

# 'Obama' Think-Tank: Israel Should Cede Jerusalem Sovereignty

by Hillel Fendel

(IsraelNN.com) A think tank which is arguably the most influential in Washington is proposing an "interim" neutral administration to govern Jerusalem instead of Israel.

The Center for American Progress (CAP), headquartered just three blocks from the White House in Washington, is regarded as one of the most influential think tanks in the city, if not the most influential. "CAP has been an incubator for liberal thought and helped build the [Democratic party] platform that triumphed in the 2008 campaign," according to a *Bloomberg.com* report, which noted that some of the group's recommendations were adopted by Obama while he was still president-elect.

Four weeks ago, CAP held a panel discussion based on the premise that the Old City of Jerusalem is the main impediment in finding a solution to the Israel-Arab problem in the Holy Land. Michael Bell, a former Canadian Ambassador to Jordan, Egypt and Israel, presented a plan entitled the Jerusalem Old City Initiative. The plan does not call for the internationalization of Jerusalem -- but is not far off from that. It recommends that both Israel and a future state of Palestine appoint a third-party administrator that would run and police the city.

Bell explained that the plan calls for an administration or regime that would govern the Old City of Jerusalem for an interim period, without either Israel or the PA giving up their demands for sovereignty: "Frankly, I don't think there's going to be any agreement on sovereignty. I think that the two sides need not cede their demands for sovereignty; these claims can remain exactly as they are today. The sides would simply agree to delay the implementation or assertion of these claims until after an agreement is reached. Until then, a special administration would be set up, with the two sides agreeing to set this up, at least on an interim basis. And what this would do ... would be to ensure dignity, human rights and equity for all living in the Old City, all visitors, and all pilgrims."

## Questions and Clarifications

The implication that these values are not currently provided and offered by Israel was not challenged. An audience member did ask afterwards why the status quo could not simply be retained, and Bell responded by saying, "We thought of this option ourselves, but we thought it would be too intangible..."

Bell did not quantify the plan's "interim period," though he did imply that it could very well be "close to permanent."

"The Chief Administrator would be appointed by both sides to administer the city according to the mandate they give him," Bell said. "He would be accountable to them, but the mandate would have to be sufficiently forthcoming. They would have to agree that he would handle crises such as massacre, land-grab, or whatever, without their intervention."

## CAP Report Cites Western Wall as Holiest Site

The [CAP report on the event](#) states, "The Temple Mount's Western Wall is the most sacred place of Jewish worship, and the al-Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount), where Muslims believe that Mohammad ascended into the heavens, is the third holiest site in Islam." However, law professor Marshall Breger -- co-

author of "Jerusalem's Holy Places and the Peace Process" and consultant to the Jerusalem Old City Initiative – who spoke at the panel about the competing religious claims, said more than once that it was the Temple Mount itself, and not the Western Wall outside it, that is the holiest place in Jerusalem.

Bell: Whether Belief Systems are Historically Valid is Beside the Point

Both Breger and Bell dismissed the claims of those who challenge Islam's connection to the site. Breger agreed, but implied that current Islamic claims that Judaism's Holy Temple was never built there are totally unfounded, noting that the Waqf itself published literature some decades ago boasting that the

Dome of the Rock is on the site of the Holy Temple. At that point, Bell said, "It's very important to realize that it's beside the point whether these belief systems are historically valid or not... It's not up to me to tell you whether your narrative is valid or not..."

Breger: Take Politics Out

Breger similarly said that the argument that Jerusalem is not so holy to Islam is "a silly one." He said, "It's true that when Jerusalem was not under Islamic control, such as during the Crusader period, the British Mandate and under Israeli control, there was more discussion about Jerusalem in Muslim sources... but it's silly to say that it's not so holy to Islam, because you have to accept a religion's definition of what is holy." However, this appeared to contradict what he said just minutes before: "One of our problems is that we have to weed out the 'politics of religion' from the 'doctrine of religion'..."

He did not note that Jerusalem is not mentioned even once in the Quran.

Breger did say that the current Muslim clerical view that non-Muslims should not enter the Temple Mount "was clearly not always the Muslim view," since just a few decades ago the Waqf "charged admission to non-Muslim visitors."

Daniel Kurtzer on Jerusalem

Daniel Kurtzer, an Orthodox Jew and diplomat who has been credited with coining the concept "land for peace" and insisting long ago that Jerusalem be included in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, was the moderator. He said that discussing the option of imposing a settlement freeze on Jerusalem would make it easier to have serious negotiations.

Kurtzer further warned that a solution for Jerusalem had better be found before Israel builds its E-1 housing project near Maaleh Adumim and before the City of David (Silwan) Jewish settlement project proceeds much further.

