

**MEMORANDUM  
IN OPPOSITION TO THE  
APPLICATION OF THE BOULDER NABLUS SISTER CITY PROJECT**

May 1, 2013

To: Mayor Matt Applebaum and Members of the Boulder City Council  
City of Boulder, Colorado  
(By email: Council@bouldercolorado.gov)

From: William M. Cohen, Sara-Jane M. Cohen, Talor HaLevi, Thomas Trager

Dear Mayor Applebaum and Members of the Boulder City Council

About a year ago, members of the Boulder Jewish community learned of the intent of a group called Boulder Nablus Sister City Project ("BNSCP") to establish a sister city relationship with the Palestinian City of Nablus in the West Bank and to seek formal approval of that project from the Boulder City Council. In response, William M. Cohen, Talor HaLevi and Tom Trager conducted preliminary research and investigation into the qualifications of Nablus as a potential sister city for Boulder, based on published and other relevant criteria and factors.

On April 10, 2012, they submitted to Council a Memorandum titled "SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR BOULDER CITY COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A BOULDER-NABLUS SISTER CITY." This Memorandum represents an updating and expansion of the April 10, 2012 Memorandum.

**OUTLINE OF OPPOSITION TO THE  
BNSCP APPLICATION FOR CITY OF BOULDER APPROVAL OF  
SISTER CITY STATUS**

**I. Boulder's Sister City relationships should be apolitical. BNSCP is not.**

**II. The Human Rights situation in the West Bank and in Nablus is abysmal.**

- 1. Honor killings of and violence against women are endemic to the Palestinian culture.**
- 2. Gays persecuted in Nablus and the West Bank often flee to Israel and seek asylum there.**
- 3. The P.A. represses Freedom of Press and Freedom of Speech.**
- 4. The P.A. Restricts access to and allows desecration of a Jewish religious shrine in Nablus.**

**III. The dangerous and violent situation in the West Bank and Nablus, fostered by terrorism, has led several countries, including the U.S., U.K., Canada and Australia, to warn against travel to the West Bank and Nablus**

**IV. For these reasons, Council should not approve the BNSCP application.**

**MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION TO THE  
BNSCP APPLICATION FOR CITY OF BOULDER APPROVAL OF  
SISTER CITY STATUS**

**I. Boulder's Sister City relationships should be apolitical. BNSCP is not.**

The first suggested criterion of the April 10, 2012 Memorandum was that sister city relationships are supposed to be apolitical. BNSCP recognizes this fact by characterizing itself as "non-political." However, the real motive behind their proposal is political, as manifested by the militant anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian political rhetoric and activities of the project's Outreach Coordinator, chief promoter and spokesperson, Guy Benintendi. That activity is outlined in our earlier Memorandum and supported by the attachments to this letter. Additionally, the BNSCP has been showing a series of films about Palestine. Virtually all of them depict the Palestinians in a positive light and the Israelis in a negative light in the political conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians in the West Bank.

For this reason alone, we believe that the BNSCP does not qualify for approval of sister city status by the City of Boulder.<sup>1</sup>

There are additional substantial factors under City Resolution 631, as amended 7-26-2001, which cause us to oppose BNSCP's application.

**II. The Human Rights situation in the West Bank and in Nablus is abysmal.**

BNSCP's mission statement includes acquainting Boulder citizens with "what life **in Palestine** is like." (Emphasis added.)

Under Res. 631, human rights are an important element in any Boulder-approved sister city relationship. This vital issue has been virtually ignored by BNSCP. However, the human rights situation in the West Bank and in Nablus is abysmal. It cannot be possible that Boulder, with its progressive ideals and respect for all, wishes to align itself with a city that shows such blatant disregard for the very values we cherish.

- P. David Hornik, "The Palestinian Human Rights Nightmare," Daily Mailer, Front Page, Mar. 27, 2012;
- J. Paul, "UK-based Arab HR group accuses PA of abuse," JPost.com, Dec. 30, 2012 (Mass illegal detentions and tortures).

