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U.S. POLICY

Selling Out Moderate Islam

Weekly Standard

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

2/20

The Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, like Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's 1989 fatwa against the British author Salman Rushdie and those who helped publish his *Satanic Verses*, have revealed more disturbing things about the West than they have about Muslims in Europe and the Middle East. With Rushdie, Westerners deplored the Iranian cleric's death warrant but often temporized their condemnation by suggesting that the then hard-left author had been, as the former, redoubtable New York Times correspondent Kennett Love once put it, "mean to Islam." (Few prominent Muslim clerics and intellectuals could bring themselves to make an unqualified condemnation of Khomeini's actions; an enormous number of Muslim clerics, intellectuals, and scholars chose to remain quiet, and in their silence there was surely often both fear and assent.)

With Denmark, the initial response of the Bush administration aligned America more with those Muslims who felt the cartoons impugned their sacred messenger than with the European press that had printed the caricatures. Sean McCormack, the assistant secretary of state for public affairs, declared, "Anti-Muslim images are as unacceptable as anti-Semitic images, as anti-Christian images, or any other religious belief." Former President Clinton echoed this sentiment while visiting the Persian Gulf emirate Qatar: "None of us are totally free of stereotypes about people of different races, different ethnic groups, and different religions. . . . There was this appalling example in northern Europe, in Denmark, . . . these totally outrageous cartoons against Islam." Senator John Kerry, too, took umbrage: "These and other inflammatory images deserve our scorn, just as the violence against embassies and military installations are an unacceptable and intolerable form of protest."

Former Democratic congressman Tim Roemer, a member of the 9/11 Commission, which was deeply worried about the woeful image of the United States in the Muslim world, articulated what many Democrats and Republicans were surely thinking but not saying: "We have done precious little to effectively communicate to the hearts and minds and win that long-term war. . . . This seems to be an opportunity to condemn the cartoons and communicate directly with the Muslim people on a host of issues." And across the Atlantic, French President Jacques Chirac, who still hasn't recovered from Muslim French youth rioting last fall, gave the most "sensitive" European response: "Anything liable to offend the beliefs of others, particularly religious beliefs, must be avoided."

Beyond the question of whether any of these men really means what he says--it's not hard to imagine Clinton, Kerry, the Anglophone Chirac, or McCormack enjoying Monty Python's relentlessly mocking, anti-Christian romps *Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*--they all echo a common view about Muslim sentiments and Western policy since 9/11, and especially since the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. To wit: We need to encourage interfaith dialogue, we need to show that the West, particularly America, is not opposed to Islam, and we need to solve, or at least play down, points of friction between the West and the Islamic world. (Until the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections, this view inevitably underscored progress on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as indispensable to better relations.)

Anti-Americanism is the great bugaboo for these folks, and the more wonkish among them often have at their finger-tips polling data showing what a sorry state the United States is in among Muslims worldwide. A good, highly polemical example of this mindset is *The Next Attack* by Daniel Benjamin and Steve Simon, former counterterrorist officials in the Clinton administration. In their book, Benjamin and Simon zealously use polls, and the opinions of unnamed American and European intelligence officials, to argue that the Bush administration is losing the war against Islamic holy warriors.

However well intended, this empathetic view is seriously wrong-headed. It camouflages what is really at stake in Denmark and the rest of Europe with these cartoons. This type of hearts-and-minds strategy will inevitably backfire, compromising the very Muslims that this administration and liberal Democrats would most like to see advance in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States.

For better or worse, expatriate and foreign-educated Middle Easterners have helped to shape decisively the secular and religious cultures that have dominated their homelands since World War II. Many of the best and brightest of the Middle East now live abroad. Many have sought greater freedom of expression and personal liberty in the West. Is it Presidents Clinton and Chirac's desire that Muslim satirists never develop because their work would be insensitive to less irreverent Muslims? In its heyday, Islamic civilization contained many heterodox and heretical strains. In particular, Shiism, always a vehicle for minority protest, was rich in movements and cultural experimentation that sometimes electrified and horrified the Sunni Muslim world.

It is possible that Muslims living outside the Middle East will have a substantial role to play in revivifying Islamic civilization--in shedding some light on the convulsive path that one may still hope will lead from dysfunctional dictatorship through bin Ladenism to more peacefully self-critical, democratic societies. If Westerners appease Muslims who countenance violent intimidation, we are doing a terrible injustice to the liberal and progressive Muslims among us, who really would like to live in lands where people can say about the Prophet Muhammad what they have said about Jesus, Mary, and Moses. Among the Muslims of the United States and Europe, if not in the Middle East, there are many who have Western cultural sentiments and wit. The irreverent, religiously skeptical Western elite has Muslim members and Middle Eastern counterparts of equal intelligence and similar tastes. Islamic civilization may yet produce its Edward Gibbon, a sincere religious voyager who ends up scrutinizing the foundations of his civilization with a skeptical, cynical, and, at times, profoundly unfair irreligious eye. It would appear that if President Clinton had his way, a Muslim Gibbon would not be welcome in the United States.

The fate of European Muslims is now openly in play. The militant Muslims of Europe who do not want their brethren to embrace the continent's liberal, thoroughly secular culture helped fuel this controversy by emailing and faxing the offending cartoons to their spiritual allies in the Middle East. Most European Muslims, like their non-Muslim compatriots, didn't notice and probably would not have cared about these caricatures, if it had not been for the activist imams in their midst.

As important, the governments of the region also took sides. As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice noted, somewhat tardily, the Syrian and Iranian regimes are trying to exploit this event for all that it's worth. Damascus and Tehran, more closely allied than ever before, are under pressure from the West for their terrorist and nuclear ambitions, respectively. Both have responded by inciting demonstrations in Lebanon and Syria. It is a bizarre spectacle to observe the heretical Shiite-Alawite Baathist regime in Damascus--which has in the past been on the cutting edge of anti-Islamic pan-Arab nationalist propaganda and slaughtering thousands in the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood--now defend the Prophet Muhammad from Danish despoliation.

Tehran has probably also been behind the demonstrations in Iraq. And the government-controlled media throughout the region, especially in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have not been helpful. As the French scholar Olivier Roy acutely noted in *Le Monde*, Europe is now in the cross hairs of many Middle Eastern governments for its more activist role in the region since the invasion of Iraq. The French, British, and Germans have taken the lead in trying to thwart Tehran's nuclear ambitions. France has sided with the United States against Syria in Lebanon. Most of Europe under the umbrella of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is now in Afghanistan, increasingly in combat roles against Taliban insurgents and the holy warriors of al Qaeda. And however timidly, Europe has joined the United States in calling for more open political systems in the Muslim Middle East. Democracy is an ugly word to most of the region's rulers. With official encouragement, anti-Europeanism is bound to rise throughout the area. Muslim autocrats, in conjunction with European and Middle Eastern Muslim militants, are likely to interfere increasingly in Europe's internal affairs to create fear and a more hesitant European community.

And the controversy over the Danish cartoons could conceivably betray the most important, though least remembered, player in this controversy: the average Muslim in the Middle East. Far more than most Middle Eastern Muslims and politically correct Western scholars of the region and Islam would like to admit, Western standards for individual liberty, curiosity, personal integrity, scholarship, and the political relations among men have become the defining benchmarks for Muslims everywhere, however resented or admired. If our standards collapse and give way to fear, theirs in the long-term have no chance whatsoever. The psychology of victimization--surely one of the worst gifts the Western anti-imperialist left has given the Muslim world--can only be made worse by Westerners who treat Muslims like children unable to compete and to defend their religion.

In the Middle Ages, Christian theologians said vastly worse things about the Prophet Muhammad than the Danish cartoons implied. Back then, Muslims cognizant of what the Christians were writing usually took it in stride, not too perturbed by the ruminations and calumnies of a superseded faith. Non-Muslims living beyond the writ of Islamic law were not expected to respect a prophet not their own. That is, after all, what it means to be benighted infidels.

To be healthy, Muslim pride and political systems need to be based on real accomplishments, where the average believer can feel that he is participating in a larger, productive enterprise. (In the classical and medieval Islamic eras, when Muslim armies usually defeated their non-Muslim enemies, manifestly fulfilling the divine promise that Muslims were God's chosen people, maintaining both collective and individual pride was much easier.) Western indulgence of supposed Muslim outrage over these cartoon insults to the prophet is pretty demeaning. It can only fortify the destructive, self-pitying impulses that all too often paralyze Muslim conversations and thought. (One of the more bizarre facts of the modern Middle East is to see the ruling Muslim elites of these countries--men and women of considerable influence and privilege--bemoan their powerlessness owing to the hidden, omnipresent, all-powerful machinations of the West, in particular, the United States.)

Lurking behind much of the American response to the Danish cartoons is a difficult, probably impossible, and certainly unnecessary short-term foreign-policy goal: improving the image of the United States among Muslims. There is perhaps nothing more debilitating for the Bush administration than to believe that anti-anti-Americanism ought to be a key component in our overseas policy. Anti-Americanism in and of itself is not a catalyst for Islamic terrorism. There are many other, vastly more important things, both historical and personal, at work inside young Muslim men (and occasionally women) who decide to kill themselves and others to express their love of God and their hatred of the United States. Muslims who loathe these holy-war killers and want to see them extirpated from their societies can often themselves dislike, if not hate, the United States for a wide variety of reasons, some legitimate, some fictitious, some surreal. On the traditional side, Muhammad Sayyid at-Tantawi, the head of al-Azhar, Cairo's famous seat of Sunni Islamic learning, and Egypt's grand mufti, Ali Gomaa, would probably fall in this category. So would the European Muslim "modernist" Tariq Ramadan and many members of the Arabic Al Jazeera television network, who can marry a real hatred for bin Laden with an exuberant loathing of the United States. Iraq is chock-full of devoutly religious Shiite and Sunni Muslims who abhor suicide bombers and religious radicals in their midst yet harbor--have probably always harbored--distinctly unfriendly attitudes toward the United States.

A greater liking for the United States would not enhance the counterterrorist credentials of any of the above. In all probability, more pro-American commentary by these men would do just the opposite. The spreading of democracy in the Arab Middle East will naturally increase, not diminish, anti-Americanism. The only exceptions to this rule may be Iraq and Syria.

Syria is the least certain, since the Syrian wing of the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood would probably do very well in any free election there. And the Brotherhood--unlike Iraq's Shiite religious parties, which have seen an American-led war against a barbarous tyrant and the enormous rise in pro-American sentiment in Shiite Iran--is consistently and deeply anti-American, as is the Brotherhood mothership in Egypt. We should not, however, be alarmed by this phenomenon. There is just too much historical baggage for the United States to

overcome it quickly or easily.

Before the Bush administration, Washington usually gave unquestioning support to dictatorships in the region. And there is the little fact, always near the surface in the Muslim world but often ignored or forgotten in the United States, of nearly 1,400 years of always-competitive, often intimately antagonistic and violent, history between Christendom and Islam. There is Israel, which even the most liberal and moderate Muslims often acutely dislike. (The Jewish state is, after all, an existential insult to both Arab nationalism and Islamic pride, even for Arab Muslims who view Arab nationalism as a cultural catastrophe and view the faith as irrelevant to their lives.) And there is the very tricky issue of women, which often animates progressive, traditional, and fundamentalist conversations.

America is seen by all as a force supporting change in the dynamics between Muslim men and women. Touching the well-ordered, paternalistic home, which Muslim men, poor or rich, have always seen as a bedrock of their identity, is unavoidably convulsive. There is no way to gauge how many recruits fundamentalists have made on the women's issue since the Muslim Brotherhood formed in 1928. It's a decent bet that it has been a more intimate and effective message than the fraternal appeals after 1948 to eject the Jews from Israel.

American foreign policy has long been in the odd position of trying to assuage Muslim anger at Israel by advancing the peace process even though a sober analysis should have told Washington's diplomats that the fundamentalist set--the young men who are most susceptible to making the leap to suicidal holy war--did not see this process as progress. (The victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections has perhaps made evident what should have been obvious for years. But the sclerotic peace-process establishment in Washington, second in influence only to the transatlanticists, may not see what Hamas has tried to write as pellucidly as possible.)

And Washington has consistently advanced, especially in the Bush administration after 9/11, the women's agenda throughout the region, another sure-fire way of angering the young men who are most likely to transmute into jihadists. American foreign policy should never be tailored to appease the anger of Muslim men--though, if we are to be honest, this is in part what we've been trying to do in the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation and in much of our Muslim-oriented public-diplomacy.

What is striking is that Washington has been doing the opposite of what it intends and doesn't know it. Americans have acted, at least on the issues of Israel and women's rights, as if the Muslim world had a liberal silent majority waiting to rise up and embrace these issues as we do. In all likelihood, this isn't so. Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani of the holy city of Najaf in Iraq, who has repeatedly saved us from potential disaster in Mesopotamia, wrote numerous fatwas after the fall of Saddam Hussein on the proper comportment and dress for female believers. In Western eyes, his conclusions would hardly be called liberal--yet his commitment to democracy in Iraq is real. (Concerning the cartoons, Sistani also strongly condemned the "misguided and oppressive" elements of the Muslim community whose actions "projected a distorted and dark image of the faith of justice, love, and brotherhood." Though no fan of the caricatures, Sistani is giving a slap to Tehran and its agents in Iraq.)

As we saw in Egypt, the West Bank, and Gaza, Sunni Muslim fundamentalists are going to be among those pushing seriously for democratic change in the Middle East, and will, as in the Palestinian territories, surely be among those who benefit most from the collapse of secular autocracy. A rise in anti-Americanism throughout the region seems inevitable. And it is healthy.

With dictatorship giving way to democracy, Muslims of various stripes will make their best case to their brethren on why they should be given a chance to govern. The religious radicalization of the Muslim body politic, which has gained ground under autocracy, will likely lose speed, if not rapidly reverse itself. Young men who feel most acutely the injustices of their societies and have the testosterone-driven determination to do something about it will have broader personal experience and a wider range of political options than to embrace just the mosque, where Muslims have usually found brave and tenacious popular heroes when they

could find them nowhere else. Let us be frank: For every Said Eddin Ibrahim, a courageous secular liberal who has seen the inside of Egypt's prisons, there are several religiously motivated dissidents who are willing to question President Mubarak's rule. Few of the Arab liberals and progressives one meets at conferences appear to have the intestinal fortitude of fundamentalists who are similarly opposed to their regimes.

What we have seen happen in the Islamic Republic of Iran under clerical dictatorship--the conversion of the most anti-American holy-warrior society into the least anti-American, probably most pro-democratic culture in the region--will likely happen elsewhere but even more rapidly if Sunni fundamentalists are given a chance to gain power democratically and demonstrate to their fellow Muslims how their interpretation of the Holy Law and Islamic history will improve their lives.

Correctly understood, anti-Americanism when it accompanies the loosening of political controls in the Middle East is a sign that the status quo that gave us bin Ladenism and 9/11--the perverse marriage of autocracy and Islamic extremism--is coming apart. Under dictatorship, Muslims cannot evolve politically. They will not be able to confront the "baggage" that all Middle Eastern Muslims have with the West, especially the United States, and come to a livable consensus on how they are going to absorb Western ideas, influence, and money. Even in Iran, where the bankruptcy of a virulently anti-American clerical dictatorship has done wonders for the democratic ethic and the prestige of the United States, a functioning democracy is probably the only way the Iranian people will find a sustainable, peaceful modus vivendi with their complicated love-hate for America. It is democracy, not dictatorship, that can best take Muslims through the difficult religious reformation that is well under way among both Shiites and Sunnis. (Correctly understood, bin Laden is an ugly expression of protest against the region's rot.)

This is all about internal Muslim evolution, about coming to terms with the centuries-long absorption of both good and bad Western ideas. It has absolutely nothing to do with whether the Israeli-Palestinian peace process can somehow soon resume. When al Qaeda's princes--bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi--rail against the intrusion of Western democracy into the Muslim world, they know what they are talking about. If it succeeds, democracy will eventually kill them off. It will pull fundamentalist believers--the pool that bin Ladenism must draw from to survive--into the great ethical and spiritual debates that can best happen when free people fight it out in elections. Only Muslims--only fundamentalist Muslims--have the power to kill off bin Ladenism. Historically, there is no reason to believe this will happen under the dictatorships that gave birth to Islamic extremism in the first place.

Like Christendom before it, the Muslim Middle East will have to work out its relation to modernity. The faster democracy arrives, the sooner the debates about God and man can begin in earnest. It will probably be for both Muslims and Westerners a nerve-racking experience. But we have no choice, since continuing autocracy will only make the militants' message stronger and judgment day, as in Iran, a possibly bloody revolutionary event. The electoral victory of Hamas should not give us pause. It should give us hope and encourage us to push for real elections where our national interest stands to gain the most--in Egypt and Iran. We should also not neglect to defend vigorously Christian, Muslim, or Jewish satirists, be they clever, banal, or ugly, wherever they may be found. Both elections and satire are basic to the evolution of the Muslim world.

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10 Questions For Karen Hughes

Time

By Elaine Shannon; Jay Carney

2/20

The former television reporter, known around the White House as the only person besides Laura Bush who

can tell the President he's wrong, now has the job of bridging the chasm between the U.S. and the Muslim world. Hughes, 49, spoke with TIME's Elaine Shannon and Jay Carney about how soccer and Oprah figure into her role as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

THERE'S A FAMOUS PICTURE IN OUR OFFICE OF A COWBOY SAYING "THERE WERE A HELLUVA LOT OF THINGS THEY DIDN'T TELL ME WHEN I HIRED ON WITH THIS OUTFIT." WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND OUT ABOUT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLIC-DIPLOMACY OUTFIT? I really didn't know what to expect. The morning after the President announced my appointment, the Vice President saw me and said, "Karen, my condolences. You just took the hardest job in government."

DO YOU SEE THE FURY OVER THE MUHAMMAD CARTOONS AS A SETBACK OR AN OPPORTUNITY? Well, I think this highlights the need for dialogue. The violence is wrong and counterproductive. I can understand why people are offended. That said, in a free society, people have the right to speak out even if others are offended. With freedom of the press also comes responsibility. We need to do a better job of talking through these difficult issues in a peaceful way.

HOW DO YOU MAKE SURE PEOPLE AREN'T JUST TELLING YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR? Right now, if we walked down [to the State Department's new media-monitoring unit], you'd see live what's happening on Arab TV. We have a young man who's watching the blogs, the Web chats. So when I walk in, I instantly can know what's being said. That unit publishes a daily rapid-response report. It goes to all the Cabinet Secretaries and all our ambassadors.

WE HEAR THAT AMBASSADORS AND EMBASSY PUBLIC-AFFAIRS PEOPLE ARE BEING TOLD TO GET OUT AND TALK MORE. There used to be a rule that you had to get clearance from public affairs before you did an interview. We've eliminated that because we want people to speak out. It's like what Ed Murrow used to say: "Public diplomacy needs to be in at the takeoff, not just the crash landing." ANY SURPRISES DURING YOUR MIDDLE EASTERN LISTENING TOUR LAST YEAR? When I was in Saudi Arabia, women there kept saying, "Your media said this, your media said that," and I finally realized they were talking about an Oprah Winfrey show about domestic violence in Saudi Arabia. Because they don't understand the independence of our media, they thought I put Oprah Winfrey up to that.

ARE THERE BOOKS BY SCHOLARS OF ISLAM THAT YOU FIND PARTICULARLY INSIGHTFUL? John Esposito at Georgetown has done a number of books. I've read excerpts of a lot of them. [Reza Aslan's] No God but God, I've read it. Here at the State Department, we've hosted several events, trying to educate our own employees. We've had three scholars and one cleric come and speak about Islamic culture and traditions, and we had a huge turnout.

A SKEPTIC MIGHT SAY THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREAT TO DO FIVE OR 10 YEARS AGO, BUT NOW YOU'VE GOT IRAQ AND A GENERAL PERCEPTION THAT AMERICA IS NOT A FRIEND TO MUSLIMS AROUND THE WORLD. I recognized going in that this is the work of decades, not of months or weeks. Bringing a cleric or a coach who perhaps was very anti-American to America, having them go home with perhaps a different view--that's not going to show up in a public-opinion poll in the next year. I told my staff this morning, "Sometimes I feel like I'm nibbling around the edges, but you just have to keep nibbling."

HOW DO YOU REACH BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL ELITES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS? In our exchange programs, we're making a real effort to reach out to young people in different populations, not just 'lites. We've got a World Cup program--soccer is a world sport, something America took up after the rest of the world--and so we're going to have our embassies very involved in inviting kids to come watch the games this summer.

YOUR SON IS A FRESHMAN AT STANFORD. DOES HE WANT TO STUDY ABROAD? I strongly urged him to consider studying overseas for at least a semester, preferably a year. But you never know. Sometimes when their moms suggest things, [kids] tend not to do them.

IS HE ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO WILL TELL YOU YOU'RE FULL OF IT IF YOU ARE? [Laughs]
Frequently!

Need to Know

Weekly Standard

Editorial

2/27

"Where was the nuclear material transported to?" asks an aide to Saddam Hussein, in a taped conversation released last week. He answers his own question: "A number of them were transported out of Iraq." This provocative snippet is part of 12 hours of taped exchanges between Saddam Hussein and his advisers. The tapes were found in Iraq after the war and were released last week by their American translator. The tapes are authentic. And they are seemingly of little interest to the U.S. government. A spokesman for John Negroponte, the director of national intelligence (DNI), downplayed their importance: "Analysts from the CIA and the DIA reviewed the translations and found that, while fascinating from a historical perspective, the tapes do not reveal anything that changes their postwar analysis of Iraq's weapons programs."

We suspect many Americans would be interested in learning more about this "nuclear material" and where it went when it was "transported out of Iraq"--and not just for "historical perspective." That doesn't mean the Saddam tapes contain some "smoking gun" on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. We don't yet know the circumstances of the Iraqi aide's conversation with his boss, or whether he was being truthful. It would certainly be nice to know more.

Unfortunately, Negroponte's dismissive attitude toward the 12 hours of Saddam tapes seems to reflect accurately the attitude of the intelligence community toward all of the documents captured in postwar Afghanistan and Iraq. It's an attitude his boss apparently doesn't share. Meeting with congressional leaders last Thursday, President George W. Bush said he wants the documents released, and released quickly.

For months, though, Negroponte and his staff have been in a tug-of-war with House Intelligence Committee chairman Peter Hoekstra, who is leading the effort to have the captured Iraqi documents released. As Stephen F. Hayes has reported on several occasions in this magazine, the U.S. government has more than two million "exploitable items" recovered in Afghanistan and Iraq since October 2001. And though there has been much talk of expediting the release of this material, Negroponte has stalled.

Late last week, a top DNI staffer met with Hoekstra. The meeting did not go well. "If there are 100 reasons not to make this information available, I got every one of them," Hoekstra told *The Weekly Standard* last week. "We have received a proposal that clearly demonstrates that the DNI is living in the analog age while the rest of us are in the digital age. At this rate, my grandkids and great-grandkids will be the first ones to see this information. And I don't even have grandkids yet."

The DNI proposal calls for small sets of documents to be farmed out to researchers at think tanks and universities. The documents would be scrubbed for sensitive information, and researchers would be required to sign nondisclosure agreements. The researchers could later request that documents be released to accompany publication of their work. At which point the documents would be subject to another review for sensitive information. How long would this process take? Did we mention that the DNI recently took two months to provide an insistent chairman of the House Intelligence Committee with a few dozen unclassified documents from Iraq that he had requested?

A glimpse of how this process might work could be seen with the release last week of a study about al Qaeda by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, accompanied by a small collection of documents captured in postwar Afghanistan. The researchers tell us in their foreword that the 28 documents were being

released "so that they can be analyzed and used to learn more about al Qaeda and better understand the organization." Making these documents available for additional study "is critical to developing an effective long-term counterterrorism strategy."

The documents are indeed interesting. According to one document, Osama bin Laden's chief deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, sought assistance for his terrorist operations from both Iraq and Iran. Another al Qaeda document by an unknown author provides some "lessons learned" from the experience of the past jihadist-Iraq collaboration and concludes that such relationships can be counterproductive and are to be avoided in the future. Other documents offer insight into the personal and ideological conflicts among al Qaeda's senior operatives. In short, we know more now than we did a week ago.

But this is the first such glimpse in the more than four years since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. And the Saddam tapes released last week, no thanks to the intelligence community, are a sliver of the 3,000-some hours of recordings of Saddam Hussein meeting with top aides.

If President Bush believes such materials should be released, as he has assured several members of Congress, he might at least pick up the phone and have a talk with John Negroponte. This material is too important to wait for Rep. Hoekstra's great-grandkids.

Cash vs. Terror

Newsweek

By Michael Hirsh and Kevin Peraino

2/27

As they passed over the border, the Palestinian workers had their sweat shirts slung over their shoulders like sacks, each one bulging with Israeli oranges. Awaiting the young men on the other side of the Erez Crossing--a checkpoint that separates Israel from Gaza--was a huge crowd that pressed forward, shouting and shoving to get at the oranges. Palestinians waved 20-shekel notes, yelling, "That's a good one!" and "Leave that to me!" The bidding at this squalid spot market began at midafternoon. But even later that evening, a few desperate Palestinians were still scrounging around on the dirty floor, searching for any oranges that might have dropped in the filth. There were peels everywhere.

The Palestinian fruit frenzy, which occurred earlier this month after Israel shut a separate border crossing, is an incident that Hamas would do well to remember as it forms a new Palestinian government in coming weeks. Not that the Israelis--or their chief allies, the Americans--will let Hamas forget. By closing its borders or restricting work permits, Israel can cause economic desperation whenever it pleases. The lesson could hardly have been lost on the Hamas members who were sworn into Parliament last Saturday, formally taking control of the Palestinian Legislative Council. They were forced to participate by videoconference from Gaza, since Israel blocked Hamas politicians from traveling to the West Bank city of Ramallah for the ceremony.

From Gaza to Baghdad, if you want to know what the Bush administration's grand democracy project in the Mideast is going to look like for years to come, this is it. Forget brotherhood and peace; making things work is now more about power diplomacy. The weapon of choice will be dollars (or shekels). The immediate goal, of course, is to pressure Hamas to renounce violence, accept Israel and observe previous peace agreements. A recent U.N. report estimated that closing one border crossing for two weeks--as Israel did in mid-January--had cost the Palestinians \$7 million. The report said 100 tons of Palestinian goods like strawberries and flowers had spoiled. Another tactic the Israelis are likely to use is to withhold some of the \$600 million in Palestinian tax and customs receipts that Israel collects annually. "How will we eat? How will people live?" said one Palestinian taxi driver. "Eventually they [Hamas] will recognize Israel. Otherwise we will eat s--t with our hands and feet."

U.S. officials say they have no common strategy for handling the various Islamist parties flourishing in the newly tilled democratic soil of the Middle East. Among them: Hizbullah in Lebanon, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the new government emerging in Iraq, which is dominated by religious parties. Should Washington try to nurture and moderate these Islamist movements--or attempt to undermine and destroy them? Causing pain and despair could backfire by stoking anger and extremist tendencies. So the Bush team is muddling its way toward compromise solutions.

