

U-TURN IN AMERICAN ISRAELI POLICY

Tom's Perspectives

by Thomas Ice

The first six months of the Barack Obama administration has witnessed a 180-degree U-turn in American foreign policy toward Israel when compared with most of the previous presidents of the last fifty years. Obama promised "change" and that is exactly what he has produced in the area of American relations with Israel. Candidate Obama also declared that his administration would implement a new friendliness by the United States toward the other nations of the world. Since entering the White House, Obama has been friendly to our enemies, especially Muslim nations, but has taken our previously warm relations with Israel and placed them in a deep freeze.

THE NEW ANTI-SEMITISM

A recent poll of Israeli citizens indicated that those who had a favorable view of Obama is only about a third of the nation.¹ The basic reason for such an uncharacteristically low view of Obama by Israelis is that the American President treats Israel unfairly. For example, during the post-election protests in Iran Obama said that he did not speak out in support of the protesters because he did not want to interfere with the self-determination of another sovereign nation. Yet, at the same time Obama was speaking out against so-called Israeli settlements and telling them to cease all construction in those areas, which even includes significant parts of Jerusalem. So much for the belief that people have a right to self-determination!

It appears that from the very beginning of his administration Obama has brought nothing but change concerning American dealings with Israel. The United States and Israel have been best friends for a long time and now that relationship is being reversed by our current administration. The new American relationship with Israel increasingly fits the definition of the new anti-Semitism where one treats the collective (Israel) with similar unfairness that the Nazis treated individual Jews. In a cover story on the new anti-Semitism, Abraham Foxman said the following:

Today several "isms" inhabit the world still. Among the most pernicious are anti-Semitism and its 20th-century version, anti-Zionism. These "isms" are graffiti on the wall of history, emblems of a poison still potent and raw, evidenced, most recently by the remarks of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Bin Mohammed, who said, "Today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them." Mohammed's words were widely condemned. But such comments obscure a deeper truth about this new strain of anti-Semitism, which is not that it is directed at individual Jews or even at Judaism itself. It is directed, rather against the Jewish collective, the modern State of Israel.

Just as historic anti-Semitism has denied individual Jews the right to live as equal members of society, anti-Zionism would deny the collective expression of the Jewish people, the state of Israel, the right to live as an equal member of the family of nations. Israel's policies are thus subjected to criticism that cause it to be singled out when others in similar circumstances escape any criticism at all. Surely if any other country were bleeding from terrorism as Israel is today, there would be no question of its right to defend

itself. But Israel's efforts merely to protect its own citizens are routinely portrayed as aggression.²

That is the point, that Israel, simply because they are a Jewish nation, is treated differently than all the other nations of the world. Such anti-Israel or anti-Zionism, whatever one wants to call it, is unquestionably anti-Semitism. As Bible-believing Christians, we know that anti-Semitism is caused by Satan himself, (Rev. 12), as a result of his conflict with God. Therefore, we are not surprised that all the nations of the world will eventually turn against Israel and seek to wipe the off the map (Zech. 12—14). The stage is being set in our own day as Israel's historic ally, the United States, is now turning against her in the name of peace.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

When Obama speaks to Jewish groups, his teleprompter tells him that he is all for Israel. He speaks in platitudes and generalities and avoids specifics, as is his custom on many issues. After all, we are told, his two closest advisors are Jewish: David Axelrod and Rahm Israel Emanuel. Emanuel even served in the Israel Defense Forces when he was younger, it is correctly noted. However, one should take into account that some of the most anti-Israel, anti-Zion people on the planet are Jewish. Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein are notorious examples of what some Jewish people call self-hating Jews who are militantly anti-Israel. Also, many Jews and non-Jews alike believe that they are pro-Israel by trying to solve the Middle East Crisis by giving away significant parts of the covenant land of Israel. So it does not mean a whole lot to know that Obama has close Jewish advisors; it matters what those individuals believe about Israel. The consensus is that the Obama administration has taken American policy toward Israel in the direction of a sharp turn toward the President's Islamic roots.

Pro-Israel, Jewish-American columnist Daniel Pipes speaks of "the Obama administration's 'rapid and harsh turn against Israel'" that "has had three quick, predictable and counterproductive results. These point to further difficulties ahead."³ Pipes predictions are as follows:

First result: Barack Obama's decision to get tough with Israel translates into escalating Palestinian demands. . . .

