2015 Bradley Prize Nomination: Thinker

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**Bret Stephens,** International Affairs Columnist, The Wall Street Journal, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036 212.466.2000 [Bret.stephens@wsj.com](mailto:Bret.stephens@wsj.com)

Bret Stephens is the most influential conservative journalist specializing on international affairs today. Stephens, who was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his work, writes weekly for the Wall Street Journal in a widely read and widely cited column. He has loyal readers around the world, and especially in policymaking circles on Capitol Hill and among key allies in Jerusalem, Tokyo and Ottawa.

Most columnists base their columns on academics, think tank scholars or individuals in government seeking to disseminate their work or to leak information. Bret’s columns are almost always think pieces, often brilliant, able to look well beyond the headlines, beyond the rhetoric and assertions of politicians or academics, to draw on original research, history and current affairs. They provide unique, high-quality and compelling analysis that is unavailable elsewhere. His undergraduate work in political philosophy at The University of Chicago has given his work, whether at The Wall Street Journal Europe, as editor of The Jerusalem Post or as international affairs columnist for The Wall Street Journal, an intellectual depth and richness that is missing from the work of many journalists.

Stephens has been an unremitting critic of the Obama administration. He has helped restore credibility to a conservative vision of American foreign policy. Stephens has done more than anyone else to highlight both the moral bankruptcy of and the price for America’s withdrawal from global leadership, whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Ukraine or Northeast Asia. He is the most articulate journalistic foe of the Obama administration’s obsession with an Iran nuclear deal and someone who has defended Israel with great force against both the Obama administration and against its Islamist opponents.

Stephens’ work offers the best and most compelling foundation for a new conservative governing foreign policy. Bret recognizes the need for strong and engaged American leadership, leadership that does not seek to promote democracy around the globe but instead focuses on policing zones of trouble between democracy and authoritarianism. His America in Retreat: The New American Isolationism and the Coming Global Disorder, which outlines this vision through the subtle use of grand strategy, economics, history and counterfactual history and was a highly acclaimed and extremely prescient best-seller. Given Bret’s depth of work, breadth of influence and journalistic excellence in support of conservative principles, I believe he is worthy of a Bradley Prize.

Other references:

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