

Bad Dog: James Mattis' Comment About Israel's Capital Has a Lot of People Angry

The eternal capital of Israel is Jerusalem.

But with its government authorities almost entirely located in Tel Aviv, President-elect Donald Trump's defense secretary-designate, James Mattis, gave an answer during his confirmation hearing last week that riled more than a few pro-Israel advocates. In part, the angst has been created by a liberal mainstream media bent on driving a wedge between the new administration and those who elected it into office.

During the hours-long question-and-answer process, which centered on both whether or not Mattis should be given a waiver to even be considered for the secretary of defense post—he has not been retired from the U.S. Marine Corps the requisite number of years under federal law—and whether or not his nomination should be confirmed by the Senate, Mattis gave a pretty straightforward answer. And it wasn't quite as controversial as some have made it out to be.

"Sir, right now I stick with the U.S. policy," he said. "The capital of Israel that I go to, sir, is Tel Aviv, sir, because that's where all their government people are."

He then reminded the senator who asked the question that as secretary of defense, that wasn't a question he necessarily needed to bother himself with. Such matters, he added, were under the purview of the incoming secretary of state, who he suggested was better equipped to answer.

Throughout the 2016 presidential campaign, Trump maintained

the U.S. Embassy in Israel would be relocated to its eternal capital, Jerusalem. The Republican Party platform was also amended—with help from the Trump campaign—to reflect the same goal.

Asked Friday during the morning press briefing if this should be a matter of concern for the president-elect, incoming White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer gave the same answer he's given nearly half a dozen times since Election Day. Although Trump appreciates and welcomes input from all of his Cabinet, at the end of the day, they will be expected to advance his agenda, not their own—and they wouldn't have been picked if they couldn't do the job. {eo}