Last week U.S. officials went to great lengths to deny a New York Times story that indicated U.S. and Israeli officials were planning to force the Hamas government into collapse by squeezing it economically. Yet U.S. officials also demanded the Palestinian Authority hand back \$50 million in direct aid, and they didn't deny that pressure tactics were being used to put Hamas "in the box," as one diplomat said. The Israeli approach appears to be to provide minimal humanitarian assistance, but no --more, and U.S. officials say they won't object to a "month by month" Israeli review of receipts payments. "We don't have a plan worked out with the government of Israel," said a senior U.S. official in Washington who would speak for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice only on condition of anonymity. "We won't have total collapse and we won't have starvation. I'm confident we will have support for humanitarian assistance. But Hamas's bubble has now burst. They have to be shown they have a moral responsibility for governing."

It's not yet clear that the newly empowered Islamists understand what it means to go from being gadflies to governments. On Saturday, Hamas officials continued to insist they would not negotiate with Israel. "When Hamas is in the government, everything should be according to our will," party cofounder Mahmoud Zahar told news-week recently. But then he showed a rather shaky understanding of economics, saying, "If we flourish the economy--if we decrease the price of oil and so on--we can flourish."

In Iraq, U.S. officials are confronting a different kind of problem. Moqtada al-Sadr, the radical Shiite cleric once hunted by U.S. troops, last week sought to become a political kingmaker. Sadr's 32-seat faction sent the favored Shiite candidate for prime minister, Adel Abdul Mahdi, to narrow defeat. Sadr was jubilant. "The U.S. brought democracy to the Middle East but God turned the tables and made the democratic process a weapon against the U.S.," he said on Syrian TV.

Yet even as Sadr was boasting, Iraqi politicians were beginning to rebel against his power, prodded behind the scenes by U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. According to a knowledgeable official in Washington, who did not want to be named because of the sensitivity of the situation, Khalilzad was sending the message that Iraq's next leaders don't want to displease America, with all of its military leverage and aid. By the end of last week it was no longer certain that Sadr's favored candidate, the mildly Islamist Ibrahim Jaafari, would become the new prime minister.

In Iran, the Bush administration is meeting yet another Islamist rebirth--that of fiery President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad--with yet another kind of dollar diplomacy. Rice announced a \$75 million campaign to support Iranian dissidents, deliver 24-hour Voice of America broadcasts to Iran and create student programs. In Egypt, meanwhile, U.S. officials protested only mildly when President Hosni Mubarak--recipient of the largest U.S. aid program after Israel--postponed local elections for two years. "They are afraid," says Mahdi Akef of the Muslim Brotherhood. "This is why they want to control the gains of Islamists." Dollar diplomacy may be the only tool the Bush team has left to achieve that. With Babak Dehghanpisheh and Michael Hastings in Baghdad and Vivian Salama in Cairo.

Misled

New Republic
By Joseph Braude
2/27

Now a year and a half into Abdurahman Alamoudi's 23-year prison sentence for violating anti-terrorism

sanctions, it might seem hard to remember why both the Clinton and Bush administrations used to embrace him, for years, as a leader of Islam in America. It might seem troubling that an FBI spokesman, as recently as 2002, had dubbed Alamoudi's organization, the then-Washington-based American Muslim Council, "the most mainstream Muslim group in the United States." It might seem perplexing that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a statement praising Alamoudi's group as "the premier, mainstream Muslim group in Washington," had dismissed warnings about the organization and its long-serving director as "Muslim-bashing."

But the reasons Alamoudi enjoyed this status are not so difficult to understand. He purported to represent millions of American Muslims, who deserve a political voice in Washington. And, throughout his public life, he spoke out against terrorist attacks in the United States. In a typical speech to thousands of American Muslims at the annual convention of the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) in Chicago in 1996, for instance, he told the audience, "Once we are here, our mission in this country is to change it. ... There is no way for Muslims to be violent in America, no way. We have other means to do it."

To a large extent, his reputation as an influential moderate Muslim became self-perpetuating, his stature enhanced each time he met with a mainstream politician or clergyman. The pages of his organization's newsletter and sympathetic publications reported that he had held meetings with President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake in the mid-'90s. The State Department reportedly sent Alamoudi on diplomatic junkets to Muslim countries in the late '90s. Bush administration officials had picked up where their predecessors in the White House left off, granting Alamoudi and his associates photo opportunities with the president and an open-door policy with senior administration officials.

What these mainstream politicians and government institutions largely missed, however, was that, if you listened to Alamoudi carefully, he stopped sounding so moderate. While he generally advised against attacks in the United States, he enthusiastically endorsed terrorism against Israeli, Jewish, and Western targets abroad. In that very same 1996 address to the IAP, he said: "I think if we are outside this country, we can say, 'Oh, Allah, destroy America'" and that "[y]ou can be violent anywhere else but in America." During a conversation recorded shortly before his 2003 arrest, he again counseled against attacks in the United States, but he called for strikes in Europe and Latin America. He expressed the view in Arabic that the Al Qaeda attack on the U.S. Embassy in Kenya had been "wrong," but only because "many African Muslims have died and not a single American died," and he went on to say that "I prefer to hit a Zionist target in America or Europe or elsewhere.... I prefer, honestly, like what happened in Argentina.... The [Buenos Aires] Jewish Community Center. It is a worthy operation." In July 2004, Alamoudi pleaded guilty in an Alexandria, Virginia, federal court to smuggling Libyan money into the United States and concealing his financial transactions and foreign bank accounts from the IRS. He also admitted to having participated in a plot to kill the crown prince of Saudi Arabia--the present King Abdullah--in consort with Al Qaeda affiliates in London.

This picture of Alamoudi leads to a troubling conclusion: During the time he was holding himself out as a spokesman for Islam in America, Alamoudi's words and deeds amounted to a toxic moral influence on American Muslims and a repugnant misrepresentation of that community to the politicians and priests who embraced him. Worse, Alamoudi is hardly one of a kind. Many of those recently held out as moderate leaders of the American Muslim community--and embraced as such by American politicians--are anything but. For over a generation, supporters of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah have promoted their views and solicited support in numerous U.S. mosques, Islamic centers, and convention halls--as journalists and a litter of indictments and convictions in recent years have documented for the public. The opportunistic acceptance of the United States by Islamists like Alamoudi as "the dominion of truce"--a concept that has been spelled out in detail by leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, both inside and outside the United States--is inherently shaky. It is a truce that asks to be breached--as recent cases of terrorist planning by American Muslims in the United States suggest.

The American Muslim community and the U.S. political establishment can and should do better than this. In

contrast to various governments in Western Europe, where official negotiations with domestic Islamists have been deemed necessary, there is no need to reach such accommodations here. Fortunately, given the largely successful integration of Muslim immigrants in the United States, there is reason to hope that the Alamoudis of America will be superseded over time by more progressive Muslim voices. To some degree, such changes have already begun. But this natural process has been delayed and stifled by American political leaders' unnatural selection of extremists to represent Islam and Islamic aspirations in the United States.

Critiques of American Islamist leadership typically come with the disclaimer that most Muslims in the United States do not call for the death of Israelis or Jews, let alone anybody else. This understatement does not begin to capture the disconnect between most American Muslims and groups like Alamoudi's American Muslim Council that have spoken and acted on their behalf. Islam in America, a millions-strong religion, does not resemble a cross section of the Muslim world, the Middle East, or any Muslim country. Among immigrant Muslims to the United States, Shia--who include nearly all of the country's Iranian Muslim immigrants and a significant proportion of South Asians and Arabs--may well outnumber Sunnis. Arab-American Christians outnumber Arab-American Muslims--though demographics and shifting migration trends are poised to taper if not invert this disparity. Black Muslims, relative newcomers to mainstream Sunni Islam, easily represent one of the largest waves of conversion in twentieth-century Islamic history--as well as one of the most remote from the faith's traditional heartlands. If all these disparate groups held a contested election for a single American Muslim community leader, wealth and demographics might easily induce a dead heat between an Iranian Shia businessman in Los Angeles and a black Sunni cleric in Chicago.

How strange, therefore, that the most prominent national Muslim legations to Washington have, for decades, been headed mainly by Sunni Arabs and Sunni Pakistanis, many of whom have baldly espoused the tenets of Wahhabism and the Muslim Brotherhood. Both of these ideologies are as anti-Shia as they are anti-Jewish. And Muslim Brotherhood architect Sayyid Qutb, whose teachings are frequently cited in Saudi-subsidized books that have been distributed in numerous American Sunni mosque libraries, was no fan of American blacks, either. In his Arabic-language account of visiting the United States in the late '40s, *The America I Have Seen*, he called jazz "this music that the savage bushmen created to satisfy their primitive desires, and their desire for noise on the one hand, and the abundance of animal noises on the other."

Evidence of the radicalism lurking beneath the moderate veneer of many of those who have headed prominent Islamic organizations is not hard to find. Take the case of Sami Al Arian, a former University of South Florida professor. To be sure, Arian shared Alamoudi's opposition to terrorism on U.S. soil, leaving aside a memorable speech about jihad in which he cried, "Let us damn America," from which he subsequently distanced himself. But Arian is currently facing nine counts in a Tampa terrorism indictment--after a jury acquitted him in December of eight counts and failed to reach a verdict on the rest of the 17 originally included in the indictment--arising from the charge that he helped finance and steer the Palestinian Islamic Jihad organization. Through his lawyer, Arian has conceded a close affiliation with the Islamic Jihad leadership and extensive financial remittances to individuals affiliated with the group. Arian does not deny having publicly called for the death of Israelis, nor does anyone dispute that a former colleague of his in Tampa, Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, now heads the Islamic Jihad organization. Yet Arian's thinly veiled activism did not lose him an invitation to the White House in 2001 or friends and supporters in the United States who have championed his cause in the name of political freedom and Islam in America.

Whatever value judgment one places on Arian's strident anti-Israel activism, one cannot help but notice that it indirectly promoted killing projects beyond Israel, including in the United States. Several conferences organized by Arian in Chicago featured Abdel Aziz Odeh--a cleric subsequently listed by federal prosecutors as an unindicted co-conspirator in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing--as a guest speaker, and one conference gave a platform to Omar Abdel Rahman, the blind Egyptian sheik now serving life in prison for his central role in the 1993 bombing and subsequent plots to attack New York City.

The natural connection between terrorism overseas and against the United States lies in the enduring alliance between Israel and the United States and the inherently transnational nature of the militant ideology Arian

and Shallah espoused. Though Islamic Jihad is focused on Palestine, it is not a discrete national liberation movement. The group posits the centrality of the Palestinian cause within a broader armed struggle to reclaim all Muslim lands from rulers deemed un-Islamic--and arguably, by extension, all those who support them.

Alamoudi, Shallah, and Arian also appear to have had something in common with scores of other American Islamists and Islamist institutions subsequently charged by prosecutors with abetting terrorism overseas. While they may have frowned upon attacks on U.S. soil, their indictments suggest they had no qualms about flagrantly transgressing the country's laws. The 42-count Texas indictment against the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, an avowedly pro-Hamas organization whose supporters were ubiquitous in Sunni American mosques and Islamic centers throughout the '90s, does not merely allege \$12.4 million in material support to a terrorist group; it charges conspiracy, tax evasion, and money-laundering. The 2002 North Carolina conviction of Mohamed Hammoud on charges of materially supporting Hezbollah and several associates on charges of smuggling, racketeering, and money-laundering is stunning not merely because of its gravity--the defendants had funneled over \$1 million to the group and sent advanced military technology and global-positioning systems--but also because their tactics are reminiscent of other organized crime syndicates. Hammoud and his co-defendants had organized an inventive cigarette-smuggling ring from North Carolina to Michigan.

Unlike common criminals, these Islamists' crimes are the result not of a moral lapse, but rather of a consistent moral position. Many radical Islamists subscribe to a traditional Muslim legal convention that divides the world into the "dominion of Islam" (Dar Al Islam), where Islamic law prevails, and the "dominion of war" (Dar Al Harb), where war prevails pending the country's Islamization. A debate has been aired publicly in the Muslim community as to which sphere the United States belongs. But, if the United States is within the dominion of war, all kinds of criminality may be permitted. As an article in *Al Zaitounah*, the flagship publication of the IAP, reported in 1994, "Some Muslims permit themselves to take money from non-Muslims in America, whether individuals or companies, and avoid reimbursing them, on the grounds that America is an infidel country."

Al Zaitounah interviewed three senior Muslim Brotherhood clerics on the question of whether the United States was part of the dominion of war. Their responses left a good deal of wiggle room as to the answer. Qatar-based Youssef Al Qaradawi, at the time a star attraction at well-attended Islamist conferences in the United States, clarified at the outset that Israel was the dominion of war and that "it must be dealt with on this basis until all rights and lands are restored to their owners and justice takes the place of the scum regime that is present there now." (It bears noting that Yitzhak Rabin, then-prime minister of the "regime" to which Qaradawi referred, had signed the Oslo accords with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) a few months earlier.) Asked whether the United States belongs in a similar category, Qaradawi replied, "The bifurcation of the world into two dominions, a dominion of war and a dominion of Islam, does not necessarily mean that war must be waged against every dominion that is not a dominion of Islam. Some dominions should be fought, while other dominions could be affixed to the dominion of Islam by pacts and truces, as has been the case in Islamic history." Noting that one of the four schools of Sunni Islamic law, the Shafii school, had allowed for a third designation, "the dominion of truce" (Dar Al Ahd), Qaradawi suggested, "It may be generally possible to classify America and Western states as the dominion of truce, because they share treaties, common interests, and embassies with Arab and Islamic countries and do not--at least for the time being--pose a direct, unveiled aggression to Muslims or Muslim countries." The other two clerics did not substantively differ with Qaradawi.

A decade later, it would be difficult for any American follower of Qaradawi to avoid concluding that the cleric's conditional acceptance of the United States as "possibly" the "dominion of truce" no longer applies--if it ever did--based on its own logic. Qaradawi himself has confirmed his view that America's invasion of Iraq was a direct aggression against an Arab country and a Muslim people--calling for armed jihad against the occupier. So did 26 Saudi clerics in a joint edict released in November 2004. In a December sermon, he also called upon God to protect Iraq from "the American Satans." Though Qaradawi has been banned from entering the United States since 1999, he can still reach thousands of Arabic-speaking U.S. homes via *Al*

Jazeera, on which he hosts a weekly program about Islamic life.

This strand within American Islamist culture, however thin, is relevant to the rash of initiatives by some Muslims in America to assist Al Qaeda, which federal prosecutors have brought to light since September 11. It was through a predominantly Arab-American mosque outside Buffalo, New York, that six American-born Yemeni ethnics--mostly employed, married, and college-educated, all registered Democrats--met a pair of preachers who lured them to an Al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan and a meeting with Osama bin Laden. A journalist who visited the young men's hometown of Lackawanna, New York, described the Al Qaeda trainees as "the cool, assimilated guys in the community." The FBI agent who elicited their first confession--from a member of the group who had been intercepted in Bahrain--recalled in a "Frontline" interview, "[W]hen we got on the plane on our way to the States, and he met the case agents from Buffalo, one of his biggest concerns [was], 'How are the Buffalo Bills doing?' That tells me that he really likes what he has here." These youths had experienced an integrated, American Islamic cultural environment that condoned suicide bombings in Israel as surely as it cheered the home football team. When a local Al Qaeda preacher and his Saudi colleague sought to recruit them, they apparently did so by building on the moral foundation that formed the bedrock of their religious environment--by asking them to take a short walk from the dominion of truce to the dominion of war.

Other members of the community, to be sure, took issue with the preachers' arguments. The apprehension of the so-called "Lackawanna Six," in fact, was reportedly the result of information provided to the FBI by the Yemeni-American community--and the Saudi preacher had not lasted long in the local mosque. But the case may have been as much a learning experience for Al Qaeda and its affiliates as it was for the United States: It demonstrates that some number of second-generation American Muslims can be lured into American killing projects within the framework of their indigenous religious milieu--provided the recruitment is carried out discreetly, outside the purview of other American Muslims who disagree with Al Qaeda. Effective recruitment in the United States may be tricky and time-consuming, but it is doable--and some of the blame for this state of affairs rests on the failings of America's Islamist leadership.

Further evidence of the pernicious effect the radicalism of these so-called moderate Muslim leaders have on their flocks can be seen in several other recent terrorism cases. Consider the businessman in Brooklyn who allegedly helped Sheik Mohammed Al Hasan Al Moayad channel money to Hamas and Al Qaeda (part of the multimillion-dollar total that the sheik allegedly raised and remitted). Before Moayad's conviction last spring in a Brooklyn federal court for conspiring to support both organizations, jurors were treated to a taste of the cleric's flamboyant personal style through clandestine recordings of his meetings. Moayad not only celebrated a suicide bombing in Israel, he also bragged that Osama bin Laden held him in the highest esteem and had called him "my sheik." On the basis of his many explicit recorded comments, it's hard to imagine anyone who partnered with Moayad being deluded into thinking he wished to kill only Israelis or support only Hamas. As for the studious distinction between Israelis and American Jews, it was plainly confused by 34-year-old Ahmed Hassan Al Uqaily, an Iraqi-born resident of the United States for over a decade who worked for a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop in Nashville, Tennessee. In October 2004, he paid an undercover agent \$1,000 for two M-16 machine guns, four hand grenades, and several hundred rounds of ammunition. A Tennessee judge sentenced him in October 2005 to four years and nine months in prison for illegally possessing the weapons, which he had planned to use to attack two Jewish facilities--in the Nashville area.

Of course, law-abiding American Muslim leaders do not bear responsibility for the crimes of some misguided souls in Lackawanna, Brooklyn, Nashville, Washington, Richardson, Chicago, Charlotte, and a handful of other cities where Islamist killing projects and terrorism financiers have been busted since September 2001. But they do owe their flocks, and all Americans, a firm moral stand against the global murder fetish that aroused some of their jailed and far-flung counterparts. They should consistently repudiate Islamist civilian carnage--whether in Tel Aviv and New Delhi or New York and Riyadh--and relentlessly counter the set of teachings that sanction it. Such leadership has been too slow in coming--a tragedy for which some of the blame extends beyond the Muslim community.

Washington's cozily intertwined Muslim advocacy groups tend to pool personnel, ideals, and Saudi largesse

and co-habit Qaradawi's permanent floating dominion of truce. By the time Alamoudi was indicted in 2003, the American Muslim Council's preeminent mainstream status in Washington had been supplanted by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (cair). Its long-serving executive director, Nihad Awad, had been a prominent officer of the IAP, whose conferences Alamoudi memorably addressed. In November 2004, a federal judge declared the IAP civilly liable for the Hamas killing of an American citizen in the West Bank. Awad left the association to found cair in 1994--but, rather than try to distinguish himself from his former colleagues, Awad has also declared his support for Hamas in his new capacity and declined to denounce the movement's bloody tactics. Furthermore, he has acknowledged that cair received money from the Holy Land Foundation, the avowedly pro-Hamas charity that now faces federal charges of supporting terrorism. The Holy Land Foundation was co-founded by Mohammed El Mezain, who went on to work for a new nonprofit entity, KindHearts for Charitable Humanitarian Development. KindHearts has funneled money back to some of the same groups as Holy Land. Its 2003 tax return shows that \$77,571 was transferred to the IAP. Among its remittances to overseas coffers in 2002, \$100,000 went to the Sanabil Association for Relief and Development in Lebanon, which the Treasury Department designated a Hamas-supporting entity in August 2003. Mezain has since been charged with aiding Hamas through the Holy Land Foundation by federal prosecutors, and he has departed KindHearts; but a veteran of at least one other Islamist charity shut down by the government for providing support to terrorist groups also works for the organization.

All these American Islamist leaders and organizations, in turn, have maintained direct, public affiliations with the Plainfield, Indiana-based Islamic Society of North America (isna), the largest and oldest umbrella organization of Muslim groups in the United States and Canada. Its numerous ties to Brotherhood and Hamas activists do not amount to an indictment of isna as a whole or the tens of thousands of predominantly Sunni Muslim Americans who attend the group's annual convention. For that matter, nor does the fact that alleged Islamic Jihad backer Arian, according to several published conference proceedings, co-founded isna. These links do not devalue the \$20,000 isna donated to victims of Hurricane Katrina in September or the vaguely worded condemnation of "terrorism" that the group added its name to back in July. (See Judea Pearl's insightful tnr Online article on the document, "Word Choice," on September 13, 2005.) But they do underscore the commonplace acceptance of Hamas and Islamic Jihad within the culture of interlocking Islamist institutions that have achieved the most prominence in America.

This gut-wrenching state of affairs poses a recurring dilemma for outsiders whenever an Islamist leader in the United States seeks the same status-boosting acknowledgement from elected officials that other political interest groups do. When isna invited President Bush to address its annual convention in Rosemont, Illinois, last September, a total rebuff would have snubbed tens of thousands of American Muslims in attendance--but an acceptance would have elevated the mainstream communal esteem of their questionable leadership and affiliates, as surely as Alamoudi had been endowed a mainstream status he did not deserve. (Bush sent Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes as his representative.)

The circumstances under which some Sunni Islamists rose to prominence in the United States are intimately linked to U.S. government policy decisions: Isna's most radical affiliates, including the IAP and the now-defunct Muslim Arab Youth Association (maya), promoted militancy in support of the Afghan Jihad during the later years of the cold war--when President Reagan himself stood squarely behind the Afghan fighters they championed. In the '80s, the IAP and maya jointly brought Abdullah Azzam, Osama bin Laden's acknowledged spiritual mentor, on tours of American Islamic centers from his base in Peshawar, Pakistan. Azzam's sojourns across the Atlantic were truly within the borders of a "dominion of truce" at the time, in the sense that the United States and Azzam's Wahhabi backers in Saudi Arabia were aligned in support of Islamist fighters in Afghanistan. Yet, even then, Azzam used the occasion of his U.S. visits to push for attacks far beyond Afghanistan. In a Brooklyn mosque, as has been widely reported, Azzam memorably declared that the "jihad of the sword" was global, and he explicitly called for its fulfillment inside the United States. Camera pans of the sermon's audience in a video recording of the event subsequently revealed the presence of a co-conspirator in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Mahmud Abouhalima, taking in the cleric's message.

American groups like maya and the IAP, which hosted and boosted Azzam in this country, are in some ways

comparable to Islamist groups in other pro-Western countries, once encouraged by their host governments out of deference to their struggle against a common, godless enemy: Egypt's late president, Anwar Sadat, gave the Muslim Brotherhood a chance to flourish in his country, hoping that the movement would serve as a counterweight to his communist and socialist opposition--a policy that did not survive his assassination by a radical Islamist. Israel's government, prior to the first Palestinian intifada in 1987, used to engage Sunni Islamists in Palestine, hoping that they would serve to challenge the PLO's monopoly on Palestinian politics; it was in this manner that Hamas was born. The fact that Hamas espouses suicide attacks on civilian targets does not erase its social function as a provider of some health and human services to Palestinians. But it does--and should--undermine the movement as a moral voice on any national or global stage. In a similar vein, both Alamoudi's American Muslim Council and Nihad Awad's cair have fought for Muslim civil rights in the United States, among other just causes. But their avowed support for Hamas and other manifestations of radicalism should call into question their pretext of speaking on behalf of millions of American Muslims--and disqualify them as interlocutors on behalf of American Muslims to the United States government. This is not to preclude the possibility that they may revise their views--or that true moderates may emerge from within the ranks of organizations tinged by an older generation of poor leadership. It is, in fact, to demand that such a transformation occur.

If the United States were France--where a massive, ghettoized Arab Muslim underclass encircles the capital city in an exurban wall of rage--then sending politicians to build bridges with domestic Islamist leaders might be a necessary measure, among other necessary measures. During the bloody riots around Paris last fall, the pro-Muslim Brotherhood Union of Islamic Organizations of France (uoif) appears to have joined the government in calling for calm by pitting religion against the rioters. Since 2003, the uoif has been the largest constituent member of the French Interior Ministry's French Council for the Muslim Religion--a body established to bring French Islam into the mainstream by granting it official status. A fatwa issued by the uoif declared, "It is not acceptable to express feelings of desperation through damaging public properties and carrying out arson.... Under Islam, one cannot get one of his or her rights at the expense of others." Though some observers labeled the riots an "intifada" or "jihad," Islamist voices in France that extol jihad in Palestine and Iraq were successfully enlisted to try to undermine that ideological conception when it came to French terrain. Having achieved official recognition by the French Interior Ministry, the Brotherhood group evidently found enough common ground with the Republic to add its voice to calls for calm. In doing so, the uoif issued the fatwa despite its grievances about the country's foreign policy--which supports harsh crackdowns by the Algerian regime on Algerian Islamists--and the second-class status of Muslim immigrants to France. This dominion of truce-style accommodation appears to be valuable to the French: The Muslim Brotherhood movement may well command more popularity among France's predominantly North African Arab Sunni Muslim immigrant population than the Republic itself.

But the United States has succeeded where France and much of Europe have failed. As Spencer Ackerman observed in these pages recently (see "Religious Protection," December 12, 2005), American Muslims enjoy social integration and acceptance, religious tolerance, economic opportunity, and a higher standard of living than the general population. These blessings mean that American imams, unlike their French counterparts, are not in the position of shepherding socially restive flocks. According to demographers, Jews and Muslims in the United States overwhelmingly co-habit the two coasts and a handful of urban areas in between. Nowhere since Baghdad in the 1930s--where a plurality of Jewish urban elites famously commingled with their Sunni and Shia counterparts in business, the professions, civil service, and music--have the points of intersection between the two faiths been so manifold, so easygoing, and so fruitful. Nowhere else has the medieval distinction between dominions of "war," "Islam," and "truce" been so irrelevant, so anachronistic. For this reason, the United States does not need to countenance Islamist interlocutors who endorse militancy and radicalism abroad, even while calling for a truce at home. It can find and promote true moderates more representative of Islam in America. The United States owes this much to its Muslim community, and its Muslim community owes this much to itself.

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IRAN

The Last Word: Sergei Kiriyenko; How to Handle Iran's Nukes

Newsweek International

By Owen Matthews

2/20

Sergei Kiriyenko may hold the key to re-solving the Iranian nuclear crisis. The former Russian prime minister and the head of RosAtom, the Russian nuclear agency, will meet a delegation from Tehran this week to discuss a proposed deal whereby Moscow would provide Iran with enriched uranium for its nuclear plants, including a Russian-built reactor at Bushehr. Tehran originally rejected the plan, but with possible Security Council action looming, has recently revived its prospects. NEWSWEEK's Owen Matthews spoke with Kiriyenko, who hopes the deal will also bolster Russia's profitable nuclear industry, in Moscow.

Excerpts:

What's the status of your offer to Iran?

Russia has already made one agreement with Iran to return their spent nuclear fuel to Russia. That guarantees that no plutonium can be extracted from the fuel. Second, we've put a proposal on the table to jointly create an enterprise for enriching uranium on Russian territory. The conditions of such a joint venture would be that Iran would contribute to its funding. In return it [will have] guaranteed supplies of enriched uranium--but not access to enrichment technology. So we will take uranium, enrich it here and send [the Iranians] ready fuel. And after it's been used, we take it back. That means that we keep control of two of the most sensitive technological stages. Thus there will be no danger that the development of atomic energy in Iran--or in any other country--will become a proliferation threat.

Will the Iranians accept?

