

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping->

We welcome your comments to this and any other *CIJR* publication. Please address your response to: rob@isranet.org /
Coles, Publications Chairman, *Canadian Institute for Jewish Research*, PO Box 175, Station H, Montreal QC H3G
2K7 - Tel: (514) 486-5544 - Fax:(514) 486-8284; E-mail: rob@isranet.org

UPDATE ON THE ABDUCTED ISRAELI TEENS: SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED BOYS ENTERS FIFTH DAY, IDF ARRESTS 41 (Nablus) —The IDF arrested some 40 Palestinian suspects, most of them Hamas members, in Nablus overnight Tuesday, expanding its operation to retrieve three abducted Israelis northwards from Hebron. On the fifth day of Operation Brothers's Keeper, a thousand soldiers launched raids in Nablus's Balata and Awarta areas. A total of 200 suspects have been arrested since the start of the operation. In addition to the arrests, soldiers on Tuesday seized handguns, explosives, and grenades. A security source said a large quantity of weapons was recovered during the arrests, describing the raids as a large-scale counter-terrorism clean-up operation. "Everything linked to Hamas is being targeted," the source stated, adding that this includes civilian organizations linked to the terrorist organizations, municipal figures, and the organization's military wing. ([Jerusalem Post](#), June 17, 2014)

Contents:

[The Men Who Sealed Iraq's Disaster With a Handshake: Fouad Ajami, Wall Street Journal, June 13, 2013](#)— Two men bear direct responsibility for the mayhem engulfing Iraq: Barack Obama and Nouri al-Maliki.

[Obama's Iraq: Max Boot, Weekly Standard, June, 2014](#)— Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, has long been hard for the central government to control because of its combustible mix of Arabs and Kurds.

[America's Middle East Delusions: Flynt Leverett & Hillary Mann Leverett, National Interest, June 15, 2014](#)— The explosive ascendance of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) underscores the thoroughgoing failure of America's political class to devise an effective and sustainable strategy for the U.S. after 9/11.

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping->

[War-Weariness As an Excuse: William Kristol, *Weekly Standard*, Mar. 24, 2014](#) [pp/](#)
[Are Americans today war-weary?](#)

[On Topic Links](#)

[On Decision to Leave No Troops in Iraq, Hillary Clinton Points to Bush: Patrick Goodenough, *CNS News*, June 12, 2014](#)

[The Speech Obama Should Have Given About Iraq: Michael Goodwin, *New York Post*, June 15, 2014](#)

[Iraq: Barack Obama’s Self-Regarding Goodness is Bad News For the Rest of Us: Charles Moore, *Daily Telegraph*, June 13, 2013](#)

[Obama Fiddles While the World Burns: Shmuley Boteach, *Algemeiner*, June 16, 2014](#)

THE MEN WHO SEALED IRAQ'S DISASTER WITH A HANDSHAKE

Fouad Ajami

[Wall Street Journal](#), June 13, 2014

Two men bear direct responsibility for the mayhem engulfing Iraq: Barack Obama and Nouri al-Maliki. The U.S. president and Iraqi prime minister stood shoulder to shoulder in a White House ceremony in December 2011 proclaiming victory. Mr. Obama was fulfilling a campaign pledge to end the Iraq war. There was a utopian tone to his pronouncement, suggesting that the conflicts that had been endemic to that region would be brought to an end. As for Mr. Maliki, there was the heady satisfaction, in his estimation, that Iraq would be sovereign and intact under his dominion. In truth, Iraq's new Shiite prime minister was trading American tutelage

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

[https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping)

[ooms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping)

for Iranian hegemony. Thus the claim that Iraq was a fully sovereign country was an idle boast. Around the Maliki regime swirled mightier, more sinister players. In addition to Iran's penetration of Iraqi strategic and political life, there was Baghdad's unholy alliance with the brutal Assad regime in Syria, whose members belong to an Alawite Shiite sect and were taking on a largely Sunni rebellion. If Bashar Assad were to fall, Mr. Maliki feared, the Sunnis of Iraq would rise up next.

