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November 17, 2026



Israel's General Staff Chief LTG Eyal Zamir welcomes CENTCOM Admiral Brad Cooper in Tel Avivr, expressing the close collaboration and extraordinary military results achieved by US and Israeli forces over decades, but especially recently, crushing Iran's threat to the Middle East.

Why Cutting U.S. Aid to Israel Hurts American Interests More Than Israel's

Word count: 982; estimated reading time: 3.7 minutes

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

President Trump's recent announcement that he will immediately cut U.S. military aid to Israel was a desperate attempt to jolt midterm voting to the Republicans' favor. This hail-Mary effort to sway votes failed miserably—Democrats gained control of both chambers, and El-Sayed won his Senate race.

While the existing U.S. 2016 memorandum of understanding provides $3.8 billion annually to Israel through fiscal year 2028, it's unclear when the cut will be implemented. No matter: Contrary to popular assumptions, its effects will actually harm U.S. defense and economic interests more than it will Israel's. In short, Trump's decision was a mistake, and every indication is, it will be a net boon to Israel.

Benefits of the aid cut to the U.S. will largely be political and illusory. This aid reduction will primarily provide vague comfort to hardline critics of Israel's defensive wars and the U.S.-Israel relationship. But contrary to the false message of Abdul El-Sayed's "Banana Libel" campaign commercial, it will not benefit U.S. taxpayers in any tangible way. Indeed, the $3.8 billion Israel aid package represents only one-twentieth of one percent of the annual U.S. budget—a relative pittance, not nearly enough to affect the price of supermarket commodities. In short, the antisemitic trope that Israel is responsible for Americans' high cost of living is simply a lie.

Likewise, in terms of total foreign aid grants, Israel represents only a fraction of the U.S.'s $48 billion annual total. Israel's grant stands well below the $6.75 billion we provide Ukraine and the nearly $4.9 billion we send to seven African nations—for which we receive not a penny nor any military benefits in return.

Negative impact to the U.S. of aid cuts to Israel will be concrete. It's mistaken to see aid to Israel as a gift, since it really represents a high-return investment. Nearly all the $3.8 billion grant to Israel is spent in the United States on American-made systems, supporting hundreds of U.S. firms. Surely a large portion of that will be lost, robbing the U.S. defense industry of significant revenue and jobs.

In addition, the aid cut will inhibit U.S. intelligence gathering and strategic military options, especially in the Middle East. As part of the U.S.-Israel partnership, Israel conducts extraordinary espionage on Iranian leadership, nuclear and missile programs, terrorist networks, and regional threats that former U.S. Air Force Intelligence Chief Gen. George Keegan once equated to the output of five CIAs.

Finally, Israel's use of American weapons also contributes ROI to the aid investment, since Israel serves as a real-world laboratory for improving the systems it buys. Operational feedback from the F-35 fighter jet and other platforms has resolved glitches, shortened development cycles, and improved weapons performance without risking U.S. lives. Joint missile-defense programs and co-development work to further leverage Israeli innovation. The U.S. is currently a customer of Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system, co-developed with the U.S. Missile Defense Agency and American firm Raytheon.

Most importantly, Israel has proven military might and determination to help defeat America's enemies in the Middle East, as it did by demolishing Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons site in Iraq, Iran's leadership and military infrastructure in the 12-Day Iran War, as well as terrorist groups in Lebanon, Yemen and Syria.

Israel requires no boots on the ground—saving the U.S. tens of billions. The U.S. currently—and for decades—has stationed hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops in Europe, Japan, Afghanistan, Iraq and other former war zones to maintain regional stability. Currently the U.S. spends some $40 billion annually to

maintain approximately 130,000 American troops in Europe and Japan. It spends nothing for troops in Israel, as Israel's armed forces defend themselves and fight U.S. enemies single-handedly.

Above all, the Israel Defense Forces work shoulder-to-shoulder with the American military on major combat missions. No wonder some 80 retired U.S. generals and admirals, including former CENTCOM Commander General Frank McKenzie, wrote an open letter in which they asserted, "A strong Israel is vital to the United States' national security, and it is imperative that America unequivocally stand by this indispensable ally."

U.S. aid cut will lead to greater Israeli independence with low economic impact. Israel's political echelon generally views reduced reliance on the U.S. as desirable—granting it greater foreign policy flexibility, free of restraints from Washington's often fickle political leaders. Moreover, Israel's 2026 nominal GDP stands at about $747 billion, with projected growth of 4.5 percent—the highest among advanced European economies. As Israel's economy continues to grow at record rates, the U.S. contribution makes an ever-*decreasing* impact—now only about one-half of one percent of Israel's annual GDP.

Nonetheless, we shouldn't underestimate the global *psychological power* of Israel's intimate defense partnership with the world's mightiest superpower. Losing the symbolic clout of U.S. backing on the world stage will make Israel's already challenging diplomatic job even more difficult.

Finally, while Israel will reap significant benefits as a result of growing independence from the U.S., it certainly will not welcome increased hostility from a Democratic House and Senate, let alone a possible antagonist president after the 2028 elections.

Regardless of the aid cut's impact and shifting political winds in Washington, Israel will power forward. The Jewish state's best strategy for coping with this challenge will be, as always, moving from strength to strength. What doesn't kill Israel makes her stronger—and as Israel's Jews have learned over the last 78 years, no one can protect *Am Yisrael* better than an indefatigable Israel itself.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's office has already framed the emerging future as a move "from aid to partnership," reflecting Israel's economic maturity. History supports the expectation that Israel will absorb this change and even improve its global position. The larger question for Washington is: Will abandoning a high-return strategic relationship with one of our most loyal and powerful allies in pursuit of short-term political relief advance American interests? The evidence suggests *it will not*.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,
James Sinkinson, President
Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, we at FLAME are constantly fighting to defeat our enemies' slanders against Israel. But I hope you agree that it's *just as important* for us lovers of Israel to spread the word about the amazing triumphs of Zionism. I believe that in addition to defending Israel from media and politicians' lies, we need also to help the world understand Israel's righteous cause and its power for good—we need as well to trumpet Israel's miraculous achievements. God knows, Americans will never learn about Israel's good deeds in mainstream media, like the *New York Times*, CNN or NPR! I believe we need to stand tall because

of who the Jewish people are . . . be proud of what Israel does for the world. For this reason, I hope you'll approve of FLAME's new *hasbarah*—our explanatory message called "How Zionism's Miracle Benefits Us All." With your agreement and support, FLAME will soon begin running this message as a paid editorial ad in major mainstream newspapers nationwide. This ad tells the truth about Zionism's unmatched power to create economic prosperity, global security, world health and democratic freedoms. It also explains why the enemies of Zionism are not just foes of Israel, they are also the enemies of human progress. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME is about to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal, New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune, Orlando Sentinel, Houston Chronicle, Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us with a donation.