

RELEASE IN FULL

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March 23, 2010

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: US Jewish and Israeli public opinion

Three new polls released: from Avaaz (all US), J Street (US Jews), and Ha'aretz (Israelis). I've sent Lauren the whole J Street poll to print out for you; its internals are the most detailed, relevant and suggestive. My reading of that poll is that the administration is in a pretty good spot with US Jewish opinion and that the drag (about 10 points, I think) has less to do with the Middle East and Israel than with the economy. Jewish opinion is far more solidly supportive of the administration generally than the general population (except minorities). Those adamantly opposed to the administration stance on Israel are preconceived to be against; they are predictable, a minority of the US Jewish community and have reached their natural limits. The institutional US Jewish position backing Bibi and against the administration does not have majority support among Jews.

Avaaz.org (a left international environmental activist group involved with Al Gore on climate change) commissioned a YouGov poll (more info here: <http://bit.ly/9T4heq>) of the general American public that found:

- 62% of those polled said the growth of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory will only lead to greater hostilities.
- 52% of respondents support, and 31% oppose, the Obama administration's demand that Israel stop all settlement-building.
- The poll showed broad support for President Obama's overall approach to the region. 61% of respondents supported the administration's plan to lead negotiations to broker a peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians during the coming months, with only 25% opposing that approach.

J Street found:

- American Jews by a four-to-one margin, 82-18 percent, support the United States playing an active role in helping the parties to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, with 73 percent of American Jews supporting this active role even if it means that the United States were to publicly state its disagreements with both the Israelis and the Arabs.

- And by a 71-29 percent margin, American Jews support the United States “exerting pressure” on both the Israelis and the Arabs to make the necessary compromises to achieve peace. An earlier J Street poll last March found a similar level of support.

A Ha'aretz-backed poll in Israel found 69% of Israelis think Obama is "fair" (51%) or "friendly" (18%) to Israel, against 21% who say he's hostile. 41% of Israeli public think that Israel should stop building in East Jerusalem until the end of peace negotiations with the Palestinian, and 48% think it shouldn't--despite a general (US) perception of an Israeli consensus supporting the settlements in Jerusalem.