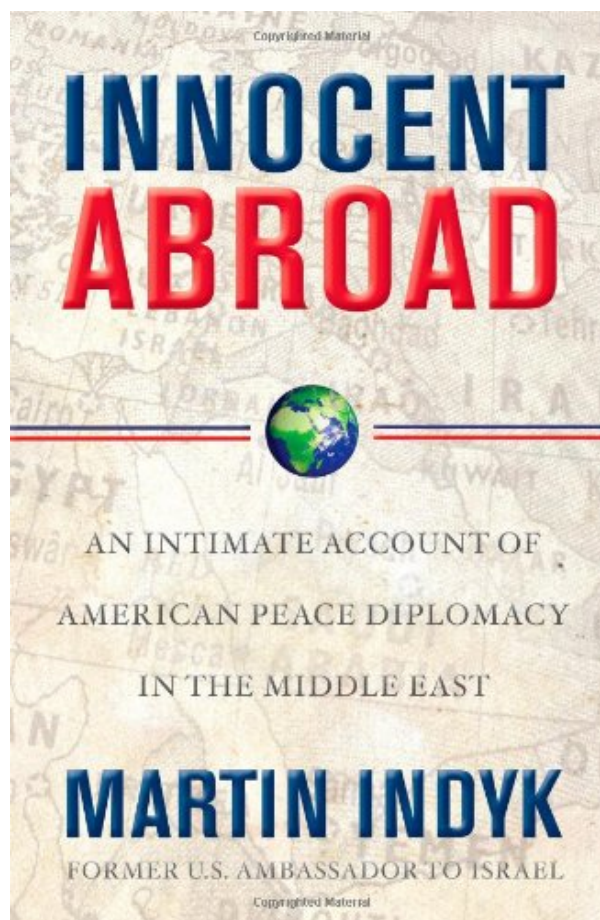
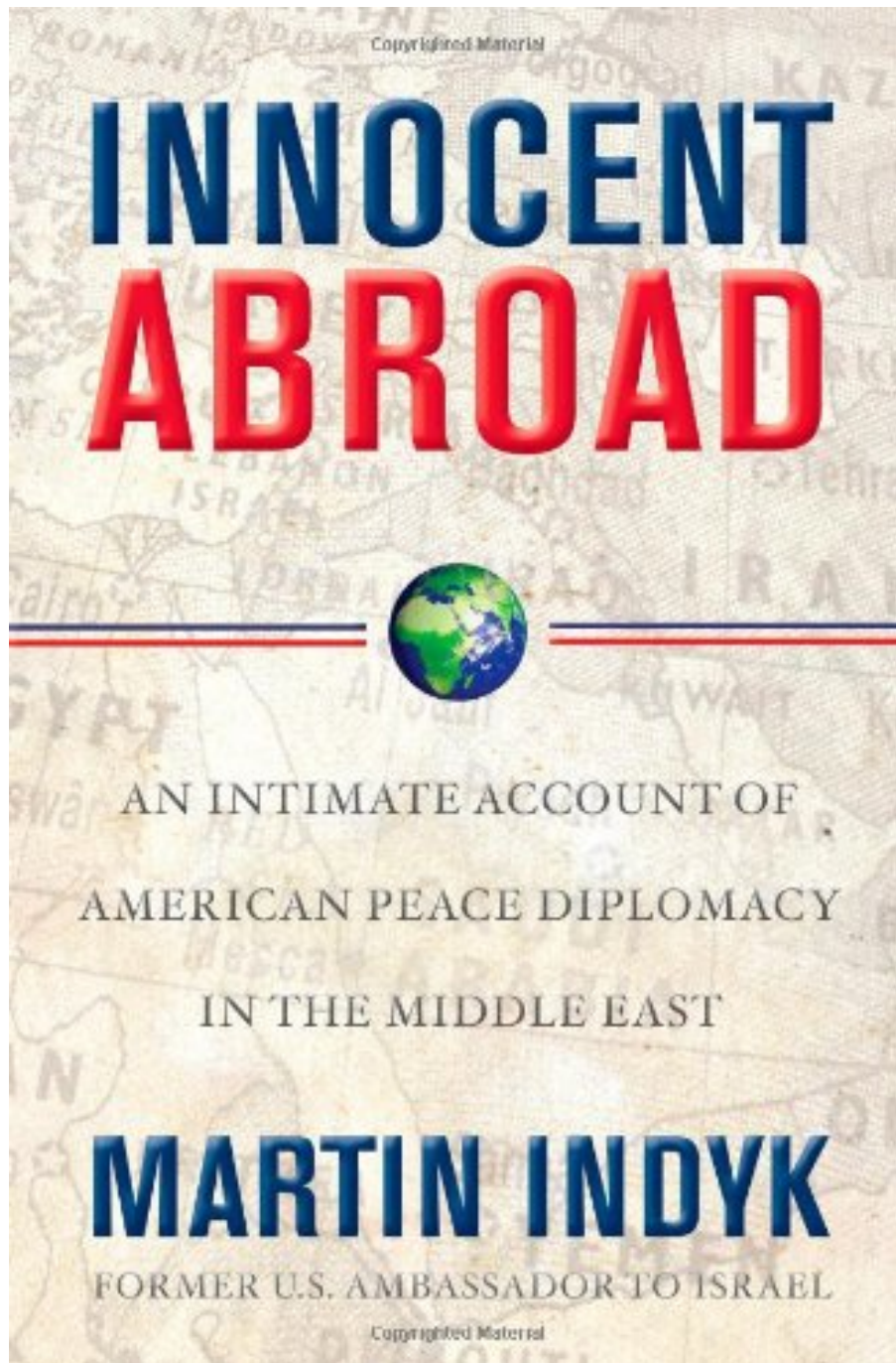


