

After Israel

Time and again Israel has proven itself one of America's most reliable allies. It has provided admirable service as our chief proxy in the Middle East, always ready to advance America's interests through diplomatic and covert means. It has been a dedicated friend in the United Nations, where the two states share a relationship comparable to that of the Ukraine and the former Soviet Union. And no other nation has been so willing to serve as a testing ground for the latest military technologies, nor proven so adept at acquiring the war machines of our rivals.¹

In light of this exemplary service, the approaching collapse of the Israeli state can only be cause for sadness among her many admirers, and aggravating the grief of the occasion is the certainty that the cruel endgame being played out could have been avoided.² The forces allied against Israel have always made clear their commitment to her destruction but even now, in these final months, Israel's leaders persist in pretending that a political solution is possible. Because of their naiveté, a proud people are suffering the death of a thousand wounds as Israel's enemies employ treachery and deceit to secure the gains won by the callous sacrifice of zealots and children.

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If Israel's leadership had restricted its efforts to the bargaining table, her military might still have ensured the nation's security. Instead, the politicians have advanced a program of "trust-building" measures intended to "lay the foundation" for a stable peace, a program which could not have been better designed to undermine the effectiveness of the IDF.³ The political establishment has defended these restrictions by insisting that they reflect the norms of civilized conduct, ignoring the fact that Israel is an occupied land, her citizens menaced by a foreign people; to expect the military to fight fairly in such a circumstance is insane. By holding itself to the same standards that govern other Western armies, Israel has crippled its ability to defend itself. The Jewish people played a seminal role in the

¹ In fact, Israel has, at times, shown itself a bit too efficient of a conduit for transferring technologies between the United States and its enemies.

² Given the history of the Jewish people, it is necessary to qualify this remark. The modern Israeli state came about through international action spurred, in part, by the 'terrorist' activities of the early Zionists, and many observers have wondered if this wasn't a case of man being too quick to make happen something for which God had a much longer timeframe in mind. Israel has wrestled with this dilemma since its founding, whether to pursue the fulfillment of prophecy by military means or wait and allow God to bring it about. This tension is most apparent in wartime: though it is arguable whether the entire Middle East was ripe for the taking in 1967, there is no denying that the nuclear option could have made the dream of a Greater Israel a reality in 1973.

³ It should be noted that economic forces have also contributed to Israel's fall, though in a less direct fashion. The socialist leanings of Israel's elite precluded the possibility that the energies of the free market might be harnessed to transform the situation on the ground and allow new solutions to emerge. A more market friendly set of policies might have triggered a regional renaissance, alleviating one of the most exasperating factors in the conflict. Take, for instance, the obstructions that the Israeli state has thrown in the path of individuals wishing to settle Israel's frontiers. These would-be pioneers are engaged in the most fundamental of economic activities, "voting with one's feet," and the reckless ease with which the state has interfered with their efforts is embarrassing to all defenders of liberty.

rise of Western civilization, and there is black humor in the fact that a commitment to civilized conduct is hastening Israel's fall.

This too-civil behavior is illustrated most clearly in Israel's reluctance to strike at individual elements of the enemy's leadership, a concern her enemies have never shared. While Israel has occasionally targeted individ-

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uals, these have always been persons who were directly implicated in attacks against the Israeli people; there has never been a policy of open assassination, despite the ease with which it could be accomplished in regions under Israeli administration. By scrupulously avoiding even the appearance of an assassination campaign, Israel has created an impossible situation for itself: is it any wonder that the number of active cells, fronts, movements, and

armies opposing Israel has multiplied over the years? In a demonstration of the law of unintended consequences, the refusal to condone assassination has only encouraged Israel's enemies to adopt an organizational struc-

