



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

**IN THE NEWS**

## **Gifts and Gaffes on Trump's Excellent Adventure**

May 27, 2017 | *Bloomberg View*

By: Tobin Harshaw

Related Expert: Hal Brands

He avoided anything truly embarrassing or catastrophic (although I'm sure the Israelis chuckled when Trump arrived in Israel and announced that he had just gotten back from the Middle East). And when you add in all of the strain that the White House was under in the weeks prior to this trip, Trump's advisers can pat themselves on the back for having pulled off a trip without major incident. We should be clear, though -- one reason the trip came off fairly well is that Trump started by visiting two countries, Israel and Saudi Arabia, that were eager and even desperate to please him. And although Trump's rather harsh tone and cringe-worthy personal interactions at the NATO summit may not qualify as gaffes -- they simply reflected his true self -- they do mean that Trump undoubtedly missed an opportunity to really establish himself as the leader of the Atlantic alliance.