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Islamic territory from North Africa to South Asia: No solutions, only adjustments

Things that shape my worldview

- Lord Palmerston
  - *"We have no eternal allies and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are perpetual and eternal and those interests it is our duty to follow."*
- Sir Harold Nicholson
  - *Describing diplomacy as "the understanding that for intractable problems there are only adjustments and not solutions."*
- Realpolitik
  - Politics based on strictly practical, even modest, goals rather than overzealous, idealistic goals.
- Gregory III
  - *What fairness suggests, What the law allows, What will work.*
- Systems view of interdependency
  - #1: Optimizing a system will sub-optimize one or more components.
  - #2: Optimizing the components of a system will sub-optimize the system.
  - #3: Components of a system form subgroups that obey Rules 1 and 2.

Monumentality of the task

- Writing on 19 September, 2001:
  - *“The US believes that it is going to war with bin Laden, Al-Qaida, or some as yet unnamed group directly responsible for this week's attacks. But taking down the infrastructure supporting these groups will require the U.S. to identify and dismantle the larger, global network. The analogy of difficulty is akin to dismantling a major drug cartel, or perhaps even eradicating drug trafficking itself.”*
- Strategic options are “Cure, kill, or contain.”
- Two don’t work; the third is merely exceptionally difficult.

A world at odds

- US is seen as the pole star, the animus, of Muslim distress heaped upon it by the Western World.
- Islamist terrorist groups, while differing in motivation, objectives, ideologies, and levels of activity, remain the most active of all terrorist organizations.
- To bin Laden and his adherents, we are Ayatollah Khomeini's Great Satan.
- Main objective: "the overthrow of secular, pro-Western governments, the derailment of the Arab-Israeli peace process, the expulsion of U.S. forces from the region, or the end of what they consider unjust occupation of Muslim lands."

Winning by force of arms, not by force of ideas

- Arabs live in a past glory for which the West gives them no credit.
- Even centrist Islamists are unhappy over the dominance, even hegemony, of the West in which Western civilization -- based on a Judeo-Christian ethic -- is promoted as “the universal civilization.”
- Pan-Arab hopes for a cultural and political revival upon the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and later, the discovery of oil, were both dashed by Western powers.
- Islamists are galled to admit their dismal political and economic failure, a failure that fell so low as to permit the establishment of a Jewish state in their midst and on sacred ground.

Theory and impact of hegemony

- The theory of hegemony, as applied to world political economy, defines hegemony as “preponderance of material resources.”
- Hegemonic powers must have:
  - Control over raw materials.
  - Control over sources of capital.
  - Control over markets.
  - Competitive advantage in production of high-value goods.
- Add the usurpation of cultural, military and technological matters and you have a recipe for seeking redress.

‘Whatever happens, we have got The Maxim Gun, and they have not.’

- Captain Blood, watches the mutinous natives, Hottentots, who vastly outnumber Anglo-Dutch troops in the Boer War:
  - *Blood thought he knew the native mind;*
    He said you must be firm, but kind.
    A mutiny resulted.
    I shall never forget the way
    That Blood stood upon this awful day
    Preserved us all from death.
    He stood upon a little mound
    Cast his lethargic eyes around,
    And said beneath his breath:
    'Whatever happens, we have got
    The Maxim Gun, and they have not.'
- Maxim's machine gun is the metaphor for Western superiority over colonial dominated regions.
- Subjugation led to a European, then Western, assumption of ideological and intellectual superiority.

Recognition of imbalance

- Arabs see dominant Western systems created to enforce the rules of an international economic order, the main purpose of which is to promote the interests of the dominant powers -- the industrialized West.
- Arabs astute in Western politics like to quote George Kennan, the doyenne of Soviet containment and postwar strategic policy:
  - *"[We] have about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population....Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity .... To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality...We should cease to talks about vengeance and ...unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization."*

Enter the Soviets

- The “free world” is merely the reassembly of Western colonial empires.
- The driver for reassembly was the USSR, the Soviet empire.
- Arab states played the empires against one another, often tilting to the USSR.
- Russia’s implosion eliminated a patron.
- Muslims saw the need for self-reliance.

