

Monographs

Israel: A Strategic Asset for the United States

[Robert D. Blackwill](#) and [Walter B. Slocombe](#)

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Americans traditionally support close ties with Israel for historical and moral reasons, but two leading foreign policy experts say that another compelling rationale is too often overlooked: the important contributions Israel makes to U.S. national interests.

"Shared values and moral responsibility remain unshakable foundations of U.S.-Israel relations," argue Robert D. Blackwill and Walter B. Slocombe in their new report, *Israel: A Strategic Asset for the United States*. "But the relationship stands equally on an underappreciated third leg: common national interests and collaborative action to advance those interests."

The authors enumerate specific important contributions Israel makes to U.S. national interests, ranging from intelligence sharing and counterterrorism cooperation to joint efforts in missile defense and unmanned aerial vehicles. Noting certain unique competencies of Israel's defense industry, they underscore the growing importance to the U.S. military of purchases of Israeli defense goods and, looking to the future, cite Israel's world-class expertise in cyberdefense and national resilience planning as advantages that will increasingly redound to the benefit of the United States.

Blackwill and Slocombe urge senior U.S. officials to deepen cooperation with Israel in order to maximize the strategic benefits America can derive from this relationship, noting that any costs are markedly outweighed by the many ways Israeli actions bolster U.S. national interests.

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THE AUTHORS

Robert D. Blackwill is the Henry A. Kissinger senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. In government, he served under George W. Bush as U.S. ambassador to India and then as deputy assistant to the president, deputy national security adviser for strategic planning, and presidential envoy to Iraq. A former senior State Department official and National Security Council aide for European and Soviet affairs, he served out of government as a senior fellow at the Rand Corporation, president of BGR International, and associate dean of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Walter B. Slocombe is senior counsel in Caplin & Drysdale's Washington, DC, office. A former Rhodes scholar, his lengthy government resume includes service in the Pentagon throughout the Clinton and Carter administrations, including his appointment as under secretary of defense for policy from 1994 to 2001. In 2003, he served as senior advisor for national defense in the Coalition Provisional Authority for Iraq.

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