

Ron Paul Ready to Turn Back on Israel

If you want to alienate the conservative Christian vote, take a lesson from Ron Paul. The Texas congressman and GOP presidential candidate made a controversial suggestion that the United States should cut aid to Israel.

In a Las Vegas debate this week, the libertarian candidate repeated his foreign policy proposal, which includes cutting the \$3 billion in defense assistance Israel has received annually since 1985.

“That foreign aid makes Israel dependent on us,” he said. “It softens them for their own economy. And they should have their sovereignty back, they should be able to deal with their neighbors at their own will.”

Minnesota congresswoman Michele Bachmann and businessman Herman Cain pushed back.

“We should not be cutting foreign aid to Israel,” Bachmann argued. “Israel is our greatest ally. The biggest problem with this administration and foreign policy is that President Obama is the first president since Israel declared her sovereignty who put daylight between the United States and Israel. That’s heavily contributed to the current hostilities that we see in the Middle East region.”

Cain agreed, saying we need to continue to give money to our friends.

“If we clarify who our friends are, clarify who our enemies are, and stop giving money to our enemies, then we ought to continue to give money to our friends, like Israel,” he commented.

Paul's stance is that foreign aid should be the easiest cut to make to help reduce the deficit.

"It's not authorized in the constitution that we can take money from you (the American people) and give it to particular countries around the world," he explained. "To me, foreign aid is taking money from poor people in this country and giving it to rich people in poor countries."

Paul said he would cut foreign aid altogether, treating "every country fairly," which implies Israel would get not special attention from the U.S.

Although many conservative pundits disagree with Paul's stance on Israel, a statement on his website claims he is "the most pro-Israel candidate in the presidential race."

The post says: "With hundreds of nuclear weapons in her possession, Israel has become the most powerful state in the Middle East. She could easily take on her neighbors and eliminate any and all threats to her existence."

The Dallas Morning News editorial writer Tod Robberson applauded Paul's honesty and consistency. Although he disagrees with Paul's foreign aid policy, Robberson says the candidate's understanding of the importance of consistency is refreshing.

"You can't take a stand—like so many of his other GOP opponents—that the United States should cut foreign aid unless you're willing to stand by that principle no matter what," Robberson wrote.

"If you're going to stand on the principle that foreign aid robs U.S. taxpayers of money that should be spent at home, then you've got to stick by it whether the aid recipient is a close ally like Israel or a not-so-close nation," he added.

Israel has received the most U.S. foreign aid money since

World War II. While almost all of the aid goes toward military assistance, the country also receives significant economic aid. While all other countries must receive their aid in installments, the special treatment of Israel allows them to get their aid in the first 30 days of the fiscal year.

Do you think the U.S. should cut off aid to Israel?