grow shorter in winter and then longer into the spring. These kinds of plants are called photosensitive, because they are responding to the changes in light. Mums and poinsettias are some common examples. A change in the day length can trigger blooming or leaf drop in plants.

Many fruit plants require chill hours to be able to put on blooms. Chill hours is a count of the number of hours where the temperature is 32 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit. After a satisfactory number of chilling hours has been reached, the plant will break into bloom. This chilling process is called vernalization. Without vernalization, we wouldn't be able to enjoy apples, peaches, tulips, foxgloves, blueberries, and many other plants. Different varieties of plants require different numbers of chilling hours, so it's always best to pick varieties that are well adapted to our climate so that you have the most success with your fruits and flowers. For example if you select a variety of apples that requires too many chill hours, the apple tree will not bloom. However, if you select a variety of apples that has a chill hour requirement that is too low, it could bloom too early, and the flowers would be killed in a late frost.

In these plants, a repressor gene is keeping the plants from blooming. The cold causes that repressor gene to be altered so that it's no longer controlling the blooming of the flower. That way when warmer temperatures arrive the flowers can bloom out.

The timing of when cold happens is also critical. Oftentimes in the mountains, we'll have a late freeze after many of the apple or peach trees have already bloomed. Freezing temperatures after bloom can result in flowers dying and falling off. If the blooms fall off a fruit tree, that tree won't be able to bear any fruit that year. For a freeze to damage blooms the temperature usually needs to be 28 or lower. Early freezes can be damaging to plants as well. They are forced into freezing temperatures before being able to harden off properly, and can be severely damaged.

Some plants are able to tolerate cold weather while others can't. Scientists believe the ability to tolerate cold weather comes down to the makeup of the cell membranes in the plant. Cell membranes are made up of fat molecules. Some of them are saturated and some unsaturated. Similar to what you read on the nutrition facts label for packaged food. Scientists think that plants with a higher ratio of saturated fats can freeze more easily.

Winter can seem like a dead time of the year, really it's Mother Nature's way of preparing for spring. If you have questions about the effect of winter on plants contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters To The Editor

Why is my grocery bill so high?

Dear Editor,

We hear reports everyday about how well the economy is recovering: unemployment remains low, inflation is cooling, the expected recession hasn't happened. We are outperforming our peer countries, wages have continued to rise and gas prices have fallen more than 80 cents a gallon since summer. So why is my grocery bill still so high?

U.S. Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania has released a report detailing how big corporations are using inflation as a cover to raise prices and are continuing to report record profits at the expense of the rest of us. Between 2020 and 2022, corporate profits rose by 75%, five times as fast as inflation. His report states, "From July 2020 through July 2022, inflation rose by 14% while corporate profits rose by more than 74% during the same time period."

The Federal Reserve found that corporate profits contributed a large percentage to inflation in the first year of the pandemic, including accounting for all of the inflation from July 2020 through July 2021 and 41% of all inflation from July 2020 through July 2022."

According to an analysis by the nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute, corporate profits accounted for 54% of food price increases between 2020 and 2021. For the four decades prior, only 11% was attributed to corporate profits.

A similar report, compiled by think tank Groundwork Collaborative, appears to show that high corporate profits are a main driver of ongoing inflation and that companies continue to keep prices high even as their costs go down. The inquiry also found that corporate profits accounted for 53% of inflation during the second and third quarters of 2023. In the 40 years prior to the pandemic, profits drove 11% of price growth. Costs have come down, but corporations have not been very quick to pass the savings on to their customers who are still paying about 25% more for their groceries.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers has found in a new report that grocery store profit margins remain higher than pre-pandemic levels and could be contributing to the high price of food. The analysis shows that food and beverage stores have increased their margins to the highest levels in the past two decades.

Some will say that the high prices reflect supply chain issues, transportation costs and global unrest. But the profit numbers are suspicious. Corporations must be held accountable if they are taking advantage of consumers. We all need to be treated fairly and we need answers that directly address the problem.
Michelle Maloney

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Union County Gold

I have heard people say that gold was found in Union County before any was found in Lumpkin County. It has also been said that the gold from here is among the purest in the world and that experts could tell if a sample of gold came from the area simply by its shade of color.