Redressing the imbalance

- Technology's "glide slope to the desktop"
  - Every technology has its glide slope (where the angle of descent indicates the cost threshold of acquisition over time) where its capacity will ultimately get to anyone's desktop, anywhere and for any purpose.
  - Minor states and tribes can now get the "Maxim Gun."
- Fourth generation warfare (4GW)
  - Undermine enemy strengths (whereas most modern warfare has involved direct attacks on enemy strengths).
  - Exploit enemy weaknesses.
  - Use asymmetric operations (weapons and techniques that differ substantially from opponents).

Overwhelming force less effective in 4GW environments

- Generations of warfare
  - First generation: Napoleonic wars, conscription and firearms.
  - Second generation: US Civil War and WW I, firepower and nation-state alignment of resources to warfare.
  - Third generation: WW II, maneuver, aerial and armored warfare.
  - Fourth generation -- ad hoc warriors and moral conflict.
- US has performed well in first three generations.
- US is less well prepared for wide 4GW confrontations.

Islam's many complexities

- Islam is not monolithic; its Sunni and Shia division parallel our Protestant-Catholic divide.
- Division largely based upon who ascended to the Caliphate at Mohammed's death: the prophet's trusted childhood friend and ally, Abu Bakr, or Ali, the husband of the prophet's daughter, Fatima.
- Wide spectrum of liberal (Egypt and parts of the Maghreb) to conservative (Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia) and the battle rages between their conservatism as much as between the theologies of Sunni versus Shia.
- "Arab unity" is a contradiction in terms; growing resentment is a potential reuniting force for a non-monolithic Islam.
- Islam had its Martin Luther in Mohammed for much the same reasons.
- Islam had its conservative resurgence in the Whahabistic Renaissance that swept the Saudi peninsula.

Regional curiosities

- While Shias account for only 10 % of Muslims worldwide, they account for 40 % of Muslims in the region from the Levant to the Persian Gulf.
- Iranians are Shia but not Arab; depending on preference, they are Persian or Iranian.
- Persian Iran is the regional adversary of Sunni Arab Saudi Arabia.

Conservatives versus Modernists

- Conservatives believe that Islam achieved its zenith in the Medinian society under the guidance of Prophet Mohammed and the four “rightly guided caliphs,” encompassing the laws of the faith as developed during the early centuries of Islam, and so is rightly a closed cultural system that allows for no change.
- Modernists, in their attempt to make Islam relevant to modern society, attempt to insert a contemporary Western ethos into Islam, reinterpreting Islam’s fundamentals in such a way as to provide what amounts to a sanctioning forum for the introduction of new ideas and an authentication for adopting Western legal, social and economic institutions.

Both are unhappy

- Conservatives and modernists share pride in past glory and have confidence in a better future, but views of past, present and future vary greatly.
- Conservatives believe the authority of the past is valid for the present and the future, i.e., the past is ideal, and if Islam were only to resuscitate it, it would regain its ascendancy in the world. Religion is the totality of life.
  - Reform means resuscitation, requiring Islam is to eliminate, by force if necessary, all alien elements that have attached themselves to the faith and thus drained its life.
- Modernists see the past as crucially important for bringing an element of pride and dignity to the individual and endowing Islamists with the ability to function in the modern world.
  - Reform means creative innovation, removing Islam's suffocating strictures that have not adjusted to changing realities and have arrested in its development and growth.

Can Muslim moderates survive their conservatives?

- Sunni's "fatwa chaos" – Unlike Shias, there is no central authority responsible for issuing penultimate rulings on doctrinal questions.
- Each Sunni Imam can preach and invoke within an enormously wide latitude, thus opening the possibility for contradictory "sweeping, ill-defined statements" that can be] interpreted as a "mandate to undertake any violence, no matter how vicious."
- Islamic reformers face an uphill battle as "whenever they attempt to depart from Qur'anic literalism" or literalism in Hadith (oral sayings of the Prophet), they become vulnerable to charges from radicals of infidelity to Islam.
- Islamic reinterpretation will be lengthy and dangerous as it is all too easy for a reformer to be ruled an apostate to the faith by a conservative cleric with a following and thus be open to summary execution for that 'lapse' of faith.
- This may be an insurmountable problem for those who would reform Islam, at least among Sunnis.

