

The Journal of
**International
Security Affairs**

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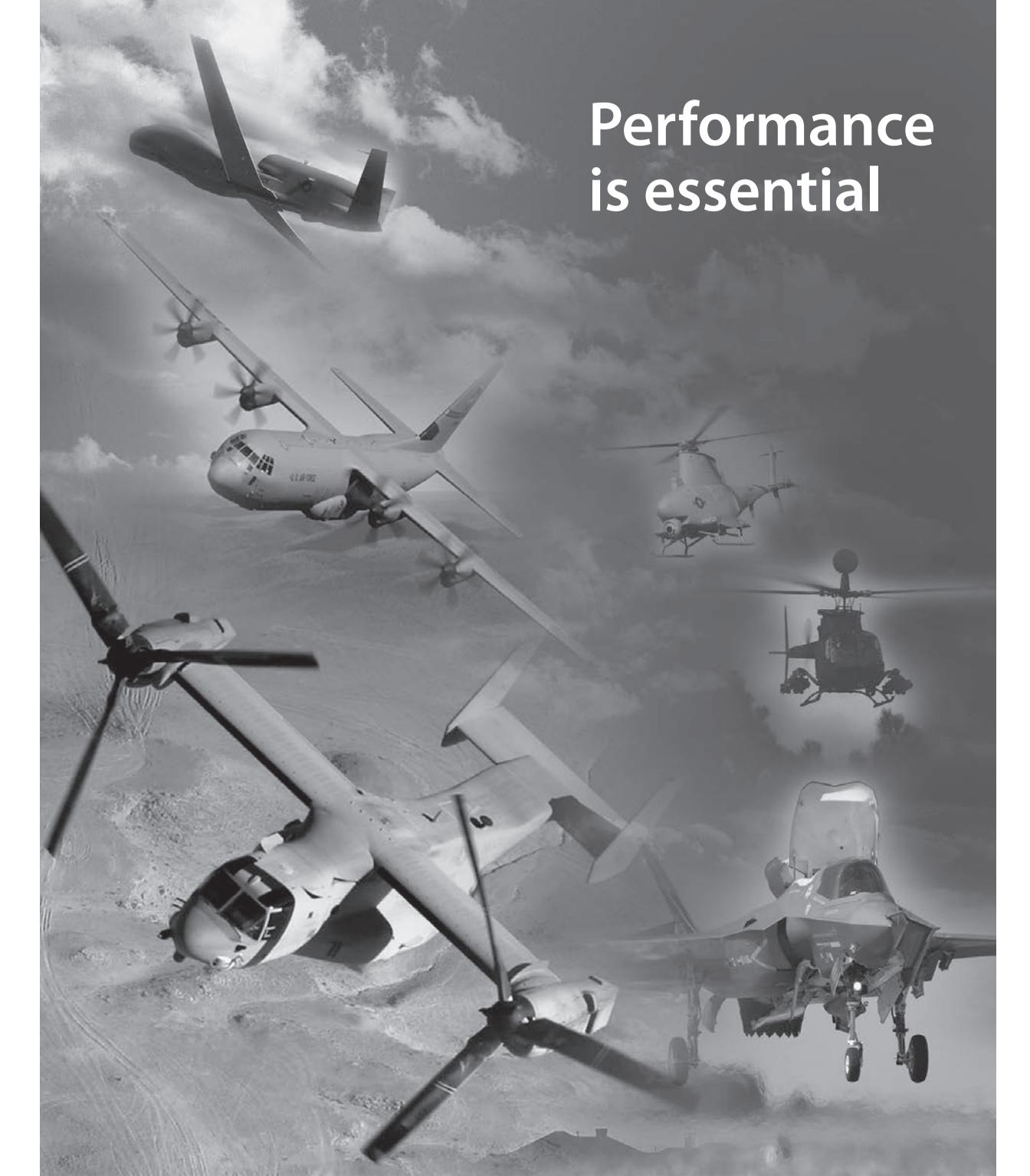
The Future of Warfare

featuring articles by

Admiral William H. McRaven, USN
Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command
&
General Norton Schwartz, USAF (ret.)
Former Air Force Chief of Staff

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Editor's Note

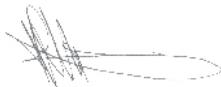
For most of the past two decades, the United States has confronted a “revolution in military affairs”—a transformation typified by new adversaries, new battlefields and new tactics. Today, the challenge is more profound than ever. New technologies have given non-state actors such as al-Qaeda an unprecedented ability to exert influence over nation-state behavior. Rogue nations such as Iran and North Korea increasingly exhibit extensive ballistic missile and nuclear capabilities—and are actively seeking to acquire more. Meanwhile, strategic competitors (like Russia and China) are busy making major investments in everything from cyber capabilities to space warfare.

To maintain its strategic primacy, America needs to adapt as well. To explore how it should, this issue of *The Journal* leads off with a quintet of articles focusing on “The Future of Warfare.” Admiral William H. McRaven, the commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), lays out how America’s special operators are augmenting security through a range of direct and indirect action—and, in the process, expanding the ability of partner nations to do the same. General Norton Schwartz, the recently retired Air Force Chief of Staff, explains the rationale behind the Pentagon’s new “Air-Sea Battle” concept, and outlines how it will help America confront new threats facing the U.S. and its allies. Mark Schneider of the National Institute for Public Policy lays out the pressures now facing the U.S. arsenal—and the dire consequences that will result if America doesn’t get serious about its strategic capabilities. The George C. Marshall Institute’s Eric Sterner then makes a compelling case that Washington needs to get beyond rhetoric and begin to truly treat space as a new medium for conflict. Finally, Frank Cilluffo and J. Richard Knop of The George Washington University explain the changing nature of cyber threats to the U.S. homeland—and suggest a way forward for both cyber defense and cyber offense.

We then turn our attention to President Obama’s foreign policy record. The Legatum Institute’s Jeff Gedmin, a former Director of Radio Free Europe, leads off by looking at U.S. strategic communications—and where it is currently falling short. Jamie Fly and Evan Moore of the Foreign Policy Initiative take a critical look at the old thinking that animates the Obama administration’s approach to nuclear policy. Thomas Joscelyn of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies then takes aim at exactly what the White House has—and hasn’t—accomplished in the arena of counterterrorism. In turn, Andrew Davenport of RWR Advisory outlines our current approach to economic pressure, and explains why and how much more can be done. From there, the American Foreign Policy Council’s Herman Pirchner underscores the missteps and that have plagued the Administration’s outreach toward Russia. Defense expert Mike Pillsbury does the same with China, outlining the misconceptions that continue to plague American policy toward the PRC. Last but not least, yours truly explains why the Administration’s approach has fallen short of addressing the menace posed by Iran and its nuclear program.

This issue’s “Perspective” interviewee is one of Washington’s consummate defense insiders, former Under Secretary of State and Pentagon Defense Science Board Chairman Dr. William Schneider, Jr. We also have “dispatches” examining developments in Chile, Turkey and Pakistan. And we wrap up this edition of *The Journal* with reviews of four important new works: on intelligence, the Arab world, international law and the unfolding Cold War between Israel and Iran.

Here at *The Journal*, we pride ourselves with going beyond the headlines, and staying ahead of the policy curve, on global issues. With this edition, we have once again done so. Take a look, and we are confident that you’ll agree.



Ilan Berman
Editor

THE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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PREPARING SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES FOR THE FUTURE

— Admiral William H. McRaven, USN —

In January 2012, the President and the Secretary of Defense published the Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG), “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” which provides insight and direction to the Armed Forces for the next century. The DSG directs the U.S. military to build a more “agile, flexible, ready, and technologically advanced” force that works in concert with all elements of national power and is led by “the highest quality, battle-tested professionals.”¹

Special Operations Forces (SOF), assigned to the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), execute core capabilities that are inextricably linked to this guidance, and will provide significant capability to both our nation and the joint force of the future. Specifically, U.S. SOF will become exceedingly important to our nation’s counterterrorism and irregular warfare efforts. SOF will utilize a balanced approach of direct and indirect activities to counter violent extremism, which will enable our partners to more effectively address regional issues.

The Global environment

The DSG describes a “world of accelerating change” in which transnational terrorists, criminal organizations, and nation-states (along with their proxies) exploit gaps in U.S. policy and that of our partners—policies that were developed for the more predictable world of the Cold War era.² Increasingly, these threats are networked, adaptable and empowered by technology with new ways to recruit, train, finance, and operate which transcend recognizable boundaries and Westphalian models of organization or expectation for rational actor behavior. These networks are diverse, complex systems that do



ADMIRAL WILLIAM H. McRAVEN, USN, is the Commander of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

not offer a single point of failure in the form of a center of gravity, a capital city, or a single unifying leader on which the United States can focus its efforts. These intricate eco-systems require a nuanced and persistent response, one which must be inherently flexible to be capable of adapting to unintended, unpredictable second- and third-order effects.

In an era of increasing responsibilities, competing priorities, and reduced resources, it is imperative to build a lateral network of partners and allies that proactively anticipate threats and enable cooperative security solutions in cost-effective ways.

Chief among these actors, and a focus of U.S. strategy since 9/11, has been the al-Qaeda network. The death of Osama bin Laden, undoubtedly, had a significant effect on al-Qaeda, its affiliates and, more broadly, violent extremists worldwide. However, a decentralized al-Qaeda ideology continues to serve as a rallying point for violent regional actors across the globe. The rise and perceived success of al-Qaeda against the West further emboldens violent extremists and trans-national criminal networks which equally threaten the U.S., its interests, allies, partners, and the homeland. Collectively considered, the U.S. military of the future will operate in a dynamic, global security environment that is convoluted, unpredictable, and increasingly dangerous.

Additionally, after a decade of war and a global economic recession, the United States government faces a period of financial austerity. Regardless of the outcome of the U.S. Presidential election, the United States government will likely seek to reduce spending in the defense budget.

This culmination of events, both the effects of fiscal belt-tightening and the dynamic character of global conflict, compels the leadership of the Department of Defense and our American military forces to adapt and employ strategies that fulfill our obligation to protect this great nation. Our leaders must also seek solutions that are efficient, cost-effective, and innovative. USSOCOM is uniquely positioned to meet these demands.

Persistent presence

USSOCOM was formally established as a unified command in 1987. Its mission is to provide fully capable and enabled special operations forces to defend national interests in an environment characterized by irregular warfare. USSOCOM is a unique organization within the Department of Defense. It possesses both legislated military department-like authorities, as well as combatant command responsibilities. In its role as a combatant command, it is the Department of Defense's lead organization for synchronizing planning for global operations against terrorist networks. In its role as a supporting command, USSOCOM's primary responsibility is to provide ready SOF to support the objectives of geographic combatant commands. USSOCOM is unique due to its legislated Title 10 authorities, which provide the command with an Acquisition Executive, and its own budget to enable rapid and flexible acquisition and fielding.

As stated in the DSG, "Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities."³ This requirement directly aligns with U.S. SOF strengths and core capabilities. U.S. SOF constitutes the nation's elite fighting force. These men and women are specially selected, trained, and tasked to execute the most difficult and critical missions. SOF successfully

operates long distances from supporting operational bases, which necessitates independent thinking and action in highly ambiguous environments.

The warriors who perform these missions are often older, college educated, and more experienced than those forces assigned to conventional units. Unbeknownst to many, the average SOF warrior is 34 years old, married with two kids, speaks an additional language, and has served an average eight years with conventional forces. These highly trained and qualified operators allow for the employment of much smaller teams, and when supported with the most advanced training and equipment, these teams provide a highly cost-effective, operationally reliable, low-signature option for the U.S. government. Additionally, many SOF units are organized, trained, and equipped along regional alignments. This provides the Geographic Combatant Commanders with a unique capability to shape their environments and defeat violent extremism and regional threats.

SOF is trained to operate in austere and ambiguous environments, enabling units to work as small and dispersed teams in support of geographic military commanders and only at the behest of civilian Chiefs of Mission. SOF has the ability to enter a country, with the approval of the ambassador, to build and leverage existing clandestine networks in both receptive and hostile areas. The result is a small-footprint engagement aimed at building relationships, partner capacity, and accomplishing discrete tasks in high-risk, politically sensitive countries utilizing a persistent presence.

It is through this persistent presence that SOF will continue to improve the capabilities and increase the security capacities of its partners to deal with regional and internal security threats. This is a key component to how SOF needs to operate in the global environs—not alone.

Building partnerships

USSOCOM owes much of its recent success to the network of partners that play a critical role in every operation conducted by U.S. SOF. The old adage that “you need a network to defeat a network” remains particularly germane. In an era of increasing responsibilities, competing priorities, and reduced resources, it is imperative to build a lateral network of partners and allies that proactively anticipate threats and enable cooperative security solutions in cost-effective ways.

USSOCOM maintains an exceptional relationship with the four military Services; its integration and mutually beneficial relationship with the conventional forces is at its pinnacle since USSOCOM’s establishment. The SOF truth, that “most SOF operations require non-SOF support,” is a hallmark of this interdependence—one which allows SOF to maintain focus on its organic capabilities and leverage the capabilities of the Services. Ten years of persistent conflict have driven both USSOCOM and the Services to find efficiencies and interdependence at the tactical and the strategic levels. It also allows both SOF and conventional forces to eliminate redundancies and find cost savings across the joint force. USSOCOM meets with each of the respective Service Chiefs and their staffs on a yearly basis. These senior-level engagements provide a venue to validate and prioritize limited resources, which are required to meet the demands of the Combatant Commanders’ operational requirements. With future fiscal reduction, maintaining this relationship will prove even more critical for both USSOCOM and the Services, particularly if the government faces sequestration.

Operationally, this partnership is best demonstrated by the integration of conventional infantry forces and SOF operators in Village Stability Operations sites across Afghanistan. The Village Stability Operations Program (VSO) has

become a major tenet of the overall reduction and withdrawal strategy in Afghanistan. The rapid expansion of VSO sites across the country could not have been possible without the close integration of SOF and conventional forces. Currently, Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) maintains approximately 50 VSO sites. Nearly all of these sites are joint sites where both SOF and conventional forces operate in partnership to enhance the security of the Afghan people and meet the long-term strategic objectives of the National Security Leadership.

The U.S. cannot address the challenges of tomorrow alone. It will require a global partnership of like-minded entities that can come together to address mutual security concerns.

USSOCOM's relationship with the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) is another critical factor in USSOCOM's success. As stated earlier, USSOCOM supports the GCCs by providing trained and ready SOF in support of their missions and objectives. To better support the GCCs, USSOCOM intends to increase USSOF capacity to the GCC's Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOC) with additional resources, capabilities, and force structure. Ultimately, this effort will provide the GCC with an agile joint force headquarters capable of employing the full range of SOF capabilities when called upon. The enhanced TSOCs will be better organized to conduct full-spectrum special operations, ranging from building partner capacity to irregular warfare and counterterrorism. Empowering the TSOCs to better support the GCCs, USSOCOM will provide Department of Defense leaders, GCCs, and Chiefs of Mission with responsive, flexible, and agile SOF capable of

supporting U.S. regional objectives and partner nation requirements in a rapid and persistent manner.

USSOCOM strives to maintain collaborative relationships throughout the U.S. government through the interagency process. Over the past decade, this outreach has grown to the point where coordination now is near-effortless. Most major departments and agencies maintain a liaison officer within the USSOCOM headquarters, and conversely, USSOCOM assigns a senior SOF officer within their headquarters. The Special Operations Support Teams (SOSTs) are currently embedded at 18 separate departments or agencies within the U.S. government. Each of these teams is charged with synchronizing and facilitating the planning in a whole-of-government approach to emerging issues and challenges.

The engagement between USSOCOM and the myriad of departments and agencies is founded on persistent presence and personal relationships, not on episodic engagements. This relationship is best exemplified by the response to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. During this crisis, the SOST leader, working within the USAID headquarters, collectively assessed and rapidly tailored a response to best address the requirements of the host nation and the Geographical Combatant Commander. The final result of this close, personal coordination was a rapid deployment of the 720th Special Operations Group to Haiti. The unit opened the Port-au-Prince airport within 30 minutes of arrival, and in less than 24 hours, humanitarian aid was flowing in to support Haitian citizens.

Additionally, USSOCOM is seeking to strengthen its relationships with partner nation SOF. This is another method for U.S. SOF to apply pressure on extremist networks and criminal organizations worldwide. This not only increases our own cultural and situational awareness,

but also builds trust among like-minded partners. The Special Operations Liaison Officer (SOLO) program maintains a direct link between USSOCOM and select partner nations. Currently, there are 13 SOLOs located within partner nations that provide an ongoing connection with our allies' special operations forces. These mutually beneficial relationships yield and allow a shared understanding of emerging threats and the capabilities of each nation. More important still, they are vital during times of crisis. The SOLOs answer to each GCC through the TSOCs and focus on developing the long-term institutional capacity and increasing the human capital within their respective host countries. The relationships are enduring, strategic and mutually beneficial—aiding in the development of long-term trust between the two nations.

A recent example of increased partner SOF relationship building was the establishment of the NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) in 2009. This initiative united special operations forces from nations within the NATO alliance. As the executive agency for NSHQ, USSOCOM has overseen the transformation of this organization over the past three-and-a-half years. The original SOF coordination cell started with 18 personnel and has since grown to over 220 from 26 NATO and three non-NATO countries. The mission of NATO SOF Headquarters states, "The NSHQ is the primary point of development, direction and coordination for all NATO Special Operations-related activities in order to optimize employment of Special Operations Forces to include providing an operational command capability when directed by SACEUR."⁴

The need to establish NSHQ grew out of lessons learned when SOF was employed from multiple nations in support of a common objective. The lack of standardized training and equipment was especially problematic during large-

scale contingency operations, such as the Balkans response and the 2008 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. Since the establishment of NSHQ, it has established a baseline-training course that seeks to provide standardized training to allied SOF deploying in support of sanctioned NATO operations. The role of the headquarters is to act as a facilitator, rather than a traditional command and control node for deployed forces.

USSOCOM maintains a persistent presence in more than 70 countries around the world, where it is helping to build partner nation capacity.

Overall, the NSHQ has proven invaluable to our endeavors in Afghanistan. Its successful implementation resulted in an expansion of overall SOF capabilities throughout the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the NATO-led security mission in Afghanistan authorized by the United Nations. Currently, NATO SOF has deployed over 2,200 SOF operators in support of ISAF. Many of them are working with Afghan security forces in a variety of roles and mentorship programs. To date, this effort has been exceedingly successful and has resulted in a five-fold growth in the NATO SOF units deploying to Afghanistan. The increase in SOF capacity in Afghanistan, in turn, has directly eased the burden between allied nations and reduced the requirement on U.S. forces.

Annually, USSOCOM hosts frequent events and provides opportunities for international partners to interact with each other and USSOCOM personnel. The most significant event is held once every four years. In spring 2012, SOCOM hosted its quadrennial International Special Operations Forces week. During this five-day conference, Special Operations Forces from 96 nations sent representatives to discuss emerging

threats, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. The event provided unique opportunities for the global SOF community to strengthen enduring relationships and enhance cooperation while identifying commonalities and challenges.

Underlying these efforts is an undeniable reality. The U.S. cannot address the challenges of tomorrow alone. It will require a global partnership of like-minded entities that can come together to address mutual security concerns. These relationships cannot be built through sporadic or episodic encounters. It will require an increased capacity of U.S., allies, and partner forces to assist fledgling nations in building the institutions needed to provide immediate security to their populations. SOF must encourage the growth of long-standing institutions capable of providing freedom of action by their sovereign governments.

Countering violent extremism

The DSG states, “Our global counter terrorism efforts will become more widely distributed and will be characterized by a mix of direct action and security force assistance.”⁵ Although somewhat simplistic in description, SOF activities can be categorized into separate and distinct categories: direct and indirect. Direct action operations include activities such as raids, ambushes, reconnaissance missions, and counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is typically characterized by kinetic operations: seizing, destroying, capturing, exploiting, recovering, damaging a target through short-duration strikes, or other small-scale offensive actions in denied areas. Conversely, indirect operations are non-kinetic and focus on empowering host nation forces and engaging key populations to include foreign internal defense, security force assistance, military information support, civil affairs, unconventional warfare, and

counterinsurgency. These long-term, indirect efforts increase our partners’ capabilities to generate sufficient security, rule of law, address local needs, and advance ideas that discredit and defeat the appeal of violent extremism.

The direct approach is epitomized by recent success against senior al-Qaeda leaders. A decade of war has honed the kinetic capabilities of U.S. SOF. Direct operations have achieved unprecedented success, especially against al-Qaeda leadership and have demonstrated the willingness of the nation to strike at threats wherever they may exist. The operational aspects of direct operations have been refined and integrated into effective tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) that have become a standard in SOF education and training. Well-practiced TTPs have provided numerous government agencies with a common goal and continuously reinforce the relationships between USSOCOM and the interagency. This has assisted military and civilian leadership with the ability to make rapid and informed decisions regarding operations against enemy targets. As the DSG directs, “continue to hold al-Qa’ida and its affiliates and adherents under constant pressure, wherever they may be.”⁶ U.S. SOF will continue to serve as the nation’s force of choice to successfully conduct such operations.

USSOCOM maintains a persistent presence in more than 70 countries around the world, where it is helping to build partner nation capacity. One mechanism in SOF’s application of the indirect approach is the Joint Combined Exchange for Training (JCET) program. The JCET is a low-cost, high-impact program that allows SOF to collaborate and provide training to host nation militaries tailored to the host nation’s requirements. During a yearly conference, GCCs submit requests, endorsed by each respective country’s Chief of Mission for SOF, to provide specific training to the host nation

military. As the DSG states, “Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.”⁷

The JCET program provides countless opportunities and benefits for SOF. First, it provides our forces with the opportunity to work with the host nation military and demonstrate American commitment by providing ammunition, training, and lessons learned from other ongoing conflicts. Secondly, it delivers realistic training to U.S. SOF personnel in language, culture, and techniques implemented by other nations around the world. The result is a small-footprint engagement aimed at building relationships and accomplishing discrete tasks in high-risk countries through persistent presence. Accordingly, given the guidance found within the DSG and U.S. SOF capabilities, USSOCOM is focused on maximizing U.S. SOF force posture and strengthening relationships with partner nation SOF.

A successful program that has validated the use of the indirect approach is the Afghan Local Police (ALP) Program. Currently, U.S. SOF is protecting the Afghan population and increasing local capacity through village-stability operations with the development of the Afghan Local Police. This includes training Afghan security forces to protect the population and to provide security in maintaining the improvements made in-village. These programs also serve as a bridge from villages to district and provincial governance structures. Thus, while providing security village by village, SOF efforts are nested within the overall strategy of tying security, governance, stability, and safety into one effort led by Afghans.

Another efficient application of the indirect approach is evident in the ongoing relationship between U.S. SOF and

the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). This effort began in 2002 when U.S. SOF deployed to Basilan Island to assist the AFP in operations against the insurgent group Abu Sayyaf. Immediately upon arrival, U.S. SOF personnel conducted a series of engagements with the local residents to identify their basic needs and grievances as a precursor to severing ties with the insurgents. Besides training and advising, SOF also coordinated a comprehensive interagency and multinational program to address water, security, medical care, transportation, and education needs. As a result, people in the area continue to support the AFP and U.S. presence today. These efforts have served as the impetus for the return of economic prosperity and stability to the region.

Both direct and indirect approaches will be essential in the future operations. Kinetic operations demonstrate the nation’s ultimate commitment to defeating our enemies whenever necessary. Non-strike operations, consequently, value local-led efforts to reduce and eliminate shared threats.

A more enduring example closer to home of the long-term, indirect effort leading to success is the development of Colombia’s security apparatus. Since 1998, U.S. government support to Colombia has involved a whole-of-government approach under Plan Colombia that includes economic support, equipment, personnel, and training provided by U.S. SOF. SOF primarily provided counter-insurgency and internal defense training against the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) insurgent group. The effect has been dramatic; Colombia once had vast areas

of ungoverned territory where FARC insurgents, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers operated unchecked. Fortunately today, a well-trained Colombian military force, coupled with a police force, controls much of the once-lawless outlying areas, along with all the major urban population centers. The Colombian example illustrates that sustained support to partner nations over the long-term offers considerable returns.

Both direct and indirect approaches will be essential in the future operations. They will simultaneously apply pressure to our Nation's enemies and build trust and confidence among our partners. Kinetic operations demonstrate the nation's ultimate commitment to defeating our enemies whenever necessary. Non-strike operations, consequently, value local-led efforts to reduce and eliminate shared threats. The focus on the indirect approach should not be construed as neglect of the direct; U.S. SOF capabilities to execute precision strike, hostage rescue, and other special warfare missions are essential. But the enduring solutions to countering extremism involve utilizing SOF's non-strike capabilities. Indirect action can be as lethal as direct action to the ideas fostered by extremists. Therefore, identifying and supporting the needs of foreign populations, where extremist ideology has the potential to fester, is the logical strategic step toward preventing future large-scale conflict before it occurs.

Toward the future

In the 20th century, massive land forces and large naval groups opposing each other characterized war. Today's security landscape—and that of the foreseeable future—presents a much different problem set. The 21st century requires a U.S. defense posture that optimizes effectiveness and strengthens intra-governmental and international partnerships. While the nation

must continue to focus on winning the current fight in Afghanistan against al-Qaeda and other extremist networks, the military must also re-balance our mission priorities and expand our network in order to exploit opportunities and address crises more effectively.

Creating change and overcoming tomorrow's challenges will require hard work, tough decisions, and trust—all things that Special Operators and their Service counterparts, interagency partners, and international SOF brethren are familiar with and ready to do in concert with partners from across DoD, the interagency, and allied nations.



1. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Letter accompanying the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, January 2012.
2. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," January 2012, 1, http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf.
3. *Ibid.*, 3.
4. NATO Special Operations Headquarters, "Mission statement," n.d., <http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSHQ/page/mission/>.
5. Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership," 4.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibidem.*, 3.

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TOWARD AN INTEGRATED JOINT FORCE

General Norton Schwartz, USAF (ret.)

The rapid development and proliferation of increasingly sophisticated technologies have given potential adversaries access to an array of military capabilities that specifically threaten the United States' ability to project power globally and secure access to and maintain freedom of action in the global commons.¹

Given this reality, the Department of Defense recognized the need to explore and adapt options that will preserve our ability to project power and maintain freedom of action in those commons. In July 2009, the Secretary of Defense directed the departments of the Navy and Air Force to address this challenge and to embark on a new operational concept called Air-Sea Battle. For the last three years, the Navy and Air Force—and now together with the Marine Corps and Army—have collaborated in new and thoughtful ways to address the military problem set now termed as “anti-access/area denial”—or “A2/AD” for short.²

Components of enhanced inter-service collaboration

The intensifying A2/AD challenge demands improvement on early efforts to counter these increasingly sophisticated threats to our national interests. This is driving the Air Force and Navy—the two services that most share a global perspective, and which routinely operate in the global commons—toward a logical and more robust partnership of enhanced collaboration that includes institutional, conceptual, and materiel components.

Institutionally, the Air-Sea Battle concept provides the means to normalize collaboration, making it less episodic, and produce something more routine and systematic,



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from the headquarters level down to the fleets and forces. The military services already work well together, but past integration efforts have ebbed and flowed. Through the Air-Sea Battle concept, the services can evaluate and modify how they collectively approach their Title 10 “organize, train, and equip” functions to provide more compelling force capabilities to combatant commanders.

The conceptual aspect of Air-Sea Battle provides an analytic framework we can use to understand and articulate the A2/AD problem set. It describes how, with institutional agreement, air, sea, and land forces can integrate and cooperate to achieve the joint force commander’s objectives in an A2/AD environment. Conceptual alignment can further serve to moderate parochial views among the services and even to provide a forum for initiating new and innovative inter-service cooperation.

Finally, the materiel component offers opportunities to collaborate in innovative ways. Air-Sea Battle provides a lens through which we can examine joint force acquisition. Fundamental to materiel considerations is assuring the most efficient use of our resources, particularly where the services share the same spaces (e.g., training, basing, transportation, logistics, and communications). The initiative also shows promise as an effective framework for a well-considered and disciplined prioritization of required capabilities, particularly during this period of acute fiscal constraints.

Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the Chief of Naval Operations, has affirmed on many occasions these same sentiments on this mandate for materiel collaboration, stating, “We must leverage our respective service strengths because we can no longer afford to go down separate investment paths.”³ With Air-Sea Battle, the Department of Defense has a valuable opportunity to unite modern-

ization efforts to address a threat that is real, intensifying, and proliferating.

The rise of anti-access and area-denial threats

The foundational national security principle that the United States is a global power with global interests will continue to place demands on the military’s ability to project and sustain power on a global scale. Largely unrestrained access to the global commons of sea, air, space, and cyberspace, over the years, has facilitated this ability to project power.

Today, efforts by potential adversaries to field formidable A2/AD capabilities threaten to make U.S. power projection increasingly risky and in some cases cost prohibitive, while enabling near-peer competitors and regional powers to expand their coercive strength well beyond their borders. In the most challenging scenarios, the United States will be unable to do what it has become accustomed to doing: building up combat power in an area, performing detailed rehearsals and integration activities, and then conducting operations when and where desired. By acquiring these advanced technologies, potential adversaries are altering the nature of modern warfare.

While A2/AD ideas are not new—denying an adversary both access and the ability to maneuver are timeless precepts of warfare—the emergence of new A2/AD methods and strategies makes this trend an urgent concern. For example, the proliferation of technologies, enhanced by rapid advances in computing power, places increasingly sophisticated ballistic and cruise missiles, integrated air defense systems, submarines, anti-ship missiles, guided rockets, artillery, fourth- and fifth-generation combat aircraft, and advanced space and cyber capabilities in the hands of potential adversaries. Further improvements in remote sensing and weapons

guidance, maneuverable and terminally-guided ballistic missile warheads, and growing anti-satellite and cyber capabilities have amplified the threat still more. In certain scenarios, even low-technology capabilities, such as rudimentary sea mines, fast-attack craft, or shorter range artillery and missile systems, can turn essential, freely flowing movements in the commons into maritime chokepoints, vulnerable to exploitation by coercive, aggressive actors. The range and scale of possible effects with these new capabilities present a never-before seen set of military problems that threaten the U.S. and allied expeditionary warfare model of power projection and maneuver.

The A2/AD threat and international security

The A2/AD threat exceeds any single or specific theater of operations, and creates problematic consequences for international security. For example, if a potential aggressor can slow the deployment of U.S. and allied forces to a theater; if they can prevent coalition operations from operating from desired locations within a theater; or if they can force friendly forces to operate over longer distances than what would be operationally advantageous, then aggressors effectively could undermine integrated activities with allies and partners. This could drive allies and partners to seek accommodation with potential aggressors, or to develop alternate means of self-defense with potentially destabilizing effects. Such scenarios may cause concern among allies, partners, and other nations whose access to the global commons might be denied at a time and place of an adversary's choosing, and that aid could be slow to come and ineffective upon arrival. Such an environment on a macro level could induce instability, making U.S. deterrence less credible and responses more escalatory, and act

to weaken U.S. international alliances, along with their associated agreements on trade, economic integration, and diplomatic alignment.

Of further concern for the international community is the proliferation of advanced weaponry into the hands of other state and non-state actors. Such capabilities are increasingly available at lesser expense. They afford even modestly-resourced actors and some non-state entities the ability to shape regional outcomes, and perhaps even the global geo-strategic balance. It makes sense, therefore, for potential adversaries to pursue these cost-effective, asymmetric capabilities, insofar as they provide alternatives to direct confrontation with qualitatively superior U.S. and allied forces.

A pre-integrated joint force

At its core, the Air-Sea Battle concept seeks to develop a "pre-integrated" joint force built from habitual relationships, with interoperable and complementary cross-domain capabilities, which benefit from realistic, shared training. Once developed, this "force in being" will be prepared for operations at the outset of a contingency, and not require a lengthy delay for buildups or extensive mission rehearsal.

Air-Sea Battle provides a unifying collaborative means for the services to address the challenges of operational access for the joint force. This represents the concept's true value. The concept is a natural fit as one of several supporting concepts nested under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's approved Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC). The Joint Concept for Entry Operations (JCEO), now in early development and primarily concerned with land forces, also complements both concepts.⁴ Air-Sea Battle does not seek to create a new

force, as in one with wholly new equipment or capabilities, but to unify service Title 10 efforts to develop forces that fight together more effectively. The concept is a natural evolution of joint coalition warfighting toward more networked and integrated operational employment. It is an example of how the separate services can formally collaborate, yet still protect, develop, and maintain unique service capabilities, equities, and culture.

Today, efforts by potential adversaries to field formidable “anti-access/area denial” capabilities threaten to make U.S. power projection increasingly risky and in some cases cost prohibitive, while enabling near-peer competitors and regional powers to expand their coercive strength well beyond their borders.

Such inter-service coordination and integration will not occur without focused efforts. In the past, the Air Force and Navy perhaps would have attempted to address A2/AD challenges independently, coming together to derive a joint operational solution only at the onset of a contingency or the appearance of a particular threat. History shows that once specific threats abated, these “joint partnerships” tended to dissolve almost as quickly as they formed. While Air-Sea Battle is not the first time that service integration has been employed to solve difficult warfighting challenges, today’s increasingly complex operating environment demands a more enduring, deeply institutionalized approach.

Air-Sea Battle will mitigate access challenges by moving beyond simply de-conflicted service operations in each warfighting domain, and instead forge a heightened level of domain integration necessary to defeat A2/AD threats.

This integration clearly needs to occur for the combatant commanders, but it must first occur institutionally in services’ Title 10 duties to “organize, train, and equip” current and future forces. As a Service Chief, I stayed keenly aware of those responsibilities so that current and future joint force commanders can more effectively execute their power projection mandate. To be sure, Air Force airmen will remain “all in” with their commitment to improve collaboration among the services for enhanced joint warfighting capabilities.

In the present fiscal environment, the services must also resist the temptation to purchase solutions. While our nation’s substantial research, development, and manufacturing capacity continues to benefit the nation, new operational challenges cannot be fully addressed by simply investing in and acquiring new technologies and platforms. Implementing actions across doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities—the familiar components of our “DOTMLPF” construct—must occur to retain an operational advantage in the evolving A2/AD environment. Future investment, innovation, and development throughout the DOTMLPF dimensions will be guided by the construct of “networked, integrated, and attack-in-depth.”

In Air-Sea Battle, “networked” defines actions that are tightly coordinated in real time by mission-organized air and naval forces to conduct “integrated” operations across all domains without being locked into service-specific procedures, tactics, or weapons systems. These joint forces are able to attack the adversary A2/AD “system-of-systems” in depth and in all domains to exploit inherent vulnerabilities in such areas as adversary surveillance and battle management command and control networks.

Air-Sea Battle’s vision of “networked, integrated, and attack-in-depth”

operations requires the application of “Cross Domain Operations” (XDO) across air, sea, land, space, and cyberspace, to counter A2/AD capabilities and to provide operational advantage to friendly joint and coalition forces. The capabilities of integrated equipment, platforms, and units within all five domains to communicate, interact, and operate together presents the joint commander with more numerous and powerful options, which, in turn, offer greater probability of operational success. While XDO are more complex, their multi-path possibilities gain advantage over single-service or platform solutions to operational problems. For example, cyber or under-sea operations can be used to defeat air defense systems, air forces can be used to eliminate submarine or mine maritime threats, or space assets can be used to disrupt adversary command and control. Put simply, traditional understandings of service missions, functional responsibilities, or employment of capabilities from particular domains should not be barriers that hamper imaginative joint operations in an A2/AD environment.

Collaboration is under way

The Air-Sea Battle concept already has served as the catalyst to fundamentally alter the chemistry of collaboration between the Navy and the Air Force. This alignment of effort was not for the purpose of excluding or diminishing the contribution of the military’s land forces. Rather, the rationale behind Air-Sea Battle assumes that there are two military services that predominantly operate in the global commons. Furthermore, early investigation and analysis of the A2/AD problem suggested natural synergies between the Air Force and Navy that could be rapidly matured into a viable operational construct. From that dialogue, the straightforward but descriptive name for the concept evolved.

Creation of the Air-Sea Battle office served as another agent to facilitate and improve integration and inter-service communication. This step to institutionalize the multi-service office unquestionably fostered “positive change in the institutional relationships among the services, the integration of acquisition strategies, and the conceptual approach to warfare.”⁵ Another unique aspect of the Air-Sea Battle office is the absence of a designated “joint” boss. Instead, the services are committing their own equities to this organization’s efforts, and calling for their respective staffs to work with the office to address the concept’s ideas and work to realize them.

Air-Sea Battle represents a real “first” among recent DoD initiatives, in that services are now more unified in their Title 10 roles to develop forces that are able to fight together in this emerging and challenging operational environment. Whereas initial conceptual dialogue specifically framed the integration of air and naval forces to operate in the global commons, the initiative has evolved to include all of the services’ contributions to A2/AD operational solutions. More recently, the Army brings additional specialized capabilities to the A2/AD “fight” in the form of space, cyber, special operations, and air defense forces. Those capabilities contribute to the joint forces’ ability both to defend and to attack in depth in A2/AD threat scenarios.

In tangible terms, the initiative’s value is its ability to unify the services conceptually as they develop forces for future, higher-end warfare. Services’ capabilities to counter or negate A2/AD systems can now be championed and synchronized in service budget submissions, and networked, integrated operations can be emphasized in service-level wargames, experiments, exercises, and training. These non-materiel efforts are not without cost: they consume time and effort, and they produce less immediate

results. However, the efforts are real and have already permeated Navy and Air Force cultures and planning efforts.

The ultimate realization of the Air-Sea Battle concept will be interoperable air, naval, and land forces that can execute networked, integrated attacks-in-depth, to disrupt, destroy, and defeat the threat of an adversary's "anti-access/area denial" capabilities.

Commitment to implementation

The services and the Department of Defense are still in the early stages of maturing the Air-Sea Battle concept into practical implementation.

To provide historical context, "Air-Land Battle," a Cold War-era analogue, was developed by the Army and Air Force from approximately 1976 until 1986. During this period, the services developed, articulated, experimented with, and refined a conceptual vision. Results of this process produced the well-known "31 Initiatives" of DOTMLPF actions and the Army's Field Manual, FM-100-5, which articulated Air-Land Battle's operational doctrine. While Air-Land Battle thinking occupied Air Force and Army operational planners and doctrine writers over that developmental period, it was not formally completed for another decade. Only when Air-Land Battle became the "normal" mode of operations for air and land forces, to the point that soldiers and airmen no longer called their integration "Air-Land Battle," was that concept's implementation and transformation complete.

