



Six Senators Smear Rand Paul

This is not an April fool's joke. I wish it were. Here is what happened: In February, the six Senators I'm talking about — Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Robert Casey (D-Penn.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) — sent an open letter to House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers lambasting Paul for daring to suggest that the United States “halt all foreign aid, including its financial aid, to Israel.” The Senators were shocked, shocked I tell you, that the freshman Senator would have the unmitigated gall to suggest such a thing.



You will probably not be surprised to learn that the Senators' letter was a massive distortion of what Paul actually said. Nor should you be surprised to learn that the mainstream media quoted their scolding with undisguised glee — and of course, totally ignored the truth of what the libertarian Senator actually said. So let me give it to you straight.

First, did Paul advocate cutting off foreign aid to Israel? Absolutely! From the very first moment he began campaigning for a seat in the U.S. Senate, he said that he would work to halt all foreign aid to everyone. Paul never singled out Israel, as the anti-anti-Semites in the Senate pretend. He believes that it is almost insane for this country to borrow money from China so we can give it away to half of the world — and in many cases to countries that use our aid to suppress their own population and/or kill their neighbors.

In his actual statement, which the mainstream media pretend does not exist, Paul pointed out that the U.S. sends more aid to Israel's enemies (collectively) than we do to that poor beleaguered country.

Well, strike “poor” from the above sentence. Israel has become such a technological and agricultural phenomenon that its citizens enjoy one of the highest per capita incomes in the world. Sure, some of the oil-rich countries have more wealth. But almost all of their money is concentrated in the hands of a few ruling sheiks and their families. The average male in most Muslim countries lives in abject poverty, no matter how many billions his rulers have. And the average female is even worse off.

Israel, on the other hand, is one of the most egalitarian countries in the world. Even the Muslims who live there enjoy more rights than in any of the Arab states that surround Israel.

This whole brouhaha began on January 26, when CNN's Wolf Blitzer asked Paul whether he believed the United States should “end all foreign aid, including foreign aid to Israel.” You will not be surprised to learn that Paul gave an immediate and emphatic yes.

He then continued, “When you send foreign aid, you actually send quite a bit to Israel's enemies. Islamic nations around Israel get quite a bit of foreign aid, too. So really, you have to ask yourself, are we funding an arms race on both sides?”



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Paul went on to declare that he has “a lot of sympathy and respect for Israel, as a democratic nation, as a fountain of peace and a fountain of democracy within the Middle East. But at the same time, I don’t [believe in] funding both sides of the arms race, particularly when we have to borrow money from China to send it to someone else. We just can’t do it anymore.”

Can anyone with enough sense to come in out of the rain disagree with anything in that statement?

As it turns out, many Israelis are on Paul’s side in this debate. Yuval Levin of the Jerusalem-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies is the author of a study called “American Aid to the Middle East.” In it, he says that American aid to Israel is “a tragedy of good intentions.”

He goes on to explain, “Analysis of the economic consequences of aid must conclude that aid slows growth, stifles economic activity, encourages inefficiency and keeps alive Israel’s socialist system. It is profoundly counterproductive for the Jewish state.”

I suspect a lot of Israelis agree with Levin. And let me mention another issue that is almost never addressed in the U.S. media but is of deep and abiding concern to many citizens in Israel. That is the economic and political blackmail their leaders must pay whenever U.S. leaders decide to throw their weight around.

There is a “mentality of dependence” in Israel many Jews detest. Their leaders are too subservient to the United States, even when U.S. policy is harmful to their country.

Need proof? Our government forced Israel to accept the creation of the Palestinian Authority, which immediately became the captive of terrorists from Hamas and Fatah. But not only did we force them to accept it, we also demanded they stand meekly by while we used foreign aid to arm its members.

Abu Yousef, a senior official of the Palestine Authority and an admitted terrorist, once boasted, “I do not think the operations of the Palestine resistance would have been so successful and would have killed more than 1,000 Israelis since 2000 and defeated Israel in Gaza” without such assistance from America.

That’s sure something to be proud of, isn’t it? Our aid helped terrorists kill 1,000 Israelis. And yet six U.S. Senators try to smear Paul for trying to call a halt to such madness.

I know many of my conservative colleagues disagree with me on this. Gary Bauer, a Washington analyst and activist I’ve admired for a long time, has staunchly defended American aid to Israel. In his daily blog, he argued, “The U.S. gives billions of dollars a year to foreign countries that hate us and regularly vote against us at the United Nations. But Israel votes with the U.S. 97% of the time. They are a loyal ally that shares our values. The aid they receive is used to buy military equipment from U.S. companies, so the money comes back to us.”

That may all be true. But so what? If all foreign aid to the Middle East were stopped, wouldn’t Israel be a lot better off? And besides, knowing the extent to which many Jews in the United States support Israel, don’t you think that their private contributions would more than make up for any loss of official government aid?

As my friend Doug Casey puts it, most of the time foreign aid means taking money from poor people in this country who really need it and giving it to rich people in other countries, who merely steal it.

I say, stop it all. If you agree, tell your Senators and Representative. Let’s end the madness this year.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

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