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OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Alt-Right Isolation Doctrine

Alt-Right Isolationism Doctrine Means "America Last" By Yonatan Hamburger and Tzali Reicher

Echos from Sinai "Torah for Everyone" Rabbi Yonatan Hamburger



Most Americans, regardless of party affiliation, agree that the United States should not be exporting its products for free while American taxpayers pay heavy tariffs on products coming from those same countries. Further, most Americans agree that we should not be funding everyone else's militaries and alliances if those very countries will not invest in their own annual budget for their own protection.

This understanding reflects how the vast majority of Americans feel and how successive administrations have run U.S. foreign policy, albeit with differences in emphasis and rhetoric.

Until October 7. Only days after Hamas perpetuated its massacres, rapes, and kidnappings of 1,300 innocent Israeli civilians – and long before Israel launched its response – a handful of commentators began questioning the United States' support for its only democratic ally in the region, framing their position with an isolationist fervor. Their argument can be framed as an "either/or" proposition such as, "the same money given to Israel on account of the Jewish lobby, could be used to solve the fentanyl crisis that's killing tens of thousands of our children!"

It's dishonest, and plainly wrong. Even if we were to believe that those who hold this position aren't antisemitic or specifically anti-Israel, applying this understanding would mean that the United States should retreat from the world stage, clearly an America-Last policy. This would hasten the end of the world as we know it; the world we've been at the forefront of for almost a century.

If we were to abandon our alliances and agreements, the world would quickly descend into anarchy and chaos. In Asia, China would make its long-anticipated move to invade Taiwan after years of fearing American pushback, blocking American access to semiconductors and chips, essentially locking the United States out of competing for the future. With no threat of American and NATO interference, Russia would continue its march across Europe in Putin's bid to rebuild a Russian empire, threatening every country on the continent. And in the Middle East, with "Big Satan" out of the picture, Iran would push its proxies to join with Israel's enemies in the region in yet another bid to wipe the only Jewish state off the map. With America in isolation and left with no influence on the world stage, there will be more world wars, higher costs, and a completely destabilized world that would inevitably force the United States into conflict with a tremendous loss of life, an obvious and completely avoidable result.

Instead, American policy should continue to harness our leverage and influence to achieve better results for the stability of the world, which benefits every single American. By having allies with commonly shared values in every corner of the world, we are able to influence those areas, no matter how far away they are. By supporting Taiwan, we are ensuring China can't dominate the world and dictate our markets and futures. In backing Ukraine, the United States is doing its part to ensure the world order and peaceful consensus that came out of World War II, without losing a single American life. And by standing with Israel, we have the opportunity to support a fight against evil that wishes to destroy the United States and Israel equally.

For this reason, due to Israel's role in combating terrorism which obviously serves the United States' interest, there is a school of thought that suggests money allocated to Israel should be included in the military budget, not the foreign aid handouts that the United States distributes to countries that we get nothing in return from. President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State Alexander Haig phrased it best when he said, "Israel is the largest American aircraft carrier in the world that cannot be sunk, does not carry even one American soldier, and is located in a critical region for American national security." Israel fights in the trenches against our common enemies so that we don't have to send our soldiers to war; all they need is our support.

But mostly the United States must stand with Israel in this battle because it's the right thing to do, and doing the right thing is the American way. We don't step back and pretend to absolve ourselves of problems around the world by putting on blinders. We stand with and support our allies and defend our vision of the world that we shaped, for the good of all humanity. This is the real meaning of America's righteousness, no matter the lies and deceit that con-men, con-women, and opportunists peddle online for clicks, while peddling their ill-conceived and destructive agenda.

As always, we'd love to hear your thoughts on this subject, or any other. You can reach us at y@tasteoftorah.org. Yonatan Hamburger is a rabbi with Chabad of Rural Georgia. Tzali Reicher is a rabbi and writer based in Florida.

Letters To The Editor

Thank You for Prayers

Dear Editor,

I want to thank everyone for the outpouring of prayers and concerns regarding my health. I am happy to say the doctors are very optimistic and feel we have caught the cancer early. I will be on a two-week advanced radiation treatment in May and expect a full recovery. I feel blessed to have a great team of doctors. I feel good and I am not in any pain. Prayer works, and I encourage everyone to take their health seriously and get annual checkups. It can save your life.

Rep. Stan Gunter

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.

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The State of the Cove

I don't watch the State of the Union address. I read the transcripts, but I'd rather watch a Youtube video on how to repair the latest malady of my money-pit truck, or a rerun of a 60-year-old sitcom. Since George H. W. Bush, the speech has been given by malefactors, amateurs, war criminals, charlatans, narcissists, and grifters. You can decide for yourself the president to which some, or all of these apply.

The Georgia State of the State address, however, is something I do try to watch, and if there was a State of the County address I would watch that too. I'm much more content with the goings-on at the state and local levels, and these speeches, especially the latter, seem more than politics and theater. They affect me personally, and suggest that I might have a chance of affecting them. This week, however, we'll stick to the subject I'm most qualified to address: The State of the Cove. Here are a few of the highlights.

