



## TALKING POINTS

### BIOGRAPHY

- Obama's life story of achievement through education and hard work is one to which Jews can relate.
- He is the son of an immigrant father who came to the United States seeking opportunity through education.
- Obama graduated from Columbia and Harvard Law School and was elected president of the Harvard Law Review.
- Obama taught Constitutional Law at University of Chicago for ten years.
- Obama knows personally how it feels to experience prejudice and to be treated like an outsider.
- He has been supported by Jewish mentors through his adult life, as an organizer, student, law professor and elected official.
- He is a Christian and has never been a Muslim.
- Obama ran the business side of his primary campaign significantly better than any other candidate of either party.

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- Obama's thoughtful approach and even temperament will dramatically increase America's influence with other nations.
- Obama believes in strong but smart foreign policy: aggressive diplomacy coupled with a willingness to use force when necessary.
- Obama has expressed a willingness to talk to any nation without preconditions, but with appropriate preparations. This is the kind of smart but strong diplomacy that led Israel to a peace treaty with its strongest enemy, Egypt – unbroken for 30 years – and the United States to convince Libya to end its pursuit of nuclear weapons.
- Obama has said that he would not talk to Hamas or Hezbollah because they are terrorist groups.

### OBAMA ❤️ ISRAEL AND SO DO YOU

- After Obama's recent trip to Israel, many politicians and opinion leaders who were unfamiliar with Obama came away impressed with his command of the issues, his remarkable poise, and his commitment to the safety and security of Israel and Jews everywhere.
- David Horowitz, the editor of The Jerusalem Post, wrote this after meeting and interviewing Obama: "Obama, who was making only his second visit to Israel, knew precisely what he wanted to say about the most intricate issues confronting and concerning Israel, and expressed himself clearly, even stridently on key subjects."
- By contrast, Horowitz noted that Senator John McCain "looked to [Senator Joe] Lieberman several times for reassurance on his answers and seemed a little flummoxed by a question relating to the nuances of settlement construction."

## **OBAMA ❤️ ISRAEL AND SO DO YOU (CONT.)**

- Likkud Party Chairman and former Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu, after spending time with Obama, said he “was impressed about Obama’s understanding of the Iranian threat and said they both agreed that a nuclear Iran was unacceptable.”
- Hillary Clinton told pro-Israel lobby AIPAC, “Let me be very clear — I know that Senator Obama will be a good friend to Israel.”
- We don’t need a volatile and unpredictable president like McCain in charge of America’s relationship with Israel. We need a steady hand like Obama who will continue decades of US commitment to a strong and secure Israel.

## **PATRIOTISM**

- Raised by hard-working single mother and his grandparents, Obama has deep love for the United States, the country that gave him the opportunity to achieve greatness.
- His love for the United States is similar to that of generations of Jewish immigrants, who loved America for giving them an opportunity to succeed if they worked hard enough.
- Critics miscast Michelle Obama as not proud of her country, when she actually said she was “really proud” of her country “because it feels like hope is finally making a comeback.” Even Laura Bush defended Michelle Obama’s statement.
- Rumors that Obama will not say the pledge of allegiance, salute the flag or shake hands with American soldiers are complete fabrications.

## **HE’S BLACK, LET’S TALK ABOUT IT!**

- Obama represents a different kind of black leadership, less interested in the confrontational tactics favored by many who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s.
- Obama has repeatedly credited Jews, so many of whom were leaders in the struggle for civil rights, with making possible his success.
- He calls for affirmative action to be based more on economic factors and less on racial ones.
- After a Father’s Day speech at an African American church where Obama called upon black men to be more responsible fathers, he was chastised by Jesse Jackson.
- In a speech at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta to mark Martin Luther King Day, Obama spoke out strongly against black anti-Semitism.
- Obama strongly denounced Reverend Wright and resigned from his church. Afterwards, a former member of Rabbi Avi Weiss’ congregation wrote an op-ed noting that he had remained a member of that synagogue even though the rabbi made comments he found offensive. He stayed because he liked the rabbi and loved the community.
- You may disagree with Obama’s decision to join Reverend Wright’s church, but given Obama’s positions on issues, his close relationships across racial and ideological lines, and his even temperament, it is clear that he is very different than his former Reverend.
- McCain, despite bragging that he “had fought for civil rights his whole life,” couldn’t think of a single accomplishment when asked what, specifically, he had done. For years, McCain opposed making Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday a national holiday, and voted against it in Congress.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

- Obama has articulated a plan for strengthening Social Security and assuring its solvency by raising the income cap only on very highly compensated workers.
- Obama opposes privatizing social security.
- McCain shares Bush's interest in weakening/privatizing Social Security.

