

## **Israel Favored Over 81,000 United Airline Employees**

BALTIMORE (PC) - United has 81,000 employees and is the second largest airline in America. Recently, it asked for a \$1.8 billion loan guarantee from Washington to avoid bankruptcy. The 9/11 tragedy, among other problems, had sent the company's fortunes spiraling. Unlike Israel, however, which has never gotten turned down for any loan guarantees from Uncle Sam, the Bush-Cheney administration said "no" to United, on Dec. 4. Now, a once proud giant of the industry, is headed for Chapter 11.

To add insult to injury, two of Israel's leading sycophants, jumped on United. "This bankruptcy is just what the industry needs," wrote the insufferable Tory, George F. Will (N.Y. Post, 12/08/02). He blamed the company's situation on "labor costs." William Buckley Jr., the neolithic conservative, chirped in on the same issue: "United has to cope with the market forces. It needs to be stressed, especially in moments of high confusion, what the rules are for a dynamic economy. Overhead cost have to be met by income" (Washington Times, 12/12/02).

Here we are in an America, where the economy is taking an alarming nose dive. Large corporations, like Enron, ImClone, Tyco, and others, have gotten caught ripping off stockholders, investors and employees in the trillion of dollars. Middle class jobs are evaporating faster than Ariel Sharon can build another illegal settlement in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. United is a major player in our national economy. Nevertheless, Washington is willing to permit it to swim with the sharks. Its 81,000 employees are left to wonder if they will even have a job in 2003.

Meanwhile, Sharon's Tel Aviv regime doesn't have any of those economic concerns. It doesn't have to worry about "overhead cost," "income," or "labor costs." All it has to do, is make a request for a loan guarantee to Washington and fill in the dollar amount. The higher the amount, the better. It knows, too, that it will not have to pay back the loan. And, it doesn't matter whether it's a Democrat, or a Republican, or a Martian in the White House, or what party controls the Congress. The loan guarantee will be approved. Tel Aviv will get its loan guarantee, as sure as the overly pious Sen. Joseph Lieberman's (D-CT) middle name is Isadore.

On Oct. 21, 2002, the Sharonites announced that they were looking for another \$10 billion loan guarantee from Uncle Sam, over five times the amount requested by United. They insisted they needed the money "to invigorate the Israeli economy." Past loan guarantees have been used by Israel to "subsidize its settlements and its bloated military establishment" (Frank Collins, WRMEA, 01/90). It's highly likely that this money will be used to tighten the suppression of the Palestinian people, too.

Among other harsh occupation measures, Israel is presently building a huge barrier around the West Bank. Initially, it will consist of fences, trenches, and security patrols. It will extend 70 miles. When it is finally completed, it will ring 220 miles of the occupied territories, creating a de facto border. It will also result in expropriating even more land from the Palestinians. This Apartheid-like measure will cost tens of millions of dollars. It will probably come out of the annual U.S. grants and/or the loan guarantees to the Sharon government.

Tel Aviv never has to justify, in any way, its loan guarantee demands. It doesn't have to demonstrate how its alien-based interests should be entitled to come before the interest of an American-based company, its 81,000 mostly unionized employees, or the thousands of companies and tens of thousands of employees, that

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also serve the huge air carrier throughout our country. The American taxpayers must not only absorb the amount of the Israeli loan guarantee itself, they must also pick up the interest that is due on this extremely expensive transaction.

From 1949 to 1997, annual U.S. grants to Israel have cost the taxpayers \$85 billion. In addition, loan guarantees have clobbered the U.S. taxpayers for another \$9.8 billion. "Under the 1983 Cranston Amendment, when U.S. aid is extended as grants or loans to Israel, it never returns to the Treasury. U.S. loans to Israeli are forgiven" (Wrmea.com, 12/13/02).

On the political front, United Airlines is based in the state of Illinois, whose two senators are Richard J. Durbin (D) and Peter G. Fitzgerald (R). Illinois also has 20 members in the House of Representatives. Not one of these public officials, sworn to uphold our Constitution and the principles and values of this Republic, will dare raise the issue of this egregious double standard with respect to U.S. loan guarantees. It is fair to say that this situation, and others like it, speak volumes about the sad state of our Republic, and the undue influence that Israel, and its ubiquitous supporters, have over it.

And, finally, you can also count on media lapdogs, like Will and Buckley, to look the other way, when the issue of a new Israeli loan guarantee comes up for consideration. Although, the duo was quick to kick United and its 81,000 employees in their time of need, when it comes to sucking up to Tel Aviv, these two are masters at parroting the Israel First line.

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