



Herb LONDON

THE ARCHITECT OF
PRESIDENT TRUMP'S
RIYADH SPEECH

By Rabbi Yitzchok Frankfurter



In a carefully worded speech delivered on May 21, 2017 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, President Donald Trump appealed to a room filled with dozens of Muslim leaders, as well as a worldwide audience of over 1.8 billion Muslims, to combat terrorism. His 36-minute address, which was the centerpiece of a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, his first stop overseas as President, firmly positioned Islam with the United States on the side of civilization and counterterrorism, drawing a distinction between

terrorism and Islam itself. And he insisted that Muslims and Muslim nations not only join him to fight violence and radicalism around the world but take the lead in that effort:

“Our goal is a coalition of nations that share the aim of stamping out extremism and providing our children a hopeful future that does honor to G-d... Every time a terrorist murders an innocent person and falsely invokes the name of G-d, it should be



Herbert London

an insult to every person of faith,” the President said.

One of the primary architects of the vision articulated in that address was Herbert London, an American conservative activist, commentator, author and academic. Herbert Ira London (born in 1939) was the head of the Hudson Institute from 1997 to 2011 and is currently president of the London Center for Policy Research, a conservative think tank hosted at The King’s College in New York City. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.



It’s a privilege to speak with you. You’re an important conservative thinker and run a prestigious think tank on foreign policy.

I don’t know if I would agree with the word “important,” but I kind of like it.

I understand that you were involved in drafting the speech President Trump delivered in Riyadh. Is that correct?

Yes. My team and I had been talking about a new Sunni alliance for some time. We call it the “Gulf States Red Sea Treaty Organization.” I was a little unhappy when the President referred to it in the speech



Prince Mohammad bin Salman, Donald Trump, and Jared Kushner (l to r)

as an “Arab NATO,” because NATO has Article 5, which calls on every nation to defend the others, and I didn’t want to use that terminology. Aside from that, the President pretty much relied on the work we had done before the speech was delivered in conjunction with what I call our Team B, which included people like Mike Flynn and Jim Mattis, before he became secretary of defense. This turned into the Riyadh speech and the way in which the Middle East alliance is emerging.

Do you view the Riyadh speech as the counterpoint to Obama’s 2009 speech that was delivered in Cairo?

I do. In fact, I think it’s very important to see the juxtaposition between them. Here you have a speech in Cairo where the President is arguing that we have to tilt more towards the Arab states, and now we have a position where the President is saying that we’re going to put together a Sunni coalition, with

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Israel as an unannounced member of the team to provide for a joint arrangement on military affairs. If someone would have told me five years ago that there would be a military delegation from Riyadh to Jerusalem to discuss joint military activity and that there would be continued back-channel discussions between Saudi Arabia and Israel, I'd say that they were smoking hallucinogens. And yet it has happened, because Israel is a key player in dealing with the imperial ambitions of Iran.

By and large, Israel is celebrating the change in tone and policy that President Trump is bringing to the Middle East and to Israel. I assume you share that joy.

Without question. One of the things that was true of the Obama years was that Israel was thrown under the metaphorical bus, to some degree. It was obvious that Obama didn't care about Israel. In fact, perhaps you recall that when he gave the

speech in Cairo, setting the stage for his foreign policy in the region, Obama made it clear that the first two rows would be reserved for the Muslim Brotherhood. So it was unmistakable what the orientation would be. What has happened with Trump is very different. Trump understands that Israel is an important—and really the key—player in the Middle East. If we are going to offset the influence of Iran and use our Sunni friends like Egypt and Saudi Arabia—it's interesting to call Saudi Arabia a friend, but in this context I think you can—then there is no question that Israel is going to be a part of whatever defense condominium emerges. And Israel will play a significant role in providing the logistics and perhaps the military armaments that are necessary to deal with Iranian/Shia aggression throughout the region.

As long as Israel plays that kind of role, their Arab neighbors will be more receptive of them. When the US embassy move

to Jerusalem was announced, where were the demonstrations in Riyadh or Cairo? They didn't occur. Why not? Because Israel has become a key military player in whatever coalition of forces now exists in the Middle East. Just last week there was a discussion about selling the Iron Dome to Saudi Arabia. The very idea that Israeli weapons would be sold to Saudi Arabia to provide for their defense is remarkable. This is not only because of Iran but also because of the Houthis, who have become a surrogate for fighting against Saudi Arabia. When the missiles were recently shot into Saudi Arabia, they didn't have the Houthi signature; the Houthis don't have the capability of putting together a missile with that level of sophistication. It was an Iranian missile. They had declared war, and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia even said so. He isn't prepared yet to go to war, but if in fact that were to happen, the back-channel arrangements with Israel will become integral to how it will all unfold.

