

Intelligence Squared U.S.
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February 9, 2010

The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel

For the motion: Roger Cohen, Rashid Khalidi
Against the motion: Stuart Eizenstat, Itamar Rabinovich
Moderator: John Donovan

RESULTS

Before the debate:	After the debate:
33% FOR	49% FOR
42% AGAINST	47% AGAINST
25% UNDECIDED	4% UNDECIDED

John Donovan: I'd like to welcome Robert Rosenkranz, CEO of Intelligence Squared U.S..

Robert Rosenkranz: Well thank you so much for joining us tonight. When these debates started four years ago, our first resolution was, "We must tolerate a nuclear Iran."

Well this could well be the year that Iran gets the bomb. And our government's actions suggest that it is voting for the motion. Israel on the other hand, might quite rationally decide it cannot tolerate a nuclear Iran and take military action to prevent it. This is the perhaps the most dramatic and consequential way U.S. and Israeli policy may diverge. But there are many others. Israel's priority is its own security, full stop.

The U.S. is committed to Israeli security, but it has many conflicting priorities, keeping control of Middle East oil out of the hands of Jihadi extremists for one, encouraging the recycling of petro dollars into our vulnerable economy, strengthening ties with moderate Arab regimes, avoiding nuclear proliferation in the region. U.S. objectives might well be advanced by Israeli-Palestinian or Israeli-Syrian accords on terms Israel doesn't like very much at all.

On the other hand, the special relationship has deepened profound roots. Some is value-driven, reverends for the Holy Land by American Jews and Christians alike, respect for Israel's democratic institutions. But some is highly strategic. Israel is our closest friend and ally in the Middle East. It has, by far, the greatest military capability in the region, and is a major source of intelligence.

And getting back to a nuclear Iran, Israel might well be our best shield. Israel did the U.S., in the region, a favor, I would argue, by bombing the Syrian reactor. Maybe it will do the dirty work again so we don't have to tolerate a nuclear Iran. Against this complex backdrop, can we say that by holding hands with Israel, America is shooting itself in the foot? Should America step back from its special relationship? Tonight's debate is to provide some light on this vital issue, and it will surely provide lots of heat. So it's my pleasure at this point to turn the proceedings over to

our moderator John Donovan and the stellar group of panelists who are going to debate this resolution. Thank you.

John Donovan: Thank you. I'd just like to invite one more round of applause for the gentleman who makes all of these debates possible, Robert Rosenkranz.

Welcome, everyone, to another debate from Intelligence Squared U.S.. I'm John Donovan of ABC News. And once again, it's my honor to serve as moderator. As the floor debaters you see sharing the stage with me here at the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts at New York University. Four debaters, two at each table, are debating this motion, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel." And I want to point out, this is a debate. It's not a panel discussion. It is not a seminar. This is a debate. It's a contest, with winners and losers. And you in our audience have the special role of choosing our winners. You are the judges in this debate. And by the time the evening has ended, you will have voted twice, once before and once after the debate on whether you agree or disagree with the motion, especially after what you've heard. And the team that has changed the most minds at the end of the debate will be declared our winner. So let's go on to our first round of voting. Once again, the keypads to your seats are your means to do that. If you agree with our motion, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel", you're to push number one. If you disagree, a "No" is number two. If at this point, you're undecided that's number three. You can ignore the other numbers. And if you make a mistake, just correct it and the system will record your last entered number. So we'll have the results of that vote quite shortly. We go in three rounds. We have opening statements of approximately seven minutes each. Then we go on to a middle section where the debaters talk directly to one another, prompted also by questions from myself and from you in the audience. And then at the end of the evening, each team has two minutes of closing remarks. On to round one then, let the debate begin. Our first debater, for the motion, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel", is Roger Cohen who will make his way to his lectern. Roger is a former foreign editor of The New York Times, a journalist who has traveled the world, who has himself the interesting story, you are Cohen, because when your dad left South Africa and moved to the UK, he was advised that it will be a good idea to change his name from Cohen. And his answer was -

Roger Cohen: His answer was - he suggested maybe Einstein. He stuck with Cohen and it worked.

John Donovan: That's why tonight, I brought you Cohen, arguing for the motion, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel."

Roger Cohen: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. In life, when we fail, we call it stupidity to burrow deeper into failure. Measured by any standard, American policy toward Israel has failed over the past couple of decades. We are no closer to any kind of peace. Israelis and Palestinians today stand further apart than ever. They are estranged. They are mistrustful. They are antagonistic. They can scarcely even imagine peace. We will therefore submit to you tonight that rather than burrowing deeper into failure, and so jeopardizing American interest, the United States should reconsider its ties with Israel. It should step back from its special relationship in favor of a normal relationship. Now a normal relationship between allies, and the United States and Israel must remain firm allies, are often marked by differences. With France, with Japan, with Germany, with Turkey, important allies all, America has regular and often open disagreements. What makes America's relationship with Israel is its uncritical nature, even when U.S. interests are being hurt. What also makes the relationship special is the incredible largess that the United States shows towards Israel, over the past decade, \$28.9 billion in economic aid. And on top of

that, another \$30 billion in military aid, that's almost \$60 billion. That's 10 times the GNP of Haiti that is being gifted to a small country. Now, I ask you, to what end is this money being used. Ladies and gentlemen, we would submit that it ends often inimical to the America interest. Take the ongoing Israeli settlement program in the West Bank, at a cost of about \$100 billion, this enterprise has grown the number of settlers in the West Bank from about 140,000 in 1996, to about 300,000 today. If you add the roughly 150,000 Israeli's in East Jerusalem, you get to a number of 450,000 Israelis beyond the 1997 border. That's not all. Money has poured into a repressive apparatus involving settler-only highways, reserved military areas, a separation or security barrier. The Israelis call it "separation wall", "hated separated wall" the Palestinians call it, a barrier that burrows into the West Bank and annexes 10% of the land. What's the result of this? Well the result is an isolated, fragmented, atomized, fractured, humiliated Palestinian presence that simply makes a nonsense, at first, of the notion of "Two States for Two Peoples". What I observe there on my visits to the West Bank amounts to a kind of primer in colonialism. Imagine, Israelis in their fast cars, Blackberry-ing away, booming down these super highways, while Palestinians on their donkey carts make their way on dirt tracks, if they can get there, to their orchards. This is a primer in colonialism, much more than it resembles a nascent Palestinian state. Yet, "Two States for Two Peoples" is the declared U.S. objective. In effect, the United States is bankrolling the very Israeli policies that are dashing its own aims and the hopes for Oslo by making two states almost unimaginable. Does this make sense? Is that clever? I don't think so. And if you don't think so, ladies and gentlemen, you should vote for the proposition tonight. Now, the United States has raised its voice occasionally. Jim Baker, for example, Secretary of State in '89, said, "Foreswear annexation. Stop settlement activity."

Now fast forward two decades to Barack Obama, in Cairo, two decades in several hundred thousand settlers, he said, "The United States does not accept legitimacy of the continued Israeli settlements." And what did Prime Minister Netanyahu do two weeks ago, planted settlings in various settlements, and they are part - and said, "They are part of Israel for all eternity." Now in a normal relationship, there would be consequences to such defiance. In a special relationship, the one that exists, there are no such consequences. Now, America's perceived complicity in Israeli violence carries a heavy price. Jihadi terrorism aimed at the United States is not primarily motivated perhaps by the Palestinian issue, but it is a major factor. It is a potent terrorist recruitment tool. The United States should stand by its allies. And Israel is an ally. But if America is to pay the blood, and the treasure, and the last piece of mind that comes with supporting Israel, it should be ready at least to speak openly and critically of Israeli mistakes when needed. To boost, ladies and gentlemen, are unhealthy, a climate that affixes charges of anti-Semitism to anyone critical of Israel, and self-hating Jew to any Jew who's critical of Israel, is unhelpful. For if there are not two states, there will be one state.

And sooner or later, the number of Palestinians in it will outnumber the number of Jews. And what then will remain of the Zionist dream? Ladies and gentlemen, there's also a moral issue here. I am a Jew. I know that Israel at its foundation and its declaration of independence said it would, "Ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race, and sex." We, Jews, know in our bones what persecution is. Alas, and this is hard to say, Israel, has in my view, lost touch with these fundamental values. By uncritically supporting Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza, America is undermining its own values, which at the very least stand for the absence of second class citizenship and equality of opportunity. Yes, I know Israel's a vibrant democracy isolated in the Middle East. And its values are closer to ours than those at closed Arab societies. But that does not mean that we should endorse Israel's systematic dismemberment of the Two State option. And if President Obama is serious about reaching out to the Muslim world, America must appear much more as an honest broker and less as Israel's spokesman. And that requires a serious re-balloting. You will, I

suspect, hear that Israel is a lonely David facing an Arab Goliath. You will hear that it needs blanket American support to be secure. This is simply not true. Nuclear-armed Israel is powerful.

John Donovan: Roger Cohen, your time is up.

Roger Cohen: The United States can step back while ensuring Israel's security. And so I urge you to vote for the motion tonight. Thank you.

John Donovan: Thank you, Roger Cohen. Our motion is, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel", and arguing first against the motion, Stuart Eizenstat, who has been a former ambassador to the European Union, but his career in government is astounding. When you go through his resume, he has had undersecretary positions in Commerce, in Treasury, in the State Department. You didn't get Agriculture? Not a farmer, ladies and gentlemen, Stuart Eizenstat.

