

# **Pelosi Gives A Pep Talk To AIPAC**

**The Democratic leader in her own words**

By Mark Gaffney

11-11-6

Rep. Nancy Pelosi's recent speech to the Israeli-American lobby (AIPAC) ought to be a clarion call for peace activists. Her address did not contain any big surprises. But it is, nonetheless, remarkable for its transparency. The speech (see below for the text) affords a up-close look at what Pelosi thinks about Israel, the Palestinians, the Mideast, and nukes.

It's worth a look too because Pelosi's beliefs on these matters are not a departure. Most of the Democratic Party leadership espouse similar ideas. The bipartisan voting record of Congress in recent years on Mideast issues proves this to be the case. Remember, this is the party that's supposed to represent the grassroots, i.e., we the people. So what is the Democratic leader of the House doing, anyway, giving a pep talk to the second largest lobby in Washington? Indeed, to the lobby of a foreign power? It's a question more Americans ought to be asking.

Most of the speech is the same old stuff. I draw your attention only to several points:

Pelosi denies that the key issue is Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza --- at a stroke repudiating numerous UN Security Council Resolutions that the US voted for and supposedly still supports. But clearly, that's no longer the case, and hasn't been for many years.

The real issue, she states, is the survival of Israel. This is the familiar mantra by which anything and everything becomes possible. Only, there's a minor catch: The statement isn't true and hasn't been since probably 1949.

If nothing else, Pelosi is well-versed. She recites another familiar line, the one about how there was no partner for peace until Arafat expired, when light suddenly came flooding in. Pelosi makes it clear that in her view the Palestinian leader Abbas' real job is to serve as policeman for Israel. Evidently, his legitimacy largely depends on this. Looking after

the best interests of his own people comes in a distant second.

But her most revealing statements concern nuclear proliferation, and they show why the Democrats (who don't get it) are no improvement over the Republicans (who always get it wrong). In fact, the Democrats may be even more dangerous, precisely because there is still the perception in the land, however mistaken, that the Democrats are the party of enlightened ideas. I would be willing to bet that most registered democrats are not aware of how extreme their elected Democratic representatives are on these key issues. Nor can most thus have a true sense of how dire the situation is.

According to Pelosi, the biggest danger to Israel today comes from Iran, whose nuclear ambitions, though still unproved, also threaten the US. Her perspective contains the seed of ominous things to come, because, after all, something will have to be done about Iran, right? Yes, and soon.

Meanwhile, Pelosi manages to overlook Israel's brutal treatment of the Palestinians, which undoubtedly is the greatest danger to Israel, by far, and comes from within. Nor does she mention Israel's massive nuclear, chemical and biological weapons arsenal. But her statements additionally contain the tacit and troublesome assumption that the only people in the region who matter are Israelis and Americans. Everyone else, virtually the entire population of numerous countries, though no less imperiled by nuclear weapons (arguably even more so), simply don't count in this calculus. In fact, Pelosi's remarks are implicitly racist for this reason.

The shocker, though, also near the end, is where Pelosi takes the US and Israeli nuclear monopoly in the region for granted, as if this were a good and necessary thing. The purpose of the NPT in her view is to shut down the rogue proliferators, who by definition are always those other guys, never us. It's the stuff of which nuclear nightmares are made. I would also bet that the vast majority of people who live in the Mideast take sharp issue with Pelosi's thinking, and probably have a bone to pick with her about where the actual threat lies.

George Washington, our founding father, who warned against entangling alliances, must be turning over, about now. But don't take my word for it. Read Pelosi's speech (which follows) and draw your own conclusions.

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