Apocalyptic Islam

- Apocalyptic Islam is a vibrant strand of conservative Islam that is helping propel terrorist efforts.
- Most modern Muslim apocalyptic scenarios start with the Arab-Israel conflict or the 1990 Gulf War.
- A Muslim Antichrist called Dajal will gain control over most of the world, leading the West and Israel against Muslims.
- Muslim nations and Islam is the quintessential apocalyptic tradition, with nearly 5000 messiahs, or mahdis.
- Islam's apocalyptic groups demand an imperative to conquer the world before the expected Hour of Judgment.
- While dormant for hundreds of years, any reappearance will be explosive.

Parsing political from traditional Islam

- Superficially dangerously wrong: “religion drives both Islamic culture and politics and that the motivation for Islamist violence is religious fundamentalism.”
- Reality: Islam is a sea of interpretations, large and small. Muslims “disagree, while all stressing that the Koran is unambiguous and clear-cut.”
- Zawahiri and bin Laden married two heretofore distinct arms of Islamic thinking, the ultra-strict, quietist Wahhabi (Salafist) school and the more autonomous and activist strand of political Islam of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (which was itself injected with the thinking of Sayad Maududi's Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) from Pakistan where it still holds sway today).
- Wahhabism was “elevated to the status of a liberation theology” to “free the region of communism.”

Political Islam

- Conceptualizing Islam interlinked with socio-economic and political systems, Islam became a “movement which struggles (jihad) to enforce “the way of life.””
- In the hands of the Brotherhood fleeing to Saudi Arabia to avoid persecution, it took control of Saudi intellectual life, shaping the country's religious and political awakening after the Iranian revolution of 1979.
- A new generation of radicals carried this new activist Wahhabism into the Middle East and Asia.
- The US used Saudi money and religion to free Afghanistan from the Soviets.

Isn’t blowback wonderful?

- Now dominating Islamist politics, Jihadist Islam was an ideology of marginal political significance in the late 1970s.
- The Afghan jihad against the Soviets was the birth of modern jihadist Islam, embracing violence as central to political action.
- It was the Reagan administration that set aside the then-common secular national liberation model in favor of international Islamic jihad.
- Afghan rebels used charities to recruit tens of thousands of volunteers and created the militarized madrassas (Islamic schools) that turned volunteers into paramilitary cadres.
- Without Afghanistan, the Mujahideen wouldn’t have had the numbers, training, organization, coherence and sense of mission that has since turned jihadist Islam into a global political force.

Islam's Marxist trajectory in Europe

- Islam appears to have succeeded Marxism as Europe's "ideology of contestation." As Marxism then and Islam now:
  - Working class political voice, immigrants included.
  - Voice of idealism amid disillusionment (that "transnational ideology" leading to Utopia).
  - Similar working-class political districts (moving from Communist to Communist-led to Muslim-populated to Muslim-led).
  - Pragmatic, law-abiding mainstream but with an extremist element.
- Initial Marxist outreach to Muslims replacing working-class populations withered as Communists failed to promote Muslims.
- Disillusioned Muslims dropped political action; many turned to religion and the solace of an isolated self-reinforcing group.

European Islam's outcome in doubt

- Muslims opposed to cooperation are only isolated physically within European society; they are vibrantly connected by satellite TV and internet to the most fundamental Imams and the most vitriolic cant.
- Not clear to me that the broader Muslim population of Europe will follow Communism's shedding its revolutionary extremism, shifting to assimilation within European democratic political life.
- UK's Pakistani and France's North African immigrant experiences are not promising.
- While inward-looking fundamentalists are by definition politically insignificant, it is not their political insignificance that concerns me but rather their militancy, their willingness to unilaterally enforce a Borg-like assimilation on their terms.

Arc of instability

- Arc of Instability spanning Middle East, Asia, Africa:
  - Functioning Core: “globalization is thick with network connectivity, financial transactions, liberal media flows, and collective security”
  - Non-Integrating Gap: globalization is thinning or absent.
  - “Seam states”: Core will have to “seek to suppress bad things coming out of the Gap.”
- Trashcanistan - coined from ex-Soviet statelets:
  - Economic collapse.
  - “Gangland violence among state ministers.”
  - Rising Fascism.
  - Rising Islamic fundamentalism.
  - Population flight.
- Failed state trajectory accelerates from ‘failing’ to ‘collapsed.’
- Many Muslim states or substantial sects are in the Arc.