Stuart Eizenstat: Thank you, John. I couldn't disagree more with Roger Cohen, and strongly oppose the notion that the United States should somehow stand back from its special relationship with Israel, and I do so for the following reasons. First, if the United States would do so, it would betray the very principles upon which U.S. foreign policy is based. Unlike China, or Russia, or some of our European allies, our foreign policies since our founding founders have never been to avoid a morality. Indeed, morality is a central feature of our policy. As a first country to recognize Israel in 1947 after the Holocaust as a refuge for Jews, we would be betraying those principles were we to step back from the special relationship we've developed over 62 years. Second, it would mean abandoning the only democratic, loyal, reliable ally in the region, which shares American values of democracy, rights for women, judicial independence, freedom of speech, and forming a 21st century culture. It's the only state in the region, which has a vibrant non-governmental sector so good on policies that Roger mentioned. There are groups like Peace Now, B'Tselem, and others who are vibrantly and publicly opposing those policies, the only country in the region which permits that kind of debate and criticism of the government.

In addition, it's not just American values, it is American interest. Israel shares American interest in combating terrorism, in creating pro-Western moderate Arab states in the region, in stopping nuclear proliferation, and in having peace with all of its neighbors. In addition, if we were to withdraw that special relationship, it would be a sign of American inconstancy and weakness. What message would it send to other allies? Would they think they were going to be next on the chopping block? And indeed, to do so would only lead to more demands from those in the region. America has to stand behind its allies because if it doesn't, it will not have many left anywhere. In addition, the whole notion of this motion misunderstands the major issues facing the United States in the region. And I have spent an enormous amount of time and energy in that region in multiple capacities. Issues that we have with Iraq and Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda are unrelated to our special relationship with Israel. Indeed, what is going on fundamentally in these states is a contest internally within the Arab world between modernizing states and radical Islamic states who want to create an Islamic caliphate for the whole region, unrelated to Israel, unrelated to Israel. It's also auspicious argument that somehow there's a zero-sum game that the kind of outreach that President Obama properly is providing to the Muslim world is somehow inconsistent with a special relationship with Israel. And let me tell you from personal knowledge, there is no zero-sum game. We can, and do have, both. We have a very close relationship. And I spent a lot of time in countries like Egypt and in Jordan, and in the territories, and in the Gulf helping build that relationship. And indeed, let me point out that it is because of the special relationship with Israel that the Arab states know that the way in which

Israel will make concessions is when it has a dependable American ally so that it can make those territorial concessions. And I've seen it happen at Camp David under President Carter, all of Sinai given back. I've seen it happen with Jordan and the peace agreement with Jordan. Roger says there's been no peace. I mean, I don't know where you've been. How about the Egyptian peace, which has lasted now for over 30 years, and the Jordanian peace? And those concessions continued.

For example, Prime Minister Barack in the Clinton administration, in which I served at the second Camp David, offered 95% of the land, including East Jerusalem, to Yasser Arafat. And what was the response? No, that's where the second intifada occurred. What was the response when Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza? What was the response? Rockets from Gaza, dismantling the settlements, dismantling 3,000 people, and that was the response. So it is auspicious argument that we can only have good relations with the Muslim world if we abandon Israel. Indeed, they know we need to have that relationship to convince Israel to make those concessions. In addition, where else will one have a special relationship and with whom else? The Saudis? The Saudis who export Wahabanism as well as expensive oil from whom 17 of the 19 9/11 terrorists came? Would it be Egypt where I've spent a great deal of time? I think we need stronger relations with Israel. It's on forth with Egypt. It's a one-party state, 28 years the same president. The opposition candidate was arrested when he ran against Mr. Mubarak. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, where is the special relationship? And let me close with this thought, when you say, "Why don't we have peace with the Palestinians?" If there were a Martin Luther King, if there were a Mahatma Gandhi leading the Palestinian movement, they would have had statehood long, long, long ago. It is because there is no reliable Palestinian partner. It is because of the Hamas-Fatah problem. It is because when the Israeli public sees a withdrawal from Lebanon or a withdrawal on their own from Gaza, instead of reconciliation, they get rockets in response. That's why we don't have peace, not because Israel doesn't want peace. And last, there are certain things with which we disagree with Israel as we do with all allies, settlement policy and so forth. I didn't notice, for example, that Germany, or the UK, or France is providing the kind of troops we want in Afghanistan. You can have a special relationship with allies and not always agree. Therefore, I strongly urge you to vote against this pernicious motion, which would undercut the very basis of foreign policy in the United States.

John Donovan: Stuart Eizenstat, your time is up.

Stuart Eizenstat: The only bipartisan foreign policy which we have in this country. Thank you.

John Donovan: All right. Here's where we are. We are halfway through the opening round of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate. I'm John Donovan of ABC News serving as moderator. We have two teams of two facing it out over this motion, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel". You've heard the first two debaters. Now we move on to the third. I'd like to introduce Rashid Khalidi who is a professor at Columbia University, a former adviser to the Palestinian delegation for the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. He was in Beirut during the Israeli bombing in 1982. He comes from - New York born, comes from a storied Jerusalem family who has bequeathed to the city of Jerusalem one of the world's leading libraries of Islamic literature, started by your grandfather, I believe?

Rashid Khalidi: Yes.

John Donovan: Ladies and gentlemen, Rashid Khalidi.

Rashid Khalidi: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for braving the impending snowstorm. You've heard from our opponents, one of our opponents, a pattern that we've heard a great deal of. And if you listen to the advocates of the special relationship with Israel, you would think that all is for the best and the best of all possible worlds. Well I'm here to tell you that it's not. You heard from my colleague, Roger, exactly how bad the situation is. I strongly recommend the next time any of you have a chance to go to the Holy Land, that you take a little time away from your trip to Israel and spend some time in the West Bank, spend three or four days. And you will see precisely how bad it is. Now, I would be the last person, as a Middle East historian, to suggest that all the problems in the Middle East are caused by the U.S. special relationship with Israel. They're not. There are problems with Arab governments. There are problems among the Palestinians. There are problems inside Israel. But some problems are caused by this special relationship. Let me just list a couple of them. One of them is that there is, as a result in large measure of our special relationship with Israel, an almost total deafness to public opinion in Palestine and in the Arab world. We hear the same kind of mantra about there's no democracy, there's no public sector. There are all kinds of things going on in public opinion in the Arab world. And one of the things that's going on is a deep distrust and unease with U.S. policy over this issue in particular. A second thing that has to be said is that there is a suspicion, in public opinion in particular all over the Arab world, of the fact that the United States in the Middle East because of this special relationship is not and cannot be an honest broker. Everybody knows that the United States engages in prior coordination with Israel, as a result of an agreement made by Secretary Kissinger back in the 70s, before anything starts between Arabs and Israelis. Everybody knows, in other words, that there's a big fat U.S. thumb on the scales when the United States act as a mediator. I recall, in the negotiations in Washington, we were in an impasse with the Israeli side, and we were told, after much reluctance on their part, that the State Department of the United States would come with a bridging proposal. We were very pleased. They came with a bridging proposal that was worse than the position that the Israelis had offered us. This is what the special relationship gives you. It gives you a country that cannot act as an honest broker. And let me say something about United States reliability.

Let me say something about what the United States looks like after 20 years when American presidents, since President Carter, have said not just that they were going to make peace with Egypt, which they did, but that they were going to make peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis. We have systematically failed in this effort over the past 20 years. The situation is - 30 years in fact. The situation is infinitely worse today than when Ambassador Rabinovich and I went to Madrid in October of 1991. It's worse for the Palestinians. It's worse for the position the United States in the Arab world if you care not what autocratic governments think, but what the people think about us. And this brings me to the main reason you should vote for this proposition. You should vote for this proposition, in our opinion, because the United States should be true to its principles. It should be fair. It should be equitable. It should be just. We give, as Roger said, \$60 billion over the past 10 years to Israel. We are in effect engaged in supporting an occupation that has been going on for 42 years and counting. We are in effect underwriting settlements. And we're not just using that with U.S. money that's fund - U.S. tax dollars out of our pockets that's fungible. We are doing that with tax deductible contributions to settlements, to projects in the occupied West Bank, and essentially to doing things that are directly opposed to United States policy and to the interest of the United States not to speak of the interest of peace in the Middle East. We hear a great deal about security whenever Israel is talked about. We have to be concerned with Israel's security. Fine, we have to be concerned with the security of everybody in this region if we are going to be an honest broker, if some people are not of a higher importance to us than other people. What about the security of Palestinians? In the recent war in Gaza, it wasn't really a war. It was a one-sided affair. There were 14,000 people killed on one side and 14 on the other side. If we're concerned with human security, we should be

concerned with numbers like this. We should be concerned with the fact that everybody knows that we are engaged not just in funding, financing, supporting diplomatically, but also in selling weapons that are engaged in doing these kinds of things. Now what can the United States do? In my view, it can do many things. It's not enough to say, "Oh, it's a shame. The Palestinians are divided." The Palestinians are divided. They have deep, deep internal divisions. The United States has been working systematically to deepen those divisions. The United States should be helping to unite the Palestinians around a consensus whereby they can come forward and negotiate, rather than trying to keep them divided as we've been trying to do if our objective is not to weaken them, which is an Israeli objective. If our objective is peace, then there has to be not just an Israeli consensus for peace, there has to be a Palestinian consensus for peace. We have done everything possible to prevent this. This is one thing that we can and should do. What else can we do? I would argue that our policy should be linked not solely to what the stronger party - by far the stronger party in this relationship wants. That is no way to make peace. Again and again, what the United States has an effect done is to help gang up on the Palestinians. The United States has to pull away from this special relationship with Israel if it is to play any kind of effective role in making peace. Now, this is particularly true because the hardest issues between the Palestinians and the Israelis, much harder than anything that had to be dealt with between

