

Controversial Romney Fundraisers in London and Jerusalem

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Global Research, July 14, 2012

14 July 2012

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Next week, presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, will hold controversial fundraisers in London and Jerusalem as part of his international itinerary.

Romney insiders are saying privately that the primary purpose for Romney's international jaunt is his determination to raise more funds than President Obama.

The ticket price in Jerusalem is \$50,000 per couple which exceeds the federal limit for contributions to US presidential campaigns where an individual may not contribute more than \$2500 to any candidate including the president.

The legal basis of Romney's fundraisers is still unclear, and it is not known whether the controversial casino billionaire Sheldon Adelson and or his wife, Miriam Ochsorn, will attend. The Adelson's are reported to have lavished over \$70 million of their casino profits on the GOP in this presidential election cycle.

Romney will be visiting Jerusalem after attending the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in London as a guest of Prime Minister David Cameron. Romney's horse, Rafalca, will take part in the dressage events at the Olympics. In the British press, Ann Romney is described as a, "deep-pocketed patron of dressage." The Romneys are known to have spent several million dollars on dressage in recent years.

"The invitation to the fundraiser, first reported by the Post, also specifies that dietary laws will be observed and that no refreshments would be served until after the fast.

The timing of the fundraiser at the end of the fast day commemorating the destruction of the First Temple has raised some eyebrows in Jerusalem.

The "evening reception," as the invitation puts it, also requires that attendees contribute \$50,000 per couple or have raised \$100,000. The Post originally reported that the cost for attending the dinner would be \$60,000.

The fundraiser is set to cap a day of meetings and a speech by Romney, who will be visiting Israel after attending the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympic Games in London.

Plans for the visit are being made as speculation swirls over who Romney will pick to be his vice presidential running mate.

On Thursday, the Drudge Report put former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's name back on the front burner with a story suggesting campaign

sources have placed her at the top of the short list. Rice's name has surfaced in the past, but she has consistently denied being interested in the position.

Instead, New Jersey Governor Christ Christie, Ohio Senator Rob Portman, Florida Senator Marco Rubio and former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty are all seen as leading choices.

Rice, however, has done well in polls of potential vice presidential choices, though she has detractors on the right due to her pro-choice views and charges that she was not tough enough on countries like Iran while in office. She also could alienate some moderates who see her as too closely aligned with former president George W. Bush, under whom she served, and unpopular policies such as the Iraq war.

However, she reiterated her disinterest in the position through a spokesman after the Drudge Report came out. ABC News said that Rice, according to the spokesman, stands behind earlier comments ruling out the job possibility.

In one of several recent statements on the subject, she told CBS last month, "There is no way I would do this." (<http://www.jpost.com/DiplomacyAndPolitics/Article.aspx?id=277417>)

In London, Romney will hold two fundraisers. The 5:00 pm reception will require ticket-holders to max out at a cost of \$2500, but a dinner may violate US laws by requiring ticket-holders to pay prices between \$25-75,000. Banking officials at Barclays (the center of the \$330 trillion LIBOR scandal) and Wells Fargo join European bankers and the owner of the New York Jets in organizing the controversial London fundraiser.

"The events are being hosted by a range of business luminaries, including several bankers. The first event is at 5 p.m. with a reception requiring a \$2,500 donation, and the second is a 6:30 p.m. dinner requiring at \$25,000 to \$75,000 donation. Donors must show a U.S. passport, the Boston Globe reports.

The Olympic backdrop is fitting for Romney, who is credited with financially saving the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Host committee members for the events include Barclays bank lobbyist Patrick Durkin, Dan Bricken a managing director at Wells Fargo Securities, Dwight Poler, managing director at Bain Capital, the private equity firm co-founded by Romney; Raj Bhattacharyya, managing director at Deutsche Bank; Woody Johnson, owner of the New York Jets; Eric Varvel, CEO of Credit Suisse bank; and Gregg Lemkau, a mergers and acquisitions executive at Goldman Sachs. Read more on Newsmax.com: Romney to Appear at Two London Fundraisers Ahead of Olympics. (Newsmax Wires, July 11, 2012)

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