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# FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

May 9, 2017

## Can President Trump's Support of Israel Triumph Over His Lust to Make the Ultimate Deal with the Palestinians?

Dear Friend of FLAME:

One of FLAME's donors wrote me a pained letter last week, deriding me for our criticism of former President Obama's actions regarding Israel. "You don't understand," the donor said. "*I love President Obama.* Your criticism of him leaves me no choice but to stop my financial support to FLAME."

We always hate to lose a donor—because every dollar really does count in our efforts to defeat the lies and spread the truth about Israel in mainstream media. But FLAME remains steadfastly independent of political parties. We fully supported and praised Mr. Obama, for example, when he approved record-breaking U.S. financial aid to the Jewish state.

However, we gave Obama poor grades for his Middle East foreign policy overall, and specifically on Israel—not because he failed to forge an Israeli-Palestinian peace—but because of his betrayal of Israel at the U.N. in his waning days in office. His failing to veto a Security Council Resolution in December last year disavowing Israel's historical rights to Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine was a treachery.

Ironically, we receive equally harsh response from FLAME supporters when we have criticized Donald Trump. Our response is this: If you uncritically "love" Democrats (or Mr. Obama) more than you support Israel, and likewise, if you uncritically "love" Republicans (or Mr. Trump) more than you support Israel, then you will not love FLAME.

As we've said many times: FLAME stands for the best interests of Israel and the Israel-U.S. relationship. Israel must be a bi-partisan issue. We don't tell donors whom to vote for—because our

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**YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...**

**Israel's Settlements: Obstacle to Peace?**

Arabs opposed the State of Israel before there were settlements—and they oppose it still today. It's time to clear up 5 false myths about settlements.

**Myth #1:** *As well as some American media and politicians, since Israel doesn't want peace, since Jews build houses in disputed territories of Judea and Samaria (i.e. the West Bank) that the facts reveal settlements to be a misadventure. What, such greater choice is preventing peace.*

**What are the facts?**

Palestinian Arabs have violently fought Israel's existence since the Jewish state's founding and only much later cited Israel's settlements as an obstacle to peace. When Israel relinquished its settlements in Gaza in 2005, it was rewarded with a mushroom war by the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas. Five major misconceptions underlie criticism of Israeli settlements.

**Myth #2: Palestinians "own" these lands.** In fact, Jews are indisputably the indigenous people of Palestine (including Israel, Judea and Samaria), who have lived in the region for millennia and ruled it as a state, providing Arab settlement by 1,000 years. Palestinians have never had a state nor possessed public land in the region. Thus, the idea of "Palestinian lands" is false. In fact, both people can live in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). It is a disputed territory.

**Myth #3: Jews have no right to live in the disputed territories.** Jews and Arabs have lived together for hundreds of years in Palestine. The only exception is during 49 years of British rule, when Jews were evicted from the West Bank. Today, some two million Arabs live on full citizens of Israel, and some 400,000 Jews live in Judea and Samaria. Yet Palestinians insist that no peace with Israel is possible so long as Jews live among them. In 2013, Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas stated that "in the final resolution, we would not see the presence of a single Israeli—civilian or soldier—on our lands." Why should Abbas, who accuses Israel of "apartheid," issue a racist ban on Jews? Why should Arabs be welcomed in Israeli society—as they are—where Jews would be forbidden from living with Palestinians in the West Bank?

**Myth #4: Israel is increasing new settlements in Judea and Samaria.** In December 2014, President Obama's dispute resolution committee advised Ben Netanyahu to prohibit PLO's holy Wailing Wall of "tens of thousands of settlements being constructed" by Israel. *It just so new settlements are under construction in Israel, and Israel has issued no new settlements in over 20 years.* The number of settlements, plus illegal outposts, now stands just 250. While the number of settlers on living in established settlements has increased by 355,000 since 2005, the number of settlers living out of Israel's anti-terrorism separation barrier has since 2009 increased by only 20,000. Less than 1% of the population in the disputed territories, Judea, Israeli communities take up only 2% of the land of the West Bank. Almost all the settlements are located on land not previously occupied, used or privately owned by individual Palestinians.

