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S c h e c h t e r S e z



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An Open Letter to My Fellow Jews and to All Americans

During my 41-year career as a member of the Anti-Defamation League's professional staff and from the day I retired in 1993 to this very moment, I operated on a simple, fundamental principle, namely, if anywhere in the world a Jew is persecuted solely because he or she is a Jew, it automatically becomes my personal problem because there but for the grace of G-d go I.

To the best of my knowledge, none of my relatives were victims of the Holocaust, but I am the beneficiary of decisions made by my grandparents in the 1890's to flee Eastern Europe and come to the United States.

This issue of SSEZ is directed not so much at President Barack Obama from whom I never expected anything good, particularly with respect to the Nation of Israel and the five-and-a-half million Jews who live there, it is directed primarily at America's Jews, an estimated seventy-eight percent of whom voted for Obama in 2008. I also firmly believe Obama will get the lion's share of votes Jews will cast in the 2012 presidential election. Maybe not 78%, but more than 50%.

There's an old political saying that Jews earn like Episcopalians and vote like Puerto Ricans. This saying has an East Coast flavor and would now be stated as "...vote like Latinos and African-Americans," given the changes in the American political profile. This attachment to the Democratic Party traces back to the passionate love Americas's Jews developed for President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 because of the liberal things he said and did during the Great Depression and his vigorous opposition to Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan. Before 1932, large numbers of Jews voted Socialist and even Republican, the party of Abraham Lincoln, because in New York where more than a million Jews lived, the Democrats were under the control of corrupt Tammany Hall.

That changed with Roosevelt's victory in 1932.

Right now there is great turmoil in the American Jewish community and especially in Israel because of the speech President Obama delivered at the State Department a few days ago when he made reference to the 1967 borders as the starting point for land swaps between Israel and the Palestinians. As Rabbi Shmuley Boteach just wrote, ". . . the president's claims to naivete are ridiculous. To his detractors Obama is many things, but he is no fool He knew full well that to publicly call for a return to the '67 lines was a bomb waiting to detonate. Obama knew the demand to return to the pre-Six Day War borders spoke directly to the Palestinian narrative." I agree completely with Rabbi Boteach.

Come back with me to election night, 2008. As the results poured in from around the nation clearly indicating the Democrats would win the White House and both Houses of Congress, I spoke with a long time personal friend, a very important and influential Congressman who was smiling with each new vote posting. I told him his smiles would turn to tears when Obama shafts Israel. (I was more blunt than "shafts.") He asked, "what if you are wrong?" I said I would apologize in writing, but I knew I would not be wrong.

When Obama did his 1967 shtick, Mort Zuckerman, publisher of U.S. News & World Report, angrily accused Obama of "betraying Israel." Former Democratic Congressman and famous New York City former Mayor Ed Koch said he will not vote for Obama in 2012. Of course, November 2012 is almost eighteen months away and anything can happen.

If you watched Obama's face and body language when Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke at the White House when Obama had to listen to a lecture about the realities in the Middle East, he was obviously boiling mad as Netanyahu in essence told him he didn't know what he is talking about. As I watched Obama, it seemed to me that Obama was thinking about how he could get back at Netanyahu and at Israel for having had to suffer before the entire nation like a school boy being lectured to by his teacher.

Several liberal commentators and columnists were outraged and said that Netanyahu was ungracious and inappropriate for delivering those comments in a public setting. It must also have been very painful for Obama even though he was in England to hear about the brilliant, passionate, and informative speech Netanyahu delivered to a joint meeting of the Congress to genuine thunderous applause and getting about twenty-five standing ovations from Democrats and Republicans alike.

And good old Hillary Clinton, our esteemed Secretary of State, looks like an absolute fool have said a week or so ago that Bashar Assad, the murdering, brutal dictator of Syria is a "reformer." Yes, she called Assad a "reformer." How can anyone ever believe them?

When Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid spoke to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), he was magnificent. I never thought I

would say this about Senator Reid, but he was outstanding in his understanding of what is at stake in the Middle East between Israel and her Arab Neighbors, and he said it forcefully and convincingly. Maybe the man in the White House ought to sit down with his Senate Majority Leader and have him explain the situation between Israel and the Arabs.

Again and again, we Jews are asked to explain the devotion of so many Jews to the Democratic Party which has paid and still pays homage to the likes of Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton who in my opinion are enemies of the Jewish people and of Israel. Would they be so tolerant of the equivalent of Jackson and Sharpton in the Republican party? Of course not. Our Liberalism came to us with our mother's milk. For most American Jews, their synagogue is the Democratic party; their faith is Liberalism; and their Moses is Obama.

TO MY FELLOW AMERICANS: Please know that the hatred of Israel in the Arab world is equaled only by their hatred of you and of America. The Jews may be their first target, but all of us are on their hit list. The 9/11 attack was an attack on America!

For the record, Israel gave up land for peace. It gave back the Sinai Peninsula. Now there is the possibility of serious threats from the Sinai. What did Egypt's President Anwar Sadat get for signing a peace treaty with Israel? He got back the Sinai Peninsula, a Nobel Prize for Peace, and deadly bullets from members of his own army.

Israel gave Gaza to the Palestinians. What did it get in return? Thousands of deadly rockets raining down on its citizens. If President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority repudiates his alliance with Hamas, he knows he will suffer Sadat's fate - a hail of bullets.

Israel also gave back territory in Southern Lebanon. What did it get in return? Thousands of deadly rockets fired by Hezbollah on Israel.

Dear Friends: How long would we sit quietly while thousands of rockets poured down on us from Mexico and from Canada? Now you know what Israel is living with.

A friend sent me a marvelous cartoon of Obama meeting with the Queen of England who says to him, "I believe the borders of Britain and the U.S. should be based on the pre-1776 lines with mutually agreed swaps." One picture is sure worth a thousand words.

Remember: Be Well Because All Else Is Bubkiss

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