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Anti-semitic is anti-U.S.

Samuel J. Davis Oct 31, 2018

Is there a need for my voice, when so many others speak with more eloquence and personal knowledge? No, of course not. There is no need -- but nevertheless I write--because I have a need.

As an American of Arabic descent the Jews are my cousins. Ever since Ishmael and his half-brother Isaac called Abraham "father" the Jews and Arabs have had a relationship that has at times, as often is the case in families, been contentious. In this country when one of us is harmed by words or wounded or killed by deeds, we set aside our disputes and differences and come together: after all those of us of Syrian or Lebanese descent are also Semitic. Anti- Semitic is Anti- us. Anti-Semitic is, in the larger sense, Anti-U.S.; we as a people profess in our words and deeds to insure to all Freedom of Religion.

Gaza, The Golan Heights, The Palestinian Question are matters that have troubled me, not so much as how Israel has acted, but more so how my country has seemed to riven the Arab concerns and , at least at times, blindly supported Israel. Despite those ongoing questions that still effect millions daily in the Middle East, our focus now should and must be on who we are, and do we really believe in Freedom of Religion, and if so what can we do to protect that right?

Some say, including many I respect, that we must arm ourselves. A close friend and Pittsburgh attorney states he is always armed when going to his Synagogue. Others say the 2nd Amendment is archaic and destructive and should be at least restricted (it's easier to get a gun than a driver's license) or even abolished. Neither approach will satisfy the majority and the majority, after all, rules.

Restricting ownership of semi-automatic weapons won't stop hate and you can't arm yourself effectively against every threat, but these answers aren't mutually exclusive, and both are viable. More security for the vulnerable in our schools and houses of worship and tougher controls on who can own a weapon and what weapons can be legally owned are actions that should be taken and taken now. Weakness by feckless leaders, who believe their reelection prospects will be affected by ANY action, is like hate: it's intolerable.

My daughter married a Jew and they have given me two grandsons. When she and her sister were growing up even our dog was female. To have grandsons is beyond anything I ever dreamed. To talk about football and baseball to a wide-eyed six-year-old, all-boy is sublime. To discuss with him the reality of evil is daunting. We will get through this there is no doubt. But will we as a nation appoint courageous leaders who are willing to make real change, rather than just saying "our prayers go out to the victims' families?" We can only hope.

Samuel Davis has been practicing law since 1976 as a founding partner of Davis and Davis, Attorneys at Law in Uniontown and recently wrote a book "They Were Immigrants: The Lasting Legacy of My Syrian Grandparents."

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