For a perspective on the continuing development of Air-Sea Battle, one might look to the future of the Air Force's RED FLAG program, the service's premier large force employment exercise in

a realistic air combat environment. For almost four decades, RED FLAG has provided advanced aerial combat experience with realistic scenarios, while offering integrated training for operators across a wide spectrum of capabilities and domains. In a recent futuristic look at RED FLAG training, emphasis on operations in an A2/AD environment, contested and degraded operations, sustainable joint training, maximized integration of C4ISR assets, further incorporation of both cyber and space assets, advancing joint information operations, and joint space range play were all identified as desired areas to improve upon the exercise's already essential training value.

Extending the same kind of integrated format seen in RED FLAG events to the next stages of Air-Sea Battle evolution represents a natural progression for the concept. As demonstrated with the testing, late last year, of a fifth-generation aircraft's in-flight retargeting of a Tomahawk cruise missile launched from a U.S. Navy submarine, it is clearly conceivable that in the not-too-distant future, the first U.S. Navy surface warfare officers and submariners will brief and de-brief their platform's participation in a RED FLAG or similar exercise.

Follow-on concept development work will need to occur in a number of other key areas. In the area of resource prioritization, service resource decision-making processes share similar needs: robust understanding of military shortfalls to achieve joint missions, the alternatives available to address those shortfalls, and realistic assessment of each alternative's potential for operational success. Service resourcing methods and processes differ, but these essential steps are embedded in them all. To achieve coherent resource prioritization across the services, the Air-Sea Battle concept can also facilitate a collaborative approach to address each of these needs and enhance inter-service effectiveness.

While early concept development and implementation efforts were “triaged” to focus on identifying the onset of A2/AD threats and their possible counters, other important operational considerations, such as command and control (C2) and logistics, will require additional innovative thinking to keep pace with increasingly sophisticated A2/AD environments.

In the particular case of C2, not only will the technologies that facilitate C2 require development and fielding, but the command authorities, decision-making protocols, and relationships that allow the joint force to execute XDO over intercontinental distances, between services, and in contested and possibly degraded environments also will require further analysis and development. For future air, space, and cyber operations, how can we improve on the now familiar air operations center construct? What newer technologies and command authorities might drive change to how the Air Force and Navy present forces to combatant commanders?

The joint force will continue to rely upon a steady flow of logistical support. However, no longer will the joint force have unhindered access to the area of operations, or complete sanctuary for logistical build-ups in advance of operations. The supply chain will need to adapt to function in contested environments. Logisticians must consider the implications for concealment, disbursement, distribution, sustainment, protection, and transportation in contested areas that could extend all the way to sanctuaries in the continental United States or elsewhere.

Finally, the military’s training and education system will become fully engaged, and expand its course offerings to reflect innovations in advanced warfare employment and integration. In two Air Force examples, the Air-Sea Battle concept now resides on the agenda

of the CAPSTONE orientation program for newly-selected general officers, and a weapons instructor course for advanced integrated warfighting is being developed for the USAF Weapons School.

Will we recognize the realization of Air-Sea Battle?

The ultimate realization of the Air-Sea Battle concept will be interoperable air, naval, and land forces that can execute networked, integrated attacks-in-depth, to disrupt, destroy, and defeat the threat of an adversary’s A2/AD capabilities. This capability will in turn sustain the ability of joint forces to project military power wherever and whenever needed to help counter potential aggression or hostile actions against U.S. and allied interests.

The services are not yet at that point, nor will they fully arrive until our respective service processes and protocols seamlessly enable enhanced collaboration across their “organize, train, and equip” responsibilities. Only when Air-Sea Battle becomes the “normal” mode of operations—to the point that airmen, sailors, soldiers, and marines no longer call what they were doing “Air-Sea Battle”—will the concept’s implementation conclude.

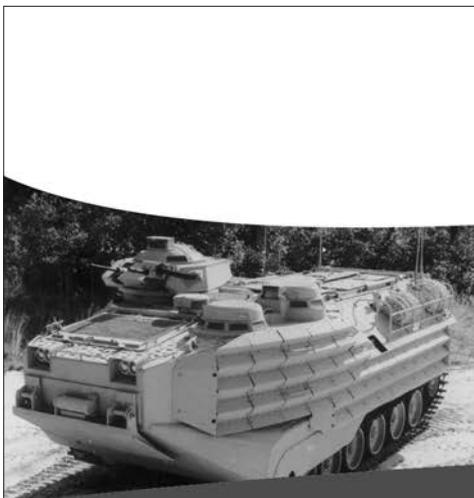
As a departed service chief who participated during the nascent stages of the Air-Sea Battle concept through early and unique collaborative efforts among the services, I believe that that the intensifying and proliferating A2/AD threat requires serious, focused institutional examination. Furthermore, all initiatives and efforts undertaken thus far in the name of Air-Sea Battle will require realistic testing before implementation in the field.

The early returns on Air-Sea Battle are encouraging. The concept unifies collaboration between departments and

services to address the emerging A2/AD threats. It represents a natural evolution toward more formal collaboration with joint, allied, and coalition partners, while allowing the separate services to still develop and maintain unique service equities. Through sustained, integrated efforts by each service, Air-Sea Battle will provide a vehicle to enable continued support to allies and partners, protection of the commons, and preservation of America's freedom of action when defending its global interests.



1. The global commons of air, sea, space, and cyberspace are those mediums through which the information, people, goods, and ideas of globalized systems freely move and generally are not subject to national limits of sovereignty or jurisdiction. Land masses are subject to claims of sovereignty and therefore are not generally considered part of the commons.
2. Anti-access (A2) denotes any action that aims to slow deployment of friendly forces into a theater, or causes forces to operate from distances farther from the locus of conflict than they would otherwise prefer. A2 affects movement to a theater. Area denial (AD) denotes any action intended to impede friendly operations within areas where an adversary cannot or will not prevent access. AD affects maneuver within a theater.
3. Andrea Shalal-Esa, "US Military Eyes Savings from Greater Cooperation," Reuters, May 16, 2012.
4. Both JOAC and JCEO are joint concepts also under development that describe how the future force will operate in response to a range of security challenges under a joint force commander—e.g., contested operations in an A2/AD environment. JOAC explains how future joint forces will achieve "operational" access in the face of A2/AD challenges, while JCEO describes how future joint forces will conduct entry operations.
5. See, for example, "Multi-Service Office to Advance Air-Sea Battle Concept," Navy News Service, November 9, 2011, http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=63731.



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THE TRIAD'S UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Mark B. Schneider

Nuclear deterrence is critical to the security of the United States. In the words of former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, “Nuclear weapons are used every day... to deter our potential foes and provide reassurance to the allies to whom we offer protection.”¹ The failure of deterrence could mean the destruction of the U.S. and a high percentage of its population. Notably, U.S. nuclear weapons also provide critical extended deterrence to dozens of allies who are threatened by weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Yet, since the end of the Cold War, nuclear weapons have received much less emphasis in the U.S. than in Russia and China. The bomber leg of the U.S. strategic triad became principally a conventional force. This provided very useful global strike capabilities, but an unfortunate side effect was the loss of nuclear competence in the Air Force (a state of affairs which prompted then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to mandate a renewed effort to restore it in 2008).

The attitudes toward nuclear weapons that resulted in the breakdown of competence still exist today. There is more understanding and focus on warfighting than on deterrence and the emphasis on warfighting is on low-intensity conflict. Yet the signals being sent by the Obama administration concerning the importance of nuclear deterrence, today are worse than those of the last decade that contributed to the loss of competence.

Mounting threats

The U.S. faces many threats today that require nuclear deterrence. Russia, China, and rogue states regard the U.S. as their main enemy and are engaged in extensive



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nuclear modernization programs. Russia, China and North Korea commonly make nuclear threats. Russian nuclear doctrine calls for the first use of nuclear weapons in local and regional conventional wars. Chemical and biological weapons have proliferated widely, and we have no in-kind deterrent.

Nuclear deterrence is critical to the security of the United States. Yet, since the end of the Cold War, nuclear weapons have received much less emphasis in the U.S. than in Russia and China.

According to the Obama administration, Russia will deploy “several substantially MIRVed new strategic missiles, including the MIRVed Yars ICBM, new Borey-class missile submarines carrying 16 MIRVed Bulava SLBMs, and, in the event it is deployed during the life of the [New START] Treaty, a planned new ‘heavy’ ICBM to replace the SS-18 that will almost certainly carry several MIRVs.”² Announced Russian plans call for two other new ICBMs, a stealthy bomber and deployment of new nuclear cruise missiles. There is also a report about the development of a 5th generation submarine to carry ballistic and cruise missiles. New advanced nuclear warheads are reportedly being deployed, including low-yield/low collateral damage warheads to make nuclear threats more credible. Additionally, according to NSC arms control director Gary Samore, Russia probably has “thousands” of tactical nuclear weapons compared to a “few hundred” for the U.S.³

China, too, is arming. The Pentagon reports that China is deploying two new ICBMs, developing a new SLBM and missile submarine, a longer range bomber and may be developing a new MIRV ICBM.⁴ Significantly, we may be

considerably underestimating the Chinese nuclear threat. The Obama administration’s estimate of a few hundred warheads is about half that of what Taiwan has judged the PRC to possess, and far lower than Russian estimates of the Chinese arsenal. Colonel General (ret.) Viktor Yesin and former Duma Defense Committee Vice Chairman Alexsei Arbatov have reported 1,600-1,800 and 1,000-3,500, respectively.⁵

Rogue nations like North Korea and Iran and other states are enhancing their nuclear, biological and chemical weapons capabilities as well. Because we have eliminated our chemical and biological capability, nuclear deterrence is necessary in this arena, although the Obama administration denies this.

Roles of the triad

For decades, the U.S. nuclear deterrent has been based upon a triad of land-based ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and nuclear bombers armed with nuclear cruise missiles and gravity bombs. The bomber force has been given substantial conventional strike capability, but proposals to give ballistic missiles conventional capability have thus far been blocked by Congress.

It has long been recognized that each leg of the triad has unique capabilities that contribute to deterrence and enhance flexibility and adaptability. Because of the elimination of most types of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons at the end of the Cold War despite their retention by our potential enemies, the flexibility and adaptability of the triad are even more important.

Our ballistic missile submarines have the highest level of survivability and can be forward deployed if necessary. Yet the number of ballistic missile submarines is declining from dozens at the height of the American submarine

fleet during the Cold War to 10-12 by 2030. Reportedly, even with our current 14 submarines, only four to six are survivable at sea at any given time.⁶ Their use to respond to limited attacks risks reducing their survivability.

The bomber force, once put on alert, is survivable, although the lack of air defense and early warning against cruise missile attack is a problem. In a crisis it can be dispersed or visibly forward deployed. The bomber force has the maximum flexibility in available weapons yield, providing the best counter to hard and deeply buried targets (HDBTs) and Russian threats of precision low-yield nuclear attack. Unlike ballistic missiles, a bomber can be recalled once launched and its targets can be changed in-flight. The incremental cost of retaining a nuclear bomber option is relatively small.

ICBMs are the cheapest leg of the deterrent, have the most effective command and control and the best responsiveness. The Minuteman life extension program will cost just over \$6 billion, probably less than the cost of the first Trident replacement submarine. During the planned life span of the Minuteman III (1970 to 2030), the Navy will have introduced two generations of ballistic missile submarines and two new strategic missiles in order to maintain the effectiveness of the SLBM force. The Air Force will have introduced three new strategic bombers to accomplish the same goal.

Dr. Adam B. Lowther points out that ICBMs “are the only leg of the triad that can hit any spot on the earth within half an hour.”⁷ In a crisis situation involving the use of WMD by a rogue state, this capability could literally be a matter of life or death to the victims of such attacks. Indeed, just after the 2006 North Korean nuclear detonation, the government of South Korea sought and obtained assurance from the U.S. Secretary of Defense that the U.S. would provide “immediate support to the ROK

[Republic of Korea], including continuation of the extended deterrence offered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella...”⁸

Compared to Russia’s and China’s ambitious modernization plans, the Obama administration’s program amounts to a 20-year moratorium on any significant strategic nuclear modernization. This represents a *de facto* policy of erosion of deterrent effectiveness by design.

The ICBM force provides critical protection for the other legs of the U.S. deterrent by making a small attack on them less likely. In 1994, the STRATCOM Senior Advisory Group observed that without a large ICBM force “the U.S. prompt retaliatory capability is severely reduced, and second, Russian targeting of remaining U.S. forces is greatly simplified.”⁹ Today, the same could be said about China. Without the ICBM force, the number of aim points faced by Russia, China or other adversaries would be reduced from about 455 to 5.¹⁰ A study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies concluded, “This option [a DYAD composed of missile submarines and bombers] presents the worst case for survivability of all the options. In a ‘bolt from the blue’ attack, just five dedicated nuclear strikes could take out all three strategic nuclear bomber bases and the two submarine bases.” The existence of the Minuteman ICBM force deters attempts to destroy at-sea missile submarines over a relatively long duration, which is more feasible than an effort to destroy them rapidly.

There is a substantial consensus on the need to maintain the nuclear triad. The bipartisan U.S. Strategic Commission addressed this issue: “The Commission has reviewed arguments in favor of

a DYAD but recommends retention of the current triad” because of the need to maintain the “resilience and flexibility of the triad,” which has “proven valuable as the number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons has declined.”¹¹ Under Secretary of Defense James N. Miller Jr. has pointed out that the triad preserves “strategic stability and hedge[s] against any unexpected technical problems or operational vulnerabilities that may arise in any one leg.”¹² A 2007 report by the Arms Control Association noted, “Throughout the Cold War the United States insisted on maintaining a triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems—bombers plus land-based and sea-based ballistic missiles—to avoid common failure modes and vulnerabilities. There is value in retaining this diversity as the total stockpile is decreased...”¹³ And the Senate Foreign Relations Committee’s Resolution of Ratification for the New START Treaty stated, “[I]t is the sense of the Senate that United States deterrence and flexibility is assured by a robust triad of strategic delivery vehicles.”¹⁴

And yet, the triad today is at considerable risk.

The Obama administration and the triad

In August 2011, STRATCOM Commander General C. Robert Kehler stated, “Nuclear deterrence is and always will be our first priority.”¹⁵

This indeed should be the case, but as former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Keith Payne has observed, the “...Obama administration openly states that movement toward nuclear zero, not U.S. deterrence capabilities, sits ‘atop’ its ‘nuclear agenda,’ and that the United States will reduce the role and the number of nuclear weapons in its arsenal... This agenda appears to be part and parcel of

an approach to arms control that places ever-greater limitations on U.S. nuclear deterrence strategies and embraces unilateral reductions.”

Nuclear Zero, however, is based more on ideology than analysis. Its proponents often believe that terrorist groups can covertly acquire nuclear weapons but deny nation-states can do the same.

Compared to Russia’s and China’s ambitious modernization plans, the Obama administration’s program amounts to a 20-year moratorium on any significant strategic nuclear modernization. This represents a *de facto* policy of erosion of deterrent effectiveness by design. Through 2031, there will be no significant improvement in the sea- or land-based nuclear deterrent. In stark contrast, since the U.S. Senate approved New START back in 2010, Russia has announced three new ICBM programs that will be deployed well before then. Russia and China plan to complete their current modernization plans before we begin ours. Only in the U.S., it seems, does ideology prevent the improvement of ballistic missile accuracy, the development of new nuclear warheads, or even a nuclear glide bomb on the B-2.

In 2009, then-STRATCOM Commander General Kevin Chilton observed that the B-2, the most modern U.S. deterrent system, is “no spring chicken” and that “the B-52s are older and limited in what they can do.”¹⁶ The B-2 carries only gravity bombs, which is the worst weapon against advanced terminal air defenses. The B-52 carries the old AGM-86B cruise missile. The drawbacks in the AGM-86B led the U.S. Air Force to begin studies for a replacement cruise missile in the 1980s. That effort, the stealthy Advanced Cruise Missile, has already been retired—leaving the B-52 with a weapon that was regarded as inadequate in the 1980s.¹⁷ Worse still, there is concern about whether the AGM-86B can be sustained until a replacement is fielded.¹⁸

Despite the endorsement of the triad by the Obama administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the administration's commitment to it seems weak. The Obama administration has claimed it is maintaining a "robust" nuclear deterrent and that "the United States will invest well over \$100 billion to sustain existing strategic delivery systems capabilities and modernize strategic systems."¹⁹ Yet, during the ratification of the New START treaty, these numbers were challenged, and the administration was forced to admit it had no money programmed for a new bomber, a new nuclear ALCM and a new ICBM. The \$100 billion number was largely operations and maintenance funding, and a lot of it seems to be related to conventional rather than nuclear bomber capability.

Under Congressional fire and in an effort to obtain votes for the New START Treaty's ratification, the Obama administration, in October 2010, reported to Congress it would develop a new nuclear-capable bomber and cruise missile. But it made no decision on a replacement ICBM or life extension of the Minuteman III ICBM after 2030.

In the best case, U.S. delivery systems will be 36-71 years old in 2031 when the first Trident replacement submarine arrives, and it will not be carrying a new missile until 2042. There is no funding in the budget for Minuteman ICBM replacement, other than to study alternatives for an ICBM capability beyond 2030. In 2012, the House Armed Services Committee noted "confusion about whether the next generation bomber and next-generation cruise missile (otherwise known as the 'Long Range Stand-Off weapon') will be nuclear capable."²⁰ If there is no follow-on to the Minuteman III and the new bomber and cruise missile are not nuclear-capable, the U.S. deterrent will decline to perhaps 10 missile submarines and 20 nuclear capable B-2 bombers with questionable capabil-

ity against advanced Russian and Chinese air defenses after 2025.

But even this force posture is in jeopardy. In November 2011, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta indicated that sequestration—should it occur in early 2013—would effectively kill the triad, resulting in the complete elimination of the ICBM force, termination of the new bomber program with a restart in the mid-2020s, and delay the Trident follow-on submarine while cutting the force to 10 submarines. Such a development is a distinct possibility, since President Obama has threatened to veto any bill that eliminated sequestration without a tax increase.

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Declining effectiveness

Efficacy is also an open question. With the passage of time, there will be increasing uncertainty with regard to whether or not our nuclear weapons will actually work. They have not been tested for two decades. This is not true for Russia and China, which are apparently covertly testing and developing new types of nuclear weapons.²¹

Since 2005, nuclear weapons experts and officials have voiced concern over the effectiveness of the "stockpile stewardship" approach to weapons life extension programs. Ambassador Linton Brooks, then-Under Secretary of Energy, told Congress in 2005 that "[t]he evolution away from tested designs resulting from the inevitable accumulations of

small changes over the extended lifetimes of these systems means that we can count on increasing uncertainty in the long-term certification of warheads in the stockpile,” adding that “it is becoming more difficult and costly to certify warhead remanufacture.”²² Dr. John Foster, former Director of the Lawrence-Livermore National Laboratory, was even blunter: “The ‘life extension programs’ developed over the past dozen years have had to introduce changes in the stockpile and in the absence of testing received extensive ‘Red Team-ing.’ Nevertheless, problems—perhaps some of a very fundamental character—may be introduced as a result.”²³

Despite the continuing decline in our deterrent capability due to aging, the Obama administration has announced that it will make nuclear weapons cuts beyond those required by the New START Treaty, and that these may be unilateral.

The Obama administration’s 2010 Nuclear Posture Review mandated no nuclear testing and no development of new nuclear weapons, including the reliable replacement warhead advocated in 2008 by then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. The reasons are clear; in 2012, President Obama told a South Korean audience that the “massive nuclear arsenal we inherited from the Cold War is poorly suited to today’s threats” and consequently “the United States will not develop new nuclear warheads.”²⁴ The administration sees no conflict between having the wrong nuclear arsenal and prohibiting new weapons to change that arsenal. Nor does it see any inconsistency between the President’s statement that we will “maintain a strong deterrent against any threat” and his pledge that “we will not pursue new military missions for nuclear weapons.”

But what if threat developments require new missions for nuclear weapons? The administration’s nuclear policy appears to be based on ideology, not analysis. The same seems true of its assertion that chemical and biological weapons attack can be deterred by conventional weapons that are many orders of magnitude less lethal.

Provocatively weak

Despite the continuing decline in our deterrent capability due to aging, the Obama administration has announced that it will make nuclear weapons cuts beyond those required by the New START Treaty, and that these may be unilateral. Early press reports indicated that the Obama administration was looking at cuts down to 300-400 warheads, but more recent ones suggest that the number will be 1,000-1,100.²⁵ Such reductions will negatively impact the viability of the triad and impair our ability to meet our targeting requirements.

And it is abundantly clear that no unilateral reduction in U.S. nuclear weapons will be matched by either Russia or China, which are both increasing their capability. Indeed, speaking to the Russian Duma on December 24, 2010, Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov announced that “[b]y all parameters, even missile launchers, we will only reach the level set by the [New START] treaty by 2028. As for warheads we will reach [the ceilings] by 2018.”²⁶

So, how many nuclear weapons do we need? A 2012 report by a self-styled “Nuclear ZERO Commission” headed by former STRATCOM commander General James Cartwright, advocated deep cuts and outlined the following targeting strategy:

Russia: WMD (325 warheads including 2-on-1 strikes against every missile silo), leadership command posts (110 warheads), war-

supporting industry (136 warheads). Moscow alone would be covered by eighty (80) warheads.

China: WMD (85 warheads including 2-on-1 strikes against every missile silo), leadership command posts (33 warheads), war-supporting industry (136 warheads).

North Korea, Iran, Syria: Each country would be covered by forty (40) warheads.²⁷

This is presumably the best warhead allocation that General Cartwright, who oversaw U.S. targeting for several years, could devise for a reduced force. The total number of weapons allocated is at least 945. According to former STRATCOM Commander Admiral (ret.) Richard Mies, our traditional targeting doctrine held at risk “potential adversary military forces, war-supporting industry, command and control capabilities and military and national leadership...”²⁸ By contrast, the Cartwright targeting plan has no defense suppression and no targeting of military facilities other than those associated with WMD. This assures that covert nuclear weapons stores will survive and our bomber penetration will be questionable. The Cartwright report is silent about damage expectancy (i.e., probability of target destruction), which is much more relevant than simple target coverage (i.e., whether a warhead is aimed at a target). Against HDBTs there can be an enormous difference between target coverage and damage expectancy. Many HDBTs are likely to survive and some cannot be destroyed even with several nuclear weapons. The announcement by China of its “Underground Great Wall,” 5,000 km of underground missile tunnels, represents an enormous targeting challenge, even if we had our large Cold War arsenal.

The idea that we can't develop new nuclear weapons or improve their military effectiveness is a self-inflicted wound.

A reduction to 1,000-1,100 warheads risks inadequate target coverage and damage expectancy with our day-to-day alert posture or probably even under conditions of generated alert. Russian and Chinese air and missile defense programs are being designed against us, not against rogue states. The Obama administration is ignoring the resulting erosion of our deterrent effectiveness. Damage expectancy would likely decline even after 2031 when the first of the modernized U.S. weapons hopefully would become available.

Chief of the Russian General Staff General Nikolai Makarov has said that Russia intends to create a nationwide missile defense system which is “impenetrable.”²⁹ Russia plans 10 battalions of reportedly nuclear-armed S-500 missiles which are designed to intercept strategic ballistic missiles by 2020, which will be about ten times the planned U.S. number of interceptors capable of engaging ICBMs.³⁰ To counter bombers and cruise missiles, Russia plans to deploy 56 battalions of advanced S-400 SAMs and interceptor aircraft including 5th generation aircraft.

China's announced commitment to missile defense was reiterated in the 2010 defense white paper. China has successfully tested a missile defense interceptor and will probably have a nationwide missile defense system by the late 2020s.³¹ China has built one of the most effective air defense systems in the world and is improving it. It is now testing a 5th generation fighter.

The percentage of U.S. surviving warheads that can penetrate these defenses will decline over the next twenty years and beyond if no counter-

measures are taken. The U.S. will *not* be able to compensate for the loss of nuclear weapons with conventional weapons because they are not hardened against nuclear weapons effects, including EMP. Moreover, the loss of GPS guidance due to nuclear or other ASAT attacks on GPS satellites would render conventional weapons mainly ineffective. Even if we harden our systems and reduce reliance on GPS guidance at great expense, they would still be unable to target most nuclear targets and all HDBTs effectively.

Corrosive neglect

A responsible approach to nuclear deterrence involves evaluating the existing and emerging nuclear/WMD threats to the United States, our allies and friends and examining the actual nature of the leadership of potential enemies who have their finger on the nuclear and WMD trigger.

Today, our unwillingness to fund defense adequately is eroding our deterrent. Ideological constraints are also clearly in play. The idea that we can't develop new nuclear weapons or improve their military effectiveness is a self-inflicted wound. As then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates stated in 2008, "Currently, the United States is the only declared nuclear power that is neither modernizing its nuclear arsenal nor has the capability to produce a new nuclear warhead."³²

Operating on the assumption that "no one would be so stupid as to start a stupid war," in the words of the Hoover Institution's Victor Davis Hanson, risks the collapse of deterrence if someone does.³³ Yet that is precisely what the Obama administration appears to be doing, to our great detriment.



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CEDING THE NEXT BATTLEFIELD

Eric R. Sterner

Space is “special.” Or is it? For most of the space age, conventional wisdom has held that space, somehow, relates to international security differently than the more traditional, physical domains of human conflict: land, sea, and air. As often as not, there is a tendency to mystify it and ascribe to it mythical properties in which mankind will discover the deepest meanings or absolute truths.

The ancient Greeks, accustomed to interpreting the physical world through the interaction of four changeable elements: earth, water, fire, and air, used the term “aether,” a so-called fifth element, to describe the unchanging nature of the bodies they observed in the sky: the very home of the gods. Of course, Aristotle and his compatriots got it wrong. Zeus does not sit on a throne above the clouds waiting to cast down thunderbolts. Space is simply another domain of human activity. It does have unique physical properties, but in that it is no different than land, sea, or air—each of which has its own particular characteristics, exists independent of humanity, and is important to us primarily in terms of how we relate to it.

Unfortunately, national security discussions about space do not always accept this reality; they still tend to separate space from the realm of human activity, as if developments there can be divorced from the struggle for wealth and power among the nations of earth, as if the bloodless destruction of satellites and spacecraft there is somehow more devastating than the leveling of towns and cities brimming with people here. Until we accept the futility of this notion and deal with space as another domain, albeit one with unique physical properties, space security discussions will always have an air of unreality. However, when we face the facts and deal with space



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for what it is, it quickly becomes possible to identify policies likely to maximize improvements in U.S. national security vis-à-vis the space environment.

No other country makes such extensive use of space to create or enhance its conventional military power. This has long given the United States an asymmetric advantage over potential adversaries—one the national security community has every reason to want to keep.

War in the aether

Aristotle's notion of space as something special, unchanging, and beyond our grasp introduced a sense of mystery that persists to this day, even though science and technology have proven the idea misconceived. In 1958, a draft statement of U.S. policy on outer space observed, "More than any other imaginative concept, the mind of man is aroused by the thought of exploring the mysteries of outer space. Through such exploration, man hopes to broaden his horizons, add to his knowledge, and improve his way of living on earth."¹ This notion of space as a domain that somehow meant more to humanity than land, sea, or air found further expression in the politics of the day. Some of President John F. Kennedy's best speeches dealt with the space age. "We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won... There is no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict in outer space as yet. Its hazards are hostile to us all. Its conquest deserves the best of all mankind, and its opportunity for peaceful cooperation may never come again."² The parties to the 1967 *Outer*

Space Treaty claimed to be "inspired by the great prospects opening up before mankind as a result of mans [sic] entry into outer space." The Treaty goes on to declare that space shall be "the province of all mankind."³ In 1969, when Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon, it was "a giant leap for all mankind." In departing from the moon for the last time in 1972, Gene Cernan commented, "We leave as we came, and God willing, as we shall return, with peace and hope for all mankind."⁴ In other words, we may suffer from normal politics and self-interested motivations when dealing with one another on Earth, but the prospect of using space for all mankind will cause people to set aside their baser instincts in orbit—or so our approach to space has implied.

Rhetorically, it has not been enough for space to simply inspire us. Instead, we decided to equate it to a blissful afterlife. Walter McDougall titled his Pulitzer-prize winning political history of the space age ...*the Heavens and the Earth*. When the Obama administration released its new *National Space Policy* in 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton observed, "As long as humankind has dreamed, we have looked to the heavens. For millennia, the planets and stars have been our signposts and inspirations, our irresistible call to exploration and the spark to human creativity. Today, they help us to unlock the potential of our planet and the universe... We must do all we can to preserve space's limitless promise for future generations who gaze skyward."⁵ Anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott went so far as to title her book about an alleged arms race in space *War in Heaven*.⁶

A little rhetorical flourish now and then can be welcome. It may spark 20th and 21st century man's imagination the same way the New World drew attention for hundreds of years after Columbus, but the frequent use of such lofty lan-

guage has elevated security policymaking in space into a category all its own where there was “no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict.”

Naturally, some desire to keep it that way. And why not? After all, nobody *should* want a war in “heaven.” In 2002, the Russian and Chinese governments introduced a draft text for a new space security treaty. Their draft restated the notion that “space is the common heritage of mankind” and asserted “only a treaty-based prohibition of the deployment of weapons in outer space and the prevention of the threat or use of force against outer space objects can eliminate the emerging threat of an arms race in outer space and ensure the security for outer space assets of all countries which is an essential condition for the maintenance of world peace.”⁷ Several significant problems existed with the draft. Notably, the Russian and Chinese sought to ban space-based weapons, which the United States does not possess but, presumably, would have a technological advantage in developing. Significantly, their draft did not ban ground-based anti-satellite weapons, which Russia inherited from the Soviet Union and China was developing—demonstrating a significant capability in 2007 with a successful ASAT test. Those omissions led many to conclude that Russia and China introduced the draft more for propagandistic purposes than any serious commitment to preventing conflict in space, but it is significant that their draft drew attention to the continued concept that space is different when it comes to domains of conflict.

In October 2010, the Council of the European Union adopted a *Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities*, to which it hoped other nations would subscribe. Among other things, the code makes it the responsibility of state signatories to “take all appropriate measures to prevent outer space from becoming an area of conflict.”⁸

U.S. space policies have the same goal: to isolate space from other domains of conflict. The U.S. *National Security Strategy for Space* explains some U.S. objectives:

We seek a safe space environment in which all can operate with minimal risk of accidents, breakups, and purposeful interference. We seek a stable space environment in which nations exercise shared responsibility to act as stewards of the space domain and follow norms of behavior. We seek a secure *space environment in which responsible nations have access to space and the benefits of space operations without need to exercise their inherent right of self-defense.*⁹ [emphasis added]

On its face, there is nothing controversial about this statement. Policymakers usually seek to use a mix of economic, political, military, and diplomatic tools to achieve their goals without resort to the kind of conflict that requires them to exercise self-defense. But, in this case, foregoing the need to exercise self-defense comes from the existence of a secure space environment, not from the absence of armed conflict. In other words, the *National Security Strategy for Space* can envision a state in which armed conflict takes place on the planet, but does not extend into space. Space is a haven free of strife or national conflict. Our strategy seeks to make it special.

Havens in heaven

Of course, the national security space community is not so fuzzy-minded as to want to avoid conflict in orbit out of some fear of profaning heaven. There are practical reasons for the United States to seek to avoid having to exercise its right of self-defense in orbit.

Space is a fluid domain that encompasses the Earth. In principle, anyone with access to it can reach any other spot on the

planet. It is the only domain that holds open the prospect of conflict between anyone on the planet. (In contrast, surface geography somewhat limits the ability of states to wage war against one another over land, on the seas, or through the air; Kazakhstan is not about to invade Denmark.) During the Cold War, the superpowers exploited this characteristic to threaten one another directly from their own territories through the development and deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), which exploit and transit space in order to deliver their payloads.

The strategic balance between the United States and any potential adversary is not determined by the relative balance of their space power. In that context, it may be in the interests of an adversary to extend, or threaten to extend, a conflict into space for exactly the reasons the United States seeks to avoid it.

More than any other state, the United States has begun to fully exploit the potential of information and communication technologies and planet-spanning space capabilities to enhance its conventional military power. (Its strategic nuclear forces have long relied on space for a variety of purposes.) It uses the unique nature of space and the laws of physics to project command, control, communications, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities (C3ISR) around the world, and much of the precision it enjoys in using firepower derives from the space-based Global Positioning System. No other country makes such extensive use of space to create or enhance its conventional military power. This has long given the United States an asymmetric advantage over potential adversaries—one the national security

community has every reason to want to keep. Presumably, preventing attacks on U.S. space systems would go a long way toward preserving it.

Second, the U.S. economy is increasingly tied to space-based systems. The so-called global space economy itself is growing, reaching some \$290 billion in 2011, and has proven relatively robust in the face of the global downturn.¹⁰ The jobs it creates involve high technology, require significant training and expertise, and generally compensate employees well.

More importantly, however, space systems have a multiplier effect on other parts of the economy. They enable some kinds of economic activity to take place that would otherwise not exist, or would be less profitable, in the absence of a space element. For example, the Global Positioning System is a series of satellites that constantly provide timing information. By comparing the position and clocks of various satellites, one can precisely determine one's location on Earth in three dimensions. Originally built as a navigation aid for the United States military, a range of non-space firms and industries have developed GPS-based applications to improve their performance. Agricultural firms use it to precisely apply water and fertilizer, reducing their costs and improving their yields while potentially protecting the environment. Transportation companies use it to improve the coordination and routing of trucks, trains, aircraft, and ships, reducing fuel use and accelerating the delivery of goods around the world. Financial enterprises use the timing function to precisely track transactions, improving performance at the margins and keeping better track of their activities. The list goes on, often in immeasurable ways, which is why a measure of the "space economy" cannot fully capture the economic value of space. Because space systems are so

deeply embedded in the economy, the secondary and tertiary economic effects of losing them could be devastating.

Third, physics and the nature of space give new meaning to the phrase “collateral damage,” which is “unintentional or incidental injury or damage to persons or objects that would not be lawful military targets in the circumstances ruling at the time.”¹¹ In the land, sea, and air domains, collateral damage can be extensive, but the nature of the domains often limits it to the area surrounding an intended target. Over time, some effects of collateral damage can be mitigated. This is not the case in space, where kinetic damage to a satellite has the potential to create debris that will remain in space for years, decades, and even centuries. Moreover, once in space, debris has the potential to increase the number of collisions between objects in space, creating still more debris. In other words, collateral damage from a conflict in space may continue to be inflicted long after the conflict is over, raising the possibility of making the domain unusable. Worse, because space is a global domain, that debris affects everyone on the planet, belligerents and non-belligerents alike. The fact that collateral damage from a space conflict can be so massive and persistent offers one more reason to avoid a conflict in space.

Fourth, space is technically demanding and, therefore, expensive. Consider the stresses that a communications satellite launched to a geosynchronous orbit will undergo even before starting its mission. During launch, the satellite, which is itself the size of a bus and may weigh 20,000 lbs., will ride atop a launch vehicle 164 feet tall, weighing roughly 750,000 lbs. At launch that rocket is 90 percent propellant and contains 675,000 lbs. of fuel and oxidizer with the equivalent potential explosive force of 75 tons of TNT. It is essentially a controlled bomb and is treated as such, with personnel at safe

distance during hazardous operations. Following ignition, the rocket will accelerate from 0 mph to the speed of sound, over 700 mph, in 60 seconds and will continue to thrust and accelerate until it reaches orbit four minutes later when the satellite and upper stage separate to continue the journey to its operational orbit. At its maximum acceleration, the rocket will impart the equivalent of four-and-a-half times the force of gravity on Earth to the satellite. Once in its proper orbit, the satellite will be 22,000 miles above the earth, traveling roughly 7,000 miles per hour and subjected to temperature fluctuations of up to 100 degrees when entering or leaving eclipse. During its life, it must operate around the clock without the ability to repair any physical malfunctions, while it is constantly bombarded by background radiation, the occasional solar flare, possible orbital debris, all while carrying several hundred pounds of explosive propellant in fuel needed for maneuvering and station-keeping to maintain its proper orbit.¹² That is just the spacecraft. Its “payload,” which is that portion of the satellite that actually performs the mission for which the satellite was built, still has to function nearly perfectly.

Success in developing the capability to deny the United States use of space could change the regional military balance and weaken U.S. security guarantees to its allies, possibly encouraging them to become more accommodating to China’s assertion of its power in the region. Success in using the capability could mean defeating the United States in an armed conflict.

Overcoming these and other stresses and actually deploying useful capability into space truly is, to use a

phrase, rocket science. It takes years to design, develop, and deploy spacecraft and involves extraordinary expense. In part for those reasons, the United States does not stockpile spacecraft and launch vehicles; they are too expensive an asset to waste away sitting on the ground. Clearly, it is in the interest of any party that owns and operates such systems that they not be attacked.

In that context, the *National Security Strategy for Space* seems eminently rational to seek a secure environment in which conflict does not take place in space. It would, presumably, help maintain U.S. military advantages over its competitors, serve U.S. economic interests, preserve an environment that all countries have the potential to use for economic, scientific, (and military) benefit, and help manage the high costs of operating in space. If only things were that easy.

The logic of space-based conflict

The strategic balance between the United States and any potential adversary is not determined by the relative balance of their space power. A host of factors figure into that estimate and different actors place different weights on those elements. In that context, it may be in the interests of an adversary to extend, or threaten to extend, a conflict into space for exactly the reasons the United States seeks to avoid it. No enemy could ignore the prospects for striking the United States in a manner that maximized the pain inflicted and happens to be one of its most vulnerable points. To the degree that those potential adversaries do not rely on space as much, they may conclude that a conflict in space—even one that they “lose” in space—would still create a net strategic advantage for them by having a greater adverse impact on the United States than on themselves.

Potential adversaries recognize this. Attention usually turns to China, which has embarked on a military program focused heavily on developing or acquiring capabilities designed to deny the United States military access to the Pacific’s western rim in a conflict.¹³ Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee earlier this year, Lieutenant General Ronald Burgess, Jr., Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, summarized China’s space activities as follows:

The space program, including ostensible civil projects, supports China’s growing ability to deny or degrade the space assets of potential adversaries and enhances China’s conventional military capabilities. China operates satellites for communications, navigation, earth resources, weather, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, in addition to manned space and space exploration missions. China successfully tested a direct ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) missile and is developing jammers and directed-energy weapons for ASA missions. A prerequisite for ASAT attacks, China’s ability to track and identify satellites is enhanced by technologies from China’s manned and lunar programs as well as technologies and methods developed to detect and track space debris.¹⁴

Success in developing the capability to deny the United States use of space could change the regional military balance and weaken U.S. security guarantees to its allies, possibly encouraging them to become more accommodating to China’s assertion of its power in the region. Success in using the capability, of course, could mean defeating the United States in an armed conflict. Even partial success could dramatically increase the costs in lives and treasure to the United States of prevailing.