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You're a scholar of foreign affairs, and President Trump doesn't come across as a very scholarly person. Do you think that he really understands all the ramifications of foreign policy? Or is it more of a shoot-from-the-hip type of thing for him?

That's a very difficult question to answer. I don't think that he's displayed the intellectual curiosity I would have liked to see in a President, but his instincts have been impeccable. And it's instincts that ultimately count because it's the kind of direction the President provides that ultimately makes the difference. I think that Trump has done very well. Does he get an A+? I don't think so, but he certainly gets a B+. But I'll admit that I'm a tough grader. When I was in academic life, people didn't walk into my classroom and automatically get an A. I do think there's something to be said about the way the President has gone about his business. I also think that Secretary Mattis is a wonderful appointment, and Mike Pompeo is an excellent appointment at the CIA. These people understand what has to be done in the Middle East.

Do you think that the President provides the proper guidance, given his volatility and unpredictability?

The President can sometimes be erratic, and I'm sure that

Trump has done very well. Does he get an A+? I don't think so, but he certainly gets a B+.

there are people in the administration who argue that he should throw away his cellphone and stop tweeting. As you mentioned before, this is nothing more than shooting from the hip. It isn't appropriate for the President of the United States to be issuing statements that way. But it's a little premature to make judgments on how well he is doing. I can only tell you that from my standpoint and the things I care about—and I am devoted to the State of Israel—I think that he has conducted himself in a very reasonable and balanced manner. It's not as though the President has been making overtures only to Israel. Keep in mind that our ties with Egypt have also increased dramatically, and the same goes for the crown prince of Saudi Arabia. It seems that the President has come to an understanding about the nature of the balance of power in this region, and that he has to offset Iranian ambitions.



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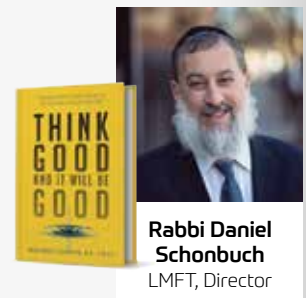
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Some of my friends are working for the present administration and are involved in negotiating a peace plan on behalf of the US. These are people who had no previous experience in foreign affairs. Do you think it's smart to have people who are inexperienced involved in something like this?

How do I say this politely? You're 35 years old, you have no prior experience in foreign policy, and the President of the United States asks you to do something that has never been accomplished: make peace in the Middle East. Come on. Peace will not be achieved in the Middle East in our lifetimes. It's certainly not out of the realm of possibility to see it happen, but it will only be achieved when the Palestinians recognize the fact that it's better for them to cooperate. If a Palestinian state existed tomorrow, and it included some of the territories of the West Bank, and those territories were within three miles of Ben Gurion Airport, they could pretty much paralyze all commercial activity into Israel. Does that make sense? It's absurd! The day the Arabs in the West Bank say "We will give up our weapons" is the day peace will be achieved. If the Israelis were to agree to give up their weapons—that would be the day you see a Palestinian state from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

They only understand power.

Exactly.

I assume that you read former Ambassador Michael Oren's book

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about the Obama administration.

Yes. I think he did a very good job.

But he was highly criticized, and some people felt that it wasn't right the way he went after President Obama, or that at least he shouldn't have done so publicly. What was your assessment of his attacks?

I wouldn't use the word "attacks." I think he provided a very dispassionate analysis of how Obama conducted himself vis-à-vis Israel, at a time when Michael was in attendance at those meetings and knew full well how he felt about Prime Minister Netanyahu. If you tell the prime minister of Israel—a key ally of the US—to use the back door because we're not interested in having you use the front entrance, what kind of symbolism is that? I think that, by and large, Michael understood it correctly. Obama clearly had an orientation that was very different from that of his predecessors, and certainly different from President Trump.

There's already a consulate in Jerusalem; they're just changing its name.

How important was moving the embassy to Jerusalem?

It's largely a symbolic move. Keep in mind that all that's really being done is changing one word—from "consulate"

to "embassy." There's already a consulate in Jerusalem; they're just changing its name. We heard all the arguments made by the former secretary of state and others about how there would be widespread disruptions and war would certainly break out, but what actually happened? As I indicated to you before, Saudi Arabia and Egypt may have voted in the UN against this decision, but that's meaningless. When it came right down to it there were no demonstrations. I watched Wolf Blitzer making the argument that there would be huge demonstrations in Lebanon following the announcement. The camera then focused on two people burning tires in the middle of the street. Two people! That was the extent of the demonstrations. This suggests that the decision was really considered ho-hum in the Arab world, and the Egyptians and Saudi Arabians made up their minds that they needed Israel more than they needed the embassy to stay put in Tel Aviv, or even the Palestinians. The Palestinian question has more or less been put on the back burner. While no one will admit it, it's the truth.

