

**MAJORITY IN SOLD-OUT INTELLIGENCE SQUARED U.S. AUDIENCE
SIDES WITH OPPOSITION AFTER ILLUMINATING DEBATE
ON OBAMA FOREIGN POLICY**

58 Percent Reject the Motion “Obama’s Foreign Policy Spells America’s Decline”

NEW YORK – May 12, 2010 –Intelligence Squared U.S. (IQ2US), the Oxford-style debate series, an initiative of The Rosenkranz Foundation, presented its final debate of the spring 2010 season with a highly focused consideration of America’s place in the world with President Obama at the helm.

The sold-out crowd in New York heard four experts, each with strong policy and intellectual credentials, debate the motion “*Obama’s Foreign Policy Spells America’s Decline.*” Prior to the debate, 23% of the audience was in favor of the motion, 45 % were against it and 32% were undecided.

When it was over, the side arguing against the motion carried the day with 34% of the audience supporting the motion, 58% rejecting it and a remaining 8% were undecided.

The evening’s winning team, which debated against the motion included **Bernard-Henri Lévy**, the influential French philosopher and writer and **Wesley Clark**, retired General of the United States Army and a 2004 Candidate for President.

Mort Zuckerman, the chairman and editor-in-chief of *U.S. News & World Report* and the publisher of *The New York Daily News* and **Dan Senor**, an adjunct senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and a founding partner of Rosemont Capital argued for the motion.

Among the debate’s highlights:

“I read that Barack Obama is getting rid of this old American creed which is exceptionalism. And why? Because he apologized for Abu Ghraib, for Guantanamo, for torture and so on? I believe the contrary. I believe that only dictators never apologize. And I believe that when you apologize, it means that you believe in your creed, that you believe in your values, and you believe in their superiority. Barack Obama more than ever believed on the house shining on the hill.” – **Bernard-Henri Lévy**

“Most countries distrust the United States less than they distrust one another. So they look for Washington -- to Washington for leadership. And they look for Washington to support them against regional opponents and other threats. They know they cannot solve most of these problems without the United States. And they need our leadership in the most severe and serious way. Now, my sense, however, is that President Obama on this level is uncomfortable with this role for the United States. He seems to be uncomfortable in leading a lot of other nations. And almost feels that there is nothing special about America's role in the world. What you have, it seems to me, is too much well intentioned belief in the power of rhetoric, good will, and too little appreciation of reality.” – **Mort Zuckerman**

“... Speeches and personal biography and personal charisma are wonderful, they’re nice; I think people around the world like us. I think they’re just limited commodities in foreign affairs. Nations don’t make major decisions about their security because President Obama gives a nice speech. They do what’s in their interests...the ultimate measure is Iran’s about the build a nuclear bomb so what have his speeches done to arrest that progress?” – **Dan Senor**

“...I think it's very interesting that you want to ask what's the benefit of a speech because one of the things that we should be talking about is concrete policies and specific actions. One of the things we did learn during the previous administration was that harsh rhetoric doesn't help. Strong bull-headed rhetoric appeals to Americans, but it doesn't change foreign affairs.” – **Wesley Clark**

John Donovan, correspondent for ABC News *Nightline*, is moderator of IQ2US debates. Dana Wolfe is the executive producer. Debates are aired nationally on more than 220 NPR stations and broadcast internationally by the Bloomberg Television network.

To view transcripts and videos, download audio or video clips or learn more about Intelligence Squared U.S. please visit: <http://www.intelligencesquaredus.org>.

ABOUT INTELLIGENCE SQUARED U.S.

Launched in September 2006, the goal of Intelligence Squared U.S., an initiative of the Rosenkranz Foundation, is to raise the level of public discourse and promote a realization that, on contentious issues, those who challenge the conventional wisdom have intellectually respectable and often persuasive viewpoints. We encourage citizens to “Think Twice” about their opinions and participate in the conversation, and we provide a forum for balanced discussion that transcends emotion and ideology. Through an annual series of 10 live Oxford-style debates, IQ2US brings together experts and audience around public policy and cultural issues.

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