Now, even as Assad clings to power in Damascus, Iraq's Sunnis have risen up and joined forces with the murderous, al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), which controls much of northern Syria and the Iraqi cities of Fallujah, Mosul and Tikrit. ISIS marauders are now marching on the Shiite holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, and Baghdad itself has become a target. In a dire sectarian development on Friday, Iraq's leading Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, called on his followers to take up arms against ISIS and other Sunni insurgents in defense of the Baghdad government. This is no ordinary cleric playing with fire. For a decade, Ayatollah Sistani stayed on the side of order and social peace. Indeed, at the height of Iraq's sectarian troubles in 2006-07, President George W. Bush gave the ayatollah credit for keeping the lid on that volcano. Now even that barrier to sectarian violence has been lifted. This sad state of affairs was in no way preordained. In December 2011, Mr. Obama stood with Mr. Maliki and boasted that "in the coming years, it's estimated that Iraq's economy will grow even faster than China's or India's." But the negligence of these two men—most notably in their failure to successfully negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement that would have maintained an adequate U.S. military presence in Iraq—has resulted in the current descent into sectarian civil war.

There was, not so long ago, a way for Mr. Maliki to avoid all this: the creation of a genuine political coalition, making good on his promise that the Kurds in the north and the Sunnis throughout the country would be full partners in the Baghdad government. Instead, the Shiite prime minister set out to subjugate the Sunnis and to marginalize the Kurds. There was, from the start, no chance that this would succeed. For their part, the Sunni Arabs of Iraq were possessed of a sense of political mastery of their own. After all, this was a community that had ruled Baghdad for a millennium. Why should a community that had known such great power accept sudden marginality?

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A "SAVIOR" — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS' STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF "P.P."**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-end-pp/>

As for the Kurds, they had conquered a history of defeat and persecution and built a political enterprise of their own—a viable military institution, a thriving economy and a sense of genuine national pride. The Kurds were willing to accept the federalism promised them in the New Iraq. But that promise rested, above all else, on the willingness on the part of Baghdad to honor a revenue-sharing system that had decreed a fair allocation of the country's oil income. This, Baghdad would not do. The Kurds were made to feel like beggars at the Maliki table. Sadly, the Obama administration accepted this false federalism and its façade. Instead of aiding the cause of a reasonable Kurdistan, the administration sided with Baghdad at every turn. In the oil game involving Baghdad, Irbil, the Turks and the international oil companies, the Obama White House and State Department could always be found standing with the Maliki government. With ISIS now reigning triumphant in Fallujah, in the oil-refinery town of Baiji, and, catastrophically, in Mosul, the Obama administration cannot plead innocence. Mosul is particularly explosive. It sits astride the world between Syria and Iraq and is economically and culturally intertwined with the Syrian territories. This has always been Mosul's reality. There was no chance that a war would rage on either side of Mosul without it spreading next door. The Obama administration's vanishing "red lines" and utter abdication in Syria were bound to compound Iraq's troubles.

Grant Mr. Maliki the harvest of his sectarian bigotry. He has ridden that sectarianism to nearly a decade in power. Mr. Obama's follies are of a different kind. They're sins born of ignorance. He was eager to give up the gains the U.S. military and the Bush administration had secured in Iraq. Nor did he possess the generosity of spirit to give his predecessors the credit they deserved for what they had done in that treacherous landscape. As he headed for the exits in December 2011, Mr. Obama described Mr. Maliki as "the elected leader of a sovereign, self-reliant and democratic Iraq." One suspects that Mr. Obama knew better. The Iraqi prime minister had already shown marked authoritarian tendencies, and there were many anxieties about him among the Sunnis and Kurds. Those communities knew their man, while Mr. Obama chose to look the other way. Today, with his unwillingness to use U.S. military force to save Syrian children or even to pull Iraq back from the brink of civil war, the erstwhile leader of the Free World is choosing, yet again, to look the other way.

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-end-pp/>

[Contents](#)



OBAMA’S IRAQ

Max Boot

[Weekly Standard](#), June, 2014

Mosul, Iraq’s second-largest city, has long been hard for the central government to control because of its combustible mix of Arabs and Kurds. The first time I visited Mosul was in August 2003 when a tenuous calm was maintained by the 101st Airborne Division. Its commander, a then-obscure two-star general named David Petraeus, had on his own initiative opened the Syrian border to trade, struck deals with Syria and Turkey to provide badly needed electricity, restored telephone service, and held elections to elect local leaders. Along the way he also managed to kill Saddam Hussein’s poisonous offspring Uday and Qusay.

