



# War Without End

The global war against terror from a British perspective

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## AIPAC Threatens to Defeat Minnesota Democrat: The Storm over



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### Author

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Joined: 06 Jan 2003  
Posts: 36484

### Message

Posted: Fri May 19, 2006 5:45 pm Post subject: AIPAC Threatens to Defeat Minnesota Democrat: The Storm over



### AIPAC Threatens to Defeat Minnesota Democrat: The Storm over the Israel Lobby

May. 19th, 2006 @ 09:26 am  
Congresswoman cuts off AIPAC

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Volume 53, Number 10 · June 8, 2006

Letter

A LETTER TO AIPAC

By Betty McCollum

The letter below was sent by Representative Betty McCollum, a Democrat from Minnesota, to the executive director of AIPAC. The bill mentioned, H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006, would place so many restraints on aid to the Palestinian people, and so many restrictions on the administration's ability to deal with the Palestinians, that even the State Department has opposed it. AIPAC has strongly backed it. The Senate version of the bill, S. 2237, would allow the administration far more flexibility. On April 6, the House International Relations Committee passed H.R. 4681 by a vote of 36 to 2; McCollum was one of the two nays. As of May 11, AIPAC has yet to respond to her demand for an apology.

—Michael Massing

April 10, 2006

Mr. Howard Kohr

Executive Director

American Israel Public Affairs Committee

440 First Street, NW; Suite 600

Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Kohr:

During my nineteen years serving in elected office, including the past five years as a Member of Congress, never has my name and reputation been maligned or smeared as it was last week by a representative of AIPAC. Last Friday, during a call with my chief of staff, an AIPAC representative from Minnesota who has frequently lobbied me on behalf of your organization stated, "on behalf of herself, the Jewish community, AIPAC, and the voters of the Fourth District, Congresswoman McCollum's support for terrorists will not be tolerated." Ironically, this individual, who does not even live in my congressional district, feels free to speak for my constituents.

This response may have been the result of extreme emotion or irrational passion, but regardless, it is a hateful attack that is vile and offensive to me and the families I represent. I call on AIPAC to immediately condemn this un-American attack and disavow any attempt to use this type of threat and intimidation to stifle legitimate policy differences. I will not stand to be labeled or threatened in a manner that questions my patriotism or my oath of office.

Last week, I did vote against H.R. 4681 during mark-up of the bill in the House International Relations Committee. As a Member of Congress sworn to uphold the Constitution, and ensure the security of the US and represent the values and beliefs of the constituents who I serve, it was my view that H.R. 4681 goes beyond the State Department's current policies toward Hamas and the Palestinian Authority and potentially undermines the US position vis-à-vis the coordinated international pressure on Hamas. The language contained in S. 2237 accurately reflects my position.

Keeping diplomatic pressure on Hamas to renounce terrorism, recognize the State of Israel, dismantle terrorist infrastructure, and honor past agreements and treaty obligations, while preventing a humanitarian crisis among the Palestinian people, are all policy goals already strongly supported by myself, the Bush administration, Congress and the American people. But, if the purpose of H.R. 4681 was to send another strong message to Hamas and the Palestinian people, as Congress already has sent with the passage of S. Con. Res. 79, then I disagree with the vehicle for that message. In my opinion, Congress should be articulating clear support for the Secretary of State's present course of action; not creating a new law which likely diminishes the diplomatic tools needed to advance US policy goals with regard to the Palestinian people, potentially cuts US funding to the United Nations, and largely restates current law while creating on-going and burdensome unfunded reporting requirements.

As you well know, in Congress we do not shy away from condemning the vile words of despots and dictators who use anti-Semitism as a weapon to incite hatred, fear and violence. AIPAC should not have a lower standard for persons affiliated and representing its organization when they label a Member of Congress who thinks for herself and always puts the interest of our nation and people first a supporter of terrorists.

You and your colleagues at AIPAC have the right to disagree with my position on any piece of legislation, but for an AIPAC representative to say that I would ever vote to support Middle East terrorists over the interests of my country will never be tolerated by me or the families I serve. This incident rises to a level in which a formal, written apology is required.

Mr. Kohr, I am a supporter of a strong US-Israeli relationship and my voting record speaks for itself. This will not change. But until I receive a formal, written apology from your organization I must inform you that AIPAC representatives are not welcome in my offices or for meetings with my staff.

Betty McCollum

Member of Congress

4th District, Minnesota

Washington, D.C.

<http://mparent7777.livejournal.com/>

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### **Pro-Israel lobby in U.S. under attack**

<http://www.upi.com/InternationalIntelligence/view.php?StoryID=20060320-124726-1902r>

Intl. Intelligence

WASHINGTON, March 20 (UPI) -- Two of America's top scholars have published a searing attack on the role and power of Washington's pro-Israel lobby in a British journal, warning that its "decisive" role in fomenting the Iraq war is now being repeated with the threat of action against Iran. And they say that the Lobby is so strong that they doubt their article would be accepted in any U.S.-based publication.

Professor John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago, author of "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" and Professor Stephen Walt of Harvard's Kenney School, and author of "Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy," are leading figures American in academic life.

They claim that the Israel lobby has distorted American policy and operates against American interests, that it has organized the funneling of more than \$140 billion dollars to

Israel and "has a stranglehold" on the U.S. Congress, and its ability to raise large campaign funds gives its vast influence over Republican and Democratic administrations, while its role in Washington think tanks on the Middle East dominates the policy debate.

