

View of the inauguration from israel

As the preparations and hype for the inauguration of Friday, January 20, heat up and the anticipation grows, many people across the world are watching. Through live streaming of news from computer monitors or TV screens, the events will be watched by Americans and non-Americans in Israel. Because it's happening on a Friday, which is Sabbath in Israel, those who are observant will have to wait until Saturday night re-runs, but the interest is still high.

Much has been expressed about the transition from Obama to Trump. All of the major Israeli online news sources are covering stories leading up to Friday's main event. The biggest issue in Israeli media about Trump is his promise to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The big back-story here is that, though it is a law on the books in the US, every president since its passage has utilized a waiver to avoid the controversy which is threatened to erupt if this is done.

Israeli Trump Fans

The problem is that anything that changes the policy on Jerusalem is an excuse for the Arabs in Israel and in the Palestinian Authority to riot and protest. They still think they will be able to steal Jerusalem from the Jewish people as part of their proposed state. However, the issue has been put six feet under by most Israelis, since for 20 years at least, the Arabs have not accepted any offers of land from Israel, other than Jordan. Moving any embassy to Jerusalem is a proclamation that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Of course it is the capital and has been for 3000 years. It's never belonged to any people called "Palestinian", since they are a new people which was created in 1964 by Yasser Arafat, an Egyptian. Besides, their state is supposed to be Jordan, which was given land from Palestine-Israel decades ago.

The newest update on the Jerusalem issue is that Jerusalem mayor Nir Barkat has begun his own campaign which encourages Israelis to welcome Mr. Trump in his new role as US president. The first part of his campaign is to post a petition online endorsing Mr. Trump's support of Israel and his promise to move the embassy. The mayor then will present the petition with signatures to the new Trump administration.

Barkat exemplifies the hopes that the new administration is bringing to Israeli citizens. He says, "After the eight dry years, a true friend has come to the White House. And I, along with all the citizens of Israel, welcome President-elect Donald Trump as he is elected leader of the free world, and thank him for his support of Israel and his efforts to move the embassy to Jerusalem.

"The call to sign the petition comes in light of Israel's enemies' strong opposition to the move. I'll direct all sectors of Israeli society [to it] and together, we'll send a signal to leaders in Washington that the U.S.'s greatest friend is still here."

It's interesting to note that Mayor Barkat referred to Mr. Trump's election as that of "elected leader of the free world."

Yishai Fleisher, a leader of settlers in Judea, though he lives on the Mt. of Olives which cannot be called a settlement, also expressed hope in the new president. Anyone familiar with the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, realizes how important the Mt. of Olives was to the events revealed in the Bible. Yet to Obama and the UN, the whole area east of Jerusalem is now called an illegal settlement which, along with the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, is Islamic. Fleisher wrote that "most indications show that he does not share your [Obama's] contempt for Israel, for Jerusalem and for the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria. We are looking forward to the next four years."

After writing the above, I went to a birthday party in my neighborhood. Some of my friends were discussing where the

embassy could be built and the length of time it would take to build it. The best solution seems to be the most obvious. A few years ago a new US consulate building was completed in Jerusalem, right smack on top of the imaginary armistice line of 1948. So it is in between Arab and Jewish neighborhoods. It is in the valley and there is lots of room to build more buildings, if other countries wanted to move their embassies there.

As with most things, it's hard to get definite answers to questions, because when we try to find out if this new consulate building was indeed planned to turn into a an embassy when the time came, we have been told both yes and no. Whatever the plans were, it does seem prudent to just turn the consulate into an embassy. Then Mr.Trump could easily check one major promise off his list. More than that, he would be demonstrating his courage, along with his support for an ally which has been much maligned in the past eight years.

And the Arabs? This would be a major calling of their bluff. The only reason they can protest is the same old argument about borders of their never-gonna-happen state. The building is already there, the personnel are mostly Arab, there would be no change to the neighborhoods or the way of life in the area. So it's a good guess the Arabs would back down and not start another war which they know they'd lose.

So Israelis have had much to talk about these past two months and the conversation has intensified as the final day of Obama approached. From where I sit in the outlaw territories deemed by the UN and Obama to be illegal for Jews, a great time of celebration will ensue on Saturday night after sundown. At that time we'll all rush to check our internet, to make sure Mr. Trump is indeed the 45th president of the United States.

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