## **TAXES**

- After originally opposing the Bush tax cuts because they favored the rich, today McCain has pledged to continue Bush tax policies.
- Sen. Obama is focused on cutting taxes for middle-class families and small businesses, and investing in key areas like health, innovation and education.
- The lack of tax revenue, due to reckless tax cuts of the Bush administration, has led to record-breaking budget deficits and cuts to important social programs.
- Obama plans to simplify tax filings.

## **WOMEN**

- Obama is pro-choice. He has a 100 percent Senate voting record according to the pro-choice lobby NARAL.
- Obama will appoint Supreme Court justices like Ginsburg and Breyer to the Supreme Court. Obama is committed to ending discrimination against women, including the ongoing wage disparity between men and women.
- McCain told a group of evangelical Christians, "I will be a pro-life president." When asked who he would appoint to the Supreme Court, he singled out Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer as justices he would NOT have appointed, calling them "activist judges." McCain praised Bush's two picks, John Roberts and Samuel Alito, as model appointees.
- In his career, McCain has voted anti-choice 123 times out of 126 votes.

## **JOE BIDEN**

- Senator Obama chose Senator Joe Biden as his vice president, cabinet member, and possible successor. Senator Biden is among the most highly respected foreign policy experts in the United States, serving as the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
- Biden is known as tough and often blunt, willing to stand up to dictators like Slobodan Milosevic, whom he called "a war criminal" to his face.
- Biden's knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs and his decades of strong support for Israel (he identifies himself as a Zionist) are well documented.

## **SARAH PALIN**

- Senator McCain, despite his health problems and advanced age, chose Governor Sarah Palin as his vice president, cabinet member and possible successor.
- Governor Palin has no foreign policy experience whatsoever. She didn't even have a passport in 2007 when she was preparing to take a trip to visit troops from Alaska's National Guard.

## SARAH PALIN (CONT.)

- She got her start in politics as an ardent anti-choice activist while her husband was a member of the Alaska Independence Party, which advocates voting on Alaska's secession from the United States.
- In 1999, she attended a fundraiser for Pat Buchanan who was running for President. The same Pat Buchanan who praised Hitler and blames Jews for turning Congress into "Israeli occupied territory"; the same Pat Buchanan who merits seven separate pages on the Anti-Defamation League's website.
- Buchanan has described Palin as a "[pitchfork] brigader for me in 1996, as was her husband. They were at a fundraiser for me. She is a terrific gal."
- Like many on the Christian Right, Palin believes that the earth is 6,000 years old and has supported the teaching of creationism in the classroom.
- As the editor of the L.A. Jewish Journal noted, a search for "Palin" in the AIPAC database produces no matches. That is because Palin has no record on Israel, one of many countries she has never visited.
- At this moment of international crisis and ongoing instability in the Middle East, why would John McCain choose a governor with absolutely no background in this area as his successor and running mate?
- After eight years of a Bush Administration that at times appeared to exist solely to do the bidding of this powerful voting bloc, many Jews shudder at the idea that we could be in for another four years of the same with McCain/Palin. Yet according to the New York Times, McCain felt he had to ask Palin, and not his close friend Senator Joe Lieberman or former Governor Tom Ridge, because he feared the wrath of the Christian Right.
- Only two weeks before she was nominated, Palin sat silently while the leader of Jews for Jesus, while discussing his evangelical work in Israel, implied to her church congregation that Israelis brought terrorist attacks upon themselves because they did not believe in Jesus. Then he collected donations from the assembled.
- In the 1990s, Sarah Palin helped fellow evangelicals take over the local school board, community hospital board and the local electric utility. She joined other anti-abortion activists in a picket line intended to intimidate a local OB-GYN who had objected to their effort to ban abortion from the region.
- Palin was asked if the earth "was really less than 7,000 years old and whether dinosaurs and humans walked the earth at the same time. And she said yes, she'd seen images somewhere of dinosaur fossils with human footprints in them."
- Palin's nomination was urged on McCain by her allies, including James Dobson of Focus on the Family, Ann Coulter, Rush Limbaugh, Newt Gingrich, Ralph Reed, Phyllis Schlafly and Pat Buchanan.

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