



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on December 8, 2011

GOP Presidential Candidates Pledge Aid to Israel; Ron Paul Not Invited

The *Washington Post's* Jennifer Rubin [posited](#) in a column on the morning of the forum that the forum was bound to be an occasion for pandering on the issue of Israel. "The temptations in these settings is to roll out every Israel cliché in the book and tell them what they want to hear. The most shopworn of these is: Move the embassy to Jerusalem! Presidential candidates say it; presidents never do it. By reiterating the line, a candidate assumes the audience is dense."



Despite Rubin's column earlier in the day, current frontrunner in Iowa Newt Gingrich conformed to Rubin's prediction. The former House Speaker Gingrich [told](#) the Washington, D.C., audience:

In a Gingrich administration, the opening day, there will be an executive order about two hours after the inaugural address. We will send the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as of that day.

Gingrich also [told](#) the audience he'd appoint neoconservative John Bolton, a Bush administration Ambassador to the United Nations, as his Secretary of State.

Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney didn't go quite as far as Gingrich in pandering, but reserved most of his [fire](#) for President Obama's Israel policy. "He's publicly proposed that Israel adopt indefensible borders. He's insulted its Prime Minister. And he's been timid and weak in the face of the existential threat of a nuclear Iran." Romney also [said](#) he would try to get Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad "indicted for the crime of incitement to genocide under Article III of the Genocide Convention." Romney didn't elaborate how Ahmadinejad was committing genocide.

Rep. Ron Paul was excluded from the forum, despite polling second in Iowa and a close third in New Hampshire. "His views are what we feel are way outside the mainstream of the Republican Party," Republican Jewish Coalition executive director Matt Brooks [told](#) the *Boston Globe* before the forum, explaining why Paul wasn't invited. "He has consistently articulated positions that are antithetical to those in the organization."

Rep. Paul has in the past expressed opposition to all foreign aid, and said that Israel should be no exception. The day of the forum, Paul gave an [interview to NewsMax.com](#) where he said of Israel:

We should be their friend and their trading partner. They are a democracy and we share many values with them. But we should not be their master. We should not dictate where their borders will be nor should we have veto power over their foreign policy.

Paul's consistency on Israel and defense of its independence won some Jewish respect for his position,



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including Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic*, who [wrote](#) December 7: "There are good reason to include Ron Paul. He is, in one sense, a true Zionist, a believer in two core values of the Jewish liberation movement: Jewish independence and Jewish self-reliance."

Indeed, part of Paul's interview with NewsMax — conducted by Paul supporter Doug Wead — explicitly noted that Zionism requires Israeli self-reliance:

Part of the original idea of Zionism, as I understand it, was that there should be Jewish independence and Jewish self-reliance. Today, America doesn't want anyone to be self-reliant. We want to rule the world and be the saviors of the world, and we are going broke in the process.

Rep. Paul's worldview also includes peace, friendship, and trade with all nations — but no foreign aid. "This is not just about Israel, by the way," Paul [told](#) NewsMax. "This is about how we should conduct ourselves with other countries around the world."

Also [addressing](#) the Republican Jewish Coalition conference were Texas Governor Rick Perry, Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum, and former Chinese Ambassador and Utah Governor Jon Huntsman.



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