In conversations I've had with President Sisi of Egypt, he has

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Barack Obama with his speechwriters before delivering his speech in Cairo

time and again made it clear that Israel is a key player in the Middle East. When I met with the Egyptian minister of defense he told me, “I speak to [Israeli Chief of Staff] Benny Ganz more than I speak to the president of my own country.” If you consider what’s going under the radar in Sinai, Israel is fighting a war together with the Egyptians. Israel has been sending its attack helicopters to help out on a regular basis without any media coverage. So the ties between Egypt and Israel have changed the way we look at so many issues in the region. I don’t think the public appreci-

ates that, and it’s very important to understand. There are alliances percolating just beneath the surface. This has been happening gradually over the last five or six years, but there’s no doubt that there was a dramatic change under President Trump. And I believe that the Riyadh speech set the stage for it.

The problem is that you can reach some sort of agreement with Egypt, for example, but the government can fall apart tomorrow.

You’re absolutely right. There’s no ques-

tion that there’s tremendous volatility. It has something to do with the neuroses that have emerged in the Middle East for centuries. However, there is also no doubt that you have to work with the leaders you have. You can’t say, “Well, there could be a change in Egypt, so we have to be very hesitant about anything we do with them.” It’s true that the Wahhabis could kill the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, who I think is making all the right moves towards liberalization and modernization. But you have to engage in planning based on the conditions as you understand them—with

the possibility in your mind that you will have to change course in the future.

Do you think that the Palestinians will ever change course?

The difficulty I have with the Palestinian question is that every Palestinian wants one thing and one thing only: an Israel that has open, porous borders that will allow them to obtain jobs in Israel. It's the leadership in the Palestinian territories— Hamas and Abbas—that represents the problem. One time I was having lunch with President George W. Bush right after he'd

I looked at him and said, "Mr. President, in my judgment there's only one answer for American policy in the Middle East, and that's to have patience."

met with Abbas. "Herb," the President said, "I just met a man I think we can work with in the Middle East." He was aware of my strong sentiments towards Israel. I said, "Sir, with all due respect, Abbas is Arafat in a suit." "I think you're being unfair," he replied. "Well, I don't know about that. I think I'm relying on the recent history and so many of the public comments that have been made, and I believe that we're going through a very difficult period because what you have in Abbas is someone who will raise the violence ante." He said, "You never know about these things. I know you've spent time in the Middle

East and that you go to Israel frequently. What would you suggest I do?"

I looked at him and said, "Mr. President, in my judgment there's only one answer for American policy in the Middle East, and that's to have patience. If in one generation—or two or even three—the Palestinians will have an infrastructure, an economy, political judgments that are sound and they renounce violence, then I think that you can talk about a Palestinian state and some sort of genuine modus vivendi between Israel and the Palestinians. However, until that time it would be foolish to do anything. The conditions necessary for the creation of a state aren't there. Your predecessors, Clinton and Carter, were impatient, and they tried to impose a peace on Israel that could

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never work.” Using a colorful adjective, he looked at me and said, “Don’t confuse me with Carter and Clinton.”

I’m telling you this because if you look at the record, George W. *did* exercise patience; he wasn’t always happy with Israel and he did make negative comments about the—mostly organic—growth in the Israeli parts of the territories. But by and large he exercised patience as well, which was very different from Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and I might add very different from Obama. You have to understand that an American President has tremendous leverage with Israel for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the two states are the closest of allies. But the most important thing is the kind of pressure that the US exerts on Israel.

Now Trump is saying to Netanyahu, “I may not agree with you on everything. I’m not going to cross every T, but I want you to know that we are with you and want to cooperate to the extent that that’s possible.” This is a significant breakthrough. If you look at the people who have been appointed Middle East spokesmen they are mostly pro-Israel, which is very different from the previous administration. Look at John Kerry. This is someone whose antipathy towards Israel was clear even when he was running for President. He has a strong feeling against Israel and an obviously pro-Palestinian stance. What you have now is a very different orientation.

You’ve also been very outspoken against BDS. You even wrote a book about it.

The BDS movement isn’t a movement. When you think about it, where does Waze come from? It comes from Israel. Where does the camera that can be ingested into the body come from? Israel. Where does the Iron Dome come from? Israel. Where does the cellphone come from? Israel. They are all advancements made by this tiny state. So when people tell me that they’re going to boycott Israel

Former Presidents George Bush and George W. Bush



I say, “Okay, give up your cellphone and don’t go into the operating room, because you’re going to need a very different type of procedure. And if you’re ever lost on the road, I hope you have a map.” There’s no such thing as a boycott of Israel unless you’re willing to turn the clock back to the 19th century. BDS has only a single goal:

the demonization and delegitimization of Israel. That’s it.

