



BIBLICAL BLUEPRINT: WEST BANK ANNEXATION UNDER A SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

REVIEW OF DAVID FRIEDMAN'S ONE JEWISH STATE (2024)

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Trump's Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman. Remember him? The Trump Organization lawyer and longtime supporter of illegal Israeli settlements who took a sledgehammer to American foreign policy towards Israel-Palestine. In 2019, then-Ambassador Friedman literally [swung a sledgehammer](#) at the underground walls of Silwan, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem. The US presidential election next month will determine whether Trump, Friedman, and other former administration officials get their hammer back. Ahead of the election, Friedman is out with a new book, [One Jewish State](#), which outlines his plan for dealing a final blow to the two-state solution. In his "Author's Note," Friedman makes clear that this 281-page screed is intended as a "handbook" in the event that Trump is reelected in November.

During his ambassadorial tenure, Friedman oversaw a series of grave diplomatic errors, including unilateral US [recognition](#) of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights and the [reversal](#) of longstanding US policy on Israeli settlements that had classified them as inconsistent with international law. The latter became known as the "[Pompeo Doctrine](#)," named after Trump's Secretary of State and close Friedman ally, Mike Pompeo, who authored the forward of *One Jewish State*. Alongside fellow evangelicals Pastor John Hagee, Ralph Reed, and Mike Huckabee, who heap "Praise for *One Jewish State*," Pompeo endorses his former colleague's plan for Israel to "reconnect with its majestic biblical legacy," which "eschews the conventional diplomacy directed toward a two-state solution." This is a blueprint for permanent occupation and endless conflict that would prevent Israel-Saudi normalization and true Israeli regional integration.

The Friedman Plan for *One Jewish State*

One Jewish State is riddled with inaccuracies and rife with diplomatic malpractice, ranging from Trumpian name calling of ideological opponents and anti-Palestinian bigotry to Holocaust manipulation and Biblical fanaticism. It also lays out Friedman's plan to "Let Israel be Israel":

- Absolute Israeli sovereignty over all of "Judea and Samaria" [the West Bank];
- Palestinian enclaves with "maximum civilian autonomy," subject to Israeli overriding security control;
- Civil and human rights for Palestinians, per Israel's Basic Law on Human Dignity, but not the collective right of self-determination;
- Palestinian freedom to enact their own governing documents "as long as they are not inconsistent with those of Israel";
- Permanent residency and Israeli travel documents for Palestinians, but no voting in national elections; and
- Israeli taxation of Palestinians "to support their local needs," but no income taxes.

This year, the International Court of Justice issued an historic [advisory opinion](#) that mandated Israel to end its illegal occupation of the West Bank. Friedman's plan would defy the opinion of the Court and violate international law. In his "Closing Argument," Friedman sees the need to preemptively defend his plan against those who will see its clear resemblance to apartheid. He argues that his proposed institutionalization of Palestinian "enclaves" in the West Bank would not constitute apartheid because those who will become "permanent residents" already reside there. Palestinians would not be forced from their homes, unlike black people living under apartheid in South Africa. Friedman also defends his plan by arguing that Palestinians would benefit from a higher standard of living and would be granted what he calls "civil and human rights." Crucially, these rights do not include the fundamental right to vote, access to courts, or equality under the law.

The former ambassador dedicates a chapter of his book to answering the question of "Who's Paying for All This?" His answer is that the US government should help finance Israeli annexation of the occupied West Bank by redirecting the aid intended for Palestinians and funding for the Palestinian Authority Security Forces towards settlement construction. The more than one billion dollars of aid that the US has traditionally provided to benefit Palestinians, Friedman argues, should instead be used to create a "Judea and Samaria Trust," with buy-in from Israelis, Palestinians, and private donors. He also suggests that Gulf allies and European nations contribute to this trust.

The Two-State Solution and Independent Palestinian Statehood

Regarding the international consensus framework of two states for two peoples living side by side in peace and security, Friedman boasts of having successfully pushed the Republican Party to abandon this framework in its 2016 platform. He calls the two-state solution variously a "Kumbaya fantasy," "suicide formula," and a "cruel fallacy." Friedman falsely claims that the 2005 Israeli disengagement from Gaza is an example of a failed land for peace deal, ignoring the fact that Israel disengaged *unilaterally* from the Strip, outside the framework of peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Nevertheless, Friedman writes that such a deal cannot be repeated in the West Bank, lest it also become a "breeding ground and launching pad for terrorists."