**Myth #5: Israel's settlements are illegal under international law.** Most who assert Israeli settlements are illegal cite the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." However, Britain has settled its people into the Middle East, Turkey has settled Turks into Turkish-occupied Cyprus, and China has settled Chinese into occupied Tibet. *The Israel has never transferred any of its people into the West Bank. All settlements in Judea and Samaria have been voluntary, undertaken by private Israeli citizens. Why does the world focus on Israel—which has not broken this law—while allowing other nations to violate it liberally?*

**Myth #6: The Palestinians would make peace if settlement building stopped.**

**"Israel has created no new settlements in some 20 years."**

Since new settlement activity for 10 months to entice the Palestinians to negotiations sponsored by the U.S. The Palestinians refused. Indeed, Israel has made numerous land-for-peace offers to the Palestinians, most recently in 2009 and in 2016, in which the Palestinians would have received more than 90 percent of the disputed territories, rights land except—plus a capital in Jerusalem. Yet the Arabs turned these down. They refuse to accept Israel as a Jewish state and insist on "rights" of five million descendants of Arab refugees from 1948 to "resettle" in Israel, which would swamp Israel demographically.

Israel has a standing offer to resume negotiations with the Palestinians with preconditions. Yet the Arabs reject, citing Israeli settlements as an obstacle. One thing is certain: Settlements are not a barrier to peace in 1948—what Israel was then and there never—and they're not the obstacle today.

**This message has been published and paid for by**

**FLAME**

**Facts and Logic About the Middle East**

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**IF YOU SUPPORT PUBLISHING FLAME'S BOLD PR MESSAGES,**

politicians *do much more than legislate* regarding Israel and the Middle East. But we will not hesitate to criticize politicians from either party who act against the best interests of Israel and the Israel-U.S. relationship.

Case in point: Donald Trump's meeting last Wednesday in Washington with Palestinian "President" Mahmoud Abbas (now in his 12th year of a 4-year term). Mr. Trump seems enamored—enchanted—by the idea that he can make a deal between Israel and the Palestinians.

While the President makes nice noises about supporting Israel—and his U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley has spoken up boldly and courageously for Israel at the U.N. several times—Mr. Trump has yet to deliver on his promise to re-work (or scuttle) Mr. Obama's misbegotten Iran Deal, as well on his promise to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Israel's capital. We will be patient, *but we mustn't forget*.

Trump leaned backwards, left and right last week to build a "personal bond" with Mr. Abbas. He praised Abbas (as Obama used to) for being a man of peace. Without putting too fine a point on that dubious claim, Trump risks fooling himself by attributing the virtue of a commitment to peace to the Palestinian president.

For example, Abbas lied outright to Trump, swearing to an utter absence of incitement in Palestinian media and schools. We hope Trump recognizes a liar when he sees one and that he doesn't fall prey to the common foible of deal-makers: A salesman always loves a good salesman.

This week's featured FLAME *Hotline* article, below, leans hard on President Trump because he may already have damaged Israel with his romancing of the anti-Semite Abbas. Abbas does not recognize the right of Jews to a state in Palestine, he still pays stipends-for-life to jihadists who murder Americans and Israelis, and his media and schools have increased their incitement to terrorism in recent years.

Outspoken Middle East commentator Caroline Glick cuts Mr. Trump little slack in this piece, arguing that his tête à tête with Abbas also harms U.S. interests and the President's own interests. She discusses the complex interrelationship between encouraging the Palestine Liberation Organization (Abba's PLO) and encouraging unhealthy relationships with Hamas and Iran.

## PLEASE HELP US!!

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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## FLAME'S WEEKLY HOTLINE E- NEWSLETTER



FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

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No matter which political party you favor, I hope Ms. Glick's article reinforces a healthy skepticism about all politicians, as well as the need to guide—with full-throated voices and our hasbarah messages in the media—every elected official on issues related to Israel.