**1. Honor killings of and violence against women are endemic to the Palestinian culture.**

Honor killings of and violence against women are endemic to the Palestinian culture.

- E.g., "Honor killings on the rise in West Bank; Palestinian Authority calls for culture change," WorldTribune.com, Aug. 28, 2012;
- Itamar Marcus, "Upsurge in 'honor killings' triggers Palestinian calls for cultural changes,

---

<sup>1</sup> The second basis of our April 10, 2012 Memorandum was that "HAMAS controls Nablus' City Government." That is no longer the case. HAMAS boycotted the October 2012 municipal elections in the West Bank. As a result a non-Fatah independent party won a majority of the Nablus election and a new mayor and city council are now in office. However, HAMAS and other terrorist groups continue their terrorist activity towards Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank from cells located in and around Nablus. See Section III in this Memorandum.

- new laws," Palestinian Media Watch ("PMW"), Aug. 15, 2012;
- "Women victims of systemic violence, authorities fail to protect them," Stophonourkillings.com, 7 Nov. 2006 (based on Human Rights Watch report citing "rape victims being forced to marry assailants and light sentences for men who kill female relatives suspected of adultery.")

In the wake of extensive protest and publicity of an honor killing of a student from Hebron on the West Bank in 2011, P.A. President Abbas promised to toughen the laws against such crimes and allegedly signed a decree to that effect.

- H. Sherwood, "Death in the West Bank: the story of an 'honour' killing," The Guardian, 30 June 2011.

However, in December, 2012, Abbas reneged on that promise.

- "Abbas reneges on promise to amend 'honor killing' laws," Algemeiner, Dec. 25, 2012.<sup>2</sup>

Also, violence against women, even those present in the West Bank to aid the Palestinian cause, is a serious problem.

- Emma Hansson, "Women Under Siege," April 2008 ("A review of violence against women in Palestine and its extreme expression in the form of 'honor' killings").
- Avi Issacharoff, "Israeli leftist [women] activists: We are being sexually harassed in the West Bank," Haaretz.com, Mar. 17, 2012.

## **2. Gays persecuted in Nablus and the West Bank often flee to Israel and seek asylum there.**

A four-year study by the Refugee Rights Clinic at Tel Aviv University of several gay Palestinians who fled the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and sought protection in Israel concluded that:

[H]omophobic violence by both private and official parties is a serious human rights problem in the OPT. Unlike well-known human rights problems connected with the Israeli occupation, in this instance Palestinians are the main agents of persecution against other Palestinians.

M. Kagan & Anat Ben-Dor, "Nowhere to Run: Gay Palestinian Asylum-Seekers in Israel," [www.law.tau.ac.il/Heb/\\_Uploads/dbsAttachedFiles/NowheretoRun.pdf](http://www.law.tau.ac.il/Heb/_Uploads/dbsAttachedFiles/NowheretoRun.pdf)

- Also e.g., T. Zarchin, "Court: Palestinian persecuted for homosexuality can stay in Israel," Haaretz.com, Jan. 10, 2010 ("*Nablus* man says would be killed for sexual orientation, collaborating with Israel, if expelled to PA.");
- P. Podolsky, "Gay Palestinian to court: Deport me and I'll be killed," timesofisrael.com, May 25, 2012 (Muslim resident of *Nablus* testified that Palestinian police had "arrested, tortured and severely beaten him because he is openly gay. Most members of his family have disowned him, and those who haven't have warned him by phone to never come home.")

---

<sup>2</sup> The widespread and frequency of honor killings was recently recognized by the Chief Justice of the Palestinian Judicial Council, Yousef Ideis: "[S]uch crimes were committed allegedly for religious motives, 'but in fact they were motivated by a desire to defend family honor. In most cases, women are being hurt or killed by first degree relatives motivated by very weak evidence and unsubstantiated rumors.'" "Chief Justice: 'Honor killing' unacceptable in Islam," Maannews.net, Mar. 16, 2013.

