

Ambassador-nominee David Friedman, In His Own Words

by [Lara Friedman](#), posted at [Americans for Peace Now](#) 12/19/16 [Updated 12/21/16, 10:19am]

Much has been written about the views of David Friedman, President-elect Donald Trump's nominee as the next U.S. Ambassador to Israel. We have compiled this collection of quotes from his articles and speeches, so people can better understand and judge Mr. Friedman's views, based entirely on his own words.

Contents:

- [Rejecting U.S. policy in support of peace efforts/two-state solution](#)
 - [Attacking liberal U.S. Jews \(as kapos, etc\)](#)
 - [Accusing President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry of anti-Semitism](#)
 - [Attacking Hillary Clinton & Bill Clinton](#)
 - [Other positions of note \(pro-Putin/Assad; pro-quashing campus activism on Israel, attacking the New York Times, etc.\)](#)
-

Rejecting U.S. policy in support of peace efforts/two-state solution

Unequivocally opposing the two-state solution, Friedman wrote:

*"There has never been a 'two-state solution' – only a 'two-state narrative.' He also referred to it as "this non-existent 'solution,'" a "scam," a "damaging anachronism," and "an illusory solution in search of a non-existent problem." He described it as "an illusion that serves the worst intentions of both the United States and the **Palestinian Arabs**. It has never been a solution, only a narrative. But even the narrative itself now needs to end."* [Note: The term "Palestinian Arabs" is used by those who reject recognition of the Palestinians as a people with a legitimate national identity]. ([February 2016](#))

Suggesting that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict today has nothing to do with land or Israeli policies, Friedman stated:

"This is not about battle about land. It's an ideological battle about whether there will be a Jewish state, and it's a battle between a radical jihadism and the rest of the Muslim world." ([August 2016](#))

Suggesting that the demand to remove settlers from the West Bank as part of a peace agreement is racist and similar to a Nazi policy, Friedman stated:

"The Palestinians want Israel to absorb countless 'refugees' - people who never lived in Israel and whose ancestors were never forced to leave Israel [not accurate] - while their so-called 'state' is required to be, as the Nazis said, Judenrein (devoid of Jews)...It is an entirely racist and anti-Semitic position...the Prime Minister of Israel correctly observes that the Palestinian demand to remove all Jews from their ancestral homeland in Judea and Samaria is nothing short of an attempt at ethnic cleansing." ([September 2016](#))

Opposing the removal of settlers, Friedman wrote:

“It is inconceivable there could be a mass evacuation on that magnitude [speaking of the removal of settlers], in the unlikely event that there was an otherwise comprehensive peace agreement...It makes no sense for Judea and Samaria to be ‘Judenrein [void of Jews],’ any more than it makes sense for Israel to be ‘Arabrein [void of Arabs].’ It’s not fair.” ([November 2016](#))

Making the case for permanent Israeli control over West Bank, he said [explicitly from the perspective of someone identifying with the settlers and Israeli right - note the use of the word "we"]:

“...under most calculations, if you took **the entire state of Israel, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea**...if you annexed all of Judea and Samaria into Israel, the Jewish population would still be about 65%... If you study the numbers you’ll see that the whole idea that **we** have to jettison Judea and Samaria to retain the Jewish characteristics of Israel is just not true.” ([September 2016](#))

Advocating the obstructionist position of Prime Minister Netanyahu, Friedman wrote:

“The critical thing is to recognize that there is not going to be any progress on a Palestinian state until the Palestinians renounce violence and accept Israel as a Jewish state. Until that happens, there is really nothing to talk about in terms of a political process...” ([November 2016](#))

In contrast to this November 2016 assertion, Friedman previously wrote candidly about his view that Palestinian actions/policies are irrelevant to what Israel should do vis-à-vis settlements - a view predicated on the belief that there is no occupation and the entire West Bank belongs to Israel. He wrote [explicitly from the perspective of someone identifying with the settlers and Israeli right - note the use of the word "we"]:

“If, say, next month the Palestinians renounce violence, are **we** really prepared to cede to them Gush Etzion, Maale Adumim, Bet El, Ariel, etc.? **Of course not.** Separate and apart from the threshold issue of trust, Judea and Samaria historically have deep Jewish roots and were validly captured 48 years ago in a defensive war – far more legitimately than through the atrocious acts that today dictate the borders of most countries. And, insofar as they were captured from the Kingdom of Jordan, which almost immediately abandoned any interest in the region, **they are not occupied territory.**” ([October 2015](#))

Supporting the continuous expansion of settlements [in an entire article written explicitly from the perspective someone who identifies with the settlers, using the words “we,” “us,” and “our” throughout], Friedman wrote:

