

Al-Jazeera America Features Anti-Israel Author in Debut

The newly launched television news network *Al-Jazeera America*, which has stated that it aims to present more objective coverage than its Middle Eastern counterpart, featured noted anti-Israel author Stephen Walt as its first guest.

Walt, a professor of international affairs at Harvard University, gained notoriety for co-authoring the controversial book “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,” which uses long-held anti-Semitic conspiracy theories of Jewish manipulation to allege that pro-Israel Americans manipulate U.S. policy to serve Israel’s selfish interests.

In his interview on *Al-Jazeera America* posted on YouTube by the *Washington Free Beacon*, Walt was critical of Egypt’s past and current rulers—Hosni Mubarak, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian military—calling them all “stupid.” He concluded his interview by noting that the U.S. provides military aid to Egypt mainly to protect Israel.

Al-Jazeera America is a new venture by the Qatar-based television network *Al-Jazeera*. In January, *Al-Jazeera* announced it had purchased former Vice President Al Gore’s struggling *Current TV* to serve as a distribution network for its foray into the American media.

But some have been openly critical of the new network’s ties to the government of Qatar.

“To Americans, Al-Jazeera purports to be the equivalent of *CNN* or *Fox* or *MSNBC*—an independent purveyor of news. Yes, Americans know that most media leans left and a little bit of it leans right, but the networks themselves are generally free of government manipulation. Al-Jazeera, however, is a wholly owned arm of the government of Qatar,” Shoshana Bryen, a

Middle East analyst for the Jewish Policy Center, wrote for the *Gatestone Institute*.

While Qatar is officially a U.S. ally, its ruling royal family has forged close ties with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. Last month, nearly two-dozen *Al-Jazeera* staffers quit over what they called pro-Muslim Brotherhood bias in its coverage of events in Egypt.

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