⁴ Israel's hesitation may be motivated, in part, by concerns about the effect a policy of state ordered assassinations would have upon American public opinion. The anti-Israel bias of the American media is a well documented phenomena, and is most apparent in the New York Times, where the slant has grown even more pronounced over the past decade. Q: What might account for this increasingly prejudiced coverage? Perhaps the growing influence of homosexuals in the New York Times newsroom— confirmed in a remark by a Times correspondent: "There are times when you look at the front page meeting and literally three-quarters of the people deciding what's on the front page are not-so-closeted homosexuals."—has something to do with it. Testing this hypothesis requires identifying a news cycle that includes both: 1) an attack by Israel's enemies on a group of photogenic Israelis (perhaps a group of school children in Jerusalem); and 2) a major homosexual community celebration in the New York metropolitan area. For maximum reliability, two such news cycles should be identified, with care taken to guarantee that only one takes place while the United Nations is in session. An analysis of the New York Times coverage of each incident should be performed, with attention given to the number of appearances of the first person singular, the page on which the story appears, the size of the headline, and similar factors. Further statistical significance can be established by comparing coverage of any mayoral proclamation declaring, "[homosexual community celebration] Day," with reporting of any presidential remarks regarding the attack in Israel. If such a link does exist, and it almost certainly does, what reasons might account for it? Two spring to mind: First, given the Judeo-Christian condemnation of abomination expressed most clearly in Leviticus, it is no surprise that the Israelis, being the people of the Book, should be the target of the homosexual community's venom. No matter how much progress homosexuals make in legitimizing their lifestyle in the eyes of the American public, the existence of the nation of Israel will always be a rebuke to their activities. Second, the rancor may reflect a deeper struggle taking place in Hollywood over who will control the entertainment industry. Since the rise of the gay rights movement, homosexual individuals—who are disproportionately represented in the ranks of entertainers—have pursued a strategy of publicly identifying their homosexual allegiance and seeking to advance the interests of other homosexual individuals and of the homosexual community as a whole. It is no surprise, then, that there should be an on-going clash of interests in Hollywood, where the establishment—many with close ties to Israel—finds itself under increasing pressure from the homosexual community, and that this clash should spill over into other elements of the mass media. If antipathy does exist between the Jewish and homosexual communities, it bodes badly for the Democratic coalition. One can easily imagine a day when Republicans, breaking with their anti-homosexual past, announce that the Big Tent is finally big enough to accommodate "a few queers," and the mostly middle-class, mostly childless homosexual community arrives, at last, in its natural political home, the party emphasizing fiscal austerity and tax cuts. In response, one would expect the Jewish community, labor unions, and the remaining identity politics based organizations—excluding the discredited post-Clinton feminist movement—to come together in a new left-centrist coalition, with the Black community growing further estranged from the political process.

ture in which every individual is made a leader of some sort.⁴ Equally damaging to Israel's security have been the politically imposed restrictions governing the time and manner in which the IDF can engage the enemy, rules which are indistinguishable from the very ones which have castrated America's own law enforcement agencies. Any military that is required to obey strict regulations dictating where and when no-knock entries can take place is doomed to defeat. And equally counterproductive is the insistence that Israel's armed forces avoid engagement on the enemy's holy days for fear of disrupting the 'peace' process. The human cost of these policies is so great that the Israeli media is prohibited from giving live coverage to military efforts, for fear that the Israeli people will rise up in open rebellion when they see the consequences of their leaders' misguided directives.

Israel's inability to control its own minority population has caused much embarrassment for its American partner

While it is possible to identify the cause of Israel's decline, there is no way of knowing what a post-Israel Palestine will look like. In the best case scenario, Palestine will be a demilitarized region administered by the Security Council through Scandinavian peace-keepers, with representatives of affected groups making policy for sites of historical and religious import. In the worst case, Israel is made a glowing desert too dangerous to be entered by anyone but Red Adair's hellfighters, a toxic wasteland where noxious clouds rain biohazard residues onto ancient hillsides while trapped survivors broadcast lonely pleas for help from underground bunkers buried deep beneath the rubble. But no matter the outcome, it is undeniable that a strong presence in the Middle East is vital to America's long-term security, and so it is essential that the United States be prepared for the unhappy day when Tel Aviv falls. Recognizing this need, and bearing no ill will towards our soon to be displaced Israeli allies, let us turn our attention to identifying the most suitable candidate to replace Israel as America's strategic partner in the region.