Are you concerned?

I’m concerned because the Europeans have been compromised and turned against Israel, whereas previously they had admired Israel. Before the Six-Day War, there wasn’t one European country that was opposed to Israel. They all looked at Israel as the underdog. When Israel was victorious in six days things started to change, and it suddenly became the top-dog because of its military strength. Israel, of course, demonstrated that it wasn’t just a group of intellectuals sitting in a university in Jerusalem; it was a bunch of tough-minded Jews who were going to fight to preserve their country. What you have now is a very different mindset that has emerged over the last 50 years, which I find very disturbing. And a lot of it is true in the US as well.

If someone had told me that Tom Perez and Keith Ellison would be the top two people in the DNC [Democratic National Committee], I would have said that it wasn’t possible for anti-Semites to lead

Charles
Schumer
claims to be
pro-Israel, but
that’s only on
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the rest of
the week he’s
against Israel.

the Democratic Party. If you had told me that Linda Sarsour would lead a women's march made up of Jewish women demonstrating against Trump in Washington, I would have told you it's crazy. If you had predicted that over half the Democratic Party would be opposed to the State of Israel in 2018, I would have told you you've got to be kidding. But that is what has happened to the party, and that is the problem I have with the Democrats today. They turned against the State of Israel. Then there are hypocrites like Charles Schumer. He claims to be pro-Israel, but that's only on Wednesday and Friday; the rest of the week he's against Israel.

Can we mention Jerry Nadler in the same breath?

Absolutely. These are hypocrites.

Nadler, of course, supported the Iran deal, which I assume you consider a disaster.

It's a complete and utter disaster. And look at Schumer. He said he was with the President until he realized that the President had enough votes without him; then he wasn't with him anymore. But he also refused to campaign against the vote when he could have tried to convince the other senator from New York to vote against it, but he didn't. So where was Schumer? Where is Schumer on any issue? Fortunately for him, he has a lot of Wall Street money, but if he didn't I would certainly run against him.

As you mentioned, you were close with George W. Bush. But how is your relationship with Donald Trump?

We aren't close, although I've met him on several occasions in the past. I had a cordial relationship with him when he was married to Ivana because of some sort of artistic activities we were engaged in together. But I know him and I like him. I think he's a very congenial and convivial sort of fellow, but as far as being involved



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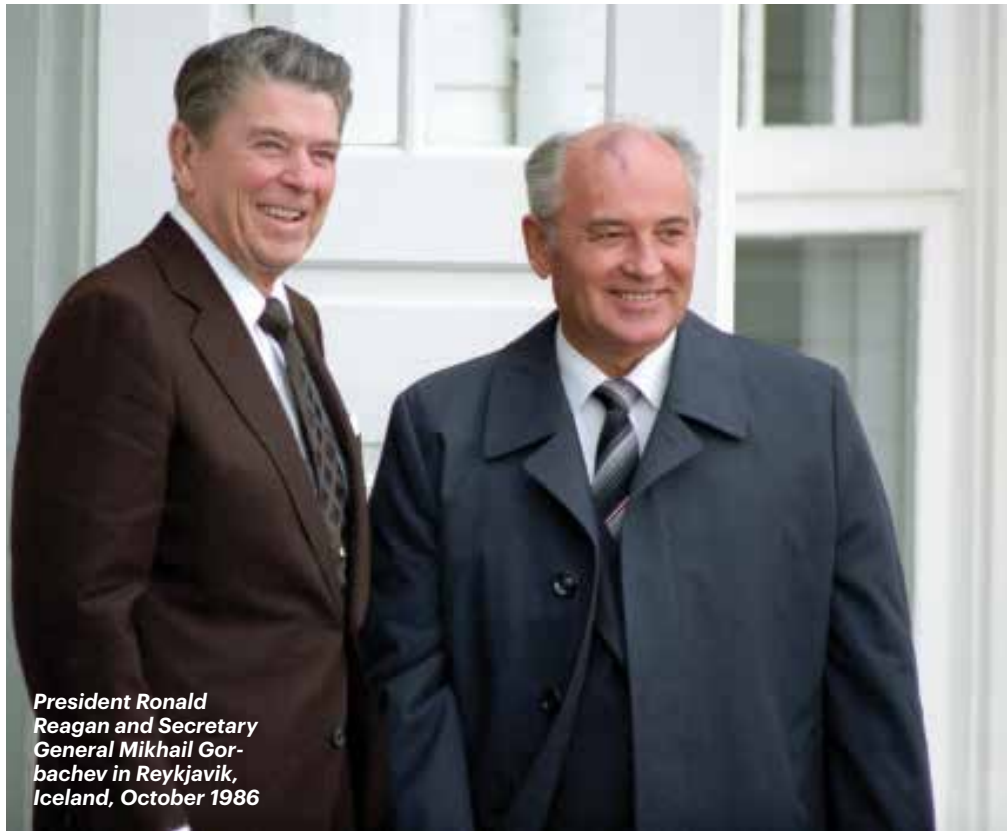
in policy it has always been indirect. The person we dealt with in regard to the Riyadh speech was Sean Spicer when he was in the White House.