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- 1.Slippy Slope  
Yaakov Rudd, Miami Beach (01/07/09)
- 2.The ONLY obstable to Israeli-Arab peace is MOSLEM  
TERRORISM (N"C)  
, (01/07/09)
- 3.Outrageous!!!  
SDunc, Texas, USA (01/07/09)
- 4.Coming soon: the destruction of America  
emmess, Canada (01/07/09)
- 5.Obama and Jerusalem  
Red, London (01/07/09)
- 6."I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem"  
Javier Ruiz-Leon, Los Angeles (01/07/09)
- 7.Tom Clancy  
Joe, (01/07/09)
- 8.Never going to happen!  
Wise Saba, Netivot (01/07/09)
- 9.Full agreement with ....  
Gavriel, Cyberspace (01/07/09)
- 10.Circle the Wagons, Israel  
DALevit, Signal Hill, CA (01/07/09)
- 11.Kurtzer is NOT an "orthodox" Jew!  
Sergio, Turin, Italy (01/07/09)
- 12.Declare the USA an enemy entity !  
fivish, london (01/07/09)
- 13.Agree only if Obama agrees to cede Washington DC to  
Patsy, usa (01/07/09)
- 14.How can Daniel Kertzer  
Gavriel, Cyberspace (01/07/09)

- 15.The US has captured Babylon, now JIm?  
eret, shilat (01/07/09)
- 16.Limiting natural growth is a sort of pre-emptive abortion  
DALevit, Signal Hill, CA (01/07/09)
- 17.Obama stink-tank (N"C)  
Aubrey Wulfsohn, Leamington spa (01/07/09)
- 18.Bastard Jewish Weasels-The Whole Lot Of Them  
Adina Kutnicki, Israel (01/07/09)
- 19.MIKE EVANS: "Thursday, I received a call from a top -  
Norway , (01/07/09)
- 20.obama's think tank  
topcat, samaria (01/07/09)
- 21.Outrageous !  
Moishe, Montreal (01/07/09)
- 22.get rid of waqf  
a yid, nyc (01/07/09)
- 23.Who cares about CAP? they're nothing but a leftist org of  
misguided democrats.  
Rick, USA (01/07/09)
- 24.N-O W-A-Y !!!!! N-E-V-E-R !!!! (N"C)  
swedgoy, eurabia (01/07/09)
- 25.Obama Think Tank  
Kathy Chriqui, Los Angeles (01/07/09)
- 26.3rd Party Admin? Guess Who...  
Nehama, UK, (01/07/09)
- 27.A7 - Stop Insulting Ur Readers  
Mike, Los Angeles (01/07/09)
- 28.Once again! This is the price for gays walking in JSLM  
(already for 8th time)!  
Moshe, philly (01/07/09)
- 29.TODAY IN JEWISH HISTORY 9 Tammuz In 423 BCE,  
Norway, (01/07/09)
- 30."R" is missing in "CAP"  
Moishe, Golutsk (01/07/09)
- 31.Arab do not belong here, and no 3rd party belongs  
here,CAP's ideas are dribble  
gilavsimcha, k4 (01/07/09)
- 32.To # 4  
Liones, Israel (01/07/09)
- 33.SHAME ON OBAMA, SHAME ON AMERICA!!!  
HENRY STALONE, CANADA (01/07/09)
- 34.USA vs. G-d  
Yehoshua, (01/07/09)
- 35.ummmmmm NO. Not gonna happen (N"C)  
Davey, Scranton (01/07/09)
- 36.So said the Lord of Hosts: The fast of the fourth month,\*  
Norway, (01/07/09)

37. Daniel Kurtzer  
MC, (01/07/09)
38. Think tank of retards? What is it worth? (N"C)  
Ron, Amsterdam (01/07/09)
39. # 29 Yehoshua: When the messiah comes, there will be...  
Norway, (01/07/09)
40. This evil against G-D & Israel would not be if it were not  
YID, (01/07/09)
41. "interim government?"  
Jerry Hallett, Indianapolis IN (01/07/09)
42. Dumb Tank (N"C)  
, (01/07/09)
43. This is what I was afraid of  
John Knoefler, San Diego (01/07/09)
44. Daniel Kurtzer is what we call an Erev Rav  
, (01/07/09)
45. The G-Dless do not understand with WHOM they're dealing  
, (01/07/09)
46. ה"ב ב"ח inyan: asking for fulfillment of prophecies  
Esther Sarah Evans, Yerushalayim (02/07/09)
47. This is the Same as Asking Muslims to Cede Mecca and  
Medina!  
Linda Rivera , New York (02/07/09)
48. Bibi's failure to reject Two State Final Solution is to blame  
for this rubbish.  
Chaim, (02/07/09)
49. I think the Arabs  
by, usa (02/07/09)
50. Who the are they to decide and threaten  
art, jc (02/07/09)
51. A quote by Walt Whitman in the 1850's  
ameneyman, U.S.A. (02/07/09)
52. Third Party Administrator.  
Adam Neira, Melb, Australia (02/07/09)
53. Jerusalem = Jewish  
www.KleimanUp.com, Florida, USA (02/07/09)
54. Destroying America!  
Malachi, Manila (02/07/09)
55. Kurtzer's questionable orthodoxy well covered... (N"C)  
Nigel, (02/07/09)
56. I thought a moderator was to at least appear neutral!  
Nigel, (02/07/09)
57. Another known non-starter designed to manufacture  
apparent Israeli intransigence (N"C)  
Nigel, (02/07/09)
58. To #10 DA Levit re "good Americans"  
emmess, Canada (02/07/09)

59. Daniel Kurzer  
Al Herman, NY (02/07/09)