

Israel Connection

AN AIPAC HOLIDAY PUBLICATION FOR SYNAGOGUES

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 HANUKKAH 5767

Hanukkah's Lesson of Action

THERE ARE TWO THINGS WE CELEBRATE ON HANUKKAH, according to the Talmud (BT Shabbat 21b): A great victory over religious oppression and the miraculous rededication of the Temple. As we all remember, the Seleucid Greeks, under King Antiochus, had defiled the Temple by erecting an idol of Zeus inside the Holy of Holies.

Antiochus criminalized the practice of Judaism and ordered unclean sacrifices on the holy altar. In 165 BCE, after a great rebellion, Judah Maccabee and his brothers liberated the Temple and rededicated it to the service of God; the small amount of oil they found miraculously burned for eight days.

In the 2,171 years since that time, many more rulers like Antiochus have come and gone. Our people have always survived because of our ability to see the light at the end of the tunnel and advance through the darkness until we reach it. Judah and the Maccabees succeeded with God's help, but only after deciding to fight back. Hanukkah teaches us that the first step to redemption is action.

For American Jews, the strength and survival of Israel has always been a worthy pursuit. Because the United States and Israel share common values, keeping Israel strong is as much an American concern as it is a Jewish one. This year, the light of Hanukkah penetrates a dark time. Israel faces intractable enemies—Iran, Hamas and Hizballah have all stated that they are bent on Israel's destruction.

This Hanukkah, we must rededicate ourselves to the strength and survival of the State of Israel and allow that rededication to spur us to action. While action can come in many forms, the most effective way an American can help Israel is by working to ensure a continuing, strong friendship between these two longtime allies through involvement in the American political system.

This year, let our community help shine light into darkness. Let our community be rededicated to Israel and to the U.S.-Israel friendship through pro-Israel political action. At this time, we should all remember the lesson of Hanukkah: The first step to redemption is action.

Iran's Quest for Nuclear Weapons



IRAN'S LEADERS HAVE CALLED FOR ISRAEL TO BE WIPED OFF THE MAP

while stridently refusing to give up their nuclear ambitions.

Iran has continued to expand its nuclear program after rejecting a U.N. Security Council deadline demanding an end to its efforts to enrich uranium, a key step in assembling atomic arms.

The Iran Freedom Support Act renews and strengthens sanctions aimed at curtailing the funds and international cooperation necessary for Iran to pursue nuclear weapons. The recent passage of this legislation last fall is the latest example of AIPAC's work with Congress over the past 15 years to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them.

But our work is far from over. When a new Congress returns to Washington next month, our elected officials will have the opportunity to strengthen legislation designed to enhance the U.S.-Israel relationship and keep our world safe from the threats posed by Iran and terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hizballah. Please join us at the AIPAC Policy Conference March 11-13 so you can speak with your members of Congress in person about the issues shaping the futures of the United States and Israel.



Turn pro-Israel passion into pro-Israel action. Join us at AIPAC's Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. this spring.

AIPAC Achievements

AIPAC WORKS WITH REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL LEADERS around the country to ensure that the U.S.-Israel relationship remains strong and vital. With the support of its members nationwide, AIPAC has worked with Congress on critical initiatives, including:

- **Helping to secure foreign aid to Israel**, totalling \$2.52 billion in 2006 and including military and economic assistance.
- **Working to pass the Iran Freedom Support Act** which strengthens and renews U.S. sanctions against Iran aimed at choking off funds that would aid in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.
- **Passing resolutions** that demonstrate overwhelming support for Israel's right to self defense in the face of unprovoked attacks by Hizballah and Hamas.
- **Working to block U.S. funding for Hamas** by insisting that Hamas is given no American aid until it recognizes Israel and renounces terrorism.
- **Strengthening homeland security in the United States and Israel** through legislation that will foster further cooperation between the United States, and key allies, including Israel, through joint initiatives.
- **Holding Syria accountable** for its continued interference in Lebanon and support of terrorism. The Syria Accountability Act allows the President to sanction Syria for both.
- **Helping secure the designation of Hizballah's** television station as a terrorist entity through legislative language.



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Join us in Washington, D.C., March 11-13, 2007

HELP US WORK WITH CONGRESS TO ACHIEVE EVEN MORE. AIPAC's annual Policy Conference has been called three of the most important days affecting Israel's future. The blockbuster event attracts more than 5,000 pro-Israel activists from all 50 states. Presidents Bush and Clinton; Prime Ministers Sharon, Barak, Netanyahu and Peres; and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel are only some of the luminaries who have keynoted the event.

Delegates participate in three jam-packed days of programming that gives them the information and skills to effectively lobby their members of Congress on day three of the conference.

A highlight of the event is the Policy Conference Banquet, which draws nearly

half of the Senate, a third of the House of Representatives, scores of administration officials, diplomats and student government presidents from across the country.

Specialized programming for college campus activists is also offered, along with more than 100 hours of workshops and learning labs that give all participants access to our world's most highly acclaimed experts and scholars.

National Public Radio says "The conference showed once again just how much political clout the group wields at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue."

If you want to help protect Israel against the threats posed by Iran, Hizballah, and Hamas, rededicate yourself to pro-Israel political activism. Come to the AIPAC Policy Conference.

The AIPAC Policy Conference where history is made...



...and the future is charted.

Make plans now to attend this year's AIPAC Policy Conference March 11-13, 2007 and be part of the group *The New York Times* calls "The most important organization affecting Israel's future."

For more information about the AIPAC Policy Conference or to register today and take advantage of the early bird special, please visit www.aipac.org/pc2007.