This kept militants at bay, but they returned with a vengeance after the 101st pulled out in 2004, to be replaced by a smaller American unit whose officers were less attuned to the demands of civic action. Mosul became a hotbed of Saddamist and Islamist militants, as I saw for myself in February 2008 when, during another visit, the U.S. Army convoy in which I was riding was hit by a “complex ambush”: The Humvee in front of mine hit a bomb concealed in a big puddle, and insurgents opened machine gun fire from the left. Luckily no one in our unit was hurt, but a bystander had his arm sliced off by a flying piece of the Humvee’s engine. Mosul was the last major city to be pacified by the successful “surge.” It took until at least 2010 before it was secure. But now that achievement has been undone. Black-clad fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), as Al Qaeda in Iraq has rebranded itself, stormed into Mosul last week and seized control. Dispirited Iraqi soldiers ran away rather than fight. Many were so eager to escape that their discarded uniforms littered the streets. ISIS freed more than 2,000 of its fighters from prisons and seized copious stocks of money, ammunition, and

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

[https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-weapons—many-of-the-latter-provided-by-the-United-States-to-Iraqi-forces.)

weapons—many of the latter provided by the United States to Iraqi forces. end-pp/

This was only the latest and most alarming advance for this extremist group, which has risen out of its grave to display dismaying strength in recent years. In January, ISIS seized Fallujah and holds it still—a loss that, like Mosul, is particularly painful to American veterans who sacrificed so much to wrest control of those cities from militants. Following up on their success in Mosul, ISIS fighters advanced south to seize, at least temporarily, Tikrit, Saddam -Husseins’ hometown, and Baiji, home to Iraq’s largest oil refinery, which supplies Baghdad with much of its electricity. Their next targets are certain to be Baqubah and Baghdad. In the capital, ISIS has already inflicted devastating casualties with a series of car bombings. Iraq Body Count calculates that some 9,500 people were killed in Iraq last year, the highest total since 2008. Worse is surely yet to come as Shiite militant organizations such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq and Kataib Hezbollah respond to Sunni atrocities with atrocities of their own.

This is not just a problem for Iraq. ISIS, as the name implies, has spread across the border into Syria, where it has been showing increasing strength amid the chaos of the Syrian civil war, in no small part because the United States has done so little to aid the non-jihadist opposition to Bashar al-Assad. ISIS is well on its way to carving out a fundamentalist caliphate that stretches from Aleppo in northern Syria to Mosul in northern Iraq. The post-World War I borders of the Middle East seem to be unraveling. Syria is being split into two entities, one controlled by Sunni Islamists, the other by Hezbollah and the Iranian Quds Force and their Alawite proxies. Iraq is being split into three, with a prosperous and stable Kurdish state, a fundamentalist Sunni Triangle state controlled by ISIS, and the Shiite portions of the country under the sway of militants backed by Iran. Iran is directly involved in the fighting in both countries: It has already sent Quds Force troops to Syria and now reportedly to Iraq as well. The only thing that remains to be determined is whether Shiite or Sunni extremists will control the capital—the new battle for Baghdad, which has already begun, is likely to be even bloodier than the previous installment from 2003 to 2008.

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

[https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping)

It is hard to exaggerate how much of a disaster this is, not only for Syria and Iraq and their neighbors, but for the United States. Rising oil prices (crude oil rose to over \$112 a barrel last week), which could torpedo a weak economic recovery, are just the start of it. Senior intelligence officials have testified recently that they fear Syria could become a launching ground for attacks against the United States. Similar concerns now must extend to Iraq. Certainly, the track record of Islamist militants suggests that whenever they control a piece of terrain—whether Afghanistan before 2001 or Mali in 2013—they immediately set up training camps for foreign jihadists, some of whom then filter back to their home countries to commit atrocities. At the least, neighboring states such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia will be destabilized by the growing strength of ISIS; at the worst, the American homeland and Americans overseas will be threatened.

