

July 1, 2015

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*"In Washington, the Carter administration, **which until today had played no role in helping arrange what had been an almost unthinkable meeting**, appeared to be dramatically revising upward its opinion of the event's importance."*

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Always ungracious, Carter has started running down the worst president's record. Pickerhead thinks that's like taking coals to Newcastle. **Free Beacon** has the story. *President Obama was criticized last week by the president he is often compared to, Jimmy Carter.*

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**Jonah Goldberg** writes on race identity as practiced by the left.

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**Bret Stephens** says Michael Oren has made the right enemies.

*Michael Oren, Israel's former ambassador to the United States, has written the smartest and juiciest diplomatic memoir that I've read in years, and I've read my share. The book, called "Ally," has the added virtues of being politically relevant and historically important. This has the Obama administration—which doesn't come out looking too good in Mr. Oren's account—in an epic snit.*

*The tantrum began two weeks ago, when Mr. Oren penned an op-ed in this newspaper undiplomatically titled "How Obama Abandoned Israel." The article did not acquit Israel of making mistakes in its relations with the White House, but pointed out that most of those mistakes were bungles of execution. The administration's slights toward Israel were usually premeditated.*

*Like, for instance, keeping Jerusalem in the dark about Washington's back-channel negotiations with Tehran, which is why Israel appears to be spying on the nuclear talks in Switzerland. Or leaking news of secret Israeli military operations against Hezbollah in Syria.*

Mr. Oren's op-ed prompted Dan Shapiro, U.S. ambassador in Tel Aviv, to call Mr. Netanyahu and demand he publicly denounce the op-ed. The prime minister demurred on grounds that Mr. Oren, now a member of the Knesset, no longer works for him. The former ambassador, also one of Israel's most celebrated historians, isn't even a member of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud party, which makes him hard to typecast as a right-wing apparatchik. ...

... His (**Oren's**) memoir is the best contribution yet to a growing literature—from Vali Nasr's "Dispensable Nation" to [Leon Panetta's](#) "Worthy Fights"—describing how foreign policy is made in the Age of Obama: lofty in its pronouncements and rich in its self-regard, but incompetent in its execution and dismal in its results. Good for Mr. Oren for providing such comprehensive evidence of the facts as he lived them.

We opened today kicking Carter and close with [John Hinderaker](#) pointing out the latest bit of hypocrisy from the NY Times.

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## Federalist

### [Jimmy Carter Tries To Rewrite Israel's History](#)

***The former president wants to take credit for Middle East peace. To do so he has to skip over a momentous historic event.***

by David Harsanyi

Jimmy Carter's new book, "A Full Life: Reflections at 90" is a breezy and predictable reminiscence of the 39th president's life, from his rural Georgia upbringing to his post-presidential charitable work. You should take it out of the library. I can't admit to reading every word, but I did have a particular interest in the parts focusing on Carter's perception of his own presidency. And, as you might have guessed, according to Jimmy Carter Jimmy Carter is one of the dynamic and indispensable leaders this country has ever known.

One chapter that might catch the attention of a curious reader is titled “Issues Mostly Resolved.” So what issues were solved during the Jimmy Carter years? Well, “Human Rights and Latin America,” “The Hostage Crisis, and the Final Year,” “Hungarian Crown,” “China,” and yes, “Middle East Peace.” Good to know that he put that one to bed.

Carter claims that during his 1976 campaign, many voters were seeking assurances about his good will towards Israel. It’s then, says Carter, that he “became increasingly interested in bringing permanent peace to Israel and its neighbors.” The subsequent subchapter not only offers an absurd framing of the Middle East conflict in the late 70s, but it’s built upon a complete myth. Carter claims to have single handily convinced a reluctant and fascistic Menachem Begin to come to terms with kind-hearted and amenable Anwar Sadat. It took that Carter personal touch.

One weekend when our family was enjoying Camp David, Rosalynn suggested that this would be an ideal place for negotiating teams to benefit from the privacy and quiet atmosphere. I agreed with her and sent handwritten invitations to Begin and Sadat in August 1978 to join me for comprehensive peace talks. They both accepted.

Carter expediently skips one historic event that puts his handwritten notes into some perspective.

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The peace deal fell into Jimmy Carter’s lap. The United States provided the financial backing to make the arrangement possible, but the idea that Carter precipitated the peace is preposterous. Since he left office, Carter has given his own backing to all brands of terrorist, dictator and tyranny. It is one of the most embarrassing post presidencies in American history. Concocting a legacy that isn’t won’t help.