Second result: The US government takes marching orders from Abbas and passes them along to the Israelis. . . .

Third result: The US demand has prompted an Israeli resolve not to bend but to reiterate its traditional positions. . . .⁴

"From May 27, when the Obama administration began its attack on Israeli 'settlements,' it has displayed an unexpected naiveté; did this administration really have to relearn for itself the well-known fact that Washington fails when bossing around its main Middle Eastern ally,?" wonders Pipes? "It then displayed rank incompetence by picking a fight on an issue where an Israeli consensus exists—not over a remote 'outpost' but a Jerusalem quarter boasting a Zionist pedigree back to 1891."⁵

Jewish conservative columnist for *The Jerusalem Post*, Caroline Glick notes that, "There is a national consensus in Israel that preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons is the most important and urgent national-security challenge facing the country."⁶ "It is no wonder, then, that Israelis of all political stripes are deeply disturbed by the Obama administration's Middle East policies. Since taking office,

President Obama has made it clear that preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons is not a major concern for him," she opines. "Rather, he strives to open diplomatic relations with Iran in the inexplicable hope that Iran can be appeased out of a nuclear program that has already brought it to the cusp of regional hegemony."⁷ Glick further notes as follows:

Israelis are mystified by this position. With Iran's proxy Hamas in charge of Gaza, and ascendant in the West Bank, it is clear that any Palestinian state that is established in the near future will be an Iranian-aligned terror state at war with Israel. That is, while administration officials claim "the only solution is a two-state solution," Israelis recognize that the rapid establishment of a Palestinian state will only cause more war, terror, and regional instability.

Moreover, statements by Biden and Defense Secretary Robert Gates expressing the administration's opposition to an Israeli military strike against Iran's nuclear installations, together with Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller's recent call for Israel to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, have led many Israelis to perceive a strategic and moral blindness informing the administration's views about Israel and Iran. Apparently, for the administration, there is no difference between Israel, a stalwart U.S. ally and fellow democracy, and Iran—a terror-supporting, human-rights-violating, self-declared enemy of the United States that has been attacking U.S. citizens, interests, and allies since the 1979 Islamic revolution, and has repeatedly called for Israel to be eradicated.⁸

The Obama administration is clearly turning a cold shoulder to Israel, while at the same time warming up to the enemies of Israel and the United States. There is no doubt that this current American administration is moving our nation into league with the general consensus of the world, which is anti-Israel. Just as when the British Empire turned her back on her promises to the Jewish people after World War I and went into decline, so it appears that the United States is following a similar path to ruin.

CONCLUSION

Support for Israel in the United States is still fairly high, probably around two out of three Americans are positive toward Israel. It is still true that a large majority of American Christians are still supportive of the modern state of Israel; however, it appears that the voices of various kinds of replacement theology are getting louder if not more numerous. No doubt that the leadership of the mainline denominations is militantly anti-Israel and are aggressively seeking ways to wield that influence. It is clear that this world is moving to the place foretold by Jeremiah the prophet when he said of Israel, "Because they have called you an outcast, saying: 'It is Zion; no one care for her'" (Jer. 30:17b). We can be confident that the Lord will redeem His remnant Israel, for He says, "At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people" (Jer. 31:1).

So whose side are you going to be on in this matter? Are you going to follow the increasingly shrill voice of the anti-Israel crowd who chant, "Death to Israel"? Are you going to follow those within Christendom who say, "God has cast off His people, whom He foreknew"? I don't know about you, but I will take my stand with the God of Israel who will one day soon redeem His people whom He foreknew. God plus one makes an overwhelming majority concerning any matter. Maranatha!

ENDNOTES

¹ Caroline Glick, "Washington Has Abandoned its Obligations," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, electronic edition, (May 17, 2009),

www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20090517_Washington_has_abandoned_its_obligations.html.

² Abraham Foxman, "The New Anti-Semitism," *U. S. News & World Report* (November 3, 2003), p. 44.

³ Daniel Pipes, "Obama and Israel, into the abyss," *The Jerusalem Post*, electronic edition (July 23, 2009), www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1248277865693&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull.

⁴ Pipes, "Obama and Israel."

⁵ Pipes, "Obama and Israel."

⁶ Glick, "Washington Has Abandoned."

⁷ Glick, "Washington Has Abandoned."

⁸ Glick, "Washington Has Abandoned."