

GOP Ups Ante on Clinton's Israel Pander

By inserting Israel-first promises in the Republican platform, GOP regulars challenge Donald Trump's America-first policies and open a possible bidding war with Hillary Clinton over pandering to Israel, as Chuck Spinney explains.

By Chuck Spinney

The so-called two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in my opinion, has always been a distraction to buy time for the Israelis to formally annex most of the West Bank to Israel. Much like Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights, annexation of this territory will be tangled up in the unexamined question of controlling access to scarce water resources.

This posting builds on my posting of last April, "[The Palestinian Question: Why the Two-State Solution is Kaput.](#)" My aim was to explain how the central and generally ignored goal of controlling access to the West Bank's water resources water is shaping Israel's long-term settlement policies. That posting described how issues relating to control of these water resources go a long way toward explaining the "facts-on-the-ground" pattern of accelerating settlement growth in [Area C](#) of the now defunct Oslo Accord, which comprises about 60 percent of the West Bank.

Ensuring fair and equitable access to the water resources of the West Bank and the River Jordan's watershed is a *necessary* although not a sufficient condition for an equitable solution to the complex Palestinian Question. That is true regardless of whether that solution takes the form of a two-state solution or a single-state bi-national solution.

However, the momentum of developments, in terms of the interaction between weak and vacillating U.S. policies and the accelerating rate of Israel's settlement growth in Area C, is leading inexorably to an Israeli annexation of Area C. Annexation will necessarily be accompanied by a Gazification of the Palestinian enclaves making up Areas A and B, and a perpetually unfair access to the West Bank's water resources.

Haaretz, Israel's leading left-of-center newspaper, recently carried a report entitled, "[About Face on U.S. Foreign Policy: GOP Platform to Drop Support for Two State Solution.](#)" This report was first published in the Jewish Insider, and it informs the reader that the draft Republican platform rejects the "false notion" that Israel is occupying the West Bank. The draft language also includes:

"Support for Israel is an expression of Americanism, and it is the

responsibility of our government to advance policies that reflect Americans' strong desire for a relationship with no daylight between America and Israel."

And the language goes on to recognize that "the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement ('BDS') is anti-Semitic in nature and seeks to destroy Israel." It calls for federal legislation "to thwart actions that are intended to limit commercial relations with Israel, or persons or entities doing business in Israel or in Israeli-controlled territories, in a discriminatory manner."

Whether Donald Trump will buy into such a blatant subordination of American interests to those of Israel is as yet an unanswered question. But the language puts Israel into political play in the 2016 presidential election. This creates a potential for a bidding war that could land Ms. Clinton in an awkward position.

To date, a cynical political strength of Ms. Clinton's campaign is that a large number of pro-Israeli Republican neocons in the national security establishment are flocking to her campaign. This crossover creates an appearance if not the reality of bestowing on Ms. Clinton an enhanced national security gravitas, at least among the Beltway establishment and mainstream media.

Her control of the Democratic platform committee has already enabled Ms. Clinton to defeat platform language criticizing Israel's occupation policies. Watch this video; note particularly the reference to the BDS by a Clinton stalwart.

Despite the Democratic platform committee's stuffing of the Palestinian Question, the draft Democratic platform says nothing comparable to the Republican language. That silence may not go far enough to placate Hillary's neocon crossovers. So, Ms. Clinton may come under pressure to strengthen her already strong pro-Israel stance in an effort to outbid the Republicans in the war to win the anti-Trump Republican voters.

But in so doing, Clinton may drive Sanders's supporters into throwing up their hands in disgust and staying home in November or voting for the Green or Libertarian candidates. How this supposed "lesser of two evils" triangulates her way out of this cul de sac will be a fascinating spectacle in the Roman circus passing for a presidential election.

[For more on this topic, see Consortiumnews.com's "Yes, Hillary Clinton Is a Neocon."]

Chuck Spinney is a former military analyst for the Pentagon who was famous for the "Spinney Report," which criticized the Pentagon's wasteful pursuit of costly and complex weapons systems. [This article appeared previously at <http://chuckspinney.blogspot.com/2016/07/draft-republican-platform-effectively.h>

tml]