The proposal is on the table. Our talks are at the stage of concrete legal, technical and financial details. For our part, Russia is completely ready to create such an enrichment enterprise--we have the plant locations for it and a draft contract. We are ready technologically, financially and organizationally. Our offer's terms are clear and open to the international community. To accept it or not is up to Iran, and I can't tell you what they will say.

The IAEA has reported that Iran has deliberately concealed important parts of its nuclear program from inspectors. Do you believe that Tehran's nuclear program is purely for peaceful purposes?

I don't think it's a question of believing. International security and international law cannot be based on personal trust. We think that any country in the world which conforms to international norms and is inspected by the IAEA has the right to develop atomic energy. Period. No one has the right to deny anyone else that right. At the same time, Russia's attitude to Iran, or to any other country, is that they are categorically not allowed to violate the principles of nonproliferation. We believe that the proposals made by Russia today allow a resolution to the Iranian problem.

How can you make sure that nuclear-energy technology stays separate from weapons technology?

Those countries which do not have nuclear-energy programs want access to cheap energy. Not to let them have access to cheap energy is a violation of international law. It's discrimination. Our position is that we have to help these countries escape from energy poverty--but at the same time it is our responsibility to prevent any threat of nuclear proliferation. We need to establish some kind of ground rules for dealing with these situations. Otherwise we will have situations like we have with Iran with other countries. It's the responsibility of countries with a full nuclear fuel cycle to agree on a coordinated structure, not just to find a solution on a case-by-case basis.

Such as?

[Russian President] Vladimir Putin made a suggestion for four kinds of international cooperation: the creation of international uranium-enrichment centers of the sort we have proposed to Iran; international centers for reprocessing and storing spent nuclear fuel; centers for training and certifying nuclear-power-plant staff, and to have an international research effort to find new nuclear-energy technologies which are proliferation resistant. Many of those ideas were echoed by the president of the United States.

Do you mean the United States should build uranium-enrichment centers, too?

These international centers must be just that--international. It would be very good if the United States could provide such centers on its territory. There are several other countries [that] could participate, too. That way, potential users of nuclear energy would have a choice.

Will Russia have many more customers for its nuclear technology?

Iran Amok; Tehran Plays Host to al-Qaeda

Weekly Standard

By Dan Darling

2/27

"Iran continues to host senior al Qaeda leaders who are wanted for murdering Americans and other victims in the 1998 East Africa Embassy bombings. We have called repeatedly for these terrorists to be handed over to states that will prosecute them and bring them to justice. We believe that some al Qaeda members and those from like-minded extremist groups continue to use Iran as a safe haven and as a hub to facilitate their operations."

So said a high State Department official in a speech in Washington on November 30. The assertions by Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns were nothing new. Though often overlooked, they have been the position of the U.S. government for some time. As discussion of Iran's nuclear program and its hardline president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad intensifies, Iranian aid to al Qaeda should not be allowed to drop off the radar screen.

A careful review of what is known about this matter--even a review confined to public sources--shows that Iran has long maintained ties to al Qaeda and has assisted the group in refining its terrorist capabilities. During the years of Taliban rule, Tehran allowed al Qaeda members, including some future 9/11 hijackers, to transit its territory en route to and from Afghanistan. Nor has this support waned since the Taliban's fall. To this day, much of the surviving al Qaeda leadership is based in Iran, enjoying the protection of the Revolutionary Guards Corps.

Tehran has been supporting terrorist groups ever since the mullahs came to power in 1979. According to the State Department's annual report Patterns of Global Terrorism, the Shiite regime has aided outfits as ideologically and religiously diverse as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, GIA, GSPC, and Hizb-e-Islami--all of them Sunni Muslim--along with the Marxist groups Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and the Kurdistan Workers' party (PKK)--that last, despite Iran's concern over any move towards autonomy on the part of its own Kurdish minority. Clearly, the mullahs do not consider ideological or religious purity a prerequisite for cooperation.

It is not surprising, then, to find the 9/11 Commission Report tracing Iranian involvement with al Qaeda as far back as the early 1990s. "In late 1991 or early 1992," the report says,

discussions in Sudan between al Qaeda and Iranian operatives led to an informal agreement to cooperate in providing support--even if only training--for actions carried out against Israel and the United States. Not long afterward, senior al Qaeda operatives and trainers traveled to Iran to receive training in explosives.

Contrary to much academic opinion, the commission noted that "Sunni-Shia divisions did not necessarily pose an insurmountable barrier to cooperation in terrorist operations."

More training took place in Lebanon. Says the 9/11 report, "In the fall of 1993, another such [al Qaeda] delegation went to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon," a longtime stronghold of Hezbollah, "for further training in explosives as well as in intelligence and security. Bin Laden reportedly showed particular interest in learning how to use truck bombs such as the one that had killed 241 U.S. Marines in Lebanon in 1983," the heaviest U.S. loss in a single engagement since the Vietnam war. According to Rohan Gunaratna's *Inside Al Qaeda*, among the al Qaeda members who traveled to Lebanon was Saif al-Adel, a senior leader who would later emerge as a key figure in Iran's relationship with Osama bin Laden's group.

Contacts between "Iranian security officials and senior al Qaeda figures [persisted] after bin Laden's return to Afghanistan" in 1996, according to the 9/11 report. In particular, there is "strong" evidence of Iranian involvement in the Khobar Towers bombing of June 1996, in which 19 Americans died, as well as "signs that al Qaeda played some role, as yet unknown," in that attack. Two years later, the Clinton administration's formal indictment of bin Laden charged that he was allied with both Iran and its terrorist proxy, Hezbollah. After the USS Cole bombing in 2000, the 9/11 report says, Iran made a "concerted effort" to "strengthen relations with al Qaeda."

More ominously, the 9/11 Commission describes as "strong" the evidence, provided by al Qaeda operatives in U.S. custody, that "Iran facilitated the transit of al Qaeda members into and out of Afghanistan before 9/11, and that some of these were future 9/11 hijackers. There is also circumstantial evidence that senior Hezbollah operatives were closely tracking the travel of some of these future muscle hijackers into Iran in November 2000." While finding no evidence that Iran or Hezbollah was aware of the planning for the 9/11 attack, the commission concluded that "this topic requires further investigation by the U.S. government."

Whether the government ever followed up is doubtful, given U.S. officials' frequent assurances that Iran was not involved in the 9/11 attacks--a claim not found in the 9/11 report. Yet in July 2004, the *New York Times* did report that "the United States was actively investigating ties between the Iranian government and al Qaeda, including intelligence unearthed by the independent 9/11 Commission showing that Iran may have offered safe passage to terrorists who were later involved in the attacks." The *Times* quoted President Bush as saying, "We will continue to look and see if the Iranians were involved."

If a serious investigation of these events was indeed launched following the publication of the commission's final report on July 22, 2004, it would seem to be in the public interest to disclose what, if anything, the inquiry turned up. What do we know about these events now that we didn't know in 2004?

Since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al Qaeda's relationship with Iran appears to have grown stronger. As the *Washington Post* reported in September 2003, "After the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the locus of al Qaeda's degraded leadership moved to Iran. The Iranian security services, which answer to the country's powerful Islamic clerics, protected the leadership." The *Post* identified these leaders as al Qaeda military chief Saif al-Adel, chief ideologue Mahfouz Ould Walid, finance chief Abu Mohammed al-Masri, al Qaeda second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri's deputy Abu Khayr, propaganda chief Suleiman Abu Ghaith, and Osama bin Laden's son and heir apparent, Saad.

The al Qaeda leadership appears to have operated more or less with impunity inside Iran until May 2003, thanks to its close ties to the elite Qods Force unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Citing a European intelligence official, the *Post* noted that after the fall of the Taliban, Zawahiri (whose relationship with Qods Force goes back at least a decade), negotiated safe harbor in Iran for much of the surviving al Qaeda leadership. Numerous media reports listed then-future Iraqi insurgent leader Abu Musab al Zarqawi among

them. As a European intelligence analyst explained to the Washington Post in October 2003, Qods Force is "a state within a state, and that is why they are able to offer protection to al Qaeda. The force's senior leaders have long-standing ties to al Qaeda and, since the fall of Afghanistan, have provided some al Qaeda leaders with travel documents and safe haven." It was from Iran that al Qaeda military chief Saif al-Adel ordered the May 2003 Riyadh bombings in Saudi Arabia that killed 34, including 8 Americans.

Since late 2003, the exact status of the al Qaeda leaders in Iran has been murky at best. The Iranian government claims that any al Qaeda members on its territory are in custody. But what kind of custody? MSNBC's Investigative Unit noted in June 2005,

According to reports in the Arab media, [the al Qaeda leaders] were rounded up and taken to two locations guarded by Iran's Revolutionary Guards: one in villas in the Namak Abrud region, near the town of Chalous on the Caspian coast, 60 miles north of Tehran, and the other in Lavizan, a region northwest of the capital that also houses a large military complex.

The London-based Arabic newspaper Al-Sharq Al-Awsat further reported in July 2004: "More than 384 members of Al Qaeda and other terrorist organisations are present in Iran, including 18 senior leaders of Osama bin Laden's network." The paper attributed the information to a source close to the Iranian presidency. When Tom Brokaw asked CIA director Porter Goss about the al Qaeda leaders active in Iran, Goss answered, "I think your understanding is that there is a group of leadership of al Qaeda under some type of detention--I don't know exactly what type, necessarily--in Iran is probably accurate."

Most of the reporting on the al Qaeda leaders in Iran has assumed that the individuals in question are being constrained in their activities and that the regime could be persuaded to hand them over in return for certain concessions--such as the release of the leadership of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, a Marxist anti-Iranian terrorist group that was extensively supported by Saddam Hussein and many of whose members were captured by U.S. forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

But it is not so clear that Iran has a vested interest in constraining the activities of al Qaeda. In August 2004, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat quoted an Iranian official who had attended an Iranian military seminar where Qods Force commander Brigadier General Suleimani stated that Zarqawi and 20 senior members of the terrorist group Ansar al-Islam were allowed to enter Iran whenever they wanted through border crossings between Halabja and Ilam in Iraq. When asked why Iran would support Zarqawi given his anti-Shiite activities, Suleimani replied that Zarqawi's actions in Iraq "serve the supreme interests of Iran" by preventing the creation of a pro-U.S. government.

Examples of al Qaeda's continued activity inside Iran abound. In February 2004, noted Spanish terrorism judge Baltasar Garzon told El Periodico that al Qaeda's "board of managers" were active inside Iran but were more involved in coordinating operations than in issuing orders. In July 2004, Agence France-Presse quoted a French counterterrorism official as saying that al Qaeda leaders had "controlled freedom of movement" inside Iran, while the Los Angeles Times of August 1, 2004, quoted a top French law enforcement official as saying, "The Iranians play a double game. . . . They have arrested important Al Qaeda people, but they have permitted other important Al Qaeda people to operate."

This view is supported by the German magazine Cicero, which in October 2005 quoted a high-ranking intelligence officer as saying of the Iran-based al Qaeda leaders, "This is not prison or house arrest. . . . They are free to do as they please." Cicero had earlier that year reported on al Qaeda-in-Iraq leader Abu Musab al Zarqawi, quoting extensively from German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation documents that collated data from German, American, French, and Israeli intelligence sources. These documents, some of which were classified, listed Zarqawi's activities, passports, phone numbers, benefactors, and the mosques used or controlled by his followers in Germany. In addition to confirming much of the evidence presented by Colin Powell to the United Nations Security Council on the activities of Zarqawi's network in Europe, the documents state point-blank that Iran "provided al Zarqawi with logistical support on the part of the state."

In sum, the publicly available evidence suggests that Undersecretary Burns was well within his rights to speak as he did last November of Iranian support for al Qaeda. The problem has received too little attention, considering the need to prevent the al Qaeda leadership from reconstituting itself if another major attack is to be prevented.

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HAMAS

Middle East: Presenting a New Face to the World

Newsweek International

By Kevin Peraino

2/20

Mahmoud Zahar has little doubt about who should control the Palestinian Authority. "People voted for us," the Hamas cofounder told NEWSWEEK recently at his Gaza City home, a yellow and brown-flecked structure that looks like it was painted by Jackson Pollock. Hamas's election victory entitles the party to key cabinet posts, he says, among them the Interior Ministry, responsible for Palestinian security forces. "When Hamas is in the government," Zahar insists, "everything should be according to our will."

How best to express that will? That was the question in Cairo last week, where Zahar holed up with Damascus-based Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal and other top officials to plot strategy. According to the Saudi newspaper Asharq al-Awsat, they agreed to tap Ismail Haniyeh from Gaza as the new Hamas prime minister. Any Hamas-led government, however, is likely to face an unfriendly world community. In Cairo Egyptian intelligence chief Omar Suleiman has reportedly been urging Hamas to renounce violence and recognize Israel before the newly elected Palestinian parliament meets for the first time this week. U.S. and European leaders are exerting similar pressure. Says one Western diplomat in Jerusalem: "We're trying to put them in the box."

Equally challenging will be the task of imposing order on the unruly West Bank and Gaza. Under the territories' basic law, President Mahmoud Abbas commands his own security detail, as well as the PA's general intelligence branch. The Interior minister oversees the police, civil defense and the all-purpose forces known as "preventive security." Who's in charge of the most sophisticated unit, the 21,000-member "national security" force? That's "very murky," says a Western diplomat in Jerusalem, adding that he has "not seen any of the preventive security forces take orders from --the Interior minister." The armed wing of Abbas's Fatah Party, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, for example, frequently accepts directives only from local warlords. Mohammad Dandan, an Al Aqsa leader in Nablus, puts it bluntly: "We won't take orders from Hamas. We'll never listen to them." Meanwhile, Hamas itself has long resisted disarming its own military wing, Izzedine al-Qassam, which Palestinian government officials say employs some 2,000 fighters.

Hamas, which campaigned on a law-and-order platform, is trying to kill two birds with one stone. Last week leaders called for an end to anti-European protests over cartoon depictions of the Prophet Muhammad, many of which had been led by rival Fatah supporters. But neither reining in the gunmen nor winning over the West will be easy. At least some leaders of both Hamas and Fatah think they must work together if either is to happen. Shortly after Hamas's victory, Zahar and a top Fatah official met at the office of Ziad Abu Amr, an independent Gaza politician who frequently moderates disputes between the feuding movements. Abu Amr says he tried to impress upon the men that it would be in both parties' interest to share political power.

After the upset at the polls, Fatah cabinet ministers immediately resigned, refusing to consider staying on under a Hamas government. But Abu Amr describes that initial reaction as overly "emotional" and believes party leaders will eventually come around to his more pragmatic view. "If they don't join" with Hamas, he

says, Fatah's work in Parliament will be condemned in the street as "obstructionist." For now, Abbas has chosen to remain president and commands significant authority, at least on paper. "He can create a constitutional problem every two hours," says Abu Amr, who also believes a power-sharing deal would help Hamas present a softer image to the wider world. "Hamas," he says, "will be hiding behind Abu Mazen."

Such an arrangement wouldn't sit well with foreign donors and politicians unless it is accompanied by signs of genuine change within Hamas. "There's definitely a logic for Hamas to present a more moderate face to the world," says the Western diplomat. Yet if it's only cosmetic, any such deal would defeat the purpose of engaging the party in the first place. For now, leaders like Zahar remain noncommittal, and Fatah's own apparatchiks are taking note. "The declarations of Hamas are tough to take," says Ibrahim Salameh, a senior Interior ministry official. "Maybe even a civil war would be better." That may be just bluster. But more turmoil is never out of the question in a troubled land with strong wills on all sides.

No Mas to Hamas

National Review

By James S. Robbins

2/20

One of the problems with promoting democracy in foreign lands lacking liberal traditions is that you get some peculiar results. Case in point: Last month's landslide electoral victory by Hamas, the Islamic Liberation Movement, in the Palestinian Authority's parliamentary race. At stake was continued access to and control over a billion dollars' annual international aid. If nothing else, Fatah's defeat proved that Yasser Arafat's successor President Mahmoud Abbas may well be the moderate people say he is, if by "moderate" they mean feckless leader. The Fatah team showed themselves wholly incompetent in their role as corrupt third-world thugs, being unable to rig their own electoral victory. This is a mistake Hamas is unlikely to make in future elections. The new Palestinian Legislative Council has chosen young Hamas stalwart Ismail Haniyeh as its nominee for prime minister. Haniyeh is widely regarded as a pragmatist, which in the Hamas context means acknowledging that something called Israel does in fact exist, even if it has no right to.

Both the U.S. and Israel designate Hamas a terrorist organization, and have wisely chosen to cut all aid transfers (except for food and subsistence) until Hamas renounces violence, recognizes Israel, and makes other fundamental reforms. This move has brought charges of hypocrisy, to wit, that the U.S. seeks to build democracies abroad, but when the elections do not go the way we want, we attempt to reverse them. Al Qaeda used this same reasoning to question the legitimacy of the Iraqi elections, using the example of the December 1991 Algerian election, in which victory by the Islamic Salvation Front led to the declaration of a state of emergency and a ten-year civil war. The West will not tolerate a genuinely Islamic government, and will throw its democratic ideals overboard if one comes to power through the ballot.

Interesting argument, but missing the point. Promoting democracy only requires us to approve of the process; we need not be delighted with the results. And it is not hypocrisy to shift policies when foreign governments legitimately change hands. It happens all the time. For example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel enjoys a much better relationship with Washington than her predecessor Gerhard Schroeder. Furthermore, the United States is under no obligation to help underwrite the finances of a government that sponsors suicide bombings. It is bad enough that Hamas seeks to create a new terror state in the Middle East, it would be ludicrous for us to pay them to do it. If anything, cutting funds to Hamas shows more consistency than hypocrisy; their program is barely distinguishable from the Taliban's, and lately we have not been on the best of terms.

Meanwhile European diplomats are trying to find language satisfactory to Hamas that will imply their acceptance of Israel's existence. For example, if Hamas acknowledges the provisions of a 2002 Arab peace proposal (that Israel has denounced), one could argue that by implication they have recognized Israel, since Israel is included in the proposal. This fig leaf will make it easier for the Europeans to keep the aid spigots

open to the Palestinians. But obscurantist diplomats are running into difficulties with the new frankness, the growing and refreshing willingness of radical leaders to say exactly what they think, and mean what they say. We see it in the mystical musings of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and the Khrushchevian bluster of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. So too from the Hamas leadership, there is a decided unwillingness to relinquish violence and recognize Israel. And why should they? Intransigence was their passport to power. If the Palestinian people wanted temporizing moderates they could have kept Fatah. Violence has worked well for Hamas. (Come to think of it, it worked for Fatah too, under Arafat's leadership.) And if the Western countries cut aid there are always people like Ahmadinejad and Chavez to help keep the dream alive.

It is hard to see what billions of dollars of Western aid money have purchased in the PA. Aid did not buy peace, nor did it garner the good will or gratitude of the Palestinian people, who, after all, were the ones who cast ballots for terrorists. Aid money did contribute markedly to the growth of the personal fortunes of corrupt Palestinian officials, but that is typical of most such handouts to authoritarian governments. I am certain politicians could find something better to do with the over \$200 million we send to the PA annually. How about giving it to Afghanistan?--At least they like us. And it will be interesting to see if Hamas demands that Israel resume its payments to the PA, putting them in the position of making claims against a nation they say has no right to exist. Who then would be the hypocrites?

--James S. Robbins is author of the forthcoming *Last in Their Class: Custer, Picket and the Goats of West Point and an NRO Contributor.*

How Will Hamas Rule?

Time

By Simon Robinson

2/27

To understand what Palestinian life might look like under Hamas, it's instructive to visit the home of Sheik Hamid al-Bitawi, high above the bustling West Bank town of Nablus. Al-Bitawi sits on the Islamic appeals court in the West Bank, the top court for all family-law matters in the region. Running as a Hamas candidate in legislative elections last month, he won a seat in the 132-member Palestinian parliament, part of a landslide victory for the militant Islamic group. Now religious conservatives like al-Bitawi find themselves in a position to promote social strictures that were only fitfully observed under the rule of the secular Fatah party. As he offers visitors a bowl of fruit, al-Bitawi recalls how, after returning to the West Bank from religious studies in Jordan in the 1970s, he looked for a future wife who covered herself in the traditional hijab, or head scarf, and the body-length jilbab.

"I couldn't find a girl for months," he says. "Nowadays, 70% of Palestinian women wear these clothes. It's normal." To al-Bitawi, the change is a sign that more Palestinians are adopting the fundamentalist values that Hamas espouses. "Of course we would love to see Shari'a [Islamic law] in every home," he says. "But the reality is that some women don't wear the hijab, some people don't pray at the mosque. We can't force people."

How far Hamas goes in promoting its brand of Islam may yield answers to a dilemma that is roiling the Middle East: Will the party choose moderation, now that it has inherited responsibility for governing some 4 million Palestinians? Or will it use its power to impose a fundamentalist ideology that, coupled with its militant anti-Israel stance, has produced suicide bombings against Israel and led the U.S. and the European Union to designate it a terrorist organization?

Despite Hamas' victory at the polls, the Bush Administration has refused to budge from its insistence that it will not deal with a Hamas-led government--or continue to provide funding to the Palestinian Authority, which received a total of \$1.1 billion in foreign aid last year--unless the group renounces violence and

recognizes the Jewish state. The Israeli government indicated last week that it plans to impose new restrictions on the ability of Palestinians to work in Israel and may slow the movement of Palestinian goods to Israel. Hamas bristles at such measures, arguing that it was elected democratically and should be given time to prove itself in government. But the group is aware it needs help. Party leaders say if Western aid stops, the group can still sustain itself with money from countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia and wealthy benefactors from the Persian Gulf--although U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice plans to discourage such aid during a visit to the region this week. Hamas also hopes to gain some international legitimacy through a scheduled meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow next month. Some experts say a Hamas-led government may try to wean itself off Western aid by slashing the Palestinian Authority's bloated budget. "Reform could generate substantial savings," says Patrick Clawson, deputy director for research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "Palestinian Authority expenses are ridiculously high for the quality of the services delivered."

Throughout the Palestinian territories, the Hamas triumph has fueled a new assertiveness, but beneath the bluster, there have been hints of accommodation. "The fact that Hamas is part of the Palestinian Authority is already a sign that they are prepared to compromise," says political scientist and moderate independent legislator Ziad Abu Amr, whom Hamas may bring in as Foreign Minister. Hamas leaders say the party will honor previous Palestinian Authority agreements and have offered the possibility of a long-term cease-fire--which also squares with the desires of its Arab neighbors. According to Palestinian officials in Damascus and a senior Israeli security official, jailed Hamas leaders have asked the militant group Islamic Jihad to respect a cease-fire with Israel. "They're trying to buy time," says the official. "And they understand they need calm so they can work out what to do when they're in power."

So what sort of rule is the party likely to establish? Palestinian insiders say the new government will be stocked with technocrats and academics rather than party ideologues. The job of Prime Minister is likely to go to Ismail Haniya, one of the more moderate top leaders. Hamas' first priority is to curb lawlessness in the Palestinian territories, which it blames on unruly security forces loyal to Fatah. Hamas leaders say they intend to impose order on the security apparatus, a move that may spark clashes between loyalists of the two parties. Al-Bitawi says "the bad people in the security services will be dismissed" and the remaining personnel consolidated into one or two forces.

Hamas says the money saved by running a more efficient security force will be spent on social services such as health clinics, schools and soup kitchens--all of which Hamas has used to build grass-roots support. But some Palestinian officials warn that Hamas may also push for new social restrictions. "Hamas must decide whether they want to establish an isolated fundamentalist system or a national system open to the whole world," says Jibril Rajoub, former national security adviser to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. In the Gaza Strip, Hamas' main stronghold, alcohol is no longer publicly served, and nearly all women wear the hijab. Hamas officials say they will move slowly but make no secret of their desire to expand the use of Islamic law--currently limited to resolving family disputes--to criminal cases. That might lead to harsher punishments for crimes such as murder and rape. "In principle, the Shari'a should be applied on all life activities," says Mahmoud al-Khatib, 34, the youngest Hamas member to win a seat. "But there are some circumstances where it can't yet apply. We believe in graduality. It will take time." Al-Khatib uses an Arabic word that means "mutual consent." "We approach people openly and see what they are willing to accept," he says. "You cannot bring back the rules of Islam in one day."

Some Palestinians appear willing to trade some social freedoms for a government able to stand up to Israel. "Hamas will not be preoccupied with the hijab or whether people can drink or not," says Rawand Khilfeh, 23, who just graduated as a civil engineer and wears a hijab in public. "They will concentrate on the Israeli problem." Her younger sister Dima, 21, who leaves her hair uncovered, says, "Even if Hamas did force things, this is Islam. It's not bad."

Many Israelis might disagree. Until Hamas proves that it is committed to restraint, it's likely that Israel will continue the policy of unilaterally establishing permanent borders to separate itself from the Palestinians. Signs that the Palestinians are building a fundamentalist society on their side of the line won't do much to

bolster Israeli interest in a negotiated peace. That may be why Hamas leaders like Sheik al-Bitawi are sounding conciliatory. "There are good things in Europe and the U.S.: civilization, democracy, medical care," he says. "But there are also bad things: divorce, drugs, murder. We hope that the positive things in the West can combine with the positive things we have in Islam. This is our vision." The world is waiting to see it in action.

The Palestinian Authority – Clarity

National Review

Editorial

2/27

Hamas has defeated Fatah in the Palestinian elections, and nobody can be sure what happens now in that unhappy corner of the world. Give them the vote, pessimists groan, and look how they use it: to put into power terrorists whose program is to team up with the crazies in Iran and wipe out Israel. It would have been better to cancel the election altogether, they continue, or at least to forbid Hamas from running. So the peace process is over -- the Palestinians evidently prefer suicide to constructing a state.

Polls in fact regularly show that a majority of Palestinians are fed up with self-inflicted misery and would choose peace with Israel if they could. They know that Fatah also practices terror, and in that respect is no different from Hamas. The election was not fought on any grounds of anti-Israel strategy. Fatah lost because Yasser Arafat and his cronies ran a mafia for almost 40 years, ruling with the gun in order to enrich themselves exclusively under cover of empty nationalist slogans. At the time of his death, Arafat's fortune is estimated to have been several billion dollars, all of it gouged from American and European taxpayers or brother Arab tyrants.

In such crooked circumstances, even the most meager form of civil society never stood a chance. Moving into the void, meanwhile, Hamas has been carefully building a grassroots civil society, offering health and education and at least the façade of honesty. Succeeding Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas and his corrupt cronies continued to drive to expensive villas in Mercedes-Benzes with bodyguards, as though they could carry on regardless. They deserved to lose.

Hamas loves to decry President Bush as "the enemy of God" and "the enemy of Islam," and to issue bloodcurdling threats against Israel. Rhetoric apart, it is in a weak position, so weak indeed that its spokesmen in Gaza, Damascus, and Cairo keep contradicting one another. Firm policy is undetectable as yet.

Israel controls Palestinians' water supply and electricity, and ultimately the economy, such as it is after Fatah's depredations. The Israeli government's very first decision toward Hamas was to release millions of dollars collected through the tax system, without which the Palestinian bureaucracy could not have been paid this coming month. At the same time, Israeli security forces have foiled several suicide bombers, and targeted terrorists attacking them from Gaza. If Hamas were to pursue an all-out terror strategy, however, Israel would abandon this modulated response. All Palestinians would then be at the mercy of Israel, and the majority at least would blame Hamas for worsening their plight. Equally sobering from the Hamas perspective is the reluctance of Fatah fat cats to remove their hands from the till. Fatah still controls the militia, and its gunmen here and there continue to shoot it out. In such a situation, civil war is always on the horizon.