### **3. The P.A. represses Freedom of Press and Freedom of Speech.**

The Palestinian Authority, the governing body in the West Bank, under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas, "is getting tougher with critics, interrogating, prosecuting and even jailing several journalists and bloggers in recent months for allegedly 'defaming' " him.

- K. Laub et al., "Palestinian leader clamps down on critics," Daily Camera (A.P.), April 1, 2013.
- 

Similar efforts by the P.A. and its Fatah affiliates to squelch dissent in the West Bank have been occurring for several years.

- E.g., D. Murphy, "Out of ideas, Palestinian Authority censors critics," csmonitor.com, May 4, 2012;
- H. Sherwood, "Palestinian TV Station sued as journalists fear media crackdown," guardian.co.uk, 1 May 2012 (Websites have been closed and independent TV is facing court after investigating alleged corruption linked to the Palestinian Authority.);
- K. Abu Toameh, "'PA bans journalists from reporting human rights abuses,'" JPost.com, Jan. 25, 2012;
- K. Abu Toameh, "Fatah gunmen shoot up Al-Jazeera studio *in Nablus*," JPost.com, Jan. 8 2012 (Attack came shortly after station interviewed local academic and staunch critic of the P.A.);
- K. Abu Toameh, "PA Magistrate's Court in Nablus sentenced Palestinian man to one year in prison for criticizing the Palestinian Authority leadership," JPost.com, Feb. 23, 2013;
- K. Abu Toameh, "Palestinian journalist jailed for 'insulting' Abbas," JPost.com, Mar. 23, 2013 ("Journalist gets one year sentence after sharing photo comparing Abbas' face to a villain on a Syrian TV show").

### **4. The P.A. Restricts access to and allows desecration of Jewish religious shrine in Nablus.**

The Tomb of Joseph, the Jewish Patriarch, is located in Nablus (biblical Shechem). Jews consider the Tomb to be a religious shrine and desire unrestricted access to it for purposes of prayer. However, Israel ceded security and administrative control over Nablus and the Tomb to the P.A. in 2000, after which the Tomb was pillaged and vandalized by local Arabs. The Tomb has been repeatedly vandalized since and access to the Tomb by Jewish pilgrims restricted to periodic late night visits under Israel Defense Forces (IDF) escort.

- G. Queenann, "Four US Jews Arrested [by PA police] at Joseph's Tomb," IsraelNationalNews.com, Feb. 15, 2012;
- A. Zeiger, "Joseph's Tomb in Nablus vandalized, worshippers say," TimesofIsrael.com, Jan. 24, 2013 (Jewish pilgrims discover urine stains, attempted arson during monthly visit to purported biblical site).

Taken together, these extensive and pervasive human rights violations in the West Bank and in Nablus are so inconsistent with the values and standards of Boulder that they prevent a sister city relationship between Nablus and Boulder from being based on "some common interests and characteristics important to both cities." See Res. 631, 6th Whereas Clause ("[E]ach of our sister city relationships should be based upon some common interests and characteristics important to both Boulder and the sister city.")

For these reasons alone, Nablus is not an appropriate candidate for a sister city relationship with the City of Boulder.

### **III. The dangerous and violent situation in the West Bank and Nablus, fostered by terrorism, should preclude establishment of a sister city relationship with Nablus.**

Exchange of visits is normally a hallmark of any Boulder sister city relationship. However, the security situation in the West Bank and in Nablus is particularly dangerous currently and is likely to deteriorate in the near future. Several Western countries, including the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and Australia have recently issued updated travel warnings to their citizens regarding travel to the West Bank and to Nablus.