In a shameful invocation of the Nazi Holocaust, Friedman dubs the two-state solution as the "final solution." He writes that an independent Palestinian state would be *Judenrein*, the Nazi designation for an area cleansed of Jews, and a "terror state" that consists of "isolated hotbeds of angry Palestinians." Palestinian independence, Friedman argues, would also continue the economic failures of the Palestinian Authority and lead to civil war in Israel over the transfer of Israeli settlers from the West Bank that two states would require. Further manipulating Holocaust memory, Friedman writes that the lingering "tinge of doubt" among diaspora Jewry after the Holocaust prohibits the two-state solution and independent Palestinian statehood, because all of Biblical Israel must be preserved as a post-Holocaust Jewish safe haven.

The Bible, Not the Trump Peace Plan

Friedman grounds much of his defense of *One Jewish State* in his interpretation of the Bible. He cites the divine "obligation of Jews to settle in Israel" as justification for extending Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank. On these grounds, Friedman criticizes the so-called "peace plan" by his former boss for only permitting Israeli sovereignty over Jewish settlements and Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, and not the entirety of the West Bank. "God's grant to the Jewish people may not be rescinded," Friedman writes in reference to Trump's "Peace to Prosperity" plan that would have afforded Palestinians a limited form of statehood. "In retrospect," Friedman

argues, the Evangelical Christian opponents of Trump's plan "were right." Anything short of absolute Israeli sovereignty over all of the West Bank was "anathema to their religious beliefs." Trump's plan aside, Friedman reminds his readers of Trump's fundamental indifference to "one state or two states," and assures them that "if Israel will support this plan, he will as well."

Anti-Palestinian Bigotry and Playground Insults

Hateful anti-Palestinian racism appears on almost every page of *One Jewish State*, in contravention of fundamental Jewish values. "Of the handful of innovations attributed to Palestinian society," Friedman writes, "the most noteworthy is the suicide bomber." Not only is this offensive and cruel, it also ignores the wondrous cultural productions of Palestine, from the poems of Mahmoud Darwish to the literary works of Sayed Kashua. Friedman accuses Palestinians of being incapable of democratic governance, disqualifying themselves as partners for peace, rejoicing over 9/11, and never having "advanced beyond Jew hatred." He also invokes the silly refrain about Palestinians not having a "P" in their lexicon – which ostensibly proves that "Palestine" does not exist, as well as the anti-Palestinian trope that Palestinians lack a "discernable religious, cultural, or territorial identity." "The Kingdom of Jordan," Friedman concludes, "is thus a Palestinian state."

Palestinians are not the only target of Friedman's ire. In *One Jewish State*, the supposed diplomat calls everyone from EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell to pro-Palestine student protesters on college campuses, "idiots." Friedman even provides a list of "Israel bashers" in the Biden Administration. While calling the accusation of settler violence "ridiculous," he blasts President Biden for sanctioning West Bank settlers and allegedly emboldening Palestinian terrorists. Friedman contrasts President Biden with the late right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and laments that, "Begin unfortunately is no longer with us. Biden unfortunately is."

The Gaza War and the "Day After"

In *One Jewish State*, Friedman accuses President Biden and leading Democratic officials, including Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Speaker Emirate Nancy Pelosi of "push[ing] for a Hamas victory" in the ongoing Gaza war. He commends Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for resisting pressure from the Biden Administration to minimize civilian harm, increase humanitarian aid, refrain from invading Rafah, negotiate a hostage-for-ceasefire deal, and prevent a widening regional war. Friedman expresses hope that Israel will continue to defy the international community by refusing to end the war.

Friedman also weighs into the "Day After" planning for Gaza, calling [Biden's plan](#) to rebuild the Strip "nonsensical." Instead, he suggests that "the long-term path for Gaza must be the same as for Judea and Samaria," though "it is just too soon for Israel to declare its sovereignty over Gaza" right now. Friedman states unequivocally, "Israel has no other choice but to reclaim its Biblical territory and return one day to the Gaza Strip." Those of us who seek a peaceful future must not ignore this threat. West Bank sovereignty, for Friedman, is only the beginning.

If Trump returns to office in January, and especially if he brings Friedman back, this handbook will be used to bury the two-state solution. After all, Israel from River to Sea is "God's land given to the Jewish people," according to Friedman, and Trump is for many of his evangelist followers the messenger of God.