

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 6, 2011 7:56 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Jeffrey Goldberg

From: Stern, Todd D (S/SECC)
Sent: Thursday, January 06, 2011 7:28 PM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Fw: Jeffrey Goldberg

Look at HRC item. My friend Jeffrey Goldberg's blog. For the record, he knows more about Middle East than most any journalist and he loves HRC.

From: Jeffrey Goldberg :: The Atlantic [mailto:[\[REDACTED\]](#)]
Sent: Thursday, January 06, 2011 07:07 PM
To: Stern, Todd D (S/SECC)
Subject: Jeffrey Goldberg

B6

Jeffrey Goldberg



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- **Enough With Firing Journalists Already**
 - **Kuwait's Experiment in Democracy**
 - **It's Hillary Time**
 - **You Know That Big Snowstorm Over Christmas? It Was the Mossad**

Enough With Firing Journalists Already

Posted: 06 Jan 2011 02:39 PM PST

It was announced today that Ellen Weiss, National Public Radio's news chief, has "resigned" in the wake of an internal report that found that NPR didn't do anything wrong in the firing of the commentator Juan Williams. Yes, I'm also confused.

Williams's firing seemed rash -- among other things -- to me, but I'm not sure how NPR is served by forcing out (does anyone believe this is anything but a forced resignation?) a news executive with an otherwise sterling reputation? I don't know Ellen Weiss; I don't think we've ever met, but I have friends at NPR who speak highly of her. In any case, even if my friends didn't think highly of her, it doesn't seem that her removal is actually warranted. She made a mistake of judgment, and she certainly shouldn't have fired Williams by telephone, but really, are there no second chances anymore in journalism? Rick Sanchez shouldn't have been fired; Dave Weigel shouldn't have been fired; Juan Williams shouldn't have been fired; and Ellen Weiss shouldn't have been fired. (About Helen

Thomas we can have a separate discussion, though I see she is **employed again by someone** who has exonerated her of anti-Semitism). I obviously don't know the internal dynamics of NPR, but it seems as if a good person was removed from her (three-decade) place of work for no particularly good reason. Fallows, as usual, **says it better than I do:**

Is letting her go, for one episode (with Williams), any worse than letting Williams go for one comment on Fox News (that he got nervous when people in "Muslim garb" got on an airplane)? Structurally they might seem the same. But NPR's day-after explanation about Williams was that this was the culmination of years-long disagreements with him about his role as a Fox commentator. I know nothing first-hand about the merits of that explanation; but its essence is different from Weiss's situation, in which one instance of misjudgment appears to trump her reputation and achievement over the decades.

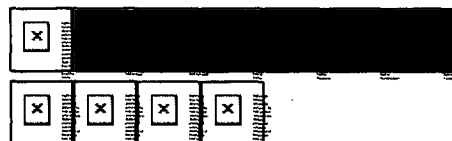


Kuwait's Experiment in Democracy

Posted: 06 Jan 2011 12:33 PM PST

Israel and Iraq (!) are the only two countries in the Middle East that can reasonably claim to be democratic, but apparently Kuwait comes close -- not too close, but, according to Elliott Abrams (who has started-up a new **Council on Foreign Relations blog**, God help him), closer than you would have thought:

Since we liberated Kuwait in the first Gulf War, complaints have been heard about why we bothered rescuing an oil monarchy. OK, Saddam's aggression couldn't be tolerated, but why kid ourselves about the Al-Sabah rule we were re-establishing? It turns out that in rescuing Kuwait we set the stage for the Arab world's most advanced experiment in parliamentary power. Kuwait's political system is highly imperfect in its own terms--and some of those voting against the PM were Islamists. Parliament keeps getting dissolved by the Amir when hostilities recur between the parliament and the prime minister--who is the Amir's nephew. But those hostilities are political, not physical, and reflect an effort to create a balance between royal power and popular participation. It's a laudable effort, and sooner or later the parliament is going to get Sheik Nasser, the prime minister. And that will be a landmark day in the development of democracy and popular rule in Arab lands.



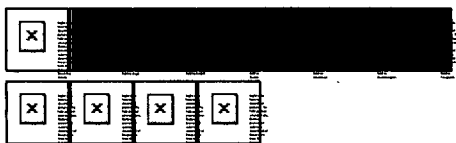
It's Hillary Time

Posted: 06 Jan 2011 07:53 AM PST

Aaron David Miller **on the one person** who might be able to make America's Middle East efforts work: Let's be clear again: Fixing the bureaucracies won't overcome the huge challenges standing in the way of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. But if it's to be fixed (and even if it can't), there has to be a change. Somebody -- the secretary of state -- has to take charge. And there's no doubt she is capable of doing it.

If, as it appears, the administration is going for the endgame on the big issues -- proposals to bridge the gaps between the parties or even a U.S. plan -- then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton needs to identify and fight for a strategy that reflects the needs of both Israelis and Palestinians, and get the president not just to allow her to take the lead, but to watch her back at home and abroad. Indeed, if this gets to another summit (and it might) Obama himself will have to do the heavy lifting.

FWIW, I do tend to think that Hillary Clinton has been put on earth in order to negotiate this issue to a successful conclusion. She has the will, the intelligence, the understanding and the prestige to make this happen -- if it is going to happen at all. Opportunities are, in fact, presenting themselves at this moment, and it would be a shame to see Hillary's talents go to waste on lesser projects. And, by the way, I don't believe that solving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute fixes America's problems in the Middle East, but I do believe that it's an important enough issue in its own right to warrant most of Hillary's attention.



You Know That Big Snowstorm Over Christmas? It Was the Mossad

Posted: 06 Jan 2011 04:02 AM PST

Michael Totten with a useful reminder of just how nuts the Middle East is:

Iran and Egypt are in many ways each others' opposites. Egypt's government doesn't believe this crap, but many if not most of its people do. Hysterical nonsense like this is the molten core of the Iranian government's ideology, but vastly fewer people who live in Iran take it seriously.

Israel today is at war with Tehran and has a peace treaty with Cairo, but I for one won't be remotely surprised if the situation ten years from now is reversed.

UPDATE: The Saudis just captured a vulture and **fear the bird is spying for Israel.**

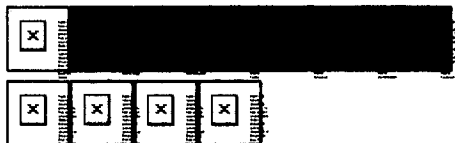
There is nothing the Israelis can do to appease this kind of reckless stupidity. They are hated in large part because the people who hate them are mad.

People in the U.S. tend to underestimate the power of conspiracy thinking to shape the minds of people across the Middle East. Much of the region is simply divorced from reality.

And yes, the Mossad made me write this. They made Totten write what he wrote as well. Also, the Mossad caused all

those birds to fall out of the sky in Louisiana. And also global warming. The Mossad caused global warming, and it is also behind the campaign to convince people that global warming is real, when we know that it is not, except when the Mossad causes it.

If you can figure out that last sentence, you'll understand the Middle East.



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