

Trump's Mideast strategy rejects anti-Israel theory of linkage

by Matthew Hausman



More than a month has passed since President Trump rolled out his National Security Strategy and it continues to elicit condemnation from progressives, globalists, and advocates of Barack Obama's failed foreign policy.

As it pertains to the Mideast, Trump's strategy has been assailed by the left for repudiating the debunked theory of "linkage," which holds that Israel is the source of destabilizing tension throughout the region. The President has also come under fire for rejecting the two-state orthodoxy of Oslo, identifying Palestinian rejectionism as the real barrier to peace, acknowledging Jerusalem as Israel's indivisible

capital, and threatening sanctions against the Palestinian Authority.

Considering the region's geopolitical history, however, Trump's strategy realignment is refreshing – especially in its rejection of certain foreign policy doctrines that unfairly single out Israel and draw surreptitious inspiration from classical anti-Semitic themes and stereotypes.

It has become political dogma that the Israel-Palestinian situation precludes regional peace and prosperity, though this view is unsupported by fact or history. The reality is that ethnic and religious conflict marred the region long before Israel's modern rebirth in 1948 and liberation of Judea and Samaria in 1967. There is absolutely no link between Israeli-Palestinian relations and the Islamic radicalism that has toppled governments across the region or Iran's nuclear ambitions, sponsorship of terrorism, and proxy wars in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. Ancestral violence between Muslims and Christians, Sunnis and Shiites, Arabs, Persians, Turks and Kurds; the spread of Wahhabi extremism; and the Yazidi genocide are no more responses to Palestinian statelessness than are the jihadist threat spreading across Europe, the epidemic of terrorism plaguing the West, or the Islamic State's attempt to establish a caliphate in Iraq.

The most pressing conflicts in the Mideast today are rooted in the tribalism, ethnic friction, and religious fundamentalism that have defined the region from time immemorial – problems that were exacerbated by the creation of modern Arab states after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. To argue otherwise is to ignore geopolitical reality, and to blame Israel is to deny Jewish history and national character...

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