How did this disaster come about and what can be done about it? Critics of the Iraq war affix blame to President George W. Bush’s decision to invade in 2003. But there is no guarantee that, even absent American intervention, Saddam Hussein would have had any more luck staying in power than other Arab despots. A civil war might well have broken out in Iraq anyway, as has been the case in Syria and Libya. It is true that Bush’s mismanagement from 2003 to 2007 aggravated the situation, especially his foolish decisions to disband the Iraqi Army without sending enough U.S. troops to fill the vacuum and to purge Baathists from the government in a process that was hijacked by Shiite militants such as Ahmad Chalabi. This created the lawless conditions out of which both Sunni and Shiite extremists arose. The “surge,” however, turned the tide and created an opening for a more stable and democratic Iraq. Al Qaeda in Iraq was decimated in 2007-08. As a result Shiite militias such as Muktada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army lost their rationale of protecting Shiites from Sunni terrorism. Violence fell by more than 90 percent, and Iraqi politics began to function. But that tenuous calm started to unravel the minute that U.S. troops pulled out at the end of 2011. Freed of effective American oversight, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki gave full vent to his Shiite sectarian tendencies by persecuting senior Sunni politicians and many of the Sunni commanders who, as part of the American-backed Sons of Iraq, had once fought against al Qaeda...

[To Read the Full Article Click the Following [Link](#)—Ed.]

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-end-pp/>

[Contents](#)



AMERICA'S MIDDLE EAST DELUSIONS

Flynt Leverett & Hillary Mann Leverett

[National Interest](#), June 15, 2014

The explosive ascendance of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) underscores the thoroughgoing failure of America’s political class to devise an effective and sustainable strategy for the United States after 9/11. The failure cuts across Democratic and Republican administrations, with the most self-damaging aspects of each administration’s policies roundly endorsed by the opposing party in Congress. Both sides deny responsibility for unfolding catastrophe in Iraq: Republicans criticize Obama’s marginal modulations of Bush’s approach to the Middle East while Democrats blame Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. (Republicans also criticize Maliki, but not so much that it might exculpate Obama.) Foreign policy elites also ignore a more urgent and ongoing flaw in America’s post-9/11 Middle East policy that is directly linked to Iraq’s current crisis—Washington’s recurrent partnership with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab states to arm, fund, and train Sunni militias.

America’s turn to *jihadi* proxies did not start with Bush’s strategic malpractice in Iraq. It was born on July 3, 1979, when President Carter signed the first directive to arm jihadists in Afghanistan, before Soviet forces invaded the country. For U.S. policymakers, collaborating with Riyadh to launch transnational jihad in Afghanistan seemed a clever way to undermine the Soviet Union—by goading it into a draining occupation of Afghanistan, which Carter’s national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, hoped to make Moscow’s Vietnam. Ultimately, Red Army garrisoning of Afghanistan contributed only marginally (if at all) to the Soviet Union’s dissolution. But U.S. support for the *mujahideen* and cooperation with Riyadh contributed critically to al-Qa’ida, the Taliban, and 9/11—which opened the door for Republican neoconservatives and Democratic fellow travelers to unite behind attacking Iraq.

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-end-pp/>

America’s invasion-cum-occupation of Iraq was not just badly implemented, as many of its non-Republican champions self-servingly lament; it was an irredeemably bad idea from the start. Certainly, U.S. action destroyed the Iraqi state. But, just as fatefully, the political displacement of Iraqi Sunnis by decisively larger Shi’a and Kurdish communities attracted powerful patrons—e.g., Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab states—determined to help Iraqi Sunnis, including segments of Saddam’s disbanded army, fight to regain a disproportionate share of political power. Such were the roots of the insurgency that erupted within months of the U.S. invasion in 2003—stoked by an externally-facilitated influx of non-Iraqi Sunni fighters (including a substantial number from neighboring Syria), many coalescing into the Jordanian Abu Musab az-Zarqawi’s nascent Al-Qa’ida in Iraq.