What about some of the other Republican Presidents? For example, how was your relationship with George H.W. Bush?

I knew him fairly well and I had some amusing incidents with him. When George Bush Sr. was the vice president I was doing a television program called “Crossfire.” The program offered the voices of both sides; I was the voice of the right, and Tom Braden, who had been with the CIA, was the voice of the left. One time we had George Bush on, and he called me ahead of time to ask if I would be asking him a lot of tough questions. I said, “Mr. Vice President, I’m not there to ask tough or easy questions; I’m just there to ask questions. You can handle them any way you like and I’ll be respectful.” Braden didn’t always have that reputation, so I guess he was a little concerned. Towards the end of the program Braden and I would have a little colloquy articulating our positions. So that time Braden turned to me and said, “Herb, I guess you’ve found your presidential candidate for 1988.” Thinking that Bush had already left the studio I said, “Tom, I prefer a quarterback from Buffalo [Congressman Jack Kemp] rather than a first baseman from Yale [then-Vice President Bush].” He wasn’t too happy with me, to put it mildly. “How dare you?” he said. I wasn’t campaigning for Jack Kemp at that point; it was just an off-the-cuff comment, but it was a very awkward moment.

Yet you remained friends.

I don’t think he ever forgot that incident, because it came up a couple of times. The President I did get to know fairly well was Reagan. When he was re-elected in 1984 I was appointed to a committee made up of a number of prominent intellectuals who were interested in everything from



President Ronald Reagan and Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland, October 1986

tax policy to the anti-missile system. We met with the President on a regular basis and put together an important document for him, which ended up serving as the agenda for his administration.

I met with Reagan on a number of occasions in the Oval Office; he was among the most congenial people you will ever meet. One thing about him that is really quite telling is that he was a magnificent storyteller. I mention that because I don’t know if he was necessarily immersed in policy, but he could tell a story that could provide a context and understanding of the issues.

On one occasion I was in the room together with [Attorney General] Ed Meese and several others when the President went around the table asking each of us what we considered to be the most important issue to be addressed during his second administration. Each person gave a different answer. Then the President asked Pete du Pont, who was the governor of Delaware. By that time most of the key issues had already been mentioned, considering that there were 11 or 12 people present. Du Pont hesitated and

then finally said, “I have an idea. I think that the price of litigation is so high that it adds to the impediments that stand in the way of business transactions; 16% of all business transactions are related to legal fees.” I don’t know if that number was correct, but that was the number he used. It was obvious that du Pont was desperately trying to find something that hadn’t been touched on yet. The President turned to him and said, “Pete, I’m taking care of that problem.” We all leaned forward as he explained: “The Environmental Protection Agency has laboratories where rats are used for experimental purposes. In Washington, however, we find that there are a lot more lawyers than rats, so that’s why we use them. One of the reasons this is a good idea is that in the past we found that many of the laboratory assistants would develop a certain fondness for the rats. We know this will never happen with the lawyers.” It was terrific, completely disarming, and so Ronald Reaganesque! It was just perfect.

Almost every time I met with Reagan there was a story like that. He once gave

a speech about a book of mine and kept referring to me as “Mr. Rock and Roll.” In a previous life I’d been a singer. [Then Secretary of Education] Bill Bennett used to say, “Mr. President, I taught you everything you know about rock and roll, but Herb taught me everything that I know about it.”

You’re an interesting mixture for an intellectual. To put it another way, you’re a very colorful intellectual.

Thank you.

Most intellectuals wear tweed suits and are very strait-laced; they lack that other dimension. I believe you ran for mayor of New York, is that correct?

I ran for mayor in 1989, knowing full well that it was a quixotic activity. I loved being Don Quixote because I thought I could knock down a couple of windmills. I ran against two

I met with Reagan on a number of occasions in the Oval Office; he was among the most congenial people you will ever meet.