Finally, I hope you'll also quickly review the P.S. immediately below, which describes FLAME's recent *hasbarah* campaign to expose the Palestinians' funding of Islamic terrorists using U.S. taxpayer dollars.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson  
President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Did you know: By subsidizing the corrupt Palestinian Authority (P.A.) with aid of some \$400 million taxpayer dollars a year, the U.S. is also funding the P.A.'s program of paying salaries to Palestinian terrorists who have killed innocent Americans and Israelis? In order to make Americans—especially college and university students—aware of this Palestinian practice of rewarding jihadi assailants and murderers with U.S. funds, FLAME has recently been publishing a new position paper: "[U.S. Funds Palestinian Terrorism](#)" This paid editorial has appeared in magazines and newspapers, including college newspapers, with a combined readership of some 10 million people. In addition, it is being sent to every member of the U.S. Congress and President Trump. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate now](#). Now more than ever we need your support to ensure that the American people and the U.S. Congress end our support of blatantly anti-Semitic, global jihadist organizations.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline [at no charge](#) every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively [tell the truth about Israel](#)? Just go to [free subscription](#).

## Trump's Tragic Mistake

**Israel is the most immediate casualty of Trump's decision to embrace Abbas and the PLO, because the PLO is Israel's enemy.**

By Caroline B. Glick, *Jerusalem Post*, May 4, 2017

**By all accounts, US President Donald Trump is a friend of the Jewish state.**

It is due to Trump's heartfelt support for Israel and the US-Israel alliance that his meeting Wednesday with PLO chief Mahmoud Abbas at the White House is most discouraging.

By meeting with Abbas, and committing himself to working toward achieving a peace deal between Abbas and his PLO and Israel, Trump undermines Israel.

He also undermines himself and his nation.

Israel is the most immediate casualty of Trump's decision to embrace Abbas and the PLO, because the PLO is Israel's enemy.

Abbas is an anti-Semite. His doctoral dissertation, which he later published as a book, is a Holocaust denying screed.

Abbas engages in anti-Semitic incitement on a daily basis, both directly and indirectly. It was Abbas who called for his people to kill Jews claiming that we pollute Judaism's most sacred site, the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, with our "filthy feet." The Palestinian media and school system which he controls with an iron fist both regularly portray Jews as evil monsters, deserving of physical annihilation.

**Abbas's PLO and his Palestinian Authority engage as a general practice** in glorifying terrorist murderers. As has been widely reported in recent weeks, his PA and PLO also incentivize and underwrite terrorism to the tune of \$300 million a year, which is paid, in accordance with PA law, to convicted terrorists sitting in Israeli prisons and their families.

And that's just the money we know about.

In welcoming Abbas to the White House, Trump chose to ignore all of this in the interest of fostering a peace deal between Israel and the PLO.

There are three problems with this goal. First, the peace process between Israel and the PLO is predicated on the notion that the US must pressure Israel to make massive concessions to the PLO. So simply by engaging in a negotiating process with the PLO, Trump has adopted an antagonistic position toward Israel.

The second problem is that Abbas himself has proven, repeatedly, that he will never support a peace deal with Israel. Abbas opposed Israel's peace offer at Camp David in 2000. He rejected then-prime minister Ehud Olmert's peace offer in 2008. He rejected then-president Barack Obama's peace offer in 2013. Since then, Abbas made no sign of moderating his position.

The third problem with Trump's decision to engage in peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians is that any hypothetical deal a hypothetical Palestinian leader would accept, would endanger Israel's very existence. So in the unlikely event that he reaches "the deal," his achievement will imperil Israel, rather than protect it.

**Again, Israel isn't the only party harmed by Trump's decision to embrace** the Palestinian dictator whose legal term of office ended eight years ago.