Israel and Jordan or Israel and Egypt have to do with issues that resonate all over the Arab world, things like refugees, things like Jerusalem. These are not easy issues. If we stand with the stronger, as we have done consistently on these and other issues, if we stand with Israel and ignore the fact that these are not just things on which there's a claim on both sides, but most importantly, these are things that will negatively affect U.S. interests. If we take a one-sided position, we are harming U.S. interests throughout the region. If you vote against this proposition, I would argue, you are voting for the status quo. You are voting for more of the same. You are voting for a peace process that has delivered a lot of process and no peace. And that is what we have gotten from every administration up to this point. We have peace with Egypt. We have with Jordan. Peace with the Palestinians is much farther away. I would suggest that voting for this status quo is to say in effect, "We're going to bury our heads in the sand. We're going to allow a Two States solution to disappear." I personally don't think it has very many changes anymore. But if this is something that is important, if we do not want the future for Israel that many Israelis see, where Israel continues to rule over the Palestinians, we should vote in favor of this proposition. Thank you very much.

John Donvan: Our motion is, "The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel". And our last debater, arguing against this motion, Itamar Rabinovich is a former Israeli Ambassador to the United States. He was on the White House lawn when Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shook hands. He has seen what he felt Israeli locations peace come here. His book on "The Brink of Peace" was about his involvement in negotiations with the Syrians. It went to the brink, and then pulled back. Ladies and gentlemen, Itamar Rabinovich.

Itamar Rabinovich: Thank you. I urge you strongly to vote against the motion. I think that the motion indicates a desire to destroy the United States' most important, most successful relationship in a very important part of the world. What does special relationship mean? It does not mean that the tail is wagging the dog.

It is a mutual relationship. I was an ambassador to Washington for nearly four years. I was a peace negotiator that worked very closely with the United States peace team. And I know how many disagreements we have had over the years with our American colleagues. How many times, what we call, pressure was brought to bear on Israeli decision makers, even presidents who were considered very friendly. Bill Clinton, considered a great friend of Israel, he was a close

friend of Yitzhak Rabin. He admired Rabin, but I've seen them argue fiercely. And I've seen Rabin yield to Clinton because he was the President of the United States, the senior partner in this special relationship. Now, what is special about the relationship? It's special. It's unique because you have unusual loyalty on both sides. We have many relationships around the world as we have mentioned. Israel relationship with France is so close. Doesn't France undermine U.S. interests and policies in parts of the world? Japan is a close ally, look at the arguments you're having with Japan over stationing of U.S. troops in Japan. You will not have such an argument with Israel because there are no U.S. troops stationed in Israel. It's a very close military and strategic alliance defined, among other things, by the fact that Israel does not want American troops to be stationed in Israel. Israel wants to look out for its own security with American help, with American weapons and equipment, but on its own, and not having to station troops in Israel or in that part of the Middle East because Israel is there, it's a huge advantage. Because look at the other side of the Middle East, an important part of the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, countries that are of enormous influence or importance for the United States. You have troops there. You have many American troops at a huge cost in Iraq. You have troops in Afghanistan. You have troops stationed in Saudi Arabia. And remember, what did the Al-Qaeda terrorists say once they exploded into the World Trade Center, the first reason they cited for the U.S. - for attacking the U.S. is that the United States has troops on sacred Muslim soil in the Arabian peninsula. In Israel or near Israel, you don't need to station U.S. troops. It's a very close alliance. It's an alliance based on mutuality, on a full loyalty on both sides, acceptance of, of course, the seniority of the United States in that relationship. And this relationship serves you in an area in which many American interests are focused. Now, the argument of the people who put this for a vote, the argument of our opponents in this debate is that support to Israel undermines American position in our republic opinion and reinforces Arab and Muslim tendency to terrorism against the United States. Wrong. What the Arabs resent most is, that is American military presence, American support for dictatorial regimes. Let me read a very perceptive comment written awhile ago. Iraq has changed everything in Washington, the city obsessed with the President. It was easy to forget that as recently as a few years ago, the United States was not particularly disliked in the Middle East, and that Al-Qaeda was a tiny underground organization with almost no popular support, very perceptive professor Khalidi who wrote these lines. So we are in agreement on a few things but we take different conclusions from that. So another complaint that I have against our opponents in this debate, first of all too much was focused on the Palestinian issue. It's very important issue, it's important first and foremost for us. I'm one of those Israelis who desperately believe in fight for having a two state solution. I think it's dangerous for Israel to keep the states poor. Now there are people in Israel who think otherwise and politically we disagree. In the United States and this Government of Israel do want to see a two state solution. But the President problem is not the only one. He said there is peace with Egypt, there is peace with Jordan and normal relations with quite a few Arab countries and that has been achieved by the United States precisely as my colleague Stu Eizenstat said, because the United States is the power, the great power that has the ability to influence to work with Israel. And Arab countries who want to see a change. Syria if it wants the Golan back knows that their road to the Golan leads to Washington, not through Tehran. So, actually the closest to Israel, the perception in the Arab world that the United States has that sway with Israel is one of the most important assets that United States has. And believe me I spent hundreds of hours talking to the Syrians as the peace negotiator with Syria, and I know exactly full well. They wanted to make peace with Israel because that was a pathway to Washington. They work with Washington, you know, that to make peace with Israel. Finally much of what you heard from our opponents earlier this evening was actually in the frame of the Bush years. We are not in the Bush years any more. For year there has been another administration in Washington and actually what we have seen it was President Obama who listened to such advice and begun by taking some distance from Israel. He went to Cairo; he gave the speech to the Muslim world. He didn't go to Israel. What is the

result, the result is the current impulse. It was a mistake to take even one step, because the voices that we heard from the Arab world was you took one step go all the way, that is a mistake. So the policy should be stay with the special relationship with Israel and together with Israel, use it in order to make peace with the Middle East including with the Palestinians.

John Donovan: And that concludes round one of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate where the motion being argued is the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. And we now have the results of our live audience vote.

We asked you before the debate begun where you stood on our motion the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel before the debate began here is word stood 33% of you were for the motion, 42% against and 25% were undecided. Now one to round two, ended round two the debaters is going to address one another directly. I will asks some questions of them and we will come to you and the audience to ask the questions and I once again want to urge you very much like a participation but we ask you to think in terms of the question, think in terms of something that you can say in 40 seconds, think in terms of something has question mark in the end and that is also on topic. But I where I want to begin this, I want to go to the side that is arguing against the motion which argued in part particularly Stuart Eizenstat who served in so many administrations and was involve in this region. Argued that turning away from Israel at this point would be an immoral act because Israel has been such a loyal ally for so long and I want to put to that side to either gentleman the question. So what would actually happen to Israel if the U.S. created more distance?

Stuart Eizenstat: Well, what would happen is that the United States would lose the levers and influence it has, and it has used to encourage Israel to make the concessions that it is made. It's inconceivable for example that Israel would have given up all the sign at Camp David one with President Carter to each. If it didn't know that the United States was solidly and affirmably in its corner and the same is true with respect to other concessions that Israel made. These depend on a mutuality of interest and what I'll mention John and my closing points is the very specific concrete benefits that relationship with Israel provides to the United States. They are very concrete from intelligent sharing, to missile technology sharing to standing shoulder-to-shoulder to oppose Iranian nuclear threats. So the interests are not just values, they are profound U.S. national security interest, but again, the direct answer to your question is, it would send a signal to Israel of inconsistency as it would be less likely make concessions - but they would say the same to all other allies, but what it would say -

John Donovan: But would it be harmful for Israel is one of the questions -

Stuart Eizenstat: It would very harmful for Israel because Israel would be completely alone. Where else does it have a very close relationship? To whom else would it turn for support? I mean in the 1967 war, at the maximum time of their danger, all right when the state was almost eliminated by all the Arab countries, their prime arms supplier was not the United States of America, it was France. And in the midst of the war, that arms shipments were totally cut off, a 100% cut off. So Israel has nowhere else to turn as a major ally other than the United States, it would feel increasingly isolated. It would be much more intractable in terms of the peace process, and I think it would be a terrible thing both for Israel and for the United States.

John Donovan: To the other side, is it an act of betrayal to put distance-

Roger Cohen: No, it's not an act of betrayal. With respects to nobody is arguing for a divorce here. Nobody is arguing that Israel should cease being an ally of the United States. So, we are

simply arguing that when President Obama says that he wants settlements to stop and settlements continue and Prime Minister Netanyahu declares that some settlements are Israel's for all eternity, that there should be consequences, and I believe that if the United States were firmer if it made clear to Israel that there are indeed consequences, then Israel would measure its actions much more carefully and there would be more chance of getting a resumption of Israeli-Palestinian talks, which are currently paralyzed. Israel, if it thinks it can act with complete impunity is not going to be responsive to U.S. desires.