Masterly inactivity should be the policy of the United States and the Europeans while Hamas is in the process of deciding whether to respond to pressures to act responsibly, or to be a willing tool of Iran in the global jihad against the West. Whichever it is, Palestinians will have to live through the consequences of their vote. This may mean learning democracy the hard way, but that is better and wiser than never to learn it at all.

Hamas More Don't We Know?

National Review

By Andrew C. McCarthy

3/1

The \$8 billion deal to turn over commercial shipping operations at major American ports to Dubai Ports World, a company owned by the United Arab Emirates, continues to stoke controversy. The Bush administration and other supporters of the deal insist that, despite a history of facilitating al Qaeda--including what the 9/11 Commission described as contacts between high-regime officials and Osama bin Laden himself--the UAE is a "good friend" and a valuable ally in the war on terror.

Nevertheless, it has become necessary to ask whether, even now, the UAE is in felony violation of the 1996 law that has become the cornerstone of U.S. counterterrorism enforcement. Is the UAE providing material support to Hamas, a specially designated terrorist organization?

Any American citizen doing such a thing would be sent to prison. Any American company doing it would surely be convicted and put out of business--and its principals liable for prosecution and imprisonment.

Obviously, the UAE cannot be prosecuted criminally; it has diplomatic immunity. But if it is transgressing our fundamental antiterror law, in the middle of a war on terror, would it be asking too much to insist that it not be rewarded with a profitable commercial deal that would call for it to be read into part of the strategy for our border enforcement?

THE BUSH DOCTRINE Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. Those were the words President Bush spoke with stirring moral clarity on September 20, 2001, just days after Islamic terrorists annihilated nearly 3000 innocent Americans in suicide hijacking attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. This directive, the Bush Doctrine, was echoed in the National Security Strategy of the United States, promulgated by the White House near the first anniversary of 9/11. It proclaims: The United States of America is fighting a war against terrorists of global reach. The enemy is not a single political regime or person or religion or ideology. The enemy is terrorism--premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against innocents.

In many regions, legitimate grievances prevent the emergence of a lasting peace. Such grievances deserve to be, and must be, addressed within a political process. But no cause justifies terror. The United States will make no concessions to terrorist demands and strike no deals with them. We make no distinction between terrorists and those who knowingly harbor or provide aid to them. [Emphasis supplied.]

At a minimum the Bush Doctrine necessarily means a country supporting terrorist organizations cannot be considered a reliable ally in the war on terror.

In 1996, as part of a major overhaul in counterterrorism law, Congress enacted the material support statutes. (Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 2339B is the provision germane for present purposes.) The law states, in pertinent part: Whoever, within the United States or subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, knowingly provides material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization, or attempts or conspires to do so, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 15 years, or both, and if the death of any person results, shall be imprisoned for any term of years or for life.

MATERIAL SUPPORT TO HAMAS AND PIJ? The United States government officially designated Hamas a foreign terrorist organization in 1995, and reaffirmed the designation in 1997, following the

aforementioned overhaul of counterterror law.

Formed in 1987 as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas (whose name is derived from Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyya, meaning the "Islamic Resistance Movement") is incorrigibly dedicated to the destruction of Israel. To this day, its charter states: "the purpose of HAMAS is to create an Islamic Palestinian state throughout Israel by eliminating the State of Israel through violent jihad." Hamas is responsible for innumerable terrorist attacks and murders. Its recent electoral triumph in the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, far from inducing it to forswear this deadly posture, appears only to have emboldened it.

Consequently, several people and entities have been indicted in the United States for providing material support to Hamas, as well as related crimes. In announcing one such indictment in 2004, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft was plainspoken about the government's position: "Today, terrorists have lost yet another source of financing and support for their bombs and bloodshed. Our record on terrorist financing is clear: We will hunt down the suppliers of terrorist blood money. We will shut down these sources, and we will ensure that both terrorists and their financiers meet the full justice of the United States of America."

Is the UAE a source of support for Hamas? It certainly appears to be. In an important article in FrontPage Magazine last Friday (February 24), analysts Rachel Ehrenfeld and Alyssa A. Lappen describe extensive strands of UAE funding for the terror organization. Indeed, as they observe: On July 27, 2005, the Palestinian Information Center carried a public HAMAS statement thanking the UAE for its "unstinting support." The statement said: "We highly appreciate his highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan (UAE president) in particular and the UAE people and government in general for their limitless support...that contributed more to consolidating our people's resoluteness in the face of the Israeli occupation".

The HAMAS statement continued: "the sisterly UAE had... never hesitated in providing aid for our Mujahid people pertaining to rebuilding their houses demolished by the [Israeli military] ... The UAE also spared no effort to offer financial and material aids to the Palestinian charitable societies."

Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan, the father of the current UAE president, is described as having been an ardent benefactor of Hamas as well as another U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), right up until his death in 2004--i.e., three years after 9/11, the point at which the Bush administration maintains that the UAE became staunchly antiterrorist.

The UAE, moreover, continues to operate an ostensibly "charitable" entity, Human Appeal International, which is alleged to fund the terrorist activities of Hamas and PIJ by routing thousands upon thousands of dollars through the Palestinian Red Crescent Organization, whose branches in the Palestinian territories are controlled by Hamas. The terror organization is said then to transfer the money to purported charities which are actually fronts for Hamas's dirty work. As Ehrenfeld and Lappen elaborate, the UAE has a "compensation" plan for the Palestinian intifada. In 2001, this plan is said to have "included \$3,000 for every Palestinian shaheed [i.e., "martyr" or suicide bomber], \$2,000 for his family, \$1,500 for those detained by Israel, \$1,200 for each orphan. In addition, families of those terrorists whose homes Israel demolished each received \$10,000."

Back in October 2005, moreover, the Palestinian Authority broke ground on a new town to be known as "Sheikh Khalifa City," in honor of the UAE president, who has ponied up \$100 million for the project. As an Israeli news service reports: "The new town will not be used to ease the housing crisis in the PA's refugee camps, but will rather house relatives of those killed in the years of violence against Israel, other casualties such as the wounded and arrested, and families whose homes were razed during the war."

Meanwhile, America's premier expert on Islamic terrorism, Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project on Terrorism, recently told MSNBC's Rita Cosby that "Hamas couriers as late as last year ... were sent to the West Bank or Gaza [who] came in with UAE cash. So there is still a problem of terrorist supporting

operations."

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM THE UAE'S MIXED RECORD It cannot be gainsaid that the UAE was an al Qaeda booster before 9/11. Nor should it be minimized that, ever since, the country has vastly improved, giving valuable assistance to our military overseas. Of course, on the latter score, it is worth noting that--the port deal aside--a good relationship with the U.S. is where the UAE's interests lie. Its hospitality to American forces and its billions in purchases of American arms are precious insurance for a tiny autocracy that has sometimes tense relations with menacing Iran. Still, proponents of the ports deal understandably emphasize that the UAE's strides are a welcome development. It is one we should cultivate to the extent we can do so without compromising core principles.

But that means not at the expense of making a mockery of our laws--particularly the laws essential to our security. The ports transaction will be under review for the next 45 days. That probe must include an assessment of the UAE's ties to Hamas and PIJ.

If there is to be anything left of the Bush Doctrine, the United States cannot allow a country in violation of our counterterrorism laws to play a critical role in admitting, storing and transferring shipments into our country. Nor can we abide a lucrative financial arrangement for a country that uses its wealth to underwrite organizations our law designates as terrorists.

--Andrew C. McCarthy, a former federal prosecutor, is a senior fellow at the *Foundation for the Defense of Democracies*.

UAE & DUBAI PORTS WORLD

Company Policy

National Review
By Frank Gaffney Jr.
2/22

President Bush's announcement Tuesday that he would support the effort of a United Arab Emirates-owned company, Dubai Ports World, in its bid to take over a lease for part of the Port of New York and other major U.S. seaports--even to the point of vetoing legislation that would block the deal--is as regrettable as it is untenable.

President Bush has dug in his heels on a fight he surely cannot win. The only political figure of note who has fully supported his position publicly seems to be former President Jimmy Carter--a salutary reminder of the latter's dismal judgment on national-security matters. Meanwhile the list of elected officials, Republican (including the leadership of the Senate and House) and Democrat alike, making clear their adamant opposition grows.

This sentiment on Capitol Hill reflects the overwhelming, common-sense attitude of the vast majority of the American people. They are horrified at the prospect of entrusting the management of sensitive U.S. port facilities to a government that allowed most of the operational planning and financing of the 9/11 attacks to occur from its soil.

If this drama is allowed to play out fully, several things are predictable:

* Legislation will be enacted by veto-proof margins in both the House and Senate to block the DP World takeover of the port terminal and other management contracts currently held by the British company, P & O.

* If so, the president will be unlikely to cast his first veto in a futile attempt to block the legislation. The deal

will, therefore, be aborted.

* Relations with the UAE, which has been helpful in some aspects of the War for the Free World post-9/11--the factor that seems to have trumped all others in the secretive deliberations of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) about the DP World takeover, will be damaged unnecessarily.

This will be particularly so in light of the fact that the congressional investigations of this transaction promised by people like Rep. Peter King and Sen. Susan Collins, the Republican chairmen respectively of the House and Senate Homeland Security Committees, will surely delve into the nature and conduct of Dubai Ports World. If the following response to a posting on the WarFooting.com blog last Thursday by a self-described, but anonymous, former employee of the UAE company is any guide, that won't be pretty: The US and the West in general are making a serious mistake if they hand over control of 21 ports to an Arab company, owned by an Arab government.

As a former employee of the DP World I can offer a unique insight into the goings on of this company, and I'm afraid if you scrape beneath the surface, it's not all its cracked up to be.

Did you know that several times a year, staff receive a company memo informing them that, for that particular month, one day's salary will be deducted and given to a Palestine "charity"!!! Staff are allowed to refuse by informing Human Resources Department, but no one ever did--knowing that this would lead to being over-looked for promotions and/or not having your contract renewed. I recall one poor Indian dock-side labourer on [a] \$500-a-month [salary] complaining that he couldn't afford to make the payment as he had his wife and three children back in India to feed. He promptly was fired!

They have a reputation and a track record of not honouring staff contracts for expatriates, and I know of several employees who didn't receive their end contract bonuses or whose personal effects were not repatriated back to their home country. I mean, what can you do when the company is owned by the government of UAE and Shari'a law applies?

The author goes on to remind us of some of the United Arab Emirates' unsavory behavior: "the UAE bans Israelis from visiting or working in their country, and maps of the world have Israel blackened out. Even a non-Israeli who has visited Israel and has an Israel visa in their passport, is denied entry into the UAE." He also observes DP World made much on their website about "one of its senior executives, Dave Sanborn, being nominated by US President George W. Bush to serve as Maritime Administrator, a key transportation appointment reporting directly to Norman Mineta, the Secretary of Transportation and Cabinet Member."

Some, like my friends at the Wall Street Journal's editorial page, take a libertarian view: The deal makes business sense and, hey, security is the U.S. government's job, not the company's. The truth of the matter is that the job of performing port security is already problematic; an arrangement that affords opportunities to put personnel and cargo in positions where they can do us harm and involves reading people into the government's port-security plans who may not be on our side amounts to what the lawyers call an "attractive nuisance." These are opportunities that are not likely to be passed up by terrorists who have operated from the UAE in the past.

These considerations argue for the president to do as he did with Harriet Miers--namely, recognize that a strategically and politically insupportable mistake has been made and cut his losses. The CFIUS process that put him in this untenable position--and that has been responsible for innumerable other bad decisions about national security-damaging foreign investments must be overhauled. And port security must be made a priority, not something we contract out to one-time, and possibly future, hosts to anti-American terror-wielding Islamofascists.

--Frank J. Gaffney Jr. is a contributor to NRO and the lead author of *War Footing: Ten Steps America Must Take to Prevail in the War for the Free World*.

Un-American

National Review

By Mansoor Ijaz

2/22

Islamophobia, not national security, is at the heart of the raging controversy on Capitol Hill over a United Arab Emirates-based company, Dubai Ports World, assuming ownership and management responsibilities at six major seaports in the United States. U.S. lawmakers might bristle at the thought of letting the UAE own and operate U.S. ports. After all, it was a citizen of the UAE, Marwan al Shehhi, who piloted United Airlines Flight 175 into the second World Trade Center tower, and it was through the banks of this country that the 9/11 attacks were partially financed. But their fiery rhetoric and threats of congressional action mask an increasingly patronizing racism fueled by illogical paranoia rooted in past events. Let's deal with what the UAE is now.

Simply put, the reaction to the Dubai deal is un-American.

President Bush has therefore rightly threatened to veto any attempts to block the Dubai deal, although Congress, eager to insure the burden of responsibility falls squarely on his shoulders if another terrorist attack takes place on American soil, is sure to force him to pull out the presidential ink pen next week.

Congressional moves to reverse the administration's support for an Arab company to run American ports exposes dangerous prejudices in America's dealings with important Muslim countries at the time when they are needed most as front-line allies to fight terrorism. In Dubai's case, this reality is reflected by deep suspicions that the sheikdom's cordial relations with leading state sponsors of terrorism, like Iran, might somehow become the basis for DP World's port operations allowing nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons to be smuggled into the U.S. in ship containers from unregulated ports.

Dubai, known for innovative investing in antiterrorist technology, should be encouraged to fund and deploy a revolutionary array of security initiatives, such as neutron pulse scanners and smart container-tracking chips that can track and detect illicit materials in cargo containers. U.S. technology is already being developed in prototype form to create CAT-scan-like reports identifying nuclear and chemical materials inside containers in less than two minutes, without opening them or materially affecting port management economics. Rather than penalize Dubai for suspicions no one can prove, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security should find a common investment and implementation basis with DP World for moving such technology development forward at a more rapid pace.

Simple corporate restructuring of the deal could also address concerns over how foreign-government-owned businesses are allowed to exert control in operating U.S. ports. DP World's operations could be conducted under a U.S.-limited liability company framework with two classes of shares--voting and non-voting. DP World would own 100 percent of the non-voting shares, which in turn would accrue 99 percent of the deal's economic benefits. The voting-rights shares would be 100 percent owned by U.S. citizens with one percent of the economic benefits. The voting shares would have sole authority to set port operations policies, and importantly, to change any policy promulgated by DP World deemed a threat to national security.

Under such a proposal, the U.S. shareholders could be, for example, the chief-executive officeholders of the port authorities that DP World proposes to manage, along with a few presidential appointees, such as former law-enforcement officials, to provide oversight. Such arrangements already serve to channel important investment into private U.S. companies engaged in sensitive technology development that are regulated by International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR). Port security, as opposed to a port's commercial activities that DP World would be responsible for, will remain the task of the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs Service.

Such changes would not be discriminatory going forward--even a British company, like the ports' present management owners, Peninsular and Oriental, would also be subjected to the new regime.

Washington's bout with Islamophobia also ignores the reality of Dubai's future direction. A metropolis already, it is rapidly becoming the prototype city-state that could serve as an important example for the future in Muslim societies bedeviled by high unemployment, low literacy rates, bad trade policies, and authoritarian political structures. It is managed and led by a cadre of young, highly educated Arab and Muslim professionals who seek to transform the world's stereotype of Islam by developing and running businesses transparently, with integrity and with an increasingly democratic and accountable corporate culture.

Whatever the UAE's policies in the pre-9/11 world (whether as home to A. Q. Khan's illicit nuclear network, one of three Taliban embassies, questionable banking practices, or as an alleged repository for Iranian-terror funds), Dubai's record under these young leaders in the post 9/11 world reflects serious and structural change in national strategy. As Jim Robbins noted Tuesday, in December 2004, Dubai was the first Middle East government to accept the U.S. Container Security Initiative as policy to screen all containers for security hazards before heading to America. In May 2005, Dubai signed an agreement with the U.S. Department of Energy to prevent nuclear materials from passing through its ports. It also installed radiation-detecting equipment--evidence of a commitment to invest in technology. In October 2005, the UAE Central Bank directed banks and financial institutions in the country to tighten their internal systems and controls in their fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

These are not the actions of a terror-sponsoring state.

The Dubai port deal could also serve to increase the depth and breadth of people-to-people contacts between America and important Muslim countries in the Reaganesque "trust but verify" mold. It is useful in this regard to remember the example of the U.S. International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which for decades has trained foreign armies in unstable countries to stay out of politics and improved U.S. understanding of complex societies. It seems patently hypocritical that America wants democracy in the Middle East, champions capitalism and global integration, pushes for reform, transparency, and anti-corruption practices in business, and then turns around and tells those who are practicing what America preaches, Sorry, we think you folks are a bunch of terrorists, so we don't want you on our shores and don't trust you running our ports.

It is understandable that American politicians would want to seek clarifications, safeguards, and accountability on the DP World deal in honor of all those who were mercilessly murdered on that tragic September morning. But the best way to honor their memories is to use the Dubai deal as a model to build effective bridges to the Arab and Muslim world--as we did in Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan--instead of erecting barriers that reveal America's paranoia and fear about some Islamist doomsday scenario no one can predict, all the while alienating the very people we need to help raise up the Muslim world's disaffected so they are not so desperate to tear us down.

--Mansoor Ijaz is chairman of Crescent Investment Management LLC, a New York private equity firm developing homeland-security technologies related to Internet security, air and seaport-cargo security, and airship-surveillance technologies. He also serves as chief executive of Crescent Hydropolis Resorts, a London Stock Exchange (AIM) quoted company that is developing the world's first permanent underwater living facilities, including a planned location in Dubai.

The Politically Correct vs. the Politically Ridiculous

National Review
By Andrew C. McCarthy
2/23

With the approval of the Bush administration, a company owned by the United Arab Emirates is poised to take over commercial management of shipping and stevedoring operations at six major American ports, located on the eastern seaboard and in New Orleans. When attention was suddenly drawn to this development last week, the urge toward public-safety questions was understandable. Not panic, but legitimate questions.

Sure as Dean follows Howard, though, understandable concern rapidly degenerated into calculated hysteria from poseurs seeking to claim the high ground from a president against whose measure they stand as national-security Lilliputians. Accelerating the downward spiral, the administration's initially temperate but unconvincing defense of the transaction devolved just as quickly into nauseating political correctness.

Neither corner of the ring has distinguished itself. In one, leading Democrats and some Republicans are evidently shocked to learn that many of the nation's ports are managed by foreigners. Indeed, even as they railed against the prospect of this buy-out by UAE's Dubai Ports World, Inc., they skipped past the inconvenient fact that the seller, the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, is a British concern.

Naturally, they prefer to cast the issue as one of foreign port-terminal management because they lack the gumption to state that the problem is Islamic participation in what is a gaping soft-spot in our armor. Yet, as usual, such too-clever-by-half cravenness has landed them in a box. Terminals at the ports in question--like many others in the country--have long been under the management of non-Americans. Should we expel everyone?

THE CLINTONS AND THE PORTS Especially precious in this regard is Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton's newfound passion for port security. Fresh from throwing in her lot with partisan efforts to derail the Patriot Act and frame the NSA's surveillance of wartime enemy communications as a crime, the '08 stars in Mrs. Clinton's eyes have suddenly twinkled with a fond memory: namely, how her husband managed to win the 1992 election, in large part, by getting to the right of the first President Bush on what was that era's great global menace--post-Tiananmen Square China. So here she is, trying to elbow her way to the right of the current Bush administration on the scourge of al Qaeda ... and hoping the rest of us are struck by amnesia.

You may recall, however, that, upon election, President Clinton proceeded to get tough with Beijing for, oh, about ten minutes. After that, there was no transfer of precious technology and no national security secret that couldn't be had for the right price. Oh, and guess who now controls several port operations on the West Coast? And has for years? Well, whaddya know? It's China.

Indeed, Chinese infiltration of U.S. ports would have been even more pervasive if Senator Clinton's husband had had his way. In 1998, the Republican Congress (led by Senator James Inhofe (OK) and Congressman Duncan Hunter (CA)) had to stop him from turning over management of a 144-acre terminal at the former U.S. Naval Station in Long Beach to the Chinese Ocean Shipping Company--a subsidiary of the People's Liberation Army linked to arms trading to Iran, Iraq, Syria, North Korea, Pakistan, Cuba, and even the street gangs of Los Angeles.

Of course, in the Clinton years, when anyone had the temerity to suggest that maybe it wasn't such a hot idea to give away the store to thuggish, democracy-crushing Communists, we were told such troglodyte notions were insentient to the alchemy of "constructive engagement." This was the very "why make friends when you can let them buy you?" philosophy that led these super-competent, obsessed-with-national-security Clintonistas to sell \$8 billion worth of F-16s, anti-aircraft and anti-ship missiles, other advanced weapons, and sundry munitions to--guess who?--The United Arab Emirates.

That happened in early 2000. For those keeping score, that's less than two years after al Qaeda blew up our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. It is one year after the Clinton administration had Osama bin Laden targeted at a camp in Afghanistan ... but called the strike off because the al Qaeda chief was in the company of high UAE officials, including an Emirati prince. A few months later, while the Clinton folks were getting

the UAE its new military hardware, the regime's friends at al Qaeda were blowing up the U.S.S. Cole.

So why do I have this crazy feeling that, in a new Clinton era, we'd be apt to find a lot more "engagement" than exclusion of the UAE (not to mention other dubious "partners") at our ports? In any event, now that Senator Clinton is all over this port thing, it'll be interesting to hear how she plans to tackle those dread Chinese foreigners managing California's coastline--not to mention her explanation of why the administration in which she figured so prominently thought it was okay to sell lots of stuff that goes boom to a country apparently not even fit to run a port terminal.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE PORTS Meanwhile, President Bush, who has never, ever vetoed anything in five years--not campaign-finance "reform" that shredded core First Amendment protections, not bursting budgets they haven't built calculators big enough to tally, not a law extending Fifth Amendment protections to alien enemy combatants, etc.--has somehow decided that this, the great principle of equal-market access for checkered Muslim regimes, is where he draws his line in the sand.

The president is promising to kill any legislation aimed at derailing the deal, so offended is he by the suggestion that, in the middle of a war against jihadists, a tiny Islamic country with a history of terror ties, which lives in an unstable, al Qaeda-friendly neighborhood, maybe, just maybe, might be a smidge less suitable for port management than, say, a private company based in England. (England, for those with a short memory, is a country with which we have a bit of history, and which was, for example, patrolling the no-fly zone with us in Iraq while the aforementioned Emirati prince was cavorting with bin Laden in Kandahar.)

I mean, does it get any more chauvinistic than that?

So while Democrats pander to our fears (and thus adopt the very cudgel they claim the administration has clubbed them with since 9/11), the president panders to what he takes to be our sense of fair play. He has he challenged lawmakers, the Wall Street Journal reports, to "step up and explain why a Middle Eastern company is held to a different standard" than a British company.

Well, okay. The Middle Eastern company is wholly owned by an Islamic autocracy. The president says we need to democratize the Islamic world because autocracies are unstable. And this particular one, oil-rich but only about the size of Maine, has more non-citizens than citizens among its four million or so residents, is enmeshed in a territorial dispute with those famously reasonable mullahs in Iran (over the Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island), and has been a hub for international narcotics trafficking and money laundering.

Nonetheless, the administration regards the regime--which does not show much promise of democratic reform--as both friendly and adherent to moderate Islam. As usual, "moderate" is in the eye of the beholder. For example, it is a crime punishable by imprisonment in the UAE for a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim man--because that is a violation of the meta-tolerant Religion of Peace's sharia law, which governs the realm. Muslim men can marry non-Muslim women (and more than one if they like), but you can get sent to prison for such crimes as urging Muslims to convert to other faiths.

Moreover, as my friend Frank Gaffney points out, the regime despises our close ally, Israel. The UAE promotes the idea of a one-state solution in "Palestine" (hint: the one state is not Israel), and may well be funding charities in Gaza and the West Bank--where "charities" are notorious for underwriting terrorism.

It was also a key supporter of the Taliban--one of only three countries to recognize bin Laden's kindly hosts as the official government of Afghanistan. In fact, the UAE is the country through which bin Laden was allowed to transit when al Qaeda moved its headquarters to Afghanistan from Sudan in 1996.

All that aside, we are at war with jihadists who, more than anything else, seek to strike us domestically with weapons of mass destruction--including nukes if they can access them. Lo and behold, it turns out that the UAE has been used as a transfer-station for nuclear components in the conspiracy of Pakistani proliferator

A. Q. Kahn, who was selling technology to Iran, North Korea and Libya. Obviously, the Kahn enterprise would have made other plans had it not believed it was on safe footing with the UAE.

SHOULD WE CANCEL THE DEAL? Does all this mean the port deal ought to be scotched? I think it does, but I have a (slightly) open mind--as do a lot of other people who fret over our security.

The Bush administration contends that the UAE has cleaned up its act since 9/11. There are reasons to be skeptical. The administration, after all, also counts Saudi Arabia and Yemen as cherished friends. It has set a laughably generous grading curve for Islamic regimes (and Islamic leaders) seeking the “moderate” diploma which qualifies them for the status of “ally” in the war on terror. Moreover, while the UAE has plainly taken some steps in the right direction, its facilitation of the enemy prior to 9/11 was substantial. It is not generally our practice to consider hardened criminals redeemed after only four years of good behavior--especially when “good” in this context is, to put it mildly, relative.

On the other hand, port commercial management is not exactly the same as port security. If it really insists on pressing ahead with this deal, the administration should have a chance to demonstrate why, at a time when our homeland is a target and it takes very few operatives to execute a massive attack, we should be comfortable with the UAE in such a prominent role at our borders--even if security remains primarily the task of the Department of Homeland Security.

But the administration should make that case to Congress and the American people, not to a secret tribunal (the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States) which is run by the Treasury Department--rather than the Pentagon or DHS--and for whom the promotion of commerce has pride of place over national security.

Which is all to say: This transaction needs a long, careful look. It doesn't need stone-throwing from opportunists who would be better advised to check their own glass houses. And it doesn't need bully-pulpit demagoguery.

You don't need to be an “Islamophobe” to have doubts here. You just need to have an IQ of about 11.

--Andrew C. McCarthy, a former federal prosecutor, is a senior fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

Dubai Dealings

Daily Standard
By Dan Darling
2/23

A Great deal of public and political controversy has arisen in recent days over the proposed deal to allow the United Arab Emirates (UAE) state-owned company Dubai World manage several major U.S. ports, with critics arguing that doing so will leave the United States more open to a terrorist attack. In evaluating this argument, it is worth examining how al Qaeda itself views the UAE, a task made far easier by drawing on a newly-released al Qaeda document from 2002 that contains a list of demands to UAE officials if they wish to avoid terrorist attacks on their soil.

To begin with, it is important to recognize that the UAE is not Iran and has entirely justifiable reasons for claiming that it is both one of the most moderate countries in the Arab world as well as a valuable partner in the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

Ironically, during his defense of the UAE's record on cooperation, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld failed to mention one of their most significant achievements to date: the November 2002 capture of Abd Rahim al-

Nashiri, a senior al Qaeda leader generally regarded as the mastermind of the USS Cole bombing and the head of the terror network's maritime operations. While this would indeed be a significant achievement in its own right, it is made all the more remarkable by the fact that the UAE had been directly threatened by the al Qaeda leadership several months prior to al-Nashiri's capture.