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Bud Akins gave me an article by a gentleman named Dwayne Ramey about gold mining in Union County, and another person by the name of Bruce Roberts also provided a great deal of information to me so this article could be written.

Most of the gold mining in Union County area was done in the area around Coosa Creek and the Bowers Cove area. Some of the people which mined this area were: James Nix, Frank and Zed Summerour, Human Addenwood, Jody Bowers, Joe Rich, Herschel Summerlin, March Addington along with John and Sam Tider. A mining settlement sprang up at the head of Coosa Creek which had a church, school, store and even a saloon. It is said that a woman called Ma Mulkey ran this saloon and would only take her payment in gold. This camp was called the Summerlin Camp.

James Bly Nix and his brother John decided to mine for gold in the Choestoe area, but the Civil War delayed their efforts. According to the information I read, John was killed in a Virginia cornfield while serving his state of Georgia. According to his brother, the vein of gold they knew about was the richest in the county.

The first steam shovel in Union County was built by Frank Summerour on Coosa Creek. Two of the gold mines the Summerour brothers operated can still be seen on Gold Mine Knob, which is located south of Owl Town Gap.

Robert Corn, his father and one other man were hunting in the area of Little Duncan Ridge when they found a fellow digging in a bank. This fellow was living in a shelter made of tree limbs, leaves and bark. Soon the fellow, Mr. Hamby, asked where he might find room and board while he prospected for gold. The Corn family took him in and supplied him with provisions. They said he would be gone days at a time prospecting around the Coosa area.

One day Hamby came back to the Corn house with a sack full of quartz which contained gold. They shipped 45 pounds of this to a mining company in London, England. The company responded back to Hamby stating that they would be willing to finance up to \$4 million and encouraged him to begin purchasing mineral rights for the company. But, as fate would have it, England declared war on Germany and the operation was delayed. Meanwhile Hamby remained with the Corn family for about 18 months and continued prospecting. On one particular day he found a gold nugget which weighed 1 pound.

Soon thereafter, he announced to the family that he would soon be leaving for Seymour, Indiana, to discuss marriage proposal and a mining partnership with a lady. He was seen later carrying two large and heavy suitcases at Harve Davis' store where he caught a bus to Gainesville.

Later in November Mr. Corn received a letter from this Hamby fellow explaining that he had married a wealthy lady and formed a mining partnership with her. He also asked him to hire 10-15 men to begin mining on his leases and that he would soon arrive with heavy machinery needed for a mining operation. Hamby was never heard from again.

His wife soon came to Union County to look at his mining prospects and explained that on her wedding day her husband had received a visitor. He later asked her to borrow \$450 and then went to Pittsburgh to obtain mining equipment. He never came back so she contacted the FBI. They caught two men trying to smuggle gold out of the country. One was caught on the west coast while the other was caught on the east coast. Hamby's wife speculated that these two men had murdered Hamby for the gold he acquired in Union County.

The largest quantities of gold found in the eastern United States were found in the Georgia Gold Belt which extended from Alabama to Rabun County, Georgia. The gold found in Georgia was close to 24 karat purity. Most of the gold found here was mixed with eroded rock and quartz.

Recently, Bruce Roberts gave a presentation on Gold Mining. His presentation included a discussion on where the gold can be found geologically speaking. There are fingers of areas where the gold is located. One of which is the Dahlonega area and the other is where the Coosa mines are located, and yet another is the Gum Log area which extends into Towns and over toward Hightower Bald.

Some of the mines in Union County included the Coosa Creek Mine, The Wellborn-Hill Mine, the Brown Shaft Mine, the Old Gum Log Mine and the Hunt Property Mine.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor
P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546
Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net

Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc. Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*

Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

Towns County Community Calendar

First Monday of each month:	
School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
Every Tuesday:	
Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month:	
Hiaw. City Council... City Hall	6 pm
YH City Council... YH City Hall	6:30 pm
Second Tuesday of each month:	
Conventions & Visitors Board... Civic Center	8:30 am
Second Wednesday of each month:	
Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
Third Monday of each month:	
Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month:	
Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse	5:30 pm
City of Young Harris Planning Commission...	
Meeting Room in City Hall	5 pm
TC Water Authority Board Meeting	6 pm

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