Trump himself is harmed by his move.

Trump's move is self-destructive for two reasons. First, he is setting himself up for failure. By positioning himself in the middle of a diplomatic initiative that will fail, he is guaranteeing that he will fail.

Trump's move also endangers the support of one of his key constituencies. Evangelical Christians in the US voted overwhelmingly for Trump in both the Republican primaries and in the general election. They rallied to his side due to Trump's pledge to appoint anti-abortion justices to the Supreme Court, and to support Israel. By initiating a diplomatic process that pits his administration against Israel, Trump places that support in jeopardy.

Then there is the US itself.

Trump's engagement with the PLO harms US core interests in two ways. First there is the issue of coalition building.

Consider for a moment the other anti-American autocrat Trump reached out to this week.

**Trump's recent invitation for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte** to visit him in Washington has been roundly criticized by Washington's foreign policy elite. Last year Duterte stunned Washington when he launched an expletive-filled denunciation of Obama and announced he is ditching the Philippines' longstanding alliance with the US in favor of an alliance with China.

Obama did nothing to convince Duterte to change course. While understandable from Obama's perspective, the fact is that the US needs to restore its alliance with Manila to secure its interests in the Far East.

The most acute threat the US now faces is North Korea's threat to launch a nuclear attack against America. Due to the passivity and hapless diplomacy of Trump's predecessors, Pyongyang may well have the means to carry out its threats.

To protect itself and its interests against North Korea, the US must build up and strengthen a coalition on allies in the Far East. The Philippines, with its strategic location and naval bases, is a key component of any US coalition against North Korea.

**In the longer term, the US has a vital interest in restoring its alliance** with the Philippines to contend with the rapidly rising strategic threat China poses to its interests.

Hence, despite the fact that Duterte is a potty-mouthed strongman and bigoted authoritarian, US interests require Trump to embrace him.

This then returns us to Abbas.

In contrast to Duterte, no US interest is served by embracing Abbas.

The US's chief challenge in the Middle East today is to form a coalition of states and actors that can help it stem Iran's rise as a nuclear-armed, terrorism- sponsoring regional power. The members of such a coalition are clear.

**Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE stand united today** in their opposition to Iran, its nuclear program, its support for Sunni and Shi'ite jihadists and terrorist groups, and its moves to establish an empire of vassals that spans westward through Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, southward to Yemen and eastward through Afghanistan.

The members of Iran's coalition include its Lebanese foreign legion Hezbollah, the Assad regime, the Shi'ite militias in Iraq, Hamas, other Sunni terrorist groups aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood and Yemen's Houthis.

By embracing the PLO, rather than build and strengthen the anti-Iranian alliance of Israel and the anti-Iranian, anti-Muslim-Brotherhood Arab states, Trump is tearing that alliance apart. In its place he is cobbling together an anti-Israel alliance comprised of Iran's allies in Qatar and to a degree in Turkey, the PLO, and at least passively, Hamas. This anti-Israel alliance is supported, grudgingly, by the Saudis, Egyptians and others who cannot

afford to be seen abandoning the Palestinians.

In other words, by embracing the PLO, Trump is strengthening Iran and its supporters at the expense of Israel, the US-aligned Sunni states and the US itself.

Moreover, by embracing the PLO Trump is directly undermining the US's goal of defeating terrorism in two key ways.

**First, Trump's move undermines congressional efforts to block further US funding** of Palestinian terrorism. Today, the Taylor Force Act, which enjoys massive support in both houses of Congress, is making its way through Congress. The act will block US funding of the PA due to its payments to terrorists and their families.

On Wednesday Trump pledged to keep those funds flowing. This pits him against the Republican-controlled Congress. Congressional sources relate that the Taylor Force Act is just the first move toward holding the PLO accountable for "its monstrous behavior."

