



Former AIPAC Official Says Israel Should get no US Aid without Ending ‘Oppressive’ Settlements

Par [Philip Weiss](#)

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Here is another sign that what had been quiet disagreement between American Jews and Israel is breaking out in the open, thanks to the approaching jubilee year of the occupation. Citing “nearly half a century” of occupation, a former AIPAC official comes out for conditioning US aid to Israel on that country agreeing to freeze its illegal settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem. He says forthrightly that Israel’s “oppressive and discriminatory settlement policies in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem continue unabated.”

Greg Slabodkin, of Buffalo, is described as “a former opposition researcher for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee,” or AIPAC, in his [piece in the Hill](#). The article is pegged to the news that the Obama administration is going to sign an aid package with Israel giving it \$40 billion over ten years, “the biggest U.S. military aid package ever given to any country.”

Under Netanyahu’s watch, Israel clearly has no intention of ending its occupation. Consequently, the United States should be exerting pressure on Israel to persuade the Netanyahu government to abandon its settlement activities, not rewarding the Jewish state with increased military aid.

The Obama administration should make it clear that there are strings attached to U.S. aid and that Israel’s failure to comply with a settlement freeze will have financial penalties.

Slabodkin is for the two-state solution, but he repeatedly slams the “occupation.” Recall that the Democratic Party was incapable of even mentioning the occupation in its party platform.

His piece includes a jab at Netanyahu as a madman:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who recently formed the most right-wing government in Israel’s history, has driven U.S.-Israel relations to their lowest point in a generation by undermining the prospects for peace with the Palestinians by entrenching the Israeli occupation, which has lasted nearly half a century.

Clearly the Israeli discourse and the U.S. Jewish discourse are feeding one another here. Centrist Israeli Zionists like Moshe Ya’alon and Yitzhak Herzog have been so openly critical of the fascistic political culture in Israel that they are giving American Jews power to speak out.

Daniel Birnbaum, [the American-born head of SodaStream, has also](#) issued an attack on Netanyahu to the Times of Israel, saying that Netanyahu has encouraged the “evil manifestations” of the conflict between Palestinians and Jews.

It pains me to say that I believe this administration is nurturing the conflict in all its evil manifestations. They nurture the hate and the boycott and they nurture separatism.

Birnbaum says that Netanyahu made certain that 74 SodaStream workers could not get permits to travel from the West Bank to the Negev to work for his company so that Netanyahu could blame the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) for their unemployment.

Bibi [Netanyahu] is systematically spreading hate within Israel between Jews and Arabs and between Orthodox and secular.

With such a separatist track record, it’s no wonder that he won’t embrace a straightforward solution to lower the flames and build a bridge to coexistence. Apparently our 74 Palestinians represent a threat to his agenda.

This is very much what [Yakov Hirsch wrote here some weeks ago](#), that Israelis are flipping out over Netanyahu’s nihilist Zionism, which offers no path to a peaceful future and embraces a fascistic ideology that Palestinians just want to kill Jews.

Yet another sign that Israel is cracking apart. Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman has called President Obama a Neville Chamberlain, for a deal the world made a year ago. What is Jeffrey Goldberg going to say?



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