### Free Beacon

#### [Jimmy Carter: Obama’s Foreign Policy Accomplishments ‘Minimal’](#)

by Blake Seitz

President Obama was criticized last week by the president he is often compared to, Jimmy Carter.

Carter told an Aspen Institute audience that Obama’s accomplishments on foreign policy “have been minimal” and that the United States’ influence is “lower than it was six or seven years ago.”

After proclaiming John Kerry “one of the best secretaries of state we’ve ever had,” [Carter dumped cold water](#) on Obama’s record abroad.

“On the world stage, I think [Obama’s accomplishments] have been minimal,” Carter said. “I think he has done some good things domestically, like health reform and so forth. But on the world stage, just to be objective about it, I can’t think of many nations in the world where we have a better relationship now than when he took over.”

Carter declined to blame Obama for the U.S.’s dismal foreign policy outlook, stating simply that circumstances “have evolved.” However, he did state that the U.S. had suffered a reversal of fortunes in foreign policy since Obama took over from President George W. Bush.

“I would say the U.S.’s influence and prestige and respect in the world is probably lower than it was six or seven years ago,” Carter said.

As president, Carter presided over a series of foreign policy challenges as Iran seized American hostages and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. He spent the last year of his presidency trying to counter these threats, in part by articulating [the Carter Doctrine](#), a reversal from his previously standoffish foreign policy.

By contrast, Obama has not challenged his core foreign policy assumptions in the face of aggression from a host of bad actors.

This is not the first time the dovish former president has criticized Obama’s inaction. Last year, Carter said that the U.S. “waited too long” to confront the Islamic State. “We let the Islamic State build up its money, capability and strength and weapons while it was still in Syria,” Carter [told](#) the *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*.

Carter laid out a policy to defeat IS that is more aggressive than the policy currently being pursued by the Obama administration.

“If we keep on working in Iraq and have some ground troops to follow up when we do our bombing, there is a possibility of success,” Carter said.

Obama has so far shrunk from committing U.S. combat troops to defeat IS.

## **National Review** **[Liberals Are Playing a Racial Shell Game](#)** by Jonah Goldberg

Let me get this straight.

Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren is something of a dashboard saint to American liberals, principally for her retrograde leftism on economics. It was alleged a few years ago that she spent much of her professional career lying about her fictitious Native American roots. Warren listed herself as a minority in a professional directory and identified herself as a Native American. There was no evidence to support her claim, other than her own family lore and her

personal conviction that she feels part Indian. And yet, when Republicans criticized her for it, they were denounced as racist by many defenders.

Touré, a professional expert on all things racial, wrote in *Time* magazine, “Warren has every right to define herself” as part Native American. “The only way we could truly gauge Warren’s Indian-ness would be to see how much being an American Indian means to her,” he explained.

Interesting thought, that.

A few weeks ago, a woman named Rachel Dolezal, another self-proclaimed expert on race (she taught Africana studies and was, until recently, the head of the Spokane, Wash., chapter of the NAACP), was revealed to be faking it. Dolezal is white underneath her bronzer and braids. Rather than apologize for her fraud, she spoke eloquently about the fact that she just feels black. “I identify as black,” Dolezal explained on NBC’s *Today*.

Touré’s response? Fury. “When she says she knows what it’s like to experience blackness, I’m just like, no! You don’t! Just stop,” he fumed on MSNBC. “And I find it offensive that you would suggest that you do.”

While you try to find a coherent standard in this intellectual morass, I’m going to move on.

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So: We live in a world where Bobby Jindal is a fake Indian, but it’s racist to say an older white woman isn’t a real one (the correct term being “Native American,” of course). Nikki Haley is a villain for “suppressing” her Indian roots, but Senator Ted Cruz is a fraud for touting his Cuban roots. (Cruz was recently grilled by Bloomberg’s Mark Halperin about how authentically Cuban he really is. At least Halperin later apologized.)

In *Barack Obama: The Story*, biographer David Maraniss recounts how Obama didn’t see himself as an American in college, mostly hanging out with Pakistani students as a fellow

“outsider.” But as his political ambitions grew, he realized that had to change. His friend Beenu Mahmood told Maraniss that Obama was “the most deliberate person I ever met in terms of constructing his own identity.”