The forced fiscal tightening brought on by the ongoing theft of our purchasing power has not caused doom to descend upon us just yet. We have become ruthlessly aggressive shoppers, and the bozine (my own word, referencing Bozo the Clown) handling of our nation's fiscal policy continues to encourage us to shop the outer aisles at the grocery store, which is the healthiest place to shop anyway.

Too many of our friends and associates are aging rapidly. We're concerned that eventually someone will notice that time has apparently stood still for Tracey and me, which might cause resentment and suspicion. This hasn't happened yet, but any day now.

We suspect that this premature aging of our friends and family is caused by excessive consumption of news and media and perhaps too much shopping on the inner aisles of the grocery store. I had to remind a friend just the other day that instead of talking about his medications we should be planning our next adventure, and he should eat more salads.

Once again this year the grass, the bamboo and the poison ivy are growing much too rapidly. Someone forgot to tell the plants that warmer temperatures and extra CO2 spell doom. Everything here is growing faster, and bigger. Just like last year, I am complaining about the extra mowing, the trimming, the chopping, and carrying. I'm not complaining, however, that I still fit comfortably in those 34 jeans and after the grumbling, which is mostly for show, I thank God for our good health, and the privilege of having something to mow and trim and chop and carry.

We have decided this year never to live with carpet again. Ever. We had our carpet removed and replaced with tile and you would not believe what was living underneath. It was appalling. We were walking barefoot on THAT!?! Breathing that? How did we not sicken and die? We vacuumed regularly and even had an industrial carpet cleaner we used frequently, but millimeters away from our skin, a chemical and biological disaster was ongoing.

The new flooring was definitely a step up in the health department, but in the process of obtaining it we also got new information that affects not only the state of the cove, but that of the county, state, and perhaps even the nation. We now believe that the youngest generation now entering the workforce is going to make it. I think it's called Generation Z, and the infotainment doom peddlers have consistently given them a bad rap.

The young men who labored intensively to move our furniture, remove the baseboards, rip out the carpet, condition the subfloor, install the tile, replace the baseboards, and put the furniture back in place were as professional as any contractors I have ever seen. The supervisor told me they would arrive at 9:30 AM. They knocked on the door at 9:29.

They were highly skilled, energetic, and focused. Not only that, but they were respectful, gregarious, and funny. They were eager to talk with us when the work allowed, and we learned a bit about their ideas and motivations. Said one of the guys, "I don't have time for politics; try to stay out of any conversations about it. I'm too busy working and trying to make a better life for my family."

The Wall Street Journal tells me that Generation Z is returning to the skilled trades. College is unaffordable and for many students, not a good investment. GenZ is becoming technicians, welders, craftsmen, plumbers, and electricians. It would seem to follow that real-world experience would also encourage real-world values.

The doom peddlers present GenZ as angry but feckless – unable to change a tire but willing to throw a rock at a police officer. The truth is that the majority are not trashing college campuses and protesting things they don't understand or proselytizing ideals they did not acquire through their own experience and reasoning. That minority represents a combined failure of parenting and education, whereas the majority is just like we were at that age, and often better.

In the young men who visited our cove recently and the screaming students arrested for vandalism and assault, I see the dividing line between values and ideals. Values can function just fine without ideals. They can build a life and feed a family. Ideals without values can be dangerous. They are too easy to manipulate.

Which leads us to one of the main themes in human history in its wars and self-made disasters. The outlook from the cove is optimistic, but those who control information will never promote that viewpoint. Let's hope that the values being nurtured by ordinary people make a comeback in the real world through the younger generations, prevailing over the extreme beliefs of the minority that have shaped the narrative.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Snakes

As the temperatures continue to rise, plants are blooming, leaves are expanding, and life is rustling in woods again. Some of the life includes snakes. I've already heard a few stories of encounters that people have had with snakes early this spring. Snakes are a natural part of the landscape that we're going to have to learn to live with. So, it's not going to be possible to completely eliminate all encounters with them. There are some things that you can do to make those encounters less frequent and safer for you and the snake.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Most of the snakes that live in Georgia are non-venomous. There are 46 species of snakes in Georgia of which 6 are venomous. Of those 6, we have 2 of them in Union and Towns counties. Copperhead and Timber Rattlesnake are the 2 that we have in our area.

Copperheads can grow to be 4.5 feet long. They are usually light brown with dark brown hourglass shapes on the back. The narrow part of the hourglass is along the spine with the wide base on either side. They are mostly found in forested areas. They like spots with logs, leaf, and rocks for cover. They are capable of living in suburban areas with people around.

Timber Rattlesnakes can grow to be about 5 feet long. They have a color range from yellow to black. Their backs are covered in brown or black chevron shaped crossbands. They like to live along wooded streambanks. They like old debris piles, old burrows and rock crevices. They will also have the iconic rattle on the end of their tail.

