

PASSPORT

A blog by the editors of FOREIGN POLICY



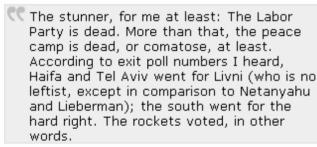
The New ForeignPolicy.com

Passport : Tom Ricks : Dan Drezner : Stephen Walt : David Rothkopf : Marc Lynch The Cable : In Other Words : Shadow Govt. : The Argument : The Call

"The rockets voted"

Wed, 02/11/2009 - 6:15pm

Jeffrey Goldberg is **blown away** by Israel's strange and inconclusive election results:



The RAND Corporation's Claude Berrebi, who I spoke with for a piece on October surprises

before the U.S. presidential election, has quantitatively demonstrated this effect by showing that a terrorist attack within the past three months in a given area of Israel has historically resulted in an average 1.35 percentage point increase in the level of support for right-wing parties. As this election shows, 1.35 percent is nothing to sneeze at in an Israel election.







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Berrebi also argues that terrorists know exactly what effect this has on the electorate: Tour past research has shown that the behavior of terrorists is highly

rational, even more so sometimes than leaders in the West," he says. Rather than behaving irrationally, more likely they are either trying to perpetuate a cycle of tit-for-tat violence with an overly aggressive government that will end in Israel's destruction, or—the explanation Berrebi prefers—they hope terrorist attacks will cause the entire political spectrum, including the right, to move in the long run toward

Tzipi Livni probably also belongs on that list. And as Nigel Ashton argues, Benjamin Netanyahu may yet surprise everyone by moving toward a more accommodating position. Somehow I don't think Avigdor Lieberman is moving anywhere, though.

a more moderate stance. The more accommodating policies adopted in

recent years by one-time hard-liners such as Ariel Sharon and Ehud

Olmert may be evidence of this shift.

(filed under: Elections | Israel/Palestine)

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