

White House Adviser: Donald Trump Has Made Israel Great

As founding member of President Trump's Evangelical Initiative, I've had the privilege of working closely with him, Jared Kushner, David Friedman, Jason Greenblatt and Avi Berkowitz. I can say unequivocally that Donald Trump and his team have helped to make Israel great.

When the president visited Jerusalem on May 22, 2017, I had many diplomats say to me, "Donald Trump is not going to recognize Jerusalem. Why did you put 220 billboards up around the city that read, 'Trump, make Israel Great?'"

I replied, "I know Donald Trump, and he will do more for your nation than any American president ever." This has certainly proven to be true.

Not only has the president recognized Israel and the Golan Heights, but he has also stood up to Iran. He stopped the funding for terror through the Taylor Force Act. He closed the PLO office in Washington, D.C. and the anti-Semitic consulate in Jerusalem. He moved the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and built a Sunni alliance that is creating enormous support for Israel. In addition, President Trump has crafted the most brilliant vision for peace of any president in American history.

Jared Kushner and the president are builders; they have laid a foundation that everyone can now build upon. There is no doubt that the foundation will last, and will be the basis for a true and lasting peace. Of course, it will take time; but with this plan, time is not an enemy; it's a friend. Every issue has been addressed.

One of the significant factors in the plan is that it is so extensive, it will help normalize relations between Israel and Arab countries more significantly than those that currently

exist. It was astonishing to see three Muslim ambassadors in the White House for the unveiling of the plan.

The plan is a realistic solution for the Palestinians to govern themselves, but not have the power to threaten Israel. It addresses limits of certain sovereign powers in the Palestinian areas—such as maintaining Israeli security and control of the airspace. The Palestinians would not be allowed to sign treaties. There would be no recognition of a Palestinian state or any movement in the \$50 billion trust fund until corruption and terror have been rooted out, and the Jewish state acknowledged. This also includes the demilitarization of Gaza.

The plan deals with everything. In 10 years, it would provide 1 million jobs for Palestinians, reducing unemployment by 10%, and the poverty rate by 50%. It's a vision. It reminds me of the "I Have a Dream" speech by Martin Luther King Jr. I was very close to Shimon Peres, the ninth president of the State of Israel, during the last two years of his life. We met with many world leaders, including George W. Bush, Prince Albert of Monaco and Pope Francis. Shimon was a dreamer.

To me, this plan is a dream, a wonderful dream like that of Theodor Hertzl. Since 1946, the United Nations has passed almost 700 resolutions and over 100 security council resolutions in an attempt to bring peace to the region. All have failed, because they did not understand the core issues that had to be addressed. President Trump's plan does that.

It gives the Palestinians self-determination, but it does not provide them with a government that will compromise Israel's security. It addresses Israel's geographic challenges, such as the danger of Gaza, and demands complete disarmament of the terror state. Many do not realize that Israel has already given to the Palestinians 88% of the territory captured in 1967. The plan does not uproot anyone—not Jewish homes or Palestinians—and provides a brilliant transportation corridor.

Although the plan realistically addresses the refugee problem, it does not begin until the Palestinians prove that terror and Jew-hatred have been rejected. It takes into consideration Israel's valid legal and historical rights and recognizes the Bible and the Bible lands as legal. Neither is mentioned in the plan, but in essence it does allude to them. The commitment is that the Jewish people not be uprooted from their homeland.

Ninety-seven percent of Israelis in the West Bank will, through new infrastructure, be incorporated into contiguous Israeli territory. The recognition of Judea and Samaria is astonishing, as is the recognition of the Jordan Valley, an area critical to Israel's security. It commits that Israel would maintain sovereignty over territorial waters and airspace.

The plan designates both East and West Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state. In no way does it divide the Holy City. A Palestinian capital would be in an area east and north of the existing security barrier, including Kafr 'Aqab—the eastern part of Shua'fat and Abu Dis—as the capital of al Quds. It does not even acknowledge that the Palestinians can use the term "East Jerusalem" as its capital.

The U.S. plan consents to an embassy in al Quds for the Palestinians. It also contains a strategy to work closely with Jordan and Egypt. There is a five-year provision to allow the PA to have a small airport and utilize Israel's ports in Haifa and Ashdod, but only with inspections and security by the Israelis. Palestinian refugees would not be permitted to return to the territories, but the plan does provide billions of dollars in compensation for them.

President Trump in his speech spoke of the fact that Israel is a light unto the world. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the United States would recognize Israeli sovereignty over the territory with no incremental security risks to the

State of Israel. He reiterated that the plan would be a firewall against political corruption and terror. It would give the Palestinians time to meet the challenges of statehood. The Peace Plan decrees that the territorial allocation of a new state would remain open and undeveloped for a period of four years.

Israel is my life and has been for more than 40 years. That is how long it has been since I first met Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Netanyahu. I can say wholeheartedly that I support this plan 100%. It is brilliant, but I do not believe that the Palestinians will embrace it this year or next year; it may take a decade. It will take time for the current population to move beyond corruption and radical Islam and begin to enjoy the civilized world.

To see the ambassadors of the Emirates, Bahrain and Oman in attendance was astonishing. To realize that finally the White House and the State Department have recognized Judea and Samaria as true Bible land from Bethel, where Jacob dreamed of a ladder ascending to heaven, to Shiloh, where the Ark of the Covenant held the Ten Commandments for centuries. Unlike all other plans, this one does not trade biblical land for peace. Donald Trump is truly making Israel great! {eo}

Mike Evans is a No. 1 New York Times' bestselling author with 96 published books. He is the founder of Friends of Zion Museum in Jerusalem, of which the late President Shimon Peres, Israel's ninth president, was the chair. He also serves as a founding member on the Trump Evangelical Faith Initiative and has 66 million Facebook followers on the Jerusalem Prayer Team.