According to the now-declassified al Qaeda document labeled AFGP-2002-603856 by the United States, al Qaeda explicitly threatened UAE officials with attacks if they refused to cease cooperation with the United States. Written between May and June 2002 and addressed in particular to officials in the emirates of Abu-Dhabi and Dubai (the UAE is a federation of seven emirates), the document claims that the UAE has engaged in "spying, persecution, [sic] detainments" against al Qaeda members operating on its soil at the behest of the United States, noting that, "authorities have recently detained a number of Mujahideen and handed them over to suppressive organizations in their country in addition to having a number of them still in its custody" and that "these practices bring the country into a fighting ring in which it cannot endure or escape from its consequences." These threats appear to suggest that whatever else al Qaeda thinks of the UAE, it does not regard the nation as being among its friends.

Yet the document also provides ample ammunition to those concerned over the UAE port deal, with its al Qaeda author asserting to the Abu-Dhabi and Dubai officials that "we have infiltrated your security, censorship, and monetary agencies along with other agencies that should not be mentioned" and that "we are confident that you are fully aware that your agencies will not get to the same high level of your American Lords. Furthermore, your intelligence will not be cleverer than theirs, and your censorship capabilities are not worth much against what they have reached . . . you are an easier target than them; your homeland is exposed to us."

In a rare window into al Qaeda's strategic mindset, the author explains, "our policies are not to operate in your homeland and/or tamper with your security because we are occupied with others which we consider are enemies of this nation. If you compel us to do so, we are prepared to postpone our program for a short period and allocate some time for you." A list of demands is then presented to the UAE to avoid the prospect of al Qaeda attacks, consisting only of releasing all known al Qaeda members detained by the UAE since the September 11 attacks as well as anyone else who had been detained on suspicions of involvement with the attacks. It should be noted that the UAE did not comply with these demands and while the nation has been spared any terrorist attacks to date this appears to be due more to al Qaeda's limited resources than a lack of desire. For instance, an audio message in March 2005 by Saudi al Qaeda leader Salih al-Oufi called upon fellow jihadis to carry out attacks against "crusader" targets in the UAE as well as Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait.

The issue of whether or not the UAE should be allowed to manage U.S. ports highlights many of the paradoxes involved in fighting al Qaeda in the Middle East as well as the dangers of over-simplifying or mischaracterizing U.S. allies in the region. The UAE has been a valuable U.S. ally in the areas of both military cooperation and counter-terrorism and should be rightly recognized as such. Yet it also faces a number of serious problems with regard to al Qaeda infiltration. The UAE is by no means the only Gulf state dealing with this issue, but it is currently the only nation that is seeking to manage major U.S. ports. It is by no means unreasonable for U.S. policymakers to seek strict assurances that these concerns will be rigorously addressed by the UAE before allowing one of its state-run corporations to manage such a sensitive and vulnerable aspect of U.S. infrastructure.

Finally, the debate over whether or not Dubai World should be allowed to manage U.S. ports should serve as the backdrop for a larger national debate on what American policy should be towards corporations, some of them fully or partially state-owned, heralding from countries where al Qaeda or its supporters are known to be active either by having infiltrated local government agencies or in some cases as having the support of established religious leaders or political parties.

Dubai World, which has never been linked to al Qaeda in any fashion, is well within its rights to complain that political opposition is only organized against them while ignoring the far greater number of U.S.-based

businesses coming from other Gulf states with far greater levels of al Qaeda infiltration (most notably Saudi Arabia). Therefore, it is extremely important for supporters of the Dubai World deal to recognize that there are entirely valid security concerns relating to the UAE, just as opponents must recognize that these same security concerns are equally valid relating to a number of other countries as well.

Dan Darling is counterterrorism consultant for the Manhattan Institute Center for Policing Terrorism.

Port Hysteria

National Review

By Rich Lowry

2/24

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, styles himself an independent voice unafraid to speak truth to power. Judging by his performance in the controversy over a company that is owned by the United Arab Emirates potentially managing terminals at six U.S. ports, Graham is also unafraid to speak falsehood to power. He doubts whether we should “outsource major port security to a foreign-based company.”

He makes it sound as though the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and local police agencies--all of which provide port security--will be retiring as the UAE company Dubai Ports World takes over. This is fantasy. Graham insists that the White House has been “tone-deaf politically” about this issue. He is right, but that doesn’t make it politically deft to misstate facts in an inflammatory way.

Graham, unfortunately, isn’t alone. He is part of a bipartisan herd hoping to win the War on Terror through ill-informed hysteria.

Did some of the 9/11 hijackers come from the UAE, and did the hijackers launder money through that country? Yes, but Britain also has produced terrorists, and the UAE has worked to tighten its financial system. It is arguably our most useful Arab ally, providing an air base and ports crucial to military operations in the Middle East.

The UAE is a kind of Arab model. It is pursuing commercial openness, attempting to orient itself more toward the West. Blackballing the Dubai firm would turn our backs on the UAE’s progress.

Some members of Congress, worried at being portrayed as anti-Arab, have attempted a perverse broad-mindedness by objecting more generally to foreign involvement in U.S. ports. But Dubai Ports World will take over management at certain terminals only because it is purchasing the British company that is already running them. Foreign companies--from Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and China, among other places--already play a huge role at U.S. ports.

It is loosely said that Dubai Ports World would “take over” six ports. That’s false. The ports are owned by local governmental entities, and the company will manage only a few terminals. For instance, it will manage two terminals out of 14 in Baltimore. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey owns five terminals devoted chiefly to cargo. Dubai Ports World would be involved in only one, which it would manage together with a Danish firm.

A management company has very little to do with port security. It unloads cargo containers and then holds them until they are hauled out by trucks. As homeland-security expert Stewart Verdery says, this is but a small part of the process. The U.S. begins screening select cargo containers at their port of departure. Then, when they are on their way here, computer-based risk analysis is done to decide which containers need further scrutiny.

Dubai Ports World would have no role in determining how containers or ships are reviewed and deciding which containers are inspected. Critics complain that the company will obtain inside information about U.S. ports. But because the UAE has signed on to the Container Security Initiative, in which foreign countries cooperate with the U.S. on safeguards, it already is privy to our security practices in general. The company will probably learn more about specific procedures at individual ports, but this knowledge is not that tightly held.

The unionized employees at the ports would stay the same, and almost all of them are U.S. citizens. It seems unlikely that Dubai Ports World, even if it wanted to, could infiltrate Arab terrorists into the International Longshoremen's Association to plot mayhem in the United States.

We should worry about port security. But the real vulnerability is foreign ports, where something noxious could be loaded on ships headed here. The nightmare, of course, is a nuclear or radiological device. More resources should be poured into detection technology deployed overseas and in the U.S., where only 37 percent of containers go through radiation detectors. That is a real issue; the furor over Dubai Ports World is a distraction.

--*Rich Lowry is author of Legacy: Paying the Price for the Clinton Years.*

Call it What It Is: Islamophobia

National Review

By Larry Kudlow

2/24

The brouhaha surrounding the Bush administration since it gave the green light to a United Arab Emirates company slated to manage six major U.S. ports has nothing to do with homeland security. Allow me to give this episode its proper name: Islamophobia.

This UAE company -- Dubai Ports World -- is a commercial administrator. They are not a security company, and should the deal go through they will not be in charge of security at a half-dozen U.S. ports. That responsibility remains tight in the hands of our U.S. Coast Guard and Customs officials. Meanwhile, the same longshoremen and stevedores will be hauling containers. Moreover, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (a multi-agency panel which includes seasoned representatives from the departments of Defense, Treasury, and Homeland Security) has vetted this deal and given it their seal of approval.

None of the eager critics of this business transaction can furnish a scintilla of evidence that the Bush administration hasn't done its security due diligence on DP World. And so far, no one has proven that the security-vetting process of the executive branch is flawed. Instead, what we have here is a perfect storm of bi-partisan criticism based on a combination of nearsighted protectionism and xenophobic anti-Arab sentiment.

An amusing component of this flare-up is the sudden call to arms of the dovish Democrats. Aren't many of these vocal critics the same folks who opposed the Patriot Act? Isn't this the same posturing chorus that opposed NSA surveillance of al Qaeda phone calls? Didn't these same folks want immediate withdrawal from Iraq? Why the sudden about face?

The entire case against the DP World deal is built on nonsense. The UAE is an American ally in an unsettled Middle East -- and an important ally at that. They are exactly the kind of Arab country we need in our ongoing, critical mission in the region and the broader war effort. The UAE is not unlike our good friend Jordan, and is a whole lot better than Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The Wall Street Journal correctly pointed out this week that

“Critics also forget, or conveniently ignore, that the UAE government has been among the most helpful Arab countries in the war on terror. It was one of the first countries to join the U.S. container security initiative, which seeks to inspect cargo in foreign ports. The UAE has assisted in training security forces in Iraq, and at home it has worked hard to stem terrorist financing and WMD proliferation. UAE leaders are as much an al Qaeda target as Tony Blair.”

Deputy Defense secretary Gordon England told a Senate panel that “The UAE today is a good friend and a good ally. They stand side by side with us in the war on terrorism.” For the Pentagon, the UAE offers the region’s only deep-water port and dry-dock facility, large enough to take in aircraft carriers and nuclear subs. Two of its ports, including the DP World-administered Jebel Ali Port in Dubai, host more U.S. naval visits than any other facility outside the United States. The country also hosts major air bases for U.S. refueling and surveillance flights.

Additionally, UAE central bank officials have strengthened anti-money-laundering and terror-financing laws and have greatly increased oversight of their financial system. The UAE is also the only country in the Middle East that allows U.S. customs inspectors to check cargo headed to America.

Could Bush have done a better job in handling all of this? Sure. The president made some clear political marketing mistakes. In particular, he should have opened up the black-box of executive review and shared it with members of Congress. Transparency in government is always a good thing.

But in the end, America ought to honor its word. We have a duty to keep our promise to Dubai Ports and the UAE, a country that deserves the same fair treatment we give all our allies. There is no room for prejudice or bigotry here.

Make no mistake about it. What is going on right now on cable news channels, in the newspapers, and over the Internet is simple Islamophobia. The Democrats who are vocally against the deal are assuredly motivated by political gain. But Republicans should know better. If we’re to win the fight against the Islamofascists, a tiny minority of the Muslim community, we cannot afford to erect political, trade, or commercial barriers against those Arab nations who have aligned themselves with the U.S. in the terror war and who wish to do business with us as part of that alliance.

Repulsing them is just plain stupid. Tearing down barriers to promote global connectivity is a much better strategy wherever it makes national-security sense.

Dubai has offered their help. We should take it.

-- *Larry Kudlow, NRO’s Economics Editor, is host of CNBC’s Kudlow & Company and author of the daily web blog, Kudlow’s Money Politic\$.*

With Friends Like This...

National Review

By Alex Alexiev

2/24

Proponents of the Dubai Ports transaction make two main arguments that in their view prove conclusively that the deal is in the best interests of the United States: First, that guaranteeing our ports security means that they will remain in the hands of U.S. authorities and, second, that the UAE is a friendly country cooperating with the U.S. military in a variety of ways and thus contributing to the war on terror. What if, for the sake of argument, we agree that both of these assumptions are true, yet there are nonetheless compelling reasons to oppose the deal on national-security grounds.

There are at least two such reasons. The first one has to do with the nature of the UAE state and the philosophy of government it represents. Very simply, it is an authoritarian, anti-democratic polity that pursues policies that are the exact opposite of the model of democracy that we promote in Iraq and consider the basis of our strategy to transform the Middle East. It allows no political parties, dissent, or freedom of speech, unless it is anti-American or anti-Semitic; censors the Internet; and uses troglodyte sharia tenets to throw people in jail for crimes such as being homosexual. At the very least, our support for such a “stalwart friend” makes our pro-democracy stance look just a bit hypocritical; at worst it contributes to the growing hostility toward America. Virtually all recent opinion polls in the UAE have shown upward of 75 percent responding with a starkly negative opinion of America, even when compared to Osama bin Laden.

Much more serious than the nature of its government, though, is the evidence that the Emirates have for decades been one of the key financiers of radical Islamism and even outright terrorism. Indeed, if they have been a reliable friend and ally to anybody, it is to the House of Saud in its efforts to export the hateful Wahhabi creed worldwide. And it is this massive campaign over the years that has created the huge infrastructure of thousands of radical mosques, madrassas, Islamic centers, and “charities” that is the true breeding ground of hate, fanaticism, and terrorism.

Official information about these activities is, needless to say scarce, but even the little that does see the light of day indicates massive involvement. The monthly journal of the Muslim World League indicates that the UAE and the potentates ruling them have donated large sums of money to virtually all of the Saudi-controlled instruments of spreading radical Islam, such as the Muslim World League, the Islamic Development Bank, the World Council of Mosques, and the Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF), etc., for nearly three decades now. The ISF alone, for instance, was given \$500 million in 1980, according to the March 1981 issue of The MWL Journal.

Nor have UAE leaders been squeamish about financing radicalism in the United States itself. In 1980, again according to The MWL Journal, the president of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed, and the ruler of the Sharjah Emirate, Sheikh al-Qassimi, gave \$4.5 million to Nation of Islam leader W. D. Muhammad, as part of a successful effort by the Saudis to convert the movement to Wahhabism. The result has been a radicalization that last year resulted in one of its leaders calling for jihad against the Los Angeles Police Department.

More recently, a \$2.5 million donation by the late Sheikh Zayed to Harvard University for the establishment of an Islamic chair, had to be withdrawn after it became known that another Sheikh Zayed Center in UAE engaged in scientific activities such as proving that the U.S. masterminded the 9/11 attacks and that “Jews use gentile blood for holiday pastries.” None of this prevented the government of the Emirates from donating to Columbia University toward a chair for a militant Palestinian professor.

Finally, our good friends in the UAE are far from unwilling to engage in direct funding of terrorism. In 2000, as the so-called Second Intifada began, Saudi Arabia established the Al Aqsa and Intifada Fund designed to provide direct support to suicide bombers and their families. According to Arab sources, the UAE became the second-largest contributor to the \$1 billion fund after Riyadh with a contribution of \$150 million. If Washington’s policies in the Palestinian conflict are in shambles today with Hamas in power, more than a little credit is due to our friends in Saudi Arabia and UAE.

However the DP World controversy is resolved ultimately, it would have been worthwhile if it leads to a long-overdue debate on who really is friend and who is foe in the war on terror. It's something that we still do not seem to be quite sure about four and a half years after 9/11.

--Alex Alexiev is vice president for research at the Center for Security Policy.

Bait and Switch

Extreme caution is in order with respect to Dubai Ports World's recently announced "voluntary" decision to "separate P&O's operations held through its US subsidiary." It is true that this action will allow the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to conduct a "further review" of the national-security implications of having the United Arab Emirates-owned company operate as many as 22 port facilities from Maine to Texas.

Those implications include the prospect that a country from whose territory most of the operational planning and financing of the 9/11 attacks occurred will be able to make decisions concerning personnel and cargo that could permit further--and possibly even more deadly--terrorist assaults on this country. At the very least, the company will have to be read-in on these ports' security plans as it will have some role in their implementation. Unless DP World is willing to start from scratch as far as their port deals with us go, these considerations constitute potential security problems.

There seems little likelihood that a genuinely fresh assessment of these risks is in the cards, however, as long as the same, clearly dysfunctional, CFIUS "process" is charged with reevaluating the Dubai Ports World transaction. Anyone who says it might produce different results this time--namely, a finding that the deal is unacceptable from a national security perspective--is either confused, or is trying to confuse the rest of us.

"Garbage In, Garbage Out" Changes in the way the secretive interagency group operates are long overdue. The Treasury Department, whose responsibilities include promoting foreign investment in the United States, is allowed to chair CFIUS, despite its inherent conflict of interest here.

The committee's deliberations are opaque. It appears that even the president was blindsided by its conclusions, as evidently were at least some of the Cabinet officers who are, nominally, their agency's CFIUS representative.

Needless to say, it has also been the norm for the Treasury-led panel to keep Congress in the dark--until, that is, legislators are presented with faits accomplis. Doing otherwise, after all, might afford Capitol Hill the opportunity to second-guess, or even countermand, what have been repeated defective decisions from a national-security standpoint ever since CFIUS was legislatively mandated 17 years ago.

Think of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States as a classic example of a process designed to assure that "garbage in" will result in "garbage out." Absent something changing in the evaluating mechanism, DP World's spokesmen, and those of the Bush administration, will be vindicated in their assertions over the weekend that "further review" will affirm there is no national-security problem with having a country with troubling past ties to terror running operations in more than a score of American seaports.

In other words, left to their own devices, the proponents of the DP World transaction will simply have bought time: time for the executive branch and DP World's lobbyists (notably, former Republican Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole and former Clinton Secretary of State Madeleine Albright) to try to pick off enough legislators to sustain the president's threatened veto of legislation blocking the deal; and time for prominent conservative opinion-makers to argue that the UAE is so important an ally that we must not give it offense, indeed we must give it whatever it wants.

A Truly Fresh Look It is entirely possible to stipulate that the UAE plays a valuable role in the War for the Free World, and that we do not want to alienate it gratuitously, without conceding that it must be appeased, no matter what. Congress is entitled to a genuinely fresh look, one that examines not only the national security implications of the Dubai Ports World transaction, but how to manage the bilateral relationship from this point forward--and it better do so in the next 45 days.

Of course, there is, as a practical matter, no chance of reforming CFIUS during this short window. Despite the committee's dismal track record, the institutional inertia may preclude real change even after the time for the present re-review has expired.

So what to do? Congress should insist that several things happen in the present CFIUS deliberations:

* First, the principals--including secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Michael Chertoff, of the Defense and Homeland Security Departments--should be required to participate personally in these deliberations, and to sign off on the outcome. Secretary of the Treasury John Snow should recuse himself since, in a previous incarnation, he sold seaport operations of the company he ran, CSX, to DP World. Protocol would dictate that, under such circumstances, secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, the longest-serving of the participating principals, should serve as chairman, rather than deputy Treasury secretary Robert Kimmett.

* Second, the review should be informed by a rigorous security assessment, not simply concerns about ties with the UAE. The possibility of setting a precedent that might raise questions (appropriately) about having state-owned and state-linked Communist Chinese companies operate facilities in American seaports should also be set aside for the purposes of this exercise.

Instead, the reassessment must address, for example, how we can be confident about personnel security if, as a Coast Guard spokesman has acknowledged (see an interview conducted by syndicated talk radio host Hugh Hewitt last week with Rear Admiral Craig Bone), DP World will be responsible for vetting the people assigned to its U.S. operations. The review must also be able to show that the undermining of port security plans and cargo monitoring activities by insiders can be reliably prevented.

* Finally, a rule of thumb might be included in the mix: In the case of foreign government-owned and -tied companies seeking to operate American seaports or other critical infrastructure here, the unwillingness of the country in question to allow American companies to perform similar functions in their countries (not to be confused with often-circumvented U.S. monitoring and customs missions in ports like Dubai's) would preclude the deal--even if every other aspect were satisfactory.

In addition to ensuring that the CFIUS review amounts to a bona fide, zero-based fresh look at the national security implications of the DP World deal, Congress should get a second-opinion. Normally, the legislative branch could not even name a small group of outside experts--call it a Team B--to conduct such an assessment in forty-five days, let alone get them appointed and equipped with the necessary detailed information about the deal, and then obtain their conclusions.

The concerns that have been expressed across the political spectrum about this deal, however, may just make possible the sort of non-partisan study so clearly required. The House and Senate leaders on both sides of the aisle should agree to half-a-dozen or so people who have the expertise, independence, and demonstrated ability to get the job done quickly and with high quality to provide an unvarnished assessment within the next forty-five days.

If these steps are taken, we may just be able to find a way to minimize further damage to an important strategic relationship with the United Arab Emirates, without risking potentially vast damage to our ports and people.

--Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., is president of the Center for Security Policy and a contributor to NRO. He blogs at www.WarFooting.com

Cancel This Deal, Diplomatically

"America's belief in human dignity will guide our policies, yet rights must be more than the grudging concessions of dictators; they are secured by free dissent and the participation of the governed. In the long run, there is no justice without freedom, and there can be no human rights without human liberty."-- President George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address, 2005.

Dubai Ports World, the subsidiary of the United Arab Emirates, has now asked for a 45-day review from the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to investigate security concerns over the control of six U.S. ports. This is to the good, calming calls for congressional action as well as subsequent threats of a presidential veto. Many lobbyists have been hired, charges alleged, fact-sheets disseminated, and polls put in the field. Still, questions remain to be asked, questions that none of the above D.C. responses have addressed. Perhaps these questions can be asked by CFIUS over the course of the 45-day review; perhaps they will begin to explain why so many are so riven over this issue. But better than asking questions, a back-channel message should be sent to the UAE to withdraw this deal, much as China withdrew its UNOCAL bid last year. This deal will not stand public deliberation; it confuses things.

At the end of the day, we should not risk being perceived as forgiving or rewarding the people who played a role in the slaughter of 3,000 of our countrymen. This deal has confused the war's message and objectives and handed the opposition a club with which to beat the president on his strongest issue: trust with national security and moral clarity on the war. Never has the president been further from the base on these issues than now. But, by having the UAE withdraw its offer, the issue will be taken off the table--it can be corrected and ended; otherwise it will live and bleed for at least another 45 days.

Some have argued that the more one looks into the security issues at play, the more one becomes satisfied that security concerns were addressed by the original CFIUS review and that further commitments by Dubai Ports World were promised. Nevertheless, many remain unconvinced. Our ports remain one of our most vulnerable points for attack--and the cargo in some of these ports is to be managed by a company from the UAE. No matter how many assurances we are given that our government will remain in charge of this security, the cargo will be managed and coordinated by a foreign-owned company whose country has anything but a strong record in preventing terrorism. In short, when all the smoke is cleared, the UAE is not a country of tried and true reliability like, say, Great Britain. There is a difference between Great Britain and the UAE, many differences in fact, and we should not be instructed otherwise.

But it is the larger political concerns of policy and consistency that remain most troubling and will not subside, concerns that go to the very heart of our Global War on Terrorism and the ideas by which the administration has rallied support for it. And the more one looks not into the singular issue of security concerns but into the more specifics of what kind of country the UAE is, the more one becomes dissatisfied.

This is not the stuff of "nativism" or "isolationism" or "Islamophobia"--labels that have been thrown around too casually over the past two weeks. Many of us so labeled were among the first to call for the liberation of Iraqi Arabs and Muslims, and enthusiastically defended and supported the liberation of the Muslims in Afghanistan--indeed, many of us supported the liberation of Muslims elsewhere, and continue to support liberation for Iranians. The labels may apply to those who have finally woken up to the threats posed by other nations, but not to us, and not to long-time supporters of the president's call for democracy in the Arab world--a call that we believe is stifled by countenancing the UAE deal.

We are given evidence that since 9/11 the UAE has changed its ways to become a staunch supporter of the United States. But how much and for how long have those ways been changed? For example, for such a newly heralded supporter, why is it--and how dangerous is it--that a Zogby poll taken in October of 2005 found that over 70 percent of those in the UAE have an unfavorable opinion of the United States? Are such opinions the fuel that drove the UAE's policies toward al Qaeda prior to 9/11? That is not something that can

be asked about Great Britain.

Here is what rankles Americans, and what should rankle the administration: We are being asked to not only trust our ports to be partially run by the UAE, but we are additionally being asked to support a multibillion-dollar arrangement that supports an authoritarian regime. The message of the Bush doctrine has been blurred. We have been led in this war by the great call to and for freedom in other countries--"the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time," as the president put it in his powerful Second Inaugural. This calling applies to nowhere else as direct as it does to the Middle East.

Freedom House rates the UAE "not free" and puts it one notch above Saudi Arabia. The Economist actually ranks it one notch worse than Iran in its "political freedom index." In its report on the country, Freedom House reports that "[c]itizens of the UAE cannot change their government democratically. The UAE has never held an election. All decisions about political leadership rest with the dynastic rulers of the seven separate emirates of the UAE in what is known as the Supreme Council of Rulers." That is not something that can be said about Great Britain.

As for freedom of expression, the UAE "severely restricts this right." While freedom does exist in the economic sector--mostly for the promotion of trade--"Discrimination against non-citizens, who make up the vast majority of the population and at least half of the workforce, occurs in many aspects of life, including employment, access to education, housing, and healthcare." This is the description of the sort of regime that President Bush warned us about a year ago: "A status quo of tyranny and hopelessness in the Middle East--the false stability of dictatorship and stagnation--can only lead to deeper resentment in a troubled region, and further tragedy in free nations." That is not something that can be said about Great Britain.

To defend this deal is to defend a \$7 billion arrangement with a country that has never had a democratic party in its entire existence. Indeed, it has been a supporter of terrorist organizations and authoritarian regimes. And, despite post-9/11 reforms, to this day the UAE will not recognize Israel, and has funded Islamic terror movements, including Hamas, during the very time we are told it has changed its ways. It may have changed some of its ways, but it is a country that in its 34-years of existence has been unable to recognize the first, original, and perhaps only fully-fledged democracy in the Middle East--Israel--which has been in existence for almost 60-years, and where Arabs enjoy more freedoms than they do in the UAE.

To this day--and since it has become a post-9/11 ally--the UAE continues to support the Arab commercial boycott of Israel. Since we are told the UAE would be offended by being barred from trading with and in the United States, perhaps it might take the next 40 days or so to rescind its boycott of Israel, and--if it is not asking too much--actually see fit to recognize the existence of Israel. For a prospective deal with the UAE down the line, this would go a long way toward satisfying concerns that we are rewarding a questionable ally. In short, if the UAE would be offended by our barring them from our ports, they should see fit to stop offending free trade and democratic principles by not barring Israeli goods in theirs.

We will certainly learn more about the security of our ports and how it would fare under the UAE's management, but it is the politics that matters most just now--politics in the most serious sense of the word: how we organize and define our republic and ourselves. We cannot have a policy to isolate Hamas while doing this sort of business with a country that supports it. We cannot speak of the importance of freedom in the Arab world while asking Americans to support commerce through our ports with an autocratic oligarchy that only four years ago recognized the Taliban but still cannot see fit to recognize Israel. We cannot speak against "the grudging concessions of dictators" while asking Americans to ignore the political record of the UAE. In short, we cannot take this chance with our security or our principles.

The president has asked "what kind of signal does it send throughout the world if it's okay for a British company to manage the ports, but not a company that has been secure, been cleared for security purposes from the Arab world?" The better question, with larger implications, is: What kind of a signal are we sending by making a public ally of a country that refuses democracy and does not recognize the existence of its most democratic neighbor because it is considered to be inhabited by members of the wrong religion?

Who are the real xenophobes here?

We are indeed a commercial republic, but we should not allow commerce to dictate our republican principles any more than we should allow it to trump our wartime sensibilities, goals, or lessons. The stakes are too high, and the nobility of our effort is too great. Kill the deal, Mr. President.

--William J. Bennett is the Washington fellow of the Claremont Institute, the chairman of Americans for Victory Over Terrorism, and the host of the nationally syndicated, Bill Bennett's Morning in America radio show. Seth Leibsohn is a fellow of the Claremont Institute and the executive director of Americans for Victory Over Terrorism.