Aid is not solely a Western enterprise; it is not a compliance weapon

- Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) provides majority of humanitarian aid.
- Non-DAC donors give between 1 and 12 % of total humanitarian aid, but influence is crucial in their spheres, .e.g., North Korea and Palestinian territories.
- if the Quartet (US, EU, UN and Russia) suppress aid in the absence of Hamas or other players rejecting violence and recognizing Israel, Iran, China or other Gulf States can fund.
- In that event, the US, EU and UN would be dispossessed and lose what little leverage they had.
- Withholding aid has confirmed Arabs' view of double standard.

Islam and the West inhale completely different messages

- In the West:
  - Tend to think of images only in terms of cameras and television; Photography is separate from narrative.
- In the Arab world:
  - Language is full of images, which cannot be separated from narrative. Arabic is a metaphorical language, rich in shades of meaning. The image-based style of the Arabic language acts as an excellent interface with pictures.
- Thus television is terribly important.
- Consider effect when Majid Abdul Hadi, an al-Jazeera reporter in Baghdad, shows a picture of a coalition bomb landing while referring to Baghdad as the pulsing heart of the Muslim caliphate, a pulsing heart engulfed in flame."

Disastrous propaganda gap, deprived of realistic means to solve

- Our marketing effort is failing across the ‘support’ spectrum:
  - Hard Support (for US government): Regimes and their retainers
  - Soft Support: Regimes and their retainers, a few technocrats
  - Neutral: Some of the professional class and some regular & poor
  - Soft Opposition: The overwhelming majority
  - Hard Opposition: A substantial minority (more than we want to admit)
- Muslims “see American policies as inimical to their values, American rhetoric about freedom and democracy as hypocritical, and American actions as deeply threatening”
- Americans are convinced that the US “is a benevolent “superpower” that elevates values emphasizing freedom and prosperity as at the core of its own national interest.”
- Americans are too ready to operate under a belief system that “U.S. values” are in reality “world values.”

Abu Ghraib

- Inject Abu Ghraib photos into an Arab, even wider Muslim, culture that often uses imagery (to us sensational imagery) over text to deliver its message.
- Already inflamed against the US to a degree unappreciated by US readers, Muslims interpret those images through a subtext alien to US readers.
- Arabs' belief system rose with the Crusaders and continued through Western colonial occupation, Suez, all the Arab-Israeli wars, the Intifada, and now Iraq:
  - Americans and Israelis are barbaric, and these images add confirmation.
  - Arabs are heroic in their asymmetrical victories and in their sufferings.
- Arabs watch a completely different war than do US nationals.
- Each is reinforced by the 'truth' that they see and become increasingly less willing to negotiate.

Competing spheres of influence

- US and al Qaeda have competing spheres of influence that are irresolvable other than by a massive application of force or a cooperative, genuine hearts and minds campaign.
- US will not leave the Middle East or yield an interest in sustaining the House of Saud and thus a stable supply of energy.
- Al Qaeda has been consistent in the first two complaints against the US and the West, adding the third when it suited bin Laden's political goals:
  - Supporting tyrannical governments in Muslim states.
  - Continuing presence and influence in the Arabian peninsula.
  - Supporting Israel which is regarded as a “crusader outpost.”
- Al Qaeda sees US as the linchpin baring achievement.
- Until we yield on all three points, they will continue to bear animus against us. There is no room for compromise.

Misperceptions of al Qaeda

- US foreign policy enrages al Qaeda, not our culture and society. Bin Laden doesn't “hate our freedom.”
- Muslims are bothered by our modernity, democracy, and sexuality, but they are rarely spurred to action unless US forces encroach on their lands.
- Bin Laden is an eloquent and rational actor, not a madman.
- As Islam has no separation of church and state, al Qaeda sees US evangelicals as speaking for the state.
- Al Qaeda's “terrorist training camps” were primarily for paramilitary troops to fight their “corrupt” native governments.
- Fixating on terrorists ignored the growing, well-trained Islamist forces the camps were producing.

