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# Israel Insight

ישראל מקרוב

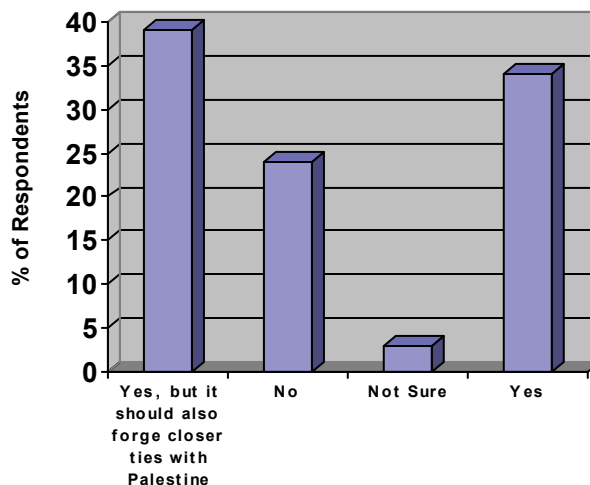
## News Briefs:

- Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Bernard said Monday that Canada is committed to the middle east peace process. Officials asserted that giving the PA assistance and \$300 million in aid would be beneficial for both the PA and Israel.
- Chinese Vice Premier Yi says that China is prepared to further economic and trade cooperation with Israel.
- Internet search engine Yahoo! is investing in Israel, opening a research lab in Haifa and will be working with Walla, an Israeli search company. Google and Microsoft already have facilities in Israel
- Tel Aviv cultivates the "perfect tomato." The search for the perfect tomato began in New Brunswick, NJ 50 years ago and ended in Tel Aviv. It is called the Ramapo tomato and has been tested by agriculturalists and tomato connoisseurs. 572,000 certified organic seeds have been cultivated.

## Facebook Polls Members on US-Israel Alliance

- Starting December 10, 2007, ABC News sponsored a Facebook Poll on whether the United States should continue its strong alliance with Israel.
- The Results as of January 09, 2008:
- 13,670 voted "Yes, but it should forge closer ties with Palestine." (39%)
- 8,453 voted "No" (24%).
- 1,000 voted "Not Sure" (3%).
- 11,769 voted "Yes" (34%)
- Numbers show that the average Facebook user supports the alliance, though many wish to see greater US-Palestinian cooperation.
- Interestingly, the only politician who decided to vote in the poll was Dennis Kucinich and his position is, "Yes, but it should also forge closer ties with Palestine."
- The poll was not scientifically conducted, so results may or may not have statistical significance or reflect any broader population. The poll was not limited to US residents.

Poll Results



## Violence Escalates; Gaza Borders Close

- Qassam rocket attacks by Hamas militants have recently seen an upsurge in frequency. More than 110 projectiles landed in Israel of the past three days, setting fire to a kibbutz, causing damage to infrastructure and, in one case, narrowly missing a kindergarten.
- PM Ehud Olmert's office issued a statement saying that the attacks will be dealt with decisively. All border crossings have been closed. Only humanitarian aid from the United Nations, specifically approved by Defense Minister Ehud Barak, will be able to enter the region. Gaza is, in effect, under siege.
- IAF bombers destroyed the former Interior Ministry in Gaza. The Marine Police headquarters were also destroyed.
- Analysts say that the increased shelling of the Negev is part of a Hamas tactic to force the Israeli Government into a truce. Barak said he opposes a cease-fire, since Hamas currently has enough leverage to obtain better terms.

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