

## The Facts Tell the True Story of Obama's Israel Record

*By former Representative Paul Hodes (D-NH)*



This campaign season we've heard a number of claims made about President Barack Obama's Israel record that simply do not square with the facts. Since his first day in office, Obama has been a consistent and stalwart friend to Israel, amassing a record of ac-

complishments that place him among Israel's best friends who have served in the Oval Office. That's not just rhetoric; it's borne out by the facts.

Obama has provided Israel with more military assistance than any of his predecessors. As I witnessed while serving in Congress, upon his taking office, Obama restored Israel's qualitative military edge -- an advantage which diminished during President George W. Bush's tenure. In addition, Obama provided Israel with supplemental funding for the Iron Dome missile system that continues to shield Israelis living within range of Hamas's rockets. He also sold Israel bunker-busting bombs, which Bush adamantly opposed. Indeed there are plenty of facts supporting his words in his State of the Union address in January, when the President noted that his commitment to Israel's security is "iron-clad."

Diplomatically, Obama has been squarely in Israel's corner, especially when it comes to uniting the world against Iran's nuclear program. While critics incorrectly and offensively charge "appeasement,"

this President has led and imposed the toughest sanctions movement against Iran ever. The sanctions have crippled Iran's economy and left the country diplomatically isolated; they continue to send the message that the Obama Administration and the international community will not tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran.

I remember the President's impassioned speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September; I know Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu does too, as he praised Obama for wearing his support for Israel like a "badge of honor" that day. Based on his profuse thanks, I know Netanyahu also remembers when Obama devoted himself to rescuing Israel's diplomats in Cairo. But did you know that unlike any of his predecessors, Obama has voted with Israel 100 percent of the time at the U.N.? Did you also know that Obama personally ordered that Israel receive all resources necessary to combat the 2010 Carmel fire? These are accomplishments that Obama's critics have been reluctant to acknowledge -- let alone repeat -- lest they give the President the credit he's due. Further, Obama consistently asserts Israel's legitimacy and security when addressing global audiences. His firm leadership of pro-Israel diplomacy has received praise from Israeli and American Jewish leaders alike, and it sends a firm message to the world that the U.S.-Israel bond is unbreakable.

Yet Obama's right-wing critics continue to negate these achievements and instead attack the President's excellent record by ignoring traditional pro-Israel benchmarks and imposing double standards. In this paper, a recent op-ed attacked the Pres-

ident for not visiting Israel, despite his predecessor not visiting until the third year of his second term -- or GOP hero President Ronald Reagan never visiting at all. Obama traveled to Israel as a presidential candidate and stood physically in solidarity with the residents of Sderot who receive the brunt of Hamas's rockets. Indeed the Iron Dome missile shield, which saves the lives of Israelis from incoming rockets regularly, is a direct result of his visit, how it affected him and his leadership since.

These detractors continue to dangerously make Israel a partisan wedge issue -- especially when they overplay longstanding policy differences that have existed between Israel and the United States, across Democratic and Republican administrations alike.

Too many of Obama's critics -- including GOP presidential candidates and some members of Congress -- very unfortunately continue to spread utter fabrications regarding the President's stellar Israel record, all with a political goal in mind: driving a wedge between the Jewish community and the Democratic Party. It is long past time for this behavior to end. American and Israeli Jews must stand together and demand that the truth about the record be known -- that Obama is one of the strongest supporters of the Jewish state to ever inhabit the White House. That's not just rhetoric; that's a fact.

*Paul Hodes was New Hampshire's first Jewish member of Congress and served from 2007 until 2011. His first trip abroad as a member of Congress was to Israel in August of 2007.*

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Ron Paul disavowed knowledge of anti-Israel, possibly anti-Jewish, anti-black and anti-gay views expressed in his newsletters in the 1980s and 1990s, but I assume he knew the contents of his newsletters. He was the editor.

A 1987 issue stated Israel is "an aggressive, national socialist state." and another newsletter about the 1993 World Trade Center bombing stated "whether it was a setup by the Israeli Mossad ... or was truly a retaliation by the Islamic fundamentalists, matters little."

Paul believes the U.S. should allow Israel to be independent, which is code for the U.S. to cut off foreign aid to Israel. Paul said Iran is not a dangerous country and we should not be concerned with Iran's nuclear development program.

A 1990 newsletter was critical of this country creating the holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1992 Paul's political report about the Los Angeles riots said, "Order was only restored in L.A. when it came time for the blacks to pick up their welfare checks."

Paul accepted a campaign donation, and posed with Don Black, a neo-Nazi white supremacist.

Paul's newsletters and his positions on Israel and Iran indicate he is not fit to be President.

Donald A. Moskowitz  
Londonderry, NH

Dear Editor,

"There is nothing so powerful as truth." (D. Webster) It's time for truth. Our detractors' tactic is to delegitimize Israel, and to do it with what Orwell called "newspeak," the idea being, if you can replace key words with other words you can create a new perception of reality. And so words like "the West Bank" have entered our lexicon. Although there has never been a "West Bank," people buy into this. In this case the "West Bank" has replaced what has for centuries always been Judea (land of the Jews) and Samaria. Do you see where I'm going with this?

If you can de Judaize Judea through words, then you're free to call Israeli Jews "occupiers," "settlers," or any other "newspeak" term you wish to use. Now let's go one step more...let us replace Israel in history with another people, though history has never recorded a "Palestine" existing on its own as a nation. "Newspeak" can create that nation. It's imaginative...I'll give you that. I mean, try to find it. When did it exist? What were its borders? Who were its leaders? What was its currency? What was its language?

There is only one reason people accept "newspeak" -- it's because its creators haven't been called out. Well...I'm calling them out. It's time to take sides, not tomorrow but today. I'll take sides. I'll take sides proudly, and stand with Israel.

Marc Saidel,  
Bedford

To submit a Letter to the Editor to be published in the Jewish Reporter please email [thereporter@jewishnh.org](mailto:thereporter@jewishnh.org). Please include name and location.