



Innocent Abroad: An Intimate Account of American Peace Diplomacy in the Middle East

Martin Indyk

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Making peace in the long-troubled Middle East is likely to be one of the top priorities of the next American president. He will need to take account of the important lessons from past attempts, which are described and analyzed here in a gripping book by a renowned expert who served twice as U.S. ambassador to Israel and as Middle East adviser to President Clinton.

Martin Indyk draws on his many years of intense involvement in the region to provide the inside story of the last time the United States employed sustained diplomacy to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and change the behavior of rogue regimes in Iraq and Iran.

Innocent Abroad is an insightful history and a poignant memoir. Indyk provides a fascinating examination of the ironic consequences when American naïveté meets Middle Eastern cynicism in the region's political bazaars. He dissects the very different strategies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush to explain why they both faced such difficulties remaking the Middle East in their images of a more peaceful or democratic place. He provides new details of the breakdown of the Arab-Israeli peace talks at Camp David, of the CIA's failure to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and of Clinton's attempts to negotiate with Iran's president.

Indyk takes us inside the Oval Office, the Situation Room, the palaces of Arab potentates, and the offices of Israeli prime ministers. He draws intimate portraits of the American, Israeli, and Arab leaders he worked with, including Israel's Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, and Ariel Sharon; the PLO's Yasser Arafat; Egypt's Hosni Mubarak; and Syria's Hafez al-Asad. He describes in vivid detail high-level meetings, demonstrating how difficult it is for American presidents to understand the motives and intentions of Middle Eastern leaders and how easy it is for them to miss those rare moments when these leaders are willing to act in ways that can produce breakthroughs to peace.

Innocent Abroad is an extraordinarily candid and enthralling account, crucially important in grasping the obstacles that have confounded the efforts of recent presidents. As a new administration takes power, this experienced diplomat distills the lessons of past failures to chart a new way forward that will be required reading.

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