Republicans in the primary: Ronald Lauder, who had a lot of money, and Rudy Giuliani, who had name recognition and the support of the regular Republican machine. As a result of our debates—in which I did very well, if I say so myself—it became clear that the Republican Party didn’t have anyone to run for governor against Mario Cuomo. In fact, then-Chairman Pat Barrett said that anyone who ran against Cuomo would be a sacrificial lamb. I said I was willing to do it, because I believed that I could defeat Cuomo. Barrett then promised me the nomination. At that point

I went to see the Conservative Party leadership and asked for their endorsement as well, knowing that you cannot win as a Republican in New York without it. They agreed, even though I wasn’t a registered Conservative—I’m a registered Republican—and I thought I’d be able to run under both party lines.

Five minutes to midnight, Pierre Rinfret came to the Republican Party and said he would put several million dollars of his own money into the campaign if they pushed me aside and gave him the nomination. Always desperate for money, they were perfectly willing to do it and ran him as their candidate instead

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of me. Quite upset with the way this was handled, I decided that I would continue to run on the Conservative line, and I ended up generating more votes than any third-party candidate running for governor in history: more than Upton Sinclair in California when he ran as a Socialist, and more than Weicker in Connecticut and Ventura in Minnesota. Even though both of those guys won, they didn't generate as many votes as I did. There's also a story associated with that from a Jewish standpoint.

Please share it. I love stories.

All of the candidates would invariably go to see Rabbi Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, to receive a dollar bill. I also went to see the Rebbe and was taken to the head of the line. The Rebbe was a rather imposing figure with piercing eyes and a remarkable demeanor. I was very impressed by him. He said, "I know who you are." I said, "I'm very pleased by that." He then asked me if I knew what year it was. I knew he wasn't referring to 1990. He explained that in Chabad they referred to the years by acronyms, and according to the Jewish calendar it was the "year of miracles." "With all due respect," I said, "I don't understand." "You're the miracle," he replied. "Why?" I asked him. "Aside from my mother, no one thinks that I'm a miracle." "How many votes do you think you can get in a campaign like this?" he wanted to know. "I'm running as a third-party candidate," I told him. "The best a third-party candidate has done in a gubernatorial race in New York State is 310,000 votes." He said, "You're going to get many more votes than that."

A week later I appeared on "The McLaughlin Group." There were several so-called experts on the panel and they were talking about the gubernatorial campaign. They asked me how I thought I would do, and I answered okay. Then one of the panelists said, "I'm sure you know that the most a third-party candi-



The Rebbe had an imposing mien, piercing eyes and a very profound personality.

date has ever received is 310,000 votes. Do you think you can get that many?" "I'm going to get a lot more than that!" I replied. "I guess you're feeling very cocky," he remarked. "I'm not cocky at all; I'm actually rather humble. But I spoke to someone who speaks to a higher authority, and he made it clear that I'm going to do better than that." Fast-forward to Election Day, when I got nearly a million votes [827,000]. I did nearly three times as well

as anyone had done before. McLaughlin called me up immediately afterwards and wanted to know how I'd known that. "This is the Jewish year of miracles. Rabbi Schneerson told me that I was going to be a miracle and it happened." The reason I mention this story is that I also related it after Rabbi Schneerson's funeral.

What do you mean by that? No one delivered any eulogies at his funeral.

There were gatherings held on Long Island in two synagogues. I attended both of them and was asked to tell this story. It really was an amazing story. The Rebbe had an imposing mien, piercing eyes and a very profound personality. I'm sure he spoke to G-d just as I speak to G-d every day, but for me something is generally lost in the translation.

I understand that you were born in Brooklyn, not too far from the Rebbe's headquarters.

I was born in Brighton Beach. My parents were the usual lefties who gravitated

to Brighton Beach. My politics were those of someone whose father was a socialist. It wasn't until I was mugged by reality later in life that I started to understand how misguided this view was. I had a relative whom my father admired tremendously; his name was Meyer London. He was the first member of the Socialist Party ever elected to Congress, and was one of the founders of *The Forward*. The profound influence he had on my father was, of course, passed down to me. So I did originally share his left-wing views. But when Meyer London would have celebrated his 100th birthday I wrote a piece for *The Forward* entitled "The London Shande," because I obviously broke away from his views.

The Democrats were once the lovers of Israel, but that love has now been

transferred to the Republicans.

