

Three Reasons Why Trump will be Good for Israel and Bad for the Palestinians

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What President-elect Trump says and what he will actually do, still remains to be seen. However, Trump had made statements in the past regarding Israel and the Palestinians do raise some important questions. The Palestinians whether in the West Bank, the Gaza strip and elsewhere have legitimate concerns regarding the Trump administration that is set to begin on January 20th, 2017. Trump will begin his term not only as the commander-in-chief of a global empire, but as a friend to Israel, probably its "best friend" after some of the statements he made in the past.

The New York Times reported what right-wing members of the Israeli government thought about Trump's victory on November 14th, 'Israel's Right, Cheering Donald Trump's Win, Renews Calls to Abandon 2-State Solution':

Emboldened by the Republican sweep of last week's American elections, right-wing members of the Israeli government have called anew for the abandonment of a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians.

"The combination of changes in the United States, in Europe and in the region provide Israel with a unique opportunity to reset and rethink everything," Naftali Bennett, Israel's education minister and the leader of the pro-settlement Jewish Home party, told a gathering of the Foreign Press Association in Jerusalem on Monday. Mr. Bennett, who advocates annexing 60 percent of the occupied West Bank to Israel, exulted on the morning after Donald J. Trump's victory: "The era of a Palestinian state is over"

Obviously, Naftali Bennet is quite optimistic about Trump's election victory. Back in August 8th, 2015, *The Times of Israel* published an interesting story by Uriel Heilman on Trump's long and deep connections to Israel and to Jewish American community in the U.S. The article was titled '*When it comes to Jewish ties, no GOP candidate trumps Trump*', Heilman wrote the following:

Given his myriad Jewish associations, Trump is not an unfamiliar face in Jewish circles. He has served as a grand marshal at New York's annual Salute to Israel Parade. After Hurricane Katrina, he was among a group of celebrities who decorated Jewish federation tzedakah boxes to be auctioned off to support hurricane disaster relief. And in February, he was honored with an award at the annual gala for the *Algemeiner*, a right-wing Jewish news organization.

"I have a Jewish daughter. This wasn't in the plan, but I'm very glad it happened," Trump said at the event, held in Manhattan. On Israel, he said, "We love Israel. We will fight for Israel 100 percent, 1,000 percent. It will be

there forever”

Trump said that he will fight for Israel 1,000 percent, so what does that mean for the Palestinians and for the Middle East in general? It seems that the Trump administration will defend Israel’s actions no matter what it does against its Arab neighbors following in the same footsteps of past U.S. Presidents.

Under the Trump Administration, U.S. “Security Aid” to Israel will substantially Increase

Well, there is a certainty that Trump’s aid package to Israel would surpass President Obama’s \$38 billion 10-year deal. On September 15th www.jewishinsider.com published a report ‘*Trump Advisor: Security Aid to Israel Will Not Be Limited By MOU*’ on what Trump’s advisor David Friedman had said to the *Jewish Insider* in regards to U.S. “security aid” to Israel:

The United States will not be limited by the new \$38 billion 10-year “memorandum of understanding” (MOU) in determining whether and how to increase security aid to Israel under a Trump administration, Donald Trump’s Israel advisor told Jewish Insider on Thursday.

“Under a Trump administration, the level of strategic and tactical cooperation between the two countries will be of an unprecedented high level,” attorney David Friedman, who advises the Republican presidential nominee on U.S.-Israel affairs, said. “The U.S. will not be limited in its support for Israel by the terms of the MOU”

More aid to Israel will certainly increase under a Trump administration. Does this mean more conflicts against Israel’s adversaries including the Palestinians, Hezbollah and a possible major war against Iran? Trump just nominated retired General James “Mad Dog” Mattis for Secretary of Defense who said that Iran “*remains the single most belligerent actor in the Middle East*” in a speech at the Center for *Strategic and International Studies* (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. last April (not a good sign for US-Iran relations in the future). Will Trump give Israel the green light to attack Iran if he does not make a “new deal” concerning Iran’s nuclear program? Unlimited security aid means that the Israeli government can become more militarily aggressive towards its neighbors and that is a dangerous step towards a Middle East conflict that could spiral out of control under a Trump presidency.

Trump Supports Israeli Settlement Expansion

On May 3rd, 2016, www.dailymail.com interviewed Trump and asked him about Israel’s intention to build West Bank settlements ‘*EXCLUSIVE: Trump insists Israel should keep building West Bank settlements as he says Netanyahu should ‘keep moving forward’ because Palestinians fired ‘thousands of missiles’ at Jewish state.*’ Here is part of the interview on Trump’s position on Israel’s construction of new settlements and negotiating a peace deal between both sides:

Asked whether there should be a pause in new construction – which the Obama administration has pressured Netanyahu’s government to observe in order to bring the Palestinians to the negotiating table – Trump responded: ‘No, I don’t think it is, because I think Israel should have – they really have to keep going. They have to keep moving forward.’ ‘No, I don’t think there should be a pause,’

Trump said. 'Look: Missiles were launched into Israel, and Israel, I think, never was properly treated by our country. I mean, do you know what that is, how devastating that is?' 'With all of that being said, I would love to see if peace could be negotiated. A lot of people say that's not a deal that's possible. But I mean lasting peace, not a peace that lasts for two weeks and they start launching missiles again. So we'll see what happens,' Trump added.

'I'd love to negotiate peace. I think that, to me, is the all-time negotiation,' Trump said, in reference to stalled peace talks – which Palestinian negotiators say won't occur without a halt in new construction. The Obama administration demanded in 2009 that Netanyahu's administration freeze new settlement construction in an effort to get the two sides to the negotiating table

Trump's negotiations won't stand a chance if he continues to support Israel's settlement expansion deemed illegal by the international community.

The Trump Administration will Recognize Jerusalem as Israel's Capital

On September 25th, 2016, *Reuters* reported that President-elect Trump has every intention of recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital:

U.S. Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump on Sunday told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that if elected, the United States would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the campaign said, marking a potential dramatic shift in U.S. policy.

During the meeting that lasted more than an hour at Trump Tower in New York, Trump told Netanyahu that under his administration, the United States would "recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the State of Israel"

The day after, an article by *The Jerusalem Post* '*Palestinians: Donald Trump shows 'disregard for international law'*' described the reactions from Palestinian officials on Trump's remarks on Jerusalem becoming Israel's capital:

PLO Secretary General Saeb Erekat on Monday condemned Republican White House contender Donald Trump for saying if he is elected, the US will recognize Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital. Erekat charged that Trump's remarks – made during a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday – show "disregard for international law." The senior PLO official continued, accusing, the GOP presidential candidate of "neglecting" calls for a two-state solution between Israel and Palestinians.

"Previous statements delivered by [Trump's] adviser on Israel show a total abandonment of the two-state solution, international law and UN resolutions," Erekat asserted

The Middle East, especially the Palestinians should be concerned about President-elect Donald Trump come this January. Trump's statements during his campaign on Israeli-Palestinian issues including his promise for more unlimited security aid for Israel, his support for the construction of more illegal Jewish settlements and recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital is worrisome. Trump's "unbreakable" bond with Israel is a continuation of Washington's long-standing policy that favors Israel over its Arab neighbors.

The Israeli-Palestinian peace talks will fail under a Trump presidency if he follows through with the promises he made to the Israeli government under its current President, Benjamin Netanyahu. Expect more of the same old political shenanigans by the deep relationship between the U.S. and Israel. President-elect Trump, just like his predecessors before, will fund, arm and protect Israel, stoking tensions that can lead to more conflicts in the Middle East.

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