On December 20, 2012, the U.S. Department of State issued the following Travel Warning concerning the West Bank:

The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to exercise caution when traveling to the West Bank. Demonstrations and violent incidents can occur without warning, and vehicles are regularly targeted by rocks, Molotov cocktails, and gunfire on West Bank roads. U.S. citizens can be caught in the middle of potentially dangerous situations, and some U.S. citizens involved in political demonstrations in the West Bank have sustained serious injuries. The Department of State recommends that U.S. citizens, for their own safety, avoid demonstrations. During periods of unrest, the Israeli Government may restrict access to the West Bank, and some areas may be placed under curfew. All persons in areas under curfew should remain indoors to avoid arrest or injury. Security conditions in the West Bank may hinder the ability of consular staff to offer timely assistance to U.S. citizens.

Personal travel in the West Bank by U.S. Government personnel and their families is permitted to the towns of Bethlehem and Jericho and to transit the West Bank using Routes 1, 443, and 90. Personal travel is also permitted to Qumran off Route 90 by the Dead Sea, as are stops at roadside facilities along routes 1 and 90. All other personal travel in the West Bank, unless specifically authorized for official purposes, is prohibited.

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_5841.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_5841.html)

Subsequently, on February 25, 2013, the U.S. Embassy in Israel and the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem issued the following update to the earlier Department of State Travel Warning:

**Security Message for U.S. Citizens**  
**Retransmitted Security Message for U.S. Citizens**  
**from U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem**  
**February 25, 2013**

Due to demonstrations occurring at locations across the West Bank, the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem has temporarily limited official travel to the West Bank by U.S. Government personnel. In addition, personal travel to Bethlehem by U.S. Government personnel is temporarily suspended. U.S. citizens are advised to defer non-essential travel to and within the West Bank and to exercise an extra measure of caution during this period.

The U.S. Consulate General takes this opportunity to remind U.S. citizens that demonstrations, even peaceful ones, can turn violent with little or no warning. U.S. citizens should be aware of their surroundings at all times, and avoid large crowds.

<http://israel.usembassy.gov/mobile/sm02252013.html>. (Emphasis added.)

The U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office ("FCO") travel advisory (updated as of 23 April 2013, and still current as of 26 April 2013) recognized Nablus as a specific hotspot during the current period of ongoing violent clashes between the IDF and Palestinian protesters. The FCO cautioned:

Take care when travelling anywhere in the West Bank, particularly in areas close to refugee camps, in and around Israeli settlements across the West Bank and in the cities of Jenin, **Nablus** and Hebron. There have been violent clashes between the Israeli Defence Force and Palestinian protestors in the West Bank following the death of Palestinian prisoners in custody and the shooting dead of 2 Palestinian teenagers on 3 April.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel> (Emphasis added.)

As violence in the West Bank continued, on April 15, 2013, the Canadian Foreign Affairs and International Trade office issued the following red alert against travel in the West Bank:

### **Regional Advisory for the West Bank, excluding Ramallah, Jericho and Bethlehem**

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada **advises against non-essential travel to the West Bank**, excluding Ramallah, Jericho and Bethlehem, **due to the unpredictable security situation**. Consult the Security tab for more information.

<http://travel.gc.ca/destinations/israel-the-west-bank-and-the-gaza-strip>. (Emphasis added.)

The Security section of the Canadian Advisory describes the West Bank and Nablus security situation in even more admonitory terms:

There is a potential for inter-factional tension, demonstrations and military operations in the West Bank. There are frequent police and military operations targeting militants in cities and villages throughout the West Bank, **particularly in Nablus**, Jenin, Qalqiliyya, Tulkarem and the refugee camps. It is not possible to travel without passing through multiple Israeli military checkpoints. There is a threat of demonstrations and violent outbreaks occurring in areas near checkpoints. Areas in the vicinity of the barrier separating the West Bank and Israel are particularly high-risk. Travel only during the daytime and do not stay overnight.

In Hebron and in other parts of the West Bank, there remains potential for violence between settlers and Palestinians or between Palestinians and Israeli security forces.

