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Schumer Says It 'Makes Sense' To 'Strangle [Gaza] Economically' Until It Votes The Way Israel Wants

By [Zaid Jilani](#) on Jun 11th, 2010 at 1:30 pm

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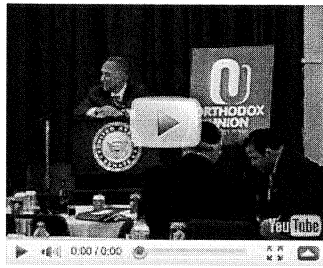
This past Wednesday, Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) delivered a wide-ranging speech at an Orthodox Union [event](#) in Washington, D.C. The senator's lecture touched on areas such as Iran's nuclear program, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and several domestic policy issues.

During one point of his speech, Schumer turned his attention to the situation in Gaza. He told the audience that the "Palestinian people still don't believe in the Jewish state, in a two-state solution," and also that "they don't believe in the Torah, in David." He went on to say "you have to force them to say Israel is here to stay."

New York's senior senator explained that the current Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip — which is causing a [humanitarian crisis](#) there — is not only justified because it keeps weapons out of the Palestinian territory, but also because it shows the Palestinians living there that "when there's some moderation and cooperation, they can have an economic advancement." Summing up his feelings, Schumer emphasized the need to "to strangle them economically until they see that's not the way to go":

SCHUMER: The Palestinian people still don't believe in the Jewish state, in a two-state solution. More do than before, but a majority still do not. Their fundamental view is, the Europeans treated the Jews badly and gave them our land — this is Palestinian thinking [...] They don't believe in the Torah, in David [...] You have to force them to say Israel is here to stay. The boycott of Gaza to me has another purpose — obviously the first purpose is to prevent Hamas from getting weapons by which they will use to hurt Israel — but the second is actually to show the Palestinians that when there's some moderation and cooperation, they can have an economic advancement. When there's total war against Israel, which Hamas wages, they're going to get nowhere. **And to me, since the Palestinians in Gaza elected Hamas, while certainly there should be humanitarian aid and people not starving to death, to strangle them economically until they see that's not the way to go, makes sense.**

Watch it:



Schumer is simply factually incorrect that the “majority” of Palestinians refuse to accept a two-state solution. Recent polling has found that 74 percent of the Palestinian population wants to see a two-state solution with an Israeli and Palestinian state side by side. It is also the position of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and there is evidence that Gaza’s Hamas rulers may be compelled to support such a solution as well.

As for the senator’s comments on economic strangulation making “sense” to produce better leadership in Gaza, they are as offensive as they are wrong. Schumer believes it is logical to economically harm the civilian population of Gaza — where 44 percent of the people under the age of 14 — for freely voting in an election the U.S. supported, then undermined, in order to change the territory’s government. The reality is that its leadership has only become further radicalized and entrenched as a result of the embargo. (HT: [Mondoweiss](#))

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