

recorded video of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney speaking to campaign donors at a \$50,000/plate dinner caused an immediate media sensation, largely because of Romney's notoriously disparaging comments on the "47 percent" of Americans who pay no Federal income tax. Although most of the discussion concerned domestic affairs, Romney also remarked on the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, echoing some of his other statements on Palestinians' allegedly deficient culture but also, in rejecting diplomacy toward a two-state solution, contradicting the official Republican position. The full transcript is available from Mother Jones at www.motherjones.com.

. . . **Romney** [to another audience member]: Please—yes?

Audience member: It's your lucky night: more foreign policy! [*Audience laughs/crosstalk.*] . . . actually the first time you were in Jerusalem. And we appreciate you being there. How do you think that the Palestinian problem can be solved, and what are you going to do about it?

Romney: I'm torn by two perspectives in this regard. One is the one which I've had for some time, which is that the Palestinians have no interest whatsoever in establishing peace. And that the pathway to peace is almost unthinkable to accomplish. Now, why do I say that? Some might say well just let the Palestinians have the West Bank and have security and set up a separate nation for the Palestinians. And then come a couple of thorny questions. And I don't have a map here to look at the geography. But the border between Israel and the West Bank is obviously right there, right next to Tel Aviv, which is the financial capital, the industrial capital of Israel. The center of Israel. It's, uh—what? The border would be maybe seven miles from Tel Aviv to what would be the West Bank?

Audience member: Nine.

Romney: Nine miles. Okay, I'd be close. Nine miles. The challenge is the other side of the West Bank . . . the other side of the West Bank, the other side of what would be this new Palestinian

UNITED STATES

D1. GOVERNOR MITT ROMNEY, REMARKS TO A PRIVATE FUNDRAISING DINNER, BOCA RATON, FLORIDA, 17 MAY 2012 (EXCERPTS).

The release by Mother Jones magazine on 18 September 2012 of secretly

state would either be Syria at one point or Jordan. And, of course, the Iranians would want to do through the West Bank exactly what they did through Lebanon and what they did in Gaza. Which is the Iranians would want to bring missiles and armament into the West Bank and potentially threaten Israel. So Israel, of course, would have to say that can't happen. We've got to keep the Iranians from bringing weaponry into the West Bank. Well, that means that—who?—the Israelis are going to control the border between Jordan, Syria, and this new Palestinian nation? Well, the Palestinians would say, "Ah, no way! We're an independent country. You can't guard our border with other Arab nations." And then how about the airport? How about flying into this Palestinian nation? Are we going to allow military aircraft to come in? And weaponry to come in? And if not, who's going to keep it from coming in? Well, the Israelis. Well, the Palestinians are going to say, "We're not an independent nation if Israel is able to come in and tell us what can land at our airport." These are problems, and they're very hard to solve, alright?

And I look at the Palestinians not wanting to see peace anyway, for political purposes, committed to the destruction and elimination of Israel, and these thorny issues, and I say there's just no way. And so what you do is you say you move things along the best way you can. You hope for some degree of stability, but you recognize that it's going to remain an unsolved problem. I mean, we look at that in China and Taiwan. All right, we have a potentially volatile situation, but we sort of live with it. And we kick the ball down the field and hope that ultimately, somehow, something will happen and resolve. We don't go to war to try and resolve it.

On the other hand, I got a call from a former secretary of state—and I won't mention which one it was—but this individual said to me, "You know, I think there's a prospect for a settlement between the Palestinians and the Israelis after the Palestinian elections." I said, "Really?" And his answer was, "Yes, I think there's some prospect." And I didn't delve into it but you know, I

always keep open the idea of, I have to tell ya, the idea of pushing on *the Israelis*?—to give something up, to get the Palestinians to act, is the worst idea in the world. We have done that time and time and time again. It does not work. So, the only answer is show your strength. Again, American strength, American resolve, as the Palestinians someday reach the point where they want peace more than we're trying to push peace on them—and then it's worth having the discussion. Until then, it's just wishful thinking. [*Audience crosstalk.*] . . .