

*Bob Dole*



**NEWS**

**U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS**

**FROM:**

**SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

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## **U.S./ISRAELI RELATIONS**

### **CONCRETE GROUNDS FOR NEW HOPE**

ALL OF US HOPED THAT THE STUNNING ELECTORAL VICTORY OF ISRAEL'S PRIME MINISTER RABIN WOULD HELP EASE SOME RECENT STRAINS IN U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS, AND AT THE SAME TIME OPEN THE DOOR TO PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS.

WHILE IT'S TOO EARLY TO BREAK OUT ANY CHAMPAGNE, IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO CONCLUDE THAT THERE ARE REAL, CONCRETE GROUNDS FOR NEW HOPE ON BOTH COUNTS. IT'S ALSO NOT TOO EARLY TO CONSIDER WHAT THAT MIGHT MEAN IN TERMS OF ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN RESETTLING JEWS IMMIGRATING FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION.

SECRETARY OF STATE BAKER HAS JUST CONCLUDED CORDIAL AND PROMISING TALKS IN ISRAEL. WITHOUT DOUBT, THE FOCUS OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS WAS THE APPARENT NEW FLEXIBILITY IN ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS POLICY. A BREAKTHROUGH ON THAT ISSUE COULD REINVIGORATE THE PEACE PROCESS. IT COULD ALSO REMOVE SOME OR ALL OF THE OBJECTIONS THAT PRESIDENT BUSH RAISED IN REGARD TO THE "KNEE JERK," "BLANK CHECK" APPROACH ON LOAN GUARANTEES ADVOCATED BY SOME LAST FALL AND EARLIER THIS YEAR.

### **LOAN GUARANTEES**

AMIDST ALL THE POLITICKING, POSTURING AND PREACHING ON THE ISSUE OF LOAN GUARANTEES, PRESIDENT BUSH AND SOME OF US IN THE SENATE HAVE TRIED TO KEEP OUR EYE ON THE BALL. WE WANTED TO DO IT RIGHT, RATHER THAN DO IT IMMEDIATELY.

YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IT FROM SOME OF THE ILL-TEMPERED REMARKS OF A FEW OVER-ZEALOUS SUPPORTERS OF ISRAEL, BUT ALL OF US ARE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL. WE ALL RECOGNIZE THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF A SPECIAL U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP. AND WE ALL WANT TO HELP ISRAEL BEAR THE ENORMOUS BURDEN OF RESETTLING THOSE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW IMMIGRANTS.

BUT SOME OF US HAVE INSISTED THAT WE CONSIDER ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR HELP IN AN ORDERLY WAY; IN A FORM THAT WE CAN AFFORD, AND THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER WILL SUPPORT; IN A PROGRAM THAT DOES NOT TAKE RESOURCES FROM URGENT DOMESTIC NEEDS; AND IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT UNDERMINE THE PEACE PROCESS AND THEREBY JEOPARDIZE ISRAEL'S OWN LONG-TERM SECURITY.

I THINK THE RESULTS OF ISRAEL'S ELECTIONS, THE SERIOUS AND RESPONSIBLE DISCUSSIONS UNDERWAY WITH ISRAEL'S NEW GOVERNMENT, AND THE NEW HOPE FOR PROGRESS IN THE PEACE TALKS ALL TESTIFY TO THE WISDOM OF THE PRESIDENT'S APPROACH.

### **THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY**

THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION, PATIENCE AND GOOD SENSE APPEAR TO BE PAYING OFF. WE DON'T HAVE A BREAKTHROUGH YET, BUT THERE IS REAL HOPE THAT WE MIGHT.

SO, WHILE IT IS STILL TOO EARLY FOR THE SENATE TO ACTUALLY TAKE UP A LOAN GUARANTEE PROPOSAL, IT IS NOT TOO EARLY FOR US TO BEGIN THINKING AND TALKING ABOUT THE KIND OF LOAN GUARANTEE PROPOSAL THAT WILL ADVANCE AMERICA'S OWN INTERESTS; WILL HELP ISRAEL MEET ITS REAL NEEDS; WILL HELP PROMOTE OR AT LEAST NOT COMPROMISE THE PEACE PROCESS; AND WILL NOT DETRACT FROM OUR CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH THE VERY REAL PROBLEMS WE FACE IN THIS COUNTRY. I LOOK FORWARD TO TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN DISCUSSING THIS WITH PRESIDENT BUSH, WITH SECRETARY BAKER, AND WITH MY COLLEAGUES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE.

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