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**From:** Office of Terje Rod-Larsen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2013 5:38 PM  
**Subject:** March 28 update

Articl= 2. <[https://mail.google.com/mail/=/0/html/compose/static\\_files/blank\\_quirks.html#b](https://mail.google.com/mail/=/0/html/compose/static_files/blank_quirks.html#b)>

The Washington Post

Obama's pragmatic approach to Mi=east

David Ignat=us <[http://www.washingtonpost.com=david-ignatius/2011/02/17/ABXXcOJ\\_page.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com=david-ignatius/2011/02/17/ABXXcOJ_page.html)>

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The Wall Street Journal

Stopping an Undetectable Iranian B=mb

David Albrigh=, Mark Dubowitz and Orde Kittrrie  
<<http://online.wsj.com/search/=erm.html?KEYWORDS=DAVID+ALBRIGHT%2C+MARK+DUBOWITZ+AND=;ORDE+KITTRIE&bylinesearch=true>>

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Los Angeles Times <<http://www.latimes.com/>>

'Star Wars' today: What would Reag=n do?

Graham Allison

Article 7.

The Economist

Can India become a great power?

Article 1.

The Washington Post

Obama appeals to Israel's conscience

Fareed Zakaria <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/fareed-zakaria/2011/02/24/ABhDZWN\\_page.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/fareed-zakaria/2011/02/24/ABhDZWN_page.html)>

March 27, 2013 -- As a piece of rhetoric, Barack Obama's speech to college students in Jerusalem <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/president-obamas-address-to-the-israeli-people-in-jerusalem-transcript/2013/03/21/febb408e-9269-11e2-9abd-e4c5c9dc5e90\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/president-obamas-address-to-the-israeli-people-in-jerusalem-transcript/2013/03/21/febb408e-9269-11e2-9abd-e4c5c9dc5e90_story.html)> was a triumph. He finally convinced Israel <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/obama-ends-israel-visit-by-honoring-historic-figures/2013/03/22/7a489fc4-92e9-11e2-ba5b-5507abf6384\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/obama-ends-israel-visit-by-honoring-historic-figures/2013/03/22/7a489fc4-92e9-11e2-ba5b-5507abf6384_story.html)> and its supporters that "HE GETS US," as one of them emailed me. "In his Kishkas [gut], he gets us!" But Obama also spoke more bluntly about Israel's occupation and the case for a Palestinian state than any U.S. president has in the past. Oratory aside, Obama has recognized and employed the strongest — and perhaps only — path toward peace and a Palestinian state: an appeal to Israel's conscience.

For 40 years, those who have tried to push Israel toward making concessions have pointed to dangers and threats. Israel is surrounded by enemies, the argument goes, and the only way to ease that hostility is to give the Palestinians a state. Palestinian terrorism will make daily life in Israel unbearable, another variant explained, and Israel will have to settle this problem politically. These assumptions undergirded the peace process and Obama's approach in his first term.

The argument reflected reality in the 1980s and 1990s, when Israel faced an array of powerful Arab states with large armies — Iraq, Syria — formally dedicated to its destruction. The Soviet Union backed these regimes with cash and arms and ceaselessly drummed up international opposition to the Jewish state. Israelis lived with constant Palestinian terror, which created a siege mentality within the country.

The situation today however, is transformed in every sense. The Soviet Union is dead. Iraq and Syria have been sidelined as foes. The Arab world is in upheaval, which produces great uncertainty but has also weakened every Arab country. They all are focused on internal issues of power, legitimacy and survival. The last thing any of them can afford is a confrontation with the country that has become the region's dominant power.

The data underscore this. Israel's per capita gross domestic product is now nine times that of Egypt, according to the International Monetary Fund's most recent figures; six times that of Jordan; and nearly three times that of Turkey. It is almost 50 percent greater than Saudi Arabia's per capita GDP. Israeli military expenditures are larger than those of all its neighbors combined, and then there are its technological and qualitative superiorities and its alliance with the world's dominant military power. Israel's highly effective counterterrorism methods, including the wall separating Palestinians and Israelis and the "iron dome," which increasingly shields Israelis from missiles, have largely made Palestinian terrorism something that is worried about and planned against but not actually experienced by most Israelis.

Even the much-discussed "demographic threat" is a threat only if Israel sees it as such — something the country's new breed of politicians, such as Naftali Bennett <[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/01/21/130121fa\\_fact\\_remnck](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/01/21/130121fa_fact_remnck)>, have cynically grasped. After all, Israel has ruled millions of Palestinians without offering them citizenship or a state for 40 years. There is no tipping point at

which this becomes logistically or technically unsustainable. Walls, roads and checkpoints would work for 4 million Palestinians just as they do for 1 million.

