

Steven Menashi (CA2 – NY)

Takeaway: Steven Menashi’s article “Ethnonationalism and Liberal Democracy” is a defense of Israel’s status as both a Jewish state and a liberal democracy. It argues that ethnic diversity is not a precondition for liberalism. The article in no way questions the benefits of ethnic diversity either for liberal democracy or the United States. Those opposed to the nomination of Mr. Menashi – the son and grandson of Jewish immigrants – are engaged in a shameless distortion of a nearly decade old article and have chosen to misconstrue his record because they know he is impeccably qualified to be a judge on the Second Circuit.

- **About Steven Menashi:**

- Mr. Menashi is proud of his Middle Eastern Heritage
 - Mr. Menashi’s father was born in Iran to Iraqi Jewish parents. His father lived in Tehran until leaving for Israel and then the United States.
 - Mr. Menashi’s paternal grandparents were Iraqi Jews, living in Baghdad, before moving to Tehran and then finding a home in Israel. His grandmother survived the Farhud, a violent pogrom against the Jewish community of Baghdad in 1941, by fleeing the city for the countryside.
 - At the age of 16, Mr. Menashi’s grandfather fled Ukraine for the United States and his maternal grandmother’s family emigrated from Lithuania.
 - Mr. Menashi’s in-laws came to the United States from the Soviet Union as Jewish refugees in 1978 under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment

- **Mr. Menashi cares very deeply about the United States as a nation of immigrants and Israel as a home for the Jewish people.**

- “Ethnonationalism and Liberal Democracy” is an academic article that argues Israel’s status as a Jewish state is consistent with its status as a liberal democracy.
 - Mr. Menashi is a firm believer in liberal democracy and supports Israel’s right to self-determination.
 - A key point of the article is that Israel’s status as a Jewish homeland is expressed through policies that, for example, allow for expedited Jewish immigration and pertain to the welfare of the Jewish people. Notably, Israel does not affect political rights within the state based on ethnicity.
 - The article is clear that an essential principle of liberal democracy is the guarantee of equal rights and argues that equal rights are often better protected when society acknowledges differences rather than ignores them.