Of course, it is egocentric to posit that countries make decisions about military capabilities and strategy only,

or even primarily, through the lens of a potential conflict with the United States. The number of countries making use of space capabilities for military, political, economic, and cultural purposes is growing. It does not require a stretch of the imagination to envision some of these countries going to war with one another. Just as they may recognize the competitive advantages that U.S. space capabilities provide it, so too will they recognize the advantages that space can provide to them or other potential competitors. Some discussion in the Indian military media, for example, highlights the role space would play in enhancing its military power vis-à-vis China and Pakistan.¹⁵

To complicate matters further, space systems are generally undefended. That is another reason to seek to avoid conflict, but it also makes them all the more an inviting target, particularly since destroying them in orbit will not necessarily kill anyone or cause visible damage on the ground. Thus, by attacking space systems, not only can adversaries cause real harm, they can also demonstrate a willingness to use force without crossing a redline associated with killing people. Potential attackers may believe that such demonstrations are less likely to lead to escalation by a superior power (such as the United States) than attacks that involve the immediate loss of life. Even in the face of small, modestly successful attacks on its space assets, the United States may not want to retaliate for fear of further losses in its space capabilities and/or the long-term consequences to the space environment. Call it the Samson option, in which an adversary credibly threatens to bring down the entire edifice unless the United States (or some other power) gives way to the adversary's political purposes. Iraq essentially adopted that posture by threatening to cause environmental catastrophe in the face of a military campaign to liberate Kuwait during the run-up to Operation Desert

Storm in 1991, a course that the regime did in fact pursue, though to no avail.

It should not come as a surprise that potential adversaries might seek to extend conflict into space for the very same reasons the U.S. seeks to avoid it. War has a logic all its own, which usually involves seeking advantage over an adversary. The 19th century philosopher of war, Carl von Clausewitz, who remains a touchstone for understanding the phenomenon, argued that in the abstract, war would tend towards increasing levels of destruction as one side, or the other, took every measure needed to ensure its martial activities met its political ends in the face of resistance from the other side. Of course, the other side must follow suit. He wrote, “[W]ar is an act of force, and there is no logical limit to the application of that force. Each side, therefore, compels its opponent to follow suit; a reciprocal action is started which must lead, in theory, to extremes.”¹⁶ Seeking security in a domain free from conflict in the belief that war can be contained on planet Earth ignores this fundamental characteristic of war. That warfare in space has not happened so far is a reflection more of the relative inability of various belligerents to engage in it.

It should not come as a surprise that potential adversaries might seek to extend conflict into space for the very same reasons the U.S. seeks to avoid it.

If you wish for peace, prepare for war

The Latin adage “*Si vis pacem, para bellum*” generally refers to deterring aggression by being prepared to defeat it. It is an old notion, one that the United States follows in the air, sea, and land domains. Curiously, however, it does not in space.

Seeking security in a domain free from conflict in the belief that war can be contained on planet Earth ignores this fundamental characteristic of war. That warfare in space has not happened so far is a reflection more of the relative inability of various belligerents to engage in it.

The 2010 *National Space Policy* reaffirms a commitment to U.S. space leadership and maintaining certain space capabilities, including access, space-based positioning, navigation, and timing, and a talented workforce. However, the 2010 policy notably differs from its predecessor in removing language that committed the United States to develop capabilities needed to exercise freedom of action in space or deploy capabilities that sustain advantages in space.¹⁷ Instead, it focuses on creating or preserving a conflict-free domain, that is, in treating space as special. The Administration's attempt to negotiate an international code of conduct for space highlights its commitment to this approach. Senior officials working on the issue discuss space in terms of "threats to the environment" and frame the U.S. approach in terms of cooperation to create "sustainability" of the environment.¹⁸

Unfortunately, this domain-focused approach defies the logic of war. Tolerating extreme vulnerability in high value targets is not a formula for security. Instead, the U.S. must focus on capabilities that preserve its own ability to use space while denying it to adversaries in times of armed conflict.

Orbiting satellites are extraordinarily vulnerable to any number of forms of attack, including kinetic and directed energy weapons, which may be based in space or fired from the sur-

face of the earth. Even minor damage to fragile components, such as a solar array, optics, or a communications transponder may have catastrophic consequences. Links between satellites and the ground-based elements of any system can be jammed, and ground-based elements are also vulnerable to any number of attack methods, ranging from physical destruction to cyber weapons. One can even attack groups of satellites in a single instance, using weapons that render common orbits lethal or electromagnetic pulse weapons that overload delicate electronics. The United States needs the ability to counter, defeat, and, if necessary, exercise such attacks in space the same way it seeks them on the land, sea, and air.

There are several ways the United States can defend its space capabilities. (Ground-based elements of space systems can already be defended.) It can harden electronics against electromagnetic attack, build frequency hopping transponders to defeat jamming, maneuver against an adversary's targeting capabilities or incoming kinetic threats, build greater redundancy into architectures, and stockpile space and launch vehicle capabilities with an eye toward replacing lost elements. It could develop reusable systems and an infrastructure with greater flexibility. All of these things are expensive. They may add weight to a spacecraft, which will increase its costs and, quite possibly, reduce its ability to perform its primary mission. Thus, officials have been naturally reluctant to incur the financial and performance costs of defense when U.S. space assets have not been critically attacked to date. (U.S. satellites have been jammed by Iran and Cuba and reportedly been targeted with laser designators by China.)¹⁹ Similarly, developing the capability to deny adversaries their use of space has not been a priority; the number of potential adversaries capable of using space in a

meaningful way was very limited and defense dollars were better spent elsewhere. That is changing.

As the Administration argues, space is increasingly congested, contested, and competitive largely because a growing number of actors recognize their interests in using space and are capable of using the medium to pursue those interests. Today, eight countries, including Iran, have demonstrated a space launch capability and some 60 governments and multi-government consortia, plus numerous private entities, own or operate satellites.²⁰ Several of them, including members of the European Union, Japan and India, have taken steps to increase their military use of space. Continued growth in the number of countries using space, including for their security purposes, is likely, particularly given the ongoing spread of space technology and applications.

The United States must prepare for that eventuality, and for the likelihood that those countries will not view their interests in space in the same way the United States views its own. The globalization of space technology and applications practically guarantee that the notion of total control will always remain unfulfilled. Nevertheless, meaningful capabilities to deny an adversary full exploitation of space while defending one's own advantages during wartime lie at the heart of American national security interests in space. Policy approaches geared toward securing the domain politically, by turning it into some conflict-free zone, will not be successful enough to overcome an adversary's interests in asymmetrically striking a source of American power and military advantage.

This does not mean that national security policymaking should be indifferent to the domain, or that it should reject specific policies or agreements geared toward reducing incidences of conflict that might affect space. Nothing

could be farther from the truth. Changes in spectrum policy reached through international negotiations, for example, can have significant consequences for the GPS system. Just as traditional rules can improve state interaction on land, sea, and air—particularly during peacetime—so too can they address common interests in being able to use space for peaceful purposes. Indeed, many of the specific measures the Administration seeks agreement on, such as debris mitigation, improved space situational awareness, and preventing collisions, are welcome. By establishing routine procedures for certain types of space operations or situations, they can reduce the transaction costs for countries seeking to solve problems when their interests coincide. The challenge comes when one seeks to depend on those policies for national security—an area dominated by the calculus about war, when interests do not coincide and intentions are not peaceful.

Tolerating extreme vulnerability in high-value targets is not a formula for security. Instead, the U.S. must focus on capabilities that preserve its own ability to use space while denying it to adversaries in times of armed conflict.

Space may be special in the sense that it fires the imagination, but it is not “special” when it comes to the logic of warfare. Conflict is a function of human interaction, not of the domain in which the interaction takes place. American space policies must recognize this lest they encourage aggression in space by tolerating the vulnerability of capabilities upon which we are increasingly dependent. This must not become an excuse to forego leadership in rule-making for the domain, which has the

potential to improve the ability to use space for peaceful purposes, but neither must a commitment to the rule-making process become an excuse to ignore the logic of warfare or the development of capabilities that will help the United States prepare for it.



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GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT CYBERWARFARE

— Frank J. Cilluffo & J. Richard Knop —

The future of military conflict will certainly include a cyber component. Computer network operations, including exploits and attacks, will be integrated into military planning, doctrine and operations. Cyber warfare will simultaneously be its own domain and will also impact other domains (land, sea, air, and space)—from intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB), to computer network attack (CNA).

Nations that can best marshal and mobilize their cyber power—defined as “the ability to use cyberspace to create advantages and influence events in all other operational environments and across the instruments of power”—and integrate it into strategy and doctrine will ensure significant national security advantage into the future.¹

The U.S. cybersecurity community is evolving and developing in response to the threat climate that prevails, but remains in a nascent stage of maturity. To date, the cybersecurity community has not reached anything approaching the level of acumen displayed by the U.S. counterterrorism community. Its current state is akin to where our anti-terrorism efforts found themselves shortly after the 9/11 attacks. While our defense and intelligence architectures and capabilities in the cyber field outmatch and out-compete those on the civilian side, the future of U.S. cyberdefense and cyber-response is not assured even in a military context. The threat and the technology that supports it have markedly outpaced U.S. prevention and response efforts as a whole.

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Despite multiple incidents that could have served as galvanizing events to shore up U.S. resolve to formulate and implement the changes that are needed (and not just within Government) we as a country have yet to take the steps needed to enhance our security, readiness and resilience. As General Keith Alexander, Commander of U.S. Cyber Command and director of the National Security Agency, noted recently, “The country is a ‘three’ on a scale of one to ten when it comes to cyber preparedness.”²

While bits and bytes are unlikely to replace bullets and bombs, terrorist groups may increase their cyber savvy as time wears on and may affect our threat and vulnerability calculus accordingly.

Threat matrix

The cyber threat is multifaceted. At the time of a breach, just who is behind the clickety-clack of the keyboard is not readily apparent. It could be an ankle-biter, a hacker, hacktivists, criminal or terrorist groups, nation-states or those that they sponsor. The Internet is a medium made for plausible deniability. From a homeland security perspective, however, our principal concerns are by and large foreign states—specifically those that pose an advanced and persistent threat. Russia and China fall in this category although their tactics and techniques may—and likely have been—exploited by others.

The U.S. National Counterintelligence Executive (NCIX) pulls no punches in its assessment: “The nations of China and Russia, through their intelligence services and through their corporations, are attacking our research and development... This is a national, long-term, strategic threat to the United States of

America.”³ The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff likewise expressed concern in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee earlier this year: “I believe someone in China is hacking into our systems and stealing technology and intellectual property.”⁴ He declined to link this activity directly to the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). However, Chinese Army officers have publicly expressed significant interest in and support for non-traditional means to yield military advantage.⁵

As a report issued by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission has outlined, “Computer network operations have become fundamental to the PLA’s strategic campaign goals for seizing information dominance early in a military operation.”⁶ The report also notes that even during peacetime, computer network exploitation has likely become central to PLA and civilian intelligence collection operations to support national military and civilian strategic goals.⁷

As foreign intelligence services engage in cyber espionage against us, they often combine technical and human intelligence in their exploits.⁸ These activities permit others to leapfrog many bounds beyond their rightful place in the innovation cycle. As the Office of the NCIX observes in its *2011 Report to Congress*, “Moscow’s highly capable intelligence services are using HUMINT [human intelligence], cyber, and other operations to collect economic information and technology to support Russia’s economic development and security.”⁹

After Russia’s war with Georgia in 2008, the military appraised its campaign and made note of its poor performance in the domain of Information Warfare.¹⁰ This led to a call for “Information Troops” within the Russian armed forces; however, no such body has yet to appear. Professor Igor Panarin, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Diplomatic

Academy, notes that “the objective is... certainly, to create centres which would envisage so-called hacker attacks on enemy territory.”¹¹ The present absence of defined “Information Troops” within the armed forces does not preclude a pre-occupation with their “lack of capacity to prosecute or defend against CNO within the military” and will continue to incite calls to action.¹²

At worst, such exploits hold the potential to bring the United States and its means of national defense and national security to a halt—thereby undermining the trust and confidence of the American people in their government. This is a dark scenario. Yet one wonders what purpose the mapping of critical U.S. infrastructure (by our adversaries) might serve other than intelligence preparation of the battlefield. In 2009, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that cyberspies from Russia and China had penetrated the U.S. electrical grid, leaving behind software programs. These intruders didn’t cause any damage to U.S. infrastructure, but sought to navigate the systems and their controls.¹³ Indeed, the line between this type of reconnaissance and an act of aggression is thin, turning only on the matter of intent.

Countries such as Iran and North Korea are not yet on a par with Russia and China insofar as capabilities are concerned; but what Iran and North Korea lack in indigenous capability they make up for in terms of intent. Here motivation supersedes sophistication. From a U.S. perspective, the challenge is asymmetric in character and of course complicated by the nuclear backdrop.

Iran is increasingly investing in bolstering its own cyberwar capabilities. According to press reports, the government there is investing the equivalent of one billion dollars to build out its offense and defense.¹⁴ Iran has organized an “Iranian Cyber Army,” and has also employed pro-government hackers who have man-

aged to shut down Twitter, block websites and execute complex cyberattacks within Iran.¹⁵ Also, it is useful to keep in mind that many of the capabilities that Iran does not yet have may be purchased. A veritable arms bazaar of cyber weapons exists, and the bar to entry continues to get lower while the cyber weapons continue to become more user-friendly (i.e., point-and-click).¹⁶ Our adversaries just need the cash and the intent.

Our cyber-offense and defense both require work. The two go hand-in-hand, with the one bolstering and reinforcing the other. Imbalance between them may give rise to significant potential peril.

Unfortunately there is no lack of evidence of intent. By way of example, U.S. officials are investigating “reports that Iranian and Venezuelan diplomats in Mexico were involved in planned cyberattacks against U.S. targets, including nuclear power plants.” Press reports based on a Univision (Spanish TV) documentary that contained “secretly recorded footage of Iranian and Venezuelan diplomats being briefed on the planned attacks and promising to pass information to their governments,” allege that “the hackers discussed possible targets, including the FBI, the CIA and the Pentagon, and nuclear facilities, both military and civilian. The hackers said they were seeking passwords to protected systems and sought support and funding from the diplomats.”¹⁷

Iran itself is not a monolith when it comes to its cyber (or terrorist) activities. Indeed, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) operates as a semi-independent entity, and it is unclear just how much they coordinate with Iranian intelligence (the Ministry of Intelligence

and Security, or MOIS). This complicates U.S. efforts in terms of both threat assessment and response. Moreover, despite the imposition of sanctions on Iran, it is quite clear that the IRGC is not running out of money; the Corps has a substantial economic enterprise internal and external to Iran including telecommunications.¹⁸ This coupled with the foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs) Iran supports and sponsors, notably Hezbollah, makes Iran a key threat.¹⁹ Note further that Iran's ability to conduct electronic warfare, including the jamming and spoofing of radar and communications systems, has been enhanced by acquisition of advanced jamming equipment. In the event of a conflict in the Persian Gulf, Iran could combine electronic and computer network attack methods to degrade U.S. and allied radar systems, thereby frustrating or at least complicating both offensive and defensive operations.²⁰

From the standpoint of defense, the nation would be well served by a cyber-deterrence strategy that is clearly and powerfully articulated. Having singled out certain adversaries in open-source government documents, logic dictates that we should specify (without divulging sensitive or compromising details) the broad outlines of what we are doing about these activities directed against us.

If past is prelude, Iran has leaned on proxies in the past to do its bidding, and this factors into the cyber domain as well. Hezbollah has also entered the fray, establishing the Cyber Hezbollah organization in June 2011. Law enforcement officials note that the organization's

goals and objectives include training and mobilizing pro-regime (Government of Iran) activists in cyberspace. In part this involves raising awareness of and schooling others in the tactics of cyberwarfare. Hezbollah is deftly exploiting social media tools such as Facebook to gain intelligence and information. Even worse, each such exploit generates additional opportunities to gather yet more data as new potential targets are identified, and tailored methods and means of approaching them are discovered and developed.²¹

Looking beyond the horizon, the outlook is likewise concerning. While bits and bytes are unlikely to replace bullets and bombs, terrorist groups may increase their cyber savvy as time wears on and may affect our threat and vulnerability calculus accordingly. As Gen. Alexander observed recently, al-Qaeda and others who wish to do harm to the United States "could very quickly get to" a state in which they possess "destructive" cyber capability that could be directed against us.²² Bear in mind that cyberterrorism (and terrorism in general) is a small numbers business. Big numbers are not needed to generate serious consequences. Indeed, nineteen hijackers were able to take nearly three thousand lives and cause substantial economic damage in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

How prepared are we?

With national and economic security at stake, the imperative of preparedness is clear. Yet we have a way to go on this front before it could be reasonably concluded that the United States is giving enough focus to cyberdefense and cyber-response in the military realm. (Of course, the cyber threat spectrum impacts more than the defense community alone. The broader public sector, the private sector, the interface and intersections between them, as well as individual citizens, are also at risk. This article, however, relates simply to the military domain.)

Prevention and response requires, among other things, capabilities and capacities that can be executed and implemented in real time against sophisticated and determined adversaries. Underlying those abilities and the exercise of that power, in turn, must be fundamental operating principles carefully derived, defined and debated in the clear light of day, that represent the product of a national conversation on the subject.

Policy and strategy in this area have suffered to date because concepts and categories which constitute the evolution and end-product of our thinking as a nation have lagged behind both technology and practice (particularly that of our adversaries). These various elements may still be brought into better alignment, but doing so will require concerted effort and commitment on the part of our military and civilian leaders. Remember that we have risen in the past to similar challenge successfully, forging strategy and policy in another new domain devoid of borders, namely outer space.

Our cyber-offense and defense both require work. The two go hand-in-hand, with the one bolstering and reinforcing the other. Imbalance between them may give rise to significant potential peril. Fortunately discussions are under way at the Pentagon and elsewhere regarding the rules of engagement that should, do, and will inform and guide U.S. actions in cyberspace. Contingency planning that incorporates attacks on U.S. infrastructure is needed, as is red-teaming and additional threat assessments which should include modalities of attack and potential consequences.

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the broad outlines of what we are doing about these activities directed against us.²³ It may be that the equivalent of an above-ground nuclear test is needed in order to demonstrate U.S. wherewithal to actual and prospective adversaries, who might thereby be dissuaded from a course of action or, alternatively, compelled toward specific steps. What that equivalent test may be is not altogether clear nor is the feasibility or possible consequences of conducting it, but these are the sorts of questions that merit national reflection at this time. Force protection is another, as second-strike capabilities may be needed to ensure it.

Before going on the offensive, prudence dictates that we first inoculate ourselves against the very measures that will be visited upon others. Blowback is always a risk in military engagement and all the more so in the cyber context, where unintended consequences may materialize once a cyber-weapon is released into the wild.

An “active defense” capability, meaning the ability to immediately attribute and counter attacks, is needed to address future threats in real-time. Active defense is a complex undertaking, however, as it requires meeting the adversary closer to its territory, which in turn demands the merger of our foreign intelligence capabilities with U.S. defensive and offensive cyber capabilities (and potentially may require updating relevant authorities). A significant breakthrough in the counterterrorism realm post-9/11 was the synchronization of Title 10 and Title 50 of the United States Code—a development that harmonized

military and intelligence functions. Similarly, this synchronization can be leveraged to strengthen our active defenses in the cyber domain. We cannot simply firewall our way out of this problem.

Before going on the offensive, however, prudence dictates that we first inoculate ourselves against the very measures that will be visited upon others. Blowback is always a risk in military engagement and all the more so in the cyber context, where unintended consequences may materialize once a cyber-weapon is released into the wild. Identifying and implementing the necessary precautions should therefore be an integral part of taking the offensive—and indeed a precursor to it.

Readiness is no simple matter in this context, certainly not across the board. Government entities with the greatest capabilities (such as NSA) do not have all the authorities, while departments whose capacities are less fully developed (such as DHS) are endowed with relatively greater authority. The result is a range of knock-on effects including challenges for computer network defense (CND) and computer network exploit and attack (CNE and CNA). Figuring out how best to bridge the gap between authorities and capabilities is a vexing challenge, but one that would serve us well to think through carefully, taking into account all competing equities (security, privacy, civil liberties, etc.).

All-source intelligence that underpins and enables prevention and response is and will continue to be crucial for military and civilian efforts. As much as technology matters in this area, there is simply no substitute for HUMINT. A human source—whether a recruit in place inside a foreign intelligence service, a criminal enterprise, or a terrorist organization—is the most valuable force multiplier, bar none. By helping to create a “rich picture” of the threat, HUMINT keeps our blind spots to a minimum.

Input and insights from the private sector, including the owners and operators of critical infrastructure, are also an important component for building robust (national) situational awareness and a shared knowledge of the battle-space. These owners and operators should be part of our Fusion Centers. Yet this is not the case for more than half of the nation’s Centers—despite the fact that a sizable majority of Fusion Centers are (according to survey research conducted recently by The George Washington University’s Homeland Security Policy Institute) believed by their membership to have “relatively weak capabilities in regard to the gathering, receiving, and analyzing of cyber threats.”²⁴

The road ahead

History offers guidance on how to move forward smartly. We must find the cyber equivalents of Billy Mitchell, George Patton, Curtis LeMay and Bill Donovan—leaders who understand both the tactical and strategic uses of new technologies and weapons. Such leadership, together with the elaboration and articulation of doctrine to guide and support the development and use of U.S. cyber capabilities of all kinds, will propel the nation much closer to where it needs to be.

At the end of the day, the ability to reconstitute, recover and get back on our feet is perhaps the best deterrent. The storms that recently battered the National Capital Region, leaving close to a million people without power during a week-long heat wave, are instructive in terms of our shortcomings on resilience. Mother Nature may be a formidable adversary, but just imagine the level of damage and destruction that a determined and creative cyber-enemy could have wrought.



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MISREADING THE MUSLIM WORLD

Jeffrey Gedmin

Go back and read the speech that President Obama gave at Cairo's Al-Azhar University on June 4, 2009, and you'll see just how unkind history can be. This was in essence the President's attempt to begin to undo the damage done by George W. Bush and the Iraq war and provide a compass, as Mr. Obama envisioned it, for a "new beginning" in America's relations with the Muslim world.

Already at the time, critics pointed out that the President might well have considered another venue. Most of the world's Muslims live outside the Middle East and Egypt at the time was ruled by an aging, corrupt autocrat whose reign, it turns out, was nearly at an end. There were predictable platitudes (Pakistan's problems, the President declared, cannot be solved by the use of military force alone). There was only fleeting reference to one of the biggest problems faced by the region, namely the need for decent, accountable government and rule of law (four paragraphs out of the entire speech). There was naïveté, too; as a good modern American liberal, President Obama spoke out eloquently against "nations and tribes subjugating one another to serve their own interests."¹ That may resonate with a graduate seminar at Harvard. The Middle East is a region, though, which still pulses proudly with nationalism, tribalism and sectarian hierarchy. It's good to speak aspirationally; but it's equally important to know your audience.

Apologize for colonialism, voice compassion for Palestinian plight, bow to Islam as a great religion of tolerance and racial equality. The Obama administration's public diplomacy seems to have been predicated on the idea that if we smother the Muslim world with kindness, dignity and dialogue we can set relations on the right path. But by any measure, more than three years later, the Administration's approach has borne little fruit.



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The President chose Cairo as the venue for his June 2009 speech to pay homage to Egyptians, the citizens of a great nation, heirs to a rich and proud civilization, a capital and country arguably crucial to development in the Middle East. So what does the citizenry of the Middle East's most populous nation have to say about Mr. Obama today? According to a recent Pew poll, 76 percent say they'd be happy to see Obama lose in November.² In fact, most of the Muslim world today still sees the United States as unilateralist and acting in its own selfish interests (Libya being an exception). In six countries surveyed by Pew—Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan, Turkey and Pakistan—confidence in the U.S. president has fallen in three years from 33 percent to 24 percent, rivaling George W. Bush's dismal 22 percent approval rating after the Iraq war.

America is also still widely seen as unfair to Palestinians. In 17 Muslim countries around the world, there is strong condemnation of the American reliance on drones to go after extremists in Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan. Ordinary Iranians were mystified that the Administration was so slow and feeble in offering support to the pro-democracy movement that swelled and shook the country starting in summer 2009. (The deference to the Iranian regime we showed by declining to interfere in their internal affairs has done little to garner Tehran's good will in nuclear negotiations, however.) Meanwhile, Iranians and Syrians alike must wonder today whether the United States has a single coherent thought on how to assist their respective nations to a path of self-rule and prosperity.

With the administration's "new beginnings" public diplomacy now largely in tatters, what lessons can be gleaned for a second Obama term—or a Romney administration in waiting?

Interests, not popularity

Let's recognize, it's not about popularity, it's about interests. It would be a mistake and the wrong objective if the American president were to try to become the darling of Muslims in the Middle East or elsewhere. The United States is a great power with self-interests. It is ridiculous that we labor at times to imply otherwise. Public diplomacy is not therapy. There's nothing the slightest bit wrong with self-confidently articulating where our interests lie.

Among other things, the U.S. has an interest in stability, open trade, and access to energy. Yes, that includes the need for oil in problematic places like Saudi Arabia. We also have an interest in security. This means containing hostile governments and eliminating extremists who wish to do us and our allies harm. Foreign policy is rarely a purely noble, philanthropic endeavor. Bismarck once said he often found the word "Europe" coming from the mouths of those politicians who wanted something for their respective nations but dared not ask for it honestly and openly. (More than a century later, how little has changed in today's EU.)

For our part, let's declare our interests and refrain from concealing disagreements or papering over differences. Nothing is perhaps more central in this regard than how we address the Palestinian question. However often and cynically the issue has been manipulated by Muslim leaders, its emotional appeal to millions of Muslims around the world is also real and undeniable.

Similarly, though, Israel has become part of America's political DNA. It is a democratic ally with an influential constituency in the U.S.—and this constituency is composed not only of American Jews. From a U.S. perspective, Palestinians were on the wrong side of World War I, World War II, the Cold War and the first Gulf War. For years, Palestin-

ian terrorists have killed innocent Israelis with weapons and training supplied by Iranian theocrats who see the United States as the great Satan and who revel in chants of “Death to America.” While it is unquestionably an American interest to see Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace, it is hardly surprising that many Americans also have considerable concern about the character and behavior of a future Palestinian state. Should the U.S. encourage the emergence of a Palestinian state if we deem it probable that such a state will align itself with America’s adversaries and threaten our ally Israel?

These are plainly valid strategic considerations. Let’s be open about them. Candor is not hubris.

Of course, it’s appropriate for the United States to provide humanitarian assistance to those innocent Palestinians who suffer as a result of the conflict. There’s nothing wrong, moreover, with revisiting our record with the Muslim world. We make mistakes, sometimes with tragic consequences. We failed, for instance, to lift a finger as Saddam Hussein massacred his Kurdish population in the 1980s. In the first Gulf War we inspired the Shi’a of Iraq to rise up, and then allowed our guns to fall silent as tens of thousands were killed by Saddam’s superior forces.

But the United States has acted honorably, too. During the administration of George H.W. Bush, it sent troops to feed starving Somalis in the early 1990s. Under Bill Clinton, it led humanitarian interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo later that same decade to stave off the slaughter of Muslims in the Balkans. The United States has poured billions into Afghanistan and the reconstruction of Iraq where, however ill-conceived the war may have been, even the most ardent anti-Bush activist would have to concede today that the mission was hardly just a ruthless “blood for oil” adventure.

It’s a familiar irony that many insist that the United States keep its hands off the Middle East and cease meddling, while at the same time demanding that America take responsibility and solve the region’s problems, including and especially the problem of Israelis and Palestinians. Again, the lesson here for our public diplomacy is clear. The Palestinians deserve dignity. But pandering is the wrong path.

The truth is that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be resolved one day not because of any pressure Washington exerts on Israel. Nor will the conflict come to an end because Israelis give up land for peace. They’ve tried that. Rather, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will come to an end when the Palestinian side fully renounces violence and accepts in earnest Israel’s right to exist. At that historic moment, there will still be great disagreements over maps and modalities; the dickering may go on for years. But the fundamental conflict will have been settled and real peace will finally have a chance in this part of the Middle East. Our public diplomacy should be candid about American interests and be guided by a clear and compelling analysis of problems and solutions. It should also be in synch with our values. This may not make us popular in the short term. But it’s the only course that will earn us genuine respect and credibility in the long run.

Values matter

Let’s be equally clear that, while it’s about interests, it’s about values, too. Ronald Reagan went to great lengths to explain to Mikhail Gorbachev why the leaders of an unelected government that rules by brute force and wicked coercion cannot be trusted. U.S. foreign policy is at its best—and enjoys its most secure basis at home—when it is conducted in principled fashion and endeavors to align interests and values. It is here that we have an enormous amount of work

to do, both in the exercise of our foreign policy and in the formulation of our public diplomacy. It's a contradictory and untidy business. Ronald Reagan fought Communism to a considerable extent over values. He also turned a blind eye to human rights abuse and coddled the authoritarian rulers of Saudi Arabia in exchange for their support of the Contras in Nicaragua and the anti-Communist resistance in Afghanistan.

Of course, every nation faces dilemmas in the conduct of its foreign policy. Every country feels compelled at times to enter tactical alliances in the pursuit of larger strategic objectives. The United States aligned itself with Stalin's Soviet Union in the campaign to defeat Hitler's Germany. The result was the end of Nazism and the liberation of Europe from fascism. The tragic, unintended consequence was the division of the continent and the enslavement of tens of millions, trapped under Communism behind the Iron Curtain. The balancing and blending of interests and values is an endlessly difficult, agonizing endeavor.

I recall hosting in Paris several years ago a meeting with members of the Syrian opposition at which there was much railing against America hypocrisy. I also remember one American participant arguing eloquently that just because we are hypocritical does not mean we are insincere. The conversation slowly modulated to an honest and sophisticated discussion of the defensible and indefensible double standards of American foreign policy in the Middle East. This is a conversation that needs serious attention and transparency. It should be a central task of American public diplomacy to take this on.

This is especially so as for decades we've evaded this responsibility in the Middle East. In fact, until recently—Iraq was a turning point in this regard—U.S. policy toward the Middle East had focused almost entirely on stability and

access to energy. Issues of democracy and human rights were barely part of the conversation. What's more, before Iraq, the Palestinian problem always took center stage when it came to matters of "justice," as corrupt authoritarian governments sought to take away attention from their own dismal state of domestic affairs. The United States generally accommodated this cynical strategy.

Today we see a great transformation under way. The "Arab Spring" has changed the conversation in a fundamental way. U.S. policymakers will continue to be concerned about security, stability and access to energy in the region. But now a new debate is taking shape on how we support national aspirations for greater freedom and democracy. In some cases, this may lead to the formation of governments that share some of our liberal dispositions. In other instances, though, governments will be elected that promote anti-American, anti-Israeli policies, while pursuing decidedly illiberal agendas at home.

This has led realists, of course, to chide us: beware of the freedom you wish for! So what can and should the United States do?

The case for culture

First and foremost, we need to grasp that culture matters, profoundly. It's a commonly accepted fact of organizations: you can change leadership, you can alter structure. You can redesign and in effect create an entirely new company or department. But values, habits and behavior—in a word, culture—take an inordinate amount of time to change. The transformation of the culture of a nation can take decades. In this respect, the unification of Germany is still ongoing some 23 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. All Bonn's Federal Republic had to do was to absorb 17 million decently educated, ethnically homogeneous, overwhelmingly Christian

German speakers from the East. Nearly a quarter of a century later, Germany is in some respects socially and culturally still a divided nation.

The challenge for large parts of the Muslim world to cope with globalization and join modernity is immense, and is largely a matter of culture and identity. Because of the complexity involved, it makes the transformation of East Germany look like child's play. With Turkey, however ill-timed and inconvenient, we're now confronted with the fact that the country was never simply Istanbul—modern, cosmopolitan, open, and Western leaning. In Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, we see a strategically important partner and a country often praised for the vibrancy of its democracy. But Indonesia is also a nation comprising 17,000 islands, 300 different ethnic groups and 740 languages, where sectarianism remains a challenge and religious persecution is said to be on the rise. American policy and public diplomacy toward such an important country requires patience and an appreciation of the limits of U.S. influence.

The same applies to the Middle East. Much of our American debate about the "Arab Spring" has been sadly, although perhaps predictably, self-referential. It is driven by an illusion of control, when in fact much of what drives and defines Middle Eastern politics—including powerful forces such as religion, nationalism, tribalism, sectarianism, narratives of grievance, cultures of conspiracy theory—has very little to do with us and lies far beyond our powers to shape. With humility, though, we can find our role and seek ways to advance our interests.

To start, let's once and for all conclude that it's foolish (and dangerous) to be naïve about violent extremists who celebrate death and destruction. Some may change stripe, but until they do so they are self-avowed enemies and should be treated as such.

At the same time, let's not be naïve about potential allies. We may well wish to build coalitions of pro-American, pro-Israeli, secular liberal democrats in the region. They exist, and they surely deserve our activism and support. But it's wishful thinking to believe they are present in sufficient numbers. In fact, such forces in today's Middle East are exceedingly small in number and operate mostly on the margins with modest influence. As Olivier Roy observes in the current issue of the *Journal of Democracy*, the demonstrators who led the recent revolts in the Middle East wanted elections, democracy and human rights, but "the Arab Spring masked large reservoirs of underlying conservatism in Arab societies."³

Indeed, what of the large swathes of Middle Eastern societies one might fairly describe as traditional, conservative and religious? They are not extremists or supporters of terror. But neither are they pro-Western democrats. Many of these individuals tend toward anti-Americanism. They are troubled by Israel. They fret mightily about Western hedonism and decadence (not always without justification, one might add). They turn up rarely at Washington conferences. And yet, it's precisely these "reservoirs" of Arab conservatism that represent something important. They are the forces that will ultimately advance or impede modernization and democratization in key parts of the Muslim world. It's a strategic imperative to find ways to engage these segments of Muslim societies, and not just in the Middle East.

A couple of years ago, a prominent imam in Kabul discussed with me why he rejected the Taliban and supported basic human rights, including education for girls and women. He also sought to explain why he could not fathom America or Europe, with our excessive individualism, promiscuity and materialism, ever being models for the develop-

ment of Afghanistan. Considering the landscape as it exists in many Muslim majority countries, we may actually do a disservice when we spend too much time talking about Israel and America, about religion and history. As Olivier Roy points out, “Religious tolerance was not the first fruit of liberalism and the Enlightenment.”⁴ Of course, women’s rights were not the first rights to flow from American and European democracy either.

This is not a case for moral relativism. It is an argument, however, that our policies and public diplomacy should be driven by candor and a sense of realism. We have to see things for what they are, not how we wish them to be. Accurate description is the essential prerequisite of any sensible prescription and formulation of policies. Above all, perhaps, we need to proceed with a good measure of patience and humility.

Economy and opportunity

There is one fertile area where our dialogue with the Muslim World, especially with the “Arab Spring” countries, should be deepened. This is the realm of enterprise, entrepreneurship and economic development. The Obama administration deserves some credit for its early focus in exchange and educational programs on entrepreneurship, technology, health and innovation for young people. This work should be continued and expanded. Together with the peoples of the Middle East, we have a common interest in seeing individuals and communities empowered, and old dependencies ended. “Arab Spring” governments and civil society actors share a common view that any political reform will be contingent on job creation and economic growth. There will be endless debates and battles fought over “social justice” and the redistribution of wealth. There’s an emerging consensus in most quarters, though, that wealth first has to be cre-

ated and that in order for this to happen the rule of law has to sink roots, a vibrant private sector has to develop and trade, not aid, will be key to a prosperous future.

Let’s see to it, for our part, that the discussion of economics is also a conversation about ethics and morality. We should make it a joint undertaking to discuss the values that underpin functioning markets and systems that flow from greater economic freedom, things such as individual responsibility, savings, thrift, deferred gratification and service to others. None of these things, it should be noted, run counter to Islam *per se*.

The best possible partnership is one in which we listen and learn as well as teach. The same applies to effective public diplomacy. If we’re looking for secure bridges to advance our relations with the Muslim world, maybe it’s the adage “It’s the economy, stupid” that can anchor us most effectively and frame what are certain to be very difficult times of transition ahead.



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COLD WAR NUCLEAR REDUX

Jamie M. Fly & Evan D. Moore

Only three American Presidents had previously won the Nobel Peace Prize. It was thus a surprise on October 9, 2009, when the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that it had awarded that year's prize to President Barack Obama, then barely nine months in office. The announcement noted that the prize was being awarded to him "for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples." The statement went on to note that "[t]he Committee has attached special importance to Obama's vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons."

Barack Obama entered office in January 2009 after a campaign dominated by the near-collapse of the U.S. economy. National security played a minimal role in the election, despite events such as Russia's invasion of Georgia in August 2008 and the worsening situation in Afghanistan. Consequently, the President came into office with few notable plans on the national security front with the exception of winding down the war in Iraq, focusing on the "good war" in Afghanistan, and improving America's image abroad.

Although he had previously served as a United States senator, the new President had limited international experience. However, there was one issue he had studied and opined about for years: nuclear disarmament. As a student at Columbia University, he had written favorably of the nuclear freeze movement of the 1980s. Once he arrived in the Senate, he took an interest in issues related to securing weapons of mass destruction, traveling the globe with Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN), who was known for his creation of and support for the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program. As Michael McFaul, now U.S. ambassador to Russia, later told James Mann, "The nuclear issue is really important to his background."¹



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Despite this interest in arms control, in the early months of the Obama administration, the President often gave the sense that he preferred to spend his time and attention on domestic challenges. Even as national security issues such as Afghanistan encroached on these desires, the President took the time to lay out a detailed nonproliferation and disarmament agenda.

President Obama, perhaps drawing on his intellectual roots in the anti-nuclear freeze movement at Columbia, deemphasized the counterproliferation tools that the Bush administration had pioneered, and turned the U.S. government back to the arms control perspective.

As the President's strategy began to emerge, there was some commonality with the threat assessments of previous administrations. The specter of terrorists getting their hands on weapons of mass destruction or even components, such as nuclear material, had long been the nightmare scenario for U.S. policymakers. But to address the threat, President Obama decided to emphasize different approaches than those utilized by President Bush. This change in U.S. approach was nicely summarized in the Nobel Committee's statement in its press release that "dialogue and negotiations are preferred as instruments for resolving even the most difficult international conflicts."

