

Subject: Appointing Jeffrey Goldberg as Atlantic Editor-in-Chief

My Colleagues in Atlantic Media,

After six months of elapsed time, hundreds of names to review, and scores of potential candidates to meet, Bob Cohn and I are pleased to announce that we have asked Jeffrey Goldberg to step forward as *The Atlantic's* 14<sup>th</sup> editor-in-chief. And, the higher hurdle as it turned out, Jeff accepted.

### **A Not-Incidental Search**

I suppose the most heart-felt finding from the search was Bob's - that wars between nations are won faster than David thinks through an editor search. It is fair to say that, together, we met a great deal of the nation's top editorial talent. A hundred journalists with the most-respected U.S. and U.K. publications recommended to us just under 500 people as the current and next generation stars to meet. For this moment in time, I think Bob and I know the next-generation leadership at *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, and so forth as well as do those publications' own owners.

But, at least for us, Jeff is something set apart. At the outset of the search, one of the nation's legendary editors asked: "Have you focused on Jeff Goldberg? There's no greater journalist writing in the country today."

As background only, here is Jeff's story in brief: raised in New York, Jeff attended the University of Pennsylvania, where he edited the *Daily Pennsylvanian*. Beginning his career as a crime reporter for *The Washington Post*, Jeff moved through *The Jerusalem Post*, *The Forward*, *New York* magazine, *The New York Times Magazine* and *The New Yorker*. Jeff joined *The Atlantic* in 2007. Across his nearly-10 years with us, Jeff has written many of our most-successful cover stories, including this year's "The Obama Doctrine," and has interviewed many world leaders on our behalf including King Abdullah of Jordan, Cuba's Fidel Castro, Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, and the former British Prime Minister David Cameron.

### **Thinking Through this Appointment**

Over time, I've come to have great sympathy for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century editor. Our species does not create, in one individual, so full an offering of human talent. The editor in chief of a great publication is asked to be a public figure, a live performer, a leader of talent, a driving news force, a culture commentator, a long-form editor, a cover story genius, a packaging genius, a digital strategist, a social media practitioner, a video producer, a new product creator, and so forth. In the end, therefore, the selection of an editor becomes a question of which virtue to privilege.

As with James Bennet and Michael Kelly before him, Jeff was first a great journalist. He is, in himself, the property we prize. Our confidence in Jeff is that, understanding talent, Jeff will lead a great-talent enterprise. And that, of course, is *The Atlantic's* salient comparative advantage in the scrum of modern media - that *The Atlantic* was created to be the great talent destination.

None of this is to say that the particular format of Jeff's best-known writing—long-form narrative for the print magazine—is the center or circumference of our work. In the world of modern media, *The Atlantic* needs to be a run-away success online, on social media, in video and in live events. Jeff's assignment is to make *The Atlantic* an unequalled talent destination for all our editorial disciplines. It is talent, not format, that has drawn us to Jeff.

### **A Harder Call for Jeff**

In the end, the editor appointment was a harder call for Jeff than it was for Bob and me. The move suggested a near-complete reorientation of Jeff's professional life, from a narrower focus on his own writing to the work and careers of a large staff. I was not with Jeff and his wife, Pamela, for those conversations; one can imagine they ran deep. But, Jeff resurfaced from a weekend's thought committed to the larger Atlantic proposition and to what we all take to be the privilege of leading this exceptional staff.

(Jeff faced as well a largely-logistical issue. Some time back, Jeff agreed to write for Simon & Schuster what will be his second book. With our complete blessing, Jeff will take leave to fulfill that commitment when he feels the time is right.)

### **The Weeks Ahead**

Starting this week, Jeff will take the reins of leadership. Reporting directly to Bob, Jeff will lead a cabinet of Scott Stossel, John Gould, Kasia Ciaplak-Mayr von Baldegg, and a creative director to succeed Darhil Crooks. As he explained it to me, Jeff intends to begin his work "reporting the story" - that is to say interviewing the staff and other industry leaders on their work and their thoughts for *The Atlantic*.

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Bob and I want to close by thanking Scott, John, Kasia, Sommer and the editorial team at AtlanticLive - Margaret, Steve and Rob - for leading *The Atlantic's* work these last six months. Jeff will find what James found before him, that he joins a leadership team as fine in disposition as they are in talent.

Finally, for those *Atlantic* staff in the Washington office, Bob and I intend to convene a meeting in the 3rd-floor newsroom, this morning at 10:00 am, to introduce Jeff as our new editor. For those in New York, Bob and Jeff plan a Friday visit to our offices. For those in London, for every reason under the sun, I'm sorry we won't be with you.

I close with my best wishes to all.

David