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Obama, Israel & the '67 Borders

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Distinctly Catholic

Last night, conservative talking heads lambasted President Obama for pointing out publicly what everyone has acknowledged privately for years: The final border between Israel and a future Palestinian state will take the 1967 borders as their starting point with, as the President said, adjustments and land swaps. This is because many of the lands closest to the '67 line have become large Israeli settlements and they are not going anywhere. Along other stretches of the '67 line, the land on the Israeli side is largely unpopulated and can be given to a future Palestinian state in a swap.

But, many Christian conservatives do not see the West Bank as part of a future Palestinian state. They see it as Judea and Samaria, part of the land promised by God to Israel and, therefore, not on the table for negotiations. For them, the lens through which negotiations should be viewed is the lens of the end times. This is madness and it has nothing to do with the security of Israel.

I take a second seat to no one in my commitment to the state of Israel. I am one of those old-style liberals who sees Zionism as expressive of our most closely held liberal ideals. To make more out of the President's comments than was there because of a fantasy about the end times is dangerous.

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