And they say that the Lobby works ruthlessly to suppress questioning of its role, to blacken its critics and to crush serious debate about the wisdom of supporting Israel in U.S. public life.

"Silencing skeptics by organizing blacklists and boycotts -- or by suggesting that critics are anti-Semites -- violates the principle of open debate on which democracy depends," Walt and Mearsheimer write.

"The inability of Congress to conduct a genuine debate on these important issues paralyses the entire process of democratic deliberation. Israel's backers should be free to make their case and to challenge those who disagree with them, but efforts to stifle debate by intimidation must be roundly condemned," they add, in the 12,800-word article published in the latest issue of *The London Review of Books*.

The article focuses strongly on the role of the "neo-conservatives" within the Bush administration in driving the decision to launch the war on Iraq.

"The main driving force behind the war was a small band of neo-conservatives, many with ties to the Likud," Mearsheimer and Walt argue." Given the neo-conservatives' devotion to Israel, their obsession with Iraq, and their influence in the Bush administration, it isn't surprising that many Americans suspected that the war was designed to further Israeli interests."

"The neo-conservatives had been determined to topple Saddam even before Bush became president. They caused a stir early in 1998 by publishing two open letters to Clinton, calling for Saddam's removal from power. The signatories, many of whom had close ties to pro-Israel groups like JINSA (Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs) or WINEP (Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy), and who included Elliot Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, Bernard Lewis, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, had little trouble persuading the Clinton administration to adopt the general goal of ousting Saddam. But they were unable to sell a war to achieve that objective. They were no more able to generate enthusiasm for invading Iraq in the early months of the Bush administration. They needed help to achieve their aim. That help arrived with 9/11. Specifically, the events of that day led Bush and Cheney to reverse course and become strong proponents of a preventive war," Walt and Mearsheimer write.

The article, which is already stirring furious debate in U.S. academic and intellectual circles, also explores the historical role of the Lobby.

"For the past several decades, and especially since the Six-Day War in 1967, the centerpiece of US Middle Eastern policy has been its relationship with Israel," the article says.

"The combination of unwavering support for Israel and the related effort to spread 'democracy' throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic opinion and jeopardized not only U.S. security but that of much of the rest of the world. This situation has no equal in American political history. Why has the U.S. been willing to set aside its own security and that of many of its allies in order to advance the interests of another state?" Professors Walt and Mearsheimer add.

"The thrust of U.S. policy in the region derives almost entirely from domestic politics, and especially the activities of the 'Israel Lobby'. Other special-interest groups have managed to skew foreign policy, but no lobby has managed to divert it as far from what the national interest would suggest, while simultaneously convincing Americans that U.S. interests and those of the other country - in this case, Israel -- are essentially identical," they add.

They argue that far from being a strategic asset to the United States, Israel "is becoming a strategic burden" and "does not behave like a loyal ally." They also suggest that Israel is also now "a liability in the war on terror and the broader effort to deal with rogue states.

"Saying that Israel and the U.S. are united by a shared terrorist threat has the causal relationship backwards: the US has a terrorism problem in good part because it is so closely allied with Israel, not the other way around," they add. "Support for Israel is not the only source of anti-American terrorism, but it is an important one, and it makes winning the war on terror more difficult. There is no question that many al-Qaida leaders, including Osama bin Laden, are motivated by Israel's presence in Jerusalem and the plight of the Palestinians. Unconditional support for Israel makes it easier for extremists to rally popular support and to attract recruits."

They question the argument that Israel deserves support as the only democracy in the Middle East, claiming that "some aspects of Israeli democracy are at odds with core American values. Unlike the US, where people are supposed to enjoy equal rights irrespective of race, religion or ethnicity, Israel was explicitly founded as a Jewish state and citizenship is based on the principle of blood kinship. Given this, it is not surprising that its 1.3 million Arabs are treated as second-class citizens."

The most powerful force in the Lobby is AIPAC, the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, which Walt and Mearsheimer call "a de facto agent for a foreign government," and which they say has now forged an important alliance with evangelical Christian groups.

The bulk of the article is a detailed analysis of the way they claim the Lobby managed to change the Bush administration's policy from "halting Israel's expansionist policies in the Occupied Territories and advocating the creation of a Palestinian state" and divert it to the war on Iraq instead. They write "Pressure from Israel and the Lobby was not the only factor behind the decision to attack Iraq in March 2003, but it was critical."

"Thanks to the lobby, the United States has become the de facto enabler of Israeli expansion in the Occupied Territories, making it complicit in the crimes perpetrated against the Palestinians," and conclude that "Israel itself would probably be better off if the Lobby were less powerful and U.S. policy more even-handed."

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### **Mearsheimer replies to the irate "Israel Lobby"**

Letters - The Israel Lobby - From John Mearsheimer & Stephen Walt.

We wrote 'The Israel Lobby' in order to begin a discussion of a subject that had become difficult to address openly in the United States (LRB, 23 March). We knew it was likely to generate a strong reaction, and we are not surprised that some of our critics have chosen to attack our characters or misrepresent our arguments. .... Must Read !!!

<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n09/letters.html>

[http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/print/mear01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/print/mear01_.html)

Additional at following URL:

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=49800>



Alpha

Posted: Fri May 19, 2006 5:53 pm Post subject: How Israel Controls/Corrupts the US Congress and Media



Joined: 06 Jan 2003  
Posts: 36484

### How Israel Controls/Corrupts the US Congress and Media:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=53>

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