

FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

February 19, 2019



Why Ilhan Omar is dead wrong about why the U.S. loves Israel

Dear Friend of FLAME:

When newly elected Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar accused U.S. elected officials of being influenced by Jewish lobby money, she got it horribly wrong on two big counts.

First, attempting to malign organizations like AIPAC (or FLAME, for that matter) for trying to influence American opinion and legislative outcomes is flat-out anti-Semitic. Influencing public opinion and the votes of legislators is called *politics*—and it's practiced by U.S. lobbying groups ranging from the NRA and Planned Parenthood to unions and hundreds of industry associations.

All these organizations raise and spend money to effect their agendas, but Omar made the mistake of a) attacking *Jewish* organizations and no others for this all-American practice (a double standard, which itself is *prima facie* anti-Semitic) and b) employing a classic anti-Semitic trope—the idea that "Jewish money" is dirty money, illegitimate money, the money of a nefarious cabal.

Omar's second mistake was that her premise is factually false: She seems to believe that U.S. love of Israel is solely or primarily the result of Jews twisting Americans' minds, brainwashing us so we support something we should logically hate.

But the truth is, the U.S. loves Israel for many powerful emotional and material reasons that far surpass the influence of AIPAC or FLAME or any of dozens of other Israel advocacy groups. In fact, the primary strategy—and supreme virtue—of these groups is that they fight lies by the media and people like Ilhan Omar. They in fact simply *tell the truth* about Israel.

Consider Israel's overwhelming popularity among Americans—an astounding 74% of us view the Jewish state favorably, a 17-year high point. This cannot be simply because of lobbying groups. Indeed, this approval stands in defiance of the daily carping of mainstream media, like the *New York Times*, against Israel, to say nothing of rising support among the left, including Ilhan Omar, for the hideous anti-Israel Boycott,

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YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...

Recognize Israel's Golan Heights Rule

It's time to affirm Israel's Golan Heights sovereignty—protecting U.S. interests and preventing Iranian and Hezbollah terrorists from overrunning the Middle East.

What are the facts?

Israel has treated Israel as its enemy since the founding of the Jewish state, using helicopter wars against Israel in 1948, 1967 and 1973—and losing each time. Israel took possession of the Golan Heights following the 1967 Six Day War. After constant refusal by Syria to return the Heights to Israel, Israel annexed the Heights in 1981. The Syrian state declared this act null and void since it was a puppet state under Russian and Iranian protection. Israel covered over this 49-square-mile territory with its own strategic security on its Syrian border—its walls, as well as for U.S. and world interests. These critical concerns make a compelling case for the United States and other world powers to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights now.

Israel's Golan Heights sovereignty keeps U.S. enemies at bay. The U.S. has opposed Syria's decision to return all-Annex since he assumed office in 2016, due to Israel's treatment of the non-profits, including the murder of half a million Syrian children—as well as his sponsorship of international crime and terrorism against U.S. civilians. Today, Syria's existence depends on its partnership with one of America's greatest enemies, Russia, and Iran. With the U.S. withdrawal of troops from Syria, Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights remains our strategic linchpin against Syria, Russia and especially, Iranian aggression.

Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights impedes Iranian imperialism. As the world's largest sponsor of global terrorism, Iran has received an estimated \$100 billion designed to give it a powerful legitimate land bridge from Lebanon through Hezbollah and Damascus to Syria. Both Iran and its Lebanese proxy, the designated terrorist group Hezbollah, have sworn to destroy Israel, and both have obtained nuclear technology to Hezbollah in order to launch the terror group's head against Israel from Lebanon. Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights allows Arabians to monitor Tehran's nuclear enrichment levels and defend their lives they can further threaten Israel and regional stability.

International law supports Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. While international law prohibits the acquisition of territory through aggressive conquest, it is universally agreed that Israel's control of the Golan Heights was the result of a defensive war. When Israel defeated Syria in 1967, no international arbitrators against aggression existed. What's more, the United States has even recognized territory seized in aggressive war, such as the Republic of Vietnam's sovereignty over both the north and south of the country, and India's legal access to the Portuguese territory of Goa.

Syria's Assad regime should be punished for annexing Syria. Syria has been one of the most brutal and bloody regimes in the Middle East, having experienced the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri, and national prosecutor chemicals killed 100,000 people, and committed such war crimes as rape and headhunting.

"Recognizing Israel's Golan Heights sovereignty would be a powerful form of justice."

To meet the needs of the Golan Heights people would reward the will of the Assad regime—whom recognizing Israel's sovereignty would be a powerful form of justice.