Most people will talk about being able to tell if a snake is venomous from looking at the shape of its head. Generally speaking, venomous snakes will have a triangular shaped head. However, this can be difficult to determine in the wild without getting close and handling the snake, which is never advised. Non-venomous snakes can flatten their heads and appear to have more triangular heads too. Some of the markings on non-venomous snakes can be confused with copperheads.

To lessen the chance of having snakes around your home make sure that your dryer vent is covered with a screen to prevent snakes from wandering inside. Remove piles of debris, leaf piles, or wood piles, because those create habitats for snakes. Thick ground cover like tall grass or ivy can create hiding spots for snakes or the rodents, frogs, and insects that snakes like to eat. Keeping the space around your house clear will decrease the likelihood of a snake being present.

Most of the time people are bitten when they try to kill a snake. Non-venomous snakes are protected by state law. If you are bitten 1) stay calm; 2) Get competent medical help as quickly as possible; 3) Keep the affected limb level with the body; 4) Do not cut, suck, or apply ice or a tourniquet to the wound. Wear closed-toed shoes when walking in areas where snakes might be present.

There are no chemical poisons or effective repellents for snakes. Mothballs are not registered for use as snake repellent. They also can't hear, so any kind of repellent that uses sound isn't going to work. Make sure that the area around your house is kept clear and your house is sealed to that snakes can't enter your home.

If you have any questions about snakes please contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters To The Editor

Ukraine

Dear Editor,

It is good news, though not the best, that the United States House of Representatives finally passed a bill clearing the way for \$61 billion in military aid to Ukraine. The Ukrainians face a shortage in ammunition so critical that their soldiers must ration bullets and have given up hard-won land in Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Donetsk City, according to the Institute for the Study of War, but if new munitions arrive in time they might turn this tide.

It is good news as well that Speaker Mike Johnson finally found the courage to bring the bill to the floor where it won overwhelming approval by both parties. "If I operated out of fear over motion to vacate, I would never be able to do my job," Johnson told reporters, facing reality after months of dithering. "Look, history judges us for what we do."

Critics of the aid, such as Majorie Taylor Greene and our own Andrew Clyde, have been sidelined for now. Both parroted Russian propaganda to defend their positions and sow chaos. "A vote for Speaker Johnson's America Last foreign aid package," Clyde wrote on X, "is a vote to secure Ukraine's borders but not our own." Greene gallingly declared Ukrainians "Nazis." Both statements are right out of the Kremlin's playbook, but Greene and Clyde were on the losing side this time, which is good news.

It is certainly good news that the House has finally found a bipartisan coalition that has allowed it to govern after nearly four years of Republican leadership mayhem. "The House's governing coalition has been cemented," writes Leigh Ann Caldwell and Theodor Meyer. "It consists of nearly every Democrat and about half of Republicans."

Vladimir Putin's advance on Ukraine will be slowed by this bill's passage and his rapacious desire to move against NATO countries stopped for now – good news indeed. "I think Vladimir Putin would continue to march through Europe if he were allowed," Johnson admitted after receiving high-level intelligence briefings. "I think providing aid to Ukraine right now is critically important."

It is good news, as well, though still not the best, that our enemies in Asia and Iran will need to re-think American resolve in global disputes. Until this vote, Republicans treated our obligations around the world as a joke, and the autocrats were watching, eager to take advantage. Military aid to Ukraine will give them pause.

All that is good, but the best news is, as it has been for years now, the courage of the Ukrainian people to fight for the ideals of Western-style democracy no matter what. They did it against all odds from the first day of the war when they thwarted a Russian invasion in a surprise victory that analysts in the United States and elsewhere thought impossible.

When the U.S. offered to help president Volodymyr Zelenskyy escape, he reportedly said "I need ammunition, not a ride," and since then he has been an inspiration to his people and the world. As the war ground on with enormous losses at the front and massive destruction of towns and cities behind the lines, Ukrainian courage never wavered even when we apparently abandoned them.

What kind of courage? Consider these examples from the Chatham House Policy Institute: The courage of George Keburia "waving goodbye to his wife Maya and their children as they leave Odessa by train for Lviv and safety before his return to the front line." The courage of nurse Nastya Gracheva and doctor Anton Sokolov who posed for "photos in the ruins of a shopping mall in Kharkiv after their wedding" before returning to their work as "medical volunteers since the Russian invasion." The courage of the Ukrainian woman "from the city of Izium" who, weeping, "tells of her ordeal after being raped by Russian soldiers and hit by a piece of shrapnel." The list goes on and on.

Because of Ukrainian courage, no United States soldiers have died in our common fight against the spread of autocratic rule. "I would rather send bullets to Ukraine than American boys," Johnson said in his emotional speech. Ukrainian courage makes that possible, and that remains the best news.

Steven Harvey

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Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 3 "The Mall", Hiawassee
Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546