That's a very important point—an exceedingly important point! One of the reasons why I used to love the Democratic Party was that I cared so deeply about the State of Israel. And the Democrats represented the intellectual movement in American politics. I remember working as a speech writer for Senator Edmund Muskie, who was a Democrat from Maine. When he ran for President, he traveled the country giving speeches. One time he had to address the AFL-CIO [the largest federation of unions in America] in Madison Square Garden. He called me from somewhere in the Midwest and asked me to work on his speech. This was at a time when I was starting to have many reservations about what was happening in the labor movement, especially with the truckers' union. It made me very

uncomfortable. I went through some of my own thinking on the matter and wrote the speech. Afterwards, I called the senator and told him I wanted to meet him at LaGuardia Airport so he could review it, as I was concerned that it might have reflected my own views more than it did his. If there was something he didn't agree with, I wanted him to revise it.

When I got to the airport he was sitting in a limousine with his eyes half-closed. "Herb," he said, "I'm too tired to read it right now. I can't do it." "As long as you get a chance to go through it and make whatever changes you consider adequate I'll be very pleased." He then told me to meet him at the Waldorf Astoria, the hotel where he was staying, at four o'clock. When I got there I asked his chief of staff to wake him up so I could review the speech with him. He said, "I can't wake

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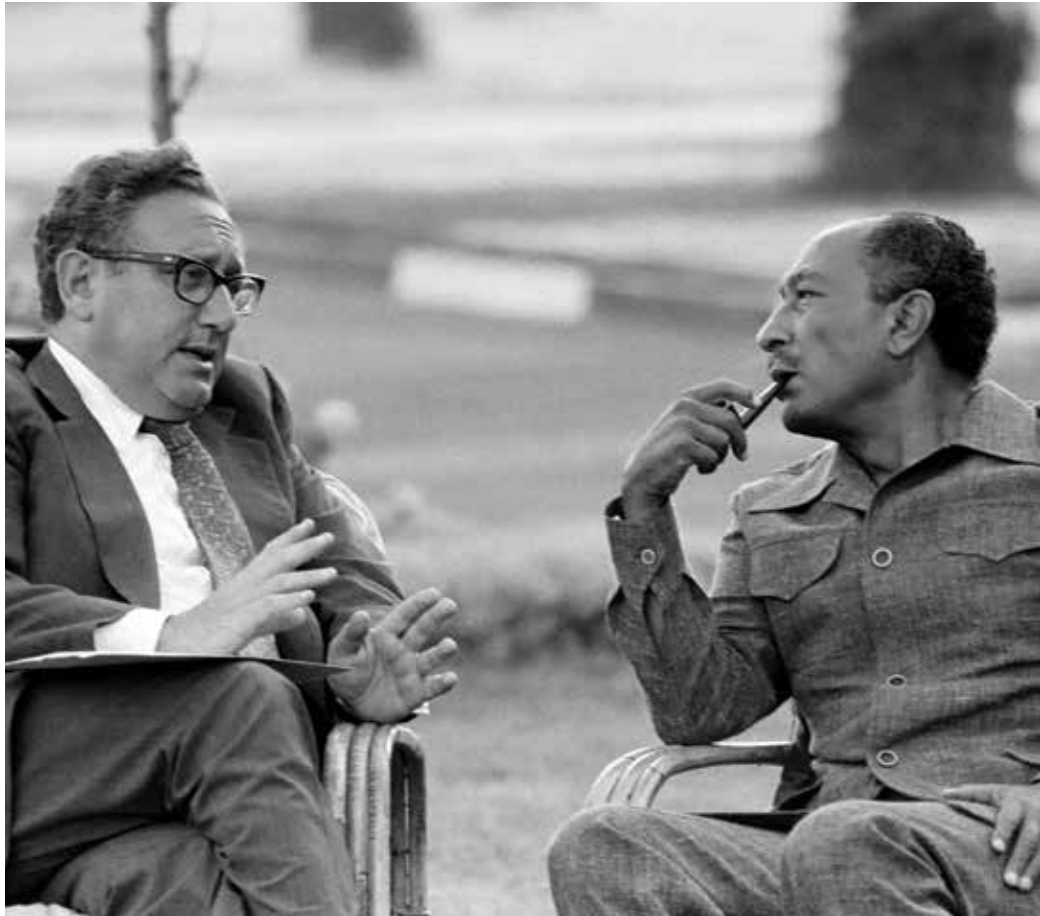
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him up—he's dead tired." "There are only three hours left," I explained. "I don't want him to give *my* speech; I want him to give *his* speech." The senator never ended up reading it ahead of time.

A few hours later, as we were traveling to Madison Square Garden he asked me, "Is it triple-spaced?" "Yes," I replied, "but I'm not sure that you're going to be happy with it." He gave the speech. It was called "Whither the Labor Movement," and it raised lots of questions about the labor movement while challenging the Democratic Party's association with it as a kind of twin arrangement. It also raised questions about the advances of technology and how they would affect the labor movement in the private sector. I could see that as Muskie was reading the speech he was turning red—and he had a volatile temper. He finished the speech to almost no applause. It was astonishing. There were 17,000 people in Madison Square Garden and nothing.