John Donovan: Let me go to Itamar, he is looking at-

Itamar Rabinovich: Briefly I like to say of course, it would not be good for Israel if the U.S. walked away from the special relationship. There would be both substantive and a perception issue of weakening Israel. Israel would go to the right, maybe to the radical right. My point what is going to happen to the United States. Now, let me read sentence from the most unlikely source. If you go this week's New Yorker, Seymour Hersh discussion with Bashar Assad, the President of Syria, says, now the problem is that the United States is weaker and whole - in financial world, is weak as world. You always need power to do politics and nobody is doing politics. What you need is a strong United States with good politics not weaker United States. For United States it walks away from Israel it sends the signal of weakness inconsistent, it's not going to be good for U.S. policy.

John Donovan: Rashid Khalidi

Rashid Khalidi: I think this is like telling us when you are deep hole, the thing to do is dig deeper. I mean we have enabled, we have enabled, the worst instincts of Israel politics. We have enabled and supported and financed the worst policies in terms of, leave aside American interest. We are all Americans that should be the only thing that matters to us. Israeli interest, why is occupation and settlement in the Israeli interest? Ambassador Rabinovich is opposed, is an opponent of these things. Most right thinking Israelis that most of know are but Israeli politics is moving exactly the opposite direction. What we are doing is enabling these tendencies. Let me say one other thing about constancy. When we are doing something that everybody in the world think is dominant. The idea of staying the course does not make us look constant, it makes us look dumb. And our allies we were asked rhetorically by one of my opponents, if United States moved away from the special relationship what will happen with some of our allies, they would applaud. They see the United States as systematically weakening itself by this perverse special relationship.

John Donovan: Stuart Eizenstat, what about that very point that our allies would actually applaud readjustment to number of relationships?

Stuart Eizenstat: Two things. First of all when Roger says he is not calling for a divorce, okay. Sometimes it difficult for spouses and countries to tell the difference between a separation and a divorce. The implications can be the same. And second, I was ambassador to the European Union. I have spent an enormous amount of time in Europe. I can tell you that it would send a chill down the spine of every ally we have in Europe and around the world if this relationship were abandoned. Because they would say, we will next on chopping block. It would a terrible side of inconstancy what the world wants is a strong constant United States that stands behind its principles, that stands behind its value and stands behind its allies.

Roger Cohen: If I may-

John Donovan: Roger Cohen.

Roger Cohen: With respect I also spend a lot time in the European Union not as an ambassador. And my perception of European publics and European governments is that many are bewildered by the extent and degree of U.S. support for Israel and would applaud some modification of that relationship.

John Donovan: The side arguing for the motion I said that made a rather cogent argument, quite logical that U.S. relationship with Israel raises the question whether the United States can be an honest broker in the Middle East. What - take that on either side-against the motions.

Stuart Eizenstat: We both seen it from different perspective myself and United States perspective and get [morph] is really perspective. Every moderate care country knows that only the United States can talk to both sides. It is the only honest broker. And indeed if it were to withdraw from that special relationship it would lose the capacity to have then ear of the Israelis in a way it does now. It is an honest broker that's why even though there is a quartet with the UN and Russia and so forth and the EU. It's only the United States, the Secretaries of State, the President who were the active ingredients in the Peace process. The Arab states know that, Europeans know that, Israelis know that, and so we are accepted as the honest broker. And again, I think that Itamar is right, you are retreading Bush, we have got a different President who has reached out to the Muslim world and who said entire world, yes, we want to have stronger relationships with the Muslim world. Yes, we want to have a two states solution but yes we stand firmly behind the state of Israel as a Jewish State, that's being an honest broker and that's what accepted on all sides.

John Donovan: Does the other side agree that President Obama is changing the game?

Rashid Khalidi: I'd actually like to say something about this honest broker thing. I don't think United States in any way an honest broker. United States is quite frequently the only broker because United States hugs the stage. Look at what the United States does to the quartet, it essentially tries to turn them into bunch of oodles who will follow the American lead, it successfully does that quite frequently even with European Union and with the Russians. And I think this is actually a problem. We have seen more constructive diplomacy in the Middle East from Qatar and Turkey; incidentally an important Democratic ally.

A country with a public sphere. A major ally over decades going back to launching of NATO. The only democracy in the Middle East is not Israel. And we have seen more constructive diplomacy from those two countries than we have seen from the United States over the past several years as far as brokering a peace between or trying to broker a peace. For example, arranging a settlement of the conflict in Lebanon, and I would suggest that it is in the United States' interest to bring others in. It's in the United States interest to make this a multilateral settlement. James Baker, to his enormous credit, understood this. And that's one of the most important achievements of Madrid. It was to bring other parties in, that United States has this tendency to monopolize things. It is a tendency to be resistant.

John Donovan: Do you see President Obama changing the game?

Roger Cohen: I think the president's problem at the moment is that he's gone a long way in words with the Cairo speech, with the speech in Istanbul, with other gestures. But when it comes to actions, and people are looking at actions, I think the Palestinians tend to see more of the same. And that is the issue here. Can we be imaginative? Can we think outside of the box? Look, when

the Oslo Accord came in the 1990s, the PLO Charter still existed. It existed until 1996 in its original form calling for the annihilation of Israel. Now did this stop the imaginative negotiators in the 1990s from moving that process forward. Oslo was 1993; this was done while the charter still existed. The Hamas charter calling for annihilation of Israel is vile. It is unacceptable. But can we think outside the box about these things? Can we look for new forms of engagement? Can we think and act in different ways that might advance peace? I think, so far, the verdict on the Obama administration and on what Mr. Mitchell has been trying to achieve is no. And it is important that we look at the Middle East the way it is, not the way we would like it to be or imagine it might be, but what the reality of this increasingly sophisticated Middle East is today what is Hamas really? What is bothered really? Let's look at these things in a hard headed way and let's think about and find some new ideas. And I think right now the president in a half way house and that's why we seeing no movement.

John Donovan: I want to let Itamar Rabinovich answer that question but I - after that I get to questions from the audience, so I'd like to disperse our microphones and bring the light up. Itamar your response?

Itamar Rabinovich: You know President Obama's--some distancing from Israel. Abu Mazen, President of the Palestinian authority is not joining the negotiations now. Because he says President Obama, you put me up on a tree, you have to help me climb down. Because President Obama seemed to be taking a pro-Palestinian anti-Israel position at the outset. His expectation was that the Muslim and Arab world will applaud. The real reaction was give us more. We will not come to the negotiations, you have to deliver Israel. It was a very bad mistake. And Roger when you say, think out of the box about the Hamas charter, which is not an anti-Israeli, an anti-Semitic document, speaking about the protocols of Zion, I don't know how to think outside the box about that, I would rather be in the box.

John Donovan: Roger Cohen

Roger Cohen: So was charter of the PLO. It got changed and how did it get changed? It got changed through negotiations.

John Donovan: Can you respond to that Itamar?

Itamar Rabinovich: Yes. You can negotiate with a secular nationalist movement like the Fatah. Hamas is a radical religious fundamentalist organization and you cannot negotiate with people who have these strong religious convictions.

John Donovan: Itamar-

Rashid Khalidi: Israel is negotiating with them. Israel is negotiating with prisoner release with Hamas right now. Israel negotiates with Hamas all the time. In fact it suits Israel perfectly, perfectly to have Hamas and Fatah divided and to have nobody to talk to. You will have peace in this part of the world between Palestinians and Israelis when there is not just a Israeli consensus but a Palestinian consensus. There are enough people in Hamas who are interested in a resolution of this conflict that if, as Roger said if you think outside the box, we could get something.

Itamar Rabinovich: So, when Ehud Olmert went out of his way and offered much more than Ehud Barak and any other Israeli politician, put it on the table, why did Abu Mazen not take it?

John Donovan: Let me go to questions from the audience. We are going to leave a lot of things hanging because we will keep going. We will come back. You can put that question to him, I want to move on to this. And if one of you wants to take that question back you are welcome to us, write down and see the gentlemen.

Unidentified Participant: Thank you.

John Donovan: Please stand up and if you're with the media, let's known.

Zead Ramadan: My name is Zead Ramadan, I am the President of the Council on American Islamic Relations in New York. It was often said of Yasser Arafat that he never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity. Is it - have we come into the era where Israel is starting to make decisions in its worst interest that Charles Freeman, who was a nominee for one of the top intelligence posts in the United States criticized them and said that himself before he pulled his nomination due to criticism from Israel and American elected officials. Are we entering an era where Israel continuously make decisions and hurts its future?

John Donovan: How would you relate that also to U.S. interest which is our topic tonight?

Zead Ramadan: Absolutely. We - as an American, I think back as a Palestinian myself, I am jaded whenever they say, whether it's Jimmy Carter or Bill Clinton or Ronald Reagan or George Bush senior or junior, it's always said that we are going to work towards peace in the Middle East, and it always seems like an Israeli Prime Minister is pitching the phrase with the U.S. President and says, 'it doesn't matter what you say. We're going to do whatever we want to do and we still going to take your billions from you all the time'. So as my tax dollars are going to build settlements where –

John Donovan: Yeah, I do need a question, what's your question?

Zead Ramadan: I apologize.

John Donovan: No, I want a question, that's on a topic.

Ziad Ramadan: Is it in the U.S. interest to support Israel financially while they continuously disagree with [unintelligible] –

John Donovan: Stuart Eizenstat to decide.