**There is a high risk of kidnapping in the West Bank cities of Nablus and Jenin. Foreigners have been kidnapped in the past. Maintain a high level of vigilance at all times.**

If you are travelling to the West Bank despite this advice, ensure that you have appropriate security measures in place to protect yourself, as well as alternative travel arrangements in case of a rapid deterioration in the security situation. Carry your passport at all times, register and maintain contact with the Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah, keep a low profile, monitor local news reports and follow the advice of local authorities.

<http://travel.gc.ca/destinations/israel-the-west-bank-and-the-gaza-strip>. (Emphasis added.)<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The Australian Government Travel Advisory as of 23 January 2013 is consistent with the U.K., U.S. and Canada warnings: "**We strongly advise you not to travel to the West Bank (with the exception of East Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho and Ramallah and Route Nos. 1, 90 and 443) because of the unpredictable security situation.... Stone-throwing and other violent incidents are common,**

Indeed, since the Israeli retaliatory attack on the Gaza Strip in November 2012 (known in Israel as Operation Pillar of Defense in response to extensive rocket fire), terror attacks and violent demonstrations by Palestinians in the West Bank, including in Nablus, have continued nearly daily. Violent clashes between Palestinians and Israeli civilians and soldiers have escalated with tragic results to all parties.

- "Violent protests in West Bank over Gaza Conflict," JPost.com/Reuters, Nov. 21, 2012 (Dozens of Palestinian youths in Ramallah, Hebron, and **Nablus** hurling stones, some with slingshots, at IDF soldiers, met with tear-gas canisters, stun grenades, rubber bullets, foul smelling 'skunk' spray, and live ammunition);
- " Four Palestinians arrested for Molotov cocktails," JPost.com, Dec. 27, 2012 (Suspected of throwing fire bombs at an army position from a moving vehicle at a position south of **Nablus**);
- Ben Zion, "Terror attacks in West Bank, Jerusalem on the rise," TimesofIsrael.com, Jan. 7, 2013 (400% spike in number of attacks since August 2012, including throwing Molotov cocktails, explosive devices, grenades, small arms fire, a stabbing, and a hit and run.);
- "Israel 'cracking down' on West Bank terror suspects," YNet/AFP, Jan. 3, 2013 (Security services bolstering efforts to arrest suspected terrorists to prevent simmering civil unrest from escalating into a full-blown uprising);
- T. Lazaroff et al., "West Bank violence continues for fifth straight day," JPost.com, Apr. 7, 2013.

These clashes have resulted in casualties on both sides of this protracted conflict.

- T. Wittle, "Israeli troops practice repelling mass demonstrations in West Bank," Xinhua.com, Feb. 28, 2013 (Number of Palestinians injured during violence across West Bank in prior week);
- N. Browning, "Palestinian funerals draw thousands amid some of worst West Bank violence in years," NBCNews.com (Reuters), Apr. 16, 2013 (During a disturbance, four Palestinian youths threw firebombs at an Israeli checkpoint near Tulkarm in the northern West Bank. Soldiers returned fire and killed two teenagers).

The Palestinian tactic of rock throwing in the West Bank has inflicted serious injuries and even death on Israeli civilians. In early April 2013, a West Bank Palestinian was convicted of murder of an Israeli and his infant son in September 2011 by throwing stones from a moving car and the victims' car. He was also convicted of attempted murder in a series of similar incidents. "Court convicts Palestinian of murder in Asher Palmer case," I. Fleishman, YNetNews.com, April 2, 2013.

More recently, an Israeli "woman and her three daughters were injured in a car incident caused by stones hurled by Palestinians." "3-year old critically injured by stones near Ariel," YNet News.com, March 14, 2013 (Other incidents of stone throwing incidents listed). See also, T. Lazaroff, "W. Bank:

---

particularly around settlements and military checkpoints." [http://smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Israel\\_Gaza\\_Strip\\_and\\_West\\_Bank](http://smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Israel_Gaza_Strip_and_West_Bank). (Emphasis added.)

Palestinians hurl stones at IDF, Israelis," JPost.com, Jan. 2, 2013 (Including, "near **Nablus** and Yitzhar settlement, five Palestinians threw stones at soldiers, who responded with riot dispersal methods").

