
NEXT KCDW MEETING APR. 27TH Yacht Club Broiler – No host lunch – 11:30 am; Meeting – 12:30 pm. Our discussion this month will be about Charter Schools. NO RSVP required. Please bring canned goods for the food bank.

I'M GOING TO MISS THIS MAN – *by Jo Fox Burr*

Before Lawrence O'Donnell's interview with Jeffrey Goldberg about his article, 'The Obama Doctrine,' published in *The Atlantic* (4/8/2016), O'Donnell said, "If you read only one foreign policy article in your life, let it be this one." So I read it. O'Donnell was right.

This lengthy 72-page article is based on a series of interviews Goldberg has done with Obama spanning several years, starting in 2006 when he was still a US Senator. It spells out what could only be called a doctrine, as it delineates a foreign policy reorientation which definitely deviates from the path followed by past administrations. The basic long-term thrust being to move away from such a dominating focus on the Middle East toward a refocus on Asia, in particular China, Africa, and Latin America. There is also a greater focus on climate change and the resulting effects it will increasingly have on world economics and politics. What Goldberg details from his discussions with Obama, and a few others, are the ever more tremendous complexities involved in foreign policy these days. There is no way to summarize it all, but here are a few main points.

You remember Einstein's definition of insanity – doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. While this is not explicit, reading this article makes me think this is how Obama views what we have been doing in the Middle East prior to his presidency, and he thinks it is time to do something different. When Syria's Assad used sarin gas to kill over 1000 of his own people, he crossed a red line set by Obama. The world waited to see if Obama would fire missiles in retaliation, but at the last moment he pulled back. This, of course, resulted in a fair amount of criticism, both domestically and from abroad.

However what Obama saw was that such an action would lead us into a trap set by both allies and adversaries, and more significantly by conventional expectations of what an American President should do. At the same time, it would not succeed in destroying the chemical weapons. So what did Obama do instead? He took Putin aside at the next G20 summit and told him if he got Assad to get rid of the chemical weapons, it would eliminate the need for the US to take military action. Ultimately, Assad agreed, so the weapons were destroyed and a war was avoided. Still, critics decry Obama's credibility because he failed to use the military when he initially warned he would. Instead he used diplomacy. He knew it would cost him politically, but still he had the courage to take the personal sacrifice to follow what he considered a more rational course.

Because of America's energy revolution, Obama thinks the Middle East will soon be of little economic relevance to us. To him the Middle East seems like a problem we cannot solve, at least partially because of our past history in the region. Instead he would like to see the Middle East begin to try to solve its own problems. In particular, he thinks the Saudis should come to terms with sharing the neighborhood with Iran and settle on a kind of 'cold peace.' This is definitely a different approach. The

problem is that ISIS and the like do pose a threat to us, so he cannot walk away just yet. The frustrating part of this to him is that it is getting in the way of the pursuits he considers to be more important objectives in the long term.

Obama is very concerned about being careful to act only when our national security is threatened. He does not feel we can or should try to solve all problems. Libya is a case in point for him. He felt like they did everything right and it still did not work out. It is a lesson which he bears in mind when faced with similar situations.

There is so much more to this article, but here's the main takeaway. We have been very fortunate to have such an intelligent, thoughtful, selfless President managing our foreign policy for the last seven years. George W. Bush left a terrible mess. Obama is doing what he can to not leave a similar mess for the next president. Even if he succeeds in doing this, it is clear from this article that given the current complex world situation, there is no way that either Trump or Cruz could possibly keep us safe. For this reason alone, it is imperative to ensure we elect a Democrat to replace him. The world cannot afford to let the dysfunctional GOP take control of the US Presidency.

Special Note: Normally after our May General Meeting, we have a picnic and take a break for the rest of the Summer. This year, because it is an election year, we will be holding a General Meeting in both May and June – followed by our picnic in July.

OTHER UPCOMING DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS AND

Support

Contact site support at support@kitsapdemocraticwomen.org

EVENTS: (*GM designates a general membership meeting)

Kitsap Co. Dem. Central Com: GM* Apr 18th (Monday); 6:30 pm Desserts; 7 pm meeting; Eagles Nest

23rd Leg. District Democrats: GM* Jun 21st (Tuesday); 6:30 pm social time; 7 pm meeting; Poulsbo Library

26th Leg. District Democrats: GM* May 5th (Thursday); 7-9 pm; Kitsap Rm, Givens Ctr 1026 Sidney Rd, Port Orchard

35th Leg. District Democrats: GM* May 14th (Saturday); Noon – 2 pm; Olympic College Shelton, 937 Alpine Way

“[For America to be successful in leading the world] I believe that we have to avoid being simplistic. I think we have to build resilience and make sure that our political debates are grounded in reality. It’s not that I don’t appreciate the value of theater in political communications; it’s that the habits we – the media, politicians – have gotten into, and how we talk about these issues, are so detached so often from what we need to be doing that for me to satisfy the cable news hype-fest would lead to us making worse and worse decisions over time.” - President Barack Obama, taken from The Atlantic, 4/8/2016, The Obama Doctrine by Jeffrey Goldberg

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CONTRIBUTE TO THE BAKELESS BAKE SALE!!!**

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