President Obama entered office as the nuclear nonproliferation regime was increasingly under strain. North Korea had withdrawn from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003. It had since proliferated nuclear technology to Syria, a state sponsor of terrorism, which was violating its own obligations under the NPT by pursuing a covert nuclear weapons program. After Israel

bombed a nuclear reactor that was part of the program in September 2007, Syria had suffered no real consequences other than the damage done to the facility, as the United States and Israel scrambled to keep information about the program secret, lest a regional war ensue or, for the United States, the Six-Party Talks with North Korea be affected.

Even after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the international body able to investigate states' compliance with the NPT, was provided with information about Syria's illicit activities, little progress was made. Damascus stonewalled the investigation, adopting tactics used by Iran, itself under investigation for the better part of the last decade for its violations of the NPT. As President Obama came into office, Iran had begun to make significant progress in its nuclear enrichment activities in contravention of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. Many feared that if Iran went nuclear, others would quickly follow, leading to a cascade of proliferation unlike anything seen since the dawn of the nuclear age. Even counter-proliferation "successes" like the British-American effort to convince Libya to give up its nuclear and chemical weapons programs were a testament to the uncertain international environment, revealing hints of even more troubling proliferation under way, such as the network of Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan.

While the threats were growing, the U.S. track record in this area was less than impressive. These were all problems that successive administrations of both political parties had grappled with and had all failed in one way or another to adequately address.

Previous priorities

The Bush administration responded to these challenges by highlighting the limitations of the arms control approach

avored by its predecessors in the Clinton administration and instead emphasized counterproliferation efforts. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush also recognized the role that rogue regimes played in hosting and supporting groups, making the state-centric approach a priority. As the President explained in a speech at the National Defense University in 2004, “One source of these weapons is dangerous and secretive regimes that build weapons of mass destruction to intimidate their neighbors and force their influence upon the world. These nations pose different challenges. They require different strategies.”² In that vein, when arms control agreements were negotiated, Bush administration officials made sure arms control did not come at the expense of U.S. interests.

Shortly after entering office, the President announced his decision to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, because Iran and North Korea’s emerging ballistic missile capabilities required the development and deployment of a missile defense system in order to prevent these rogue states from being able to inflict damage on the United States.

The Administration’s signature achievement in arms control, the 2002 Moscow Treaty (known also by its official name, the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty), likewise reflected the Bush team’s approach: instead of an overly-complicated system of limitations on delivery systems and verification measures, it simply required that a country’s total deployed warheads fall within a range of 2,200–1,700, and used the existing monitoring regime from the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). This arrangement not only jettisoned the notion of parity between the predominant strategic powers, but ratified a presumed American superiority in warhead deployment.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the Bush administration realized

that, as devastating as that day was, the impact of a WMD strike on the U.S. homeland would be even more horrific. Therefore, the Bush team pursued a series of initiatives to prevent the spread of technology and material abroad, detect the presence of material, and respond to their use—namely, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). Instead of using the ossified structure of international treaty regimes, these efforts were built around informal “coalitions of the willing” to advance their objectives, rather than seeking a “lowest-common-denominator” treaty-based approach that would only net the most signatories.

President Obama’s Prague Agenda placed the onus—and blame—of denuclearization on the United States for failing to accede to various international agreements of dubious merit, instead of on rogue states that failed to comply with their international commitments.

In contrast, President Obama, perhaps drawing on his intellectual roots in the anti-nuclear freeze movement at Columbia, deemphasized the counterproliferation tools that the Bush administration had pioneered, and turned the U.S. government back to the arms control perspective. His initial embrace of the Global Zero movement’s agenda of a world without nuclear weapons had an attendant need to improve relations with Russia to lure the Kremlin into an arms control agreement it did not really need or want. Vice President Joe Biden delivered a speech in February 2009 pledging to “go beyond existing treaties to negotiate deeper cuts in both our arsenals.”³

Deconstructing the Prague agenda

On April 5, 2009 in Prague, President Obama outlined his administration's nonproliferation agenda. Delivered, ironically, just hours after North Korea tested a long-range ballistic missile, the President's speech noted the strain on the international nonproliferation regime, warning "as more people and nations break the rules, we could reach the point where the center cannot hold."⁴ The centerpiece of his address focused on America's "moral responsibility to act" in seeking a world without nuclear weapons. Despite this lofty aspiration, the President cautioned, "This goal will not be reached quickly—perhaps not in my lifetime."⁵

The President then proceeded to lay out what has colloquially been called the Prague Agenda, which had six major components: first, a START follow-on agreement with Russia, and additional reductions to the two countries' strategic arsenals; second, ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); third, pursuit of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT); fourth, a new framework for civil-nuclear cooperation, fifth, efforts to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the globe; and sixth, making the PSI and the GICNT "durable international institutions."

These proposals were largely reminiscent of 1990s-era initiatives, namely the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and the Clinton administration's support of an FMCT and ratification of the CTBT, which the Senate had rejected in October 1999. This "back to the future" approach ignored the significant developments in world affairs since the 1990s that should have rendered many of these efforts unsuited to the task of global denuclearization.

One other problem was that President Obama's Prague Agenda placed the onus—and blame—of denuclearization

on the United States for failing to accede to various international agreements of dubious merit, instead of on rogue states that failed to comply with their international commitments. Despite emphatically stating, "Rules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something," at Prague, the President emphasized what America, already compliant with its international agreements, must do. This was a theme that continued in later efforts by the Obama administration, from its declaration of the size of the U.S. nuclear stockpile at the NPT RevCon in 2010 to the revision of U.S. nuclear strategy to state that the United States would not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states in compliance with the NPT.

New START and beyond

But before he was able to achieve the first goal of the Prague Agenda, the President had to convince Moscow that a new round of strategic arms reductions was in Russia's interest. The Bush administration had concluded several agreements with Russia, but struggled to find ways for the United States and Russia to cooperate on missile defense; despite extensive efforts and several presidential summits at which President Bush and President Vladimir Putin had in principle agreed to work together on a common approach. This apparent agreement at the top, however, belied fundamental concerns amongst Russian security officials about U.S. intentions that made it unlikely that substantive cooperation was actually possible.

The Obama administration's first step was to attempt to change the tone. Their belief was that the Bush administration had not focused enough on disarmament and arms control and that its missile defense plans had only served to bog down the relationship. President Obama had long been skeptical of the need for missile defenses. In his book

The Audacity of Hope, published during his time in the Senate, Obama wrote that “the more I studied nuclear arms policy, the more I found Star Wars to be ill conceived.”⁶ In 2001, he stated, “I don’t agree with a missile defense system”⁷ and during his presidential campaign, he declared his intention to “cut investments in unproven missile defense systems”⁸—all views which put him in the mainstream of Democratic Party opinion at the time.

Missile defense thus became an early issue on which the President was ready to compromise. After Vice President Biden’s February 2009 speech at Munich, Secretary of State Clinton presented Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov with a red button emblazoned with Russian text that was supposed to read “reset” but in actuality read “overcharge.” The “reset” with Russia thus was off to an inauspicious start.

The Administration started a charm offensive with the Russians, with President Obama publically treating Russian President Dmitri Medvedev to hamburgers at a Washington, DC-area restaurant that June. Administration officials routinely played down the role of former President (and then-Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin, who seemed to still be lurking behind every major international decision coming out of the Kremlin. Some Administration officials went so far as to assert that the “reset” was needed to help build up Medvedev and avoid empowering Putin through further conflict between Washington and Moscow.

Even as the evidence of Russian reciprocity was weak, White House officials trumpeted relatively minor Russian cooperation on Iran (such as stopping its sale of an advanced S-300 air defense system to the Islamic Republic, and supporting a relatively weak U.N. Security Council resolution against Tehran in 2010) and Russia’s willingness to allow

U.S. transit of non-lethal supplies into and out of Afghanistan over Russian territory. In September 2009, the President announced that missile defense sites previously planned by the Bush administration in Poland and the Czech Republic would be scrapped in favor of a new, more flexible system. The decision was announced with minimal consultation with either country, raising concerns in Central and Eastern Europe that the “reset” might come at the expense of America’s treaty allies.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, Obama administration officials continue to claim that cooperation on missile defense with Moscow is possible. But, given the Bush administration’s experience, achieving Russian acquiescence to a second major arms control agreement will likely require more concessions, not cooperation.

Despite this charm offensive, the negotiations over a New START agreement, which President Obama had said at Prague would hopefully be concluded by the end of 2009, dragged on. This was due in large part to the fact that the Russian nuclear weapons arsenal was already being downsized due to Russian budgetary constraints. More than anything, Russia likely enjoyed once again being at the center of international policy, and Russian negotiators adeptly used the negotiations to attempt to extract further U.S. concessions on missile defense.

Despite the delay, the New START treaty was signed in Prague one year after the President’s Prague speech and ratified during the December 2010 “lame duck” session of Congress. This agreement lowered the nations’ stockpiles from the minimal level of 1,700 deployed stra-

tegic nuclear warheads under the 2002 Moscow Treaty's range to 1,550.

The signing of New START was followed by Obama administration efforts to advance a civil nuclear cooperation agreement with Russia, and strong U.S. support for Russian entry into the World Trade Organization. However, the often unrecognized corollary of the "reset" has been the White House's unwillingness to speak out on behalf of the rights of the Russian people, even as a series of fraudulent elections took place in 2012, returning Vladimir Putin to the country's presidency.

These and the prior concessions on issues such as missile defense in 2009 appear to still not have satisfied the Kremlin. Russian officials continue to threaten America's NATO allies, with a Russian official warning in May 2012 of the possibility of potential preemptive attacks on planned missile defense sites in Poland. Concerns abound as well about what a second-term Obama administration arms control policy will bring. The President was caught on a hot microphone at a summit in Seoul telling outgoing Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that he would have "more flexibility" after the November 2012 election.⁹ Despite all the evidence to the contrary, Obama administration officials continue to claim that cooperation on missile defense is possible. But, given the Bush administration's experience, achieving Russian acquiescence to a second major arms control agreement will likely require more concessions, not cooperation.

The dangers of drawdown

While the nuclear reductions taking place under New START are only a small first step on the path to a world without nuclear weapons, the President made clear at the signing ceremony in Prague that the agreement "set the stage

for further cuts." General James "Hoss" Cartwright, the former head of U.S. Strategic Command, has proposed reducing America's total strategic arsenal to 900 warheads, with only half of those deployed at any one given time.¹⁰ News reports indicate that the Obama administration is considering a range of options, including reducing nuclear force levels to as low a level as 300 deployed warheads. While the administration is presently said to favor levels at approximately 1,000 warheads, such a level is a third lower than the New START limit, half that of the Moscow Treaty, and a sixth of START I's ceiling. Such steep reductions would call into question the viability of the nuclear triad and would put the United States and Russia at risk of being surpassed by rising nuclear powers, some of which are rapidly expanding their nuclear arsenals.

What is often overlooked in this debate is that the United States' strategic arsenal is integral to its global alliance system, a network of commitments that Russia does not possess. The credibility of our extended deterrence to allies has prevented global conflicts for decades. If these proposals come to fruition, American allies could lose faith in Washington's security guarantee, and seek their own strategic arsenals to provide for their safety in the face of the threats posed by China, Iran, or North Korea. Instead of a global roll-back of nuclear weapons, the Obama administration could inadvertently spark a wave of proliferation throughout East Asia and the Middle East—precisely the scenario that the past fifty years of arms control efforts have sought to avoid. Moreover, these states would wield vastly more power in the global arena, as the United States' comparative strategic strength would be dramatically diminished by its own disarmament initiative.

The true path to zero nuclear weapons does not lie solely through

Washington and Moscow, but also through Beijing, Tehran, Pyongyang, and eventually Islamabad. The Administration's unwillingness to recognize this and its sole focus on reducing the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal actually show that it, not its critics, is mired in Cold War thinking.

Dusting off old arms control initiatives

Also straight out of the Cold War era was the President's focus on outdated treaties such as the CTBT and a FMCT. Rather than a strategy-based limitation on a country's strategic arsenal to lower the risks and costs of a nuclear war, these treaties aim to fulfill the dream of the 1950s—that the nuclear bomb be done away with entirely. Unfortunately for activists who dream of “Global Zero,” Pandora's Box has been opened, and there is little reason to believe that nuclear capability can be rolled back.

In his 1993 address before the United Nations General Assembly, President Bill Clinton called for “an international agreement that would ban production of [materials for nuclear] weapons forever;”¹¹ and reiterated his commitment to negotiations for a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing—a progression of the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, which forbade nuclear testing in water, air, or space, but not underground. Progress on both continued, and while the CTBT was adopted by the United Nations in 1996, it was summarily rejected by the United States Senate by a vote of 51-48 due to concerns about verification and the state of the aging U.S. nuclear stockpile. Despite efforts by the Obama administration to resuscitate negotiations over the FMCT, talks have gone nowhere given the lack of support from key states such as Pakistan, which is rapidly increasing its production of fissile material.

While many arms control skeptics have concerns about the verifiability

and enforceability of these treaties, the best response to make to the disarmament community is a philosophical one. These treaties are bound in the optimism of the post-Cold War era, rooted in the hope that the world had reached “the end of history,” and all that remained for global peace and prosperity to reign worldwide was to enshrine high-minded principles in international law. Unfortunately, the two decades since the fall of the Berlin Wall have demonstrated that the bad actors in the global arena have not changed their stripes in the wake of the Soviet Union's demise.

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Russia's adherence to arms control agreements has, sadly, never been great. China has flagrantly violated international arms control agreements, and has shown no willingness to accede to the monitoring provisions that would make them more meaningful. Rogue states seek nuclear technology for their own reasons—namely the perceived safety from international pressure that a nuclear device would provide the regime—that are not amenable to persuasion. Those countries that have forfeited their nuclear capabilities (Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and South Africa) have done so for their own reasons, and “civilian grade” nuclear technology sadly

allows a country to be a short distance from a nuclear weapons capability.

The United States' strategic arsenal, meanwhile, has proven to be the best guarantor of international peace since 1945. Instead of a world in which the United States would disarm itself in the face of a rapid expansion of nuclear technology, the United States should focus on ensuring that its arsenal is sufficiently large and flexible to handle all types of threats, and clearly guarantee its reliability. This would give America's allies reason for comfort in the strength of our extended deterrence, and give America's enemies pause before challenging America or her allies. American power remains the only way to increase the likelihood of what President Reagan described as "an enduring peace."

Stepped-up nuclear cooperation

As part of the Prague agenda, President Obama talked of building a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, so that all could enjoy the benefits of nuclear energy without increasing the risk of proliferation. One proposal mentioned at the time, an international fuel bank, has long been advocated but has made little progress. The failure of these proposed solutions to convince countries such as Iran to give up access to elements of the fuel cycle raises concerns about the utility of such arrangements.

Oddly, despite devoting much time and energy to disarmament, the Obama administration has shifted away from a key Bush effort to prevent further nuclear proliferation—limiting the number of countries with access to the entire nuclear fuel cycle.

By concluding a nuclear cooperation agreement with the United Arab Emirates whereby the UAE agreed to not seek access to enrichment and reprocessing and to allow intrusive nuclear inspections and

transparency measures, the United States established a so-called "gold standard" for future agreements. The "gold standard" shouldn't be the ceiling for "good faith" civil nuclear behavior, it should be the new floor and minimum standard.

But, prodded by a U.S. nuclear industry eager for new contracts, the Obama administration began to walk back this standard. In negotiations with Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, and other countries, it was reported that the United States might be open to lesser standards. Obama State Department official Rose Gottemoeller was quoted as saying in August 2012, "You know, I really don't like this term, the 'gold standard,'"¹² raising concerns that the Obama administration was moving toward a "case by case" approach to nuclear cooperation agreements.

The administration also has ignored significant bipartisan congressional objections to its weaker policy. In 2010, administration officials failed to even attend a hearing on the U.S.-Russian civilian nuclear cooperation agreement, and the administration has worked to obstruct bipartisan congressional efforts to modify the Atomic Energy Act to allow for greater congressional scrutiny of future so-called 123 agreements. Instead, the United States appears beholden to the whims of the nuclear industry, showing a clear disregard for proliferation concerns as America follows, rather than leads, countries such as Russia and France on a vital issue to our long-term national security.

This is inconsistent with previous U.S. leadership on these issues. After India tested a nuclear explosive device in 1974, the United States led the eventually-successful effort to get nuclear supplier states to require full-scope IAEA safeguards as a basic requirement for civil nuclear cooperation, when Congress passed the *Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1979*. At the time the U.S. nuclear industry claimed that full-scope

IAEA safeguards would be detrimental, but today we see that they're a well-established and accepted norm among nuclear supplier states.

Next-generation initiatives

President Bush announced the creation of the PSI in a May 2003 speech in Poland. There, he plainly stated, "When weapons of mass destruction or their components are in transit, we must have the means and authority to seize them."¹³ This informal multi-national partnership facilitated just that: the interdiction and seizure of ships and aircraft to stop the transfer of WMD, delivery systems, or other related materials; and the rapid exchange of information between nations regarding suspected trafficking. Since its inception, PSI has facilitated dozens of successful interdictions of suspected goods and material.

The GICNT was similar in spirit: an international effort to bolster nations' capability to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism by conforming those on countries' laws and practices to a set of principles. Indeed, this mission-centered approach is the hallmark of both initiatives: the rallying of nations by the United States to a set of flexible goals, rather than via a watered-down international agreement that could be insufficient to the task, and limit America's ability to act. Nonetheless, these endeavors won international legal support via UN Security Council Resolution 1540, which blessed them under the mandate of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Eighty-five nations are currently members of GICNT, while ninety-eight have endorsed the PSI statement of principles—a testament to the broad global support towards preventing a nuclear catastrophe, and the Bush administration's leadership.

President Obama's early proposal to institutionalize the PSI and GICNT shows

a lack of understanding of the fundamental nature of these new and flexible tools. Since the Prague speech, little seems to have been done in this regard, which perhaps is for the best if these efforts are to continue to be successful.

Nuclear summitry... but little substance

Going back to his days in the Senate, the President has focused much attention on efforts to secure nuclear material spread around the globe. Central to his administration's approach has been the creation of a new mechanism, biennial nuclear security summits, held to discuss best practices and to announce bilateral agreements to secure nuclear material.

President Obama hosted the first in Washington in April 2010 to great fanfare. Forty-six world leaders attended, marking the largest such gathering on American soil since 1945. The summit communiqué praised President Obama's call to secure all sensitive nuclear material in four years, but in reality, accomplishments were minimal. The major news was that several countries including Canada, Mexico, and Ukraine announced plans to transfer nuclear material to the United States for safe-keeping. As columnist Charles Krauthammer farcically noted at the time, "What a relief. I don't know about you, but I lie awake nights worrying about Canadian uranium. I know these people. I grew up there. You have no idea what they're capable of doing."¹⁴

The results were much the same at the second summit two years later in Seoul, where it was President Obama's unscripted comment to President Medvedev and threats from North Korea, not substantive accomplishments, that dominated the news. Also missing from both summits were the rogue regimes pursuing illicit programs, proliferating, and supporting the terrorist groups the

heads of state gathered in convention centers were so determined to prevent from getting their hands on vulnerable nuclear material.

Coping with rogue regimes

The summits embodied the Administration's unwillingness to address the key issue regarding proliferation: despotic regimes that show no regard for international treaties or norms, even when they are party to such agreements. This failure to adequately focus on the real problem actors on the international stage is perhaps the most common theme of the Obama approach to nonproliferation: Negotiate arms control agreements with Russia rather than emerging nuclear powers; talk of a world without nuclear weapons, but pursue nuclear cooperation policies that increase the risk of proliferation; hold nuclear security summits where the key drivers of proliferation are not present and uninvolved; pursue new arms control treaties that the problem actors will not sign, or those that do, will violate; make unilateral U.S. concessions on transparency and modify U.S. deterrence strategy in an effort to convince malign actors of your positive intentions.

Obama's Prague address highlighted the fact that many states violate the international norms that have been developed about nonproliferation. The mortal threat to the global nonproliferation regime actually emanates from the rogue regimes that seek nuclear weapons capability, not from the nuclear arsenals of the United States, Israel, or other responsible international actors. It is instead the actions of countries such as Iran, North Korea, and Syria that we should be concerned about.

Iran's and North Korea's long pursuit of nuclear weapons have dominated the world's attention for the past decade,

as international efforts to persuade or coerce Pyongyang and Tehran to abandon their pursuit of nuclear weapons have floundered and failed. North Korea now has a small arsenal of nuclear weapons. Its willingness to proliferate sensitive nuclear technology and know-how to Syria, a state sponsor of terrorism, raises questions about what, if any, norms Pyongyang subscribes to.

Meanwhile, Iran has steadily made progress toward a nuclear weapons capability, expanding its enrichment activities despite sanctions and apparent covert attempts by Western intelligence agencies to slow its progress. The Obama administration has undermined the credibility of the military option against Iran's nuclear facilities, even as sanctions do not deliver the desired impact and remaining options dwindle. Instead, Administration officials boast of Washington's ability to determine at short notice if Iran decides to make the dash toward a weapon, setting the United States up for a colossal intelligence failure given the U.S. intelligence community's disastrous track record when it comes to assessing weapons of mass destruction programs.

If Iran becomes a nuclear power, the consequences for the global nonproliferation regime will be severe. First, America's international credibility will be dealt a decisive blow, as three successive Presidents from both parties have stated that a nuclear Iran is "unacceptable," and all their efforts, such as they were, would be for naught. As Peter Brookes noted in these pages two years ago, at the time, fourteen countries in the Middle East and North Africa had declared their intention to pursue civilian nuclear programs.¹⁵ Without appropriate safeguards and standards, now being walked back by the Obama administration, there is a real danger that these programs could be diverted to military purposes, quickly resulting in a poly-nuclear Middle East.

The President appears to understand this. He told Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic* earlier this year that “the dangers of an Iran getting nuclear weapons that then leads to a free-for-all in the Middle East is something that I think would be very dangerous for the world.”¹⁶ But Obama administration policies have done little to move the world back from the brink of this proliferation and some, such as their willingness to advance the interests of the U.S. nuclear industry at the cost of nonproliferation, have moved us closer to it.

Yet, as part of its broader engagement strategy, the Obama administration has been loath to talk frankly about the nature of regimes. Instead, President Obama, while not fulfilling his process of personally engaging the leaders of several regimes committed to America’s destruction, has nonetheless attempted to dissuade them. A case in point was Syria, an early recipient of President Obama’s outstretched arm despite its covert nuclear efforts and its human rights abuses. Now, with the Assad regime having rejected all entreaties and on its last legs, Syria’s chemical and biological weapons could fall into the hands of terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and al-Qaeda. The story is similar with both Iran and North Korea, where Administration attempts to engage rogue leaders have resulted in little more than continued progress of illicit weapons programs.

That arms control delusion, again

The rise of North Korea and Iran as nuclear powers, the destabilization of Pakistan, and the covert trafficking of technology via networks like A.Q. Khan’s are challenges that will at times require America’s “hard power”—the physical means to stop, prevent, or deter aggression or unwelcome activity abroad.

President Obama’s agenda demonstrates his faith in the power of the arms control process, fueled by unilateral U.S. reductions, to spur global nuclear disarmament. While he criticizes his opponents for being beholden to “Cold War thinking,” his agenda is essentially a replication of Cold War-era, confidence-building arms control.

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As previously noted, President Obama declared at Prague that, “Rules must be binding.” However, because the Russian Federation and People’s Republic of China adamantly refuse to enact punitive measures at the UN Security Council, the international community is left without a procedural mechanism for enforcing these rules. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the United States and like-minded liberal states to act, utilizing loose coalitions and flexible institutions, like PSI, where necessary.

Given President Obama’s entry into this debate during his student days as a nuclear-freeze activist, it is perhaps worth reviewing President Ronald Reagan’s response to that movement. In a speech in March 1983, he said, “I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.”¹⁷

In truth, because of his unwillingness to confront the true drivers of proliferation in today’s world, the President

who began his term pledging “to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons” and who won the Nobel Peace Prize mere months afterward, has done surprisingly little in practical terms to advance a nuclear-free world. Indeed, the President’s commitment to the arms control community’s agenda and world-view undermines the gains achieved by his predecessor, emboldens rogue regimes to break out from their nuclear confines, and has weakened the power of America’s nuclear deterrent. In other words, the President who seeks complete nuclear disarmament may, if he is granted a second term, well herald the beginning of the end of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.



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CRUISE CONTROL IN THE WAR ON TERROR

Thomas Joscelyn

The conventional wisdom heading into the 2012 presidential election is that foreign policy is President Obama's strong suit. Obama is considered an especially strong leader in the fight against terrorism. With the economy sagging, unemployment numbers consistently bad, and Obamacare widely unpopular, the Obama campaign has been eager to trumpet the president's record abroad. One of the Obama team's first, and most controversial, Web videos celebrated the death of Osama bin Laden while arguing that Governor Mitt Romney lacked the will to send Navy SEALs into Abbottabad, Pakistan. That decision was Obama's "gutsy call" alone and, we are to believe, single-handedly turned the tide of the September 11th wars.

This is not just a matter of politics. The entire defense strategy of the United States is now based on the idea that the killing of bin Laden and several of his most senior lieutenants has degraded the terrorist threat to such an extent that American combat forces are no longer needed in large numbers. There were 144,000 American troops in Iraq when President Obama took office in January 2009. The last American combat troops left Iraq in December 2011. American forces will have only a limited combat role in Afghanistan by the summer of 2013, and large numbers of troops are scheduled to leave by 2014.

The rationale given for this massive drawdown in forces was set forth by the Department of Defense in January. In a document entitled "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," the Obama administration issued its "strategic guidance" for America's defense. In a brief introductory letter, President Obama used the phrase "as we end today's wars" twice.¹



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“Our Nation is at a moment of transition,” wrote the President. “Thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, we have responsibly ended the war in Iraq, put al-Qaeda on the path to defeat—including delivering justice to Osama bin Laden—and made significant progress in Afghanistan, allowing us to begin the transition to Afghan responsibility.” The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan must come to an end, Obama argued, to “focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities, including the security and prosperity of the Asia Pacific.” The Defense Department added that it is necessary to “rebalance” its assets “toward the Asia-Pacific region”—that is, *away* from the post-9/11 theaters of war.

The Obama administration’s “strategic guidance” is short-sighted. At its core is a willful blindness when it comes to our nation’s terrorist enemies and the *jihadist* ideology that motivates them. In each of the three areas President Obama highlighted as successes—the fight against al-Qaeda and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—serious complications remain on the road ahead. The president would rather not deal with these strategic challenges.

A close look at President Obama’s foreign policy record, with specific emphasis on his prosecution of the fight against the *jihadist* terror network, reveals that it is not nearly as strong as his supporters would have us believe. Yes, Obama has continued and expanded the drone campaign begun by the Bush administration in northern Pakistan and elsewhere. And yes, Obama authorized the Special Operations raid that led to bin Laden’s demise. Other senior al-Qaeda leaders have been killed on Obama’s watch, too. But these are tactical successes. While the Administration may want to shift America’s focus to the Asia-Pacific, *jihadism* will continue to pose strategic challenges in the Middle

East and beyond. And so will *jihadism*’s most infamous spawn, al-Qaeda.

Blind to enemy ideology

Upon taking power in 2009, the Obama administration quickly sought to quash the idea that America is in an ideological struggle against a totalitarian “-ism,” similar to the 20th Century’s Communism or Nazism. Some Administration officials, including Obama’s chief counterterrorism adviser, John Brennan, jettisoned the use of words such as “*jihadism*” or “Islamist terrorism,” which were commonly employed during the Bush years. During a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in May 2010, Brennan argued that we should not “describe our enemy as *jihadists* or Islamists because *jihad* is [a] holy struggle, a legitimate tenet of Islam meaning to purify oneself [or] one’s community.” America should avoid describing al-Qaeda and related groups in “religious terms,” Brennan elaborated, and instead seek to confront “violent extremism generally, including the political, economic and social forces that can sometimes put individuals on the path toward militancy.”² Ideology should take a back seat, in Brennan’s view.

This is foolish, as anyone who has closely followed al-Qaeda’s terrorism knows. Since al-Qaeda’s inception in the late 1980s, the overwhelming majority of the group’s victims have been Muslims—not Americans, or Westerners, or even non-Muslims in general (Jews, Christians, and Hindus). “*Jihadists*” adhere to a murderous ideology. While the word “*jihad*” has multiple meanings, it is most readily identified with a violent struggle pursued by a minority of Muslims against those they perceive as Islam’s enemies, including some of their fellow Muslims.

Moreover, the Administration’s purge of ideological descriptors has led to absurdities. Consider two examples from Obama’s first year in office.

The U.S. government has struggled to find Major Nidal Malik Hasan's motive for killing 13 people during a shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, on November 5, 2009. This, despite the fact that Hasan gave a presentation at Walter Reed Medical Center during which he praised suicide bombers and echoed the martyr's call to action: "We love death more than [sic] you love life!" This is a common *jihadist* saying. Hasan also warned of dire consequences if the U.S. military did not allow Muslims to opt out of the wars abroad. The military missed these warning signs and promoted Hasan even after his pro-*jihad* presentation.

Hasan also repeatedly e-mailed al-Qaeda cleric Anwar al Awlaki. During his first e-mail to Awlaki in December 2008, Hasan asked Awlaki what he thought of Hasan Akbar, an American Muslim who attacked his fellow soldiers at the beginning of the Iraq War in 2003, killing two and wounding more than a dozen others. The U.S. government had been intercepting Awlaki's e-mails at the time and so Hasan's queries were forwarded to the FBI. The Bureau's analysts did not think much of the e-mails, concluding that they were consistent with Hasan's research into the psychological effects of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. An independent commission later concluded that this was an error, finding that Hasan's message "suggested that a U.S. soldier was seeking [Awlaki's] advice on committing violence against fellow soldiers."³

The mistakes that allowed Hasan to slip through the cracks prior to the Fort Hood shooting were bad enough. But after the fact, when it was entirely clear why Hasan had become a mass murderer, Obama's Defense Department avoided any discussion of Hasan's ideology. A Pentagon report released in early 2010 placed Hasan's evil deeds in the context of alcohol and drug abuse, sexual violence, elder abuse, and child molestation. None of these topics has anything

to do with Hasan's case. A discussion of *jihadist* ideology was avoided entirely. The Obama administration prefers to see Hasan's shooting spree as just one more act of workplace violence.

The entire defense strategy of the United States is now based on the idea that the killing of bin Laden and several of his most senior lieutenants has degraded the terrorist threat to such an extent that American combat forces are no longer needed in large numbers.

As a second example, remember that President Obama himself stumbled when attempting to describe an al-Qaeda plot. On Christmas Day 2009, a young Nigerian al-Qaeda recruit named Umar Farouq Abdulmutallab attempted to blow up a Detroit-bound airliner. Abdulmutallab failed to detonate his bomb and the plane's passengers alertly jumped on the would-be terrorist to prevent him from trying again.

Speaking from Hawaii days after the attempted attack, Obama labeled Abdulmutallab an "isolated extremist."⁴ Yet the underwear bomber was nothing of the sort; he had been recruited, trained, and dispatched by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Abdulmutallab also reportedly met with Awlaki, the same al-Qaeda terrorist who inspired Hasan.

In a subsequent video address, Obama corrected his description of Abdulmutallab, adding that he had traveled to Yemen, "a country grappling with crushing poverty and deadly insurgencies."⁵ Abdulmutallab's father is a wealthy banker who provided his son with a comfortable lifestyle in London. Poverty had nothing to do with Abdulmutallab's desire to blow up a plane. In the video, Obama conceded that America is confronted by a "far-reaching

network of violence and hatred,” but refused to identify that network’s ideological underpinnings.

As a result of the Administration’s ill-conceived shift in rhetoric, the U.S. government no longer tells American citizens that there is a specific ideology driving much of the world’s terrorism. Yet, the threat of *jihadism* remains very real. According to the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), publicly-available data compiled for 2011 shows that “Sunni extremists accounted for the greatest number of terrorist attacks and fatalities for the third consecutive year.” Here, “Sunni extremists” certainly means “*jihadists*.” The NCTC explains, “More than 5,700 incidents were attributed to Sunni extremists, accounting for nearly 56 percent of all attacks and about 70 percent of all fatalities.” 8,886 people were killed by Sunni extremists (“*jihadists*”) in 2011. Similarly, 9,092 people were killed by *jihadists* in 2010, while 9,280 were killed in 2009.⁶

In sum, more than 27,000 people—mainly Muslims—have been killed in terrorist attacks by *jihadists* since the first month of President Obama’s presidency. Many more have been wounded. Even these figures are likely a low estimate as they exclude some casualties. The NCTC explains that attacks against uniformed servicemen are not necessarily included in its figures because such attacks are not terrorism, *per se*, as they are not aimed at civilians. Importantly, counting the number of people killed or wounded by terrorist organizations is an imperfect measure of the groups’ relative strength. For example, al-Qaeda was a much bigger threat to the United States prior to 9/11 than the number of its victims indicated at the time. Still, *jihadists* have killed or wounded tens of thousands of people in the last three years, indicating that the fight is far from over.

The U.S. government should be concerned about “violent extremism,” as

Brennan calls it, in all of its forms. But there is no good reason to ignore the ideology that leads to the most terrorist-related deaths each year: *jihadism*. By ignoring the ideological fight, the Obama administration is allowing America’s war-footing to slip.

Al-Qaeda on the ropes?

Not all *jihadists* are members of al-Qaeda, of course. But the NCTC’s data belies Obama’s claim that al-Qaeda is “on the path to defeat.” In 2011, al-Qaeda and its affiliates executed 688 attacks, resulting in nearly 2,000 deaths. The death of bin Laden did not lead al-Qaeda or its affiliates to abandon the fight. Al-Qaeda actually *increased* the number of its attacks by eight percent from 2010 to 2011. Much of this increase is attributable to Al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda’s affiliate in Somalia. Even so, the NCTC’s figures likely underreport al-Qaeda’s role in violence around the globe because the organization acts as a force multiplier for other terrorist and insurgency groups, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda’s hand is deliberately masked in such operations.

What does Obama really mean when he says that al-Qaeda is “on the path to defeat”? The president has not fully articulated his view, but we can look to two other Administration sources for a fuller explanation.

The first source is Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, who explained to reporters during a visit to Kabul in July 2011 that the United States “is within reach of strategically defeating al-Qaeda.”⁷ The Defense Secretary went on to explain that if the United States killed or captured just 10 to 20 key al-Qaeda operatives around the globe, then “we can really undermine their ability to do any kind of planning to be able to conduct any kind of attack on this country.” The clear implication is that Panetta thinks al-Qaeda will be strategically defeated if it is unable to hit the United States.

The threat of a terrorist attack inside the U.S. looms, however. Since President Obama's inauguration, al-Qaeda and its affiliates have plotted at least four major terrorist attacks against the U.S. Homeland. A fifth plot was launched by the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), known as the Pakistani Taliban, which is closely allied with al-Qaeda.

The first known al-Qaeda plot during Obama's tenure was broken up in September 2009, when an Afghan-American named Najibullah Zazi was arrested for conspiring to blow up commuter trains in New York City. Zazi was trained in northern Pakistan by senior al-Qaeda operatives. Then, on Christmas Day 2009, AQAP successfully planted a would-be suicide bomber on board a Detroit-bound airplane. Several months later, in May 2010, a Pakistani-American who was recruited by the TTP attempted to detonate a car bomb in the middle of Times Square. AQAP resumed its targeting of American-bound airplanes later in 2010, when it placed two bombs on board cargo planes. And American officials say they broke up yet another AQAP plot against airliners in May of this year.

The pattern is clear to see. The al-Qaeda-led terror network still wants to strike the United States and has had some success in dispatching operatives to American soil, even if the plots ultimately failed. Al-Qaeda has not stopped plotting against Europe either. In early August, Spanish authorities announced that they had broken up a three-man terrorist cell that was plotting to use explosives against one or more targets. This was just the latest al-Qaeda plot foiled in Europe. In 2010, counterterrorism officials broke up an al-Qaeda plan to launch Mumbai-style attacks in multiple European cities.

But striking the United States, or the West, is not al-Qaeda's sole strategic goal, if it can be considered a strategic goal at all. Al-Qaeda has embedded itself

within several large-scale insurgencies throughout the Middle East, Africa, Central and South Asia. Its assets in each location are principally devoted to winning the "local" war—not striking the "far" enemy.

There is no good reason to ignore the ideology that leads to the most terrorist-related deaths each year: *jihadism*. By ignoring the ideological fight, the Obama administration is allowing America's war-footing to slip.

To understand that al-Qaeda's strategic objectives are much broader than just striking the United States, one only need look to Yemen, where al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has arisen. AQAP announced its formation in January 2009, the same month that Obama was inaugurated. Since then, the group has become, by the Obama administration's own estimate, al-Qaeda's most lethal affiliate. AQAP has plotted at least three attacks against the U.S. homeland, all of which have luckily failed thanks to the clever counterterrorism work and luck. AQAP does not just plan spectacular terrorist attacks, however. The group has built a small army in Yemen and seized upon political instability to capture and hold territory. AQAP lost some ground in 2012, but the organization maintains deep roots inside Yemen. It is difficult to argue that AQAP is on the "path to defeat."

A quick review of al-Qaeda's global prospects reveals that it is hardly near defeat in many other locations as well. In Somalia, al-Shabaab formally merged with al-Qaeda in early 2012 and continues to hold parts of the country despite recent losses. Al-Shabaab has already demonstrated its capability to strike targets in nearby countries, including

Kenya and Uganda. In northern Africa, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has combined pre-existing al-Qaeda affiliates into a small, but capable fighting force. AQIM-affiliated militants have captured much of northern Mali, including Timbuktu. The al-Qaeda fighters there have destroyed ancient mosques and Muslim tombs as part of an especially savage campaign. In Nigeria, Boko Haram, which has links to al-Qaeda, has garnered international attention for its burgeoning capability. Boko Haram committed 136 terrorist attacks in 2011 alone, killing hundreds.

In Egypt, the fall of Hosni Mubarak's regime has led to instability in the Sinai. Several *jihadi* groups claiming allegiance to al-Qaeda have arisen there, and one of them has already attempted to attack Israel. Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups have sprung up in Gaza and another in the West Bank. Al-Qaeda operates in Lebanon as well. Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) has made a comeback and, as discussed more fully below, has expanded its operations in nearby Syria.