UNITED NATIONS

Cash-for-Kofi

Weekly Standard

Claudia Rosett

2/27

Despite frequent declarations of reform, it seems that United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has learned nothing from the U.N.'s Oil-for-Food scandal, in which Saddam Hussein's billions corrupted the U.N.'s entire Iraq embargo bureaucracy. Earlier this month, Annan accepted from the ruler of Dubai an environmental prize of \$500,000--a fat sum that represents the latest in a long series of glaring conflicts of interest. Call this one Cash-for-Kofi.

Annan received his award at a glittering February 6 ceremony in Dubai, as outlined in a press release from Annan's office that noted the honor, but neglected to mention the half million bucks that came with it. Surrounded by presidents, businessmen, and nearly 130 environmental ministers, Annan collected this purse as winner of the biennial Zayed International Prize for the Environment, given out by the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

So entwined were Annan's own U.N. colleagues in the process that selected him for this award that it's tempting to relabel the entire affair as one of the U.N.'s biggest back-scratching contests. Chairing the jury panel, which voted unanimously for Annan, was the executive director of the U.N. Environment Program, Klaus Toepfer, and among the jurors was the U.N. undersecretary-general for Economic and Social Affairs, Jos#233; Antonio Ocampo. Both men owe their current jobs to Annan. Serving as an "observer" of the jury panel was Pakistan's ambassador to the U.N., Munir Akram, who just finished a term as president of the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council, which works closely with Annan. On the website for the Zayed prize, the public relations contacts include a U.N. staffer, Nick Nuttall, listed complete with his U.N. email account and phone number at the Nairobi headquarters of the U.N. Environment Program.

But let us assume these folks were impartial. It's possible that with the Zayed prize already handed out in earlier years to Jimmy Carter and the BBC, the depleted global pool held no candidate more worthy than Annan.

The real issue is why on earth Kofi Annan thinks it a good idea while serving as secretary-general to accept \$500,000--for any reason--from a high-ranking official of a U.N. member state. Sheikh Mohammed is not only the ruler of Dubai but the vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates. No doubt he bestowed this award as a gesture of appreciation. But if the other 190 U.N. member states were to follow his lead, Annan would be rolling in \$95 million worth of personal prize money. Once the secretary-general allows himself to become a collector of cash awards, where's the line to be drawn? If Syria were to offer him a \$10 million environmental prize, or China were to up the ante to \$100 million, should he grab a suitcase and go pick it up?

Annan accepted the Dubai prize on the heels of setting up an ethics office within the U.N. Secretariat just last month. He has recently issued guidelines requiring staff to report any gifts of more than \$250, down from previous guidelines that smiled on the acceptance of doo-dads worth up to \$10,000. Staff rules do not apply to the secretary-general himself, who is presumed to operate as an exemplary civil servant. But one wonders what U.N. employees will make of their boss's big purse. Just last summer, a former U.N. procurement officer, Alexander Yakovlev, pleaded guilty in a U.S. federal court to taking hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of bribes involving taxpayer-funded U.N. contracts. Annan's secretariat has yet to get to the bottom of this still-spreading scandal in its own procurement department. Imagine for a moment that U.N. contractors were to start holding contests for the world's finest procurement officer, and began handing out big cash prizes to U.N. officials. Should the secretary-general then congratulate the winners--or investigate them?

Not unaware of appearances, Annan announced at the Dubai award ceremony that he would be using his prize as seed money for a foundation he plans to set up in Africa, devoted to agriculture and girls' education. To date, he has provided no information about what this promised foundation might be or who will run it, or what prerequisites might go to its founder, or to anyone else associated with it. Asked recently for details, Annan's spokesman replied, "When we have more information, we'll pass it on to you."

Such non-answers have a familiar ring to anyone who has followed the saga of the sporty green Mercedes, shipped into Ghana in 1998 by Annan's son, Kojo Annan, who saved \$14,000 in customs duties at the time via inappropriate use of his father's name and U.N. privileges. In that instance, the transaction was obscured behind a humanitarian façade, with the U.N. Development Program office in Ghana setting its U.N. seal on the paperwork. Annan, despite wiring his son \$15,000 to help pay for the car, claims he knew nothing about it, and that it had nothing to do with him or the U.N. Perhaps Annan intends to more carefully supervise and account for his prize-seeded future foundation; but it must be admitted that the Mercedes experience is not a promising portent.

Nor is it a good sign that Annan, while enthusing about his prize in Dubai, appeared to have forgotten--if he ever took it on board in the first place--that from 1999-2003, Dubai was one of the hubs of kickback activity under the Oil-for-Food program. According to the U.S. Treasury and the U.N.'s own probe, led by Paul Volcker, at least two major front companies for Saddam Hussein's regime set up shop in Dubai: Al Hoda and Al Wasel & Babel. Between them, they secured more than \$500 million worth of U.N.-approved contracts, and funneled tens of millions in kickbacks to Saddam. Volcker reports that a Dubai businessman, Ibrahim Lootah, owned 51 percent of one of these companies, Al Wasel & Babel, which received a commission for kickbacks processed through its account. Asked last year by Volcker's investigators about this commission, Lootah replied, "Why not get easy money?"

Why not, indeed? While the United States, India, Australia, and even France have investigated Oil-for-Food wrongdoing by their citizens, there is no sign Dubai has opened any such inquiry. Nor is there any sign that Annan ever brought it up with them. That's no surprise, given that in London, a week before receiving his prize, he brushed aside the entire Oil-for-Food debacle with the astounding phrase, "If there was a scandal."

If this year's Zayed prize money from Sheikh Mohammed of Dubai is to be dedicated to helping Africa, as we have been told, there is no good reason to channel the funds through the wallet of the U.N. secretary-general. Under the U.N. charter, Annan is paid to serve as the U.N.'s chief administrative officer, not its Prize Recipient-in-Chief. If Annan feels he cannot with good grace reject the honor of the Zayed prize, then in the interest of curbing future scandals, he might at least return the purse.

Claudia Rosett is journalist-in-residence with the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

10 Questions for John Bolton

Time

By Elaine Shannon

2/27

So controversial that he couldn't win Senate confirmation, John Bolton, 57, became U.S. ambassador to the United Nations after President Bush installed him via a recess appointment last August. Blunt and outspoken, he chatted with TIME's Elaine Shannon and Romesh Ratnesar about being part of the bureaucracy, Iran's nuclear program and who should succeed Kofi Annan.

YOU ONCE SAID THAT IF THE U.N. LOST 10 FLOORS "IT WOULDN'T MAKE A BIT OF DIFFERENCE." DO YOU STILL FEEL ALL THOSE FLOORS ARE EXPENDABLE? The statement about losing 10 floors was made in the context that there's not a bureaucracy in the world that can't be more efficient. What we're trying to address is whether different reform efforts that we've undertaken can make the organization better, more agile, more effective and more transparent.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SURPRISE ABOUT THE JOB? I'm very surprised by New Yorkers who come up to me on the street and say, "Hey, Ambassador Bolton, you're doing a great job," or "Give 'em hell," or something like that. I don't know why they say it, but it's nice when it happens.

THE ISSUE OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM WILL COME BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL NEXT MONTH. DO YOU THINK THE DISPUTE CAN BE RESOLVED DIPLOMATICALLY? Sure. I never would have guessed that Libya was prepared to make the calculation that they were safer giving up the pursuit of nuclear weapons than continuing to go after them, and yet they did [give them up]. And that led to substantial progress in the relationship between Libya and the United States. If Libya can do it, Iran can do it too. That's why I say the decision ultimately is largely in their hands.

THAT'S NOT A COMFORTABLE POSITION FOR THE U.S. It's not as if we're sitting, waiting for them to decide. The Administration has believed for over three years that the Iranian nuclear-weapons program should have been referred to the Security Council because the program constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Now it's here. And now that it's in New York, we have the ability and we should--if the Iranians don't change their policy--increase the pressure on them to give up the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL KOFI ANNAN HAS CALLED ON THE WEST TO STEP UP EFFORTS TO STOP THE KILLING IN DARFUR. IS GENOCIDE THE RIGHT TERM FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING? Sounds right to me.

SO SHOULDN'T THERE BE A MORE AGGRESSIVE RESPONSE? It's easy to be casual about putting military people into play when their lives can be lost. You could end up with a lot of dead military people and not save a single civilian. I don't think that's a sign of success.

DO YOU HAVE A VIEW ON WHO SHOULD SUCCEED ANNAN AS SECRETARY-GENERAL? I have lots of views on lots of things. But the official American position is, we have never accepted any notion of geographical rotation and we favor the best-qualified candidate, wherever that candidate comes from. If the best-qualified person is an Asian, we'd be delighted. If the best-qualified person is from somewhere else, we'd be delighted at that too. Western Europe has had three Secretaries-General, Latin America has had one, Africa has had two, and Asia has had one. Eastern Europe has never had any. If there's really a principle of geographic rotation, fairness dictates that Eastern Europe get one.

YOU'RE KNOWN FOR BEING BLUNT WITH COLLEAGUES. HOW IS THAT APPROACH GOING OVER AT THE U.N.? I'm known in Washington for being direct. I can be nuanced and be direct too. I don't think it's a question of style not going with the institution. Principally I deal with the missions of the other member governments. I think it's going fine, but you can ask them.

COLLEAGUES ONCE GAVE YOU A GOLD-PLATED GRENADE BECAUSE OF YOUR

REPUTATION AS A BOMB THROWER. WHERE IS IT? Somewhere in Washington. I've got an apple that the mayor [of New York] gave me. [Displays a glass apple.] It's got his signature on it.

A NEW YORK MAGAZINE PROFILE SUGGESTS YOU'RE PLANNING TO RUN FOR OFFICE AFTER LEAVING THE U.N. ARE YOU? No. I've never run for public office, and I can't conceive I ever would.

"We should increase pressure on Iran to give up the pursuit of nuclear weapons."

EGYPT

The Evil of Two Lessers: Egyptian Politics Boils Down to Mubarak and the Islamists

Weekly Standard

By Paul Marshall

2/27

The shockwaves of Hamas's electoral victory were felt keenly by everyone in the Middle East, not just the Israelis. In fact, few people watched the Palestinian election returns with more hope, trepidation, or calculation than the Egyptians.

Hamas was established in 1936 as an offshoot of Egypt's own major opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, the world's oldest Islamist organization. Founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, the Brotherhood remains a central source of radicalism throughout Sunni Islam. In recent decades it has forsworn violence within Egypt, but the Brotherhood still advocates the killing of Israelis in Israel and Americans in Iraq and proclaims that it wants a new caliphate. On December 22, its head, Mohammed Mahdi Akef, echoed Iranian president Ahmadinejad, claiming that "Western democracy has attacked everyone who does not share the vision of the sons of Zion as far as the myth of the Holocaust is concerned."

The Brotherhood scored its own notable successes in Egypt's December parliamentary elections. To avoid provoking stronger government repression, it contested less than a third of the seats and still ended up winning 88 out of 454 seats. It was quite a triumph given that some of the Brotherhood's activists were killed during the campaign while others were arrested or otherwise harassed. Furthermore, since Egyptian law forbids religious parties, Brotherhood candidates could not run under a common party banner. Many observers believe the organization could have achieved a much larger victory in a more open election.

The Brotherhood's success reflects Egyptian society's increased Islamization, fueled by workers returning from stints in the Gulf and increased Saudi funding, including support for the Al-Azhar university system and other central Sunni institutions. To be sure, Egypt retains its own distinct patterns. In the south, Bob Marley is remarkably popular, and jokes proliferate--one of the latest: "What's Egypt's major export? Jokes." But that usually reliable indicator of Islamization, the number of burka-enshrouded women, has increased noticeably in Cairo, Alexandria, and other cities.

Islamists have sought to allay growing fear in Egypt's ancient Coptic Christian community, the largest religious minority in the Middle East, but the Brotherhood's election slogan, "Islam is the solution," stokes those concerns, especially in view of Hamas's victory. In addition, the Copts are still reeling after thousands of angry Muslims in October mobbed St. George Church in Alexandria, leading to four deaths, following accusations that the church had put on a blasphemous play two years before. Their fears have multiplied as Islamists use the Danish Jyllands-Posten cartoons as an excuse to attack not only Westerners but also Middle Eastern Christians. Meanwhile, the Hamas-led Bethlehem Council has called for the reinstatement of a jizya tax upon non-Muslims, while, back in Egypt, Mohamed Habib, the first deputy of the Brotherhood's supreme guide, averred that "Islamic Rule" means "that non-Muslims can have no authority over Muslims."

Egypt's liberals, such as Hisham Kassem, head of the new daily Al Masry al Youm, think the Brotherhood's apparent strength may be misleading, since it faces little competition. Hosni Mubarak's regime has for decades choked off the media and human rights organizations and strictly controlled civil society--thus prohibiting any grassroots organizations from challenging Mubarak or the Brotherhood for political influence. Ayman Nour, the second leading vote-getter in the September presidential election, was sentenced in December to five years of hard labor on what most observers believe are trumped-up charges of forging signatures on his Ghad (Tomorrow) party's application for legal recognition. This event prompted the United States to suspend trade talks with Egypt.

The Islamists have been resilient. In the '80s and '90s, brutal repression by state security destroyed the Brotherhood's violent splinters Gamaat Islamiya and Islamic Jihad. This prompted Gamaat's "spiritual leader" Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman to move to New Jersey, where he led the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, while Jihad's leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, who also fled Egypt, went on to help found al Qaeda. But the main organization has held to nonviolence, kept its head down, and patiently organized through Egypt's professional associations and networks of mosques. The Brotherhood has also, it is said, intimidated and even infiltrated Mubarak's police, who tread lightly when it comes to mosques.

Since the rest of Egypt's opposition could maintain no such network, Mubarak has effectively ensured that the short-term choice, for America and Egyptians, is him or the Islamists.

Essam el-Erian, the Brotherhood's main conduit to Western media, is affable and gregarious as he seeks to allay fears of an Islamist state but declines to answer concrete questions. Two subjects get a rise out of him. One is the role of Islamic law, sharia, which he told me last month "is none of America's business," even though, if enforced by a Brotherhood government, it would amount to a state-coerced caste system of religion, sect, and gender. The other is support for civil society in Egypt, which "America absolutely should not do." El-Erian's response reveals the Brotherhood's fear of robust alternatives to both it and the regime. This is something for U.S. policymakers to keep in mind.

President Bush has said that elections are only "the beginnings of democracy," but they need not even be that. Without security, a free press, free debate, a robust opinion-shaping civil society, parties that have been able to organize and mature, and, not least, a range of choices for the electorate--none of which Egypt has--elections can prove hollow.

But Egypt has far more advantages than the Palestinian territories. It has breathing space, with six years until its next presidential election. And it has a talented but hitherto smothered population that could, if given the chance, contribute mightily to the growth of free institutions.

Paul Marshall, who was recently in Egypt, is senior fellow at Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom and the editor of, most recently, Radical Islam's Rules: The Worldwide Spread of Extreme Shari'a Law (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Past as Prologue

Newsweek
By Owen Matthews
2/27

Once, not so long ago, Europe saw itself as the Middle East's honest broker, poised between a hard-line United States and an equally intransigent Muslim world. At the same time Russia, once a regional superpower, was... nowhere. While the European Union played mediator in conflicts from Palestine to Iran,

Russia contented itself with hawking a few weapons systems and tending its own post-Soviet backyard.

What a difference a couple of years can make. In the wake of Hamas's Palestinian election win and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's defiance over his country's uranium-enrichment program, Europe is edging ever closer to the tougher stance taken by the United States. Meanwhile, a newly confident Russia has stepped into Europe's shoes as middleman between East and West, reaching out to the region's untouchables--and making it clear that Moscow won't be taking orders from anyone.

Earlier this month, President Vladimir Putin outraged the United States and Israel by inviting the leaders of Hamas to Moscow for talks. "Hamas is in power--this is a fact" was Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov's blunt message. "It came to power as a result of free democratic elections." Moscow has broken ranks with the West in Iran, too. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that Russia won't--for the time being, at least--back U.N. sanctions against Tehran, even as U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice complained that Iran is now "in open defiance of the international community." Russia insists instead that the way forward is to persuade Tehran to accept a scheme to enrich its uranium on Russian territory. "No one has the right to deny another country the right to safe atomic power," Russia's atomic-energy chief, Sergei Kiriyenko, recently told NEWSWEEK.

The new assertiveness, analysts say, is part and parcel of Russia's recent muscle-flexing in Eastern Europe. After a winter spent wielding energy as a political weapon against wayward former Soviet states such as Ukraine and Georgia, the Kremlin has now turned its sights to a broader forum. "First Russia went on a counterattack in the former Soviet Union," says analyst Dmitri Trenin of the Carnegie Moscow Center. "Now it is doing the same in the Middle East." Putin gave an important clue to Russia's thinking earlier this month when he described the Hamas victory as "an important setback for American efforts in the Middle East." The implication: America has no infallible monopoly on power and influence, and certainly not at Russia's expense.

For all the United States' and Israel's indignation at Russia's meddling, there's actually a chance that Moscow may succeed where the others have failed. "Unlike America, Russia is not bound up by legal objections to talking [with Hamas]," says Alexander Kalugin, Russia's special envoy to the Middle East, who met with senior Hamas representatives last week in Ramallah. And what Russia has to say to Hamas doesn't differ much in substance from the message propounded by the other members of the "quartet" of interested parties--the United States, the EU and the United Nations. "Their message will be consistent: that Israel has a right to exist, that previous Palestinian Authority agreements should be honored and that they should renounce violence," says one Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The main problem is that Russia didn't see fit to discuss its initiative with the others. "There was not a lot of advance consultation about the talks," admits the diplomat. For the Kremlin, it seems, the important point is to distance itself from the United States--and to emphasize that Russia is no longer a junior partner in Washington's foreign policy.

The risk is, of course, that Russia's strategy of talking to Hamas could backfire. After all, Russia dubs its own Chechen separatists "terrorists" and complains vociferously when the U.K. and United States offer political asylum to rebel leaders such as Ilyas Akhmadov, a self-styled "ambassador" of independent Chechnya. "If today Moscow talks to Hamas," warns Russia's Chief Rabbi Beryl Lazar, "tomorrow we'll hear demands for talks with [Chechen rebel Shamil] Basayev, the day after tomorrow for talks with Al Qaeda."

And Russia's self-appointed role as honest broker doesn't sit terribly well with its place as a major arms supplier, especially to Iran. Last month Rosvooruzheniye, Russia's giant state-owned arms-export company, announced that Tehran had agreed to spend \$1 billion on 30 Tor-M1 air-defense missile systems, capable of protecting a target from up to 48 incoming planes or projectiles to a range of six kilometers. Iran also has a longstanding accord with Moscow for up to \$7 billion in conventional arms, including MiG-29 fighters, assistance with Iran's small submarine fleet, BMP-3 armored personnel carriers and landing craft.

The bottom line? Moscow may be broadly cooperative in international efforts to get Iran to cease its uranium-enrichment program--but at the same time, it's providing Iran with the means to defend itself against a possible air raid like the Israeli strike that destroyed Saddam Hussein's French-built Osirak reactor in 1981. In that, Russia's "new" role looks more like that played in the past--less middleman than a check on Washington and the West.

A Russian Ruse

National Review
By Ilya Bourman
3/2

On March 3, Hamas envoys will arrive in Moscow. Their Russian hosts have prepared a banquet fit for a sultan. Gifts will be abundant. Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov has offered to provide Hamas with foreign aid. There may even be shipments of everything from guns to helicopters. Moscow's position undercuts the strategy of U.S., European, and Israeli officials who had hoped that isolation would encourage moderation.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice remained composed in the face of Vladimir Putin's shocking invitation to the group. She merely demanded that Moscow "send a firm message," but privately the Bush Administration was irate. It was one thing for Hamas to receive invitations from international pariahs like Iran or Venezuela. And although Turkey's invitation was a disappointment, Prime Minister Erdogan's antics and acceptance of Islamist capital has long since made Ankara irrelevant to most U.S. or Middle Eastern policymakers. But Moscow was a member of the Quartet, and host of the 2006 G-8 Summit.

Israeli politicians were likewise caught off-guard. Hadn't Putin been the first Russian president ever to travel to Israel? In Tel Aviv last April he said, "[T]here is the will and desire on both sides to strengthen our friendship, trust and cooperation and to build a constructive partnership together." Hadn't trade relations between the two countries doubled under Putin's tenure? Hadn't senior delegations from both countries visited each other in the past several years, signing lucrative energy deals, swapping military technologies, and even sharing counter-terrorism intelligence? And hadn't attacks on Russia's theatres and schools created solidarity between two peoples plagued by Islamist terrorism? Many Israeli officials had come to trust Putin. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, a friend of Putin's, told the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth that Russia's "intentions had changed."

Reacting to Moscow's overture, Israeli cabinet minister Meir Sheerit reflected widespread feelings of betrayal, telling Ha'aretz that Putin had "stabbed Israel in the back."

The Israelis were not the only ones duped by Putin. In recent years, Middle East analysts in the U.S. and Europe have viewed Russian-Israeli relations through rose-tinted glasses. Leading defense analysts published articles in nationwide Russian newspapers calling for expanded military cooperation between Moscow and Jerusalem, while in Israel, Ha'aretz and the Jerusalem Post sang Putin's praises. Even in Washington, typically sober Putin-watchers praised the Russian president for recognizing Israel as a "strategic ally." One researcher writing recently for the influential Middle East Quarterly asserted that Putin was pursuing a deliberately "pro-Israel" policy.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. Even as the Kremlin signed weapons deals with Jerusalem, the Russian government sold high-end surface-to-air missiles to Syria--a rogue nation which supports Hezbollah operations out of Lebanon. Of even greater danger, Russia continued construction of a nuclear reactor in Bushehr, Iran--even after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called for Israel to be "wiped out from the map of the world." Throughout, Putin remained steadfast in his refusal to recognize Hamas and Hezbollah as terrorist organizations. Russian officials sought help from Israeli intelligence services in

dealing with their "Chechen problem" while continuing to support terrorist organizations calling for the destruction of Israel.

If there is any silver-lining to Putin's invitation to Hamas, it is the exposure of Putin's true colors. Putin has crafted a two track, deliberately ambiguous policy towards the Middle East, allowing Russia to feign friendly relations with Israel while also developing competing interests with Arab countries in the Middle East. The Kremlin operates according to Lord Palmerston's old adage that "Nations have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies; only interests." While a clever strategy for a weakened Russia, Putin's duplicity poses serious dangers to the region.

This is not the first time that Putin has used Israel as a marionette, nor will it be the last. Only last April, having failed to stop the color revolutions sweeping through the former Soviet republics, and facing falling polling numbers, Putin asked Israeli officials if he could travel to Jerusalem. Putin's visit laundered his image, but not his policy. His latest offer to Hamas comes as Moscow seeks to reaffirm its standing as a major international actor.

So long as U.S., Israeli, and certain European statesmen believe that Putin shares their interests on matters of geopolitics, let alone energy security, they will see their interests undermined again and again. Moscow's gala for Hamas should serve as evidence to the West that Putin is as likely to be working against them as with them.

--Ilya Bourtnan, born in Moscow, is completing a master's degree at The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.

LEBANON & SYRIA

Comic Relief

New Republic

By Annia Ciezadlo

2/27

For the Western news media, always eager to revisit Lebanon's bloody 15-year civil war, the Muslim rampage through a Christian neighborhood in Beirut on February 5 was a disappointment. A mob of predominantly Sunni Muslims threw stones at a Maronite Catholic church--a desecration most militias refrained from even during the civil war--and yet Beirut's Christians turned the other cheek. A peaceful counterdemonstration that night felt like a Cedar Revolution class reunion: Young men and women milled around chanting desultory slogans, then went home. By nightfall, what was assumed to be a ham-handed Syrian attempt to stir up sectarian trouble in Lebanon had fizzled. "We will not fall in the trap," proclaimed Druze leader Walid Jumblatt. "Our national unity is stronger than Syrian destruction."

The cartoon intifada--as the sometimes violent protests over a Danish newspaper's publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed have come to be known--has been portrayed in the Western press as an epic struggle between West and East, Christendom and Islam. The image of angry, stone-throwing Muslims assaulting the Christian neighborhood of Ashrafiyeh fit right into that clash-of-civilizations paradigm.

But, as the world tuned in to watch a classic Christian-Muslim image from Lebanon's last war, it missed another picture: mainstream Sunni clerics frantically trying to hold back a bandana-wearing, brick-throwing Sunni mob that no longer respects their clerical robes. "I asked those troublemakers, 'What do the people who live in Ashrafiyeh have to do with the people who published those blasphemous cartoons about our Prophet?'" lamented one Sunni cleric from Dar Al Fatwa, Lebanon's highest Sunni spiritual authority. "I asked them, 'Why were those men destroying cars and public property? Why did they throw rocks at a church, which is a house of God?' Those people were not true Muslims. They had other agendas."

In Lebanon and Syria, the cartoon jihad is not a battle between West and East. It's a struggle by mainstream Sunnis to contain a growing network of radical Islamists. The Sunnis who burned Beirut's Danish Embassy weren't there to defend their Prophet from Lurpak butter or an obscure Danish newspaper. They weren't even there, really, to assault Christians. They came to Ashrafiyeh--from Lebanon's northern Islamist pockets, its Palestinian camps, and from neighboring Syria--to teach the mainstream Sunni establishment a lesson. Most of all, they were there to send a message to Saad Hariri, the Saudi- and U.S.-backed figurehead of Lebanon's current parliamentary majority and the ostensible leader of Lebanon's Sunni community. The message was this: You cannot control us. What's frightening is that they might be right.

Here's a story from Lebanon that didn't make the international news: On February 2, someone detonated a small, one-kilogram bomb at a Lebanese army barracks in Ramlet Al Baida, a wealthy seafront neighborhood in predominantly Muslim West Beirut. Three hours earlier, someone claiming to represent "Al Qaeda in Lebanon" called a Lebanese newspaper and threatened to bomb several security bases unless the government freed 13 members of the group arrested in early January. The phone call was traced to Ain Al Hilweh, the most squalid and desperate--and the most militant--of Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps.

Today, Lebanese security forces are worried that Al Qaeda-linked networks have decided to set up a military infrastructure in Lebanon, perhaps even forging ties to Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab Al Zaraqawi. On February 11, Lebanon's acting interior minister admitted as much to a French newspaper, adding that "the soil is fertile." According to the Lebanese newspaper *As Safir*, some of the Al Qaeda suspects confessed to planning the same types of terrorist attacks in Lebanon as in Iraq.

In fact, they already tried once. In September 2004, Lebanese security forces uncovered a plot to bomb, among other sites, the Italian Embassy--in the heart of Beirut's rebuilt downtown--as retaliation for Italy's support of the Iraq war. When a suspect named Ismail Khatib died in custody, residents of his hometown, Majdal Anjar, erupted with rage, destroying shops on the Beirut-Damascus road, smashing windows, and blocking the highway with burning tires. Long before the February 5 demonstrations, the Majdal Anjar riots revealed a deep current of support for Al Qaeda-style terrorism: "The Interior Ministry accuses Ismail Khatib of recruiting fighters against the American invaders in Iraq. Well, this is an honor for him that should earn him respect, not death in a Lebanese detention center," raged pro-Syrian activist Maan Bashour at the dead man's funeral. Last week, in a disquieting sign of interconnected loyalties, the anonymous Ain Al Hilweh caller threatened that his group would not permit "the tragedy of Ismail Khatib" to be repeated.

