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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

March 24, 2020



## U.S. Presidential Election Will Test the Commitment of Jewish Democrats to Israel

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Last July, Israel destroyed a building illegally constructed by non-Israeli Arabs in the eastern part of Jerusalem, abutting Israel's security barrier, which blocks terrorists from infiltrating the Jewish capital from Judea-Samaria (aka "the West Bank").

Israel commonly destroys residences that are built illegally or are the homes of known terrorists, a practice whose legitimacy has been consistently affirmed by Israeli courts, which in fact more often rule to thwart Israel's right-leaning ruling parties in such matters.

Nonetheless, several weeks ago, more than 60 Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo demanding assurance that Israel is not using U.S. military equipment to demolish Palestinian homes.

This gesture was clearly meant to express disapproval of Israel's legal measures to ensure the safety of its citizens, especially since it's unclear whether any U.S. military equipment is being used for such law-enforcement purposes at all.

This was not the first time House Democrats chastened Israel via the State Department. Last November, 106 of them signed a message protesting the Department's ruling that Israel's settlements in Judea-Samaria are not illegal under international law (which they in fact *are not*).

These actions—and many others recently—highlight a growing trend in which Israel is losing its traditional bipartisan support, due exclusively to increasing numbers of Democrat legislators distancing themselves from or taking outwardly critical stands against the Jewish state.

Two leading Democratic Presidential contenders—Warren and Sanders—even advocated cutting U.S. aid to Israel if Jewish settlements in Judea-Samaria are not halted.

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**Aid to Israel Makes the U.S. Safer**  
 U.S. aid to Israel is really not aid at all. The \$5.8 billion sent annually to Israel is an investment in our own country's security, returning many times its cost.

**What are the facts?**  
 Several thousand professors have proposed withholding U.S. aid to Israel unless it allows more to support a Palestinian state, such as by recognizing Jerusalem as the Jewish capital. The White House has rejected the proposal. The aid program is U.S. aid to Israel and not the responsibility of Israel's settlements in a Palestinian-occupied area.

**U.S. aid to Israel is really not aid at all. The \$5.8 billion sent annually to Israel is an investment in our own country's security, returning many times its cost.**

**Linkage of U.S. aid to a Palestinian state is misguided.**  
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This trend should be a wake-up call to Jewish Democrats who support Israel. For the last three years, these Jews have experienced severe cognitive dissonance: They've watched in horror, even as Donald Trump has fulfilled every major, decades-long demand of American pro-Israel advocates.

Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, defunding of UNWRA, leaving the Iran Deal, recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, slashing financial support of the Palestinians' pay-for-slay program, declaring Judea-Samaria "disputed" land (not "Palestinian territory"), implementing U.S. education funding policies that punish anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism—Trump's accomplishments in support of Israel are objectively unmatched by any American President.

Notwithstanding, the hate many Jewish Democrats feel toward Trump—for his boorishness, illiberality, unapologetic lying, misogyny and even some of his actual policies—blind them to the fact that Trump has become Israel's best friend. They have refused to take pleasure in Trump's support of Israel—and in many cases cursed him for it.

But now things have changed. Left-wing Democrats—like Ocasio-Cortez, Tlaib, Omar, Warren and Sanders—have transferred anti-Trump animus over to Israel. If Trump *likes* Israel, the logic goes, it's acceptable now to reveal our opposition to Israel.

As the Presidential election approaches, it seems clear that neither Sanders nor Warren will be running against Trump. While Joe Biden has a long history of sympathy toward Israel, he was also Vice President during one of the rockiest periods in the U.S.-Israel relationship in decades.

Admittedly, as bad as Obama treated Israel—excluding Israel from the Iran nuclear negotiations, allowing the infamous U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334 declaring Israel's communities in eastern Jerusalem and Judea-Samaria ("Palestinian territories") to be illegal—today's ultra-left Democrats make Obama look like a member of Netanyahu's Likud party.

So, the choice for most Jewish Democrats in November will not be anti-Israel Sanders vs. pro-Israel Trump. It will be guardedly pro-Israel Biden vs. fervently pro-Israel Trump. Given that choice, it's fair to predict that most Jewish Democrats will stick with their party—even as it slides into increasingly hostile anti-Israel positions.

The greater question, then, is not whom pro-Israel Jewish Democrats will vote for in November. Rather, it's what they will do today and over the next seven months to rescue their party from the impending anti-Israel takeover, led by the likes of Sanders, Warren, AOC, Tlaib and Omar.

It seems certain, for example, that this year's Democratic convention will be the scene of fierce battles over the party's stance on Israel in its official platform.

Despite Biden's past support of Israel, he's not strong (or determined) enough to beat back those on his left wing who want to declare Israel's communities in eastern Jerusalem and in Judea-Samaria illegal, who want to cut U.S. funding to Israel—or who perhaps wish to characterize Israel's policies toward the Palestinians as "racist" (echoing a recent Sanders trope).

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 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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One thing should be certain to every Jewish Democrat—a fact they must own—is that they are about to lose their party to powerful forces that threaten Israel's well-being and even survival. Nobody is arguing here that you vote for Trump. That's a complex personal choice.

No, the challenge today to Jewish Democrats who claim to support Israel is, what are you doing to stop the complete takeover of your party by anti-Israel forces? What will you do to keep support of Israel bipartisan in this country?

Any pro-Israel Jew who allows without furious protest the hijacking of their Democrat Party by the rising anti-Zionist juggernaut . . . will be guilty of betrayal of their people and their ancestral homeland, Eretz Yisrael.

I urge you, in conversations with friends, family and colleagues, to clarify that what's at stake in the coming election is not simply whether Trump or Biden wins—but rather, whether the United States will continue its bipartisan support of what Obama frequently called “our unbreakable bond with Israel.” If Jewish Democrats fail to exert sufficient influence on their party, the fate of the Jewish state and the Jewish people will be harmed irreparably.

In addition, I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to visit FLAME's lively [new Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—forcefully describing Israel's critical strategic value to America.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

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

P.S. Many uninformed Americans—including some politicians—believe that foreign aid to Israel is a mistake. The anti-Semites believe Jews are extorting money from U.S. taxpayers or that Israel “doesn't need the money.” These opinions, of course, are mistaken. U.S. aid to Israel is no gift: It's a wise investment that repays American taxpayers many times over—in fact delivering more benefits than most other U.S. foreign aid. That's why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called “**Aid to Israel Makes the U.S. Safer**” I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which will run on March 29 in the Sunday *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. It lays out the many contributions Israel makes to U.S. security that far exceed their relatively modest cost. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Pence 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 realistic policies in relation to Israel, the Palestinians and the entire Middle East.

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