Stuart Eizenstat: A couple of things, first, several people have mentioned including Roger inaccurately that the United States continues to provide huge amounts of economic aid to Israel. I can tell you that during the first Olmert government, they came to me when I was Undersecretary of State and they said we are now a highly developed country. We don't need, and we don't want that economic assistance and they came to us and I negotiated the total cut off of that aid. There is not a nickel in economic aid being given to Israel. The aid now is all economics.

John Donovan: Roger Cohen.

Stuart Eizenstat: And the aid is all given for security purposes and not economic purposes, it's all security.

Roger Cohen: Congressional report just put the total at \$28.9 billion over the past decades so how you can state there is no economic aid going from United States to Israel. I don't know. In response to your questions I - critics of Israel are often told that they are anti Israeli. My response is no, I think in have the long-term interest of Israel in my heart and to say that it is Israel's interest to go on building these settlements strikes me as the height of foolishness because what will be the result of this? We are at the point or we are very close to the point where a two state solution becomes impossible. At that point, we are talking about a single state between the river and the sea. That state will very soon - such a state will very soon have more Palestinian Arabs in it than Jews. What then is going to happen to the Zionist dream? And I think to point this out to Israel, is in fact acting in Israel's self interest, and the unfortunate thing about U.S. policy is it doesn't - without stepping back it doesn't act strongly enough to stop Israel making a two-states solution impossible. And I think that is the very core of the issue here.

John Donovan: Gentlemen with eye glasses, sorry?

Unidentified Participant: Question for Mr. Cohen and Khalidi.

John Donovan: Could you bring the mike a little bit closer?

Unidentified Participant: When Stuart Eizenstat said earlier on in the debate that had the Palestinians had a Palestinian version of Gandhi or King it would have been a two states solution a long time ago. Is that a statement with which you agree or disagree, and if you disagree, why? And separately, what is the answer to the question that we lost as we transitioned into the Q&A, why did Abu Mazen turn down the deal?

John Donovan: Thank you.

Rashid Khalidi: Why don't I answer that question first? Abu Mazen does much of what he does because he is weak. He is weak because we have made him weak. He is weak for other reasons as well. But a primary reason is because Israel and the United States have systematically undermined him. What happened with the Goldstone report? I don't want to go into the Goldstone report. Abu Mazen was pressured, was blackmailed, was threatened by the Israelis to, in effect prevent the consideration by United Nations Human Rights body of a report that was critical both of Hamas and especially of Israel. This is an example of the kind of situation that Abu Mazen is in. Why is he in this situation? He is in the situation because he does not represent all the Palestinians, and he is in that situation because the Palestinian coalition government which would have included have Hamas was something that was strongly opposed both by Israel and the United States. And that would have been a government in which Hamas would have authorized Abu Mazen to ahead and negotiate with Israel.

That would have been a government that might conceivably have reached an agreement or might not have. But it certainly would have better than the situation we are in. And let just create one point about the special relationship. One of the things that the special relationship does is it imports Israeli considerations into U.S. law. I was told by an American official one of the reasons we can't have a Palestinian coalition government which might in fact be a better negotiating partner is because it's against U.S. law. We would have to cut-off our funding to any government that included Hamas even a government that authorized negotiations for peace. That is an example of why we should end this special relationship.

John Donovan: Stuart Eizenstat.

Stuart Eizenstat: I want to answer the question and connect an important thread and say something I haven't said publicly before because there is a connection. I sat with Yasser Arafat in his office in Ramallah three weeks before Camp David who was supposed to start with President Clinton and Prime Minister Barak. He said to me, tell President Clinton not to invite me, I'm not ready to go and to negotiate. Likewise the reason why Arafat wouldn't go or didn't want to go and why he turned down a remarkable concession from Barak, 95% of the territory, East Jerusalem is the capital is the same reason that Abu Mazen wouldn't accept and even more generous offer from all Olmert and that is they are afraid they will be assassinated by Hamas. That's point blank the reason. And the radicals in the Palestinian movement who I do not believe in a majority have a tremendous hammer-hold over the moderate.

John Donovan: Let's go to another question. Gentleman, yes, yellow tie. You can stand and - I owe you a comeback.

Unidentified Participant: My question is very specifically about U.S. interest and U.S. security –

John Donovan: Can you bring your microphone up a little bit?

Unidentified Participant: Sorry. Very specifically about U.S. interest and U.S. security, you talked a lot about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and how the special relationships affect, the special relationship affect the peace process, but very specifically how would change in this relationship affect U.S. security interest specifically vis-à-vis the jihadi elements who are working against the U.S.. How would that relationship either improve their view of the U.S. or be a detriment to the U.S.?

John Donovan: I was just talking about the impact on our allies, you are asking about the impact on our relationship with our foes, which side would like to take that.

Roger Cohen: Well, I think if you can advance a Middle East peace clearly you are going to withdraw, remove, a very powerful recruitment tool - for the jihadis.

If you look at Osama Bin Laden's speeches going back a very long way. If you look in the 9/11 report it what Khalid Sheikh Mohammad said, the mastermind of 9/11 about how policy toward the Palestinians was really what drove him toward the - It wasn't his stay in the United States. It was what he observed of U.S. Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. So, if you can appear more as an honest broker, if you can move this paralyzed process in some way, then I think you could advance U.S. security in that respect. Look have the Palestinians made mistakes, have there been offers on the table that should perhaps have been accepted, yes. But we're not talking about the past. We're talking about trying to move forward here, that is what this debate is about tonight, and I think to throw out the Olmert offer when he was already had great legal difficulties, was on his way out of office, it really wasn't credible at that point. So I don't find that in any way persuasive.

John Donovan: Itamar Rabinovich

Itamar Rabinovich: Two issues, one, terrorism, that support for Israel increases terrorism, and you all know New Yorkers, you live in New York, open the magazine last week, very interesting story about a young man from Alabama, Omar Hammami, who grew up in a small town in Alabama, and he is now fighting with Al Qaeda in Somalia.

Very interesting long article in the New York Times magazine. The word Israel doesn't appear once. He became a terrorist not because of Israel but because of other reasons. Secondly, I want to go back to the point raised by Stuart Eizenstat before. Gandhi, other leaders. Abu Mazen is not weak because the United States or Israel weakened him. He is weak because he is weak. Where you have - even people who made peace, Gandhi was not made by the British, Mandela was not made by the Americans and King Hussein and Anwar El Sadat who signed peace with Israel were strong leaders. That's why they could take their countries to peace. But unfortunately, we have not had the kind of Palestinian leader who would become, who could become the Palestinian Mandela, who would bring about the rapprochement, the reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

This comes from an Israeli who wants that.

Rashid Khalidi: Let me say something. Let me say something. Let me say something about this sainted Nelson Mandela, a man who I think, we all greatly respect. He headed an armed movement. He was not an apostle of non-violence. He led an armed movement that succeeded in forcing a political resolution of a conflict. Now, I personally am a believer in this conflict, now, that non-violent means are the best means for the Palestinians.

I don't think, however, that we should get too mystical about this. There are many colonial, many oppressive, many occupation regimes that would never ever disappeared but for armed violent resistance. That is something that - that is something that's very painful to say because in this country, we have a constitution, and what Martin Luther King was calling for was that we live up to the highest principles of this country. I argue that in the Palestinian case, that would be appropriate, although for other reasons. But to say in a situation of occupation, and in a situation of oppression, this is not two equal parties. These are not two states. There is one country between the Mediterranean and the sea. It occupies the entirety of the territory. It's the only sovereign state. It has ruled every single Palestinian in that territory, some of them as citizens of the State of Israel, a minority, four million of them as helots with no rights for 43 years, resistance in that case is legitimate.

John Donovan: Go back to the audience.

Unidentified Participant: Good evening. Is it anti-semitism of United Nations which Israel and America always complains about that their 50 and odd resolutions requesting Israel to vacate the occupied land, Israel and America look the other way, but whereas when it comes to Iraq war, Bush Presidency on one resolution went for an illegal war.

This special arrangement between Israel and America is really hurting, in my opinion, and my question to one of the panelists will be, why are these resolutions not implemented, which are asking Israel to vacate the occupied land?

John Donovan: You're asking if U.S. has a double standard on UN resolution?

Unidentified Participant: U.S. has a double standard, Israel has a double standard.

John Donovan: Thank you.

Roger Cohen: The United States has vetoed.

John Donovan: Roger, I want to bring this to the insider first and then I'll come to you, okay?
Stuart Eizenstat.

Stuart Eizenstat: The UN Human Rights Commission has developed resolutions over the last decade and a half, two-thirds of which are directed at Israel, not in Iran, not in Iraq, not at all the human rights violations that occur around the world. Two-thirds are directed to Israel. This is grossly disproportionate. Number two, with respect to general resolutions, let's go back to the first resolution of the United Nations, which was to create a two state solution. And Ben Gurion accepted a sliver of territory and it was rejected by the Arabs and that rejection has continued with the exception of Egypt and Jordan from 1947 to 2010.

John Donovan: Roger Cohen?

