

- I don't pretend to know a lot about foreign relations. Unlike Rudy Boschwitz, I have never been a U.S. Senator, and despite media-driven rumors, I am not running for President.
- But in this Global era, a state like Minnesota has strong connections around the world - and it has especially strong connections to Israel.
- I had the pleasure a couple months ago of meeting the Israeli Consul-General from Chicago, who presented me with an ancient oil lamp from Israel. I was told that during the miracle of Hannukah, the lamp burned for 8 days during the cleansing of the Temple, after being defiled by the Greeks.
- So, at the end of this last legislative session – I thought, why not? I took it up to the House Chambers and burned it for a few days. We'll see how effective it is early next year.
- I have not yet had a chance to meet Israel's new Prime Minister - A-HUDE BARAK. But I think I might like this guy. He's a warrior, the most decorated soldier in Israeli history, but his big fight now is for peace.
- Rest assured, nobody appreciates peace more than a soldier.
- Unless it's a business owner.
- War might be good for some businesses - like defense industries - but a war-torn, unstable country is no place for an investment.
- For the roots of a business to become strong, there needs to be peace in the valley. War tends to uproot things.
- Maybe the best way for Minnesota to promote peace in the Middle East is to increase trade and investment in Israel.
- I don't know what you might have heard about me, but I do not think it is a sin to make money.
- Many Minnesota businesses have a strong presence in Israel, and last year Minnesota supplied more than \$36-Million in exports to Israel.
- Israel is Minnesota's 29th largest trading partner.
- I am not in a position right now to promise when I will travel to Israel - but I will guarantee that if I go - it will be sooner than my 29th trade mission.