Failing to separate non-violent Muslim majority from radical-militant Islamists

- Worse, the US has achieved the opposite:
  - US direct intervention in the Muslim World has paradoxically elevated the stature of, and support for, radical Islamists, while diminishing support for the US to single-digits in some Arab societies.
  - Overwhelming Muslim majority object to what they see as one-sided support in favor of Israel and against Palestinian rights, and the longstanding, even increasing, support for Muslim "tyrannies," e.g., Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Pakistan and Gulf states.
  - US talk of bringing democracy to Islamic societies is seen as self-serving hypocrisy, "freedom is the future of the Middle East" is seen as patronizing.
  - US occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq has not led to democracy there, but only more chaos and suffering; US actions appear to be motivated by ulterior motives.

US actions since 9/11 has essentially borne out radical Islamists' agenda

- US actions have elevated Jihadi insurgent authority and tended to ratify their legitimacy among Muslims:
  - Fighting groups gain broad public support by portraying themselves as true defenders of an Ummah (entire Muslim community) invaded and under attack.
  - A marginal network is now an Ummah-wide movement of fighting groups.
  - "Terrorist" groups proliferated.
  - Unifying context of a shared cause creates a sense of affiliation across the many cultural and sectarian boundaries that divide Islam.

Systems analysis of Muslim terrorist organizations

- Four ideological strategies of Arab terrorists for returning Islam to prominence by returning to the practices of the devout ancestors (salaf):
  - Defense of the faith when sanctioned by fatwa (legal opinion) as a personal obligation for all Muslims.
  - The call to Islam (dawa), peaceful preaching that avoids publicity and politics.
  - Salafi jihad that brands present Muslim societies and there leaders as in a barbaric state of ignorance (jahiliyya) and so must be destroyed.
  - Global Salafi Jihad that confronts the “far enemy” (the West, US, and Israel) before attacking the “near enemy” that survives on Western aid.

Systems analysis of Muslim terrorist organizations, 2

- Profiles show a preponderance of “solid upper or middle class backgrounds, age under thirty, caring intact families, religiousness as children, relatively good education, married with children, had good occupational training.”
- Little evidence of the traditional drivers of terrorism: poverty, trauma, madness, and ignorance.
- Social bonds predate ideological commitment; inspired alienated young Muslims join the jihad. Forms dense social networks, isolated from society.
- “Scale free network” (nodes clustered around large hubs) makes it robust and resistant to chance or random attack, but vulnerable to attack against hubs.

Surviving a 4GW opponent

- US has been successful in recent wars but encountered difficulty in securing its political aims after the shooting stopped. (Post WW II was an exception.)
- A vision of war that sees the “enemy as a target set and believes that when all or most of the targets have been hit, he will inevitably surrender” is now insufficient.
- US (or Israeli) armed forces must do “more than break things and kill people” if they desire to change the regime in another state and secure the support of the defeated populace for the new government:
  - They must secure critical infrastructure and population centers.
  - They have to maintain order and prevent the development of humanitarian catastrophes likely to undermine efforts to establish a stable new regime.

Hezbollah is something not seen for centuries: a capable Muslim army

- Unfortunately for the Sunnis, it is a Shia army trained by Persians.
- All recent Sunni armies have fallen to colonial or Israeli forces, a fact not lost on the Arab street.
- Hezbollah can fight, acquire and employ sophisticated weaponry (albeit some systems are most likely under direct Iranian control) and employ combat operations appropriate to its condition and environment.
- Israel's inability to best it is a turning point in the Levant.
- Hezbollah presents a threat greater than al Qaeda if and when it elects to strike out beyond Palestine at the US and EU.
- Despite being Shia, it has given rise to an Islamist force instead of an Arab one.