In a sense, both hard-line supporters of Israel and advocates of peace have clung to the notion of the Jewish state as deeply vulnerable. For Likudniks, this demonstrates that Israel was at risk and needed constant support. For peaceniks, it proved that peace was a vital necessity.

But Israel's strength and security are changing the country's outlook. Don't look only at the tough talk coming from the new right. As columnist and author [http://www.amazon.com/dp/0385521707/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?tag=was-post-opinions-20&camp=0&creative=0&linkCode=as1&creativeASIN=0385521707&adid=0H48BSQNW9J02EBENXP](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0385521707/ref=as_li_tf_tl?tag=was-post-opinions-20&camp=0&creative=0&linkCode=as1&creativeASIN=0385521707&adid=0H48BSQNW9J02EBENXP) Ari Shavit notes, the country has turned its attention from survival to social, political and economic justice. (January's election results <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/23/israels-elections-confound-critics/> confirmed this trend.) And while these seem, at first, domestic affairs, they will ultimately lead to a concern for justice in a broader sense and for the rights of Palestinians.

Obama's speech <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/21/remarks-president-barack-obama-people-israel> appealed to this aspect of Israel's psyche and grounded it deeply in Jewish values: "Israel is rooted not just in history and tradition but also in the idea that a people deserve to be free in a land of their own."<sup>94</sup> Then, applying that idea to Israel's longtime adversaries, he said: "Look at the world through [Palestinian] eyes. It is not fair that a Palestinian child cannot grow up in a state of their own. Living their entire lives with the presence of a foreign army that controls the movements not just of those young people but their parents—their grandparents, every single day."

Having tried pressure, threats and tough talk, Obama has settled on a new strategy: appealing to Israel as a liberal democracy and to its people's sense of conscience and character. In the long run, this is the most likely path to peace and a Palestinian state.

Article 2.

The Washington Post

Obama's pragmatic approach to Mideast

David Ignatius [http://www.washingtonpost.com/david-ignatius/2011/02/17/ABXXcOJ\\_page.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/david-ignatius/2011/02/17/ABXXcOJ_page.html)

March 27, 2013 -- Here's the coldblooded calculation at work as President Obama shapes his foreign-policy agenda: If he took "full ownership" of the Syria problem through direct military intervention, that's probably all he could accomplish during his second term — and even then, he might fail in reconciling that country's feuding sects.

So Obama is moving instead toward a more pragmatic approach in Syria, with the CIA playing a central role, supplemented by the State Department and the U.S. military. The United States will train Syrian rebels and help build governance in areas liberated from the regime of President Bashar al-Assad <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/02/21/five-most-bizarre-quotes-from-bashar-al-assads-new-interview/> . Washington will work harder to coordinate policy with the key regional powers — Turkey, Qatar

Saudi Arabia and Jordan — whose conflicting agendas have threatened in recent days to pull the Syrian opposition apart.

But Obama won't make the all-encompassing commitment in Syria that some want because he fears it would devour the remaining years of his presidency.

This pragmatic line on foreign policy was evident during Obama's trip to the Middle East [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/obamas-mideast-trips-leaves-behind-a-mix-of-hope-and-skepticism/2013/03/23/e6ee8a08-389-11e2-a31e-14700e2724e4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/obamas-mideast-trips-leaves-behind-a-mix-of-hope-and-skepticism/2013/03/23/e6ee8a08-389-11e2-a31e-14700e2724e4_story.html) this month. Though the president is often criticized for his passive, "leading from behind" style, he made some notable advances on the trip. The challenge, as always for Obama, will be to follow through with coherent "from the front" leadership.

Here are three strategic gains that emerged from the trip:

Obama breathed a little life back into an Israeli-Palestinian peace process that had all but expired. He did this largely by the force of his March 21 speech <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/03/21/how-obama-just-reframed-the-israel-palestine-conflict/> in Israel. What he accomplished was the diplomat's trick of riding two horses at once: The speech was a love letter to Israel, as one commentator noted, and it was also a passionate evocation of the Palestinians' plight, and the need to "look at the world through their eyes."

