

Conference Reports

Proceedings of the 2010 Soref Symposium and 25th Anniversary Celebration

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FEATURING

Gen. James L. Jones, Thomas Friedman, William Kristol, Martin Kramer, and David Makovsky

THE PROCEEDINGS

In 1985, a small group of visionary Americans committed to advancing U.S. interests in the Middle East established the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Twenty-five years later, a special Soref Symposium celebrated the extraordinary achievement of the Institute's founders and fellows.

This gala celebration centered on two keynote events: the Michael Stein Address on U.S. Middle East Policy delivered by Gen. (Ret.) James L. Jones, national security advisor to President Obama, and a panel discussion on Obama administration Middle East policy featuring New York Times foreign affairs columnist Thomas Friedman, Weekly Standard founder and editor William Kristol, Washington Institute Wexler-Fromer fellow [Martin Kramer](#), and director of the Institute's [Project on the Middle East Peace Process](#) [David Makovsky](#).

General Jones, speaking before an audience of policymakers, diplomats, media, and Institute trustees, delivered one of the most significant statements of administration Middle East policy this year. The heart of the speech was what can be termed the administration's bill of indictment against the Islamic Republic of Iran, setting the predicate for possible further action to fulfill the U.S. commitment "to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons." The Friedman-Kristol-Kramer-Makovsky panel featured vigorous debate on a wide range of current U.S. policy challenges, including the Iranian nuclear issue, the current impasse in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking, America's "addiction" to oil, and strategies to combat Islamist radicalism.

These anniversary proceedings, presented as edited transcriptions, capture the celebration of Washington Institute achievements over the past quarter-century and illustrate why the Institute remains such a vital force in U.S. Middle East policymaking today.