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Obama & Bibi

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Distinctly Catholic

If diplomacy is two parts choreography to one part substance, the choreography of yesterday's meeting between President Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu was exquisite and designed to show that the substance of the relationship between our two nations remains strong.

Watching the firm grasp, the easy smiles, the rare photos of the saunter from the Oval Office to the waiting motorcade, I was reminded of an earlier time, when President Harry S. Truman had to stare down his own State Department when he decided to recognize the State of Israel in 1948. Truman could not have known that the young state would become the only recognizable democracy in the region, that it would be the only nation in the Mideast that frustrates but does not imprison its political and human rights activists. Truman could not have known, what Obama knows, which is there is not one of these goofy-leftie, anti-Israeli protesters who would want to live in Gaza and be subject to the criminal thugs of the Hamas regime there.

I read the other day that an Israeli soldier had been indicted by the Israeli government for manslaughter in the shooting death of two Palestinian women last year, during the Israeli Defense Forces' incursion into Gaza. I am sure some saw this as evidence of Israeli brutality, but I saw it as evidence of Israeli civilization. An Israeli soldier is being hauled before a criminal court by his own government because he killed innocents. I remember 9/11, another day when innocents were killed, and I remember the dancing in the streets of Gaza.

Of course, as the President said, our relationship with Israel is "unbreakable." It is built on common values as well as common interests. One of those values is that those who murder innocents should be prosecuted, not celebrated.

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