

JEWISH INSIDER

1). Do you believe there is a concerning rise of antisemitism on the [Right or Left], including in your own party? How do you propose to address this issue?

Of course we've seen a rise in antisemitism in this country – and it's extremely concerning. Two years ago, we saw one of the worst antisemitic attacks in American history at the Tree of Life Synagogue. Over the last year we've seen even more attacks on Jewish communities and the Jewish faithful – from the brutal stabbing in Monsey, New York to the shootings in Poway and Jersey City.

The fact is that antisemitic incidents have hit a 40-year high. And while some politicians have been guilty of voicing antisemitic sentiments, what's most concerning is the normalization and systematic perpetuation of these beliefs by certain political organizations and individuals. When groups or leaders repeatedly spread antisemitic ideas and tropes – especially those which encourage hatred toward Israel and the Jewish people – we must condemn them publicly. Individuals like Ilhan Omar (who has repeatedly called Israel evil and openly called for the dissolution of the nation state of Israel) or organizations like the Black Lives Matter political organization (which continually endorses the BDS movement and has called Israel an "apartheid state") should be swiftly and vocally condemned. There's no doubt in my mind: the only way to end antisemitism in America and around the world is to be vocal in calling it out when it manifests itself – and persisting in condemning it until it no longer does.

2). Do you think a two-state solution will facilitate peace between Israelis and Palestinians? If so, what are the basic parameters? If not a two-state solution, what do you suggest? What do you agree or disagree with about the Trump peace plan?

It has become increasingly clear that a two-state solution is the best path to peace in the Middle East, and I support President Trump's historic efforts to deliver Israel the security and autonomy it needs to prosper.

Like President Trump, I believe that any path to peace must recognize undivided Jerusalem as the capitol and territory of Israel. Further, the land that the Jewish people have been living on for thousands of years – including lands west of the Jordan and settlements in the West Bank – must be officially recognized as Israel's sovereign territory. Finally, any Palestinian nation must be strictly policed to ensure that the violence perpetuated by Palestinians (especially through Hamas) comes to an end so that both the Palestinians and the Israeli people can fully prosper. In short, the President's Mideast peace plan is the most pro-Israel plan to emerge in decades, and it strikes the right balance between giving Israel the sovereignty it has a right to and keeping Palestinian forces in check.

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In the meantime, and until a peaceful agreement can be achieved, I will continue to support Israel's right to self-defense, and continue to support legislation like the US-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act (which I co-sponsored) to provide additional defense funds to our Jewish allies. I will also continue to defend Israel against absurd claims from organizations like the ICC, which ignores the atrocities of Palestinian violence but continually launches accusations at the Nation of Israel.

3). Why would you re-enter or stay out of the JCPOA with Iran? If re-enter, under what conditions or changes? How should the United States deal with the Iranian government on an ongoing basis? Should the U.S. military maintain a presence in the Middle East?

The Iran Nuclear Deal was a terribly bad deal, and I would absolutely not support re-entry to it. The bottom line is that Iran as a nuclear power poses an existential threat, not only to the Nation of Israel, but also to the rest of the world. And in the time since President Obama enabled Iran to continue its sinister behavior by funneling billions of dollars to them, Iran has only become more emboldened in its efforts to attack US interests and US allies like Israel. Through its support for proxy networks like Hezbollah, the Iranian regime is the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world. Under no circumstances should the United States consider allying with Iran - let alone equip Iran with the funds and infrastructure to build a robust nuclear program.

Instead, I support a continued military presence in the Middle East – and continuing to partner with Israel to keep bad actors like Iran from expanding their influence and perpetuating violence in countries across the world.

4). Should the U.S. increase, maintain or decrease the amount of foreign aid to Israel and other countries in the Middle East? Should the U.S. condition its aid for specific results? What does the U.S. benefit from its relationship with Israel?

Like I mentioned, I am strongly supportive of appropriating continued defense aid to the Nation of Israel. I support the continued appropriation of \$3.3 billion in security assistance to Israel and \$500 million for cooperative missile defense programs, as promised in our 10-year memorandum of understanding. I also co-sponsored the United States-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act, which will send additional funds to Israel in order to upgrade its military equipment, improve its ground force, strengthen its missile defense system, and expand the US weapons stockpile in Israel. I also just voted for the National Defense Authorization Act – which will send even more funds to Israel to enhance much-needed missile defense programs. Israel has tremendous value to the United States as an ally in Middle East peacekeeping against both malign sovereign nations, and terrorist organizations. Israel also is an important trading partner with over \$49 billion worth of goods and services traded between the two

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countries in 2018. We must continue this security and economic cooperation, and we must continue to protect our strong alliance with the Nation of Israel in the pursuit of peace, democracy, and prosperity for the U.S., for Israel, and for every nation.