

AIPAC's gratuitous partisan apology to Obama at 2016 Washington Policy Conference



Donald Trump at 2016 AIPAC Washington Policy Conference

Source: AP

Seth Lipsky has an op-ed in today's edition of the *New York Post* castigating AIPAC for the gratuitous partisan apology to President Obama issued by Ms. Lillian Pinkus the newly elected head of the pro-Israel lobby group, [AIPAC'S pathetic apology to Obama](#). Pinkus was abjectly apologizing for the stinging criticism of the President by Republican Front Runner Donald Trump and contenders, Texas Republican Senator Ted Cruz and Ohio Governor John Kasich for isolating the Jewish nation of Israel, America's democratic ally in the roiling Middle East. Her apology was partisan, a reflection of AIPAC's pro Administration bias, a contradiction of its alleged doctrine of free speech.

Lipsky wrote:

'Unprecedented' is the word the *Washington Post* is using for the apology issued by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee for the applause given to Donald Trump at its conference this week.

AIPAC is shocked – shocked – that The Donald criticized President Obama from the lobby's stage. And that Trump's jibe was greeted with a gleeful ovation from thousands of pro-Israel activists.

It happened when Trump was marking the betrayals by the United Nations, which, he said, is "not a friend of

democracy, it's not a friend to freedom." It's not even, he added, a friend to America or Israel.

"With President Obama in his final year – yay!" The Donald exclaimed. "He may be the worst thing to ever happen to Israel, believe me, believe me. And you know it, and you know it better than anybody."

That's what prompted AIPAC's president, Lillian Pinkus, to apologize. "We are deeply disappointed," she said, "that so many people applauded a sentiment that we neither agree with or condone."

Forgive me, but the right word for AIPAC's apology is "chickens?-?-?-." And it's not just because Hillary Clinton's address, with her jibes at Trump and other Republicans, was the most partisan speech at AIPAC.

It's also because AIPAC has always been a stage for putting things into sharp relief. Of course President Obama isn't literally the worst thing that's ever happened to Israel (we Jews have had more than our portion of woe).

It's hard, though, to think of a presidency as disappointing to Israel as Obama's has been. Who, after all, was that "senior Obama administration official" who used "chickensh?-?-?-?" to describe Benjamin Netanyahu?

The insult was reported by *The Atlantic* not long before Netanyahu addressed a joint meeting of Congress. The magazine reckoned it marked the moment when, as its headline put it, "the crisis in US-Israel relations is officially here."

No one is placing bets on this driving Jewish voters out of the Democratic Party and into the arms of the GOP.

Lipsky noted that Trump was seconded in criticism of Obama by Cruz and Kasich while AIPAC leader Pinkus was silent on

Hillary Clinton's remarks:

It's not too soon, though, to say that we're at a remarkable moment. Before Trump made his appearance at AIPAC, after all, there were warnings of all sorts of protests and walkouts.

In the event, the man who's been endorsed by David Duke (and belatedly repudiated it) received a warm reception, marked by standing ovations. It prompted the editor of one Jewish newspaper, Jane Eisner of the Forward, to write that she was "ashamed."

"The applause," she wrote, "began after he uttered his very first sentence." Soon some in the crowd were standing and clapping. "And, when he threw the red meat that he brilliantly feeds his other crowds, there were cheers as they gobbled it up."

And no wonder. Trump railed against the articles of appeasement on which the Obama administration agreed with Iran. And this is not a Likud-versus-Labor thing. Both Netanyahu and the opposition's Isaac Herzog opposed the pact with the ayatollahs.

As does every GOP candidate who addressed AIPAC this year, including Ted Cruz most forcefully. John Kasich declared that in the wake of Iran's latest missile tests he would suspend the agreement.

The only candidate at AIPAC who actually supports the Iran appeasement is Hillary Clinton. Herchutzpah is so thick that it could be carved up with a chain saw and used to make bomb shelters – a point well-marked in The Post's editorial Wednesday.

At AIPAC, she warned against the Republicans. She said the GOP would give them a "glimpse of a potential US foreign policy that would insult our allies, not engage them, and

embolden our adversaries, not defeat them.”



Professor Jay Bergman

Central Connecticut State University

Lipsky's criticism was preceded by an email sent yesterday to the Board of AIPAC by long term friend conservative scholar Professor Jay Bergman, professor of Russian History at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain. Bergman was among the conservatives in the huge crowd of 18,000 who witnessed the scene at the 2016 AIPAC Washington Policy Conference. Bergman is one of the few conservative scholars in the Connecticut University system, an ardent Zionist, a good friend for 13 years in combating pro Palestinian and Chomskyite members of the CCSU faculty like 'distinguished' Professor Norton Mezvinsky, an uncle by marriage of the Clinton son in law.

Bergman noted Obama's isolation in a comment we [published](#) in the *Iconoclast* during the fall of the 2012 Presidential campaign:

Professor Jay Bergman at Central Connecticut State University, an expert in Russian History, commented in a Democracy Project post that Obama “would shed no tears if Israel was destroyed”. Bergman went on to say:

The reason Obama does not want Israel to attack Iran before the election is that an attack might cause Iran to shut down the Straits of Hormuz. This would probably cause gasoline prices in the United States to spike, and the dissatisfaction this would generate might reduce the chances of Obama's re-election.

Ponder the implications of this: the President of the

United States is willing to risk the lives of seven million Israelis (one million of them Arab) to advance his own interests, which he conflates with America's. The callousness and disregard for human life this reveals are staggering.

TO THE BOARD OF AIPAC:

I returned home yesterday from the AIPAC conference in Washington D.C., where at the Verizon Center on Monday I heard Hillary Clinton strongly criticize Donald Trump, a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. A few hours later I heard Donald Trump criticize Barack Obama, the President of the United States.

I also learned of the selection of Lillian Pinkus as the next president of AIPAC.

I was therefore chagrined to read the disingenuous and thoroughly reprehensible statement she issued on behalf of AIPAC condemning Trump for criticizing Obama without at the same time condemning Clinton for criticizing Trump.

Why is criticizing a candidate for president permissible at AIPAC but not criticizing the president himself? Is Ms. Pinkus seriously suggesting that the president of the United States should be immune to criticism?

What makes her selective condemnation especially pernicious is that President Obama obviously loathes Israel, has gone out of his way to insult and to mock its democratically-elected prime minister, and has negotiated a one-sided agreement with Iran that will permit the latter to acquire the nuclear weapons it needs to destroy Israel. Should that happen, the current president of the United States would be an accessory to genocide. He would have the blood of millions of Israelis on his hands. But evidently according to Ms. Pinkus – and thus to AIPAC – he should not be held accountable – or even criticized – for any of this. Indeed,

one can hardly fault the White House for concluding that AIPAC, notwithstanding its rhetoric about bipartisanship, is actually a mouthpiece for the Democratic Party, Barack Obama, and Hillary Clinton.

I happen not to like Donald Trump. He is not my first choice for president nor even my second. But the double standard Ms. Pinkus and AIPAC have applied in this instance is despicable.

That said, this year's conference was both edifying and enjoyable – wonderfully informative, expertly organized, and – Ms. Pinkus' shameful comments notwithstanding – genuinely bipartisan. For these reasons, I already signed up for next year's conference.

But should Ms. Pinkus continue to make a fool of herself – and of AIPAC – I will demand my money back.

Sincerely,

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