

BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

ISRAEL LOBBY TORPEDOES APPOINTMENT

Retired Ambassador Charles W. Freeman, Jr., has withdrawn his acceptance of the chairmanship of the National Intelligence Council after aggressive opposition to his appointment by the Israel Lobby, American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Excerpts from Freeman's withdrawal statement follow:

I have concluded that the barrage of libelous distortions of my record would not cease upon my entry into office. The effort to smear me and to destroy my credibility would instead continue. I do not believe the National Intelligence Council could function effectively while its chair was under attack by unscrupulous people with a passionate attachment to the views of a political faction in a foreign country. I agreed to chair the NIC to strengthen it and protect it against politicization, not to introduce it to efforts by a special interest group to assert control over it through a protracted political campaign.

The libels on me and their easily traceable email trails show conclusively that there is a powerful lobby determined to prevent any view other than its own from being aired, still less to factor in American understanding trends and events in the Middle East. The tactics of the Israel Lobby plumb the depths of dishonor and indecency and include character assassination, selective misquotation, the willful distortion of the record, the fabrication of falsehoods, and an utter disregard for the truth. The aim of this Lobby is control of the policy process through the exercise of veto over the appointment of people who dispute the wisdom of its views, the substitution of political correctness for analysis, and the exclusion of any and all options for decision by Americans and our government other than those that it favors.

There is a special irony in having been accused of improper regard for the opinions of foreign governments and societies by a group so clearly intent on enforcing adherence to the policies of a foreign government, in this case, the government of Israel. I believe that the inability of the American public to discuss, or the government to consider, any option for US policies in the Middle East opposed by the ruling faction in Israeli politics has allowed that faction to adopt and sustain policies that ultimately threaten the state of Israel. It is not permitted for anyone in the United States to say so. This is not just a tragedy for Israelis and their neighbors in the Middle East; it is doing widening damage to the national security of the United States.

The outrageous agitation that followed the leak of my pending appointment will be seen by many to raise serious questions about whether the Obama administration will be able to make its own decisions about the Middle East and related issues. I regret that my willingness to serve the new administration has ended by casting doubt on its ability to consider, let alone decide what policies might best serve the interests of the United States rather than those of a Lobby intent on enforcing the will and interests of a foreign government.

Join us in urging Present Obama to resist the efforts of the Israel Lobby to dictate US policy in the Middle East. You can contact him at: comments@whitehouse.gov or 202-456-1111.

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LEARN MORE

LIST OF BOOKS ABOUT PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

<i>Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948</i>	By Tanya Reinhart
<i>The Road Map to Nowhere</i>	By Tanya Reinhart
<i>The Iron Wall Israel and the Arab World</i>	By Avi Shlaim
<i>Jewish Schizophrenia in the Land of Israel</i>	By Rabbi David. J. Forman
<i>The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine</i>	By Illan Pappé
<i>Palestine Peace Not Apartheid</i>	By President Jimmy Carter
<i>Understanding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict</i>	By Phyllis Bennis
<i>The Other Side of Israel</i>	By Susan Nathan
<i>The Lemon Tree</i>	By Sandy Tolan
<i>The Israeli Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy</i>	By John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt

PARTIAL LIST OF WEBSITES

Haaretz Israeli Newspaper	http://www.haaretz.org
Christian Peacemakers	http://www.cpt.org
If Americans Knew	http://www.ifamericansknew.org
B'Tselem, Israeli Peace Group	http://www.btselem.org
Rabbis for Human Rights	http://www.rhr-na.org
Aljazeera English	http://www.english.aljazeera.net
Electronic Intifada (Palestinian site)	http://electronicintifada.net
Maan News (Palestinian)	http://www.maannews.net/en
Jewish Voice for Peace	http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org
Sabeel	http://www.sabeel.org
Brit Tzedek v'Shalom	http://www.btvshalom.org

Bay Area Women in Black are Jews and allies who stand against militaristic and fundamentalist leadership in all countries, including our own. We wear black as a sign of our mourning for all the Iraqi, Israeli and Palestinian lives that have been lost as a result of war, militarization and violence. As part of the international movement of Women in Black, we seek to transform women's mourning for the dead into a powerful refusal of the inevitability of war.

Join us at the Grand Lake Theater every Saturday at noon to register your protest and your presence as we continue to urge the end of the US military and financial support for Israel's disastrous occupation.

The group with flags and signs supporting Israel is the San Francisco Voice for Israel, a local group who oppose Bay Area Women in Black's criticism of the policies of the Israeli government and military. BAWIB is not anti-Israel. BAWIB believes Israel's occupation is wrong and deprives Palestinians of basic human rights. BAWIB calls for the end of the occupation and its violent effects on Israelis and Palestinians. The flyers distributed by Voice for Israel do not accurately reflect BAWIB.