Increasingly desperate to coopt a critical mass of these fighters, Bush disregarded 9/11’s lessons and chose to gamble on arming and training 80,000 Iraqi Sunni “tribesmen” as part of General David Petraeus’ 2007-2008 “surge.” Bush turned to Sunni proxies in the vain hope of eliciting Sunni acquiescence to a post-Saddam order inevitably dominated by Shi’a Islamist and Kurdish parties representing the overwhelming bulk of Iraqis. Washington also wanted to check what it considered the unacceptable growth of Iranian influence in Iraq (Tehran had supported Iraq’s leading Shi’a Islamist and Kurdish parties in exile for twenty years) and regionally. The surge temporarily paid off enough Sunni fighters to let American commanders and politicians claim that violence was coming down. But it also gave Iraqi Sunnis greater material and organizational wherewithal with which—once U.S. forces were gone—to attack what were bound to be non-Sunni-dominated central governments...

U.S.-armed Sunnis needed a catalyst for resurgence, however. In the first two years of Obama’s presidency, they grudgingly co-existed with central governments grounded in coalitions of Shi’a Islamist and Kurdish parties. The Islamic State of Iraq—formed in 2006 from Zarqawi’s Al-Qai’da in Iraq—seemed on the wane. Then, in spring 2011, Obama decided to support largely Sunni militias and forces willing to collaborate with them in trying to overthrow incumbent leaders in Libya and Syria. This was motivated partly by dysfunctional aspects of Washington’s

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l>

[ooms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l)

[strategic co-dependency with Riyadh, and partly by a longstanding delusion that](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l)
America could orchestrate a de facto axis of Saudi Arabia and other “moderate”
Sunni states with Israel to check Iran’s rise and bolster a pro-U.S. regional order
under threat from the Arab Awakening. But, by reigniting the flames of Sunni
militancy, the decision proved profoundly inimical to American interests...

[To Read the Full Article Click the Following [Link](#)—Ed.]

[Contents](#)



WAR-WEARINESS AS AN EXCUSE

William Kristol

[Weekly Standard](#), Mar 24, 2014

Are Americans today war-weary? Sure. The Iraq and Afghanistan wars have been frustrating and tiring. Are Americans today unusually war-weary? No. They were wearier after the much larger and even more frustrating conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. And even though the two world wars of the last century had more satisfactory outcomes, their magnitude was such that they couldn’t help but induce a significant sense of war-weariness. And history shows that they did. So American war-weariness isn’t new. Using it as an excuse to avoid maintaining our defenses or shouldering our responsibilities isn’t new, either. But that doesn’t make it admirable.

The March 5 *Wall Street Journal* featured a letter from Heidi Szrom of Valparaiso, Indiana. She was responding to an earlier letter defending President Obama’s foreign policies against a powerful critique in the *Journal* by the historian Niall Ferguson (“America’s Global Retreat”). The first letter writer noted Ferguson’s statement that more people may have died violent deaths in the Greater Middle East in the Obama years than under Bush, but excused Obama: “True, but it is also equally certain that fewer Americans have died violent deaths in the Greater Middle East during this presidency than during the previous one, and this is what

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l>

ooms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-

matters more now to a war-weary American public.”

end-pp/

To which Ms. Szrom responded: “According to pundits, the president and letter writers, America is “war weary.” Every time I hear this, I wonder: Did you serve? Did you volunteer to fight oppression in foreign lands? Did your son or brother or husband? If so, then I understand and sympathize with your complaint . . . unlike most of those who utter this shopworn phrase. Perhaps the country’s weariness stems from a reluctance to face unpleasant truths—one of which is that power, like nature, abhors a vacuum. . . . History tells us it will only be a temporary reprieve. Our current defense cuts ensure that we will be woefully unprepared to face the next test. We are so weary that we are falling asleep.”

Well said. If only Republican elected officials were half as clear-minded and nearly as courageous as Ms. Szrom in taking on the claim that we all need to defer to, to bow down to, our own war-weariness. In fact, the idol of war-weariness can be challenged. A war-weary public can be awakened and rallied. Indeed, events are right now doing the awakening. All that’s needed is the rallying. And the turnaround can be fast. Only 5 years after the end of the Vietnam war, and 15 years after our involvement there began in a big way, Ronald Reagan ran against both Democratic dovishness and Republican détente. He proposed confronting the Soviet Union and rebuilding our military. It was said that the country was too war-weary, that it was too soon after Vietnam, for Reagan’s stern and challenging message. Yet Reagan won the election in 1980. And by 1990 an awakened America had won the Cold War.

