

Barack Obama: Best U.S. Candidate for Israel-Palestine Peace

By [Liam Bailey](#)

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Barack Obama is possibly the most pro-Palestinian potential Presidential candidate, but whether he acts on his feelings depends on his desire to keep himself and his party in the White House, writes Liam Bailey.

I have been reading a lot lately about where the various Presidential hopefuls stand on various issues in the Middle East, and when it comes to the Israel-Palestine conflict, I'm afraid the answer for all of them is Pro-Israel. They have to be that way to have any hope of being elected, because of the reliance on getting the Jewish vote in swing states like Florida and Michigan, which would never vote for any candidate that would end the U.S' staunch support for Israel.

It makes me angry. To be honest it is always difficult to get an idea of the candidates' views on the Middle East, because they are advised not to talk about it unless it is absolutely unavoidable, but I doubt there hasn't been a President in all these years that has sympathised with the Palestinians, and saw the conflict's continuance for what it truly is, Israel's unwillingness to give back the land.

So, I thought, fair enough they have to hint at their support for Israel, and their continuing of the "special relationship", but why not give up on it and do what's right in office. And the only answer I am left with is the desire for a second term; desire to keep your party in the White House, and the fact that both have obviously been more important to all President's in almost thirty years, than forcing Israel to abide by [UN Resolution 242](#), give back all the land it took in 1967, and saving all these thousands of lives, past, present and future.

I personally believe that if Barack Obama could speak his mind on the conflict he would be pro-Palestinian. In February he told members of the Jewish community in Cleveland that he sought to open up the debate:

"Understandably, because of the pressure that Israel is under," he was reported as saying, "I think the US pro-Israel community is sometimes a little more protective or concerned about opening up that conversation."

He was also harsh on my pet hate, people receiving the "anti-Israel and anti-Semite" tags if they don't adopt the most right-wing of Israeli stances, or criticise any element of Israel's behaviour in any way, what Obama called the "strain within the pro-Israel community that says that unless you adopt an unwavering pro-Likud approach to Israel, then you're anti-Israel, and that can't be the measure of our friendship with Israel".

These things are causing worry in the Jewish communities, and his association with the preacher Jeremiah Wright, who has spoken out against Israel's "state terrorism" against the Palestinians, hasn't helped either.

If Obama does become the Democrats candidate for President, it will all come down to whether losses in the Jewish vote, are balanced out by his being the most definite on ending the Iraq war and bringing US troops home swiftly, how his economic policies stand up against the others, and obviously we have to factor in the potential for a massively expanded Black vote for the first Black Presidential Candidate in American History.

It gets to me that the other candidates draw attention to the fact that Obama has expressed a willingness to talk to Ahmadinejad as if it's a bad thing, it's like schoolchildren running telling tales, miss, miss, he isn't repeating what you want to hear, he isn't as pro-Israel as we are — pathetic.

But when all is said and done, even if Obama does become the first black President in the history of America, just how far he will be willing to go to pressure Israel to return the land, allow the creation of a Palestinian state and end the conflict, will all depend on how much he wants a second term, and whether he weighs his party loyalties more than his true feelings and/or sympathy for the Palestinian's plight.

Liam Bailey is a UK based journalist and publisher of [The Bailey Mail](#).

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