



Written by [Daniel Sayani](#) on February 7, 2011

Senator Rand Paul Defends Israel

However, an analysis of Sen. Paul's record on Israel indicates that he — like his father, Representative Ron Paul (R-Texas) — supports Israeli sovereignty, and is not opposed to the existence of the Jewish State, unlike those on the Left, who delegitimize Israel in favor of a Palestinian State. One label that should not be thrown at Sen. Paul is that of anti-Semite.



His position on foreign aid must be evaluated in the broader context of his views toward Israel, which are enormously positive and affirmative of its sovereignty and self-defense. Sen. Paul's call to end foreign aid to Israel, among other countries, has even been supported by Israeli economists and religious Zionist groups, who believe that foreign aid hinders Israeli sovereignty (as do both Sen. Paul and his father), as well as the long-term development of the Israeli economy. (Israel receives military aid, as opposed to economic aid, and the cessation of military aid would help contribute to the further development of the Israeli weapons-manufacturing sector, according to Israeli economist [Joel Bainerman](#).)

Sen. Paul said the following about foreign aid and the need to reduce the American budget deficit, in an interview on CNN's [The Situation Room](#) with Wolf Blitzer:

Reuters did a poll, and 71 percent of American people agree with me that when we're short of money, where we can't do the things we need to do in our country, we certainly shouldn't be shipping the money overseas. You have to ask yourself, are we funding an arms race on both sides?

I have a lot of sympathy and respect for Israel as a democratic nation, as, you know, a fountain of peace and a fountain of democracy within the Middle East. But at the same time, I don't think funding both sides of the arm race [is wise], particularly when we have to borrow the money from China to send it to someone else. We just can't do it anymore. The debt is all-consuming and it threatens our well-being as a country.

Sen. Paul insisted that his proposal is motivated by nothing other than his ideological purity and his principled position regarding foreign aid, which is rooted in the non-interventionist position of his father, which they perceive as being rooted in the writings of the Founding Fathers and non-interventionist leaders such as former Idaho Senator William E. Borah and former Ohio Senator Robert



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A. Taft (the latter of whom was a strong supporter of the State of Israel and considered a Zionist, according to Clarence E. Wunderlin's book *Robert A. Taft: Ideas, Tradition, and Party in US Foreign Policy*).

Far from exhibiting any anti-Semitism, Sen. Paul offered nothing but praise and admiration for the State of Israel, and stressed that his stance on foreign aid is rooted in his economic beliefs, which emphasize the need to reduce spending in order to eliminate the deficit and balance the budget: "I'm not singling out Israel. I support Israel. I want to be known as a friend of Israel, but not with money you don't have," he said. "We can't just borrow from our kids' future and give it to countries, even if they are our friends."

On a previous occasion, Sen. Paul also expressed his support for Israel:

You have to ask yourself, are we funding an arms race on both sides? ... Many of the weapons that Israel would face in a Middle Eastern conflict would have come directly from our government. I find this appalling. In the Senate, I would strive to eliminate all aid to countries that threaten Israel.

Sen. Paul's opposition to foreign aid also extends to giving foreign aid to Arab countries, most of whom are hostile to Israel. In this aspect, the younger Paul shares with his father the unique belief that eliminating all foreign aid to all countries will promote Israel's interests by defunding those enemy regimes whose populations are generally opposed to Israel's existence and committed to its destruction, such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Bolivia, and Iraq.

In the course of his Senate campaign in 2010, Sen. Paul issued a statement explaining in detail his views toward Israel, and specific policy proposals for strengthening an efficient, equitable bilateral relationship between Israel and the United States:

Israel and the United States have a special relationship. With our shared history and common values, the American and Israeli people have formed a bond that unites us across the many thousands of miles between our countries and calls us to work together towards peace and prosperity for our countries.

Like his father, the younger Paul encourages free trade and travel with Israel, but he departs from his father in that he, like most other foreign policy conservatives, has pointed out the nefariously anti-Israel policies and demeanor of [President Barack Hussein Obama](#):

The free trade agreement that has existed, and been subsequently strengthened, between our countries since 1985 is a tremendous mutual benefit. As a United States Senator, I would work against the growing protectionist sentiment in our country and defend free trade with Israel. *I strongly object to the arrogant approach of (the) Obama administration toward the peace process.* Only Israel can decide what is in her security interest, not America and certainly not the United Nations. It is not the place of outsiders to meddle or pass judgment or to use our power or relationship to force Israel to go against her own interest for the sake of "peace." Peace is a laudable goal. But it is just that — a goal. It is not an end at any cost. [Emphasis added.]

Sen. Paul also has [defended](#) Israel's right to make decisions in its own interest, without fear of reprisal from the U.S. State Department or the visceral need to seek the approbation of the U.S. government:

As a United States Senator, I would never vote to condemn Israel for defending herself. Whether it is fighting Hezbollah in Lebanon, combating Hamas-linked terrorists in Gaza or dealing with



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potential nuclear threats in the Persian Gulf, Israeli military actions are completely up to the leaders and military of Israel, and Israel alone.

There has never been a State Department to date that has taken a firm stance supporting Israel and opposing the creation of a Palestinian State. In 1981, when Israel, out of its own national security interests, bombed the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq (which was funded by the Soviet Union), the State Department condemned Israel; however, Rep. Ron Paul was one of the only voices in the Congress to [defend](#) Israel's right to protect itself.

In a similar vein, Sen. Paul believes that Israel must have the right to act in its own interests when faced by an impending nuclear attack from Iran. The U.S. State Department, under both President George H.W. Bush and now President Obama, has scrupulously pursued a policy which seeks to prevent Israel from taking any action against the Iranian threat. To both Sen. Paul and Rep. Paul, this represents a key flaw in America's policy towards Israel. Israel must be empowered to [defend](#) herself against enemies, with or without the approval of the American government. Sen. Paul observed on January 29, 2011:

Finally, Iran has become increasingly bellicose towards Israel. Thankfully, Israel has one of the bravest, most elite military forces in the world. I would never vote to prevent Israel from taking any military action her leaders felt necessary to end any Iranian threat. Just as the United States would not follow the will of another country in the face of our national security, we shall not limit the options of Israel in this area.

He has also called for sanctions against Iran, an enemy of both the United States and Israel, which is closely tied with Russia and China, as a soon-to-be member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Despite [Russian](#) and United Nations claims that Iran lacks the capability to develop nuclear weapons, Iran nonetheless endangers Israel and the world at large through its nuclear program, and in response, Sen. Paul [called for](#) a tough, uncompromising approach toward Iranian dictator Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose rule threatens our security and freedom:

Finally, I believe the United States should increase the pressure on Iran. I would mandate that all publicly managed investment funds divest from Iran immediately. We should not be subsidizing any company that does business with Iran, and we should not allow U.S. companies or those with funds from U.S. taxpayers to enrich Iran through its national energy program. I would fight to end all subsidies to American corporations that do business with Iran, including so-called renewable energy companies that work through Brazil to provide support to Iran and empower its dictators' dangerous nuclear saber rattling. "

It would therefore be unfair and highly inaccurate to claim that Sen. Paul is by nature "anti-Israel," or anti-Semitic, considering his record of rhetoric and positions on Israel. In fact, he is a solitary voice within the U.S. Senate championing Israeli sovereignty and freedom.



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