

New American Ambassador to Israel Tries to Schmooze It

The Times of Israel does a fantastic job of hopping on new developments and getting first interviews. The Times recently interviewed Thomas Nides, the new U.S. Ambassador to Israel. He was categorized in the newspaper as “courteous, good-humored and adroit interviewee.”

In reading the interview, what was striking was the extent to which the Ambassador clearly is attempting to distinguish himself from his predecessor, David Friedman. Friedman was an unadorned, unapologetic supporter of Israel and recognized that no respect should be given to the 1948 Armistice lines.

One might even opine that the interview was lightweight, considering some of the Ambassador’s observations. Essentially, Nides attempted to say that he is going to love everybody and everybody will love him in return. Kumbaya is his message. Unfortunately, however, the Ambassador does not live in the kumbaya zone; he is serving in the Middle East where Israel is surrounded by enemies who want nothing more than its immediate and total annihilation.

The Ambassador was asked whether he would travel to the settlements and his answer was a resounding “No.” What are the settlements? The question itself is a hot button issue. The real question should be: “Will you travel across the 1948 Armistice lines to visit with Jews who are living in the area illegally seized by the Jordanians and not given as a State to anyone else?” That really is the question. For an ambassador to say that Jews should not be living in a particular locale, but that Arabs can live anywhere within the West Bank or Israel, begs the question as to whether the Ambassador is really a supporter of Israel.

One cannot say they support Israel, and even claim to be Zionist, as Nides does, and then refuse to reach out to Israelis and others who are not Muslim Arabs and live in the so-called West Bank. The Ambassador was asked in the interview whether his refusal to visit Israelis in the settlements is a *de facto* condemnation of Israelis living over the green line, beyond the 1948 Armistice lines. No matter how one slices or dices the issue; no matter how loving they are, the refusal to travel across the Armistice line sends a clear message to those who thirst for Jewish blood. The dictator, Muhammad Abbas, in Ramallah understands that the refusal of Nides to travel over the Armistice lines, to visit with Israelis, is a statement of disapproval.

The Ambassador needs to be asked just why he will not support the right of Israelis to live anywhere in the Middle East, including in that territory which the Palestinian Authority and others demand as their own country. If and when that country is established, will it be free of Jews? As we know from Gaza, the answer is “Yes.” Does the Ambassador not want to acknowledge that?

Is the Ambassador worried that by traveling over the Armistice line, he will be showing support for the Jewish right to live and occupy their traditional land and nation, recognized by a treaty signed under the auspices of the League of Nations and later adopted by the United Nations?

The Ambassador spoke frequently of attempting to strengthen Israeli democracy. The thinking in Washington is that the more concessions Israel makes as to its own security and with respect to the right of its own citizens to live in the West Bank, the more democratic the nation becomes. This is also true with respect to religious and other Israeli internal issues which the Ambassador delicately steps around. However, what does the Ambassador have to say about what will strengthen democracy within Gaza or the areas administered by the Palestinian Authority? The United States and the rest of the western world wants nothing to do with democracy under Muhammad Abbas. They know that if there were elections in the West Bank, a terrorist group would take control. Better to have no democracy than to have terrorists at yet another one of Israel's profoundly delicate doorsteps.

There is a disturbing hypocrisy promulgated by those in Washington that they want to encourage Israeli democracy, by pressuring Israel to weaken its own security, while having no concern about the democracy of Israel's enemies. This is a reflection of what the United Nations, Amnesty International and other groups have been doing in the public sphere. They trash Israel at every opportunity, but walk away from every other serious question of genocide in the world. While millions of Igbo Tribesmen in Nigeria are being murdered by Muslims, the world remains silent. When, in Sudan, Arabs in the north were committing genocide against Blacks in the south, hardly a peep from anyone. Nevertheless, American Ambassadors and those in the State Department constantly talk about "strengthening Israeli democracy" by weakening Israel's security interests. It's crazy, nu?

Israelis, although they certainly must be respectful of the new Ambassador, need to put some pressure on the Ambassador to be honest in connection with the unfairness inherent in his positions about Israel, while letting the Palestinian Authority totally off the hook. Whether the Palestinian Authority are paying terrorists to murder Israelis, or promoting mischief throughout the area it administers, is a situation that is a downhill slide for Israelis.

Ya Shakoach to the Times of Israel for jumping on these interviews of people like Nides and Amnesty International, but there is nevertheless work to be done to keep the pressure on the American Ambassador to show all of his cards, to demonstrate support for Israel and "Yes" to visit Israelis living across the 1948 Armistice line, where Israelis have every right to live.

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