“Paltustan”
Israel’s Bantustan equivalent

- Israel is treating the Palestinians as the former Afrikaans government in Pretoria treated its “Afs” (black Africans).
- Israelis has established its own series of Bantustan-like statelets, expropriating Arab lands, destroying their means of livelihood even as it offers an ever shrinking Gerrymandered remnant to the Palestinians.
- Were this one Arab nation or tribe oppressing another, we would take no specially notice, unless they possessed petroleum stocks.
- The “problem” in this case is that Israel is a Jewish state and its regional counterparts are various forms of Islam.
- The destruction leveled on these Palestinian enclaves may not match the destruction of Hama by Hafez al Assad, or the destruction of the Kurds and “Reed Arabs” by Saddam Hussein, but the oppressor is non-Arab.

Understanding why they did it: history of Abu Nidal

- Born Sabri al-Banna, Abu Nidal was nearly the al Qaeda of his day, accused of having killed or injured 900 people in attacks in 20 countries since 1974.
- Born in Jaffa in 1937 in British-governed Palestine, Abu Nidal was the son of the most prosperous orange grower in Jaffa, a child born with a silver spoon who attended French and Arabic schools.
- Abu Nidal was around eleven when his family was forced off their orchards and thrust into a refugee tent in Gaza.
- Whenever I tell his story to Israeli supporters, they invariably look away until I change the subject.
- Dying in 2002, Abu Nidal was monomaniacally focused and ruthless. We are breeding a generation in Palestine to replace him.

Israel's third patron after USSR and France: United States

- Time was prescient in its warning that "winning the hearts and minds of the Arabs away from communism was made hopelessly difficult by US policy on Israel":
  - *The word 'American' no longer has a good sound in that part of the world. To catch the Jewish vote in the US, president Harry S Truman in 1946 demanded that the British admit 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine, in violation of British promises to the Arabs. Since then, the Arab nations surrounding Israel have regarded that state as a US creation, and the US, therefore, as an enemy. The Israeli-Arab war created nearly a million Arab refugees, who have been huddled for three years in wretched camps. These refugees, for whom neither the US nor Israel would assume the slightest responsibility, keep alive the hatred of US perfidy. No enmity for the Arabs, no selfish national design motivated the clumsy US support of Israel. The American crime was not to help the Jews, but to help them at the expense of the Arabs. Today, the Arab world fears and expects a further Israeli expansion. The Arabs are well aware that Alben Barkley, vice president of the US, tours his country making speeches for the half-billion-dollar Israeli bond issue, the largest ever offered to the US public. Nobody, they note bitterly, is raising that kind of money for them.*

Time Magazine, January 1952

- Arabs forget that the US forced the Tripartite forces of the UK, France, and Israel to withdraw from Egypt in 1952 after it had nationalized the Suez Canal (but offered to pay reparations, which it did)
- Egypt won political victory even as it suffered a military defeat.

Israel's divine gift in the 1957 Eisenhower Doctrine

- The 1957 Eisenhower Doctrine that opposed international communism by providing military assistance to MidEast countries, including the employment of US forces, was a gift to Israel:
  - *Israel saw anti-communism in the Middle East as God's gift to the new Jewish nation on Arab land and became a fervent supporter of the Eisenhower Doctrine, with wholesale marginalization of the Israeli left and moderates in Israeli politics. Instead of moving in the direction of the Switzerland model, as a neutral oasis in a sea of rising Arabic nationalism against "divide and rule" imperialism, contributing to the development of the region for the benefit of all, Israel presented itself as an outpost of European imperialism and US neo-imperialism, setting itself up as a hostile garrison state in a region where Jews are outnumbered by 50 to one.*
- Communism fanned anti-imperialism in the colonies while creating pressure to placate "Third World nationalism to keep it from going communist."

Israel commences a disengagement from the US

- Tel Aviv is “shorn of a lot of hubris” over the events of August 2006.
- Tel Aviv is asking tough questions publicly about what happens next.
- For the first time, there is a chorus of voices, some still behind closed doors, but many in the media, that is beginning to call into question the meaning of US foreign policy trajectory to Israel.
- The widening fear is that US policy is detrimental to Israel and its interests in the region.