Roger Cohen: United States has vetoed more than 40 resolutions critical of Israel of recent years. That's more I believe than all the vetoes put together of all the other members of the Security Council. This is indeed a special relationship. And the question we're asking tonight is, is that really in the benefit of the United States and Israel? And I would submit not. If you look at the Goldstone report, the UN report on the war in Gaza, surely this report was imperfect. No doubt there were errors in it. I know Judge Goldstone. I met him years ago and the Hague, believe me, he is balanced and intelligent man. Did he make some mistakes, yes, but the Israeli reaction was, no this is just an expression of the world's bias, this is an outrage. This is absolutely unacceptable. And the U.S. gave it some protection in that stance, which I consider to have been outrageous. There is no justification for the position what is happened since. Israel has quietly censured two generals. It has agreed to pay compensation to the United Nations. Behind the defiance, it has been making its own admissions of the fact that they were problems in this, and I think it is the United States' special relationship with Israel which allows it to say before the world, no, we never make mistakes, this is all a plot against us, and I don't think this is helpful to Israel. And it is not good for the United States to be in that position.

John Donovan: Itamar Rabinovich?

Itamar Rabinovich: The United Nations, the Human Rights Commission, do you know who are the members of that commission? Who was the Chairman of that commission, the country called Libya. Who is a member of that commission? Zimbabwe with Mugabe.

Roger, you are from originally, you know South Africa and you know who Mugabe is. So if the commission has Libya and Zimbabwe and countries like that, it has no moral authority and Goldstone drew his mandate from a place without moral authority.

John Donovan: Rashid Khalidi.

Rashid Khalidi: Yes. As someone whose father works for the United Nations, I am going to defend this institution.

I think it ill - it does not behoove those who are friends of Israel to bash United Nations. The certificate of Israel is delivered by the United Nations in the form of the resolution that Ambassador Eizenstat mentioned, the partition resolution of 1947. Now that did not give the issue a sliver of Palestine. It gave 33% of the population that owned 6% of the land, 55% of the country; some sliver. Let me say a couple of other things.

I cannot let some of these things pass simply as a historian. We are told that the Arab countries have been rejecting everything since 2010. The majority of Arab countries came to the Madrid Peace Conference. Ambassador Rabinovich and I saw them there. Now what kind of rejection is it when they come to a peace conference. They all voted in favor of an Arab peace resolution in Beirut and one before that, way back in 2002. This is not rejection. We were told about remarkable concessions.

Remember, when a country is in illegal occupation of territory and it agrees to give it back, there are various ways of talking about that. I would not use the word concession. Thirdly –

John Donovan: Rashid, I just want to ask you, how long is your list?

Rashid Khalidi: Pardon me?

John Donovan: How long is your list?

Rashid Khalidi: I have two more, but I will go for one.

John Donovan: Thank you.

Rashid Khalidi: Okay. We were told that in 1967, Israel was almost eliminated. If you go to the U.S. government documents and you go to the extraordinarily ample Israeli documentation, you will see that not one Israeli military intelligence or American military intelligence report or military officer of field rank and above thought that there was any chance of Israel being defeated let alone eliminated in the 1967 war. I know people here believe that was a possibility, I know that many people in Israel feared it, but that was not a possibility at that time. I could go on and on.

John Donovan: Okay, all right, I want to go back to a question here. I need to do a little bit of announcing for radio. I just want to remind everybody, we are in a question and answer section of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate. I'm John Donovan of ABC News acting as moderator. We have four debaters. Two teams of two debating this motion, the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. The gentlemen standing now with grey suit, red tie?

John Girkoff: Thank you. My Name is John Girkoff. Among other things, I am affiliated with Tel Aviv University. A question I have is - small statement, but then a question is all the attention tonight has been against Israel or for Israel or against the United States or for the United States, but the Palestinians have to start taking some responsibility for what's going on? And the question I have is, what have they done over the last 40 years to instill the confidence in the United States, to maybe ease up on the relationship or become more, as you say, evenhanded and what can - do you think they should be doing or can be doing to instill the confidence that you two have that the United States should end that relationship?

John Donovan: Thank you for the question. Good question.

Rashid Khalidi: It's a very good question. As someone who wrote a book recently about just this issue in Palestinian history about the responsibility of the Palestinians have to consider for things that have happened in Palestinian history not just in the last couple of decades, but going back to the 20s and 30s, I think it's a question that should be asked by Palestinians and to Palestinians, and I take the point. What can Palestinians do? Firstly, they have to get their act together. It's absolutely essentially that there be a Palestinian consensus on how to get out of the mess that they

are in, and that's up to the Palestinians themselves. Nobody else can do that for them and that's the first thing. We are talking about Israel because that's the proposition before the house.

You voted on something about the United States and Israeli special relationship, but I think it's a good question anyway because this is a key element of this problem. The Palestinians, I have to say, have not just been systematic divided by outside forces. They have failed to unify themselves. The Palestinians have not just failed to generate some of the leadership that I think they deserve. I have been very critical of Palestinian leadership in the past. It is however the case that their leadership has been systematically subject to assassination, not just by Israel, also by Arab governments, and they have problems not only with Israel, they have severe problems with all of the Arab governments with which they have to deal. Governments which by and large are not democratic, governments which by and large do not represent their own people, and that's another problem that we're not discussing here, but which I think is well worth discussing.

John Donovan: I just want to ask, are there no women with questions? Thank you. I didn't see you before. Right in the center, we're going to do three women in a row here now. Right in the center, do you have a microphone?

Okay, I'll come back, I will come to you.

Rema Azazi: Thank you.

John Donovan: Can you bring the mike a little bit closer?

Rema Azazi: Thank you, can you hear me?

John Donovan: It's not on yet, try one more time. It's not your fault.

Rema Azazi: Hi, can you hear me?

John Donovan: Yes.

Rema Azazi: Okay. My name is Rema Azazi (ph), I'm Masters in Near-Eastern Studies at NYU. The idea of morality has been mentioned by both sides. It's been mostly invoked by Mr. Eizenstat saying that we can't end this special relationship because it would be undermining the morality, that is what the special relationship is. And I would like to ask you, Mr. Eizenstat, why the principle of morality is not being applied to the case of the Palestinians? So, when you discuss that justice and fairness is important, what would justice and fairness look like in the West Bank and Gaza? What can Israel do for justice and fairness to exist there? And can you also speak about justice and fairness for Palestinians who live in Israel and have Israeli citizenship? I'm specifically thinking of the –

John Donovan: Are you asking what Israel can do or what the U.S. can do, because I would like to stay more towards –

Rema Azazi: U.S. and Israel?

John Donovan: Okay, thank you. Fair enough. Stuart Eizenstat.

Stuart Eizenstat: I think it's very good question and it is a moral imperative of the United States, not only to support Israel's independence and security, but also to see to it that the Palestinians

have a decent standard of living and a state of their own. It is the United States of America that is the major economic supplier of aid to the Palestinians, okay? Not France, not Germany, not the UK, not Russia, it is the United States. Number two, right now as we speak, General Dayton, a three-star-general is in the process of training over 20,000 Palestinian police who are in places like Jenin now able to take over security and allowing the Israeli defense forces to withdraw allowing checkpoints to be reduced. I met in Davos ten days ago, Prime Minister Fayyad, he is a great man. He is a great man, he building a state from the bottom up. He told me, Stu, we are going to have 10% real growth in the territories in the West Bank, and the reason is because the Palestinians are now under U.S. leadership, beginning to take on their own security, rooting out Hamas and giving the Israeli defense forces the confidence to withdraw. So the United States is supporting economically, militarily, in every other way the effort of the Palestinians to develop their state. And George Mitchell, who negotiated after many, many hard years, the Good Friday agreement on Northern Ireland is a superb negotiator. He is there every month negotiating as an honest broker with a notion that we have a responsibility to the Palestinians as well as to the Israelis.

John Donovan: I want to come back to you because I saw how intently you were listening to. What did you think of that answer?

Rema Azazi: (inaudible).

John Donovan: Yes, we will bring a mike, let's just get a mike come back to you, but I don't want to go on terribly long. I just want to know if it went to the point that you were asking about?

Rema Azazi: I would like to, is it on?, compare the aid that you just spoke up with the millions or billions of dollars that go towards Israel in terms of military aid, if not other aid as well.

John Donovan: Okay.

Stuart Eizenstat: The aid to the Palestinians only started fairly recently because it is only after Madrid that the PLO abandoned their charter to destroy Israel, Hamas is yet to do it and indicated a willingness to have a two state solution although they we haven't fulfilled it. So the economic aid hasn't accumulated but it is very substantial. On a per capita basis, very substantial, and it's all going for economic assistance.

John Donovan: There was a, yes. Ma'am, I see you in the far corner and you have a yellow pad in your hand, and if you wave it, a microphone will come to you.

Sarah Lehman: My name is Sarah Lehman (ph) and I write for the Jewish press, and I have a statement and a question directed mostly towards Roger Cohen.

John Donovan: Can you do more question than statement?

Sarah Lehman: Yes, okay. In light of the fact that Israeli concessions over the years have not led to peace because the Palestinians have responded mostly with violence and also in light of the fact that Hamas charter has not changed its call for the destruction of the Jewish state, and the incitement that continues to go on - anti-Semitic incitement and propaganda by the Palestinians under the supposed moderate –

John Donovan: I need to come home with this question, I see where you are going.

Sarah Lehman: Personally as a Jew, how would you - why would advocate a severing of the special relationship with America in favor of towards Arabs or Palestinians who wish for your demise?

John Donovan: That's a question for Roger Cohen?

Sarah Lehman: Anyone.