“As a general rule, **we** should expand a community in Judea and Samaria where the land is legally available and a residential or commercial need is present – just like in any other neighborhood anywhere in the world. Until that becomes the primary consideration for development, how can we expect to be taken seriously that this is **our** land?” And: ***“Peace will come if and when Palestinians learn to stop hating **us** and to embrace life rather than worship death. **We** should try to help them in that effort, but **in all cases let’s continue to build!**”*** ([October 2015](#))

Suggesting that if elected and traveling to Israel, President Trump should not necessarily meet with the Palestinian Authority, Friedman stated:

"I personally think putting the Israeli leadership on a common level with Abbas is a mistake. In one case you have a sovereign nation that is democratic, and in the other case you have a leader who is hanging on by a thread, who does not have an actual mandate and who funds stipends to pay to families of terrorists while they are in jail. These are difference [sic] types of governments—if you even want to call the Palestinian leadership a government." ([August 2016](#))

Suggesting that a Trump Administration would clear out civil servants who argue against shifting policy on Israel-Palestine, Friedman stated in a speech:

"When Donald Trump has his first meeting with the lifers in the state Department and they say, 'Mr. Trump, with all due respect, you have only been president for a couple of days, we've been living here for the last 20 years, we don't do it that way, we do it this way – we don't move the embassy, that's been State department policy for 20 years, the reaction from Donald Trump is going to be, 'You know what guys, you're all FIRED!'" ([October 2016](#))

Suggesting that the State Department's two-state policy is grounded in anti-Semitism, Friedman wrote:

*"The U.S. State Department – with **a hundred-year history of anti-Semitism** – promotes the payoff of corrupt Palestinians in exchange for their completely duplicitous agreement to support a two-state solution." ([February 2016](#))*

Attacking liberal U.S. Jews (as kapos, etc)

In [July 2015](#), Friedman wrote an article attacking liberal American Jews, stating,

*"Unfortunately, **hearkening back to the days of the Kapos during the Nazi regime and well before that, there is a history of a minority of Jews betraying their own.** I don't think all liberal Jews are 'self-hating,' as some of my colleagues like to describe them. But I do think that, like most liberals, they suffer a cognitive disconnect in identifying good and evil."*

And: *"People like Jeremy Ben-smi of 'J Street' who cut his teeth on the **virulently anti-Israel (notwithstanding its name) New Israel Fund**, and who today leads an organization – **a proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing** – that purports to be pro-Israel but advocates just the opposite."*

In [May 2016](#), Friedman went further, writing:

*"Are **J Street** supporters really as bad as kapos? The answer, actually, is no. **They are far worse than kapos – Jews who turned in their fellow Jews in the Nazi death camps.** The kapos faced extraordinary cruelty and who knows what any of us would have done under those circumstances to save a loved one? But J Street? **They are just smug advocates of Israel's destruction** delivered from the comfort of their secure American sofas – **it's hard to imagine anyone worse.**"*

In [December 2016](#), The Atlantic's Jeffrey Goldberg asked him about his comments comparing liberal Jews to kapos. Friedman doubled down:

*"...Mr. [Jeffrey] Goldberg then raised the kapos comparison and asked if he stood by it. Mr. Friedman did not back away. **'They're not Jewish, and they're not pro-Israel,'** he said, according to the people in the room."*

In [August 2015](#), Friedman attacked Democratic (and Jewish) Senator Chuck Schumer, of New York over the Iran nuclear deal, writing:

*"No matter how he ultimately votes, by making his decision such a close call – which it plainly should not be -- **Schumer is validating the worst appeasement of terrorism since Munich.**"*

Accusing President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry of anti-Semitism

*"Asked to comment on the unspeakable tragedy of innocent Jewish civilians being murdered by knife-wielding Islamic radicals, **Obama and Kerry** do little more than condemn the proverbial 'cycle of violence.' I'm sorry, but this is pure and outright murder and any public figure who finds it difficult to condemn it as such without diluting the message with geo-political drivel is **engaging in 'blatant anti-Semitism.'**" ([May 2016](#))*

*"As the Dreyfus affair ran its course, the Parisian streets were taken over by angry mobs shouting 'kill Dreyfus, kill the Jews.' Thankfully, we have not descended to that level, but **the blatant anti-Semitism emanating from our President and his sycophantic minions is palpable and very disturbing.**" ([August 2015](#))*

*"**So how has our great uniting President responded?** In the same manner as his spiritual leader, Jeremiah Wright -- **by appealing to the vilest anti-Semitic biases of the population.** This is the worst type of Chicago-style politics and no other president in my lifetime has descended to such despicable behavior." ([August 2015](#))*

