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## **RON LAUDER NOTES IMPORTANCE OF PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS, SAYS US JEWRY SHOULD QUESTION CANDIDATES ON ISRAEL**

**"If you have an advisor that is not sympathetic to Israel...you have a potential problem."**

Fort Lee, NJ -- In a rare television appearance, World Jewish Congress President Ronald S. Lauder details how presidential advisors play a critical role in influencing presidential policy, and offers his personal opinion that American Jewry should be far more conscious of a candidate's stand on Israel.

Speaking on Shalom TV strictly for himself and not as the head of the WJC, Lauder stresses that for presidential candidates, and even presidents, it "matters very much who the advisors are," adding, "people running for, and becoming, president, are human. And they listen to people whispering into their ears.



"I know some of these people; I know what they think," continues Lauder, a board member of Estee Lauder and former US ambassador to Austria. "We always assume that our leaders are all-knowledgeable. They're not. They're very vulnerable. Whoever becomes president--he or she lives in an isolated area, and they only can get information from the people they see. [So,] advisors are critical."

Lauder points out "there's no question that the advisors around President Bush affect him. People only can go on what information they get...and you can turn somebody one way or the other just by editing the information."

And, "if you have an advisor that is not sympathetic to Israel--not sympathetic to some Jewish concerns--you have a potential problem. If you only have one or two close advisors and they're both anti-Israel, [then] it's only a matter of time before the president becomes anti-Israel."

Given the influence of advisors, Ronald Lauder believes that the Jewish community should consider possible appointments by presidential hopefuls when voting in primary and general elections, as well as taking a far more active role in pressing candidates for their opinion on Israel.

For Lauder, the voter, a candidate's stand on Israel is key.

"I don't understand [why] many Jewish people, be it Republican or Democrat, feel that a person's stand on Israel is not the most important aspect," Lauder explains to Shalom TV's Mark S. Golub. "I've been in many places where almost no Jew gets up and says [to the candidate], 'Tell me what you think about Israel.' Usually the question is about the economy."

Lauder does not feel that enough members of the Jewish community question politicians about Israel in a critical way.

"It should not be just 'Do you love Israel; do you like Israel?'" he notes. "That's a lay-up."

With a leadership record spanning the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the Jewish National Fund, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Theological Seminary, Ronald Lauder also comments on attacks in the Jewish press that are directed against American and world Jewry establishments and executives.

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"It's too often that we take shots at each other," Lauder laments. "People are always looking for news, of what they can do to sell a few more papers. And all it does is diminish our power. People who write articles, sometimes attacking me-- all that does is give our enemies a better chance to weaken us. I see today in the Muslim world [that] they are strongly united. They don't take shots at each other.

"One of the things we have never learned, since the destruction of the Temple, is that we are so much stronger working together than being apart."

Shalom TV is a mainstream Jewish cable network carried coast-to-coast on Comcast, as well as on Time Warner Cable in New York and New Jersey, and on Blue Ridge Communications. The Video On Demand service features public affairs programming (including news and event coverage), movies, cultural shows, Jewish learning, and children's programs. For additional information, visit [www.shalomtv.com](http://www.shalomtv.com).

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