

Why Obama Is Unpopular With Jews in Israel

While most Americans were focusing on the domestic implications of Barack Obama's re-election, the effects of his victory are being felt around the globe in different ways.

Furthermore, Candy Crowley of CNN and most others observing the presidential foreign policy debate in October thought the president had everything under control with Middle Eastern dissidents. Gov. Mitt Romney was considered a clear loser compared with Obama.

During the election, much was made of Obama's popularity abroad. An MSN poll of more than half a million people from 36 countries showed that President Obama was favored over Romney by an astounding 81 percent. Yet Obama was not so popular in a country that was not among the 36 surveyed in the MSN research: Israel. A similar study done by Tel Aviv University reported that only 22 percent of Jewish Israelis supported Barack Obama's reelection.

Why was there such a disconnect with young Israelis? Perhaps their apprehension can be attributed to our leader's affinity with the Islamic world and the numerous perceived slights senior Israeli leaders have received from him.

In addition, Obama did not visit Israel as president, although he did travel there as a presidential candidate in 2008. After winning a large percentage of the Jewish American vote—as Democrats traditionally do—his seeming ambivalence or lukewarm treatment has given heartburn to both Jews and evangelical Christians.

Middle East analyst Aaron David Miller echoed the concerns of many when he wrote in the July edition of *Foreign Policy*, "My sense is that, if he could get away with it, the president

would like to see a relationship that is not just less exclusive, but somewhat less special as well.”

The modern state of Israel is not a stranger to defending itself against bordering countries bent on its destruction. Time and time again, the tiny country has shocked the world with its ability to stand up to its larger neighbors.

In June of 1967, Israel simultaneously defeated Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Syria-supported Palestinian guerrilla groups (and other mercenary forces) in an astounding victory known as the Six Days War.

This month, for the first time in over 40 years, terrorists fired missiles into Jerusalem and Tel Aviv from Gaza, which borders Egypt. A barrage of hundreds of rockets pounded Israel, launched from the Hamas terrorist group.

Only the providence of God and Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system has miraculously prevented major casualties. It is little wonder that Israel is preparing for a ground invasion of Gaza. A year ago last spring, during my first trip to Israel, I was shocked at how close Gaza is to Israel.

The American public remains largely unaware of the magnitude of the conflict due to the general failure of the mainstream media to report accurately concerning the wrongs suffered by Israel. Instead, any measure Israel takes to defend itself is decried as brutal and over the top.

In the meantime, Israel’s enemies have boasted about its impending destruction. Most vocal today are the threats we hear from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who is known to be supplying Hamas with their weapons.

On President Obama’s watch, the United States has gone from being a staunch ally to the only democracy in the Middle East to something like a silent peer. But Israel will not wait for our approval to defend itself, nor should it.

As Dr. Josef Olmert observed in *The Huffington Post* in June: "When pushed to the wall, with a deep, genuine fear of extinction, the Israelis act, even against the odds."

At the time of this writing, the *New York Daily News* showed a picture of the half naked, tortured body of an alleged traitor that was being dragged through the region to the cheers of Palestinian men, women and children. This man was executed along with five others. The *Daily News* article carried a huge heading which read: "SAVAGE."

Meanwhile, the United Nations, which says little about the attacks on Israeli civilians, is publicly urging Israel to exercise "maximum self-restraint."

The current conflict is complicated by the fact that the United Nations is scheduled to vote on Nov. 29 to elevate the Palestinian Authority to the level of an "observer" nation, formally recognizing Palestine as a legitimate country. Ironically, and no doubt intentionally, this will be 65 years to the day since the United Nations first recognized the modern state of Israel.

With Hillary Clinton leaving the State Department, the president's very own vision, philosophy, wisdom and willpower are going to be tested in the Middle East.