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ED KOCH HAS KIND WORDS FOR BOTH MITT ROMNEY AND NEWT GINGRICH

Former NYC Mayor makes it clear he is voting for President Obama

Fort Lee, NJ (December 28, 2011) -- In an exclusive interview on Shalom TV, one of the nation's leading Democrats has some kind words for two of the candidates vying for the Republican party's presidential nomination, Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich.



When asked by Shalom TV President Mark S. Golub who among the current Republican candidates would be best for America and for Israel, the former New York City Mayor groups the two front runners together, saying:

"I believe that both Romney and Gingrich--one of which will be the Republican candidate--are both *able*. I'm not voting for either of them; I am voting for Obama; but they're both *able*; they are fine Americans (I mean, they have a philosophy which is not mine); but they will do what they think is in the best interest of America--and they are also both very supportive of Israel

Mr. Koch acknowledges that he successfully worked for Republican Bob Turner in this past September's special election against Democratic Assemblyman David Weprin (to fill the seat vacated by Democratic Congressman Anthony Weiner) in an effort to send a message to President Obama that he "can't take the Jewish vote for granted." In response to what Mr. Koch felt was a series of decisions by the White House which he characterizes as throwing Israel "under the bus" (embarrassing Prime Minister Netanyahu, defining Israeli settlements--which Ed Koch believes *are* legal--as the impediment to Middle East peace, failing to visit the State of Israel since his election), Mr. Koch felt it was appropriate to "turn that election (Turner-Weprin) into a referendum on the President and his position vis-a-vis Israel."

Mr. Koch also describes how after the Turner victory, the President reached out to him. In a private meeting in New York City, after the President gave what Mr. Koch calls a "magnificent" pro-Israel speech at the United Nations, Mr. Obama told the former Mayor that he didn't understand why the Jewish community is upset with him given how very supportive of Israel he is. Mr. Koch explained to the President that he would not have been so upset with Mr. Obama if, when the President had placed demands on Israel, he had also made demands of Hamas. Koch reports the President's responding, "Didn't I?"

After the half-hour meeting, Mr. Koch was convinced that Mr. Obama believes he is a friend of Israel and now supports Mr. Obama's re-election campaign because of the President's strong stand in opposition to Palestinian statehood at the United Nations and because the President has been praised by Israeli Defense Minister, Ehud Barak, for being one of the most supportive of all U.S. presidents when it comes to supplying military aid.

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