Also, HAMAS is expanding its terror network in Nablus and throughout the West Bank:

Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012) Hamas operatives in the Gaza Strip led by Fathi Hamad, minister of the interior of the Hamas administration, have increased their efforts to establish terrorist squads in Judea and Samaria (i.e., the West Bank) to carry out attacks against Israel. Among the planned attacks were suicide bombing attacks, the abduction of IDF soldiers and Israeli citizens, and killing attacks. "Intelligence Report on Fathi Hamad", Meir Amit Intell. and Terror. Info. Center, Apr. 7, 2013.<sup>4</sup>

The IDF has focused on thwarting this terrorist effort by Hamas. Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) reported that 32 attempts to kidnap soldiers were foiled since the beginning of 2013, with a dramatic rise due to Hamas' efforts in the West Bank, compared with 24 prevented attempts during all of 2012. "Sharp rise in Hamas attempts to abduct soldiers," YNetNews.com, Apr. 12, 2013.

Nablus also harbors Hamas terrorists. "A Nablus-based Hamas terrorist" was arrested in March 2013, in Mecca where a senior Hamas executive offered him \$60,000 to carry out a terrorist attack against IDF troops in Nablus. He was arrested attempting to obtain a gun for the attack. "Hamas terrorist arrested while plotting attack," Ynetnews.com, April 17, 2013.

Also, on April 15, 2013, the IDF announced the arrest of a senior Hamas terrorist in Nablus, part of a cell involved in a shooting attack on a bus station near Ariel two months prior where an IDF soldier and an Israeli civilian were wounded. "IDF arrests senior Hamas terrorist in Nablus involved in Ariel shooting," JPost.com, April 17, 2013.

And in mid-April 2013, an East Jerusalem-based terror cell was indicted in Israel for preparing to attack Israeli security personnel at the Temple Mount. These terrorists sought assistance from Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade and Tanzim terrorists based in Nablus. "East Jerusalem terror cell charged with planning to abduct Israelis," IsraelHayom.com, Apr. 16, 2013.

Under these circumstances, it would be imprudent for Boulder to approve a sister city relationship with Nablus, one of the centers of a violent conflict zone in the West Bank. By approving the BNSCP, the City of Boulder would be encouraging Boulder residents to go there notwithstanding Council's knowledge of the serious risk of injury, kidnapping or death such visitors might incur.

Moreover, these dangerous security conditions in Nablus and the West Bank would appear to render it virtually impossible for the BNSCP to fulfill a major criterion for qualifying as a Boulder Sister City, namely, encouraging a variety of exchanges, including official delegations, between the sister cities. Res. 631, 2d Whereas clause; Section 1.2.

---

<sup>4</sup> Kidnapping Israeli soldiers and Israeli and U.S. civilians is not a new Palestinian terrorist tactic. G. Cohen, "Shin Bet uncovers Palestinian squad bent on kidnapping Israelis in West Bank," Haaretz.com, May 30, 2012.

For all these reasons, we oppose the application of the BNSCP and request that the Boulder City Council reject it.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. Cohen

Sara-Jane M. Cohen

Talor HaLevi

Thomas Trager

## ATTACHMENT 1

HTTP://GUYBENINTENDI.BLOGSPOT.COM/

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2010

### FROM THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FIRE

Boulder, Colorado, USA

As anyone who has paid even a modicum of attention to the goings on in the Middle East can tell you, the United States exerts an enormous amount of influence there. Scholars such as Noam Chomsky and Edward Said have long argued that Israel is a client state of the US doing its bidding in the region. The State Department since the early 1970's has considered Israel a strategic asset, and has propped up the Israeli military to the tune of \$3 billion of aid per year. Most of this aid is in the form of military equipment superior to that of any conceivable enemy. And this is just the above-the-table aid. When accounting tricks such as loan write-offs and tax incentives for American citizens to donate money to Israel are considered, the total is much higher.