The next president will be elected in 2016, 15 years after 9/11 and 5 years after our abandonment of Iraq and the beginning of the drawdown in Afghanistan. Pundits will say that it would be politically foolish to try to awaken Americans rather than cater to their alleged war-weariness. We can’t prove them wrong. Perhaps it would be easier for a Republican to win in 2016 running after the fashion of Warren Gamaliel Harding in 1920 rather than that of Ronald Wilson Reagan in 1980. But what would such a victory be worth? The term “war-weary” (actually “war-wearied”) may have first appeared in Shakespeare. In Henry VI,

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l>

[ooms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l)

[Part 1 \(Act IV, Scene 4\), the Earl of Somerset, for reasons of domestic political calculation, resists the entreaty of Sir William Lucy to go to the aid of his fellow English lord, “the over-daring Talbot,”](https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-l)

*Who, ring’d about with bold adversity//Cries out for noble York and Somerset//To
beat assailing death from his weak legions: And whiles the honourable captain
there//Drops bloody sweat from his war-wearied limbs, And, in advantage
lingering, looks for rescue, You, his false hopes, the trust of England’s honour,*

*Keep off aloof with worthless emulation...Somerset fails to rescue Talbot, but
grandly states: If he be dead, brave Talbot, then adieu! To which Lucy replies: His
fame lives in the world, his shame in you.*

Can Republicans do no better than shamefully to emulate Somerset and Obama (“I assure you nobody ends up being more war-weary than me”)? Will no brave leader step forward to honorably awaken us from our unworthy sleep?

On Topic

[On Decision to Leave No Troops in Iraq, Hillary Clinton Points to Bush: Patrick Goodenough, CNS News, June 12, 2014](#)

[The Speech Obama Should Have Given About Iraq: Michael Goodwin, New York Post, June 15, 2014](#)

[Iraq: Barack Obama’s Self-Regarding Goodness is Bad News For the Rest of Us: Charles Moore, Daily Telegraph, June 13, 2013](#)

[Obama Fiddles While the World Burns: Shmuley Boteach, Algemeiner, June 16, 2014](#)

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping-end-pp/>



[Contents:](#)

Visit CIJR’s Bi-Weekly Webzine: [Israzine.](#)

CIJR’s ISRANET Daily Briefing is available by e-mail.

Please urge colleagues, friends, and family to visit our website for more information on our ISRANET series.

To join our distribution list, or to unsubscribe, visit us at <http://www.isranet.org/>.

The ISRANET Daily Briefing is a service of CIJR. We hope that you find it useful and that you will support it and our pro-Israel educational work by forwarding a minimum \$90.00 tax-deductible contribution [please send a cheque or

**AS O. FIDDLES: AS IRAQ CIVIL WAR LOOMS, IRAN IS
SUDDENLY A “SAVIOR” — IN ISRAEL, HAMAS’ STUDENT
KIDNAPPING IS END OF “P.P.”**

isranet-publications

Isranet Daily Briefing, June 17, 2014

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/o-fiddles-iraq-civil-war-looms-iran-suddenly-savior-israel-hamas-student-kidnapping->

VISA/MasterCard information to CIJR (see cover page for address)]. All donations include a membership-subscription to our respected quarterly *ISRAFAX* print magazine, which will be mailed to your home.

CIJR’s ISRANET Daily Briefing attempts to convey a wide variety of opinions on Israel, the Middle East and the Jewish world for its readers’ educational and research purposes. Reprinted articles and documents express the opinions of their authors, and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the *Canadian Institute for Jewish Research*.



Rob Coles, Publications Chairman, *Canadian Institute for Jewish Research/ L'institut Canadien de recherches sur le Judaïsme*, www.isranet.org

Tel: (514) 486-5544 - Fax:(514) 486-8284 ; ber@isranet.org