Israel commences a disengagement from the US

- Shlomo Ben-Ami, former Israeli foreign minister, in Haaretz:
  - *An arrangement with Syria and the Palestinians based on internationally agreed-on principles is also essential [for Israel] because of the worrisome decline of the status of Israel's ally in this part of the world and beyond. U.S. deterrence, and respect for the superpower, have been eroded unrecognizably, and Israel is still having difficulty adapting its diplomatic and security strategies… An exclusive pax americana in the Middle East is no longer possible because not only is the U.S. not an inspiration today, it does not instill fear.*
- Israel's Foreign Minister, Tsipy Livney, is in Italy, not the US.
- Israel feels that the way out of the Lebanese impasse as embraced by Israel is through Europe, not the US.
- The US was not talking, chose not to have contacts in the region, and was not in a position to be part of any deployment of a ceasefire implementation force; so Israel is relying on the Europeans.

US has overreached itself, not kept its "enemies to a manageable number"

- Separate threats:
  - Treat rogue states separately from terrorist organizations, and separate terrorist organizations at war with the US from those that aren't.
- Substitute credible deterrence for preventive war as primary policy for dealing with rogue states seeking to acquire WMD:
  - Shift US focus from rogue state WMD acquisition to rogue state use of WMD.
- Refocus the GWOT first and foremost on al-Qaeda, its allies, and homeland security.
- Seek rogue-state regime change via measures short of war.
- Be prepared to settle for stability rather than democracy in Iraq, and international rather than US responsibility for Iraq.
- Reassess U.S. force levels, especially ground force levels.

Not all Muslims are enemies

- Muslim groups are mostly indigenous, mostly nationalistic.
- Al Qaeda is a parasite on groups which couldn’t care less about a new Caliphate.
- We need to choose our enemies and friends based on our national aims, instead of letting al Qaeda chose them by which ever side they’ve joined.

Stop harming ourselves

- Recent US diplomacy isolated the US, not the terrorists:
  - Highly polarizing rhetoric and martial terminology.
  - Mideast diplomacy as a zero-sum game, a practice which demanded that the US lose every time if we forced locals to choose between the US/Israel and Hamas/Hezbollah/Syria/Iran.
  - Excessive democratization speech, whereas locals wanted other things *more* than democracy: their religion, nationalism and sectarian culture.
  - Gave democracy a bad name by associating with it with dodgy enterprises such as Iraq.
- US positioned itself on the wrong side of issues that locals cared most about, issues that primarily involved:
  - Muslims and non-Muslims.
  - Occupiers and non-occupiers.

Adapting mission and language to target

- Most of the terrorists are in states that we don't intend to invade: Pakistan, UK, Germany and Saudi Arabia.
- As it is not a war in those terms we need to replace inexact terminology:
  - Find new narrative with more precise terminology and analysis.
  - Greater discretion in choosing our enemies.
  - Craft message for both an internal and external constituency.
  - Return to traditional diplomacy as opposed to transformational diplomacy.

Controlled failure is not acceptable foreign policy; attrition is not victory

- Current US policy to the Middle East is not effective.
- I caution listeners not to brand me anti-Bush as it not clear that a Clinton or other Democratic administration would have done better, but while Democratic performance is an unknown, we have *prima facia* evidence that the policy on offer is merely controlled failure.
- Our weapons and technology in isolation will not overcome cooperative diplomacy and a sustained multi-administration, multi-generational hearts-and-minds campaign that should have a Marshall Plan level of focus and commitment.
- Witness the Israeli effort against Hezbollah.
- Witness Hezbollah's "Marshall Plan" that started the day after cessation of hostilities in Lebanon.

A productive US strategy

- Defuse current crisis, including direct engagement with Syria and Iran.
- Convey interest in a broader strategic dialogue with the al Assad regime, re-establishing US-Syrian cooperation on important regional issues with the promise of significant strategic benefits to Syria.
- Be willing to pursue a “Grand Bargain” with Iran, in which the Islamic republic accepts restraints on its nuclear activities and abandons support for terrorist activities of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah in return for US commitments not to use force to change Iran's borders or form of government, to lift unilateral sanctions, and to normalize bilateral relations.
- US and key partners articulate a more substantive vision for a two-state solution to the Palestinian question, including parameters for resolving key final-status issues meeting the minimum requirements of both sides. This vision incorporates the Saudi-initiated Arab League peace plan.
- Engage moderate Arab partners more systematically on economic reform and human rights, but drop insistence on early open electoral processes as a litmus test for “democratization.”

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