To embrace Abbas, Trump will either have to veto the Taylor Force Act and other congressional initiatives or insist on receiving a presidential waiver for implementing them. Such waivers, like the presidential waiver to block the transfer of the US Embassy to Jerusalem, will ensure that US taxpayers will continue to incentivize Palestinian terrorism against Israel.

The second way Trump's decision to embrace the PLO harms the US's efforts to fight terrorism became clear this week with Hamas's new PR document. Hamas's new policy document departs not one iota from the Muslim Brotherhood group's devotion to the goal of destroying Israel.

**In adopting its new document, which calls for Israel to withdraw**, first and foremost, from Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, Hamas has adopted the PLO's wildly successful strategy of engaging in a dual campaign against Israel, waging terrorist war against Israel on the one hand while winning the support of the West on the other.

Hamas's document is a restatement of the PLO's 1974 phased plan for destroying Israel.

The PLO's plan – which it continues to implement today – involves accepting limited territorial gains from Israel. The

territory that Israel cedes in each phase will not become a Palestinian state. Rather it will serve as a launching ground for a new war against Israel.

Under the phased plan, the PLO adopted the ruse that it is interested in territorial compromise with Israel, in order to advance its actual goal of destroying Israel piece by piece.

**Trump's decision to become the fourth US president to welcome a PLO chief** to the White House, and his apparent decision to continue funding the terrorist group are new evidence of the wild success of the PLO's strategy.

Just as the Hamas document neither contradicts nor abrogates its genocidal pledge to eradicate Israel boldly asserted in its covenant, so the PLO's phased plan and its subsequent embrace of the "peace process" neither contradicted nor superseded its founding charter that calls for Israel's destruction.

PLO leaders simply stopped discussing their founding documents in their dealings with gullible Westerners keen to win peace prizes.

In a similar fashion, the Western media received news of Hamas's PR stunt with respect and interest. Given the reception, Hamas has every reason to expect that in due time, its transparent ruse will open the doors of the chanceries of Europe and beyond to its terror masters.

In other words, by embracing Abbas and the PLO on Wednesday, Trump empowered Hamas. He signaled to Hamas – and to every other terrorist group in the Middle East – that to receive international support, including from his administration, all you need to do is say that you are willing to follow the PLO's dual strategy of engaging simultaneously in terrorism and political warfare and subterfuge.

**There is no upside to Trump's move. It will not bring peace.**

It harms prospects for peace by empowering Abbas and his terrorist henchmen.

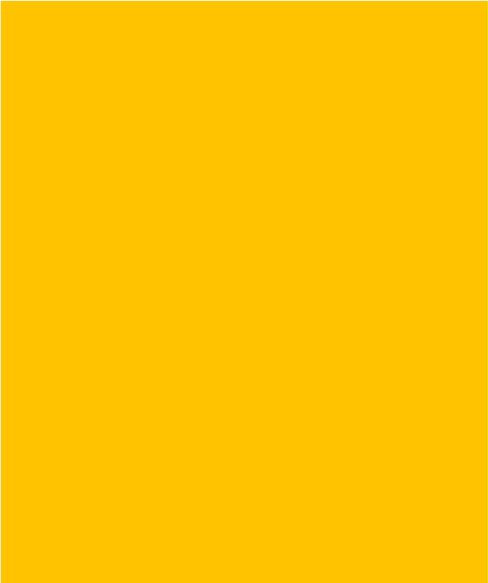
It will not strengthen Israel. It places Israel on a collision course with the Trump White House and undermines its regional posture.

It will not help the US to build a coalition to defeat Iran and its vassals. It subverts the coalition that already exists by embarrassing the Sunnis into siding with terrorists against Israel.

It does not advance the US war on terror. It empowers terrorists to kill Israelis and others by using US tax revenues to fund the PA, providing a blueprint for other terrorists to wage political war against the West and Israel.

And it harms Trump by alienating a key constituency and undermining his relations with Congress.

It is hard to see how Trump, now committed to this dangerous folly, can walk away from it. But to diminish the damage, a way must be found, quickly.



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Facts and Logic

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