None of these facts are consistent with the argument that al-Qaeda is close to being strategically defeated. If anything, al-Qaeda's affiliates have grown stronger since Obama took office. In many cases, such as in Yemen, this is not Obama's fault. But it is a strong reason not to shift America's gaze to the Asia-Pacific.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Only late in the Bush administration did the U.S. government realize it had been fighting the "war on terror" *over there* all wrong. Like Obama, President Bush maintained a list of top al-Qaeda operatives who needed to be killed or captured. Scratch every terrorist off the list and al-Qaeda would be substantively defeated, Bush initially thought. Today, President

Obama reportedly maintains a deck of baseball cards that allows him to track al-Qaeda operatives in a similar manner. Unfortunately, as the U.S. military learned first in Iraq and then Afghanistan, this fight does not work that way.

It was not until 2007 that the U.S. military, under politically courageous orders from Bush, shifted gears in Iraq. With help from Iraqis who were sick of being terrorized by an al-Qaeda affiliate, a new "surge" in American forces helped stabilize a country that had descended into chaos. Whatever one thinks of the decision to topple Saddam's regime in 2003, Iraq clearly became a central front for al-Qaeda and its allies. Al-Qaeda poured vast resources into the fight against coalition forces and the new Iraqi government. Iran and Assad's Syria did their worst to destabilize the country as well. The Syrian regime hosted the main pipeline for al-Qaeda terrorists heading into Iraq. Iran also armed, trained, and funded Shiite militias, pushing them to ever greater violence. Despite theological differences, the Iranian regime colluded with al-Qaeda in Iraq at times as well.

Obama has long argued that the two post-9/11 wars are linked, but only from the point of view of America's war-fighting capacity. Obama opposed the decision to invade Saddam's Iraq and never embraced the fight, even after al-Qaeda raised its flag in various parts of the country. Iraq, Obama said, was a distraction from the true fight in Afghanistan. Moreover, Obama has argued, the shift in America's resources to Iraq meant that the United States could not properly prosecute the war in Afghanistan. From Obama's perspective, it was logical to end the war in Iraq as part of a supposedly more focused campaign against al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

The Bush administration clearly made its mistakes in prosecuting the two wars. Obama and his advisers are

right when they say that Bush did not adequately resource the war effort in Afghanistan and this was due, in part, to the resources required in Iraq. And initially it appeared that Obama intended to fully embrace the lesson learned in Iraq—that a robust counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy was needed to win the fight—when prosecuting the Afghan war. That is not how things turned out, however. There are two main problems with Obama's handling of the wars.

First, Obama squandered much of the U.S. military's gains in Iraq and cleared the path for al-Qaeda in Iraq's resurgence. Once thought to have been reduced to nothing more than a nuisance, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) has not only unleashed a hellish terrorist campaign since the last American combat forces left in December 2011, it has also expanded its operations in nearby Syria, thereby greatly complicating America's ability to work with the anti-Assad rebellion.

Second, while Obama did build up America's presence in Afghanistan as he oversaw the withdrawal from Iraq, he quickly undercut both the Afghan War effort and the military's COIN doctrine. In other words, Obama demonstrated that he was not really committed to either fight. In retrospect, his arguments about the trade-offs between Iraq and Afghanistan now look like nothing more than politically convenient posturing.

In July, the Obama campaign released a web video celebrating the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. "As your commander in chief, and on behalf of a grateful nation, I'm proud to finally say these two words, and I know your families agree—welcome home. Welcome home," Obama says in a clip from a speech he gave at Fort Bragg in December 2011.⁸ "Welcome home," Obama repeats again for dramatic effect. An Iraq War veteran and Obama supporter shown in the ad says that the president ended the war "responsibly."

Obama has made the same argument many times in describing his decision to bring home all of America's troops. He says it was the "responsible" thing to do. As with much of Obama's war-related rhetoric, he has not offered a thorough explanation for why this is true. The same day the Obama campaign released its web video, Iraq exploded in violence. AQI executed 40 attacks in a single day, killing more than 100 Iraqis. The attacks were not surprising. Ever since American forces withdrew from the country, AQI has demonstrated that it has a remarkably robust infrastructure. The group likely waited out America's exit, which Obama had announced long in advance. This is one more warning for those who think al-Qaeda's core in Pakistan is close to defeat. AQI's top leaders have been killed on multiple occasions, only to be replaced by lesser-known comrades.

The death of bin Laden did not lead al-Qaeda or its affiliates to abandon the fight.

The American forces stationed in Iraq knew much about AQI's operations. The Iraqi affiliate of al-Qaeda operated along the Syria-Iraq border for years, shuttling suicide bombers from throughout the Middle East into Iraq. The Assad regime knew full well what al-Qaeda was up to on Syrian soil. Leaked State Department cables show that General David Petraeus, who became famous for leading the Iraqi surge, repeatedly warned that AQI would eventually turn on the Assad regime.⁹ Petraeus was prescient; that is exactly what has happened.

Al-Qaeda's presence within the Syrian rebellion is a growing concern. In fact, Obama administration officials have warned against arming the Syrian rebels because American arms could make their way to al-Qaeda. In an interview on CNN in February, the chairman

of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey, warned that “al-Qaeda is involved” in the Syrian opposition’s ranks and, therefore, it was “premature to talk about arming them.”¹⁰

Thus, the consequences of Obama’s impatience with Iraq are two-fold: American forces cannot counter al-Qaeda’s operations in either Iraq or Syria. This outcome is hardly “responsible.” Obama could have pressed the Iraqi government to allow a significant contingent of troops to stay in Iraq in the near term. Instead, the Administration made only a token effort to extend America’s presence and this effort was rejected out-of-hand.

Obama has not shown much more patience when it comes to the fight in Afghanistan. Speaking at West Point on December 1, 2009, President Obama announced “that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan.”¹¹ The U.S. military would finally be able to apply the COIN strategy, which worked well in Iraq, to Afghanistan. This new surge in forces was always intended to be short-lived, however. “After 18 months,” Obama explained in the very next sentence, “our troops will begin to come home.”

Obama’s handling of the Afghan war demonstrates that he thinks about the post-9/11 world mainly in terms of domestic politics, and not as part of a grand struggle against *jihadi* forces. His 18-month deadline, and the end of his surge shortly before the 2012 presidential election, has no conceivable military justification. The 30,000 additional troops are leaving before the end of Afghanistan’s fighting season, which also happens to overlap with America’s election season. Concerns about the latter trumped the military’s role in the former as Obama sought to shore up his political base, which is fervently anti-war.

There is something even more troubling about Obama’s handling of Afghanistan. The President gave up on the war

even while the troops he sent to Afghanistan continued to fight. In his book, *Confront and Conceal: Obama’s Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power*, the *New York Times*’s David Sanger explains how Obama’s thinking on Afghanistan evolved over time. “By early 2011,” Sanger reports, “Mr. Obama had seen enough.” Obama ordered his advisers to plan for a “speedy, orderly exit from Afghanistan.”¹²

In fact, Obama intellectually retreated from the Afghan conflict, which he used to call “a war of necessity,” much earlier. Sanger recounts an exchange between Obama and one of his aides in “late in 2009”—that is, around the time Obama announced the Afghan surge. “The aide told Mr. Obama that he believed military leaders had agreed to the tight schedule to begin withdrawing those troops just 18 months later only because they thought they could persuade an inexperienced president to grant more time if they demanded it,” Sanger writes. Obama had no intention of listening to their demands. “Well,” Obama reportedly told the aide, “I’m not going to give them more time.”

This is a stunning comment. It suggests that even as Obama ordered additional forces onto the battlefield he had no intention of allowing them to influence his future decision-making.

The Afghan surge did break the momentum of the Taliban-led insurgency, at least temporarily. For this, Obama deserves credit. But while Obama’s advisers have argued that Bush lacked a real strategy for Afghanistan, which is true, Obama never had any real strategy either.

Afghanistan has been ravaged by war for more than three decades. It is foolish to think that a temporary surge of 30,000 troops, absent any longer-term plan, would leave behind a lasting peace. While the Afghan surge made significant progress in the southern part of the

country, Obama did not give the military the resources it needed to pursue a similar strategy in the east. True to his word, Obama did not listen to the concerns of U.S. military commanders when, in 2011, he reiterated that the surge of American forces would begin coming home. As a result, eastern Afghanistan remains a stronghold for the Taliban and its allies, who remain a threat throughout much of the country as well.

It is no secret that the Afghan insurgency is headquartered in Pakistan, immediately south and east of Afghanistan's borders. In 2009, Obama commissioned a review of the Afghan War that was led by Bruce Riedel, a former CIA official.¹³ Even though he failed to propose any realistic solutions for dealing with Pakistan, Riedel has been more clear-eyed than most when it comes to Pakistani duplicity. So much so that Riedel apparently convinced Obama that Pakistan was the real source of the *jihadi* threat. Riedel told Obama that the two countries should be thought of as "Pak/Af" instead of "Af/Pak," as they are commonly referenced, in order to underscore the centrality of Pakistan.

There is no question that Pakistan is at least as problematic as Riedel concluded. However, like the Bush administration before it, the Obama administration never formulated a sound game plan for countering Pakistan's sponsorship of *jihadism*. While nominally an American ally in the fight against terrorism, Pakistan remains the principal sponsor of Mullah Omar's Taliban, the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and an alphabet soup of other *jihadi* groups. All of these organizations are ideologically and operationally allied with al-Qaeda. The collusion between these groups and al-Qaeda should not be underestimated. There is simply no evidence that these relationships are about to dissolve. Members of these Pakistani

jihadi groups regularly migrate to al-Qaeda, filling senior positions left empty when al-Qaeda leaders are killed or captured. In 2010, Robert Gates, who was then Secretary of Defense, warned that al-Qaeda and its Pakistani allies operate like a "syndicate." Gates added that when it comes to the war in eastern Afghanistan, "A success for one is a success for all."¹⁴

Like the Bush administration before it, the Obama administration never formulated a sound game plan for countering Pakistan's sponsorship of *jihadism*.

This is part of the reason that al-Qaeda is not close to defeat, as Obama administration officials have claimed. It also means that al-Qaeda will benefit if the *jihadi* coalition rises inside Afghanistan once again. If America continues to draw down its troops under Obama's command, there is a significant chance this is exactly what will happen.

Obama never saw the strategic connection between a surge of forces in Afghanistan and the effort to curtail Pakistan's *jihadi* inclinations. Obama's open insistence that the drawdown of American forces begin in July 2011, whether the fighting warranted it or not, sent the wrong signal to Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment and the *jihadi* groups it sponsors.

According to *Newsweek*, the Afghan insurgents began texting each other "Mubarak," which is Arabic for congratulations, shortly after Obama's December 2009 speech at West Point.¹⁵ "The enemy president is announcing a withdrawal of troops who will leave our country with their heads bowed," the message continued. This was not mere bluster. In August 2010, General James Conway, who was then Com-

mandant of the Marine Corps, warned that the July 2011 deadline was “probably giving our enemy sustenance.”¹⁶ Conway explained that insurgents were heard in intercepted conversations telling one another “we only need to hold out for so long.”

That is the way Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency saw matters, too. At one point, the Obama administration hoped that the Pakistanis would take the fight to the Haqqani Network, an especially effective insurgency group. Instead of fighting the Haqqanis, who have a decades-long relationship with the ISI, the Pakistanis decided to seek a political role for them in the future of Afghanistan. Recently, the Obama administration has said that the Pakistanis will finally help against the Haqqanis. We should believe that when we see it. The Pakistanis have openly flaunted their relationship with the Haqqani Network.

“The American timetable for getting out makes it easier for Pakistan to play a more visible role,” Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas, the spokesman for the Pakistani Army, was quoted by the *New York Times* as saying just months after Obama’s West Point speech.¹⁷ Abbas was referring to Pakistan’s effort to negotiate a power-sharing agreement in Afghanistan that included the Haqqanis. Another Pakistani official told the *Times* that his nation sensed the Obama administration had “a lack of fire in the belly” when it came to the fight for Afghanistan’s future.¹⁸

Obama would later call the decision to surge troops into Afghanistan “one of the most difficult decisions that I’ve made as President.”¹⁹ It says much about Obama’s presidency that America’s *jihadi* enemies and their sponsors saw that decision, which was accompanied by an arbitrary withdrawal timeline, as a major sign of weakness.

The coming fight

As America is consumed by the 2012 presidential election, we will undoubtedly hear about the raid that netted bin Laden over and over again. President Obama deserves credit for this success. It was a risky operation that easily could have gone awry. More importantly, bin Laden was a both a symbol of defiance to America and an operationally clever terrorist who continued to scheme until his death.

However, there is a fundamental irony in the bin Laden raid. The intelligence that led the CIA to bin Laden’s doorstep came from the Agency’s controversial enhanced interrogation program, as well as detainees held at Guantánamo. President Obama has long opposed both detention platforms.

Bin Laden’s longtime courier unwittingly led the CIA to bin Laden’s hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The CIA learned about this courier from terrorists held in its custody. Critics of the CIA’s program have objected that high-level terrorists did not spill the beans on the courier even after being subjected to waterboarding and other harsh techniques. But one terrorist, an important al-Qaeda facilitator named Ghassan Ghul, did tell the CIA about the courier. It was only after Ghul, who was subjected to some of the more mild interrogation techniques (not waterboarding), spoke about the courier that the CIA realized how important he was. American officials then went back to their extensive intelligence holdings and found that other detainees had discussed bin Laden’s key emissary on multiple occasions.

Whatever specific techniques were used to elicit the intelligence used to track bin Laden, the bottom line is that the intelligence came out of two efforts President Obama has decried as un-American. As one of his first acts in office, Obama shuttered the CIA’s detention facilities. He also sought to close

Guantánamo—an effort that was stymied by domestic political opposition and the realities of war.

Ever since that night in May 2011 when bin Laden was killed, President Obama has used his signature counterterrorism success as a major justification for bringing America's troops home. America's *jihadi* enemies have not stopped fighting.



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THE SORRY STATE OF U.S. ECONOMIC STATECRAFT

Andrew K. Davenport

On the campaign trail in 2008, the skepticism that President Obama brought to the use of military force was tactfully coupled with his advocacy for more aggressively pursuing non-military tools to advance U.S. security interests. As a candidate, he emphasized, with regard to Iran, “We have not exhausted our non-military options [and] in many ways, have yet to try them.”¹ Advocates of a more energetic and assertive approach to leveraging U.S. influence in the financial and economic domain were encouraged by the prospect of renewed attention to this underdeveloped area of security policy.

Unfortunately, four years later, it is clear that the familiar prerequisite of multilateralism and concern over diplomatic relationships more broadly has, once again, stymied the full application of U.S. financial and economic power. The perceived sacrifice of foregoing business opportunities in the name of national security, and pressuring our allies to do the same, has always been a bitter pill to swallow for policymakers, even at the most senior levels of government where the stakes are especially high. Business interests and their representation inside government have long opposed any form of “artificial” intervention in the markets. There is a bias towards the “military-political” school of how to leverage national power. And there is a stubborn belief that cohesion among allies is paramount when they are confronting an adversary, even when consensus involves permitting that same adversary to benefit from continued external economic and financial support.

The result for Republican and Democratic Administrations alike has been the management of conflict in a manner that fails to deploy the full financial and economic weight of the United States. For this to change, White House leadership is required that



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is not only willing to stand up to domestic objections to leveraging U.S. financial and economic preeminence for security purposes, but also to withstand the slings and arrows from foreign partners that are caught in the crossfire. Failure to stand up to these groups can result in the progression of conflict to kinetic warfare before all non-military options have been genuinely attempted. This has repeatedly been the case in the past and, during the Obama administration, this trap is as pronounced as ever.

Sanctioning Iran... sort of

Even in the case of Iran, where conventional wisdom has it that sanctions policies have been a major success, there have been a number of missed opportunities and policies notched as “achievements” that have lacked real teeth.

While multilateral sanctions are finally having some impact, unilateral action by the United States has suffered from two glaring shortcomings. First, the numerous dramatic announcements of new “sanctionable” activity have not remotely been matched by the actual implementation of penalties. Second, where sanctions have in fact been implemented, they have often targeted the most obscure violators possible in order to claim some action taken without impacting diplomatic relations (and, hence, also without exerting significant impact on Iran).

Moreover, the most aggressive unilateral U.S. sanctions initiatives have been the result of legislation passed by Congress, which, in nearly every instance, have been passed over the objections of the Executive Branch. This was the case, most notably, with an amendment to the *National Defense Authorization Act of 2012* (NDAA), sponsored by Senators Kirk and Menendez, which called for U.S. sanctions on the financial institutions of countries that fail to reduce significantly their oil purchases from the Central Bank

of Iran. Despite White House opposition to this provision, the measure was signed into law and the Obama administration later hailed the positive returns on their diplomatic management of the bill’s tough language. Although oil purchases from Iran were reportedly reduced by some 15 to 20 percent, the end result was waivers issued to countries that are still critical purchasers of Iranian energy exports.

Congress also passed the *Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act* (CISADA) over the early opposition of the Obama administration. President Obama objected to provisions of the bill that overly restricted his ability to issue waivers and avoid the legislation’s mandated penalties and investigations. The legislation was passed only after Congress accommodated certain of these objections, inputting, for example, the pursuit of multilateralism for the first time as a justifiable reason for the President to waive sanctions. Additional language was removed that would have required the Executive Branch, upon the receipt of credible information, to initiate investigations into violators of the section targeting companies active in the refined petroleum industry of Iran. (A similar provision appears to be included in the most recent Congressional sanctions, the *Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012*.) For years, the lack of a requirement to open investigations into violators of the *Iran Sanctions Act*, CISADA’s predecessor, enabled Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush to simply ignore the legislation altogether.

Despite consistent efforts to water down the sanctions provisions of legislation, President Obama issued a press release on July 31, 2012, highlighting his successes in “Partnering with Congress” on these issues. Among the listed highlights of the Administration’s Iran sanctions policies were the following two bullet points.

The [NDAA], which was enacted in December 2011, contained new sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran that the Administration has used to great effect to undermine Iran's ability to sell its oil internationally.

In June 2010, President Obama worked with Congress to pass the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010 (CISADA), which strengthened existing U.S. sanctions against Iran in the areas of refined petroleum sales, serious human rights abuses, and Iran's access to the international financial system.²

Neither of these legislative initiatives originated from the White House and, as noted, President Obama worked assiduously, just as his predecessors have, to undermine their intrusions into his foreign policy privileges. Indeed, at the signing ceremony for the NDAA, the President specifically noted that the Kirk-Menendez Amendment "would interfere with my constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations [and] should any application of these provisions conflict with my constitutional authorities, I will treat the provisions as non-binding."³ Ultimately, however, the President appears to have found value in this provision of the bill.

Other signature sanctions accomplishments touted by the Obama administration include:

1. being the first Administration to sanction companies under the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, as subsequently adjusted, including by CISADA;
2. issuing several Executive Orders that announced the President's right, at his discretion, to sanction foreign companies conducting certain kinds of business with Iran, including petrochemical projects, petroleum resource development and financial transactions; and

3. encouraging the European Union (EU) to adopt its most aggressive Iran sanctions to date, highlighted by the prohibition on petroleum and petrochemical investments and purchases as of July 1, 2012. The EU also adopted related financial and transportation sanctions that caused major ripple effects when the industry-dominant, Britain-based International Group of P&I Clubs announced that it would not be able to insure the transport of Iranian energy products.⁴

In another environment, these might have appeared to be timely and aggressive policy initiatives and announcements. In general, they contribute to an atmosphere of increased risk associated with corporate decisions to conduct business with Iran. These are favorable goals and, indeed, an appreciation for the "risk management" and "corporate governance" pressure points of corporations conducting business with adversaries is worthwhile and underdeveloped. As for the Obama administration's ability to take credit for the aggressive pursuit of "crippling sanctions" and the rejuvenation of creative, non-military policy tools, however, consider the following:

1. of the companies now sanctioned under the *Iran Sanctions Act*, only one has any significant exposure to the U.S. market, Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), and the penalties chosen for PDVSA left that exposure largely unmolested;
2. there has been no significant implementation of the sanctions measures teed up by various existing Executive Orders targeting foreign businesses, despite the fanfare and press releases associated with their announcement; and

3. the actions of the EU are actions of the EU, not the United States, and still leave the entirety of Europe's non-energy-related business with Iran untouched and un-penalized, outside of the ripple effects taking place in the financial sector (business that has effectively been off-limits to U.S. companies for decades).
4. "Sanctionable" activity now includes a broad range of petroleum, petrochemical, financial and transport activity that implicates a number of prominent global companies. Nevertheless, at this critical juncture in the nuclear standoff with Iran, the last five companies sanctioned by the United States in January and July 2012 are the relatively obscure FAL Oil Company, Bank of Kunlun, Kuo Oil, Zhuhai Zhenrong Company and Elaf Islamic Bank. When one contrasts the list of "sanctionable" activities with the actual implementation of those sanctions, there is a major disparity. Little explanation has been offered about the reticence to enforce these authorities to their fullest.

There has been no significant implementation of the sanctions measures teed up against Iran by various existing Executive Orders targeting foreign businesses, despite the fanfare and press releases associated with their announcement.

Most recently, President Obama issued an Executive Order on July 31, 2012, that, yet again, expanded the scope of "sanctionable" activity, making "sanctionable knowingly conducting or facilitating significant transactions with a private or public foreign financial institution or other entity for the purchase

or acquisition of Iranian oil."⁵ It also expanded on past Executive Orders, "by making sanctionable significant transactions for the purchase or acquisition of Iranian petrochemical products." At best, these policy pronouncements frighten corporations and influence their risk assessments when making Iran-related business decisions. With military action hovering nearby and an Iranian regime pressing ahead with its nuclear program after roughly a decade of negotiations with the international community, however, these kinds of policy pronouncements simply do not carry the weight that the security circumstances warrant.

It seems painfully obvious to point out that it is the actual sanctioning part of this equation that has so evidently been missing in U.S. financial and economic policies over the past several Administrations. Yet, with every new Executive Order and diluted piece of legislation targeting Iran, the media and politicians declare a "new round of financial and economic sanctions."

Jerry Seinfeld famously pointed out after being told that his rental car was not available, that "you know how to take the reservation, you just don't know how to hold the reservation." Something similar might be said with regard to sanctions policy.

There is no lack of U.S. policy and legislation with regard to sanctions on Iran. The companies propping up the Iranian regime, however, are not American. There is no getting around that penalizing those responsible for supporting the Iranian regime will fray diplomatic relationships. As long as the political will is lacking to endure the fallout from penalizing those responsible, these policies and legislative initiatives will not succeed, and it will be impossible to credibly claim the earnest pursuit of all non-military options. Even as military action appears to loom closer, companies continue to conduct business with Iran while benefiting

from access to the U.S. financial system, capital market listings and the U.S. markets more broadly. The non-Iranian banks facilitating these activities are likely to retain access to their U.S. correspondent and payable through accounts.

Multilateral efforts clearly have borne some fruit, particularly with regard to European energy and financial sanctions taking effect this year, some nine years after the EU3 (i.e., France, Germany and the UK) first started negotiations with Iran over its nuclear weapons program. Playing “Whack-A-Mole” via diplomacy and sanctions policy with 10-year time horizons, however, is not a replacement strategy for exercising the full array of U.S. financial and economic tools and power prior to the potential use of military force.

Broader sanctions policy

Beyond Iran, U.S. economic and financial statecraft, as a key dimension of security policy, has relied almost exclusively on identifying and sanctioning companies and banks from rogue as well as inadequately governed regimes that are, in some cases, implicated in the odious behavior of their respective governments. There is also new appreciation for the role of financial sanctions over traditional economic sanctions, due to the preeminence of the U.S. financial industry. Financial sanctions have consisted of denying access to the U.S. financial system, freezing assets that already exist within the United States and freezing assets that attempt to enter the United States. Threatening access to U.S. correspondent bank relationships has also been effectively leveraged to cause anxiety among foreign banks concerning the costs of facilitating transactions or underwriting the behavior of U.S.-designated persons across a range of concerns, including terrorism, weapons proliferation, international narcotics trafficking, human rights violations and the

depredations of states, such as Yemen, Venezuela and others.

Many of these same techniques were developed initially by the previous Administration. The power of Section 311 of the *USA Patriot Act*, which involves threatening the correspondent banking relationships of banks engaged in money laundering, was tested successfully in the case of Banco Delta Asia (BDA). When BDA was announced to be under investigation as a potential “money-laundering concern” due to its ties to North Korea, the immediate exodus of that bank’s clients and partners was a surprising victory for the U.S. security community. The Bush administration also developed prohibitions on U-turn financial transactions, which, in certain cases, denied Iranian financial institutions the ability to turn their foreign currency into U.S. dollars by using non-Iranian, offshore financial institutions to carry out the transactions on their behalf. President Obama has added significantly to the list of financial institutions facing these restrictions, for example, designating the entire Iranian banking sector as a “money laundering concern” and increasing the number of specifically sanctioned Iranian banks to twenty-four.

More traditional economic sanctions (particularly trade-related) have seemed to lose favor due to the increasing problem of foreign availability in most—although not all—industries. Like the Bush administration, however, the Obama administration has continued to designate non-financial individuals and entities as prohibited from accessing the U.S. economy. Much of the time, these persons are already prohibited entities on account of their country of origin. That said, U.S. designations can serve as a first step toward encouraging foreign companies to steer clear of these businesses on “risk management” grounds and can prod foreign governments—or possibly the EU, UN or other multilateral

bodies—to follow the U.S. lead and similarly sanction these entities.

These are all worthy endeavors. The dedication of resources, including intelligence assets, to uncovering tainted persons, banks and other entities and ensuring that they do not benefit from the U.S. financial system, even indirectly, is an essential service. Urging our foreign partners to do the same is also clearly beneficial. These undertakings, however, should be the bare minimum that the U.S. government is doing from a security perspective in the financial and economic domain. In other words, of course we do not want known “bad guys” to benefit from our financial system and economy and should be officially informing foreign companies and governments of the identity of these companies and encouraging our foreign partners to officially designate these same entities.

It is problematic, however, that this is where the leveraging of U.S. financial and economic preeminence for security purposes appears to trail off.

Getting serious about economic warfare

Although they have formed the crux of security-minded economic and financial statecraft for several Administrations, the sanctions strategies identified above represent only the surface level of what is achievable in this field. There has been a troubling lack of depth with regard to the U.S. security community’s appreciation for the strategic value of American financial and economic preeminence and its potential role in advancing, not just our economic and financial interests, but also our broader security interests.

This is, in part, due to the reality that, despite designating “bad guys,” security professionals are not typically comfortable operating in the domain of global finance. The opposite is also true.

There is anxiety among security professionals that they lack the expertise and training to discuss esoteric financial issues, such as dark pools, naked short selling, derivatives and the capital markets in general. For its part, “Wall Street” tends only to see complications for profit-seeking endeavors resulting from interventions by the security community. Accordingly, there is only a rudimentary understanding in Washington of the true financial and economic vulnerabilities of adversaries and potential adversaries and what their economic leadership might actually stay up at night worrying about.

The sovereign debt crisis that has roiled the Eurozone over the past three years has put this shortcoming into stark relief, demonstrating the geopolitical relevance of international financial flows, the cost of borrowing and the influence of these financial considerations on policy-making and political stability. With some eight heads of state displaced over the damage done by financial market scrutiny, critical geopolitical factors now include bond yields, various ratios, basis point premiums and the cost of financing basic expenses, let alone major infrastructure projects.

It is almost surely the case that governments all over the world are now more concerned over the prospect of withering financial market scrutiny, and are turning their attention to sovereign economic governance and their creditworthiness and that of their banks and largest companies. They have watched closely as this new market “identity” has taken aim at key statistics, such as debt-to-GDP ratios, labor productivity, electricity usage and other sources of market calibration (including transparency, disclosure, reliable statistics, accountability and good governance). These types of considerations have forced major policy changes on Western Europe and even the United States.

It is also likely that governments, particularly prospective adversaries of the United States, are significantly less worried about whether certain of their companies and banks are identified as “sanctionable” by the U.S. government than they are about critical market scrutiny, particularly as the vast majority of follow-up actions on these policy threats have, thus far, targeted more obscure companies. Moreover, the ability of diplomacy to foreshadow and head off these types of “designations” presents a far less ominous and frightening challenge to foreign capitals than does the power of the markets, including domestic market sentiment and the impact on foreign investment flows, over which they have little control.

In this new environment, the world’s least transparent countries have the most to worry about. Their cards are held close to their vests and, oftentimes, the markets have not been provided with reliable statistics to calibrate their views over years of analysis. Countries that pose security threats tend to fall into this category. In other words, the economic indicators identified above as playing a fundamental role in market treatment of countries and industries should not be viewed as only relevant to U.S. financial and economic policy. In a world where capital flows, market sentiment and key statistics play critically in unseating political leaders and dramatically altering the course of nations, why hasn’t the Obama administration considered the implications for U.S. security policy?

Indeed, for certain U.S. competitors, it did not take the 2008-2009 financial crisis or the ongoing Eurozone crisis to figure out the relevance of the global markets to national security. Former Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson disclosed in his 2010 memoir that Russia had urged China to join a “disruptive scheme” to dump, in tandem, their holdings of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac bonds in

2008 to stimulate emergency action by the U.S. government that would further damage America’s financial standing.⁶ China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has openly threatened to sell U.S. treasuries as punishment for selling arms to Taiwan. Luo Yuan of China’s Academy of Military Sciences offered, “Our retaliation should not be restricted to merely military matters...we should adopt a strategic package of counter-punches covering politics, military affairs, diplomacy and economics to treat both the symptoms and root cause of this disease.” He added that Beijing could “attack by oblique means and stealthy feints... For example, we could sanction them using economic means, such as dumping some U.S. government bonds.”⁷ These are only isolated examples of what is a larger area of security policy for competitors, who rely routinely on such asymmetric strategies to counter the multi-faceted super-power challenge presented to them by the United States.

There has been a troubling lack of depth with regard to the U.S. security community’s appreciation for the strategic value of American financial and economic preeminence and its potential role in advancing, not just our economic and financial interests, but also our broader security interests.

Even for the United States, this is not a foreign concept. During the Reagan administration, debilitating sanctions were implemented against European companies that defied orders not to supply U.S.-origin oil and gas equipment and technology to the Soviet Union for the development of its huge two-strand Siberian gas pipeline—and did so in spite of unprecedented diplomatic blowback

from our closest allies. Once on-line, that project would have nearly doubled Soviet annual hard currency revenues and would have created a dangerous level of dependency by Western Europe on Soviet supplies of natural gas (roughly 65 percent or more for Europe as a whole and 100 percent in a number of countries and regions). The “double financing” of this deal was also targeted. The Soviet Union was fraudulently attracting funds in the credit markets for this project (as well as its predecessor, the Orenburg gas pipeline), when actually funding the needed equipment and technology imports from the West via barter arrangements for natural gas. There was also a successful effort to eliminate taxpayer subsidies on Western government loans to the USSR, which were having the effect of helping underwrite its military build-up and foreign adventurism.

These examples span different degrees of conflict. Market-based, security-minded financial techniques could—and should—be employed to temper the belligerent activity of adversaries as well as serve shorter-term purposes; for example, to defuse a potential crisis. Markets respond to business-relevant information and disclosures as well as policy trends and signals. The destiny of global political and economic stability is profoundly shaped today, as it has been in the past, by the cost of borrowing, unfettered access to the capital markets and by market confidence as a baseline for foreign direct investment and lending. The undermining of these critical assets is likely to influence behavior more effectively than selectively targeting individual companies, banks or even industries and relying on multilateral support in so doing.

America has demonstrated in the past what is possible when the political will exists to deploy the full measure of U.S. financial and economic power. In the days preceding the collapse of the Soviet

Union, Moscow defaulted on its entire stock of Western hard currency debt. Today, foreign countries are exploring what they might do in this regard targeting the United States. To voluntarily remove ourselves from this playing field in order to avoid diplomatic tensions and/or intruding on the domain of international business and finance will likely only lead to conflict resolution by other means—primarily military ones. Without fulsome White House support, however, it is highly unlikely that creative and robust economic and financial statecraft will be successfully integrated into broader U.S. security policy.



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A FALSE START WITH RUSSIA

Herman Pirchner, Jr.

The Obama administration took office believing it could significantly improve Russian-American relations. The idea behind such a “reset” was articulated formally by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in March of 2009, and by President Obama less than a month later, during a joint appearance with then-Russian president Dmitry Medvedev in London on April 1st.

The vision behind these announcements was ambitious, encompassing joint efforts to stabilize South Asia, advance Middle East peace efforts, revive U.S.-Russian arms control efforts, and pressure Iran, as well as to secure Russian support of the American-led war in Afghanistan. Today, these aspirations seem overly ambitious at best. At worst, they underscore the irony of the President’s April Fools’ Day announcement.

A “reset”... on our part

There can be little doubt that the Obama administration did its best to make such a “reset” a reality. Through a series of diplomatic moves, the White House signaled its commitment to an overhaul of bilateral ties—no matter the cost.

Thus, on September 17, 2009—a day heavy in symbolism as the anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland—the Obama administration informed the Polish government that it was unilaterally scrapping America’s commitment to emplace missile defenses on Polish territory. Thereafter, the Obama administration reengaged Moscow on the arms control front, hammering out the New START Treaty on terms that arguably favored Moscow—but, in any case, were not to Russia’s disadvantage. More recently, President Obama was unknowingly recorded giving his Russian coun-



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terpart Dmitry Medvedev assurances of greater American flexibility on Russian-American issues if he is reelected.¹

Obama's overtures, however, met with a chilly response. On the one hand, Russian officials clearly favor his reelection. As Alexi Pushkov, Chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the Russian State Duma, put it, "We don't think that for us Romney will be an easy partner." Obama, by contrast, would be an "acceptable" partner for Russia in his second term.²

But on the other, Russia has treated Administration officials, and the President himself, with a disrespect that has bordered upon contempt. The Administration's envoy to Moscow, Michael McFaul, has been followed and picketed as a result of the Russian government learning his schedule, had guests to his residence harassed, and has been personally attacked in the government-controlled media.³ Can anyone imagine this being done to China's Ambassador to Moscow? Can anyone imagine this being done to Moscow's ambassador to Washington, DC?

And McFaul is not the only American diplomat to feel the presence of Russia's FSB (the renamed KGB). Senior personnel of the American embassy in Moscow and their families regularly have had their apartments entered and evidence left that a break-in had occurred.⁴

Moscow also snubbed Washington diplomatically. Although the May 18-19, 2012, G8 summit was held at Camp David, Maryland, in part to facilitate Vladimir Putin's attendance, the Russian president boycotted the meeting, choosing instead to downgrade Russia's participation by sending prime minister Dmitry Medvedev. Russia was also a no-show at the April 26, 2011, UN Security Council meeting on Syria. And, when an average of 70-plus countries attended international conferences on Syria (Tunisia on February 24th, Istanbul on April 1st, and Paris on July 6th), Russia again was absent.

More recently, in acts reminiscent of the Cold War, Russia twice sent nuclear-capable bombers inside of the U.S. air defense zone. They were part of an exercise to target American's strategic missile sites in both Fort Greely, Alaska, and California's Vandenberg Air Force Base. In both cases, U.S. fighters were scrambled and made visual contact with the Russian bombers, which turned around before entering U.S. territory. The first incident occurred during the June 18, 2012, Mexico summit meeting between Obama and Putin. The second incursion occurred on July 4th.⁵

Moreover, not all of Russia's anti-American actions have been symbolic. Moscow has caused problems for the U.S. in Iran, Syria, Venezuela and other places. At the same time, Russia has cooperated or has a mixed record with Washington on a number of other issues vital to the U.S. In order to get a full measure of the state of the "reset" thus far, it is necessary to review its constituent parts.

Where Moscow and Washington can collaborate

There are two principal areas where Moscow and Washington can and have collaborated, to substantial effect, over the past decade.

The first is Afghanistan. Since September 11, 2001, Russia has provided significant help to the American and NATO effort in Afghanistan. It did not do so because of its love for the West, but because Russian leaders have correctly judged it to be in their national interest. Officials in Moscow understand full well that when the U.S. and NATO leave Afghanistan, the resilient Islamism of the Taliban and various Pakistani extremist groups (aided and abetted by sponsors in Islamabad) will remain and likely expand, thus putting pressure on the governments of Central Asia, whose stability is central to Russia's security.

Further, Russia fears that these Islamists eventually will extend their reach to the Muslim parts of the Russian Federation—a fear borne out by the recent attacks on pro-Moscow Muslim leaders in Kazan.⁶ It is far better, Russia believes, if the fighting remains localized to Afghanistan and Pakistan. This goes a long way toward explaining Russia's emergence as a crucial conduit for Coalition activity in Afghanistan; today, an estimated 60 percent of U.S. supplies to troops in Afghanistan arrive via Russian airfields, trains, and roads.⁷ This is no small thing, especially since this cooperation increased at a time when Pakistan closed the supply routes that went through its territory, thereby providing the U.S. and its allies with the ability to resupply forces at a crucial juncture.

The second area of collaboration is on space and scientific matters. Today, as a result of cuts to the U.S. space program, Americans cannot go to or come back from the International Space Station without Russia. Russia, in other words, has become the gateway to space for the U.S. For the moment, at least, Moscow appears content to play that role—and to do so constructively. A series of other scientific ventures between Russia and the United States are taking place quietly within the government and private sector arenas.

A mixed bag

On a number of other issues, however, Russia and America have a mixed record of cooperation. While some tactical successes can be seen, in the main Moscow and Washington appear to hold substantially different positions on issues like proliferation, terrorism, cyberwarfare and China.

Proliferation

Russia's most visible contribution to nonproliferation in recent times was its decision to abrogate a 2007 contract to deliver advanced air defenses

to Iran. The move was significant, insofar as it preserved U.S. and Israeli flexibility in responding to the Iranian regime's expanding nuclear program. Moreover, on a tactical level, relevant U.S. and Russian agencies (the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration and Russia's ROSATOM, for example) continue to collaborate on the securing of fissile material on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

At the same time, however, the Russian government has continued its destabilizing policy of providing arms to the regimes in Venezuela, Syria and Iran, thereby increasing the menace that those countries pose to their respective regions, and to American interests. Most egregiously, the Kremlin has emerged as a lifeline for the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, providing it with arms and political cover as it wages an extended war against its own people.⁸

Terrorism

In the aftermath of September 11th, Moscow and Washington established an extensive dialogue on counterterrorism issues. That channel of communication remains durable, with good bilateral sharing of information about the threat and ways to combat it. On the Russian side, this collaboration is driven by ongoing concern over the activity of al-Qaeda and assorted "Wahhabists" in its periphery, and the growing challenge that radical Islamic ideology poses within Russia itself.

