

Thank You, Mr. Mayor

Ezra Friedlander

The Mayor of New York City is primarily responsible for the crucial services that keep the city running properly. But the city does not exist in a vacuum, and in many ways his political voice is widely recognized all over the world. His views and opinions are acknowledged on an international platform. That's why his recent remarks which strongly defended the US-Israel relationship are not to be taken lightly. It reaffirmed the close bond and the enduring relationship between this city and the State of Israel in a very public manner.

At an appearance he made at a recent AIPAC event, the Mayor unequivocally stated, "It is our obligation to defend Israel, but it is also something that is elemental to being an American because there is no greater ally on earth."

As the saying goes, "You don't have to be Jewish to enjoy bagels and lox." Similarly, you don't have to be Jewish to be a supporter of the US-Israel relationship.

Israel is certainly a strong and powerful country, yet it faces more than its fair share of enemies and those who seek its physical and economic destruction. And while many Americans share the opinion that the threat of Iran's pending nuclear capabilities are a great danger to Israel, most don't realize that there are other equally nefarious enemies out there who seek the delegitimization and economic destruction of the Jewish State.

Which brings me to a renewed appreciation of the recent remarks of Bill de Blasio and especially his



Ezra Friedlander and Mayor Bill de Blasio

refusal to back down from his statements even under extensive condemnation. When criticized for his statements, he responded by saying that he is "unabashedly pro-Israel." The Mayor, who is considered politically Progressive has made a clear and unambiguous statement that even Progressives like him can proudly identify with Israel. This, despite the fact that many in the Far Left who also identify themselves as Progressive have been at the forefront of undermining Israel's legitimacy. These are the people who are now taking the Mayor to task for his proud identification with the Jewish State in context of his role as Mayor of New York City.

For these reasons we need to publicly show our appreciation and support for Mayor de Blasio's principled stand. Not just because he has expressed his friendship so clearly

and unequivocally, but also because his statements can be seen as a catalyst for the development of continued support for Israel in the social and ideological sectors where the Mayor is so popular. If he can be so bold in stating his opinion, perhaps this will encourage others to come out of the woodwork as well.

It's important for all of us to rally behind Mayor Bill de Blasio in appreciation of his very positive statements. Jews of all stripes and all persuasions and all ideological backgrounds should firmly support his leadership and his friendship. New York City must remain a stalwart, dependable, and everlasting defender of the Jewish State. □

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