In Obama’s memoir, *Dreams from My Father*, he writes passionately about his conscious decision to identify as black, despite his mixed heritage, “to avoid being mistaken for a sellout.” Obama scrubbed any hint of white identity, eventually returning to the name “Barack” instead of “Barry.” One has to wonder: What if he’d made a different choice? Would the *Washington Post* and other outlets tout the line, “There isn’t a lot of black left in Barack Obama”?

I very much doubt it, so long as Obama ran as a Democrat.

**WSJ**

### **The President Against the Historian**

***Michael Oren’s candid account of Obama’s Mideast policy has won him the right enemies.***

by Bret Stephens

Michael Oren, Israel’s former ambassador to the United States, has written the smartest and juiciest diplomatic memoir that I’ve read in years, and I’ve read my share. The book, called “Ally,” has the added virtues of being politically relevant and historically important. This has the Obama administration—which doesn’t come out looking too good in Mr. Oren’s account—in an epic snit.

The tantrum began two weeks ago, when Mr. Oren penned an [op-ed](#) in this newspaper undiplomatically titled “How Obama Abandoned Israel.” The article did not acquit Israel of making mistakes in its relations with the White House, but pointed out that most of those mistakes were bungles of execution. The administration’s slights toward Israel were usually premeditated.

Like, for instance, keeping Jerusalem in the dark about Washington’s back-channel negotiations with Tehran, which is why Israel appears to be [spying](#) on the nuclear talks in Switzerland. Or leaking news of secret Israeli military operations against Hezbollah in Syria.

Mr. Oren’s op-ed prompted Dan Shapiro, U.S. ambassador in Tel Aviv, to call Mr. Netanyahu and demand he publicly denounce the op-ed. The prime minister demurred on grounds that Mr. Oren, now a member of the Knesset, no longer works for him. The former ambassador, also one of Israel’s most celebrated historians, isn’t even a member of Mr. Netanyahu’s Likud party, which makes him hard to typecast as a right-wing apparatchik.

But it’s typical of the administration that no Israeli slight is too minor not to be met with overreaction—and not only because Mr. Obama and his entourage have thin skins. One of the revelations of “Ally” is how eager the administration was to fabricate crises with Israel, apparently on the theory that strained relations would mollify Palestinians and extract concessions from Mr. Netanyahu.



To some extent, it worked: In 2009, Mr. Netanyahu endorsed a Palestinian state, an unprecedented step for a Likud leader, and he later imposed a 10-month moratorium on settlement construction, a step not even Labor Party leaders like Yitzhak Rabin ever took.

But no Israeli concession could ever appease Mr. Obama, who had the habit of demanding heroic political risks from Mr. Netanyahu while expecting heroic deference in return. In 2010, during a visit from [Joe Biden](#), an Israeli functionary approved permits for the housing construction in a neighborhood of Jerusalem that Israel considers an integral part of the municipality but Palestinians consider a settlement.

The administration took the Palestinian side. [Hillary Clinton](#) spent 45 minutes berating Mr. Netanyahu over the phone. Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg “summoned” Mr. Oren to Foggy Bottom and read out his list of administration demands. What follows is one of the more memorable scenes in “Ally.”

“Steinberg added his own furious comments—department staffers, I later heard, listened in on our conversation and cheered—about Israel’s insult to the president and the pride of the United States. Then came my turn to respond.

“ ‘Let me get this straight,’ I began. ‘We inadvertently slight the vice president and apologize, and I become the first foreign ambassador summoned by this administration to the State Department. Bashar al-Assad hosts Iranian president Ahmadinejad, who calls for murdering seven million Israelis, but do you summon Syria’s ambassador? No, you send your ambassador back to Damascus.’ ”

“Ally” is filled with such scenes, which helps explain why it infuriates the administration. Truth hurts. President Obama constantly boasts that he’s the best friend Israel has ever had. After reading Mr. Oren’s book, a fairer assessment is that Mr. Obama is a great friend when the decisions are easy—rushing firefighting equipment to Israel during a forest fire—a grudging friend when the decisions are uncomfortable—opposing the Palestinian bid for statehood at the U.N.—and no friend at all when the decisions are hard—stopping Iran from getting a bomb.

Best friends are with you when the decisions are hard.

Since “Ally” was published, Mr. Oren has been denounced in near-hysterical terms in the media, Israeli and American. In Israel the carping is politics as usual and in the U.S. it’s sucking-up-to-the-president as usual. The nastiest comments came from Leon Wieseltier, the gray eminence of minor magazines, and the most tedious ones came from the Anti-Defamation League, that factory of moral pronouncement. When these are the people yelling at you, you’ve likely done something right.

