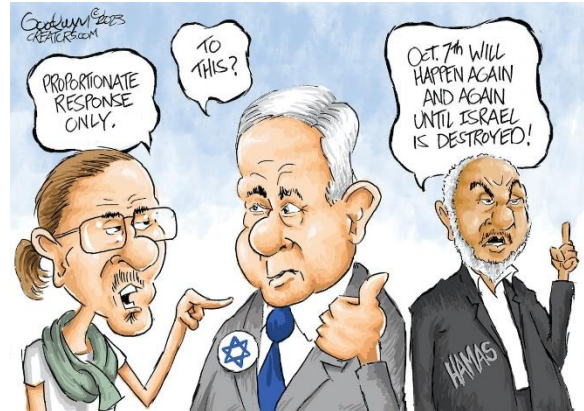


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Never Again: Israel's fight for survival

By Steve Bakke  October 3, 2024

(Letter sent to Editor of Minnesota Star Tribune)



There has been much mourning about “what Israel has wrought” in recent “Strib Voices.” Israel’s actions elicit concerns that the military response has not been “proportional” to the October 7 and related attacks.

“Never Again” represents the pledge by citizens of the world to watch for signs of genocide so that The Holocaust’s mass killing of 6,000,000 Jews would never be repeated. Wasn’t October 7th one such warning?

Radical Arab leadership, including Hamas and Hezbollah, won’t agree to any solution that includes Israel’s survival. Going back decades, Palestinian and Arab leaders have repeatedly turned down Israeli offers of Gaza, and often most of the West Bank, for developing a Palestinian nation. All the while innocent Palestinians have known only wartime exploitation and suffering.

Referring to October 7, Hamas promised “.....we will do this again and again.....” And the world debates the legitimacy of Israel’s military action. What Israeli “body count” on October 7 would justify Israel’s military response?

Frame Israel’s challenge by imagining a proportionate attack on America: years of cross border rocket and mortar attacks; 45,000 dead Americans; 10,000 hostages. Would America fully engage the attacker in order to eliminate future threats?

What would a “proportional response” accomplish? Any fight will have unintended consequences, as would inaction. Inevitably, any alternative will display genius and heroism along with excesses and regret.

America can’t ignore the spirit of Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, when evaluating Israel’s battle for existence. Israel’s response is “Never Again!” How should America respond? Tough choices abound.