Roger Cohen: I think I have tried to describe why - certainly, there have been Israeli attempts, very serious Israeli attempts to make peace. But if you look at the last 20 years, peace is going to involve an exchange of land, and what has Israel continued to do over the last 20 years? It has doubled, tripled the size of the settlements in the West Bank and this simply makes it impossible to make that exchange. Look, what we just heard about what's happening in the West Bank shows that there is nothing congenial about a Palestinian inability to take responsibility for their lives and for their governance. Given half the chance, I think they are capable of it. But when, if you, have you driven through the West Bank recently, madam?

Sarah Lehman: Yes.

Roger Cohen: What did you see? I think you saw a fractured, divided Palestinian community. Israeli garrisons on every hill, road blocks, the difficulty of families to get to the market, to get the fields, to get to their jobs and so on. What does this say to Palestinians about the seriousness of Israeli intent to make peace? It says these guys are not serious, and why has it that the Prime Minister Fayyad has not come back to the table. He has not come back to the table because the Palestinians are not satisfied of the essential seriousness of Israel. And what is enabling the government or Prime Minister Netanyahu to take this stance, it is the unconditional nature of U.S. support under the special relationship, which is why ladies and gentlemen you should vote for the proposition tonight.

John Donovan: We are coming down towards the end of the question section, so I just want to ask the panelist at this point to be slightly more concise. We are doing a few more questions. Itamar Rabinovich.

Itamar Rabinovich: Commenting on Roger Cohen's last comment, I think in an earlier comment, you actually provided the answers to why the Palestinians will not negotiate. Because you painted a scenario that over the next 10, 20 years, if the status quo continues, there will be one country with a Palestinian majority. This stretch has not been lost on many Palestinians, and support for the two state solution has dwindled among the Palestinians because many of them say, let's sit back and wait and it will be all ours. Because it will be one man, one vote with a Palestinian majority, and that is a very serious danger. That's why there are also commonalties - even commonalties between Rashid Khalidi and I because -

Roger Cohen: It's a matter of danger exist, why is Israel not being more serious about a two state solution, which is the only way to avoid a one state outcome.

Itamar Rabinovich: Because the answer is - because the party I voted for lost the last election.

Roger Cohen: Well, there you go. Thank you.

John Donovan: Rashid.

Rashid Khalidi: Palestinians negotiate. I'm a Palestinian American. I spent three years negotiating, you were dealing with the Syrians, I was dealing with -

Itamar Rabinovich: With Israelis.

Rashid Khalidi,: Yes. With Yaken Rubenstein (ph) specifically. And what we were facing then was an American commitment under the first Bush administration to do something if things were done, that prejudged or in some way prefigured an outcome and we came to them. And we said, wait a minute, Israelis are closing off Jerusalem, the close of Jerusalem was just starting in this period and settlement is continuing. They are eating the pie we are supposed to be negotiating and we got no response from the United States.

This was in 1991, went for years and years and years, Palestinians were negotiating. Palestinians negotiated with Israel without any problem for that entire decade and got absolutely nowhere. Now you can say the Oslo Accords, the Oslo Accords immiserated the Palestinians. Palestinian GDP decreased over that decade from 1990 to 2000. The Palestinians who were able to move anywhere in the occupied territories into Israel to the Golan Heights in 1990 or '91, '92 were locked into whatever you want to call them, Bantustans, ghettos whatever you want to call them by the end of that period of the Oslo Accord. So this process of settlement is not something which is just a minor issue. It is a central issue, it is absolutely central if you expect the Palestinian negotiate, this is something that should have been stopped 20 years ago, not 2010.

Stuart Eizenstat: Professor, you are historian. I was in charge of the economic dimension of the peace process. I can tell you your figures are totally incorrect. Between 1997 and 2000, the territories grew at an average of 5%, unemployment was down to 8% in the West Bank and 14% in Gaza. A 100,000 Palestinians were coming into Israel every single day to work. It was 40% of the GDP of the territories remittances. 20,000 Arab Palestinian business people could drive in without any checkpoints. Yes, 1997 and then what happened? Yasser Arafat in 2000 brought the whole house of cards down on the process, refusing the offer and instigating the second intifada. So it's very important to understand cause and effect here. We were on a real process of peace, I personally went to Gaza. I saw the Gaza industrial estate with 30 companies from all over the world creating 1200 jobs in Gaza, a second phase started. We had Israelis visiting Romolo (ph) over the weekend. We had 100,000 Palestinians coming into Israel every day to work.

John Donovan: Stuart, we see where you are going, but I just have a little bit more time left, woman on the balcony and just give a minute for the camera to find you.

Danielle Abraham: My name is Danielle Abraham (ph), I am at Argos - student at the Argos program of leadership and diplomacy that Herzliya in Israel. We just arrived two days ago. My question is about U.S. public opinion. Because as we saw on the last Presidential debate as in all presidential debates, the one thing that both can take always (inaudible) is the special relationship with Israel and this is not the coincidence. This is because the all studies and all polls show that the United States public supports this special relationship. Now, -

John Donovan: So what's your question?

Danielle Abraham: So my question is of course to Mr. Cohen and professor Khalidi should - isn't it a shame that this the public support of the people, isn't it a shame to American democracy that this is not factored in to this debate?

John Donovan: Well, Roger Cohen?

Roger Cohen: Thank you for that question. It makes any adjustment in U.S. policy toward Israel such as President Obama is now trying to accomplish extremely difficult. There is a state called Florida. It's a vital state in the U.S. presidential election. It has a large Jewish community. This calculation is not lost on America's leadership. President Obama, I understand, has been told by some Jewish congressman, if you want your health bill, step back on Israel. So the reality is indeed that it is very hard – [hissing and boos from audience] I have heard that reliably. The reality of the situation is that it is extremely difficult to steer a U.S. public opinion in any way toward any acceptance of an adjustment of policy towards the State of Israel. I think it should be done in the following terms: The President should explain that the adjustments he is making are in pursuit of peace and in pursuit of the long-term peace and security of the State of Israel.

Policies up to now have failed. Therefore, we should see a change.

John Donovan: Stuart Eizenstat?

Stuart Eizenstat: I was wondering how long it would take and who would raise the issue of quote unquote, "Untoward Jewish influence over U.S. formed policies." I am glad you finally (inaudible) came to it.

Roger Cohen: I didn't say untoward.

Stuart Eizenstat: Now let me just say I have served in three administrations. I didn't say all - this is a dangerous canard that 2% of the U.S. population has somehow got its hand around the neck of American foreign policy. American foreign policy towards Israel is supported by a bipartisan majority because the American public recognizes that Israel and the United States share common interest and common values.

And those are always counter balanced by oil interest, by corporate interest that have major defense interest, major business interest, that's the way policies is made in the United States, is just a clash of interest. But the notion that 2% of the U.S. population is driving a policy against where the public thinks simply belied by every survey that's been made.

Roger Cohen: Nobody said that.

John Donovan: Itamar Rabinovich

Itamar Rabinovich: Maybe you should elect a President from Alaska where there are no Jews.

Rashid Khalidi: You would like that.

John Donovan: There is a gentleman with the blazer and sweater. This may be our last question.

Unidentified Participant: My name is Allen Skolnick (ph). Israel as many of you know has 1.2 million Arabs living in Israel they are probably more mosque in Israel than or certainly than they are maybe close to synagogues in Europe. With that background in mind the presumption that we hear all during the discussion of course this debate is that Palestinian state if it was to be would have to be essentially without any Jews. The whole discussion is the settlements is the biggest impediment to peace, alter something out of the box, Roger Cohen, what is the Palestinian position which I think might in gender more, a better U.S. special relationship? Why isn't built on a basis of inclusion even at the scant change of minority of Jews and establish itself on enforcing

minority rights for some even for Jews and demonstrate its small character and its commitment to peace instead of having to give a constant reiteration of a new Arab country that will be one more without any Jews.

John Donovan: Roger Cohen.

Roger Cohen: Thank you sir. I'm not sure there are many Israelis who would want to go and live in the West Bank. Certainly, under the current conditions there are some who live there, I am not going to argue with this, that Israel is by far the most liberal and democratic state in the region. It has a free press, it has a relatively independent judiciary, it has democratic system, it has remarkable achievements in technology and its economy. It has everything except peace, and what we are talking about tonight is how the best to stay here this remarkable society toward whether it's requesting for and I don't think it's through the policy that Israel is currently pursuing or through the current banking that United States is giving for those polices that is what we are debating. Would a Palestinian state is ever comes into being should it offer ecology of opportunity for citizens of all race, religion, background, et cetera, yes, it should.

John Donovan: And that concludes around two of our debates. And here is where we are about to hear brief closing statements from each of the debaters in turn. Those statements will be two minutes each and it's their last chance to change your mind and from the live audience beforehand we knew where you stood before the debate actually begin on our motion the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. We asked you to vote before the debate where you stood and at that point 33% of you were for the motion and 42% were against and 25% remained undecided, you will be asked to vote once again and pick the winner in just a few minutes from now. But first we are going onto round three closing statements and speaking first against the motion. The U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. Stuart Eizenstat former ambassador to the European Union under Bill Clinton and Chief Domestic Policy Advisor to Jimmy Carter.

Stuart Eizenstat: Number one, Israel is not a recruitment tool for terrorism as Roger said, it is absolutely not. They recruit on the basis of hatred toward the west and towards secular pro-western Arab states. Number two, Israel has shown when there is a peace partner Satad Egypt. King Hussein and George that they will negotiate that they will make concessions and peace will come when the Palestinian leadership demonstrates a commitment like Arafat, like Hussein did and like Sadat did. Third, let's talk about concrete benefits.