For the Lebanese government, northern Islamist pockets like Majdal Anjar have been a perennial embarrassment. In theory, Lebanon's prime minister--and its leading Sunni families--represent the Sunni minority. But even Rafik Hariri, the powerful and popular former prime minister slain a year ago, had a hard time controlling Lebanon's Islamist backwaters. Hariri came from the relatively peaceful southern city of Sidon, not from the restive Sunni north. His son Saad is now the putative leader of the anti-Syrian majority in parliament. But inexperienced Saad is not as strong a figure as his father. "The radical Sunni fringe has a lot of control outside Beirut," says Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, an assistant professor of political science at Lebanon's Notre Dame University and co-head of the Libanlink Diversity Center, a Beirut-based interfaith nonprofit.

After the February 5 clashes, some Lebanese are worried that Syrian dictator Bashar Assad may be using Lebanon's radical Sunnis against Hariri in a battle for the Sunni street. But, in doing so, the Syrian regime risks repeating the mistake the United States made when it funneled billions of dollars to Afghan mujahedeen: feeding a jihad it cannot keep caged. Take the Ahabash, a cultlike movement carefully groomed by Syrian intelligence into a Lebanese proxy. German prosecutor Detlev Mehlis, who conducted the U.N. investigation into Rafik Hariri's murder, found evidence that the Ahabash played a key role in planning Hariri's killing. "After the Hariri assassination, the Ahabash adopted a low profile, but it doesn't mean that their influence is decreasing," says Lokman Slim, leader of Hayyabina ("Let's Go"), a civil society group that promotes a secular Lebanon.

For years, the Syrian regime's rationale for occupying Lebanon was this: Without Syria to babysit, Lebanon's warring factions would collapse back into civil war. That's the rationale that led the United States to back the Syrian dominion over Lebanon for more than a decade. Similarly, the Baath regime has always used radical Sunnis as bogeymen. Without its dictatorship, goes the argument, the Muslim Brotherhood would ignite the Levant.

Syria has cried the Islamist wolf for so long that the West, and perhaps even the Lebanese government itself, has begun to underestimate the real threat. That miscalculation became painfully obvious on February 5, when Lebanese security forces made a miserable showing despite ample warning that trouble was on its way: first the burning of the Danish Embassy in Damascus, then busloads of Islamists massing in cities like Tripoli, in northern Lebanon. "It takes two hours to get from Tripoli to Beirut--they could have stopped them, but nothing was done," says Farid El Khazen, a member of parliament and a political science professor at the American University of Beirut. "And they knew that, the day before, there was a rehearsal, so to speak, when they burned down the Danish Embassy in Damascus."

Ever since the Iraq war, and especially in recent months, Assad's government has shown an increasing willingness to play with Islamist fire. After all, a bulwark isn't much use without something to hold back. As the Syrian regime grows increasingly desperate, it is more and more willing to entertain the kind of Islamists that could pose a threat to its own existence and the entire region--a threat that the Lebanese government has, until recently, been loath to acknowledge. "It proves that the Lebanese have learned very well the message of the Syrian Baath regime," says Slim. "Instead of saying, 'We have a problem inside the country,' we are hiding it." Until now.

Annia Ciezadlo is a writer in Beirut, Lebanon.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bombs Away

Washington Monthly

By Jacob Heilbrunn

3/2006

When Israel successfully developed a nuclear bomb in the 1960s, it inadvertently became a kind of role model for a motley crew of regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere. Being first off the block had big advantages for Israel, especially during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when the threat of a bomb may have helped keep its enemies at bay. But whether it's India, Pakistan, or the most recent nuclear aspirants, Iran and North Korea, the same scenario seems to play, or be playing, itself out with distressing regularity. A regime denies that it's developing nuclear weapons, foils outside observation, and then, voila, manages to enter the nuclear club. It's not hard to see why this would be so. A good deal of hypocrisy surrounds the official five nuclear powers—Britain, France, the United States, China, and Russia—under the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which have sought to keep a monopoly on the product. Take the United States. The Bush administration has sought to lower the threshold for using tactical nuclear bombs while at the same time trying to deny them to pretty much everyone else. Obtaining a bomb has thus become a satisfying way of thumbing one's nose at the imperialistic Yankees and sending them into a frenzy.

Michael Karpin's *The Bomb in the Basement*, therefore, arrives at a timely moment. Karpin, a prominent Israeli television and radio news reporter who has written several books, including one on the murder of Yitzhak Rabin, has ventured into what remains largely forbidden territory in his own country. Mordechai Vanunu, a technician at Israel's once-secret Dimona nuclear weapons factory, was kidnapped in Italy in 1986 by Mossad (Israel's vaunted intelligence service) and ended up serving 18 years in jail for divulging nuclear secrets to the *British Sunday Times*. Based on a documentary he produced several years ago, Karpin's history relies heavily on interviews with many of the scientists and politicians, including Shimon

Peres, who were vital in creating an Israeli nuclear weapon. Karpin may not be the first to write about this topic, which was covered by Avner Cohen's scholarly *Israel and the Bomb* (1998), but he provides the most comprehensive and illuminating account of Israel's path and its policy of “strategic ambiguity” about nuclear weapons. Perhaps it is a sign of Israel's maturity as a state that it can now permit books like Karpin's to appear—though it appears censored. Or perhaps it is merely a useful way of reminding Israel's foes, (like Iran) about the apparent dimensions of its arsenal, which is said to include several hundred nuclear missiles, not to mention nuclear-armed submarines.

As Karpin correctly stresses, Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was the key to developing a bomb. On Dec. 21, 1960, he told the Israeli parliament in an emotional speech that Dimona existed and was “meant to be used only for peaceful purposes.” The Holocaust loomed large in Israel's consciousness, and Ben-Gurion was convinced that possession of a bomb was central to avoiding a repetition of the slaughter of Jews. Ben-Gurion assembled a crack scientific team led by a brilliantly inventive German “migr” named Ernst Bergmann who ran roughshod over bureaucratic obstacles. Karpin focuses on the tensions that threatened to derail the project before it had even gotten started. Some of Karpin's most interesting passages focus on the army's reluctance to develop a bomb, which it viewed as a costly and futile sideshow. The army leadership believed that Israel would be better off focusing on amassing more mundane weaponry. Ben-Gurion disagreed. He created a black budget for the bomb that would have sent his generals into conniptions had they only known about it. “Israel's nuclear project was run,” says Karpin, “like a state within a state.”

Karpin is also very good on the reciprocal advantages that Israel and France derived from cooperating with each other. Karpin rightly notes that Israel would never have been able to build a bomb without the assistance of the French. Shimon Peres, the young head of the defense ministry who always fancied himself an intellectual savant, got on well with his French counterparts. For their part, the French were eager to have access to the Israeli scientific establishment in order to speed the process of constructing their own bomb. What's more, the French coveted intelligence on Algeria, where they were waging a bitter and ultimately disastrous war against Islamic militants. What Israel—or, more precisely, Ben-Gurion—wanted from the French was a nuclear reactor. In return for Israeli help in the 1956 Suez War, France agreed to cough one up. This was heady stuff for Israel, which was for the first time playing in the big leagues of great-power politics. On Oct. 29, 1956, Israel launched an assault on Egypt that triggered the Suez War. “By agreeing that Israel would take part in the Suez campaign,” writes Karpin, “Ben-Gurion was taking a grave risk in view of the inevitably angry response of the Soviet Union and the likely displeasure of the United States.” No matter. Ben-Gurion was prepared to pretty much sacrifice anything in order to get hold of a nuclear bomb. Once Norway agreed in 1959 to sell heavy water to Israel, the course was clear. The surprising, or perhaps not so surprising, thing is that it took the United States until 1960 to begin to comprehend that Israel really was building a bomb. The CIA report on the failure to identify the Dimona project earlier has a familiar ring. It said: “The general feeling that Israel could not achieve this capability without outside aid from the U.S. or its allies... led to the tendency to discount rumors of Israeli reactor construction and French collaboration in the nuclear weapons area.” Interestingly, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser was fooled by the Israelis. He thought Israel was simply disseminating propaganda to make itself seem more powerful than it actually was. It's important to remember that, in the 1960s, the notion of a small state like Israel constructing a bomb did seem improbable.

Shortly after becoming president, John F. Kennedy successfully pressured Ben-Gurion into allowing a team of Americans to inspect Dimona, but they saw what they wanted to see, being unable to find any evidence that it was other than a peaceful project. Richard M. Nixon cut a deal with Golda Meir in which Israel agreed to forego the idea of public testing in exchange for American acquiescence and an end to inspections. Anyway, the United States wasn't that interested in harassing Israel publicly. Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol came up with the Delphic formulation “Israel will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East” to satisfy the Americans. It didn't take much. Once the Middle East became the cockpit of superpower tensions, the United States became Israel's staunch backer and had little interest in subjecting it to international inspections.

Karpin doesn't speculate about it, but the Israeli example must have emboldened other powers to go down the same path. Status quo powers like Saudi Arabia don't need an atomic bomb—at least not until the Iranians procure one. Karpin suggests that Israel might take out—as it did in 1983 Saddam Hussein's nascent project—Iran's effort at constructing a bomb. But exactly how this would occur, he does not say. An attack that failed to take out the Iranian reactor would be worse than not attacking. And thanks to the Bush administration's maladroit handling of the run-up to the Iraq war, not to mention the aftermath, it was harder than ever to assemble an international coalition that might be able to exert any pressure on Tehran. Karpin is undaunted. He ends with an effusion about how a nuclear-free Middle East might look. But this is pious nonsense. His book offers scant room for optimism. Israel conducted its search for a nuclear bomb with restraint and diplomatic dexterity. The bluff and bombast emanating from the lunatics in Tehran could not be further removed from Israel's emphasis on nuclear weapons as a last resort. Israel has always understood something that Iran does not: how to keep a secret secret.

EXTREMISM & TERRORISM

Extremism, Terror, and the Future of Conflict

Policy Review

By Michael J. Mazarr

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When they briefly stated an intention to begin referring to a “global struggle against violent extremism,” certain officials in the Bush administration did more than implicitly acknowledge the vacuity of the idea of a “global war on terror.” They hinted, however obliquely, at something far more profound: a radical shift in the nature of conflict, what it means to be “at war.” From traditional notions of armies fighting armies in vast confrontations, the new concept seems to imply, the warfare of the future will look very different — twilight struggles against non-state networks of evildoers. This notion mirrors an emerging theory about the future of conflict: “Fourth Generation Warfare.” But while the Fourth Generation Warfare concept offers great insight as a description of the causes and character of warfare in the future, it misleads: The major trends of the past century yield up a likely different future for the activity we know, but may not always recognize, as warfare.

There is a tendency, when considering “theories of war,” to default to tactical distinctions for a definition of the core event — tank war versus insurgency, massed attrition as opposed to agile maneuver. But warfare is a product of international politics, and the *form* warfare takes is closely related to its *causes*: In the reasons for war, we will find clues as to the sorts of wars we will fight. My argument builds on two facts: First, the form warfare takes derives from, and cannot be considered without reference to, its causes; and second, the fashionable theories of the future of war are mostly silent on those causes. Today, three concepts vie for the position of leading theory of conflict in the twenty-first century: tried-and-true *realpolitik*, the reliable province of traditional state-versus-state conflict; “transformation,” “network-centric” and information warfare; and Fourth Generation Warfare. None of them accurately describes the change now underway.

The theory of war that undergirds *realpolitik* is straightforward. For thousands of years, warfare has meant a clash of wills between opposing military forces on the field of battle, from which one side usually (though not always) emerged as a recognizable winner. The causes of such wars were the combination of an anarchic system of self-help that opened the way for aggressive and imperialistic campaigns of conquest, bitter competitions over scarce resources, escalating mutual security fears, and misperception and miscalculation. Conducting war meant the mobilization of resources and military units to defeat enemy forces in the field. It is from this basic concept — states at war employing organized military units — that most of the hallmarks of modern military science flow: the moral and physical clash of wills; the role of the decisive battle in a campaign; and the endless search for the enemy's “center of gravity” and the “culminating point” of a conflict.

But we have been moving away from this paradigm for some time. Centuries ago, military forces were very nearly divorced from the societies on behalf of whom they fought: crowds of adventurers out at the frontier and beyond, staging highly ritualized über-duels on grassy plains, while the home society went on farming and hunting and carpentering. To be sure, these armies would affect the surrounding societies in profound ways: They would recruit or dragoon young men who otherwise would be farming or cobbling; they would pillage the surrounding landscape as they passed through it; and they would sometimes draw abundant camp-following crowds. But the basic model was one of a quasi-independent army marching off to find its counterpart and slaughter it. Even by Napoleonic times, armies remained remarkably separable from their peoples, grand militarized playthings moving around the chessboard of strategy.

And playthings they were, because armies and navies were the instruments of their leaders — sometimes individual kings or tyrants, sometimes collective groups, but always leaders in search of some self-defined material end, the governing power goal of *realpolitik*. Philip of Macedon could decide that the time had come to unify the Greek city-states, and off went his army to battle. The Romans could elect to subjugate yet another frontier people, and the legions gathered up their equipment. Kings and princes in early modern Europe, reflecting perhaps the apotheosis of this practice, marshaled bands of expensive knights and attendants in what looks to modern eyes almost like an elaborate game. Even when wars emerged without clear power-seeking intent, issues of security dilemmas and power rivalries always hung about the proceedings.

In such a context, the enemy's forces in the field embodied very nearly the entirety of the conflict. When they were destroyed, the enemy was vanquished. What "the people" thought about it, hacking away at their farms a thousand miles from the battlefield (or even right next door to it), usually had little or no bearing on the outcome — except when especially reckless leaders bankrupted the home front to such a degree that they were overthrown while on campaign. Even when forces became nimbler and strategy emphasized moving between, around, and behind an enemy to get at his capital or his industrial heartland, these supposedly indirect strategies mostly ended up in force-on-force butchery.

In its actual practice (as distinct from its consequences, which frequently transformed societies from the roots up), then, war stood apart from society, independent, self-regarding. Warfare was armies against armies, and when it became something more than that — the destruction of whole societies, for example — it remained largely in service of the narrower goal: to cripple the enemy's military instrument, and thus compel his surrender. The character of war in this theory was fierce and brutal, built as it was around the organized employment of violence to break an enemy military's will.

All of this made sense in a world governed by the doctrine of *realpolitik*. From Thucydides onward, the concepts of a realist approach to world politics were clear enough: States sought power; there was no world authority to govern the resulting conflict; stronger states took what they could, weaker ones succumbed or hid under the protective umbrella of alliances. Above all, military power and the diplomatic and political influence that flowed from it was the coin of the realm for the players in the international game, the *sine qua non* in whose absence no other state powers or goals could be reliably sustained.

For centuries, perhaps millennia — from the Peloponnesian War through the German advocates of *machtpolitik* — this situation was not only admitted, it was frequently celebrated. The world was a great Darwinistic struggle and courageous peoples sought power and used it. Warfare was welcomed as a means of stiffening national character and a route to glory for individuals and cultures alike — a perverse notion that, sadly, has not quite been put to rest. Later, British and American realists mourned the reality of power politics and warned against imperial expansion, but pronounced both of them unavoidable given the twin natures of world politics and human nature. Either way, as a positive doctrine or an empirical analysis, realism spoke to a world governed by unconstrained power rivalries, tragic misunderstandings, and, ultimately, force-on-force military confrontations.

With this background, it becomes clear that one claimed shift in the nature of war does not, in fact, describe any change at all. It goes under the current name of "transformation," but even the concept is hardly new.

Transformation is the child of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) — itself a grandson of maneuver warfare and *blitzkrieg*, which have their roots in the renewal of strategic thought following the First World War. As one analyst explains it, attrition warfare (an especially slaughterous variant of the canonical force-on-force style) aspired to the annihilation of enemy forces. Maneuver warfare targets the coherence of the adversary's combat systems, methods, and plans. The hope is that a very selective action can have a cascading effect — an effect disproportionately greater than the degree of effort. An analogy from architecture would be the removal or destruction of the keystone of an arch . . . the removal of which disrupts the stability of the system, resulting in its destruction.

But the “system” is still the enemy military capability. Maneuver warfare is just a more elegant way of dealing with the usual force-on-force confrontation.

And so are its descendants. The Soviet theorists of the “military-technical revolution” — who were themselves influenced by American writings, and whose concepts Americans then translated into the RMA — were interested in more or less the same things as the German *blitzkriegers*: slicing up, destabilizing, and defeating enemy forces, only this time with weapons energized by a revolution in microelectronics, computing power, precision strike, and automation. Radical new concepts of command and control, “networked” organizations, “information dominance” — this and much else on the Defense Department's transformation menu — therefore reflects the latest and most efficient elaboration of the principles of maneuver warfare. Some of the documents of the Office of Force Transformation point to a broader agenda, but if we look at the *practical efforts* of the Defense Department — where its budget goes, what its troops are trained to do, how its operations are conducted — the emphasis remains stubbornly on the force-on-force route to military victory. The primary modernization agendas of the services today speak to the same deep-rooted goal: finding tanks, planes, ships, and people that belong to the enemy and making them explode. Transformation advocates have grown dextrous in the use of bold terms. They call the whole enterprise “network-centric warfare” and speak of “information superiority” and “shared awareness.” They refer to “systems of systems” and “linked platforms of sensors, shooters and commanders in seamless webs,” and talk of the increased speed and greater lethality with which military operations will now operate. But whatever the language, network-centric warfare reflects principles that have governed force-on-force warfare for centuries: Rapid, effective command and control that allows you to get inside an enemy's “decision loop” has been the goal of the great captains of history for centuries; precision-guided weapons are just the latest and most effective effort to hit enemy forces as accurately as possible.

Some elements of the transformation agenda speak to so-called “information warfare.” Like notions of transformation and “network-centric warfare,” accounts of information warfare generally say very little about what the thing actually is. Some writers have used the term “cyberwar,” by which they appear to mean the by now conventional idea that warring powers will try to destroy the computer systems of their opponents. One account points to the rise of domains that do not require physical force to attack, and the resulting extension of warfare “beyond the traditional military realm.”

This is not the first time military strategists have pointed to the potential of new technologies to overcome age-old truths about war. Yet Clausewitz wrote the epitaph of “perfect information dominance” some time back: fog and friction. There will never be sensors numerous, accurate, or reliable enough to create a perfect information picture. There will never be information architectures capable of sharing the resulting information widely, perfectly, or quickly enough to allow forces in the field to rely on it.

As partial evidence, we have a number of recent examples. In Kosovo, the Serbs managed to accomplish a vast amount of movement and operations without NATO knowledge. In the Iraq War, despite the full-scale application of sensor and communications technologies greatly more advanced than those of Operation Desert Storm, the most frequent military engagement may have been the venerable “movement to contact” — steaming ahead until you encounter the enemy, then groping your way around the battlefield until you find the right tactical answer for him. The Third Armored Division famously stumbled into the biggest conventional battle of the war without advance warning. Iraqi commanders were able to move huge units around the battlefield without being seen or detected, until more Americans on “movement to contact”

orders plowed into them. The immense success of the U.S. and allied drive to Baghdad was far more a product of the tactical skill of middle-level U.S. commanders than it was a victory for sensors and “network-centric operations.”

It is hardly surprising that all of this transformational and network-centric jargon would add up to so little in the way of truly new theories of warfare. These concepts are all about tactics and implementation; they have nothing to say about the *causes* of war, or the strategic implications of those causes.

From a definitional standpoint, there are at least three concepts at work in any discussion of “warfare.” First is the *character of battle* — the clash of arms where one army physically meets another. This is the meeting point that generates statements about the “unchanging nature of war” — violence, blood, courage, willpower, and so forth. At a second level we find the *form of warfare*, the tactics and operational art governing units in battle — infantry war versus *blitzkrieg*, insurgency versus classical force-on-force duels. Whereas the character of battle may be eternal, the form of warfare constantly evolves, responding to new technologies, new tactics, and new social organizations. But then we come, finally and most fundamentally, to *the nature of conflict*. This is the highest strategic level of analysis and deals with the causes and character of severe political-military-socioeconomic disputes in the international system. International conflict generates the context for warfare, but also much else — Schellingesque bargaining games, coercive diplomacy, deception and artful dodges short of warfare and battle.

Most analyses of “the future of war” don’t adequately distinguish these three levels. Most of them, in fact, deal with the form of warfare, with some implications for the character of battle. But it’s misleading to tackle those issues without comprehending the evolving *nature of conflict* as a whole, because that larger strategic context sets the stage for warfare and battle.

Suppose, for example, we could satisfy ourselves of the truth of the following five propositions. First, warfare between major and medium-sized states is a thing of the past. Second, most such larger states will become increasingly inward-focused and isolationist in a consumerist era. Third, the number of states truly “left behind” by globalization will be vanishingly small. Fourth, states are vicious economic competitors. And fifth, information warfare capabilities are proliferating rapidly. If those five ideas accurately reflect the future of conflict, then a theory of warfare focusing on insurgency and counterinsurgency wouldn’t make a lot of sense: The “failed states” problem will recede, and in the meantime big states won’t want anything to do with messy counterinsurgency wars. A theory of warfare predicated on cyberwar for economic purposes would, however, match this hypothetical scenario quite nicely. I offer this example not to endorse it, but to illustrate the connection between the *nature of conflict* on the one hand — the political context and reasons for violent or quasi-violent conflict in the international system — and the *character of warfare and battle* on the other.

This, again, is the problem with most current approaches to the “future of war”: They are really talking about the future of warfare, or of battle, as I am using those terms. They are not talking about the nature of conflict more broadly understood — and yet, it is axiomatic that changes in the nature of conflict set the stage for everything else. The character of warfare and battle are merely its offshoots, its symptoms. There is no theory of world politics implied by these approaches; they do not, in fact, speak much to world politics at all. They talk in great depth about new tools of conflict — cyberwar, “network centric operations,” “information warfare” — without much attention to who would use them, or why.

Consider one interpretation on offer from the transformation and network-centric crowd. The future of war, some suggest, will cease to be linear, with large-scale forces lining up against one another and blasting away. It will be nonlinear, cellular, dispersed — a war of network against network, in which an unmanned drone launches a missile against a radar installation here, a hacker conducts infowar there, a band of special forces goes after key leaders somewhere else. Again, the important questions crouch in the background of this smartly-dressed vision of information-age conflict: Who is fighting? What is at stake? Why are they fighting rather than negotiating or cooperating? Will they be content to limit their warmaking to such genteel techniques, or when things start to turn ugly, will the tank divisions start thudding across national boundaries

— and then, ultimately, will someone begin fiddling with the safety seals on the nukes? And, at the heart of it all: How will one side *win*?

My argument is that the answers to these questions paint the portrait of the nature of conflict as it exists in the international system. The specific *tools* used by the combatants, and the resulting styles of warfare and battle, will vary, but will always flow from the reasons for and contenders in international conflict.

Transformation, information warfare, network-centric warfare — all of these approaches speak, then, to the second-order issue, not the primary one. Another vision of the future of war does address the nature of conflict at the strategic level. It suggests that big war is giving way to small war — low-intensity conflict and insurgency — and furnishes some persuasive reasons why this is the case. And yet it stops short, for the most part, of offering an equally persuasive theory about the *causes* of conflict in the new era of decentralized warfare.

Martin van Creveld is perhaps the outstanding exponent of this point of view. Van Creveld argues that the chief trend in warfare over several thousand years was its “progressive consolidation”: The accumulation of massive warmaking power in the hands of a relatively few large nation-states. With the arrival of nuclear weapons, this sort of concentrated warfare became self-canceling; interstate war went on the decline, while intrastate war — civil wars, insurgencies, terrorist campaigns — came to the forefront. And the result, van Creveld believed, was that war was becoming decoupled from the state.

This basic approach has attracted other disciples, and now goes by the name Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW). Its core contention is that the nation-state is losing legitimacy and a monopoly on the use of force; one leading exponent refers to the “universal crisis of legitimacy of the state.” Fourth Generation Warfare seems to imagine a sort of neofeudalism, a “return to the way war worked before the rise of the state,” in William Lind’s words: a situation in which many entities wage war, for many different reasons, with many different tools. This is radically fragmented, decentralized, bottom-up conflict. To some exponents, 4GW is also very much about the clash of cultures, and the sorts of conflict it produces. The contestants in 4GW — and here the concept does depart from traditional assumptions about warfare — focus not on an enemy’s military forces, but on broadcasting messages directly into its political system, in order to bring about (in the interpretation of another leading 4GW proponent, T.X. Hammes) “political paralysis” in the target countries.

There is no question that low-intensity conflict has been, remains, and will continue to be a major challenge for the U.S. military, and that the military — and especially the Army — will likely remain immune to all outside efforts to force it to master the discipline. But such historical references make it obvious that the spread of low-intensity conflict does not itself constitute a “revolution” in warfare. It has been a parallel mode of conflict since Biblical times, one that has merely become more prominent given the role of nuclear weapons in tamping down great power conflict. Only its tactics have changed.

In fact, “low-intensity warfare” has often upheld the same goal as traditional military strategy: to defeat an enemy’s fielded forces — through exhaustion, frustration and other indirect rather than direct means. The classic anticolonial and national liberation movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries fall squarely into a tradition that runs back millennia: less powerful peoples making use of deception, hit-and-run raids, the sympathy of the local population, and the vulnerability of the occupier’s outposts and forces. Insurgency is, once again, a tool; the important questions remain: *Who* is using it, and *why*? Proponents of the 4GW theory know this, and try to build a portrait of a new mutation of the insurgency virus, one that employs global media campaigns, for example, rather than hit-and-run raids on military units. I am not so sure about the distinction: Insurgents have always thought very carefully about the political will of their enemy, terrorists have always used attacks for demonstration purposes, and al Qaeda, especially in Iraq, continues to use age-old tactics of intermittent, shadowy harassment of military forces through ambush and bombing.

To say, moreover, that all war is now small war, that state-to-state conflict has given way to Fourth Generation Warfare, generates an obvious blind spot for the traditional, state-on-state wars that without doubt remain possible. If China were to attack Taiwan, the United States would probably be drawn in — and

the resulting conflict would look very little like an insurgency campaign (at least at first). Very quickly, Pentagon planners would be rushing to long-neglected bookshelves for writings on escalation and crisis bargaining, and beleaguered U.S. forces in the field would be conducting large-scale naval, air, and perhaps ground campaigns that would look like a supercharged version of World War II's Pacific campaign. No serious observer of world politics denies, despite all the trends toward free trade, democracy, and interdependence, that major states could still go to war; but accepting that truism is to place a very large neon asterisk next to theories that claim our future is nothing but counterinsurgency.