*"I have little to add to the disgust already expressed by the experts with regard to the horrific agreement reached between the P5+1 and Iran – **undoubtedly the worst international accord since Neville Chamberlain conceded Eastern Europe to Hitler.**" ([July 2015](#))*

Attacking Hillary Clinton & Bill Clinton

Attacking Hillary Clinton as anti-Israel, Friedman wrote:

"Forcing a deal against Israel's will (and against the interests of justice, fairness and international law) would be the culmination of her lengthy career of anti-Israel advocacy and policy... If you are an American Jew who is thinking of voting for Hillary Clinton, I have the following suggestion: Spend a week in France, a country which has all but succumbed to uncontrolled Muslim immigration and failed left-wing policies. Speak with representatives of the

Jewish community of that country, and develop an understanding of their fears and insecurities living in their host nation. BECAUSE IF HILLARY CLINTON IS ELECTED, THE PRO-ISRAEL AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY IS GOING TO START TO FEEL A LOT LIKE THE JEWS OF FRANCE. [capital letters in the original]" ([October 2016](#))

Attacking Hillary Clinton by accusing one of her top aides of having connections to Muslim Brotherhood & Al Qaida, Friedman told a crowd:

*"Who does Hillary Clinton get her advice from? ...What about Huma Abedin? Grew up in Saudi Arabia, **close connections to the Muslim Brotherhood** [voice in crowd says, "and al Qaida"], **and al Qaida, right.**" [He later tried to suggest that "and al Qaida, right" was not an endorsement of that accusation – see video]. ([October 2016](#))*

Attacking Hillary Clinton's personal views on Israel, Friedman said:

*"I'm not aware of anything she did that is particularly good. I can name off the top of my head things that were nasty, like ripping up the letter from George Bush to Ariel Sharon, which I think was the only thing Israel got from evacuating Gaza. **I don't think she particularly likes Israel.** I think she likes the kind of elite left among the Jewish people of Israel and in America like the Max Blumenthals, the Sidney Blumenthals and the people of that ilk who would like to turn Israel into a sort of Singapore. **I think she's terrible for Israel.**" ([August 2016](#))*

Attacking President Bill Clinton for his Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts:

*"Despite his good intentions, however, **Clinton was more dangerous to the interests of Israel than any president since Eisenhower.**" ([March 2016](#))*

Other positions of note:

Suggesting that U.S. pressure of any kind is a threat to Israel, Friedman stated:

"A strong Israel un-tethered to American pressure is essential to Israel's ongoing survival." ([August 2016](#))

Calling for curbs in US on criticism/activism related to Israel, Friedman wrote,

"Colleges are generally being far too lenient in allowing the pro-Palestinian community to deprive those in the pro-Israel camp of their First Amendment right to free speech...This is a serious constitutional deprivation, so it is something that must be looked at." ([November 2016](#))

Arguing for a new U.S.-Israel relationship grounded in the fight against "Islamic terrorism," Friedman wrote:

*"...contrary to what we've seen in the past, Israel is no longer a client state to be directed what to do and not to do. Israel is a **full partner with the United States in the global war of the 21st century: The global war against Islamic terrorism.**" ([October 2016](#))*

Attacking the New York Times (and implying it is anti-Semitic), Friedman wrote:

“If only the Times had reported on the Nazi death camps with the same fervor as its failed last-minute attempt to conjure up alleged victims of Donald Trump, imagine how many lives could have been saved. But the Times has never been committed to the unvarnished truth and its priorities have never included causes important to Israel or the Jewish people. I focus on the Times not because of my disgust for this publication nor because it threatens the very core of American democracy...” ([October 2016](#))

Attacking Israel’s Arab citizens for “disloyalty”, Friedman wrote:

“Israel’s enemies are on its doorstep and it is threatened from all directions and from within. Its policy of schizophrenia – of criticizing disloyal Arab citizens while simultaneously bestowing upon them the benefits of citizenship, simply isn’t working.” ([November 2015](#))

Praising Putin & Netanyahu in the same breath [and supporting Assad regime]

“Vladimir Putin gets it. He may be a ‘thug,’ as he was recently described by Senator Rubio, but he knows how to identify a national objective, execute a military plan, and ultimately prevail. And Bibi Netanyahu gets it as well. That’s why the coordination between the Russian and Israeli armies, and in particular their respective air forces, is at unprecedented levels. Bibi knows that with Russia in the game, when the dust settles Bashar Assad will retain power – a manageable result for Israel insofar as the Assads have kept their border with Israel largely quiet for some 42 years.” ([November 2015](#))