Nevertheless, Russia's cozy relationship with state sponsors and facilitators of terrorism such as Syria and Iran has complicated its role in the War on Terror. Official support from Moscow has greatly increased the freedom of maneuver for both countries, and to a large extent frustrated international efforts to curb Iran's nuclear menace and Syria's civil war.

Cyberwarfare

In recent years, Russia has emerged as a distinct threat actor in cyberspace. Apart from the increasingly common international practice of using cyber capability to steal commercial and military secrets (something in which Russia, like China, is heavily engaged), it has deployed its cyberwarfare capabilities on at least two distinct occasions over the past half-decade: during its 2007 political dispute with Estonia, and during its subsequent, August 2008 war with neighboring Georgia.

On the positive side, it appears that a bilateral U.S.-Russia Treaty on Cyber Warfare could soon be signed. Such an agreement, now under serious discussion between the two countries, is intended to serve as both an information-sharing tool and as a hedge against provocative behavior by either country in the comparatively new medium of cyberspace.

China

On the surface, geopolitical relations between Russia and China have never been better. Russia and China have been consistent in their joint opposition to American positions on Syria, Iran, missile defense, Myanmar, the deployment of space-based weapons, and a host of other international issues. Support for each other's suppression of internal dissent is also strong, and at fundamental odds with America's view of human rights.

However, the Russo-Chinese relationship is also defined by a deeply negative undercurrent—an undercurrent which may one day strain cooperation in other areas. Until the latter half of the 19th century, much of today's Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia was Chinese. During the mid-nineteenth century period of Chinese weakness, Russia took this territory and had their land grab codified in treaties signed in 1858 and 1860. The land demarcations of those

treaties were largely reaffirmed by the border treaty signed by Moscow and Beijing in 2001. But that agreement must be renewed in 2021, just nine years from now. Russians in these sparsely populated regions are worried about their future sovereignty—a worry not lessened by the recent appearance of Chinese enclaves on their territory.⁹ Relations between Russia and China, then, have the potential in the future to trend away from cooperation, to competition and even outright hostility, aligning Moscow with Washington in the process.

The tally above highlights the narrow areas of shared concern between the U.S. and Russia, and broader spheres of potential or partial convergence between the two countries. But there are also an array of issues on which Moscow and Washington have taken diametrically opposing views, and on which Russia views America's loss as its own gain.

Nowhere are these policy differences clearer than with regard to Iran and Syria. The United States actively seeks to undermine both regimes, while Russia actively supports each. Apart from feeling the need to reassert itself geopolitically in the Middle East amid the "Arab Spring," Russia justifies its behavior, at least in part, by its fear that Islamists will replace the secular regime that currently exists in Damascus. The United States sees a brutal dictator that has sponsored terrorism and permitted the infiltration of Sunni insurgents into Iraq, where they have killed American soldiers. In Iran, meanwhile, the situations are reversed, with Russia supporting the Islamist government in Tehran while the United States increasingly seeks to undermine it. Whatever the reasons, Russia and the United States have limited flexibility to compromise in either country, absent a significant change of facts on the ground.

Why Russia and America are at odds

As with big decisions made in any country, there are a multitude of reasons for the policies emanating from Moscow and Washington.

The first is ideology. Americans value the freedoms enshrined in our Bill of Rights, as well as free elections. By contrast, Russia's neo-fascist corporate-state ideology rejects these same values as vehemently as we reject the values of fascism. When the United States helps to topple dictators in Serbia, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia or other places, it does so with the backing of the West. This makes Russia's elite feel less secure. For them, these are bad precedents—and a foreshadowing of what might happen should Russia's own nascent political opposition organize sufficiently to present a real challenge to the state.

Additionally, the Putin government views the American-supported "color revolutions" that have taken place in Ukraine and Georgia over the past decade as both philosophically wrong and strategically threatening. From the American perspective, these revolutions brought friendly liberal democrats to power. From the Russian perspective, the United States was seen to have installed regimes antithetical to Moscow in its geopolitical backyard—a betrayal of political trust, and a dangerous example for other countries to follow.

Finally, in the eyes of Russia's nationalists, support of the "color revolutions" postponed the day when the Slavic and Christian parts of the former USSR could be reintegrated into Russia. Prior to his current position as Russia's Deputy Prime Minister, longtime nationalist Dmitry Rogozin wrote:

Russians...should discuss out loud the problem of a divided people that has an historic right to political unification of its own land.

We (Russians) must present ourselves with the problem of a union, no matter how unrealistic this idea is in today's conditions. And we must create conditions to result in the environment with which Germany dealt for forty years coming out united in the end.¹⁰

There is no reason to believe that either Rogozin or the many other senior Russians who hold nationalist sentiments have abandoned this point of view. The United States, on the other hand, stands squarely against any non-peaceful change of borders.

As America's involvement in Afghanistan declines, so too will the positive aspects of contemporary U.S.-Russian relations. By contrast, the negative aspects of the "reset" show signs of both enduring and expanding as tactical cooperation in Afghanistan gives way to strategic disagreement in other parts of the world.

The second area of divergence relates to missile defense. Much of Russia's opposition to the missile defense plans of successive U.S. administrations comes from a desire to weaken the ties and the trust between the United States and Eastern European countries. When President Obama canceled planned missile defense deployments in Poland and the Czech Republic in September 2008 in favor of a missile defense plan less provocative to Moscow, the message was that the United States was more concerned with offending Russia than keeping its pledge to Poland, the Czech Republic or other small countries. This is a message Moscow would like to reinforce. In turn, Russia's objections to current NATO missile defense plans are as much about reducing American political influence in Central and Eastern Europe as they are about some future military threat to its own strategic capabilities.

Third, Russia and the United States hold vastly different assessments regarding geopolitics and the current state of the world system. Russia, more or less, adheres to a restrictive interpretation of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia—one which adopts a *laissez-faire* attitude toward internal affairs. As former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger recently described it,

(the Treaty) ended the Thirty Years War. In that conflict competing dynasties sent armies across political borders to impose their conflicting religious norms. This 17th-century version of regime change killed perhaps a third of the population of Central Europe.

To prevent a repetition of this carnage, The Treaty of Westphalia separated international from domestic politics. States, built on national and cultural units, were deemed sovereign within their borders and international politics was confined to their interaction across established boundaries.¹¹

In other words, as originally envisioned, domestic human rights abuses were not to be the purview of other nations. The West's more recent doctrine of "humanitarian intervention" thus runs counter to that idea, and represents a challenge to Russia's interpretation of national sovereignty.

Apart from the above-discussed question of non-interference in the politics of non-democratic countries, Russia thinks the United States does not understand its own interests because support of revolutions in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya have led to Islamist governments that they believe will support and inflame the Muslim populations on Russia's southern border as well as in Russia proper. As Islamists are a threat to the United States, they don't understand what we are doing, in the same way we don't understand what they are doing in Iran.

Finally, Russia and the United States still suffer from an acute "trust deficit" in bilateral affairs, and not without good

reason. Many Russian promises that were given to the West during the settlement of the 2009 Russian-Georgian war, for example, were not kept (including those concerning the borders of Georgia, the return of displaced persons, the stationing of Russian troops in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and other terms of the cease-fire agreement). These failures have not been forgotten by many in the West.

More recently, however, the shoe has been on the other foot. The UN resolution authorizing action in Libya (which Russia supported) was limited in scope to humanitarian intervention. What followed, however, was not humanitarian intervention but Western intervention on the side of the anti-Gaddafi rebels. The results left Russia feeling betrayed by the United States and its allies, and as a result it cannot be counted on to easily join in future UN resolutions.

Eyes to the future

As America's involvement in Afghanistan declines, so too will the positive aspects of contemporary U.S.-Russian relations. By contrast, the negative aspects of the "reset" show signs of both enduring and expanding as tactical cooperation in Afghanistan gives way to strategic disagreement in other parts of the world. There simply are not enough positive points of Russo-American contact to fill the post-Afghan gap.

This does not mean that conflict is inevitable, however. Moscow and Washington could well find common ground, for a variety of reasons. Internally, for example, Russia's low life expectancy (currently 60 years for men and 73 for women) ensures a relatively quick generational change—a change that could well bring to power people who believe in a more open society, are more comfortable with an independent Ukraine and Belarus, et cetera (i.e., a decline of nationalist ideology), and/or see more merit in closer cooperation with the United States.

Internationally, meanwhile, traditional Sino-Russo border tensions could reemerge, with Russia seeking greater cooperation with the West as a counterweight to its troubles with China. And should Iran, another Muslim country, or even non-state actors sponsor movements that begin to seriously destabilize any of the Central Asian Republics or parts of the Russian Federation, the already-robust bilateral cooperation on some aspects of Islamic extremism will expand and deepen.

But none of these developments are assured. Russia could become more fascist, more aggressive, and even more hostile to U.S. interests than it is currently. There is no way to know which direction Russia will take—especially since its evolution will be played out largely by domestic forces and uncontrollable foreign developments (perhaps in China or with Islamic movements).

One thing, however, is for certain. Russia will change, either positively or negatively. But until it does, the basis for a successful “reset” is absent, unless the United States significantly redefines its own national interests on a variety of issues (including nuclear weapons, the territorial integrity of the now-independent states of the former USSR, and missile defense systems, to name a few).

Even if there were enough flexibility for such concessions to be considered by a U.S. president, it is not at all clear they would survive scrutiny from other parts of the U.S. government. Nor is it evident that such concessions, sweeping as they might be, would automatically lead to a more stable and friendly relationship with Russia. Indeed, the most likely near-term scenario is the emergence of an increasingly aggressive Russia, and a further deterioration of already fraught relations between Moscow and Washington. A “reset” indeed.

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READING CHINA WRONG

Michael Pillsbury

Many observers have harshly criticized President Obama's China policy for being at best overly optimistic and at worst tragically naïve. In 2012, it is common to see strategic mistrust between the U.S. and China. The cover of the September 2012 issue of *Foreign Affairs* thus features an article on how China sees the United States as hostile and aggressive. A senior American lawmaker has noted that China's rhetoric toward Obama has grown angry, with the official *People's Daily* accusing the United States of "fanning the flames and provoking division, deliberately creating antagonism with China," and that newspaper's overseas edition going so far as to say that it was time for the United States to "shut up."¹

Is it fair to judge Obama's China policy to be so naïve, at least until the "pivot" began in 2012?

Cautious historians may claim that no one can fairly judge the successes and failures of the Obama administration's policy toward China for at least 30 years hence, when the relevant classified documents will be publicly released in the State Department Historian's book series called *Foreign Relations of the United States*. That series lags far behind the times, and even the volume covering the controversial years of Jimmy Carter has not yet been released. However, one can still reach a tentative judgment based on new three books, published in 2012, which agree in their criticisms of failure of Obama's early China policies. The core issue seems to be the erroneous decision to try and "build trust" with China's leaders by pandering to their sensitivities with regard to Taiwan, Tibet and other issues.



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“Building trust” has been tried for several decades by a long string of NSC staffers. Each has reported in his memoirs that the approach was ill-fated, only to have the next president’s NSC staff proceed to try the same idea again. The Obama administration’s experience in 2009 and 2010 should stand as a warning to any future U.S. president not to underestimate China’s misperceptions of American hostility. Yet such a warning is unlikely to be heeded, because of persistent hope that China would like to cooperate with us—if only we could build trust.

“Building trust” has been tried for several decades by a long string of NSC staffers. Each has reported in his memoirs that the approach was ill-fated, only to have the next president’s NSC staff proceed to try the same idea again.

Former NSC staffer Jeffrey A. Bader presents the most positive evaluation of Obama’s China policy in his memoir, *Obama and China’s Rise*.² By contrast, two other books by distinguished journalists cite interviews that highlight Obama’s foolishness. James Mann’s *The Obamians*³ and David Sanger’s *Confront and Conceal*⁴ bluntly assess Obama’s China policy as naïve during his first two years.

Bader is a reliable guide, actually an eyewitness, to Obama’s early intentions toward China. He stresses how modest the goals were: that Obama did not want any “dramatic changes in U.S. policy toward East Asia.” Bader praises part of the Bush foreign policy team and singles out “a number of people—notably Colin Powell, Bob Zoellick, Rich Armitage, Jim Kelly, and Doug Paal” for praise because they well understood the “requirements and subtleties of a sound Asia policy.”⁵

However, Bader and Obama wanted to reverse the influence of another group of advisers with whom the moderates “had to fight bruising internal battles with a shifting coalition of neoconservatives and hard-liners.” During the campaign in 2008, Bader reports, “our campaign team did not see our role as that of articulating dramatic new policy initiatives to reverse eight years of Asia policy.”⁶

Besides the decision to continue the policies of Powell, Armitage, Zoellick, Kelly and Paal, the Obama team decided to “avoid the mistakes of the presidential campaigns of 1980, 1992, and 2000, which had damaged U.S.-China relations early on and taken anywhere from one to three years to get past.” Bader says Obama wanted to “put a floor under the relationship, to convey that we intended to expand areas of cooperation while managing differences.” The key strategy was “to establish a relationship with a modicum of trust between U.S. and Chinese leaders so that there could be political incentives for cooperation.”⁷ Even this modest goal, however, could not be achieved with regard to Iran, North Korea, climate change or any other major issue. Rather, Bader reports in detail Obama was unfairly criticized by almost everyone from the Friends of Tibet to human rights advocates and sometimes even “the front page of the *New York Times*.”

Continuity, not change

In *The Obamians: The Struggle Inside the White House to Redefine American Power*, James Mann dwells on a significant point: that the Obama strategy was not just a continuation of George W. Bush, but its roots and personnel went all the way back to many of the same foreign policy hands who had worked under Clinton. These Clinton alumni were confronting a changed world, one that the younger Obamians took for granted but the Clinton alumni did not.

Mann, in his conclusion, suggests that the “pivot” to Asia may have been the most important step Obama took in his entire foreign policy. But he hints it may have just been rhetoric. According to Mann, “If a single word captured the Obamians’ view of their overall strategy in dealing with the world, from the very start of the administration, it was the concept of ‘rebalancing.’ They repeated this word again and again in private conversations, in official briefings and in written documents such as their National Security Strategy.”⁸

Mann criticizes the “Obamians” who used “rebalancing” in a variety of contexts. In general, they said, America should rebalance its priorities toward a greater emphasis on domestic concerns. In foreign policy, America needed to rebalance from an overreliance on the military toward diplomacy and other means of statecraft. The United States also needed to rebalance away from a preoccupation with the Middle East and toward the prosperous region of East Asia. In economics, Obama and his aides spoke of the need to rebalance the international economy, the global markets, the distribution of imports and exports, and the values of various countries’ currencies. In meetings with Chinese president Hu Jintao, whose government held ever growing foreign exchange reserves, the need for rebalancing was at the heart of Obama’s message.

Mann writes, “To some experienced Washington politicians, the Obamian concept of rebalancing seemed laudable but not exactly right.”⁹ The “Obamians” seemed to mean that they believed in the idea of America’s “decline,” as their opponents sometimes suspect. “The ultimate purpose of [Obama’s] foreign policy is to make America less hegemonic, less arrogant, less dominant,” wrote Charles Krauthammer during Obama’s first year. “In a word, it is a foreign policy designed to produce American decline—to make

America essentially one nation among many.”¹⁰ Mann reports the Obama team rejects this criticism that they are declinists, citing Biden’s adviser Tony Blinken: “This is the contrary of decline: It’s about figuring out, in a more complicated world, with new constraints, how to maximize our power, and that’s what we’ve done,” asserted Blinken.¹¹

The Obama strategy was not just a continuation of George W. Bush, but its roots and personnel went all the way back to many of the same foreign policy hands who had worked under Clinton.

The mirage of “building trust”

The first two years of Obama’s China policy seem to be roundly condemned by everyone. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton got off to a bad start by seeming to trivialize human rights, and Jeff Bader had to ask the Tibetans in exile to postpone a visit by the Dalai Lama. Bader blames the press and the Chinese for criticizing Hillary and less than gallantly tells how he had to save her on board her plane with talking points she badly needed.

Bader takes a dim view of Hillary’s early Asia diplomacy in part because the Chinese viewed the secretary “with some wariness.” They did so for two reasons. During the Beijing Women’s Conference in 1995, she had delivered a speech strongly criticizing the heavy-handed way the Chinese ran the conference and treated the attending nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), thereby becoming a rallying point for women and human rights critics. She also had issued some “fairly hot rhetoric about China” during the campaign, mostly on currency and trade issues. Therefore, while the Chinese leaders had a very good relationship with

Bill Clinton, they were not sure if “his spouse viewed China in the same light as he did.” Fortunately, in the name of building trust with China, Bader was able to save her by providing talking points for the media which she delivered “in a deadpan” and accepted “as if she were swallowing some bad-tasting medicine.”¹²

But building trust would prove to be even harder in the months ahead, and ultimately would fail completely. Tibet in particular would become a significant flashpoint. Bader is at his best describing vividly how China’s premier Wen Jiabao essentially broke Obama’s heart at the Climate Change conference in Copenhagen.

History has shown that “building trust” with China was not a wise or complete policy. But its allure is clear, and retains tremendous staying power.

Bader and Obama had tried to soothe the Chinese by postponing arms sales to Taiwan and a meeting with the Dalai Lama—sensitive over the perceived challenge posed by the Dalai Lama being received in Washington on the eve of the President’s trip to China. Bader reveals the effort to placate: “To compensate for delaying the date of the Dalai Lama’s visit, we decided to send the assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs, Valerie Jarrett, to Dharamsala in September... While our people were preparing for Jarrett’s visit to Dharamsala, we sought assurances the Chinese would resume dialogue with the Dalai Lama. The Chinese refused to make an explicit commitment...”¹³ No deal on Tibet happened, and by 2012 many monks lit themselves on fire in protest.

But the perceived cold shoulder to the Dalai Lama, and his subsequent visit to other cities in the United States, was spun differently by his representatives—with considerable damage to the Administration’s China policy.

The incident seemed to “support allegations that the Obama administration was prepared to, as some liked to say, ‘kowtow’ to the Chinese on human rights issues.”¹⁴ Predictably, columnists and editorial writers piled on.

The U.S. media attacked Obama again during his visit to Beijing. As Bader recounts, “Led by a front-page story in the *New York Times*, journalists dug deeply into all the steps the Chinese had undertaken to try to constrain the event. They left the impression of a president who accepted Chinese censorship, pulled his punches, and participated in a Potemkin village event not seen by real Chinese.”¹⁵ The main hope in the President’s conciliatory approach appears to have been that the “kowtow” would pay off in getting China’s cooperation in climate change. And yet, China didn’t cooperate. Bader recounts that on climate change, China would not agree to verification or the legally binding character of any commitments.

Thing got worse for the trust building business after Bader retired. By January 2010, when Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visited Beijing, David Sanger recounts that the level of suspicion of Gates’s delegation was sky high: “As soon as they got word of the [Chinese stealth fighter] test, Gates’s aides huddled to try to figure out what message the Chinese were sending. The first interpretation, one senior aide later told me, was that it was ‘a giant screw-you to Gates and Obama?...’”¹⁶

Sanger sums up a widespread view when he writes that “Obama’s first three years in office were spent trying to convince Hu to revalue China’s currency, pressure Iran to rein in nuclear North Korea, cease claiming exclusive territory in the South China Sea, and crack down on the daily raid on American technology.”¹⁷ At times, the Chinese leadership—particularly President Hu and other “technocrats”—seemed to be moving

toward a more responsive, constructive policy. But never did Beijing really meet any of Washington's demands. In Sanger's telling, it is this more than anything else that precipitated a turnaround in Washington's approach toward China.

Mugged by reality

In Obama's first year, he had ducked two perpetual flashpoints with Beijing. One was the tradition of greeting the Dalai Lama of Tibet for a visit to the White House—what Sanger dubs a “ritual endorsement” of Tibet's desires to break free (even though every president carefully intones that Tibet is part of China but should have religious freedom and some autonomy). But back home, pressure was growing on Obama from the left to meet with the Dalai Lama, as a symbol of solidarity after a period of extraordinarily brutal crackdowns by the Chinese in Tibet.

Then there was the long-delayed decision on arms sales to Taiwan, part of the fading American commitment to the island nation—something Obama had pushed off as long as possible. But when he finally gave the Taiwanese a modest package of arms (but none of the F-16s they wanted, which possessed the capability to strike back at the Mainland), the reaction in Beijing amounted to a calculated, prolonged tantrum. Long-arranged visits between Chinese and American military units were canceled. When U.S. officials showed up in Beijing, they were dressed down—and then given a lengthy presentation about China's rights throughout the contested South China Sea area, Sanger reports.

Nor did the intelligence community really seem to know much about how to build trust with China. Sanger recounts that the staff of Obama's National Security Advisor, Tom Donilon, together with much of the intelligence community, concluded there was a debate in China. Sanger writes, “American intelligence

agencies reported that there were three competing schools of thought developing in China. Two were the moderates, and the third school—largely in the military—argued that China should not be tethered to a set of Western-written rules meant to keep China down.”¹⁸ In the analysis of the U.S. intelligence community, the first and the second schools had won most of the fights, but the third school had all the energy. It was not hard to whip up nationalist sentiment, such as over perceived U.S. “bullying” of North Korea.

Thus, the March 2010 torpedoing of a South Korean ship by Pyongyang led to an ugly exchange between Obama and Hu Jintao when they next met at an economic summit. Obama charged that by ignoring the evidence, Hu was giving the North Koreans the chance to attack again with impunity. Sanger reports, “Hu responded that China was simply being evenhanded, siding with neither North nor South.”¹⁹ Obama was so annoyed that he publicly charged the Chinese with “willful blindness” at a press conference.

A new leaf?

The culmination of this widening distance was the so-called “pivot” unveiled publicly by the Obama administration in January 2012.²⁰ That policy, in formation today, reverses the ill-fated idea of “building trust” in favor of a more confrontational strategy toward China. And yet, significant dangers remain.

History has shown that “building trust” with China was not a wise or complete policy. But its allure is clear, and retains tremendous staying power. Over the past several decades, U.S. policy toward China has overwhelmingly been crafted by a small handful of China experts. Those China “hands,” in turn, have tended to be permanently obsessed with the quest for cooperation and trust with China, a nation

on its way this decade to surpassing our economy and one exhibiting an increasingly aggressive, militaristic international profile.

Unfortunately, future presidents will almost certainly want one of these China experts to craft his policy. The end result is that we may well see this movie again.



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OBAMA'S EUROPEAN FAILURE

Luke Coffey

Ever since President Obama announced his so-called “pivot” to Asia earlier this year, there has been extensive debate in European capitals on what this policy means, and if it really signifies the beginning of the end of serious U.S. engagement in Europe after more than 70 years.

For Barack Obama, a president always in campaign mode, Europe has often served as a useful backdrop. He used a trip to Europe as a key part of his 2008 election campaign. He ensured that his hometown of Chicago was selected for the 2012 NATO Summit—an unusual venue for the organization. British Prime Minister David Cameron was treated to a high-profile photo-op and a basketball game in the swing-state of Ohio, and then a State Dinner packed with dozens of top Democrat donors—all in a presidential election year, of course.

Sadly, beyond his incessant campaigning, President Obama has shown little interest in Europe, as compared to his predecessors.

Perception is everything

President Obama's stance on Europe and his “pivot” to Asia tend to be viewed differently depending on where one looks in Europe. Many in Western Europe, more focused on EU integration and dealing with the financial crisis than strengthening trans-Atlantic relations, have largely been ambivalent towards the U.S. administration's lack of European engagement. In fact, some in Western Europe have welcomed Obama's aloofness and feel more conformable with less American leadership in Europe.



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However, Eastern Europeans tend to take a different view. To many in the former Warsaw Pact, President Obama's level of interest in the region has been disappointing compared to his two predecessors.

Due to America's pivot to Asia, and the subsequent disengagement from Europe, many in Europe now believe that America can no longer be automatically counted on as a partner.

For example, the Clinton administration oversaw the addition of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary into NATO and sent thousands of American troops into harm's way to help pacify the Balkans. The Bush administration saw a further seven countries join NATO and paved the way with two more countries, Albania and Croatia, to join soon after his presidency.

Furthermore, George W. Bush ushered in the best U.S.-Eastern European relations in years and visited Eastern European countries seven times in his first term, compared to Obama's three. (Bush visited Eastern European countries a total of 21 times during his two terms). Consequently, many in Eastern Europe see a night-and-day difference between the levels of U.S. enthusiasm that existed for the region before and after President Obama entered office.

Due to America's pivot to Asia, and the subsequent disengagement from Europe, many in Europe now believe that America can no longer be automatically counted on as a partner. Most now believe that American and European interests, while still sharing some similarities, are increasingly diverging. This point of view has been a driver of policy in many European countries.

For example, the lack of U.S. engagement in Europe was one of the

unofficial assumptions used when the defense and security requirements were factored for the United Kingdom's 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. This view was reaffirmed by the crisis in Libya, and the lack of U.S. willingness to get involved there early on when the UK and France clearly made it a national priority.

The view that Europe's status has been downgraded under the current administration was further reinforced by the Pentagon's recent defense guidance. Issued in January 2012 and entitled "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," it contains barely a mention about Europe. In the whole 16-page document—one designed to give the U.S. Armed Forces and the civilians supporting them the Defense Secretary's broad vision and policy priorities—Europe and NATO receive only one short paragraph. And neither Europe nor NATO is mentioned in President Obama's foreword for the document.

A puzzling distance

The lack of emphasis now placed on Europe by the United States must confound many European partners, who have ranked as some of America's staunchest allies since 9/11. After devoting so much blood and treasure to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last decade, usually at great political cost at home, many wonder what it was all for.

At the end of the day, it is not just Europe that loses out from an aloof American European policy. There are many reasons why the United States needs to stay engaged with the Continent.

Through NATO, some of America's closest military partnerships have been tried and tested. When critics in France and Germany were complaining that the United States was "going it alone" in Iraq, 23 European countries, 17 of which were also members of NATO, sent troops to Iraq. The troop contribution to Iraq of

countries such as Poland, Italy and Georgia measured in the thousands. The UK contributed 46,000 troops for the initial part of the invasion. Many European countries deployed troops to Iraq at great political cost.

European troops have an even greater presence in Afghanistan. Of the 50 nations, besides the United States, that have contributed 45,000 forces to the International Security Assistance Force, approximately 80 percent of these troops (37 nations) are European. Together, these 37 nations have contributed nearly a third of the military personnel serving in Afghanistan.

It is true that there have been some shortcomings, such as major European powers not doing all they can in Afghanistan or disagreeing outright with the United States over Iraq in 2003. But on the whole, no other region of the world has been willing to back U.S. foreign policy objectives in the same way as Europe.

Europe is also important to the United States for economic reasons. A stable, secure, and economically viable Europe is in America's financial interest. Quite simply, it's too important to neglect. Regional security means economic viability and prosperity. For more than 60 years, U.S. engagement in Europe has greatly contributed to European stability, which has economically benefited both Europeans and Americans. The economies of the 27 member states of the European Union, along with the United States, account for approximately half of the global economy. However important the economies of East Asia are, and they are very important, the U.S.-European economic ties and relationships cannot be discounted.

A shrinking U.S. military footprint

Trans-Atlantic security has been the most visible victim of President

Obama's European lack of interest. This is especially true when placed into the context of the administration's "pivot" to Asia, since the "pivot" is normally defined in terms of refocusing military and defense capabilities to Asia, often at the expense of other regions.

Trans-Atlantic security has been the most visible victim of President Obama's European lack of interest. This is especially true when placed into the context of the administration's "pivot" to Asia.

Even with its many institutional shortcomings, NATO has remained the bedrock of trans-Atlantic security cooperation since its creation in 1949. It is the organization that anchors the U.S. firmly into Europe, solidified Western resolve during the Cold War and rallied European support following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. There is no stronger signal of American support for NATO than the U.S. troop presence in Europe.

Today, the United States has approximately 80,000 military personnel in 28 main operating bases in Europe, primarily in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Spain. These forces include four Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), which form the backbone of U.S. ground capability in Europe. As part of a cost-cutting exercise, this capability is being drastically reduced by the Obama administration.

In January 2012, the administration announced plans to withdraw at least two BCTs, totaling approximately 8,000 soldiers. This is on top of removing 2,200 combat service and support soldiers from Europe by 2014. In addition, the administration announced that key aviation assets, including an A-10 Squadron, would be removed from their permanent bases in Europe. Unsurprisingly

this move has left many American allies, especially in Eastern Europe, nervous.

Many in the administration believe that basing U.S. troops in Europe is a Cold War anachronism. In fact, forward-basing U.S. troops in Europe is just as important today as it was during the Cold War, albeit for different reasons. U.S. forces play a major role in the capacity building of key European allies which can, in return, fight alongside the United States in Afghanistan, for example. This has huge benefits for the United States. In 2010, the United States carried out 33 major multinational training exercises involving 50,000 troops from 40 countries in Europe.

Considering that the administration's policy on, and justification for, decreasing U.S. troop numbers in Europe keeps changing, it is likely that there was little or no consultation with European allies about the announced reductions in U.S. force levels in Europe.

For example, on April 8, 2011, the Obama administration initially announced that it was reversing the 2004 decision to remove two of the four BCTs from Europe and would instead only bring one BCT back to the United States. The Department of Defense provided the following justification for the move:

Based on the administration's review, consultations with allies and the findings of NATO's new Strategic Concept, the department will retain three Brigade Combat Teams in Europe to maintain a flexible and rapidly deployable ground force to fulfill the United States' commitments to NATO, to engage effectively with allies and partners, and to meet the broad range of 21st century challenges.¹

In fact, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that no U.S. troops would be brought back from Europe until after 2015, when NATO leaders had

agreed to complete the handover of security responsibilities to the Afghans and end combat operations.

Yet, a mere nine months later, on January 25, 2012, the Obama administration changed the policy again, announcing that two BCTs will return back to the U.S. from Europe no later than 2014. The administration has not explained what changed in the geostrategic picture of Europe since April 2011, so it can only be assumed that perceived cost savings, not strategic rationale, drove this decision.

The huge garrisons of American service personnel in Europe are no longer the fortresses of the Cold War, but are now the forward-operating bases of the 21st century. From the Arctic to the Levant, from the Maghreb to the Caucasus, Europe is at one of the most important crossroads of the world. U.S. military bases in Europe provide American leaders with increased flexibility, resilience, and options in a dangerous world. They also visibly demonstrate that the United States is committed to NATO in the 21st century.

NATO and ballistic missile defense

NATO has been the premier security alliance for the United States since the beginning of the Cold War. NATO has done more to promote democracy, peace and security in Europe than any other multilateral organization, including the European Union. Continued active U.S. participation is essential to the Alliance's future prosperity.

U.S. engagement in NATO is not a one-way street, however. Although many Europeans greatly benefit from America's involvement in European security affairs, America itself benefits from NATO. This was most visibly demonstrated after the attacks of 9/11, when NATO's Article V, stating that an attack on one is an attack on all, was invoked for the first time in the Alliance's history.

Additionally, NATO's "open door policy" is critical to mobilizing Europe and its allies around a collective trans-Atlantic defense. Yet since taking office, President Barack Obama has done little to support the NATO membership of qualified candidate countries. Obama is on track for being the first U.S. president since the end of the Cold War not to oversee NATO enlargement on his watch.

This blatant lack of U.S. leadership was the biggest shortcoming of the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago. Not only was NATO enlargement off the agenda at that time, but the meeting between NATO and the four aspirant countries seeking to join the Alliance (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia, and Montenegro) was held at the foreign ministerial level when it should have been held at the heads of government level. Contrast this to the tenure of George W. Bush, who made NATO enlargement one of the cornerstones of his European policy and who even went out of his way to rally European support for Georgia's eventual membership in the Alliance.

Missile defense is another area where the U.S. has been inconsistent and weak in terms of European policy under Obama. The Administration has not only slowed down the implementation of missile defense in Europe, it has also reduced investment for it.

When it abruptly cancelled the emplacement of missile-defense components in the Czech Republic and Poland, commonly referred to as the "Third Site," back in 2009, those two countries felt as if the rug had been pulled out from underneath them. This was especially the case after both had offered unwavering support for missile defense in spite of staunch Russian opposition, and had strongly supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq when it was fashionable in Europe to disagree with the war.

To make matters worse, it was reported that the Administration

announcement cancelling the Third Site was done without first informing the leaders of the Czech Republic and Poland in a timely manner. To add insult to injury, in the case of Poland, this announcement was made on September 17, 2009, the 70th anniversary of the 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland.

The more the U.S. stays disengaged from Europe, the more EU integrationists will slowly try to replace NATO with an EU alternative. This is not in the interests of the U.S. or many of its European allies.

The treatment of Poland and the Czech Republic has tarnished America's reputation outside the Euro-Atlantic area. There are many partners in the Middle East, especially the Gulf, who are wondering if they would be discarded in the same way as Poland and the Czech Republic if the Administration seeks an accommodation with Iran over its nuclear program.

Due to the Administration's apparent lack of interest in the security of Europe, there has been a new push for deeper EU defense integration. As part of the agenda of the Polish presidency of the European Council, during the second half of 2011, Polish leaders enthusiastically argued for the creation of a stronger defense role for the European Union. The Poles have pushed for the creation of a permanent EU military headquarters and the implantation of Permanent Structured Cooperation as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty—both of which would undermine NATO and, therefore, U.S. influence in Europe.

This sort of thinking is supported by countries such as France. The new French President, François Hollande, said that he would review his country's

relationship with NATO before deciding how France will continue to play a role in the Alliance. His new Defence Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, while speaking recently in Warsaw alongside his Polish counterpart, pointed out that "America's strategy is turning more and more towards the Asia-Pacific region, but the threats still exist."² Therefore, his argument goes, the EU must do more.

The more the United States stays disengaged from Europe, the more EU integrationists will slowly try to replace NATO with an EU alternative. This, however, is not in the interests of the U.S. or many of its European allies.

A special relationship weakened

A good measure of the effectiveness of U.S. engagement in Europe can be made by assessing the strength of the U.S.-UK "special relationship." Here also, the Obama administration has been disappointing.

The United States is never more influential in European affairs than when its relationship with the UK is strong. For example, during the late 1970s and in the 1980s, the United States responded to the Soviet deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Eastern Europe by deploying similar Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Western Europe. This was only made possible by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's support of the proposal. The same could be said for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The fact that the UK was deeply committed to the campaign encouraged other European countries to follow suit at a time when there was stiff opposition from Germany, France and the European Union.

Today, there has been a cultural shift in the U.S. government's attitude towards the UK, thanks to the Obama administration. In 2009, an unnamed

senior State Department official told the *Sunday Telegraph*: "There's nothing special about Britain. You're just the same as the other 190 countries in the world. You shouldn't expect special treatment."³ Sadly, this is a pretty accurate description of how the Obama administration has treated the UK.

The White House has brushed aside some of the most important foreign and defense policy issues facing the UK. For example, the Obama administration has repeatedly sided with Argentina over the status of the Falkland Islands by taking the Argentine position of UN mediation. In fact, the State Department recently reiterated this policy by acknowledging that it will not recognize the outcome of a referendum being held early next year by the Falkland Islanders on whether they want to remain a British Overseas Territory.

But the Falklands issue is only one example. Washington has pulled the rug out from under London in other ways as well. During the UK's 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, the U.S. requested that the UK maintain its commitment to the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program. In fact, the future of the Royal Navy's aircraft carrier program depends on the Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant of the JSF. Now, the STOVL variant of the JSF is at risk due to mandatory defense cuts expected to kick in on January 3, 2013 as part of sequestration.

However, it is not only issues such as the Falklands or the JSF that matter. Symbolism does as well. One of the first acts of the Obama administration was to remove the bust of Winston Churchill from the Oval Office—a bust uniquely on loan to the U.S. from the British Government's Art Collection.

Soon after, during President Obama's first visit with then Prime Minister Gordon Brown in 2009, he gave the Prime Minister a collection of Hollywood

film DVDs as a gift. In return, the Prime Minister gave the President a considerably more substantial gift: a pen holder made from the wood of the *HMS Gannet*, a Royal Navy warship that helped defeat the slave trade. Needless to say, there was a bit of head scratching in Downing Street over this incident. These missteps may seem small, but the symbolism is huge.

The reset failure with Russia

Underpinning the concerns many Eastern European allies have regarding the reduction of U.S. troop numbers in Europe, the abandonment of the Third Site and the lack of U.S. support for NATO enlargement is the administration's so-called "reset" policy with Russia. It is hard to see how the United States has received any strategic benefit from its "reset."

Since the announcement of the "reset" in 2009, Russia has recognized the independence of the two Georgian territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and continues to occupy 20 percent of Georgia's internationally recognized territory. Russia forced the administration to change its missile defense plans to no longer involve Poland and the Czech Republic. Russia made it extremely difficult to pass a UN Security Council Resolution on Libya in 2011 and continues to block all international efforts to stop the bloodshed in Syria, while supplying the Assad regime with weaponry.

The administration points to increased Russian cooperation over NATO supply routes to Afghanistan and Russia's limited training of Afghan Security Forces as signs of "reset" successes. However welcome Russia's cooperation over Afghanistan may be, this cooperation more likely reflects Russia's pragmatic desire to have a secure and stable Afghanistan in its southern neighborhood than any desire to improve U.S.-Russian relations.

The costs, meanwhile, have been high. Obama's "reset" policy with Russia has led many allies in Eastern Europe to question America's commitment to European security. Frankly, many leaders and decision-makers in Europe do not know what to believe. This view was accentuated during the infamous Obama-Medvedev open-mic incident at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korea, when Obama whispered to President Medvedev: "On all these issues, but particularly missile defense, this, this can be solved but it's important for him [Vladimir Putin] to give me space." Medvedev responded by saying he understood and Obama concluded by pointing out: "This is my last election. After my election, I have more flexibility."⁴

With the Cold War over, it is true that Russia no longer poses a direct military threat to Western Europe, but Russia's future is uncertain. For some NATO members, Russia is still a force driver in military planning. For other U.S. allies, such as Georgia, Russia continues to be an aggressor.

What has Russia done to deserve this reset with the United States? Nothing indicates that it is on a path to reform. Its economy is in tatters, its demographics and aging population are putting pressures on the state, and its government is best described as a thugocracy. The same failings of the Soviet Union a quarter of a century ago are starting to reappear in Putin's Russia.