Obama pulled Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu toward the U.S. position on military action against Iran. Netanyahu said [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/obama-arrives-in-israel-for-three-day-visit/2013/03/20/a01774aa-914f-11e2-9abd-e4c5c9dc5e90\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/obama-arrives-in-israel-for-three-day-visit/2013/03/20/a01774aa-914f-11e2-9abd-e4c5c9dc5e90_story.html) that "if Iran decides to go for a nuclear weapon — that is, to actually manufacture the weapon — then . . . it will take them about a year." He said the United States and Israel share "a common assessment" of Iran. This sounded close to agreement with Obama's position that the trigger for a military strike would be an Iranian breakthrough toward a bomb; that's quite different from the "zone of immunity" arguments Netanyahu was making last year [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/benjamin-netanyahu-invokes-holocaust-in-push-against-iran/2012/02/23/gIQAFKdkhR\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/benjamin-netanyahu-invokes-holocaust-in-push-against-iran/2012/02/23/gIQAFKdkhR_story.html), which viewed Iran's very position of enrichment technology as the threat. These exchanges demonstrated that Obama is stronger politically than he was a year ago and Netanyahu is weaker. The Israeli prime minister is now trying to associate himself with Obama's Iran policy, rather than pressuring him.

Obama brokered an important reconciliation between Netanyahu and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/obama-ends-israel-visit-by-honoring-historic-figures/2013/03/22/7a489fc4-92e9-11e2-b5b-550c7abf6384\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/obama-ends-israel-visit-by-honoring-historic-figures/2013/03/22/7a489fc4-92e9-11e2-b5b-550c7abf6384_story.html). With the region in turmoil, this was a matter of vital national interest for both Israel and Turkey, but it took Obama to provide the personal link that made it happen. This was a payoff for Obama's cultivation of Erdogan since 2010, and for his "reset" with Netanyahu.

Syria remains the test of whether Obama can, forgive the term, "lean in" more during his second term. Obama has been slow to see the dangers of U.S. passivity there: For months he let things drift in Syria; the United States had a nominal commitment to strengthening command-and-control within the opposition but no real policy on the ground to accomplish it.

Obama is now said to understand the risk that Syria's sectarian conflict will spread to Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan if the United States doesn't take stronger action. The White House is eager to work with Brig. Gen. Salim Idriss, the commander of the Free Syrian Army, on training, logistics and other priorities. The administration recognizes that it may need "safe zones," perhaps protected by air defenses, to train Syrian rebels inside the country rather than in Jordan and Turkey.

The president is still said to resist the simple formula of "arm the rebels," but he seems close to partnering with friendly intelligence services in the region on what would be a major covert action program, reminiscent of Afghanistan in the 1980s [http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/19149/covert\\_action.html](http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/19149/covert_action.html), with all the attendant risks.

In framing this project, he'd be wise to bring in some CIA veterans who have experience running similar programs, pronto.

Obama hasn't had a personality transplant. He's still likely to be slow and deliberate. But the Middle East trip showed that he has built some political and diplomatic capital and is starting to use it wisely.

Article 3.

The National Interest

Why Stay in the Middle East?

Leon Hadar <<http://nationalinterest.org/profile/leon-hadar>>

March 27, 2013 -- Brandishing the critics of their foreign-policy agenda as "isolationists" has become the last refuge of military interventionists and global crusaders. The tactic helps sidetrack the debate by putting the onus on their opponents—those skeptical of regime change here, there and everywhere—to disprove the charge that they want Americans to shun the rest of the world.

And now proponents of maintaining American military hegemony in the Middle East have been applying a similar technique, accusing those who call for a debate on U.S. interests and policies in that region of advocating retreat and appeasement. Like the accusation of "isolationism," the suggestion that a reassessment of current U.S. policies in the Middle East amounts to geostrategic retrenchment is part of an effort to shut down debate and maintain the status quo. But questioning the dominant U.S. Middle East paradigm, which assumes that Americans have the interest and the obligation to secure a dominant political-military status in the region, now goes beyond strategic and economic calculations being debated by foreign-policy wonks in Washington. Most Americans have only basic knowledge about the Middle East and U.S. interests there, beyond words that trigger a visceral fear ("oil" and "Israel" and "terrorism=94). But most of them are now telling pollsters that they want to see U.S. troops withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan as soon as possible, are opposed to new U.S.-led regime change and nation building in the Middle East, and are skeptical about the utility of Washington taking charge of the Israeli-Palestinian "peace process." Indeed, you don't have to be a deep strategic thinker to conclude that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was a major military and diplomatic fiasco (no more Iraqs, please); that Washington exerts very little influence on the political weather (where it's "spring" or "winter") in the Arab World, a place where they lost that loving feeling for America a long time ago; or that Israelis and Palestinians are not going to live in peace and harmony anytime soon, even if President Obama would spend the rest of his term engaged in diplomatic psychotherapy sessions with them at Camp David.

It is becoming quite obvious to most Americans that sustaining the foundations of the Pax Americana in the Middle East is no longer cost-effective. Especially at a time when many members of the middle class have yet to recover from the economic devastation of the Great Recession and their representatives in Washington cannot agree on how to manage the ballooning federal deficit.