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EDITORIALS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dean was right about U.S. role with Israel

Leading Democrats ripped into presidential candidate Howard Dean a few months ago after he called for the United States to pursue a more "even-handed role" in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Sen. Lieberman said the Dean approach would "compromise our support for Israel" and amount to "breaking commitments to longtime allies." Sen. Kerry claimed the Dean approach "would throw this volatile region into even more turmoil." House Democrat Minority Leader Pelosi, other top House Democrats and doz-

ens of Democrat representatives quickly wrote Dean a letter saying his policy would threaten the right of Israel to live in security and peace.

Republicans are no better on this issue. The Bush-Cheney administration may be the most pro-Zionist in U.S. history. A year ago, I heard local Rep. John Sweeney boast: "What is good for Israel is right for America."

Has Israel ever had a prime minister more hostile to peace than Ariel Sharon? Look at the way he lashes out at fellow Israelis who attempt to negotiate

a framework for peace. Israel has wrecked its relations with the Arab and Islamic world via decades of abusing the Palestinians. Even worse, the United States has jumped into their quagmire. The United States needs a way out.

The Israeli government and its cheerleaders in the United States played a major role in coaxing the United States into the 2003 war with Iraq, and are strenuously advocating for additional wars with Syria and Iran. The United States is widely seen as pursuing Ariel Sharon's agenda in the Middle East.

What is disturbing about the verbal attacks on Dean is that prominent Democrats are blocking a much-needed debate in the United States about the increasingly negative consequences of the passionate attachment the United States has for Israel.

Some readers may believe I am anti-Jewish or anti-Israel. Not true. I am convinced the leaders of the United States and Israel are leading both nations off a cliff.

THOMAS ELLIS
Albany