Though all of the Middle Eastern states are populated by hardy peoples quite up to the task at hand,⁵ only a few possess the infrastructure necessary for fulfilling the role in question. A few moments of reflection suggests there are only four nations that could serve as our strategic ally in the region:⁶

Jordan: For decades Jordan has been ruled by a modern, moderate regime, one that recognizes the importance of maintaining good relations with the United States. The country boasts world-class port facilities and a growing civil society, and the Jordanian people have shown themselves capable of adapting to changing geopolitical circumstances, a trait evident in the close working relationship between the Jordanese and Israeli mili-

⁵ Excepting, of course, Qatar.

⁶ Egypt is excluded for obvious reasons.

tary and intelligence services. Unfortunately, this adaptability will likely be Jordan's undoing: when Israel falls, one can expect that Jordan will tumble, too. At the least, Jordan's monarchy will be overthrown in a violent coup, with the broken bodies of the royal family dragged behind an armored personnel carrier through the streets of Amman. And should Israel suffer the worst case of NBC attack—well, the prevailing winds will carry any toxic substances straight from Tel Aviv to Jordan.

Turkey: Turkey and the United States already have close ties, and Turkey's membership in NATO facilitates the kind of military cooperation required of a strategic partner. Turkey's military is committed to continued Westernization, and its exchanges and joint training exercises with Israel demonstrate Turkey's willingness to pursue controversial policies over the objections of its neighbors. If military matters were the only basis for a decision, Turkey would be the perfect candidate, but geographic concerns are equally important. Though Turkey offers ample sea access, its location makes it a questionable staging area for American force projection along the Cairo to Dubai arc, and this proximity to Europe—both spatially and psychologically—is troubling for other reasons, as well. Turkey's push to join the EU will, if successful, give Brussels a decisive role both in dictating Turkish domestic affairs and in defining Turkey's international policies. America's strategic partners can serve only one master, and the growing tendency of the EU to pursue a foreign policy independent from that of the United States suggests that Turkey would be subjected to conflicting imperatives.

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Turkey's restless Kurds are also cause for concern. Israel's inability to control its own minority population has caused much embarrassment for its American partner; given the increasing importance of human rights to Western consumers, it behooves the U.S. to select a partner better capable of concealing photogenic incidents of repression than the Turks have shown themselves to be.

Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabia controls 26% of the world's known oil reserves, as good a reason as any to consider the kingdom as a partner. But aside from its oil, there is little else to recommend the kingdom. Given the current difficulties surrounding American deployment of a force intended to contain Iraqi expansionism—ambitions which target, in part, Saudi Arabia—there is little chance that the regime would allow America to use Saudi Arabia as a base for actions against other Arab regimes, a requirement of any regional partner. And further complicating any Saudi bid is the presence of Mecca; though some have suggested moving the holy site as a solution to the Islamic world's concern over an American presence in the 'holy land', such a course is impractical in the near term.

Syria: There's a rule of thumb known to all students of foreign policy: "never partner with a regime headed by an engineer or an M.D." President Hafiz al-Asad, an ophthalmologist by training, has confirmed this adage by squandering his nation's wealth in a failed effort to sustain his father's dynastic pretensions. Money not spent entertaining visiting North Korean delegations has funded the construction of an enormous base deep within the mountains of Northern Syria, where researchers pursue their efforts away from the prying eyes of intelligence satellites. The regime is ruthlessly anti-democratic, and it deploys a secret police force—one whose size is far in excess of the needs of such a small state—to squash any signs of dissent. While this fact alone isn't cause for American concern, the regime's indiscriminate, even random, choice of targets—rightists are prosecuted just as frequently as progressives and trade unionists—suggests it would be an erratic partner.