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Making peace in the long-troubled Middle East is likely to be one of the top priorities of the next American president. He will need to take account of the important lessons from past attempts, which are described and analyzed here in a gripping book by a renowned expert who served twice as U.S. ambassador to Israel and as Middle East adviser to President Clinton.

Martin Indyk draws on his many years of intense involvement in the region to provide the inside story of the last time the United States employed sustained diplomacy to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and change the behavior of rogue regimes in Iraq and Iran.

Innocent Abroad is an insightful history and a poignant memoir. Indyk provides a fascinating examination of the ironic consequences when American naïveté meets Middle Eastern cynicism in the region's political bazaars. He dissects the very different strategies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush to explain why they both faced such difficulties remaking the Middle East in their images of a more peaceful or democratic place. He provides new details of the breakdown of the Arab-Israeli peace talks at Camp David, of the CIA's failure to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and of Clinton's attempts to negotiate with Iran's president.

Indyk takes us inside the Oval Office, the Situation Room, the palaces of Arab potentates, and the offices of Israeli prime ministers. He draws intimate portraits of the American, Israeli, and Arab leaders he worked with, including Israel's Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, and Ariel Sharon; the PLO's Yasser Arafat; Egypt's Hosni Mubarak; and Syria's Hafez al-Asad. He describes in vivid detail high-level meetings, demonstrating how difficult it is for American presidents to understand the motives and intentions of Middle Eastern leaders and how easy it is for them to miss those rare moments when these leaders are willing to act in ways that can produce breakthroughs to peace.

Innocent Abroad is an extraordinarily candid and enthralling account, crucially important in grasping the obstacles that have confounded the efforts of recent presidents. As a new administration takes power, this experienced diplomat distills the lessons of past failures to chart a new way forward that will be required reading.

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Five Stars

By Teresa Retiz

Great book

10 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

No longer innocent

By Thomas Mitchell

Martin Indyk, an Australian citizen and lobbyist for the Israeli government, ended up as the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and the first Jewish ambassador to Israel from the U.S. during the Clinton administration. Rather than explaining how he pulled off this trick, he provides a conventional account of peace making in the Mideast during the two terms of the Clinton administration. There are significant gaps in his narrative--he hardly covers the Israeli-Syrian negotiations of 1996. He also examines the policy of dual containment applied to Iran and Iraq. Because of the scope it tends to be rather uneven, but unlike Dennis Ross he is more open about mistakes made by the administration in dealing with Arafat and the Palestinians at Camp David in 2000. He basically supports previous accounts by Clinton, Ross, and Madeleine Albright in blaming Arafat for the failure of Camp David and the peace process. But like Aaron Miller he is willing to admit American mistakes and make recommendations for future administrations. This is recommended for those wanting an overview of American Mideast policy during the Clinton years.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

An Equal Parts Fascinating and Boring Account of the Middle East Peace Process

By C.P.M.

As the winds of the Arab Spring wind down and current Secretary of State John Kerry makes his push for peace in the Middle East, he would do well to learn from the lessons of the Clinton administration, the last real attempt by the U.S. to bring about a lasting peace in the region. Fortunately for us, Martin Indyk, two-time U.S. ambassador to Israel and key Middle East advisor during the Clinton years, has written a blow-by-blow account of Pres. Clinton's herculean efforts to bring about a region-wide peace agreement through hard-nosed diplomacy. In a book of around 400-plus pages of narrative text, it is surprising how much detail Mr. Indyk is able to convey. He writes about Pres. Clinton's drive for peace deals between Israel and Syria, Jordan, and Palestine, which produced a road map for peace over the West Bank and a genuine peace deal with Jordan, and a "dual containment" strategy in regards to Iran and Iraq. He also writes extensively about how these strategies ultimately broke down by the end of Pres. Clinton's term in office. The ultimate aim of this book is draw lessons from those times to help inform future negotiators how to proceed in the Middle East. It is a fascinating account that can also be bogged down in too much diplomatic minutiae at times. Mr.



Indyk tries to strike that delicate balance between the two succeeds right up to the the Camp David talks, where things slow down to a crawl. It is both fascinating and boring and should be taken in small doses. This is a fine book for those interested in trying to understand the complexities of the Middle East peace process.

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