Syria's civil war and subsequent destruction in Russia and Iran have turned the Arab world into one of the most unstable in the Middle East—and likely to remain so for generations to come. In addition, Syria has steadily refused to consider peace with Israel to exchange for return of the Golan Heights. Israel has now controlled the Golan Heights for 52 years—more than twice as long as Syria's 27 years. Moreover, Syria's rule over the Golan Heights was marred by constant attacks on neighboring Israel. Israel's rule has ensured peace and stability. It's time for U.S. to recognize Israel's legitimate, legal and internationally-recognized sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

This message has been published and paid for by

FLAME

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Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

What then explains the strong support of Americans and the U.S. Congress for Israel?

Two main reasons emerge—one of which rests on deep-seated shared cultural values, and another that is grounded in U.S. diplomatic and military interests.

Above all, Americans love Israel because *we see ourselves* in the aspirations of the Jewish people and the values that drive them. Americans and Jews are largely people of the Bible, both of which groups still honor the values of the Old Testament. No wonder that by far the largest bloc of Israel supporters in the U.S. is *evangelical Christians*.

But Americans also love Israel because Israel so emulates America. Israel is a feisty start-up nation, borne of a fierce war of independence against overwhelming odds, just as the U.S. was. Israel is also a proud beacon of democracy, civil liberties and the rule of law—the only such nation in the Middle East—just as the U.S. has exemplified for the rest of the world.

But Israel's value to the U.S. stretches far beyond emotional identification to concrete material benefits that America receives from its relationship with the Jewish state. In fact, the U.S. is the world's largest investor in Israel—and we receive outsize value and returns for that investment.

In fact, though Israel is the second largest beneficiary of American security aid, it receives no economic aid. (Afghanistan is the single largest beneficiary of both U.S. economic and security aid.)

While some voices complain about the \$3.3 billion in American military aid Israel receives annually, the reasons for and rewards of this investment for the U.S. are compelling. Here's the short list (and there are many more):

- Unlike most beneficiaries of U.S. aid—including European states and Japan, as well as Middle Eastern countries, like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria—no American troops have ever been stationed in Israel.
- Israel invests all the security aid it receives with American defense contractors, purchasing existing weaponry or funding development of advanced weapons the U.S. can also utilize (such as the two Iron Dome missile defense installations the U.S. recently purchased from Israel).
- Israel is reputed to be "America's aircraft carrier in the Middle East," providing superior military might—including the most powerful air force in the region—fully supportive of U.S. security interests.
- Israel has kept Syria, Iran and Lebanon in check, contributing mightily to stability in the region and keeping deployment of U.S. troops to a minimum. Indeed, Israel has missiles that can blanket the Middle East and reach as far as Russia.
- Israel's intelligence service is unparalleled in the Middle East and assists the U.S. and European nations in gathering secret information about our mutual enemies (such as exposing Iranian nuclear weapon plans and assassination plots in Belgium). Israel also jointly (with the U.S.) developed the Stuxnet malware that infiltrated Iran's nuclear

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weapons facilities in 2010.

In short, if Israel's value is judged objectively, the U.S. doesn't need lobbying or PR efforts to justify its 70-year love of Israel. Unfortunately, Israel is not judged objectively. Bias—often anti-Semitic—clouds too many assessments of Israel in the media and increasingly in the halls of Congress, as Omar's anti-Zionist outburst demonstrates.

Indeed, it behooves Israel's supporters to be activists—speaking out in letters to the editor, swelling the crowds at pro-Israel rallies, and donating financially to organizations that hammer away, day in and day out, delivering the truth about Israel to the general public and our elected representatives.

Please forward this FLAME Hotline to your friends, family and fellow congregants, so they, too, can understand Israel's value to the U.S.—and why Americans love Israel—so they, too, can help us tell Israel's true story.

I hope you'll also quickly visit FLAME's lively [new Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below, which describes FLAME's recent *hasbarah* campaign asserting the need for Israel to maintain its sovereignty over the strategically critical Golan Heights on the border of Syria.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

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

P.S. After Syria used its control over the Golan Heights to attack Israel with thousands of rockets and sniper bullets—then belligerently invaded Israel in 1967—the Jewish state defeated Syria and ejected it from the Heights. Syria has refused to negotiate peace in exchange for the Golan Heights for all these decades. No wonder Israel annexed this strategically important territory in 1981. Today, the Golan Heights gives Israel the ability to protect Middle East security against Iran, Hezbollah and Syria. It's time for the U.S. and the world community to affirm Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. That's why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called "[Recognize Israel's Golan Heights Rule](#)." I hope you'll review this hard-hitting paid editorial, which began running last month—including in the *New York Times*. It supports efforts by bipartisan members of Congress to officially recognize the Golan Heights as Israeli territory. In addition to running in mainstream media, this editorial will be 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, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay focused on Israel's critical role in protecting U.S. interests in the region—as well as protecting itself.

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