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Iran: A domestic oil industry, access to the Caspian fields, and pistachios—Iran has much to offer. Unhappily, even after the thawing of relations in recent years, a sizable number of Iranians still consider the United States to be the Great Satan, and it will likely be another generation before these proud people are again willing to 'dance with the devil.' In fact, the details of the split between Iran and the US are such that the American people, too, might very well oppose any kind of partnership between the two nations.

Clearly, Turkey is the only viable candidate, but given its problems—especially the possibility of EU integration—it is a short-term solution, at best. Does this mean that America must go it alone in the Middle East? Not necessarily, but a solution requires that we set aside our prejudices and entertain an otherwise outlandish possibility. There exists a nation that shares a long history with the United States, a relationship only recently interrupted by a diplomatic misunderstanding. The nation in question is ideally situated, and it is ruled by a regime which brooks no dissent from its minority populations and which has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to pursue an independent course, regardless of the pressure exercised by neighboring states. Iraq offers all the advantages of Israel, and oil, as well.

Skeptics will sneer at the suggestion that the American public would accept an alliance with Iraq. After all, twenty years have passed since the Iran fiasco, but there still exists deep loathing on

the part of the American people for all things Iranian. But before dismissing talk of Iraq as nothing more than policy journal speculation, consider this: during the Iranian hostage crisis and throughout the 1980s, it was the *nation* of Iran that was demonized by the American government. The American people were reminded, again and again, that a hatred for all things Iranian was a fundamental component of the American identity. Given the extent of the campaign, it is no wonder that Iran is still a pariah state in the eyes of the American public. Contrast this with the U.S. government's handling of the Gulf War, during which the U.S. and its allies were careful to never portray the Iraqi people as monsters. Instead, Saddam Hussein was identified as the force behind Iraq's aggression. By making an individual, rather than a nation, the focus of their propaganda, the allies allowed the possibility of a speedy reintegration of Iraq back into the community of nations.⁷ Admittedly the failure of the alliance to unseat Hussein means that a transition in Iraq's leadership must still be arranged before any kind of partnership between the U.S. and Iraq is possible, but once Hussein is shuffled off the stage of history there is no reason the two nations can not—or should not—pursue a strategic relationship. Consider the benefits:

The United States would gain a stable partner in the region, one ideally situated in expectation of the day when the U.S. must intervene to defend the Saudi regime against a revolutionary Islamic uprising—or, just likely, to seize the Saudi oil fields, establish a defensive perimeter around them, and turn management of the fields over to a consortium of American oil companies. In addition, a presence in Iraq would provide America with control of the overland route by which the gulf's oil travels to Europe, a capability that will become increasingly important as global-warming driven economic distress brings a return of piracy on the open seas in the coming years. And, of course, U.S. based firms would gain a competitive advantage when bidding for the many contracts associated with the rebuilding of Iraq's infrastructure.

Iraq would gain just as much by such a pairing. American firms lead the world in the development of dual-use NBC technologies, and Iraq's long stalled effort to amass a WMD stockpile as a deterrent to Iranian aggression would receive a real jumpstart from our expertise. Warmer relations with Washington would also allow the coordination of efforts with Turkey to contain the Kurdish threat, a boon to regional security. And, perhaps most appealing to Iraq's leadership, American support would facilitate the fulfillment of a long-standing dream of the Iraqi people: the restoration of the Babylonian empire. In a post-Israel Middle East, the benefits that would result from a single administrative entity stretching from the Jordan to Tehran cannot be overstated; certainly, the United States would have every reason to welcome the consolidation of the enormous oil resources of the region under the rule of a regime that was avowedly—and permanently—pro-American.

⁷ It is this type of foresight in policy making which typifies the architects of the New World Order, and one can only hope to see more of it.