Israel does not just act on its own interest. If for example in the first Gulf War 1991 agreed with President George H.W. Bush not to retaliate against the barrage of Saddam Hussein's scud missiles on Tel Aviv, staying in shelters so that President Bush could keep his coalition together in the first Gulf of war. Second, Israel gets concrete benefits by supporting the U.S. in terms of anti nuclear proliferation in the region destroying the nuclear reactor of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 1981, and more recently Syria's budding nuclear facility supported by North Korea and standing shoulder to shoulder with the U.S. on the Iranian nuclear arms ambitions, and allowing the U.S. to take the lead on sanctions. Israel shares real time intelligence. I have seen it with the U.S. on terrorism and to the U.S. not simply at itself on rends nuclear capabilities. General Keegan, the Former Head of Air Force Intelligence said, "I could not have obtained the same intelligence I receive from Israel if there were five CIAs. Israel also –

John Donovan: Stuart, your time is up, but I will give you one more sentence to summarize.

Stuart Eizenstat: Thank you. In terms of the economy itself which we haven't talked about. Israel serves as the location for every major American high-tech company developing cell phones and chips to keep America safe with passports - providing aerial vehicles to help our borders.

John Donovan: Thank you, Stuart Eizenstat. Summarizing for the motion, the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. Roger Cohen, a columnist and former foreign correspondent and foreign editor for the New York Times.

Roger Cohen: Ladies and gentlemen, if you strip away all the rhetoric of the opposing team. In the end, what are they are arguing for? They are arguing for more of the same. If you think more of the same is fine, if you think the growing hatreds, antagonism, estrangement in the area is just fine, then you should vote against the resolution and not for it, as we are arguing. I don't believe that's the case, I believe what's going on is unhealthy and the United States by stepping back would put pressure on Israel to adjust its policies and open new avenues to the new Middle East of which President Obama has spoken. In the end, you have to put your backbone where your wish bone is, and what does America wish for? Two states, Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security. And as we have described, uncritical U.S. support of Israel in policies that undermine the possibility of two states is just a recipe for further failure. What does America also wish for under President Obama? He wants a new relationship with the Islamic world. This will require more than just words and pretty speeches. It will require a new balance in the U.S. approach to the region a new readiness to speak to enemies, only then will we move forward. And if you think as Stu Eizenstat just suggested that if the United States succeeded in establishing a new and more harmonious relationship with the Islamic world this would have no effect whatsoever on the terrorist threat that the United States faces. Believe me, I think you are wrong. I would like to conclude with the words of Mahmoud Darwish, the great Palestinian poet who died last year and he wrote in his poem State of Siege, me or him that how war starts but it ends in awkward stances, me and him. It's time for American policy to reflect better the him and the me of the Middle East. For all sorts of reasons this will not be easy, which is why ladies and gentlemen, you would help in this difficult adjustment by being courageous and voting for the proposition tonight.

John Donovan: Thank you Roger Cohen. On a little bit of a course of these two statements turning into 2 minutes and 24 seconds, so I'm going to give that to everybody.

Our motion is U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel and summarizing his position against the motion. Itamar Rabinovich, former Israeli Ambassador to the United States and chief negotiator with Syria in the mid-1990s.

Itamar Rabinovich: I want to look at the vision, the dream. The President of United States on Air Force One, landing at an airport in Gaza wouldn't that be a great moment. It already happened,

Bill Clinton landed with Air Force One at an Air Force in Gaza in the late 1990s. There was an efforts by our opponent to describe a unilinear Israeli undermining of any effort to make peace between Israel and Palestinians to detriment of the region of the United States. But actually during the last 20 years and 30 years almost 40 years of the peace process that began in 1973 what kept the peace process going, it was American Israeli cooperation. There were some very high moments in this, the peace with Egypt, peace with Jordan. First Israeli visit to countries in the Gulf and in the North Africa and yes, Clinton landing in the Gaza strip, at an airport when it seemed that the Palestinian are underway to state of an independence before everything turned sour because of the change of mind of Yasser Arafat's conduct that led to the disastrous consequences of the last decade 2000 to 2010. Second, I think we had a problem, our debate was

diverted tonight from debate on the U.S. Israeli special relationship to a debate on the Palestine problem, a very worthy subject, but not exactly that the focus of the issue. The issue is here is the Middle East a crucial part of the world, here is an Arab world 330 million people almost half a billion in decade or two. This is not all subjected to the Palestinian issue. There are many other issues. Iran was barely mentioned tonight. Now I tell you, you go to somebody who lives in Kuwait, or somebody who lives in Cairo, or somebody who lives in Oman and asking what is uppermost in your mind. And he would say, Iran. The Iranian threat, the Iranian bomb, the Iranian expansionism.

And what do you expect. I expect the United States to protect me from Iran.

John Donovan: Thank you.

Itamar Rabinovich: Iran, the United States can do that –

John Donovan: Thank you. Our motion is the U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel. Our final speaker to summaries his position for the motion Rashid Khalidi professor at Columbia University and former advisor to the Palestinian delegation for Arab Israeli peace negotiations.

Rashid Khalidi: Thank you. You should vote for this proposition because it would end our record of failure in Palestinian Israeli peace making. And counter to the views of – what you just heard this is centrally important in the Middle East. You should vote for this proposition because it would stop the United States for enabling Israel in its worst habits of occupation and settlement, things that harm United States harm of course Palestinians but also harm Israel. Most importantly, you should vote for the proposition because it would help to bring peace and would be in the U.S. national interest. I've said that if you do not vote for this proposition you are voting for the status quo. More process no peace. Now that is not the status quo that is stable, that is a status quo it is evolving, I would suggest in a fashion not favorable to I think most of the interests that most of us share. Let me read quote briefly, as long as in this territory west of the Jordan there is only one political entity called Israel. It is going to be either non Jewish or non democratic. Speaker continued if this block of millions of Palestinians cannot vote this will become an apartheid state. This was not some anti-Semitism; this is not some Israel passer; this is Defense Minister of State of Israel, Ehud Barak speaking on the 3rd of February at Herzliya. That is status quo that is where it is going. It is in - ultimately a decision for the Israelis to take where they want to go, but we enable this, that is why you should vote for this proposition. And let me conclude by saying something about Iran. If Israel attacks Iran, in a situation where this special relation is unmodified, imagine if you will the impact on U.S. interests, on U.S. troops in Iraq, on the U.S. position in the Gulf and the Gulf itself. Now if this relationship remains unchanged, if United States is perceived as the hand maiden, the guardian, the enabler, of everything that Israel does we will be responsible when and if that catastrophic things happens. If Iran is a problem for the region not just for Israel, but it is not a problem to be resolved in the way that a lot of Israelis are pushing us to resolve it. That is why among many other reasons you should vote for the proposition.

John Donovan: Thank you Rashid Khalidi. And that concludes our closing statements and now it's time to learn which side you feel argued best, we are going to ask you again to go to the keypads at your seat. Our motion is that U.S. should step back from its special relationship with Israel if you agree with the motion now, push number 1, if you disagree, push number 2. If you remain undecided, push number 3. Or if you became undecided push number 3. And if you - if somebody is having some trouble, if you push the wrong button just push it, the one you want to

correct with and it will lock it. All right, so we are very close to getting the results which I think we are locking out and are being tabulated at the moment. So, before I get to those, first of all I want to thank our panelist for coming here in the spirit of listening as well as debating. I also want to thank the people in the audience who asked questions because there wasn't a clunker among them. Thank you all for your questions as well. I thought they are pretty good. Some future announcements. Our next day will be Tuesday March 16th, the motion then is Don't Blame Teacher Unions For Our failing Schools. Panelist for the motion are Kate McLaughlin, math teacher from Lowell, Massachusetts Gary Smuts who is Superintendent of the ABC Unified School District in California and Randi Weingarten who is president of the American Federation of Teachers. Against the motion, Terry Moe, Professor of Political Science at Stanford, Rod Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education and Larry Sands, the former teacher and president of California Teachers Empowerment Network. Intelligence Squared U.S. going to announce a change in our topic for the May 11th debate. The new motion for that debate is going to be this, Obama's foreign policy is gift to America's enemies.

With the Obama presidency now entering its second year, the administrations foreign policy taking shape and voices of many political opponents and even some supporters beginning to challenge his decisions we felt the time was right for a thoughtful debate on this topic. And actually debaters are booked now and we will announce soon. You can still get individual tickets by visiting our website and at the square ball box office. And join to become a fan of Intelligence Squared U.S. on Facebook and you can thereby receive a discount on upcoming debates. All of our debates as know can heard on more 200 NPR stations across the nation and you can watch our spring debates on Bloomberg Television network. Air dates and times can be found in your program tonight and don't to read about tonight's debate in the next edition of Newsweek, you can pick up the current issue on your way out. Okay, now it's all in, and we have the final results remember the team the changes the most minds is declared our winner and here it is, - I have an empty page.

I picked up the wrong one. Nothing happened. Before the debate, 33% of you were for the motion, 42% of you were against the motion, 25% were undecided that the U.S. should step back from a special relationship with Israel. After the debate, 49% agree with the motion, 47% are against, 4% undecided. For the motion are our winners, congratulations to them. Thanks to all of you from me, John Donvan and Intelligence Squared U.S.