As the US-Israel relationship has evolved since the 70's one thing becomes crystal clear: the tail has started to wag the dog, so to speak. The Israeli government's behavior has become so egregious that not only is it violating international law, UN resolutions, and the Geneva conventions, as it has done almost from its inception, but it is also acting against the strategic interests of its political master, the United States. A recent example of this is the Administration's desire for an extension of the freeze on Jewish settlements colonies in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The Israeli government thumbed its nose at the rich package of incentives it was offered by the US to comply with international law in the US' effort to keep 'peace talks theater' alive.

General David Petraeus, the Army's CENTCOM Commander, in a recent warning to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, finally let the cat out of the bag regarding US strategic interests. He said, "Israeli intransigence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was jeopardizing US standing in the region." Well, Duh! Unfortunately his warning was largely ignored by the corporate media and Congressional representatives.

So now we have the situation where the US is funding Israeli aggression and that behavior is actually working against the strategic interests of the US. How could this be happening? One reason for this could be the influence of Israeli citizens within the US government. Yes, it's true. People with dual US and Israeli citizenship can serve in high level posts in the government. The list of recent appointees is long. Here is a small sample:

- Michael Mukasey, former Attorney General
- Michael Chertoff, former Secretary of Homeland Security
- Paul Wolfowitz, former Deputy Defense Secretary
- Richard Perle, former Chair of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board
- Douglas Feith, former Under Secretary of Defense
- 'Scooter' Libby, Dick Cheney's former Chief of Staff
- Elliot Abrams, National Security Council advisor
- Ari Fleisher, former White House Spokesperson
- John Bolton, former UN Representative
- Rahm Emanuel, Barak Obama's former Chief of Staff

To say that someone has dual citizenship is to say that s/he has dual allegiance. Why these people are selected to represent the interests of the US when they clearly have a bias for another nation is beyond me, but select them we do.

The recent mid-term election in the US has some people wondering how the outcome will affect the Israeli-Palestinian situation. If we listen to the pundits, the election will bolster support for Israeli actions and hurt the cause of the Palestinians. Richard Cantor is poised to assume the majority leader post in the House. He is a Jew who has been vocally critical of the Administration's efforts to pressure Israel to extend the settlement colony freeze. He said that 'playing hardball' with Israel is dangerous to US security.

Another key player in the House will be Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican. Her district includes Miami with its large Jewish constituency. She will likely become the Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, a group with enormous influence on US foreign policy.

Now, you might be asking yourself why Republican politicians would support Israel even more stalwartly than Democrats. One reason is that many of these Republicans are Christian Zionists. You don't have to be Jewish to be a Zionist. There are Jews who are Zionists and others that aren't. Similarly with Christians. And, why are these Christian Zionists so fanatical in their support of Israel? For most of them the answer is that they believe in the biblical prophesy about Armageddon and the coming rapture, when Christians will be gathered together in the clouds amid trumpets and angels to meet Christ at the time of his return.

Christ, in this formulation, will be returning to earth to initiate the 'God's wrath tribulation period' on all the sinners remaining.

Ironically they are supporting Israel and at the same time expect that the Jews and Muslims there will be left on earth in the Armageddon while the Christians ascend to meet Christ. Yes, US politics has sunk to this level.

Ha'aretz, Israel's version of the New York Times, has reported that, "In Benjamin Netanyahu's circles, many are hoping that a weak Obama will be good for Israel. They assume that a president who has had his wings clipped in the middle of his first term will devote the second half of his term to fighting for reelection."

That's the bad news. The good news is that these so called pundits have been wrong far more often than they've been right.

Predicting the future is not an easy task. Currently their analyses seem plausible and likely. Time will tell if they prove true.

Salam,

Guy

Posted by Guy Benintendi at [8:52 PM](#) 0 comments

## Attachment 2

Photo of Guy Benintendi, around October 2011, downloaded from his Facebook page February 2013.