Afterwards, the senator saw me by the side of the stage and started to curse me, screaming at the top of his lungs and using every single word you can possibly imagine. I'd worked for him before and admired him in many ways, but I was appalled by how he was conducting himself. I just walked away, and he said, "You're fired, and I never want to see you again."

The following morning *The New York Times* ran an editorial saying they would be endorsing Muskie for President because he'd displayed so much courage in telling the labor movement what was wrong. Muskie called me to apologize and asked me to forgive him. I said, "Senator, you and I will never work together again, and that's the end of it." The story was included in a book called *The Senate That Nobody Knows* because it illustrates how policies are very often made in Washington, DC. Muskie would have never given that speech if he had seen it. It might have even been inappropriate for him to do so, but *The New*



Kissinger is remarkable. He speaks in parables and isn't always easy to understand.

York Times thought it was a great thing.

I can't let you go before you tell me about Dr. Henry Kissinger. You did have some kind of relationship with him, correct?

Yes. He's remarkable. He speaks in parables and isn't always easy to understand. Sometimes when I'm chatting with him I feel like I'm trying to nail a chocolate pie to

the wall; he's a tough guy to pin down. On the other hand, the guy is remarkable in his breadth of knowledge and understanding of international affairs. If you look at the last seven decades of this country's history and you had to cite one person who had the greatest influence on the direction of American foreign policy, you would have to say Henry Kissinger. He told me recently, "Every part of my body is failing. My heart is failing, my kidneys are failing, but my brain remains intact." And it's true. He's a remarkable phenomenon, and certainly someone who represents the best of a certain kind of intellectual tradition: a dispassionate, fair-minded understanding of how the world works, together with a kind of Metternichian view of how nations deal with each other, creating a kind of balance-of-power notion.

Sometimes the "balance of power" can be decidedly inappropriate, as it was when Reagan was President and he forced the Soviet Union to the negotiating table

where they had to make compromises. At the time Kissinger was wrong, but in so many other areas he was undoubtedly right. If you look at the role the Russians are playing with Putin's imperial goals, there is no question that he was correct.

Do you think that President Trump is wrong in his dismissal of Russia's involvement in American politics?

I don't want to see Putin or any other foreign government involved in American politics. However, the extent to which they are involved isn't unusual. When Teddy Kennedy wanted to run for President he even said that he hoped the Russians would help him out. Keep in mind that Hillary Clinton took a lot of money from the Chinese when she wanted to run for President. We should be careful about the role played by foreigners, but the real question is whether they're influential in the outcome, and the answer to that is no. I don't care what Mr. Assange or anyone else says; it didn't have any effect that is discernible to me.

Was Dr. Kissinger influential on your own way of thinking about foreign affairs?

Absolutely. I don't always agree with him, but you cannot question his insight. Kissinger wrote a book about China, which he refers to as the "Middle Kingdom," as they have historically referred to themselves, with all the nations surrounding it on the periphery. It's an analysis that I personally find very upsetting, but it's an insight that provides a very clear direction for American foreign policy. If, in fact, China does see itself this way and it has the potential for adventurism, then you have to create a condominium of nearby nations to form a defense arrangement to offset China's influence. This means that Japan, India, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea have to work together in some fashion, which they are doing now. These are the kinds of things that concern

us at the London Center.

The London Center consists of yourself and how many other intellectuals?

We have 28 senior fellows. Tony Shaffer and Eli Gold pretty much run the Washington office. I get to Washington every week or every other week. We run seminars there primarily for people on the Hill. One of the things I discovered when I was president of the Hudson Institute was that if you really want to influence decisions in DC you have to be on the Hill, because the staffers are the ones who make the decisions for the congressmen. The congressmen don't have time to read documents, so if they're going in for a vote they'll ask their 24-year-old staffers how they're voting. That's why you want to make sure to influence those kids.

Who pays for your services?

We have people from across the board. Some are in the private sector, some are in the corporate sector, and some are in major industries. I don't take one dime from any government. Not from the US, and not from Israel or any other foreign government. That's the policy of the London Center. All of the money comes from private sources and is intended for a single purpose: to formulate the best policies for the interests of the United States of America.

Do you do any private lobbying or advocacy?

No. We aren't an advocacy organization. We're a C3 rather than a C4 organization. C3s aren't permitted to engage in advocacy. I don't get up and wave a Republican banner even though I might do so as an individual; after all, Herb London is a citizen of the US, and I'm perfectly free to express my personal views. But as far as the London Center is concerned, we do not have an official view on political matters. ●

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