Mr. Oren has. His memoir is the best contribution yet to a growing literature—from Vali Nasr’s “Dispensable Nation” to [Leon Panetta](#)’s “Worthy Fights”—describing how foreign policy is made in the Age of Obama: lofty in its pronouncements and rich in its self-regard, but incompetent in its execution and dismal in its results. Good for Mr. Oren for providing such comprehensive evidence of the facts as he lived them.



## Power Line

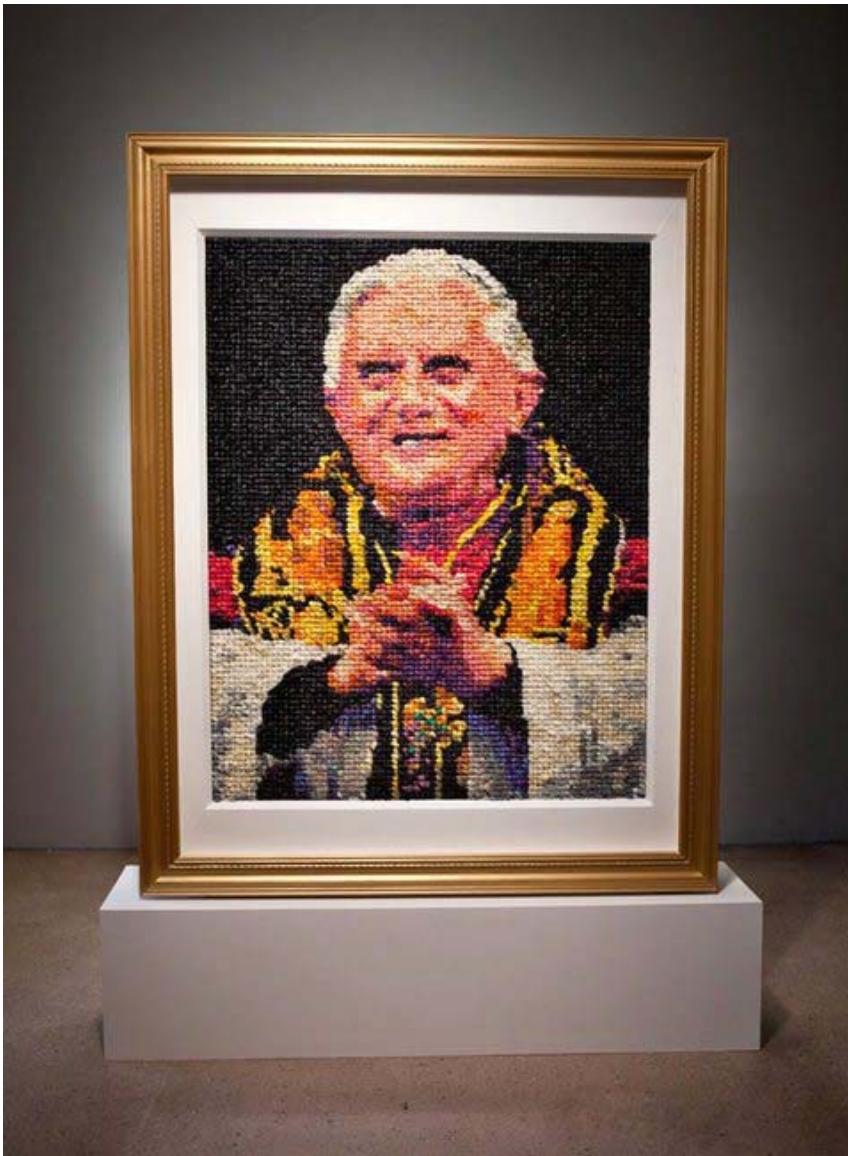
### [New York Times: The Ultimate in Hypocrisy](#)

by John Hinderaker

This is from yesterday's [Twitchy](#), but, assuming that most of our readers don't haunt Twitter, it bears repeating here. Following the Charlie Hebdo murders, the New York Times covered the terrorist attack, but declined to print any of Charlie Hebdo's mocking images of Muhammad. The paper [self-righteously declared](#) a policy against showing religious images that may be deemed offensive:

"Out of respect to our readers we have avoided those we felt were offensive," New York Times executive editor Dean Baquet told The Huffington Post on Monday night....

