

JEWISH INSIDER

1). Do you believe there is a concerning rise of antisemitism on the [Right or Left], including in your own party? How do you propose to address this issue?

Yes, and especially so since the election of Donald Trump. We have seen a concerning rise in explicit anti-semitism, as well as more implicit anti-semitism — as is present with the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS). While BDS works hard to appear benign, its objectives are clear: delegitimizing and demonizing the State of Israel. More than 90% of House Democrats properly joined in condemning this effort, without running afoul of our sacrosanct First Amendment. I support the House resolution and, in Congress, will support others like it. As a Jew and a representative for the most Jewish Congressional district in Massachusetts, I will consider it my obligation to educate those in my own party about anti-Semitic tropes that are often employed in criticism of Israel and pro-Israel Jews.

2). Do you think a two-state solution will facilitate peace between Israelis and Palestinians? If so, what are the basic parameters? If not a two-state solution, what do you suggest? What do you agree or disagree with about the Trump peace plan?

I favor a two-state solution while recognizing that such a solution must be negotiated between the involved actors and cannot be imposed by outsiders. I also know the history — I know that Israel has offered to create a Palestinian state and those offers were, unfortunately, rejected by Palestinian leaders. The solution here must result in a viable state for the Palestinians, and security for Israelis.

An active U.S. role in promoting a peace process and a two-state solution is vital. While previous administrations of both parties have worked hard to bring the involved actors together and to agreement, the Trump administration has failed to take that tack — and has even encouraged the unilateral actions of the Israeli government such as legitimizing settlement expansion. I oppose settlement expansion activities in the West Bank, which obstruct the path towards a two-state solution.

Trump's peace plan is not a viable peace plan. For almost one hundred years, the U.S. and international communities have supported efforts to create a two-state solution. In the past, Palestinian leadership has rejected those proposals, but that does not mean that the United States should abandon the goal of a two-state solution. Trump's plan hurts both Palestinians and Israelis, and incites further conflict. Both Israelis and Palestinians must be involved at every step of the negotiation process in order to reach a peaceful resolution.

3). Why would you re-enter or stay out of the JCPOA with Iran? If re-enter, under what conditions or changes? How should the United States deal with the Iranian government on an ongoing basis? Should the U.S. military maintain a presence in the Middle East?

Iran must not be permitted to obtain nuclear weapons. That has been U.S. policy under both parties. I publicly supported the JCPOA, and maintain that President Trump should not have abandoned it with no strategy and no commitment to forge a better agreement. As a result of his withdrawal, Iran has broken through a number of caps. The sunset of key provisions is fast approaching, and we must prioritize a return to compliance with the agreement as a basis for new negotiations in extending these key provisions. The US ought to prioritize diplomacy aimed at achieving an agreement with Iran.

I am in favor of scaling down the U.S. military footprint in the Middle East. The U.S. has three strategic priorities in the Middle East: supporting Israel, preventing nations from harboring terrorists, and ensuring maritime commerce is unimpeded. None of these priorities require a large conventional footprint in the region, but do require that the U.S. has force-projection capabilities through naval and air power and that it works closely with allies and partners in the region, especially Israel.

4). Should the U.S. increase, maintain or decrease the amount of foreign aid to Israel and other countries in the Middle East? Should the U.S. condition its aid for specific results? What does the U.S. benefit from its relationship with Israel?

Having served in both the Middle East and in Central America, I wholeheartedly favor a strong U.S. foreign aid effort. U.S. aid — including military aid — to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and even the Palestinian Authority, increases stability in the region, and signals our enduring partnership. I support providing aid to the Palestinian Authority and UN agencies that serve Palestinians, insofar as these funds encourage cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian security officials in the West Bank, meet critical humanitarian needs, and are not directed towards violence.

I unequivocally support military aid to Israel. In Congress, I will strongly support the \$3.8 billion dollars in annual military aid to Israel called for in the Obama-era U.S. Israel Memorandum of Understanding.

Israel is our most important partner in the Middle East. It is the homeland of the Jewish people for perpetuity and must remain a democracy. Israel is also an economic powerhouse with a booming tech sector. Israel's human capital and knowledge creation engine is unrivaled in the region and top tier in the globe. It's in America's and Massachusetts' economic interest to keep the Israeli economic engine humming.

As a Marine, Jew, and candidate for Congress, I am committed to Israel's security and prosperity. In Congress, I will work tirelessly to protect and defend the mutual interests of the United States and Israel, which include working to achieve a two-state solution to the conflict.