

# David Friedman: Ambassador for Settlers

Candidate Trump's May 2016 [statements](#) urging the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank did not come out of nowhere: less than a month earlier, Trump had [appointed](#) his bankruptcy lawyer, David Friedman, to advise him on Israel policy. Now Trump's nominee for U.S. ambassador to Israel, Friedman is poised to act – with official U.S. government sanction – on his longstanding commitment to the forced displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank. Friedman [funnels](#) millions of tax-deductible U.S. dollars to facilitate Israel's illegal settlement enterprise, [supports](#) Israeli annexation of the West Bank, [denies](#) the existence of Palestinian rights to Jerusalem, and [zealously attacks](#) anyone who takes issue with his far-right agenda. **More than 600 U.S.-based rabbis and cantors have [signed a letter](#) opposing Friedman's appointment.**



The Israeli settlement of Hashmonaim behind the Wall.  
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## WHAT WE KNOW:

### Close ties to the far-right Israeli settler movement:

- Through his nonprofit organization, Friedman [raises millions](#) in tax-exempt U.S. funds to support the illegal Israeli settlement of Beit El in the West Bank
- Friedman's organization is [currently funding](#) construction of a new, five-story residential settlement building on privately-owned Palestinian land
- Friedman [defends](#) Israeli annexation of the West Bank and does not view an independent Palestinian state as "an American imperative"

"[The two-state solution is] an **illusion that serves the worst intentions** of both the United States and the Palestinian Arabs. It has **never been a solution**, only a narrative. But even the narrative itself now needs to end."

David Friedman  
August 2, 2016

### Refusal to acknowledge Palestinian rights to Jerusalem:

- Friedman is committed to moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, notwithstanding Jerusalem's *corpus separatum* status (i.e. placement under a special international regime) under UN resolutions 181 and 194
- If implemented, a U.S. embassy transplant to Jerusalem would represent an [alarming departure](#) from longstanding U.S. presidential policy

"The U.S. will recognize Jerusalem as the **eternal and indivisible capital of the Jewish state** and Mr. Trump's Administration will **move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.**"

Jason Greenblatt and David Friedman  
November 2, 2016

### Contempt for dissent:

- Friedman [advocates](#) stripping "disloyal" Palestinian citizens of Israel – those who do not "support the state" – of the benefits of citizenship
- Friedman [characterizes](#) boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel as "inherently anti-Semitic" and promotes "strong measures, both diplomatic and legislative, to thwart" such campaigns – a thinly veiled attempt to stifle constitutionally protected activities critical of Israel

"[J Street supporters] are **far worse than Kapos....** They are just **smug advocates** of Israel's destruction delivered from the comfort of their secure American sofas – it's **hard to imagine anyone worse.**"

David Friedman  
June 5, 2016

For more information on CCR's work in support of Palestinian rights: <http://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/issues/palestinian-solidarity>