

Who Said What?

Democrat? Republican? American? Israeli?

- 1 President George W. Bush
- 2 Sen. Joseph Lieberman
- 3 Sen. Jon Cornyn
- 4 House Speaker Nancy Pelosi
- 5 Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
- 6 House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer
- 7 Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
- 8 Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl



- A** "The rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza, which were increasing in frequency and range, constituted an unacceptable security threat to which Israel had a responsibility to respond."
- B** "I think what the Israelis are doing is very important. I think this terrorist organization, Hamas, has got to be put away."
- C** "Israel is acting in clear self-defense in response to heinous rocket attacks from Hamas-controlled Gaza."
- D** "This recent outburst of violence was instigated by Hamas, a Palestinian terrorist group supported by Iran and Syria that calls for Israel's destruction."
- E** "Three years ago, Israel withdrew from every square inch of Gaza. And since that withdrawal, [Israel's] civilians have been targeted by more than 6,000 rockets and mortars fired from Gaza. In the face of this relentless bombardment, Israel has acted with a restraint that other countries, faced with a similar threat, would find hard to fathom."
- F** "Israel's recent defensive military operations in the Gaza Strip against Hamas have been both warranted and fully justified. ... Hamas is nothing more than a terrorist organization driven by hatred, fear, and radical ideology."
- G** "A victory for Hamas is not simply a victory for Hamas; it is a victory for Iran. And a defeat for Hamas, which is in reach if we allow the Israeli action to continue, is a defeat for Iran and a victory for the United States and for the forces of democracy..."
- H** "Americans must support Israel because we understand since 9/11 that terrorism anywhere is a threat to free people everywhere."

ANSWERS: A: 4; B: 7; C: 6; D: 1; E: 5; F: 3; G: 2; H: 8

flict. Similarly, a Rasmussen study in early January—the first to survey American public opinion specifically regarding the Israeli attack on Gaza—found that Americans generally were “closely divided over whether the Jewish state should be taking military action against militants in the Gaza Strip” (41 to 44 percent, with 15 percent undecided), but Democratic voters overwhelmingly opposed the Israeli offensive—by a 24-point margin (31 to 55 percent). Yet those significant divisions were nowhere to be found in the actions of their ostensible representatives.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to find in American political life any other issue of this consequence, complexity, and controversy that generates such absolute agreement within our political class. Even in the intense climate that prevailed in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, when most of America's elite institutions notoriously marched lock-step behind President Bush, there was substantial minority dissent. As pliant as the Democratic Party and the Congress were, there were still 22 senators and 133 House members—more than half of the Democratic caucus—willing to vote against the American invasion of Iraq.

There are few matters more important to America's future than the extent to which we continue to involve ourselves in endless Middle East wars. Our immersion in these conflicts profoundly affects every aspect of our country's welfare—military, diplomatic, economic, and civil. Yet there is an almost perfect inverse relationship between the significance of these policy questions and the extent to which they are debated by our political leaders. ■

Glenn Greenwald is author of Great American Hypocrites: Toppling the Big Myths of Republican Politics.

Iron Gates

Obama's secretary of defense is still a Bush man.

By Jeff Huber

SHORTLY AFTER Robert Gates replaced Donald Rumsfeld as secretary of defense, *New York Times* columnist David Brooks called him a "godsend." That was hardly the first or last time Brooks failed to see through a veneer. In fairly short order, Robert Gates has become a champion of American warmongery and, in many ways, a more effective handmaiden of the neoconservative agenda than Rummy ever was.

Gates can sound like the steady hand at the helm of our ship of war. "The United States is unlikely to repeat another Iraq or Afghanistan," he assures us. "U.S. predominance in conventional warfare," he says, "is sustainable for the medium term given current trends," and "the days of hair-trigger superpower confrontation are over."

But pass a thumbnail over his rhetoric and you'll find a man with the plan to keep America perpetually mired in Third World wars while arming itself to fight World War III.

Since the Berlin Wall came down, America's armed services have been on a mission to justify their budgets. Jargon like "transformation" and "revolution in military affairs" dominated force-planning strategies throughout the 1990s. With no rival for open-ocean supremacy, the Navy focused on projecting air and land power ashore from littoral waters. The Army, lacking a large continental conflict to fight or prevent, retooled itself for rapid deployment to global hot spots. Absent any air superiority challenge or a strategic target set to bomb, the Air Force became the Army's chauffeur. The result was a Navy that's a coast guard with an air force

and an army, an Army that's a marine corps, and an Air Force that's an airline.

This Dr. Moreau force structure failed to defend us against the 9/11 attacks or to deter them, and only Bill Kristol and his thousand closest friends think our military is serving America's interests overseas. Yet incredibly, one of Gates's stated goals is "sustaining the institution."

In the latest issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Gates says, "The defining principle of the Pentagon's new National Defense Strategy is balance." His idea of balance seems to cover the spectrum from plucking cats out of trees to projecting power beyond the Van Allen radiation belt.

Gates admits that we have no need to prepare for a major ground war and says he expects we'll steer clear of further counterinsurgency bogs, but he was also behind the initiative to add 92,000 troops to the Army and Marines by 2011—the biggest boost in ground-force manning since the long war in Vietnam. Now Gates wants young bodies to wage a long war against an -ism, a kind of war that the globally respected defense analysts at the Rand Corporation insist is best conducted with "a light U.S. military footprint or none at all."

Displaying MacArthuresque disdain for the campaign promises of the new commander in chief and the status of forces agreement between Iraq and the U.S., Gates says, "there will continue to be some kind of U.S. advisory and counterterrorism effort in Iraq for years to come." One gathers that he means "years to come after 2011." Afghanistan, he says, "will require a significant U.S. military and economic commitment for some time."

Gates doesn't try to justify American entanglement in the Middle East with the standard "if we leave, they'll follow us here" boo. Maybe he's thinking everyone realizes by now that "they" don't have a navy or air force that can get them here in significant numbers, and they can't jump or swim that far. But the arguments he does make for staying the quagmire course are just as preposterous: "The United States' ability to deal with future threats will depend on its performance in current conflicts."

Nothing in history indicates that the result of any given war dictates the outcome of conflicts that follow. America was on its way to posting an undefeated century until our fiasco in Southeast Asia came along. By Gates's logic, the United States should have been done as a superpower after Vietnam, but we went on instead to become the first global hegemon.

Everyone from the ancient Stoics to your grandma has admonished you not to worry what others think of you. But Gates would have the United States persist in two self-defeating wars for fear of being taunted on the playground. *Ahmed says you're a sissy if you stop hammering that nail into your eye.* Imagine what Ahmed will think of us if we don't stop hammering.

Few deceptions of the American public in the 21st century have been quite so cruel as the myth of the "successful counterinsurgency." The only ones who ever truly win an insurgency war are those with home-field advantage. The best you can do in an away game is to cut your losses early or stay so long that by the time you leave nobody notices.

Gates says that our military "became an effective instrument of counterinsurgency" in Iraq, but he skirts the fact that the improved violence statistics largely came about as a result of "Teflon General" David Petraeus bribing militiamen not to use the guns he gave them. Now