As the United States disengages from Europe, Russia is investing heavily in defense. It was recently announced that the Russian defense budget will increase by 25 percent for 2013. This was a key campaign pledge by Vladimir Putin during the recent Russian presidential elections. Putin is a politician who lives up to his campaign promises, and this increase in defense spending will come at the expense of Russia's education and health budgets, which will both see a sharp decrease in expenditure.

Although Russia by itself should not drive the U.S. military presence in Europe, the second-order effects of Russian-induced instability in the region are an ongoing NATO concern and consequently should be a concern for the U.S. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall caught many by surprise. The U.S. should not allow a resurgent Russia to catch them by surprise too.

Malignant neglect

Clearly, there are many inside the White House, the Pentagon and Foggy Bottom who believe that the European region is yesterday's news and that the United States should focus on defense and security issues in Asia.

With an increasingly bellicose North Korea, and an uncertain and growing China, there are many good reasons to provide more American defense resources and attention to Asia. But this should not come at the expense of U.S. engagement in Europe. In the eyes of many Europeans, the administration has made its pivot to Asia a zero-sum game with Europe.

Americans and Europeans share many of the same values and ideas about the world in a way that is not seen between America and many Asian countries. It is these shared values that have been the foundation of alliances such as NATO, which has served as the cornerstone of trans-Atlantic security for more than six decades.

Because of certain policies, such as the reduction of U.S. troop numbers in Europe, many EU integrationists are calling for even deeper defense integration. Many Eastern European allies in NATO are questioning U.S. commitment to the security of their continent. And many aspirant NATO countries on the periphery of Europe are wondering if the United States is a serious player at all.

Alliances and partnerships, like all other relationships, take hard work and require attention from all parties involved. In many ways, the Obama administration has taken America's relations with Europe for granted, with detrimental effects on trans-Atlantic relations.

In the past 90 years, the United States has disengaged from Europe on two occasions: during the early 1920s when the U.S. occupation force left the Rhineland, and during the huge troop drawdown in the early 1990s. Both cases helped to usher in new eras of instability and warfare on the continent.

The historical track record is abundantly clear. America's economic and security interests require a stable Europe. U.S. engagement in Europe helps make this possible. The Obama administration would do well to learn this lesson.



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THE COST OF MISUNDERSTANDING IRAN

Ilan Berman

Today, the United States confronts no shortage of strategic challenges in the Middle East. Initial optimism about democratic change among the countries of the “Arab Spring” has given way to deep apprehension over the ascendance of Islamist forces in places like Egypt and Libya. The post-Saddam government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki remains fragile and unstable, riven by sectarian divisions and propelled by divisive power politics. And al-Qaeda, although down in the wake of the May 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden, is decidedly not out, as frequent bombings in Iraq and mounting unrest in Yemen underscore.

But no foreign policy dilemma is as vexing, or as potentially significant for both American interests and the security of its regional allies, as the one posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and its nuclear ambitions. Yet so far, it would be fair to say that serious American strategy toward Iran has been in short supply.

The blame is hardly President Obama’s alone. For nearly two decades, successive administrations have struggled in vain to contain and alter Iran’s rogue behavior. Since 2003, these efforts have focused overwhelmingly on derailing Tehran’s burgeoning nuclear program, with little success. But the Obama administration has certainly not helped matters. Its stubborn fixation on diplomatic “engagement” and systematic neglect of pro-democracy forces has provided the Iranian regime with valuable strategic and ideological breathing room, while its schizophrenic approach to economic warfare has fallen short of altering Iran’s perceptions about the benefits of going nuclear. And because it has not, the Islamic Republic now stands on the precipice of nuclear capability—and the Middle East on the brink of a new and potentially devastating conflict.



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A dangerous diplomatic dalliance

The Obama administration took office in 2009 promising a more constructive, multilateral approach to Iran than that of its predecessor. During its tenure (and particularly in its second term), the George W. Bush White House had focused overwhelmingly on applying economic pressure to the Iranian regime in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to alter its strategic trajectory. By contrast, Obama believed that deeper and more meaningful diplomatic “engagement” could succeed where sanctions had not, and bring Iran’s nuclear program to heel.

This idea, it should be noted, was not new. Diplomacy with Iran had been tried multiple times by the United States and Europe since Iran’s nuclear program broke into the open in the fall of 2003. The first such effort, spearheaded by the “EU-3” countries (Germany, France and Great Britain), had stretched from 2003 to 2005. The second took place in June 2008 via consultations with Iran by the P5+1 countries (the U.S., Russia, China, Germany, France and Great Britain). Nearly a dozen proposals and compromises were alternately floated by Iran and the West in between.¹ All failed to reach a substantive breakthrough with Iran over its nuclear endeavor.

The Obama White House, however, was undaunted. President Obama used his March 2009 Nowruz message to Iran to tell Iran’s leaders that his administration was “committed to diplomacy that addresses the full range of issues before us, and to pursuing constructive ties among the United States, Iran and the international community.”² In the months that followed, the Administration doggedly pursued this diplomatic track—repeatedly forgoing opportunities to apply strategic pressure to the Iranian regime in hopes that its goodwill would

be reciprocated. Or, to use the parlance of the Administration itself, that Iran’s ayatollahs would at long last grasp the “outstretched hand” being proffered by the President.

But they didn’t. Iran’s leaders time and again publicly rejected American overtures, terming them to be insincere and a ploy. It was not until the Fall of 2009, following months of obfuscation and delay, that the Iranian government grudgingly agreed to negotiate with the United States, proffering a series of “proposals” ostensibly aimed at bridging the impasse over its nuclear program. Predictably, none of these offers panned out. They did, however, have the effect desired by Tehran, of keeping Washington diplomatically engaged and delaying its turn to sterner measures. All told, some fourteen months passed between President Obama’s March 2009 overture and the passage of serious new sanctions against Iran in the summer of 2010.

Yet hope for some sort of “grand bargain” still springs eternal. Thus, in the spring of 2012, the Obama administration and its fellow members of the P5+1 sat down with Iran once again for negotiations over its nuclear program. That dialogue, held in Istanbul, Turkey, was billed as the “last chance” for Iran to compromise over its nuclear program. But it proved to be the start of a new and protracted diplomatic process. Another round followed in Baghdad, Iraq, in May 2012, and then another in Moscow, Russia, the following month—all with little tangible progress for the West.

The same cannot be said for Iran. As seen from Tehran, the Obama administration’s diplomatic outreach has been wildly successful. By deftly playing on Washington’s desires to avoid confrontation, the Islamic Republic has gained valuable time to add permanence to its nuclear endeavor, and to adapt its economy to better weather international sanctions.

Stronger sanctions... but to what end?

The United States has attempted to seriously leverage economic pressure against the Iranian regime for more than a decade-and-a-half, ever since the Clinton administration signed the *Iran-Libya Sanctions Act* into law back in 1996. Throughout that time, the goal of U.S. sanctions has been consistent: to ratchet up the cost of Iran's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction to the point that Tehran's enthusiasm is chilled.

Today, economic pressure against Iran has entered a qualitatively new stage. Since mid-2010, on the heels of its failed attempts at "engagement" with Iran's ayatollahs, the Obama administration increasingly has made economic sanctions the centerpiece of its approach to Iran. The opening salvo was the passage, in July 2010, of the *Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act* (CISADA)—an omnibus bill that focused on Iran's economic Achilles' heel: its need to import refined petroleum from foreign sources.³ This was followed by a series of other Executive Branch efforts, including: an April 2011 Executive Order targeting Iran's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) for providing support to the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria,⁴ an October 2011 designation by the Treasury Department of IRGC members implicated in the attempted assassination of Saudi envoy Adel al-Jubeir,⁵ and a November 2011 Executive Order proscribing international financial institutions from conducting transactions with Iran's Central Bank.⁶ Most recently, in July 2012, the White House and Treasury Department both announced new measures taking aim, respectively, at Iran's petrochemical sector and international financial institutions implicated in trading with Iran.⁷

Congress, meanwhile, has been busy crafting new pressure of its own. Having originally formulated CISADA

to target Iran's energy sector and gasoline dependence, it has more recently proposed broader legislation to both expand pressure on Iran's energy economy and to penalize it for its human rights violations.⁸

These unilateral efforts have been buttressed by international ones. Thus pressure from the United States and European nations led the Society of Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, or SWIFT, to blacklist dozens of Iranian banks in March 2012—thereby effectively cutting Iran off from most international commerce.⁹ Equally significant was the European Union's imposition in mid-2012 of a ban on the importation of Iranian oil by member states, which until then had accounted for nearly a fifth of Iran's crude exports.¹⁰

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Cumulatively, these measures have had a real and tangible effect on Iran's economic fortunes. The Islamic Republic is now losing an estimated \$133 million daily in revenue.¹¹ Inflation in Iran is soaring (estimated as of this writing at upwards of 30 percent and rising¹²), and the cost of food staples such as bread and meat has risen dramatically in recent months, progressively outpacing the ability of ordinary Iranians to pay for them.¹³ Iran's economic horizons, too, have constricted considerably. In large part as a result of the European Union's July 2012 oil ban and the attendant difficulties of obtaining insurance for oil shipments from the Islamic Republic, a number of major Iranian crude consumers have

drawn down their purchases significantly. As a result, Iran's oil exports are now estimated at one million barrels per day—the lowest figure in years, and just a fraction of the 2.5 million barrels the Islamic Republic was exporting daily just a few years ago.¹⁴

Although President Obama can be credited for passing the most sweeping sanctions ever levied against the Islamic Republic, the reality is that most of that pressure remains unused.

Yet it is equally clear that Western pressure has fallen short of dissuading Iran's leaders from their pursuit of the "bomb." Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said as much in April 2012 when he blustered that Iran can withstand an oil blockade of the type envisioned by Europe for "2-3 years"—by which time his country ostensibly already will have crossed the nuclear Rubicon, and sanctions would be obsolete.¹⁵ Iran's Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, confirmed this outlook, recently calling for a "resistance economy" that would allow the Iranian regime to remain afloat—and on its current nuclear course—despite Western pressure.¹⁶

Iran's determination has a great deal to do with political will on the part of the United States. Although President Obama can be credited for passing the most sweeping sanctions ever levied against the Islamic Republic, the reality is that most of that pressure remains unused. Leery of roiling relations with vital international trade partners and worried about imperiling America's fragile economic recovery, the Obama administration has shied away from seriously harnessing the economic tools at its disposal. (An important secondary factor has been the realization that

real, crippling sanctions could further destabilize the Iranian regime, making it more difficult for Washington to reach the negotiated settlement with Tehran that it desires.)

Thus, to date, the Obama administration's flagship sanctions effort, CISADA, has been applied in just a handful of cases, and against only marginal economic players (the most prominent among them Venezuela's state oil company, PDVSA). The end result has been a U.S. sanctions regime that, while robust on paper, is flimsy in practice—systematically underutilized by an Executive skittish over its potential adverse consequences.

Of course, it is far from clear that sanctions can in fact derail Iran's drive toward nuclear status. Iran's leadership may simply be too determined to cross the nuclear threshold to be stopped by anything short of force. What is exceedingly apparent, however, is that the economic pressure levied by the Obama administration so far has not had anything resembling the breadth and diligence needed to make sanctions matter to Iran's ayatollahs.

Abandoning Iran's democrats

In the summer of 2009, the fraudulent reelection of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the Iranian presidency catalyzed a groundswell of protest against the regime in Tehran. That uprising, collectively known as the "Green Movement," showed tremendous initial promise, with hundreds of thousands of Iranians taking to the streets to rally against regime rule and demand profound political change.

But, in the months that followed the movement's emergence, this initial momentum slowed and the political tide turned. This reversal was due, in significant part, to an apparent lack of interest on the part of the international commu-

nity—most vitally, the United States itself. The Obama administration, then working diligently to engage the Iranian regime, made clear that it saw the unrest as strictly an internal matter.¹⁷ Only belatedly, following the brutal suppression of protests by regime security forces, did the White House take a sterner stand. The West's lack of interest was instructive, indicating to Iran that it could respond to the uprising as it saw fit, without fearing censure from the international community. The results were dramatic; in the months that followed, the "Green Movement" was effectively dismembered, its leaders jailed or marginalized, and its supporters bloodied and cowed into silence.

So the situation remains today. At present, the Green Movement can be said to be more virtual than actual, existing online (in Facebook groups and Internet chat rooms) but with little tangible manifestation in the real world. A good indicator of this reality is the fact that the power struggle within Iran over the past two years hasn't been between liberals and conservatives, but among regime conservatives themselves, with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his followers (pejoratively labeled the "deviant current") on one side and Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the country's traditional clerical elite on the other.¹⁸

The ferocity of the Iranian regime's campaign against the "Green Movement" reflects a fundamental reality: the state of freedom within Iran is inversely proportional to the stability of Iran's theocracy. To the extent that the democratic aspirations of ordinary Iranians are met, the clerical regime in Tehran will find itself weakened—perhaps fatally so. Iran's leaders understand this very well, and have devoted tremendous time and effort to quelling protests and squelching internal dissent.

They have done so largely unhindered. Over the past two decades, successive administrations have devoted

precious little time—and even less financial resources—to empowering Iran's "human terrain."

The numbers tell the story. In its second term, the Bush administration authorized a total of \$215 million in funding for all diplomatic programs dealing with Iran. But only a small fraction of that sum—some \$38.6 million—was dedicated specifically to democracy promotion,¹⁹ and even those paltry funds ultimately were diluted by bureaucratic infighting. The Obama administration has done even less; in its first year, it allocated some \$40 million for the unfortunately named Near East Regional Democracy fund (which encompasses Iran). But, due to the White House's persistent efforts to engage the Iranian regime, these funds have remained largely unused—lest U.S. support for pro-democracy forces within the Islamic Republic undermine prospects for an elusive "grand bargain" with its leadership. As a result, the White House has contented itself with mouthing empty words of support for Iran's urge for democracy—when, that is, it has paid attention to it at all.

It's the regime, stupid

Undergirding the Obama administration's missteps has been a fundamental misreading of the nature of the regime in Tehran. Contrary to what Administration experts—and their coterie of advisors in the Beltway think tank community—seem to believe, Iran is not an ordinary country in the vein of the plodding *ancien régimes* of Europe. It isn't even an ambitious Middle Eastern variant of Asia's nationalistic and economically dynamic "tigers."

It is, rather, a revisionist revolutionary state with a distinct manifest destiny. Iranian leaders have long seen their country as the *markaz-e zamin*: the Middle East's geopolitical "center of the universe" around which regional poli-

tics must by rights revolve.²⁰ And today, for all the difficulties it is experiencing at home, the Iranian leadership clearly thinks that time is on its side.

It has good reason to do so. America's withdrawal from Iraq at the end of 2012 left Iran's western neighbor a fragile emerging democracy prone to both corruption and ideological subversion. The Coalition's impending retraction from Afghanistan (to be completed by the end of 2014, if not sooner) promises much of the same, since the government of President Hamid Karzai in Kabul remains both dysfunctional and malleable. The "Arab Spring," meanwhile, has held out the promise of a dramatically reconfigured balance of power in the Greater Middle East—one that is potentially considerably more favorable to Iranian ideas and influence than was the previous status quo.

In this context, Iran's nuclear program represents a critical insurance policy—one that will guarantee regime longevity and forestall foreign nations (like the United States) from acting to prevent its regional rise. All of this goes a long way toward explaining why the Iranian regime shows no intention of giving up on its nuclear will to power, in spite of mounting Western pressure. It follows, then, that changing this calculus should lie at the heart of any serious American strategy toward Iran.

Steps toward a new approach

Such a reboot starts with sanctions. The Executive Branch already has sweeping authorities to target Iran's economy on everything from financial transactions to oil exports. These powers can be broadened still further: for example, to constrict Iran's natural gas trade, or to expand the reputational risk for companies involved in sanctionable activities in Iran. But neither existing sanctions nor

new ones will make a difference absent real political will on the part of the President. Simply put, the White House must be willing to tighten the economic noose to the point that the Iranian regime realizes its progress toward the bomb is inversely proportional to its ability to stay in power. It must also be willing to enforce a simple choice on countries (like Russia and China) that have long pursued a "business as usual" approach to Iran: you can either trade with the Iranian regime or with the United States, but not with both.

Sanctions, however, cannot be a panacea for our nagging Iran problem. As Mark Dubowitz of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies has put it, sanctions are only "silver shrapnel" that can wound the Iranian regime—not a "silver bullet" that is guaranteed to kill it.²¹ In order for sanctions to be effective, in other words, they must be married with other tactics—military, ideological and informational—as part of a larger, comprehensive national strategy.

That brings us to the military dimension. Over the past three years, as the international stand-off with Iran has deepened, Administration officials have taken pains to stress that "all options remain on the table" for the United States in dealing with Iran's nuclear program.²² Yet U.S. conduct has sent a very different message. Washington has failed to respond decisively to Iranian troublemaking in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, or take the regime to task over its sponsorship of an array of regional radicals (from Lebanon's Hezbollah to Palestinian rejectionist groups to Shi'a militias in Iraq).

The results have been devastating. Despite the Administration's insistence that the military option against Iran remains viable, no one currently believes that to be true—least of all the Iranians themselves. And because they do not, the Iranian regime remains undeterred from

its current, destructive strategic course. Reversing this trend requires that the United States reconstitute a credible military option against Iran—and link it, clearly and unequivocally, to Iranian behavior. Additional U.S. force deployments in the region, the pre-positioning of military assets in the Persian Gulf, and stepped-up cooperation with key regional allies on issues such as missile defense and counterproliferation can all communicate, far more robustly than can words out of Washington, that conflict is distinctly possible if Iran does not alter its behavior.

So can a stronger U.S. policy toward Israel. Currently, policymakers in Jerusalem are waging an acrimonious internal debate over the necessity, and the prudence, of a military strike on Iran—and doing so despite the significant economic and security costs that such a course of action would likely entail.²³ Should it choose to move against Iran, as now seems likely, the Jewish state will need both American strategic support and political backing.

The latter, at least, has been largely absent of late. While technical aspects of the Reagan-era “special relationship” between Israel and the United States—such as missile defense cooperation and coordination on counterterrorism issues—have continued, and even intensified, during Obama’s tenure, the larger bilateral political relationship has been severely strained over a myriad of issues, and none more so than Iran. Indeed, the Obama administration has been accused of leaking sensitive information in an effort to complicate Israeli decision-making vis-à-vis Iran and forestall an Israeli strike.²⁴ Such steps, in turn, have created a significant trust deficit between Washington and Jerusalem—and made unilateral Israeli action all the more likely.

A more constructive American approach would be predicated on support, rather than subversion. After all,

Iranian leaders themselves have made clear that the United States will be dragged into the middle of an Israel-Iran war, whether Washington backs an Israeli strike or not.²⁵ As such, there is great merit to a proactive U.S. policy of support that clearly communicates a unity of effort between Israel and the United States, and thereby helps to deter Iranian retaliation and suppress an escalation of hostilities in the region. Indeed, as Amos Yadlin, Israel’s former chief of military intelligence, has outlined, Israeli action might be forestalled outright through “an ironclad American assurance that if Israel refrains from acting in its own window of opportunity—and all other options have failed to halt Tehran’s nuclear quest—Washington will act to prevent a nuclear Iran while it is still within its power to do so.”²⁶ But if Washington cannot or will not give such a guarantee, Israel likely will decide to eliminate the threat itself. If it does, the United States should unequivocally support its strategic choice, knowing that the end result—the neutering of Iran’s nuclear menace—is far more in the interest of the United States than is a Middle East dominated by an atomic Iran.

A transformation of Iran toward pluralism and away from its current radical theocracy would be a boon to American interests, regional stability and most of all to the Iranians themselves.

Finally, America needs to make long-overdue investments in Iran’s future. It has long been clear that in the case of Iran, a country nearly two-and-a-half times the size of Texas, fundamental change cannot realistically be imposed from the outside, the way it was in Iraq. Rather, it will need to percolate from within. This is not a novel idea; succes-

sive American administrations have said as much publicly. What they have not done, however, is empower the idea of Iranian freedom in a tangible way.

That represents a fatal error. Iran's 78-million-person population is overwhelmingly young (two-thirds are under the age of 35), educated and Western-oriented. Iran's ruling ayatollahs, by contrast, are aging, infirm and out of touch with the aspirations of their people. It is this disparity that represents the fundamental fault line within the Islamic Republic today, and the one which to a large extent will dictate the country's future course. A transformation of Iran toward pluralism and away from its current radical theocracy would be a boon to American interests, regional stability and most of all to the Iranians themselves.

For this to have a chance of happening, though, the United States will need to pay serious, sustained attention to issues such as human rights abuses, corruption and inequality within the Islamic Republic. It also will need to use its political and economic influence to weaken the Iranian regime's ability to persecute its captive population, and help to empower the Iranian pro-democracy activists that will ultimately bring change to the Islamic Republic.

Here, at least a glimmer of hope exists. Although Western sanctions so far have fallen short of sparking a fundamental strategic rethink on the part of the Iranian regime, they do appear to be having a catalytic effect on Iran's beleaguered opposition. There are some hopeful early signs that the economic turbulence now visible within Iran—including soaring inflation, rising commodity prices, and shortfalls in the federal budget—may reinvigorate the domestic resistance to Iran's ayatollahs, and breathe new life into Iran's pro-democracy forces.²⁷

Seeing Iran straight, at last

Most of all, the key to getting American policy right lies in realizing that the threat Iran poses to American interests and the security of our allies is a function of the radical, ideological regime now in power in Tehran. Worries over the Iranian regime's nuclear development, and how Iran's ayatollahs might behave once they cross the nuclear Rubicon, are but a symptom of that phenomenon.

For the United States, the stakes could not be any higher. A bellicose, nuclear-armed Iran would profoundly reshape the geopolitical currents of the Middle East, to the great detriment of America, its allies and its regional interests. That Iran is within striking distance of doing so is a testament to the profound misunderstanding of the nature of the Iranian regime that has characterized our approach so far.



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PERSPECTIVE

America's Shifting Defense Priorities An Interview with Dr. William Schneider, Jr.

Dr. William Schneider, Jr. is one of America's foremost defense and national security analysts. He served as Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs at the Office of Management and Budget from 1981 to 1982, and subsequently as Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security from 1982 to 1986. More recently, from 2001-2009 Dr. Schneider chaired the Pentagon's Defense Science Board, of which he remains a Senior Fellow. He currently heads International Planning Service, a consulting firm which provides advice on strategic issues worldwide.

In August 2012, he spoke with *Journal* editor Ilan Berman regarding America's new tilt toward Asia, U.S. military capabilities in an age of austerity, and our policy toward rogue states like Iran and North Korea.

Since last fall, the Obama administration has executed a very public foreign policy "pivot" toward Asia. What was the impetus behind this shift? What has it entailed? What is its objective?

The "Asian pivot" reflects the Administration's effort to tailor its defense strategy to the resources it is prepared to make available for national defense. The policy builds on earlier statements by senior Administration officials (e.g., former Secretary of Defense Gates' remark that the United States would be "crazy" if it embarked on another land war in the Middle East) that the Administration intends to diminish the scope of its national security interests.

The severe distress in U.S. public finance offers an understandable driver for the Administration's policy and resource choices. The East Asian region, faced with the collision of its own security interests with the dynamism of China's reassertion of its regional sovereignty claims, is seeking support from the United States. The Chinese assertion of

its claims in the South China Sea and Northeast Asia—involving territory that is within the scope of U.S. Mutual Defense Treaties with both Japan and the Philippines—has made a clear and prompt American response necessary.

The military dimension of the “pivot”—the AirSea Battle concept—seeks to improve the effectiveness of U.S. military operations, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, through the integration of a full range of U.S. air, sea, and space assets. This is seen as essential in an environment where the number of deployed naval combatants will be less than half the number that were deployed at the end of the Cold War. The United States seeks to maintain the status quo in East Asia by dissuading China from using its growing military and economic power to enforce its regional claims. Japan and Australia will become the key sub-regional allies (in Northeast and Southeast Asia, respectively) to enhance the U.S. forward presence.

The U.S. military now faces a bleak fiscal future. The defense budget has already been cut by half-a-billion dollars, and if “sequestration” takes place in early 2013 it could constrict by as much as half-a-billion more. What will be the likely effects on U.S. capabilities?

The defense program has been encumbered by a number of policy and resource decisions that have constrained current capabilities and will limit future ones unless there is a policy change. Sequestration, if it occurs, will add to the cost of the later crisis-induced recovery of military capabilities as threats become unavoidable. Some of the perverse aspects of the sequestration process make it highly asymmetric across Department of Defense activities—and magnify the negative consequences of the process. Moreover, the asymmetric manner in which the sequestration process will be implemented—more than half the budget (military personnel, the national intelligence program and special operations forces) has been exempted from sequestration—makes the impact of the possible reductions far more serious than the top-line reduction (~ 8%) suggests. The statute directs that cuts be evenly distributed over Program Elements (PE), making a policy-driven set of reductions infeasible.

Furthermore, the President’s decision to exempt major components and programs within the defense budget from sequestration will cause the burden of reductions to fall heavily on the operations and maintenance (O&M) and investment accounts. The practical impact of these “policy-free” cuts will be to severely reduce force readiness and modernization.

There is another cost as well. Our national experience since World War II suggests that potential adversaries will find a visible decline in the readiness and sustainability of U.S. forces, or their capacity to deal with advanced threats, to be provocative. We can expect more frequent and dangerous challenges to our interests in the region.

President Obama has made no secret of his desire for a nuclear-free world, and since taking office has actively promoted the idea of “global zero” through a number of initiatives—from new arms control talks with Russia to significant drawdowns of the U.S. strategic arsenal. How realistic is this goal, in your opinion? What are the effects of these changes likely to be on U.S. capabilities and America’s global standing?

The pursuit of the utopian ideals of “Global Zero” in practice has created a high-velocity tailwind for WMD proliferation and undermined one of its own key aspirations, reducing the importance of nuclear weapons in international security affairs. While the aspiration for “Global Zero” is global, its practice is unilateral.

First, the provisions of the New START Treaty are bilateral (Russian-American), but the Treaty’s implementation produces a result that requires Russia to continue to add to its nuclear forces to build up to the New START ceiling—both delivery systems and nuclear warheads—while the United States is obliged to reduce. Meanwhile, the most dynamic part of the Russian nuclear weapons inventory—theater weapons—remains unaffected.

Second, the U.S. diplomatic practice of encouraging the spread of democratic movements through regime change (reformist aspirations were abandoned) has stopped short of including adversary states that possess WMD or have clandestine WMD programs. Libya, which had been persuaded to abandon its WMD arsenal in 2003, was the focal point of NATO military operations last year, while Iran, North Korea, and Syria are all candidates for diplomatic engagement instead. This lesson has not been lost on the 60 or so other nations who are seeking to develop their own “civil” nuclear power programs. To avoid the threat of “regime change” by the United States or its allies, acquiring WMD is the best defense.

Third, the sharp reductions in U.S. nuclear delivery systems and the loss of the industrial capacity to produce new nuclear weapons has undermined confidence in the viability of America’s extended nuclear deterrent among nations that we had persuaded to forego the nuclear option decades ago. For example, Japan appealed to both the Obama and George W. Bush administrations not to remove the nuclear armed submarine-launched cruise missile capability from the U.S. inventory. The Japanese leadership saw the SLCM as a key element in the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrent in Northeast Asia. Japan’s plea was rebuffed, however. Japan now has some 40 metric tons of civil reactor-produced plutonium that could be used in the future to produce nuclear weapons, so it possesses a near-term alternative to the collapse of extended deterrence. Other nations may follow the “Japanese model.”

World attention has focused overwhelmingly in recent years on Iran’s advance toward a nuclear capability. So far, however, Western economic pressure appears to have been insufficient to change the strategic calculus of the Iranian regime. What are the next steps for U.S. strategy in dealing with Iran’s nuclear menace?

The history of incremental sanctions is that the target is able to adapt more adroitly than those that impose them. The recent Congressional approval of yet another round of sanctions legislation reflects Iran’s success in working around the terms of U.S. law and regulation—most recently via an elaborate scheme for the reflagging of oil tankers that has allowed Iran’s oil deliveries to its customers to continue. The most recent report of the IAEA has affirmed that Iran has not only declined to slow its nuclear weapons program down; it has intensified it by adding centrifuges at its previously secret site, Fordow.

Similarly, the uneven implementation of sanctions further diminishes their effectiveness. The sanctions approved earlier this year included provisions whereby the Presi-

dent could exempt nations buying oil from Iran if they undertook some countervailing measures that diminished Iranian oil exports. All of Iran's major oil customers now have been exempted from the sanctions, no matter how undeservedly. China, Iran's largest current customer, qualified for the exemption because its oil imports from Iran were reduced for a single month. On further examination, Iran and China suspended oil trade for two weeks as a result of a price dispute. Oil trade subsequently resumed unabated.

Only a complete loss of revenue from oil exports offers a prospect of inducing a behavioral change in Tehran. Preventing Iranian oil exports would not have adverse consequences for the international economy since Saudi Arabia and Iraq have significantly increased oil production (in the Saudi case, to 10 million bpd), while the revolution in shale-derived oil and gas has significantly diminished U.S. foreign oil imports. The loss of Iranian exports (already reduced to 1.2 million bpd) would not be significant.

In the past several months, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has weathered a significant regime transition. How stable is the rule of Kim Jong Un, North Korea's new leader? As he consolidates power, what can we expect from Pyongyang?

The new DPRK leadership appears to be gaining its footing. The leadership changes in the armed forces imposed by Kim, and the recent successful meeting between Kim Jong Un and the head of the International Department of the Communist Party of China, have reinforced the regime and its legitimacy. China's overt support for the DPRK's economy, especially its energy needs, and (as a recent UN report has shown) its clandestine support for the DPRK's ballistic missile development program, offers abundant evidence of China's successful effort to sustain the status quo on the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, U.S. insistence that it is not seeking regime change in the DPRK (which parallels current policy toward other adversary WMD states such as Iran and Syria) has helped reinforce the grip of the Kim dynasty on the DPRK.





DISPATCHES

Iran's Latin American Adventure

Ivan Witker

SANTIAGO—President Obama's recent declaration that Venezuela does not pose a threat to American security notwithstanding, recent years have seen a steady growth in the dangers posed by the regime of Hugo Chávez in Caracas to the United States and the Western Hemisphere at large. Of these, perhaps the most acute is the extensive and flourishing strategic partnership that has emerged between the Chávez regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The growth of the Iran-Venezuela relationship is symptomatic of a larger problem. The past several years have witnessed an Iranian mobilization in the Western Hemisphere. The Islamic Republic has leveraged the historic anti-American sentiment prevalent throughout Latin America, and married it to a package of economic incentives that it has proffered in its outreach to the region.

Iran's focus to date has centered mainly on two states: Venezuela and Bolivia. These countries are integral to a larger regional bloc known as ALBA (the Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América), which also includes Ecuador, Nicaragua and Cuba. Chávez, together with Bolivia's Evo Morales, Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, Cuba's Fidel (and now Raoul) Castro, and Ecuador's Rafael Correa have made it abundantly clear that they see the bloc as more than simply a political and economic union. Rather, they view it as an ideological alliance to oppose Western (read, American) "imperialism" and unify the region under their collective leadership.

The five ALBA countries thus have systematically opposed U.S. values and initiatives, and are trying to influence political events in other Latin American countries through a host of destabilizing activities (from support of terrorist organizations to the facilitation of narco-trafficking). Through these activities—as well as intervention in



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regional affairs (such as the recent crisis in Paraguay, where the bloc prevented the removal of President Lugo from power)—ALBA has begun to effectuate a geopolitical rebalancing in the region. The new strategic environment has created an inhospitable climate for moderate countries such as Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. It has also facilitated Iran's entry into the region.

Although ALBA's leaders and the Iranian regime share a revolutionary vision, radical rhetoric and resolute behavior, they belong to two different phenomena. ALBA's heritage is Marxist and secular, while Iran's is Islamist. Thus, Iran is not integral to ALBA's vision for Latin America, and yet the crisis over Iran's nuclear ambitions feeds into ALBA's narrative of "resistance" to imperial influence. Moreover, its economic assistance has given Tehran the status of benefactor for the region's struggling economies. The results can be seen in growing Iranian "technical assistance" to ALBA states, the growth of its public diplomacy vehicle for the region (known as HispanTV), and high-profile state visits to the region by Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and other top Islamic Republic officials.

But this could be just the beginning. Iran's current activities in the region, ranging from economic assistance, strategic mining, and the construction of an asymmetric military presence, could be a prelude to still-greater activism.

For example, Iran could decide to develop long-range military capabilities in the region, including undertaking "weaponization" activities such as the establishment of missile bases and drone factories, or the deployment of more unmanned aerial vehicles. Such steps, carried out with the facilitation of Chávez or other regional players, would carry dire consequences for Latin America as a whole.

Iran could also use the infrastructure it already has created in the region to facilitate its further nuclear development. Already, there are signs that the Iranian regime has sought to exploit Latin America for its strategic resource wealth, and greater Iranian mining and exploration is possible.

Finally, Iran could seek to augment its current asymmetric presence in the region with the forward deployment of greater numbers of Revolutionary Guards of Hezbollah militiamen, thereby transforming Latin America into a true operational theater. In this regard, Iran's recent pledge of counter-narcotics assistance to Bolivia (to commence in the second half of 2012), may provide a convenient pretext for an expanded "on-the-ground" presence.

A great deal depends on personalities, of course. Currently, Iran's relationships in the region are driven in large part by the warm personal bonds between Chávez and Ahmadinejad. However, ALBA countries might soon institutionalize these links further, facilitating a greater acceptance of Iran's theocratic regime in the region in the process. If that happens, Iran's current profile in the region will expand dramatically, and so will its impact on Latin America.



Anatomy of a Power Struggle

Claire Berlinski

ISTANBUL—While Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan needs no introduction, the Turkish imam Fethullah Gülen is probably the most important person you've never heard about. He is an immensely powerful figure in Turkey, and—to put it mildly—a controversial one. He is also an increasingly powerful figure globally. Today, there are between three and six million Gülen followers. Gülen leads the *cemaat*, an Islamic civil society movement, that has until now been critical to the electoral success of Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AKP). The *cemaat* is often described as Turkey's Third Force—the other two being the AKP and the military.

Gülen has been living in the Poconos since March 1999. Shortly after he decamped to the United States, ostensibly for medical treatment, Turkish television broadcast footage of the imam instructing his followers to infiltrate the organs of the state. He was prosecuted in absentia for seeking to overthrow the Turkish constitution. The charges were dismissed in 2008, so there is no longer any legal obstacle preventing him from returning to Turkey. But he remains in the United States where, among other things, he is a large player in the U.S. charter school business.

Although the movement purports to be structured informally, this is generally not the view of scholars who are not on its payroll, or of those who have left its ranks. Almost uniformly, they observe that the movement's organizational structure is strict, hierarchical, and undemocratic. So are its tenets. Gülenists assiduously cultivate the image of Gülen and his movement as tolerant, peace-loving, and modern. Gülen indeed sponsors lavish interfaith dialogue events, while his schools, cultural centers, conferences, newspapers, and television stations are the more important platform for the promotion of his agenda, which is decidedly less tolerant and modern. Gülen, for example, has expressed the belief that the penalty for apostasy should be death—if the transgressor fails to return to the Islamic fold by more peaceful means.

Gülen says he does not wish to be involved in politics, but has nonetheless—until recently—used his influence, and particularly his vast media empire, to promote the AKP. This alliance was logical: Gülen and the AKP shared important goals, such as promoting a larger role for religion in Turkey and a smaller role for the military. The AKP and Gülen also shared a vision of expanding Turkish influence abroad, particularly in the territories of the former Ottoman Empire. The movement has been instrumental in promoting Turkish business interests in the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

However, the AKP and the Gülen movement are by no means identical. Indeed, while a number of AKP MPs are followers of Gülen, Erdoğan is not. Gülen and his followers can best be described as political opportunists; when the military removed Refah Party Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan from power in 1996, Gülen positioned himself with the military. Later, his loyalties shifted to the AKP, which was an outgrowth of Refah. Generally, Gülen seeks to attach himself to power, cooperate with it, and use it to his advantage.



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The AKP and the *cemaat* for a time found each other extremely useful. The *cemaat's* assiduous penetration of the police and the judiciary allowed Erdoğan to confront the military and other key obstacles to the enlargement of his power; *cemaat*-controlled media organs generated public support for this. Erdoğan was content to use the prosecution of suspected coup plotters (collectively referred to as the “Ergenekon” conspiracy) to purge his own enemies. But now that the government, with Gülen’s help, has largely demoralized the military, confined its most serious ideological opponents to prison, and terrified the rest into silence, the inevitable is happening. The victors are fighting over the spoils.

Tensions began to rise over the “Ergenekon” investigations, which have grown increasingly embarrassing for the AKP. Hundreds of serving and retired military officers, including former Chief of General Staff Ilker Basbug, have been jailed, along with elected MPs and prominent academics. The arrests of journalists in particular have given rise to tremendous criticism, prompting Erdoğan to dismiss the case’s lead prosecutor, Zekeriya Öz, the Gülenist mastermind of the “Ergenekon” probe. Still, while Erdoğan appeared to be discomfited by this, he was willing to accept it; if a bit of embarrassment was the price he had to pay for getting rid of his enemies, so be it.

But then, the *cemaat* began going after Erdoğan’s friends. His trusted intelligence chief, Hakan Fidan, is seen by the *cemaat* as soft—soft on Iran, but more importantly, soft on the Kurdish Worker’s Party (PKK). The *cemaat* is intensely hostile to the leftist (indeed, neo-Maoist) PKK, and when the news broke last year that Fidan had entered into secret negotiations with the group, it was apparently too much for Gülen to bear. The tension finally broke into the open.

On February 7, special prosecutor Sadrettin Sarıkaya, who had been investigating the KCK, the alleged urban branch of the PKK, ordered the detention of Fidan, Fidan’s predecessor Emre Taner, and two others. Erdoğan took the maneuver as a direct assault on his authority. Within days, the AKP drafted a new law making it impossible for the Justice Department to prosecute employees of MIT (Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı, or National Intelligence Organization) without the prime minister’s consent. The Gülen movement was enraged; a furious backlash ensued in the Gülenist press, which ran articles lambasting the party as authoritarian and accusing it of endangering Turkish democracy. For newspapers that had spent years applauding Erdoğan and the AKP and relentlessly supporting his ever-increasing authoritarianism, this was a remarkable reversal.

The fight, however, was not just about Fidan. It was also about Erdoğan’s increasing discomfort with Gülen’s control over the judiciary and police, and the growing political cost of the sprawling investigations launched by the special authority courts.