But that was then and this is now. Or, put another way, no one is afraid of being slaughtered by Catholics. So yesterday's [ArtsBeat](#) section featured this portrait of Pope Benedict XVI made from 17,000 condoms:



The "artist" made no bones about the piece's political intent—with which, of course, the Times agrees:

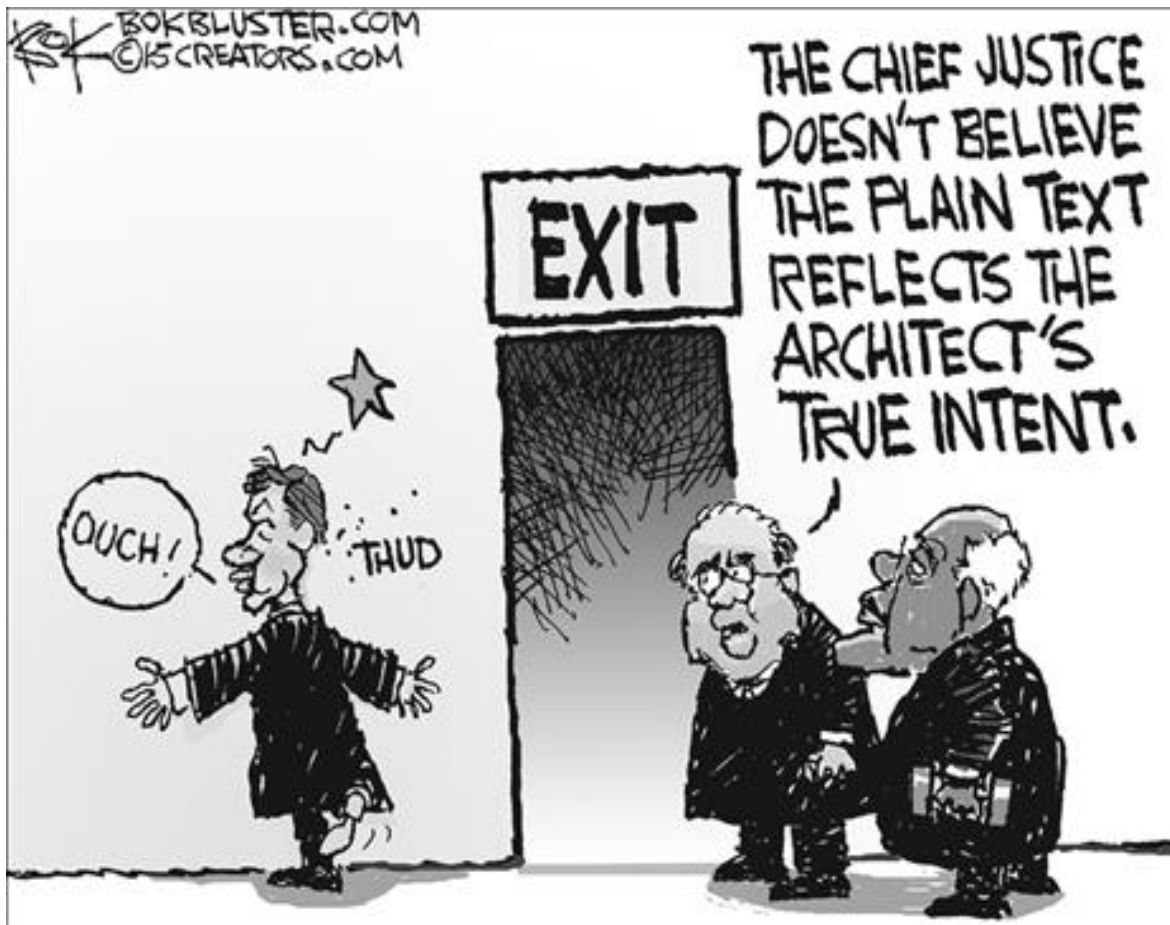
Niki Johnson of Milwaukee, the artist who created the work, said in an interview that she disagreed with Benedict's conservative social positions, including a statement that condoms could contribute to the spread of AIDS in Africa. The portrait, she said, is "not hate-based," but rather a way to critique Benedict's views while raising awareness about public health.

"What I want to do is really destigmatize the condom, normalize it," Ms. Johnson said.

Another profile in courage at the Times. So far, no beheadings have been reported in Milwaukee.







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