

RELEASE IN PART B6

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**From:** H

**Sent:** 6/30/2009 8:35:08 PM +00:00

**To:** Huma Abedin <Huma@clintonemail.com>

**Subject:** Fw: WIS column that Su asked me to send to you

Pls print.

----- Original Message -----

From: Brian Greenspun <

To: H

Sent: Mon Jun 29 20:26:29 2009

Subject: Fw: WIS column that Su asked me to send to you

B6

Hi hillary, hope you are doing better.

Myra and I are in houston for three more weeks so if your travels to foreign capitals brings you here, let us know. I am forwarding a column I wrote this past sunday. Since it has your name in it I thought you would be interested. Not that you aren't interested in everything I write! This, of course, is the subject I wanted to chat with you about before you took yourself out of commission. Would still like to talk when you are up to it. Myra joins me in wishing you all the best and a speedy recovery. Brian

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Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

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From: Mike Campbell  
To: Brian Greenspun  
Sent: Mon Jun 29 17:18:50 2009

Subject: WIS column that Su asked me to send to you

U.S. can't squander the trust of Israelis

By Brian Greenspun

Sun, Jun 28, 2009 (2 a.m.)

Is the United States still Israel's best friend?

That is a question I never thought would be on the lips of Americans and Israelis because, for my entire life, these two great democracies have had an inextricable relationship — one based on common goals and common values — that, though strained from time to time, was never questioned.

So, why now? Why are Americans — Jews and non-Jews — asking the question about America's commitment to the Jewish state? And why are Israelis, for the first time, probably ever, so overwhelmingly convinced that the United States is prepared to abandon them?

The answer is simple: President Barack Obama. And in that answer lies a very complicated calculus that is creating justifiable consternation among people in both countries who believe that America and Israel must, should and always have to be best friends.

I wrote a few weeks ago, after the president's speech in Cairo, that had those same words been spoken in Israel or in the United States, descriptors such as "betrayal" would not be too harsh in defining the reaction of responsible people to what Obama was saying to the Muslim world. The president mangled history and tortured decades of written and unwritten assurances between our two countries to show the Muslim (which includes the Arab) world that he was trying to be evenhanded in his search for the key to unlock the mysteries of a peace effort that has gone awry for the past 60 years.

I refused to pile on the president after that speech, mostly because I think I understand that part of the world and its religious adherence to the concept that words and deeds rarely need to match. In fact, rarely does what people say over there have much to do with what they actually mean or mean to do.

However, there is more to that story. And it is precisely that other part that is causing so much concern over our president's efforts to find a solution in the Middle East.

That other part can be summed up in one word — trust.

Israel, since its modern birth in 1948, has been able to trust just one country other than itself — the United States. The relationship built over the past six decades has been centered on the belief from the Israeli side that the United States would always support a secure Jewish state of Israel. And from the American side, Israel has always proven itself to be a courageous and trustworthy democratic ally in a part of the world that is vital to U.S. interests.

Other factors — cultural, democratic, political, religious — have cemented our relationship, but in the end, we are friends and we believe in each other because our interests are so similar. They could be us.

Over the years, the relationship has occasionally been strained, mostly because of a naivete on the American side about how life works in the Middle East or, more practically, because of an overpowering State Department bias toward the Arab states — because that's where the oil is.

That has manifested itself at least twice. In President Jimmy Carter's bungling of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's peace initiative to Israel which, ultimately, ended with an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty but missed the much larger pan-Arab accord that was in the offing. At the time, I thought the ham-handedness was based on a very naive view of the Middle East. Lately, the former president's actions and writings suggest much more sinister reasons.

Oil pressures worked against Israel in the late 1980s when an exasperated President George H.W. Bush took up the harshest of Arab positions and threatened Israel's lifeblood and lifeline — promised, inviolate commitments of U.S. foreign aid — because of the Jewish state's continued building of settlements in the West Bank. For the United States, they were a nuisance and an impediment to good relations with our oil suppliers. For Israel, at the time, they represented life-and-death security.

Those two obvious examples of relationship pressure notwithstanding, the bond between our two countries has been unshakable.

So, is it shaky now? Israelis think so. In a recent poll in Israel, an overwhelming majority of Israelis think Obama is the most unfriendly American president ever. That kind of attitude toward the United States feeds a growing insecurity in Israel about the heretofore unshakable U.S.-Israeli relationship. And that can all be explained by Obama's speech in Cairo and his demand for the end to all settlement activity — even the activity specifically agreed to by past U.S. administrations.

And, therein lies the rub. This can't be and is not about settlements. Most Israelis and most Americans don't understand why they are needed in 2010 — beyond a few that are major population centers and obvious security barriers to the terrorists that the Palestinian Authority is either incapable of stopping or unwilling to stop.

No, the issue is about trust. If the United States and President Obama can't be trusted to keep the word of presidents past, promises Israel relied upon when it agreed to the Road Map, when it unilaterally removed itself from Gaza (and has been rewarded for that move with murderous missiles ever since) and when it dismantled settlements at great political and personal

peril — then how can it rely on this president when he says that tiny country's security will always be first and foremost to the United States?

Simply put, Israelis no longer trust the United States with their lives.

And therein lies the greatest danger to United States' interests in the Middle East. When push comes to shove between Israel and her Arab neighbors, and especially a nuclear-tipped Iran, who can Israel look to for its survival?

Only itself.

And that changes a calculus that has kept that part of the world from a conflagration for more than half a century.

I am still one of those people who believes President Obama is playing the "words not deeds" card as he tries to break the logjam in the Middle East. But he and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have to know that kind of gamesmanship goes only so far. By mouthing the Arab terrorists' mangled historical mantra — something I am certain they do not intend — they give a powerful aid and comfort to the bad guys' deadly goals.

And that won't last long in a part of our world where survival means acting first and acting hard.

Our president is walking and talking a thin edge on a very dangerous sword. He would be wise to make sure that those who need to trust him still can. On that score, there is much work to be done.

Brian Greenspun is editor of the Las Vegas Sun.

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**Message Headers:**

From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>  
To: Huma Abedin <Huma@clintonemail.com>  
Date: Tue, 30 Jun 2009 16:35:08 -0400  
Subject: Fw: WIS column that Su asked me to send to you

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