

Playing the Holocaust Card: Will Romney Visit Auschwitz?

By [Michael Carmichael](#)

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Mitt Romney is now embarked on his highly touted international tour.

The first reactions to Romney's diplomatic charm offensive were surprisingly negative. Romney insulted the British when he suggested that London was not prepared to hold the Olympic Games.

Led by Fleet Street, a feeding frenzy ensued that pulverized Romney far more brutally than anything he had experienced to date. Even Rupert Murdoch's flagship newspaper, *The Sun*, (daily circulation 5 million) proclaimed Romney to be: "Mitt the Twit."

David Cameron, the Conservative Prime Minister blasted Romney for insulting the British Olympics, and Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London (another Conservative) held Romney up for ridicule before an audience of 60,000 Londoners at the new Olympic Stadium. The Cameron and Johnson statements received massive media coverage. "Mitt the Twit" was labeled "Nowhere Man" for bragging about his Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City - described as "in the middle of nowhere" by Prime Minister David Cameron, and Romney crawled back into his shell.

Now in Israel, Romney enjoyed a warm welcome with a massive interview in the tiny nation's largest newspaper, *Israel Hayom*, that is owned by his major financial backer, the controversial American casino billionaire, Sheldon Adelson. Of course, Romney effectively pledged himself to war with Iran to please the current right-wing coalition that governs Israel. Adelson is a major financial backer of Binyamin Netanyahu and his party, Likud, so the political fit is far more comfortable for Romney than Britain.

While Romney's political intentions in both Britain (the Olympics) and Israel are clear, the reason for his visit to Poland is still somewhat obscure. In fact, the central reason for Romney's plan to visit Poland has been kept totally under wraps to date.

It now seems likely that Romney's visit to Poland is simply part B of his plan to challenge President Obama's record on US support for Israel and the foreign policy of the Middle East.

By visiting Auschwitz, Romney may hope to upstage President Obama and his commitment to peace in the Middle East. By politicizing the Holocaust, Romney and his mastermind, Sheldon Adelson, would appear to be launching their plan to manufacturing a deep schism within the American Jewish community that could influence the outcome of the November election.

It is well known that Adelson and Romney are hoping to create a fault-line and slice off a larger proportion of the Jewish vote for the GOP. Adelson has pledged an undisclosed amount of money said to be in the tens of millions for a hard-hitting advertising campaign that will target the US Jewish community in battleground states: Florida; Indiana; Missouri; North Carolina; Pennsylvania and Virginia. Adelson's attack on Obama will be designed to encourage Jews to vote Republican this fall. To convince Jewish voters to vote Republican, Adelson's anti-Obama campaign will focus intensively on the "buyer's remorse" of Jewish voters who backed Obama in 2008 and encourage them to vote for Romney.

On the other hand, if Romney visits Poland and does not visit Auschwitz – his campaign to divide the US Jewish community will be in tatters. Therefore, it seems likely that the real reason for Romney's visit to Poland will be part of the Adelson plan to capture a higher proportion of the Jewish vote for the Republicans.

However, by playing the Holocaust card so clumsily and so politically, Romney would run the risk of setting off a tidal wave of criticism from the Jewish community – a firestorm that could boomerang and become incandescent in the USA.

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