Much to the Gülenists’ dismay, Erdoğan was not chastened by their maneuvers. To the contrary, he was enraged. With a speed that astonished observers, the government removed Sarıkaya from the MIT case. The General Directorate for Security dismissed nine officials in the Istanbul police department who had been working in a KCK operations unit. Two other high-ranking police officials were also removed, and for good measure the chief prosecutors for various cases were reassigned to different posts. The message was perfectly clear: Erdoğan, not Gülen, controlled Turkey. To make sure no one misunderstood, Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin gave the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors permission to begin an investigation into Sarıkaya on suspicion of violating the secrecy of the prosecution and abusing his power. To establish that no one misunderstood, 700 Istanbul police officers working in departments related to intelligence, terrorism, and organized crime in the Istanbul Emniyet were reassigned to the southeast.

The next stage in the growing power struggle involved, of all things, soccer. The July 2011 arrest of Aziz Yıldırım, the president of the Fenerbahçe sport club, on charges of match-fixing was of course about much more than European football; Yıldırım is a major defense contractor for NATO. With him out of the way, many lucrative jobs could go to Gülen's star entrepreneur, Ahmet Çalık.

But the attack on Yıldırım proved a serious misjudgment. The importance of football in Turkey cannot be underestimated (or understood, so don't try). Fenerbahçe fans were enraged by Yıldırım's arrest. They took to the streets in massive numbers repeatedly, and were repeatedly tear-gassed; the videos of fans, many of them women, some even in headscarves, and children, being gassed by Gülenist "robocops" in full battle regalia circulated all over Facebook and Twitter.

The AKP's fear of a massive loss of votes if immensely popular footballers were to end up in prison for many years, prompted the party to propose limiting the maximum penalty for the crimes with which they were charged. Then, while Erdoğan was in the hospital, President Abdullah Gül (who is known for having better relations with the Gülen movement) vetoed the bill. It was the first time in his four-year presidency that Gül had done so, and it was not at all a coincidence that this happened when Erdoğan was in the hospital, being treated, or so his doctors said, for intestinal polyps. (The rumors that in fact he has colon cancer were and remain persistent, and they were obviously taken seriously by many of his supporters in the AKP, who believed it might be wise to throw in their lot with the Gülenists.) When Erdoğan emerged from the hospital looking, at the very least, alive, parliament overrode the veto. Erdoğan won the round, but the divide with the Gülenists was now impossible to ignore.

The final straw was the prime minister's attempt to abolish the special authority courts—which left the Gülenists positively hysterical. Hüseyin Gülerce, Gülen's mouthpiece in Turkey, wrote columns with such striking rage and paranoia about these proposals that they would no doubt have been fodder for satirists were Turkish satirists not all too aware of what happens to their ilk. The move to abolish the courts followed the arrest of former Commander-in-Chief İlker Başbuğ. This prompted Erdoğan to say he was "disturbed" by the unending raids against current and former military officers, and to urge the prosecution to get their investigation "over and done with."

Outsiders might not notice that something has gone terribly wrong between Erdoğan and Gülen. Neither has anything to gain from a visible power struggle. According to AKP MP (and former Erdoğan advisor) Yalçın Akdoğan, the impression of a conflict with the Gülen movement has been intentionally exaggerated; it is certainly true that opponents of both Erdoğan and Gülen are greatly enjoying the discord. In June, Erdoğan publicly invited Gülen to return to Turkey; two days later, Gülen declined, weeping (as he often does) as he expressed his fears that his return might damage his movement's achievements. Erdoğan's invitation to Gülen was interpreted by some as a peace offering, but it was far from one. Erdoğan simply had called Gülen's bluff and cloaked it in a guise of magnanimity. It was a political master stroke.

Erdoğan is now endeavoring to shore up the support of the conservative wing of his party, proffering political favors to politicians capable of helping him erect an anti-Gülen alliance. Meanwhile, rumor has it that the Gülenists are considering putting their weight behind the more sympathetic Abdullah Gül as their politician of choice (one who recently signaled that he might run for another presidential term). Should he do so, it will end Erdoğan's vision of an easy ascent to a presidency with enhanced powers, and in all likelihood engender a split in the AKP.

The rivalry may have healthy consequences. The Gülen media is finally covering stories that should have long ago been covered in a society with a vibrant opposition press. The pressure to eliminate the courts with special authority was long overdue. (Sadly, it has not resulted in the release of most of those arrested.) But it could also result in a race to the bottom, with both camps striving to blackmail, jail, and intimidate members of the other, while simultaneously attempting to position themselves as the more authentic defenders of Turkish nationalism and Islam—neither of which are ideologies known to give rise, historically, to anything we would recognize as a liberal democracy.



The Real Crisis in Pakistan-U.S. Relations

Sohail Mahmood

ISLAMABAD—In November 2011, NATO forces attacked an outpost on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, killing 24 Pakistani soldiers in the process. Pakistan reacted by immediately closing the Ground Lines of Communications (GLOCs) for NATO supplies into Afghanistan. The incident threw the already-tense relations between the United States and Pakistan into a tailspin.

Some seven months after the incident, Pakistan and the United States finally reached an agreement to reopen the closed GLOCs. Pakistan was assured by the United States that there would not be a repetition of the incident. On July 8, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton even expressed hope that the reopening might lead to a “broader rapprochement in U.S.-Pakistani relations after a difficult period for the reluctant allies.”

The reaction within Pakistan, however, was very different. Opposition parties, nationalist groups, and Islamic radicals in Pakistan all responded negatively, condemning the reopening of the GLOCs and playing off widespread anti-American sentiment.

Clearly, the government of Pakistan was doing damage control. Contrary to the impression held by the general public, the drone attacks had been taking place with the permission of both the Zardari government and the Pakistani army. The Pakistanis simply were not willing to admit it for fear of a political backlash. Nevertheless, there was a convergence of national interests on allowing these drone strikes inside Pakistan. Therefore, in many ways, the attack was not the real issue.

Rather, the real sticking point in Pakistan-U.S. relations, and the main divergence of national interests between Washington and Islamabad, is Afghanistan. The United States and NATO/ISAF troops are now slated to depart that country by the end of 2014. Yet the so-called endgame is far from clear. A Western pullout makes the possibility of a civil war quite real. Afghan politics are complex, and the country is weak and fragmented along ethnic lines. The Afghan Taliban are somewhat supported by Pakistan, while the Northern Alliance is supported by the United States and India. The Hazaras, meanwhile, are supposedly supported by Iran. Should international troops depart, the Taliban will doubtless make a play for power—one that the Afghan government will be hard pressed to prevent.

True, the United States has signed a strategic partnership agreement with Afghanistan to assist it in building the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), but given the domestic realities there, the chances of a half decent national army being created are slim. The Karzai government is not only quite corrupt; it is also very weak and ineffective. The international donor base, meanwhile, is drying up. Afghanistan has received nearly \$60 billion in civilian aid since 2002. But the flow of aid can be expected to sharply diminish after international troops withdraw. Along with security issues, donors have become wary of widespread corruption and poor project governance. There is an international weariness with the war and frustration over Karzai's failure to crack down on corruption.

To remedy this situation, a number of steps are needed.



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First, Washington and Islamabad should jointly broker a power-sharing arrangement in Afghanistan. Different power groups in the country, especially the Taliban and Northern Alliance, must be brought into a meaningful intra-Afghan dialogue. These negotiations will surely be contentious, but are needed nevertheless. In Lebanon, different ethnic groups have devised a formula for sharing power which can be applied in Afghanistan. General elections will simply have to wait for this formula to work itself out.

Second, other regional players like India, Russia, China, the Central Asian Republics and Iran should be invited to contribute their share in finalizing the Afghanistan endgame.

The Zardari government, meanwhile, must wrest control of Afghan policy from the hands of the military. Pakistan's military establishment remains blind to the internal weakening of the state that has taken place because of poor governance. It fiercely guards its share of the federal budgetary pie. And it continues its ruinous policy of backing the Taliban in Afghanistan against NATO and ISAF forces. In other words, it has become the driver of tension in relations with the United States and Europe.

Pakistan should immediately announce a cessation of support for the Haqqani network and the Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Pakistan military has long believed that India was making inroads in Afghanistan, and that the United States was encouraging India in this effort. But the role of India in Afghanistan has been exaggerated, because after all, Delhi has legitimate interests there. Pakistan must negotiate an end of Indian interference in Baluchistan by severing its own links with the *jihadist* entities inside India. With some tense diplomacy and patience, a *quid pro quo* can be worked out.

Eventually, a new peacekeeping force will have to replace the Western troops. It would be best if a joint Organization of Islamic Conference and United Nations peacekeeping force were used to secure Afghanistan for some years. Pakistan can be instrumental in setting up such a mechanism. After all, no country has more at stake in post-Coalition Afghanistan than neighboring Pakistan.

The United States and Pakistan have a convergence of national interests in seeking a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. Therefore both can, and should, work as real partners rather than rivals. They now must join hands to earnestly plan for a viable endgame in Afghanistan.





BOOK REVIEWS

How Israel Thinks About Iran

Kenneth Katzman

YAAKOV KATZ and YOAZ HENDEL,
Israel vs. Iran: The Shadow War
(Potomac Books, 2012), 254 pp. \$29.95.

When dealing with Iran, it pays to be in the know. Yaakov Katz and Yoaz Hendel clearly are, and in *Israel vs. Iran*, the two veteran journalists use their extensive contacts in the Israeli defense establishment, particularly the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), to paint a fascinating and comprehensive picture of how Israel perceives the threat posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. More importantly (and more thoroughly), Katz and Hendel show us how the Israeli national security establishment is dealing with that threat, and how Israel approaches the ever-present question of whether to undertake unilateral military action against Iran's advancing nuclear program.

The authors present significant detail regarding Israeli deliberations and actions on a number of fronts related to Iran. These include the threat posed by Hezbollah; the threat posed by Hamas's control of the Gaza Strip; the air strike against Syria's nuclear reactor at Al Kibar in 2007; and Iran's efforts to smuggle weaponry, particularly missiles, to its protégé movements that surround Israel. The book also discusses the Stuxnet cyber attack on Iran's nuclear centrifuges and, briefly, the pattern of assassinations of Iran's nuclear scientists. It comes close to attributing these latter actions to Israel, with the cooperation of the United States in the case of Stuxnet, without directly stating Israeli responsibility.

The book's key strength, drawing on the excellent access of the authors, is in providing the reader with clear insights



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into IDF thinking—the key players and their positions, the strategic decisions and policy turning points, Israeli defense doctrine, and IDF after-action assessments of the 2006 war against Hezbollah in Lebanon and Operation Cast Lead against Hamas in Gaza in late 2008. Particularly useful is the authors' discussion of how the perceived Israeli failures in the 2006 Lebanon war were a product of mistaken forecasts about Israel's future conflicts, the misallocation of resources caused by those forecasts, and perhaps some weaknesses in IDF leadership leading up to that war. Katz and Hendel analyze, persuasively, how lessons learned from the 2006 war produced clear success in Operation Cast Lead.

These strengths, however, are also weaknesses. The authors are clearly close to Israeli defense thinkers and strategists—a proximity which gives us the insights discussed above. But because they are, they internalize the Israeli establishment's evaluation of the overall threat posed by Iran to Israel's national security. The result is a depiction of an all-encompassing Iranian threat: one responsible for virtually every threat in and around Israel. In this telling, every Islamic movement and dictatorship on Israel's borders is a proxy of Iran, ready to do the bidding of the Islamic Republic. Lost is some crucial nuance, such as the fact that Hamas and Iran have largely "broken up" over the past year as a result of the uprising that has taken place in Syria.

Another area in need of elaboration is the book's discussion of military action against Iran's nuclear program. Katz and Hendel delve deeply into the Israeli decision in 2007 to strike the Al Kibar nuclear reactor in the northern desert of Syria, and present useful and fresh details about Israeli commando operations that supported the strike. The book also discusses the successful Israeli effort to convince then-U.S. President

George W. Bush that the Al Kibar reactor posed an "existential threat" to Israel, and to obtain his blessing to conduct a unilateral strike against it. However, they do not analyze why Israel did not, at an early stage, make the same overtures to President Bush about Iran's facilities. This is puzzling, especially since the term "existential threat" has been widely used by Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself, to describe the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program.

And the authors do not explain why Israel did not strike Iran's major nuclear facilities long before they reached the enriched uranium production potential they have now. Nor do the authors analyze why Israel took no action even after it concluded, as they discuss, that the Bush administration would not itself take military action against Iran's nuclear facilities before it left office in early 2009. Nonetheless, they ably discuss all the pros and cons—and operational difficulties—of striking Iran's facilities now, even after the hardened enrichment facility at Fordow, near Qom, has become operational.

A number of factual problems also mar the book's analysis. For example, the authors discuss Iran's efforts to purchase the sophisticated S-300 air defense system from Russia, and assess that Iran's fielding of the system would greatly complicate any Israeli air strike on Iran's nuclear facilities. Yet they fail to mention that Moscow cancelled the contract outright after UN Security Council Resolution 1929, banning major arms sales to Iran, was adopted in June 2010. Similarly, they mistake the sequencing of the adoption of that resolution and the Turkey/Brazil-brokered "Tehran Declaration" under which Iran agreed to ship out a large portion of its low-enriched uranium for reprocessing.

Events relating to Iran tend to move quickly, and any volume on the subject is

bound to lag behind current events. *Israel vs. Iran* does not escape this problem; its narrative barely touches upon the macro-trends that have reshaped the Middle East over the past year-and-a-half, and fails to explore how those changes have impacted Iran's place in it. Still, *Israel vs. Iran* succeeds on at least two fronts. It ably covers the military dimensions of the West's current conflict with the Islamic Republic. And it provides important and valuable insights into Israeli strategic thinking about the threat Iran poses—and what the Jewish state might be willing to do about it.



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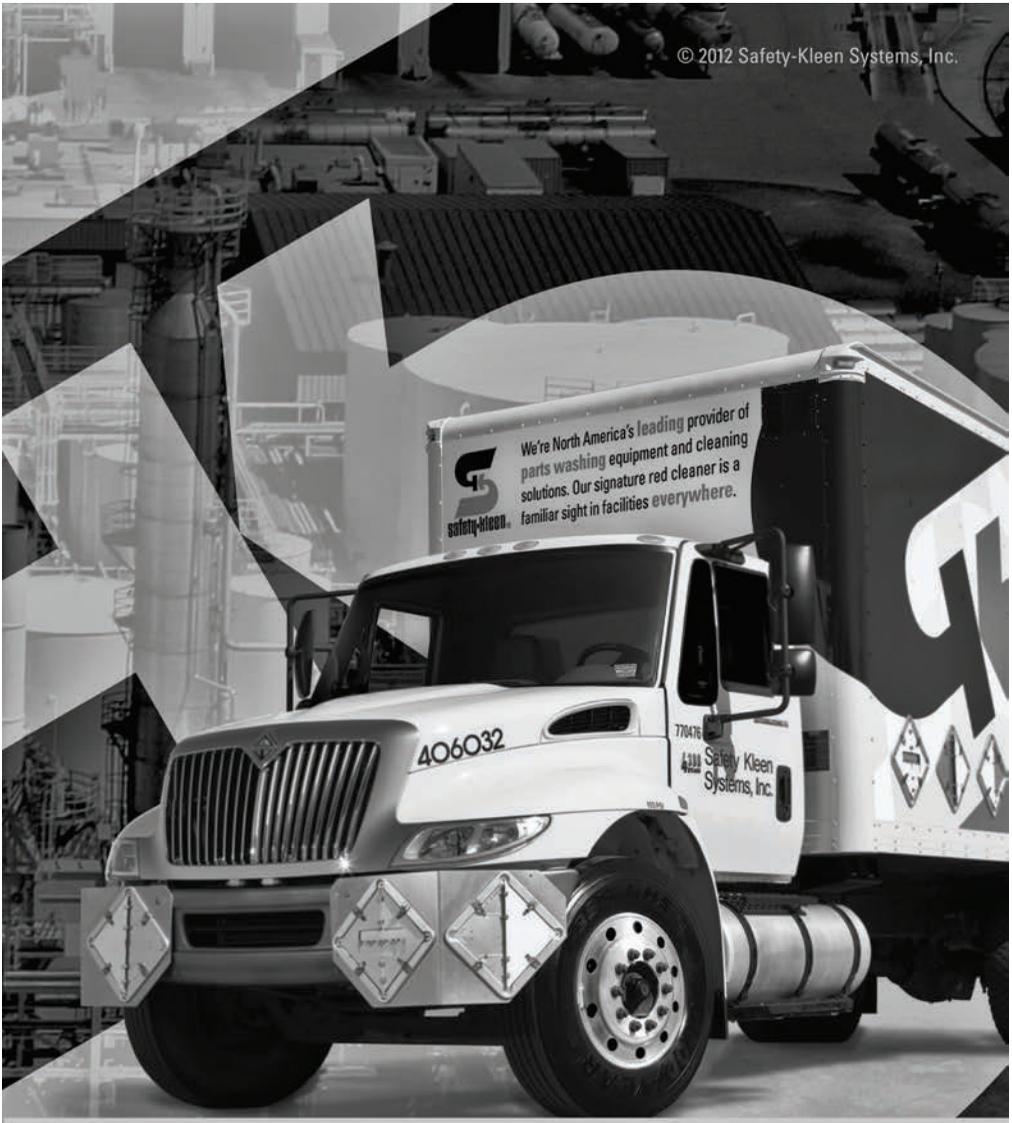


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World Upside Down

Elan Jurno

PETER BERKOWITZ, *Israel and the Struggle over the International Laws of War* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2012), 112 pp. \$19.95.

Israel is at the crux of a “new struggle over the international laws of war.” So argues Peter Berkowitz, a legal scholar at the Hoover Institution, in his new and important book on the subject.

Exhibit A in Berkowitz’s case is the United Nations’ putative fact-finding mission on the 2008–9 Gaza war—an investigation which culminated in the notorious Goldstone Report. Exhibit B: the furor over the 2010 Gaza flotilla. According to Berkowitz, these incidents of maltreatment of Israel and efforts to criminalize the exercise of its right of self-defense “threaten to effect legal transformations that will impair the ability of all liberal democracies to defend themselves.”

By exposing what he regards as abuses of the international laws of war, Berkowitz intends to contribute to their defense. The book’s evidence, though, renders that hope forlorn.

With lawyerly precision, Berkowitz dissects the Goldstone Report, highlighting the extent to which it is riddled with inaccuracies, half-truths, and Hamas propaganda uncritically reported at face value. For example, the report found that Israel illegitimately destroyed a family home in Gaza. But in reality, Hamas had used that home as a storage facility for weapons and ammunition, including

Grad missiles, rendering it a legitimate military target. Moreover, in the eyes of the Goldstone team, Hamas is not a terrorist organization, but merely one of several “Palestinian armed groups.” The report downplays the 8,000+ rockets and mortars launched from Gaza, as if they were causally unrelated to Israel’s decision to retaliate. Berkowitz deftly argues that the report’s application of relevant norms of war is legally unsound, and that its recommendation that the UN Security Council refer the matter to the International Criminal Court is baseless.

Procedurally, Berkowitz contends, the UN infringed on Israel’s right to apply the norms of war when it prematurely authorized an investigation, before the fighting ended and before Israel could reasonably carry out its own preliminary assessments. Stoking suspicions that the investigation’s verdict was a foregone conclusion, the UN General Assembly endorsed the Goldstone Report 114–18 (with 44 abstentions)—despite the report’s embarrassingly numerous (yet thematically on-message) factual and legal defects. Curiously, nearly a year-and-a-half later, Justice Richard Goldstone, who headed the investigation, retracted some of the most egregious claims; tellingly, however, the other UN team members unapologetically rejected the need to revise, let alone retract, the report.

What Berkowitz illustrates is a pattern wherein the international laws of war operate like a fulcrum for shifting blame from terrorists to the states fighting them.



ELAN JURNO is a fellow and the director of policy research at the Ayn Rand Institute. His book on post-9/11 U.S. foreign policy, *Winning the Unwinnable War: America’s Self-Crippled War Against Islamic Totalitarianism*, was published in 2009.

This pattern was manifest in the outcry over the Gaza flotilla. That convoy, posturing as a humanitarian mission yet closely tied to an Islamist group, sought to pierce Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. After Israeli commandos boarded one recalcitrant vessel, the *Mavi Marmara*, a number of flotilla activists attacked them with axes, pipes, and knives. Nine activists were killed in the process, and several dozen more were injured. The chorus of condemnation was instant, shrill, and one-sided. The call for a UN investigation, Berkowitz observes, was intended not "to determine wrongdoing but rather to place an official stamp on Israel's guilt." The UN Human Rights Council—which has been notably mute over the years on incontestable violations of rights globally—bestirred itself to issue a resolution singling out Israel as the aggressor.

Critics warped the international laws of war to argue that Israel was forbidden to engage in the blockade, because it remained an occupying power in Gaza—even though Israel withdrew from Gaza completely in 2005, and Hamas violently took over the territory some two years later. Berkowitz convincingly demonstrates that Israel cannot legally be regarded an occupier, and, piece by piece dismantles the sophistry employed to deny the blockade's legitimacy.

Dismayed at how the international laws of war are deployed to undercut free nations, Berkowitz notes a paradox: no armies in the history of warfare have devoted greater attention than Israel and the United States to complying with laws of war, yet no armies today "come under greater worldwide attack for violating" those laws.

That moral inversion, Berkowitz suggests, could be rectified by clarifying and upholding the international laws of war. But on this point, the case is unconvincing. The laws of war are themselves

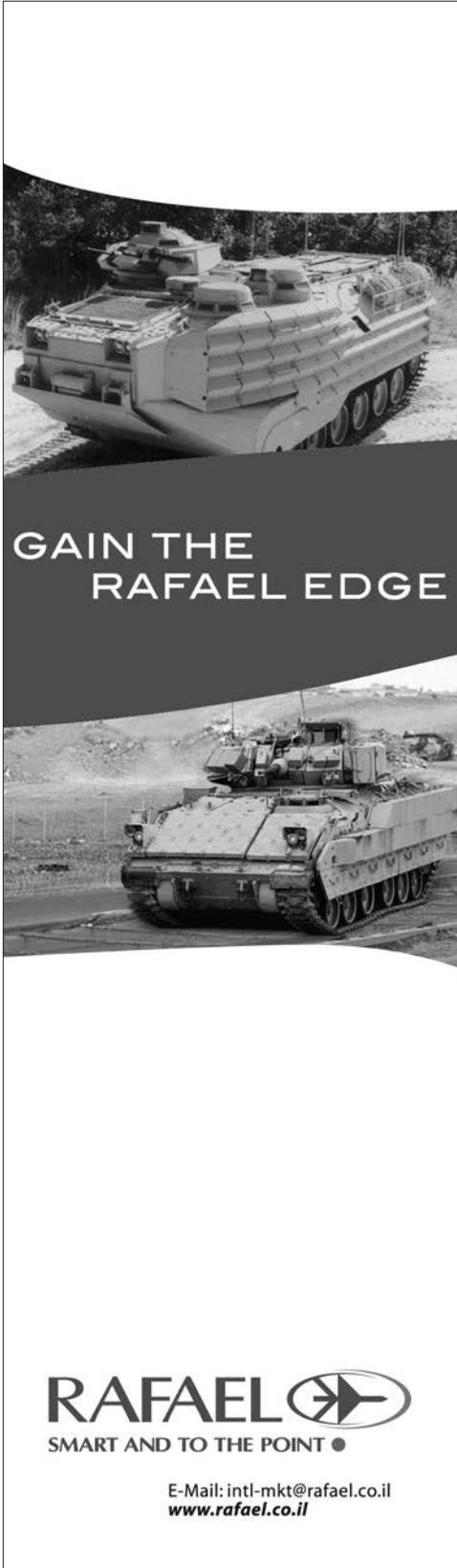
deeply problematic. Take the idea, of which Berkowitz approves, that military retaliation must be "proportional" to the attack. Arguably, that precept stands at odds with a free nation's moral right to defend its citizens' lives. In the name of proportionality, should the U.S. retaliation for Pearl Harbor have been limited to bombing the same number of Japanese warships, and nothing more? Should Israel's retaliation against Hamas be confined to firing the same primitive, imprecise mortars at Gaza, and nothing more? Berkowitz calls for a "balance" between military necessity and the need to avoid civilian casualties. But surely the fundamental moral imperative must be the military objective, with the culpability for the unwelcome but sometimes inevitable collateral damage falling to the aggressor.

Compounding the problem is that the UN and related bodies enforce these so-called laws of war. It is not the Russias or Chinas or Irans of the world, but the United States, Israel, and a small number of other free nations that strive to comply with these laws, thereby lending them moral credibility. But the UN is dominated by authoritarian and terrorist-sponsoring regimes, making subversion of those laws all but assured.

Berkowitz assumes that the international laws of war are indispensable. The book's two case studies, however, should lead the reader to question that assumption. It is true that soldiers (indeed, all citizens) of a free nation need to have a sense of justice in their military cause. Yet moral guidance in war is the task not of some international organization but of a sovereign nation's foreign policy and moral principles; these should define the objective and appropriate means in a military conflict—just as they should inform decisions on alliances, treaties, and international organizations. What Berkowitz advocates—championing the international laws of war but reserv-

ing prime responsibility of enforcement to nation-states—leaves the moral high ground open for the usual suspects to seize it anew.

With this book, though, Berkowitz has masterfully exposed how the international laws of war have become a favorite bludgeon wielded against Israel. By bringing greater attention to the nature and provisions of those laws, the book serves as an urgent reminder of the need to scrutinize this doctrine and the international institutions that have become its champions.



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A Spy's World

Malcolm Forbes

HENRY A. CRUMPTON, *The Art of Intelligence: Lessons from a Life in the CIA's Clandestine Service* (Penguin Press, 2012), 352 pp. \$27.95.

There is a moment in Henry A. Crumpton's excellent account of his career in the CIA in which we are taken into the White House Situation Room and apprised of the latest update concerning the imminent war in Afghanistan. It is late September, several weeks after 9/11. Condoleezza Rice chairs the meeting that comprises a dozen officials, including Crumpton, who admits to feeling out of his depth among political top brass. Suddenly, from nowhere, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz changes tack and launches into a bizarre monologue. For him, 9/11 had to be state-sponsored. Iraq seems the likely culprit and so Iraq should now be central to America's counterterrorism strategy. Crumpton is stunned. "What is he smoking?" I wondered. There was no intelligence that linked Saddam Hussein, a secular despot, to a terrorist group like al-Qaeda and its ideology. Crumpton dismisses the commentary as warped logic, "an aberration of an otherwise intelligent and responsible policy leader," and continues to sit in disbelief. His last word on the matter is key: "I had no idea what would unfold in the next couple of years."

The Art of Intelligence has been dubbed a 9/11 memoir, which isn't quite true. Crumpton sidesteps the details of

the catastrophe and focuses instead on the years leading to it and the military response and lessons learned afterwards. The above anecdote is characteristic of the book as a whole. We are granted exclusive access to off-limits areas, from corridors of power for policy-makers or intelligence chiefs, to front-line field-ops that are both secret assignments, and full-blown conflict. We listen in on a gamut of leadership decisions, both fanciful and level-headed, watch plans crystallize and missions succeed and fail. Best of all is Crumpton's candor. As with Wolfowitz, he has had to learn the art of diplomacy and the art of intelligence, but on the page he isn't afraid to hold back on his true feelings. Elsewhere, when the alleged Iraq link is floated by the Office of the Vice President, Crumpton's response is somewhat less restrained, "That's the dumbest fucking question I've heard all week." Such a no-nonsense approach ensures that Crumpton's account maintains a perfect balance of being both consistently informative and deeply engrossing.

He outlines that his book is an attempt "to describe the value of intelligence and how it can protect liberal institutions and advance our increasingly networked, interdependent, global society." But it is also Crumpton's own history of his career trajectory. Both make for fascinating reading.

Crumpton takes us back to his own beginning when, as a ten-year-old



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boy with a love of maps, James Bond and the romance of historical battles, he walked into the CIA recruitment office in Rosslyn, Virginia, and asked to join. Twelve years later he tried again and was accepted. We learn of rigorous training at “the Farm,” his first posting to an unnamed African country and his time recruiting sources that ranged from warlords to diplomats. After a transfer to the FBI, he took a leading position in the CIA’s Counterterrorism Center and then led the CIA’s Afghanistan campaign. A sabbatical followed, then a two-year stint as chief of the National Resources Division, before he finally left the secret realm for a public role working for the Secretary of State as the coordinator for counterterrorism.

Embedded among the wealth of detail and acronyms are critical opinions and valuable insight, always imparted and never preached. The chapter on recruitment blends his own tales of agent-running with an illuminating analysis of the main motives that prompt a person to betray or defect (Crumpton lists the standard causes of money, ideology, compromise and ego, before adding one of his own, revenge). Along with examples and case-studies of intelligence put into practice are meditations on the less-explored and more-maligned theory of intelligence, or intelligence as a subject of study.

Crumpton is fascinated by the many paradoxes or difficulties that affect or afflict the field of espionage, giving particular thought and coverage to the most pertinent: if a service like the CIA hopes to continue to play a paramount role in national security then it needs to reach out more to the public, inform them and receive support for intelligence missions. But how is that best accomplished—or even possible—for an agency whose business is secrecy? Another, seemingly perennial problem arises: who becomes the better spy: the one who joined after amassing a raft of diverse and enlighten-

ing experience or the one with a clean, blank slate?

Crumpton himself is a neat amalgamation of the two. His frankness extends as far as his readiness to highlight his weaknesses (a self-confessed technophobe, a certain gaucheness at dealing with Washington politicians) but also enumerate his strengths. He also writes with candor about his frustration with official Beltway politics. He recounts being stabbed in the back by “Pentagon media pukers.” His early warnings about the al-Qaeda threat went unheeded, and he was stupefied at the Clinton administration’s “feeble response” to the attacks on the U.S. embassies in Africa and the USS *Cole*, treating them as law enforcement matters rather than all-out acts of war. In a convincing and cool-headed argument, Crumpton later explains how the 9/11 Commission focused more on intelligence shortcomings than policy failure, so as to deflect the blame from the policy-makers.

If *The Art of Intelligence* has a fault, it is one we could have foreseen before opening it in the first place: it can only reveal so much. Although we are told it has been cleared by the CIA Publications Review Board, it is clear that Crumpton has been hamstrung by specific limits. Such curtailment, though of course necessary, is at times frustrating. His overseas postings are vague and shadowy. Many of Crumpton’s exploits and escapades have intentionally been trimmed and left on the cutting-room floor, to the extent that we have to use our imagination to make the little that he gives us work.

Overall, however, the book succeeds triumphantly as a blend of personal experience and enlightening know-how, without ever becoming a how-to manual. It lacks the objectivity of Steve Coll’s superlative *Ghost Wars* (2005), which also dealt with American intelligence’s failure to grasp the real threat of terrorism prior to 9/11; but Crumpton’s autobiographical

strand allows for the insertion of authorial opinion and judgment, and all too often we relish it. We also relish the tiny anecdotal gems of insider info that stud the book, from the revelation that North Korean diplomats can be enticed with porn to President Bush agreeing to the Afghanistan strike, patting Crumpton on the back and saying, “Go get ‘em.”

Crumpton’s message throughout is twofold: the need for spying is as vital today as it has ever been, and at the heart of intelligence is human espionage. “Never underestimate the human factor,” he says, stressing its importance over that of technology. In *The Art of Intelligence* Crumpton fuses that human factor—his own—with the record and analysis of a distinguished intelligence career. The result is difficult to put down.



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The Interpreter

Winfield Myers

BERNARD LEWIS and BUNTZIE ELLIS CHURCHILL, *Notes on a Century: Reflections of a Middle East Historian* (Viking, 2012), 400 pp. \$28.95.

Bernard Lewis has the eye of a novelist, the mind of a historian, and the heart of a poet. He notices, and it seems, never forgets, an individual's mannerisms and actions, his eyes and gesticulations, his demeanor and tone. He files away and places in context the settings of his encounters, from state dinners with presidents and prime ministers to conversations with colleagues and cabbies. All absorbed, made his own, and retold with an underlying passion that scholarly objectivity cannot dull and that age has not cooled. Little evades his perception or abandons his memory.

Such traits might suffice to create a lively conversationalist or a noble enigma. But Lewis's social astuteness and intellectual gifts did not lead him to pursue power by ingratiating himself into high society, as others with similar gifts of perception have done. Nor did he elbow his way into circles of political power in his native London or, later, along the East Coast of the United States, although his list of personal friends and confidants among rulers and statesmen is long and remarkable.

Rather, as we glean from *Notes on a Century: Reflections of a Middle East Historian*, co-authored with his long-time lady friend Buntzie Ellis Churchill, the

London-born Lewis followed his insatiable curiosity about the Middle East into a path-breaking academic career. Following the painful dissolution of his second marriage and a long career at the University of London, Lewis settled in America in 1974 to teach at Princeton, from which he retired in 1986. He turned 96 earlier this year.

A precocious only child who failed to inherit his parents' athletic skills (his inability to master riding a motorcycle overland kept him from battlefield assignments as an intelligence officer for MI6 during World War II), he was naturally bookish but not solitary. Gobbling up the entries in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* his father bought him when he was twelve, his career plans changing with each stimulating article, Lewis was becoming a formally educated autodidact—a student both in the classroom and alone at home. He surprised his parents by insisting he continue his Hebrew studies after his Bar Mitzvah, and at fourteen taught himself Italian from his father's extensive collection of opera recordings.

This habit of mind nurtured his gift for learning languages (he knows 15) and laid the foundation for his role in creating a new approach to writing Middle East history. Like other students of his generation, Lewis was schooled in the classical tradition still ensconced at all levels of education in the pre-War years. By the time he reached the University of London,



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from which he graduated in 1936, he had added Latin, German, and French; once enrolled, Greek, Turkish, Russian, and of course Arabic followed, as did Persian and more Turkish in graduate school—in French, during a year in Paris. The hollowing out of the curricula of both lower and university education since that time, with the insistence on “relevance” from the latter, has meant the almost complete abandonment of such studies save at a few Great Books colleges scattered here and there.

A lifetime of travel to the Middle East began in 1937 with a trip to Alexandria, Egypt. Upon arrival, he “felt rather like a Muslim bridegroom first seeing his bride, with whom he is to spend the rest of his life, after the wedding.” He has seen his share of firsts: he was “the first professional teacher of Middle Eastern history anywhere in England” and was the first scholar given access to the Ottoman archives, a feat that made possible one of his thirty-two books, *The Origins of Modern Turkey* (1961). Lewis describes the writing and publication of many other works, most interestingly *The Arabs in History* (1950), which he critiques for its Marxist-influenced approach to the past, a malady he calls “my measles or chicken pox.”

Throughout *Notes*, as he reflects on his decades-long relationship with the people, cultures, and languages of the region, Lewis demonstrates a virtue ignored or denied by his critics, most particularly the late Columbia University English professor Edward Said and his disciples, who now dominate the field of Middle East studies: his curiosity about, and even empathy for, how other cultures view their world. This trait manifests itself in surprising ways. His first entry into Turkey, to take but one example from among many, was across the Syrian border rather than from the West toward the ancient city of Istanbul, the most common route for Westerners.

This was important because, coupled with his training in classical Islamic civilization, it meant that his “approach was from the past and from the south, instead of the present and the West,” which afforded him a better understanding of the country.

As Lewis notes, “This capacity for empathy, vicariously experiencing the feelings of others, is a peculiarly Western feature.” So, of course, is the study of history as a search for truth. Lewis is insistent that students of history must examine the sources not to confirm their national, religious, or ethnic prejudices, but to test them. He explains this by example of the Arab or Indian student who comes West to study his own country. Obviously, there are ways in which no foreigner can understand the native’s culture the way he understands it himself. But that is not the point. These students come West, he says, to study history “that is free from both inherited attitudes and imposed constraints, where one follows the evidence wherever it leads, where one may start a piece of research without a prescribed or in any way predetermined result.”

This approach, now derided in most Middle East studies programs in America, also explains why Lewis was able to forge such close relationships with Middle Easterners during a career that witnessed so many upheavals in the region: WWII, de-colonization, the rebirth of Israel and the Arab-Israeli wars, the rise of corrupt oil-rich oligarchies and dictatorships, and, most recently, massive American intervention. Lewis approached the area and its people as a well-informed, savvy foreigner who knew their languages and ways of life, but who refused to whitewash what he found for the sake of attacking the West. VIPs trusted him for his opinions and discretion and made him among the best-informed students of the region during the post-War period. *Notes* is filled with

anecdotes both entertaining and insightful of his meetings with Arab leaders and intellectuals, including Egyptians with whom he remained friends in the aftermath of the 1973 War in spite of his close ties with Israeli leaders and unwavering support of the Jewish state.

In the chapter “Orientalism and the Cult of Right Thinking,” Lewis attacks Edward Said’s 1978 work *Orientalism* and the hyper-politicized approach to Middle East studies it wrought. Said’s bad faith, tendentious scholarship, and ignorance of history should have sunk his enterprise from the beginning. His attack on an entire field as populated by racist defenders of Western imperialism was and is self-evidently false. Yet Lewis writes that he was struck most immediately by Said’s ignorance, which was so manifest that “the gap between facts and their interpretation is so wide that I often found myself wondering where ignorance ended and deceit began.”

The takeover of Middle East studies by Said’s disciples has been an unmitigated disaster for the field. The first casualty was academic freedom, since the Saidians exercise their control with, as Lewis writes, “a degree of enforcement unknown in the Western universities since the eighteenth century.” The second casualty is sound advice for legislators and policy makers who turn to the professoriate for expert opinion and analysis to use in the making of foreign and domestic policy. In lieu of insightful information, they are too often given misleading, politicized information that, if implemented, harms the interests of America and her allies.

Lewis’s own role in advising political leaders, which in the United States began with meetings headed by the late Henry M. “Scoop” Jackson, culminated with his advice on the two Iraq wars. His adamant support for the first, in the aftermath of Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990, was at odds with the

consensus offered by Pentagon brass, whose overly cautious approach meant that “preparations were being made as if the United States were about to confront the Third Reich in its prime.” About the 2003 invasion of Iraq, which critics have long attributed to Lewis’s influence on President George W. Bush, he insists, “I did not recommend it. On the contrary, I opposed it.” By then, Lewis was well-known: “Osama bin Ladin made me famous,” he notes.

Notes on a Century is an elegant, often entertaining, sometimes moving reflection on a life well-lived. Lewis closes by writing, “I have loved my life,” and “I have been, and am, very fortunate.” We are also very fortunate to have had him as a guide to a vital region of our world.



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