The nation-state, in fact, is not losing its monopoly on force. In much of the world there is no such trend; states remain stubbornly devoted to providing order and preventing alternative forms of force from arising. Russia is hardly coming apart at the seams, nor are China or India. With better governance and a sometimes growing integration into the world economy, in fact, some state structures in Asia and Latin America seem actually to be regaining ground they had seemingly lost in the 1970s and 1980s. The old line that globalization makes that state irrelevant has proven to be too simplistic, if not in fact close to the opposite of the truth: more and more governments are discovering the tricks of the trade of institutional legitimacy in a globalizing world — and finding that their peoples, worried about the effects of trade and anxious about the fates of their cultures and desirous of border protections and safe finances, are looking as much to government as ever. Meanwhile, the supposed engines of the annihilation of borders and controls — trafficking in drugs, money laundering, and so on — are perhaps proving to be less omnipotent than once feared. Only in certain times and certain places, where things get disorderly or humiliating enough, is state control seriously threatened; and what most of the resulting armed movements want, anyway, is to seize control of the hollowed-out but still tempting state apparatus — a tendency very much on display in Hamas's recent electoral victory in the Palestinian territories.

Most of all, though, current writings on Fourth Generation Warfare and related concepts are mostly silent on a matter that ought to be their central focus — the *reasons* for the insurgencies. They take low-intensity conflict as a given, pair it up with the “decline of traditional warfare,” and project into the future. They do not have anything to offer on the causes of these conflicts. Theories of war that hope to inform us about the nature of the world and the origins of conflict must do have something to say about the reasons for war if they are to say anything worthwhile. Again, suggesting that the *form* is changing without considering the *causes* is like describing in exhaustive detail the evolving symptoms of a changing disease. Until the symptoms are connected to a specific cause, it doesn't get you very far in the direction of an actual cure.

Changes in international conflict — and, by extension, warfare and battle — always come as a result of changes in the societies waging it. The major factors impelling the latest shift in the principles of conflict are very well-known and demand little elaboration—only the implications remain to be spelled out in detail. The trends include:

Modernization as an accomplished fact in the industrialized world, an emerging trend in the fast-growing developing world, and a hopeless dream for 2 billion of the world's people being left behind.

The rise of a global market to which countries are determined, and often desperate, to gain access. *Globalization* of the world's economy, politics, information exchange, institutions, and mindset, and the rise of worldwide markets in commodities formerly best acquired through conquest.

Democratization of the world's political systems, and the creation of mass-based rather than elite-based decision-making processes.

A global information market that exposes people around the world to each others' facts, lifestyles, and values.

The advent of nuclear weapons, which fundamentally changed the calculus of war among states that possess them.

The rise of international institutions to govern common issues and problems, from the World Trade Organization to the European Union to global health, sanitary, technological, and labor groups.

On one point, then, my analysis overlaps with many of the other visions of the future of war. Combined with parallel military trends — the rise of a hegemonic U.S. military power, the continued spread of nuclear weapons — these developments have tended to discourage aggressive, large-scale warmaking by major powers and to encourage restraint, especially among nuclear-armed states. One piece of this puzzle, for example, is the growing, though far from complete, consensus on a global territorial sovereignty norm: The agreed rule that countries do not any longer invade and conquer their neighbors (unless both countries are too small for the world community to much care, or unless the invader disregards the sovereignty norm to enforce another emerging norm of world politics — human rights, for example, or nonproliferation). This notion is now an official part of the national security doctrine of the United States, whose 2002 variant speaks to an emerging international community united by shared values and agreed on the inadvisability of mutual war. This suggests that the 4GW advocates have it exactly backwards: The growing predominance of insurgent-style warfare does not evoke the collapse of state authority. It shows the final and irrevocable success of the leading principle of the Westphalian system — territorial boundary norms.

Again, as I have stressed, this is not to say that “major war is a thing of the past.” Such wars could occur — wars whose conduct, character, and principles would be mostly traditional, and which would therefore require some degree of traditionally organized military force to prosecute. New forms of warfare do not displace old ones in an instant, like the turning of a historical page. The two models coexist for a time, often centuries, as the old form slowly dies out and the new one takes over. It is not so much the characteristics as the origins of conflict that are changing; the psychological sources of conflict I will describe could easily generate state-on-state, force-on-force encounters. Nonetheless, these trends do, on balance, have the effect of making state-on-state conflict less likely — and precisely because they ameliorate some of the sources of war even while creating new ones. Modernization, democratization and related trends, *when they work out smoothly*, have the potential to create a world in which state leaders see far less need, and far more cost, to going to war. When those trends work out badly, however, the result is conflict — at the state or sub-state level.

The difference, then — the true revolution in the nature of conflict — has only secondarily to do with *how* it is fought. Mostly the change is in *why* it is fought, which carries implications for the nature of battle and warfare. A garden-variety insurgency of 1890 or 1930 or 1975 would likely have been waged for classical *realpolitik* reasons — most likely national liberation or “self-determination.” Meanwhile, typical state-on-state contests through the beginning of the twentieth century stemmed from similar thinking by state leaders — the desire for more influence, more territory, crucial natural resources, ethnic or national reunification, and so on. Because of the various trends outlined above, major war between large states had become a largely self-defeating proposition by the early twentieth century. Once the post-colonial wars of liberation had burned off their nationalist steam, insurgencies fought for the classical reasons petered out as well. What remained was for a new sort of conflict to emerge — conflict with new sources and new goals, conflict that demands a very different response from the traditional sort, conflict that cannot really be called “war” at all.

As much as the trends of the last decades — modernization, global awareness, political freedom and economic choice — have empowered individuals as never before, they have challenged, frightened, shocked, disgusted, and damaged people as well. The world brought by modernity is full of golden opportunities as well as daunting risks and responsibilities. And when brewed up in a particular context — a context of national decline, cultural stagnation, and political repression, among other things — the resulting alienation can become explosive.

The story of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the developed world was at least partly the story of people coming to grips with the implications of modernity. And the result in a few places conformed to a dangerous pattern: large numbers of alienated, frustrated individuals, uncertain of their identity or prospects in a rapidly changing world, turning to a number of ruinous political/spiritual movements whose ideologies look remarkably alike. In fascist Germany, Bolshevik Russia, nationalist Japan and elsewhere, these

movements harked back to a glorious past, condemned the moral degeneration of the present, dismissed their rulers as incompetent and corrupt, generated sinister conspiracy theories to blame outsiders or local scapegoats for their national decline, and offered a way forward through a purified moral order based on the traditional values of the people. And the people, their mindset shaped in ways still best captured by Eric Hoffer's *The True Believer* (Harper & Row, 1951) — desperate for redemption from what they perceived to be their despoiled, ruined circumstances — embraced the movement, submerged their identity within it, and transferred to it their moral judgments. One can see very much the same process underway in certain parts of the Middle East today: social and cultural decline and stagnation; an accelerating pace of change and massive insults to tradition, delivered by an outside engine of world modernization; growing uncertainty about identity and frustration at cultural decline; resentment of corrupt and ineffectual established rulers; and, ultimately, a widespread sense of uncertainty and anxiety.

Alienation generates security threats in a number of ways. One is by paving the way for aggressive, despotic movements to seize control of national governments and wage traditional war. Frustration and rage can also burst forth in the form of civil wars, revolutions, or ethnic conflicts. And of course today, the central security challenge of alienation is global terrorism, emanating from extreme, anti-modern Islamic groups.

The threat of alienation is a somewhat temporary menace, largely confined to the phases of modernization and cultural change that precede complete modernity, by which time most people are prosperous enough and safe enough and have sufficiently reliable avenues to identity to make a postmodern Nazi movement tremendously unlikely. But the risk never entirely subsides: There will always be a hyper-alienated few who turn to violence (the Unabomber comes to mind), and larger numbers of people whose footing in the identity-rich and identity-confused modern world is unsure enough to point them in the direction of hateful or xenophobic movements offering simple answers and comforting doctrines. More fundamental, though, are the global, transitional risks alive in societies still on their way to modernity in areas of the world stretching from Latin America across to Africa, through the Middle East and into South and Southeast Asia (and, as recent events have reminded us, within the immigrant ghettos of Europe as well).

The dominant feature of world politics and social development over the coming century will therefore be as it has increasingly been for a century or more — a saga of individuals, freed from the constraints of tradition and culture and repression, finding their place in a changing, globalizing world, doing so in the context of a global interdependence of awareness, information and communications, and then trying to shape the policies of their governments. The basic trend in conflict for which I am arguing might be summed up this way: *When an international system arises that allows nations and other groups to conduct extensive and self-satisfying pursuits of power and security without territorial expansion, aggression, or large-scale warfare*, the search for basic human needs like identity, belonging, dignity, and self-respect will supplant more traditional quests for political-military power, territory, and natural resources as the defining form of mass national expression; and *when a massive, accelerating, and disorienting process of modernization creates enormous social discord around the world*, that search for identity and dignity can and will generate conflict.

This is hardly the first time psychological problems sparked by modernization and modernity have ushered in a period of conflict. The pattern played itself out roughly from the 1880s through the 1930s, capped by the devastating illegitimacy and humiliation embossed on a number of states by the Depression, and it played the decisive role in generating the aggressive tyrannies that launched World War II. That war was a product of psychological issues far more than geopolitical ones: Its authors were totalitarian regimes caught in the grip of utopian fantasies — amalgams of romantic folk religions, imperialism, nationalism, ethnic and racial superiority, and a thirst for revenge for dishonors imposed by the “West.”

A crucial part of this story is the rise of mass, as opposed to elite, politics. States and peoples dominated by a handful of aristocrats or monarchs could think more regularly in *realpolitik* terms. They could, and did, view their armies as playthings, filled out with the ignorant, disposable rabble. But with modernization came massification — of education, economic achievement, entrepreneurialism, and much else; and also of governance. Times may still arise when a handful of individuals can lead a state into war based upon

rational cost-benefit calculations. Again, old forms of warfare do not die out overnight. But in the future, the pattern will be almost entirely in another direction — wars as a result of mass psychology gone bad. We think of Hitler and Stalin as madmen, and the Japanese imperial nationalists likewise; but they would not have reached power, nor gained the assent of their people for adventurism, if they were not standing atop some of the most intensely traumatized societies of the past century. Pragmatic *realpolitik*ers, almost no matter how power-hungry, are always preferable to reckless idealists at the helm of radical movements — a lesson we are re-learning thanks to President Ahmadinejad in Iran.

Realpolitik is giving way to *psychopolitik*; geopolitics to psychopolitics. The essential truth about the future of conflict is not to be found in information warfare or Netwar or Fourth Generation War. The bigger truth is that the nature of conflict has already shifted from a largely rational enterprise waged by elite-dominated states conducted in pursuit of power objectives, to the product of mass psychological trauma attendant to modernization. Our strategic response must shift from *realpolitik* and *machtpolitik* to something far more encompassing and far less political-military in its assumptions and tactics.

Increasingly, the dominant mode of conflict in the world will not be force-on-force military engagements guided by traditional principles of warfare. Increasingly, “conflict” will be something vaguer, more interdisciplinary, more to do with psychology and identity than military forces. To be very clear: The form warfare takes could still extend into state-on-state conflict, as in the case of a Chinese modernization process gone wrong; but it could also include terrorism, insurgency, information war, and much else. The critical issue is the foundational dynamics of conflict, the causes of all of these various forms of warfare.

We need, in fact, a new terminology; the idiom of “warfare” carries too much baggage. As is often said these days, the “war on terror” is a war in the sense in which the “war on drugs” was a war, or the “war on poverty.” Which is to say, not a war at all, as we have usually understood war. The shift for which I am arguing involves more than a change in the principles of war, as traditionally defined. It involves the end of war as we have known it, and its replacement with something else. This, incidentally, is what makes the employment of tough and well-trained Marines and Army troops in places like Iraq so awkward, and what places these brave young people in such bewildering circumstances. They are instruments of war, being asked to fight a very different form of conflict according to principles and tactics that no longer fully apply. By this claim I mean more than the prosaism that “troops trained for high-intensity warfare don’t do counterinsurgency.” That has long been true, but as long as the insurgents were fighting for traditional goals — national liberation, the defeat or exhaustion of the enemy’s fielded military forces — some broad approximation of traditional tactics would have an effect on the irregular forces, and when combined with the right accompanying political-economic strategies, might actually work. When the primary motive of the insurgents is to quench a desperate thirst for identity, dignity, and authenticity, though, the ground shifts profoundly. Against a geopolitically-minded insurgency, the application of military force could achieve some measurable tactical success and longer-term bargaining leverage. Against fantasists, the same application of force offers them precisely what they crave — an identity-affirming war against an evil outsider, and a reconfirmation of everything their ideologists have claimed.

We could simplify matters with a definitional trick: defining war as battle, and shifting the ground to a discussion of tactics and men at war. But the wrong diagnosis would lead to the wrong cure. If the nature of conflict is indeed based now on psychological rather than geopolitical grounds, then reminding ourselves that “war is violence and killing and a contest of wills” won’t tell us very much. It will, in fact, generally recommend the wrong policies, in service of the notion that prevailing in the man-versus-man willpower games will “win” these “wars.” But it will not, at least not unless we are prepared to slaughter far more people than has been our recent custom. The idea of overpowering an opponent on the battlefield with superior wits, courage, and will is a relic of the geopolitical chessboard games of yore, as much as is the continued obsession with concepts of credibility, prestige, and intimidation. All too often in an era of *psychopolitik*, these prescriptions will worsen the disease, which is already grounded in weak identity, national humiliation, and socioeconomic frustration and rage. Try to overpower a people in the grip of this sort of worldview and you only justify and reinforce their perceived need to fight.

It is not enough, then, merely to change the definition to “counterinsurgency” and call it a day. In some of those who attack our forces in Iraq or the radical Islamists around the world, we are up against something far more enigmatic, far more complex, in its way far more sinister. We are not fighting proto-Bismarcks, who want nothing more than to seize state power and start operating as *realpolitik*ers. (There are surely some such people among the former Baathists and Saddam loyalists in the Iraq insurgency, and perhaps some among the top ranks of al Qaeda as well. But I think they represent the smaller threat.) We are fighting people in the grip of what Lee Harris has accurately called a “fantasy ideology,” people who have lost a grip on normal standards of rational and especially moral calculation.

What, then, are the implications of this view? What would be the principles of conflict fought against a mindset? The central route to war in such psychological dramas is national humiliation and society-wide alienation. “Fighting” such conflicts has just a little to do with winning “the close battle” — force-on-force engagements, however small they might be. We want to hunt down fully self-identified al Qaeda operatives, to be sure. But prevailing means to win a battle for the society, for its mindsets and psychologies, to address sources of grievance and anxiety, to shore up institutions of governance — and, recognizing that all of that will be extraordinarily difficult in the best of circumstances, trying, in fact, to absent oneself from such conflicts, to remain as free of the effects of these traumas as is possible for the worldwide exemplar of globalized modernity. It seems to me, then, that a theory of *psychopolitik* would point to three pillars of statecraft: restraint, compassion, and fiscal responsibility.

The concept of restraint recognizes that, in a still-modernizing and increasingly globalizing world, intense psychodramas are playing out everywhere, especially in developing countries — and that it would be disastrous for the United States to become embroiled in all of them. With its emphasis on psychological traumas rather than hard cost-benefit calculations, *psychopolitik* breathes new life into the central insight of classical realism of the modern variety: Pushing your weight around will generate resentment. *Psychopolitik* highlights the role of national humiliation in generating conflict — from the French humiliation in 1870 that helped generate World War I, to the post-World War I humiliation of Germany that fed so directly into Nazism, to the humiliation of much of the Arab world (for centuries, really, but most pointedly in 1967 and the Palestinian territories) and the role it plays in energizing radical Islamism. *Psychopolitik* urges restraint and prudence and an overarching strategy of eschewing involvement in foreign conflicts in a way that would allow angry foreigners to blame the United States for their rage.

The parallel emphasis on compassion recognizes the limits of restraint in an era in which the United States is already held responsible for much of what goes on in the world and draws the conclusion that the long-time realist scoffing at “do-goodism” in the international community is in need of serious modification. If we are trying to influence the thinking of a Napoleon or a Genghis Khan, of course, trying to “make friends” by piling on economic assistance will have no good effect, and probably much bad (a consideration that halfway applies to recalcitrant Genghis Khans like Kim Jong Il; but only halfway, because they are now the outcasts, not the big powers). Nor will such efforts, even if directed, for example, to the Palestinian territories, mean much to the likes of Zawahiri and bin Laden. But these days, our audience is much bigger — the mass publics of key countries whose psychological fate in a modernizing context has yet to be finally decided. Their view of the globalization process, and the U.S. role in it, will play a major role in shaping that fate. This points to the need for a multi-billion-dollar effort to work toward development, the growth of civil society, effective governance, and much else throughout the Middle East and the broader Islamic world. Some will still characterize a pillar of statecraft built around the compassionate investment in developing-world success as soft, woolly-headed nonsense. It matters little that people around the world like or revere the United States, some say; it matters a great deal whether they respect and fear us. But more modern wars are the product of mass psychology gone wrong than of cold geopolitical calculation. Magnifying a fearful respect would also exacerbate humiliation and rage; far from deterring the aggrieved, it would merely provoke them.

A third pillar of statecraft must comprise strenuous efforts to keep the global economy on a sound footing. Always in the past, mass psychological reactions against modernization — which had been percolating in societies like Germany and Japan, but were not yet ascendant — gained crucial momentum from a

widespread economic dislocation, or a series of them. In most contexts, the anxieties, resentments, and grievances of an uncertainly modernizing people remain under control. Only with large-scale socioeconomic calamities do they burst forth, do mass publics throw their support to radical extremists out of desperation rather than true preference. America's current fiscal irresponsibility — our massive budget deficits, our vanishing savings rates, our rampant consumerism — appears calculated to set the stage for precisely the sort of traumatic global economic shocks that could take the still-moderate levels of radical Islamism (and other radicalisms as well) and elevate them to frightening new heights.

If we take these three injunctions seriously, it becomes obvious that the military instrument will gradually become a secondary tool in efforts to “fight” the “conflicts” of the future. Its roles will include tracking down those few dedicated and violent foot-soldiers of alienation (such as al Qaeda) and destroying them; sweeping aside the decaying militaries of the handful of true rogue states when necessary; and, most of all, remaining ready during the long transitional period, in case an old-style force-on-force war does break out. An understanding of the principles of conventional warfare will thus continue to serve us well for some time — as will, it is worth reminding ourselves, the sorts of advanced conventional weapons systems, like the F-22 fighter and next-generation naval vessels, that populate typical policy-wonk lists of things we ought to razor out of the defense budget.

The great danger, though, is that, as we are doing now, we will persist in our faith that traditional conventional conflict is the dominant mode of warfare and assume that buying the thirty-eighth iteration of manned-precision-destruction-from-the-air capabilities will answer our security needs. Increasingly, it will not. One implication of this revised view of conflict could be crudely summarized as follows: We ought to shift \$50 billion to \$70 billion from the U.S. defense budget into a wider array of instruments of national power more attuned to the needs of conflict against alienation. These would include strengthened and expanded institutions of diplomacy, scholarship programs, a vastly reenergized Peace Corps, direct foreign aid, debt forgiveness, a restored and expanded public diplomacy program, and much else.

The odds are, of course, that we will not do these things. The American popular understanding of war and national security are firmly lashed to images of Iwo Jima, laser-guided bombs, and tough, bearded special operators to allow any political leader to broaden self-defense in these apparently social-worky ways. The notion of substituting grand, society-wide therapeutic efforts for the 82nd Airborne — and justifying it with the use of terms like identity, alienation, and grievance — is not a challenge most politicians will tackle on the campaign trail. The domestic sustainment of the social effort needed to wage conflict has always relied on brute invocations of the need to “hit back at evil.” And so, in all likelihood, we will continue to militarize conflicts that are essentially psychological in character, continue to burst onstage in a Freudian drama dressed up as Bismarck. The result will be — the result is today — to exacerbate rather than calm the grievances, alienations, fears, and resentments that feed conflict.

We could once be confident that unilaterally following our geostrategic interests was usually the right thing to do, regardless of what the world thought about it — and there remains a distinct odor of such thinking about U.S. policy in the global war on terror. But if psychology, alienation, and perception are the wellsprings of the greatest threats to our national interests, we have much firmer reasons to tread lightly on public resentment and hatred. Anti-Americanism, in this new strategic context, is not merely a curiosity or a joke; it is a deadly serious symptom of attitudes that will be, to our grandchildren's generation, what hostile armies and navies looming abroad were to our grandparents'. This might represent an updated, and even more devilish, version of the “security dilemma” of classical realism: In striving hard for more security by annihilating the leaders of radical anti-modern movements, we risk feeding the legitimacy and strength of those same groups.

If we were willing to do things differently, the principles of conflict in an era of *psychopolitik* would suggest a number of specific efforts.

Attend to identity. The top strategic priority is providing avenues to identity formation — opportunities for people to escape stagnation and despair and to strive toward secure identities. This principle has obvious economic, political and social components.

Attend to the global economy. Worldwide economic shocks are the surest means to accelerate the growth of all forms of anti-modernization radicalism, especially radical Islamism.

Practice the greatest restraint possible in foreign policy. We must keep two stubborn facts firmly in mind: a number of psychologically-induced conflicts are likely to be underway at any given time in the world, and each of them will be devilishly hard to resolve. Staying out of their way is the most reliable avenue to safeguarding U.S. national interests, and as often as not this means adhering to a narrow definition of those interests. It suggests, then, something close to the *opposite* of a global crusade on behalf of democratic reforms, something that may easily worsen rather than alleviate psychological stress. In Russia, Germany, and Japan alike, ineffectual, short-lived parliamentary democracies were the precursors to radicalism; the combination of governmental ineffectiveness and corruption with the dashed hopes for a better and freer society has played a leading role in bringing down a host of emerging democracies.

Avoid humiliating others. Because humiliation, hopelessness, and rage stand as the most volatile flavors of alienation, we must avoid the temptation to impose it, even on strategic rivals. Trying to enforce our will on other peoples, militarily or diplomatically, is bound to be self-defeating. Patience will be the watchword; allowing a false sense of urgency and an obsession with “credibility” to compel a standoff with a national movement bound on an expression of identity — Cuba in 1958, Iran in 1979, Venezuela today — will almost always represent a strategic error.

Do not become the focus of the alienation. Adopting policies in the name of geopolitics that place us in the crosshairs of psychopolitics — supporting a repressive regime beset by an exploding antimodernist social movement for “pragmatic, strategic” reasons — will almost always work to our disadvantage.

Crush the true extremists. When we encounter a group that is truly beyond reach, who have gone so far down the road of alienation and humiliation and rage, there is no alternative but to capture and kill them as rapidly and completely as possible.

Note again the contradictory requirements of this agenda. Our task these days is not the linear requirement of destroying a given percentage of enemy forces; it is a fluid, nonlinear undertaking strewn with paradoxes and dilemmas. How do we crush extremists without generating humiliation? How do we accelerate economic growth to create avenues for identity formation without aggravating the specter of “Westernization” that helps spark alienation in the first place? The paradoxes of this challenge are on vivid, and often tragic, display in Iraq today — the need to destroy insurgents without mistreating innocent Iraqis; the desire to hasten economic and social development without creating even more cultural disquiet; the effort to liberate the Iraqi people while making them feel as if they’ve done it for themselves. These are dilemmas with which we are sadly stuck because, in taking on this intractable challenge, we violated the principles of restraint and avoiding humiliation — reasons why a *psychopolitik* approach would have argued, on balance, against invading Iraq in the first place. (It would also argue, for reasons that ought by now to be obvious, that we should do everything in our power to avoid a military showdown with Iran.) Note, too, that this agenda disputes the idea that we are engaged primarily in a “war of ideas.” Certainly, ideas and ideologies play leading roles in the psychodramas of modern life, and a vastly upgraded public diplomacy effort is in order. But we must not fool ourselves: Ideas are the product of circumstances, and unless those circumstances change, all the glossy pro-American magazines and graduate school scholarships in the world will only serve to harden perceptions about callous Western propaganda. This is a conflict with roots in the condition of societies — issues like opportunity, effective governance, status in the world community, and so on. Fighting it as a “war of ideas” will merely be to treat, once again, a symptom rather than the cause.

And note, finally, what this perspective has to say about the claims of our national leaders that we are “at war,” with all that that has traditionally meant: an effort to mute dissent “during the war”; the breathtaking escalation of executive powers, free from any legislative restraint, “during the war.” The fact is that we are not “at war” in the way the framers of our Constitution understood that concept when they wrote the document. We are engaged in a different enterprise entirely, one that overlaps only a little with war as it has been traditionally — and politically — understood. More than any well-honed constitutional theory, it seems to me, this simple distinction hacks the legs out from under the assertions of executive privilege in wartime being made today.

It is therefore extraordinarily difficult to spell out any unqualified principles of this new era of conflict. It will be vague, gradual, diverse. It will frustrate efforts to understand it, let alone forestall it. All of which suggests that it is a form of conflict likely to drive the United States — with its blunt, direct, linear, firepower- and technology-obsessed style of fighting — to distraction. That result, like the broader shift in warfare, is already much in evidence.

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DANISH CARTOONS

Muhammad Caricatured

Weekly Standard
By Stephen Schwartz
2/20

The uproar in Europe and some Muslim countries over cartoons of the prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper last September has once again dramatized several dismal aspects of the conflict between radical Islam and the culture of the West. One is that the so-called Arab or Muslim street comprises little more than a rent-a-mob available to burn, loot, and kill whenever Muslim demagogues attack political institutions and media anywhere in the world. Another is the ignorance Western media bring to their reporting on the issues that disturb the global Muslim community.

Thus, reporters and commentators have established the claim that Islam strictly forbids artistic depiction of Muhammad, other prophets, and living beings in general, and that in publishing cartoons of the prophet the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten deeply offended all Muslims. Journalists have foisted this nonsense on the Western public by recycling the apologetics for radical Islam offered by Western academics enjoying the patronage of obscurantist, oil-rich Arabs.

In reality, portrayal of Muhammad is not universally banned in Islam. It is true that Islam was marked from the beginning by a horror of idol-worship, and representations of the prophet are never found in mosques, which instead are often and famously ornamented with intricate nonrepresentational designs known as arabesques and hung with works of calligraphy. But the Koran itself is silent on the matter of images, and the warnings against them contained in the hadith, sayings of the prophet recorded centuries after he lived, have been subject to various interpretation.

Depictions of the prophet were once common, for instance, in Persian and Turkic Islamic art, although often in these pictures Muhammad's face or figure is veiled or left blank. Even before the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258, Islamic civilization came under the influence of Oriental art, with its rich tradition of human representation. And after the conquest, there was an explosion of painting and other imagery in Islam, including depictions of Muhammad.

So it is that the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington contains a picture of the prophet seated with his companions. The work appears in Bal'ami's Persian Version of Tabari's Universal History, from the 14th century. Another image, this one of the birth of the prophet, is found in one of the great achievements of the Islamic book, the Jami' al-tavarikh (Compendium of Chronicles), produced at Tabriz in Iran around 1314. The painting, in ink, color, and gold, draws on Christian imagery of Jesus' birth.

A favorite subject of Islamic illustration is the Night Journey of Muhammad, an out-of-body ride on a supernatural horse and ascent into the heavens that is a key element of Islamic theology. The prophet is shown on the magical steed Buraq, flying over Mecca, in a 15th-century manuscript, now in the British Museum, of the Khamseh or Five-Poem Cycle by Nizami Ganjavi, a poet from Azerbaijan. An even richer illuminated image appears in a Persian miniature from about a hundred years later.

In the late 18th century, the rise of the purist and intolerant Wahhabi sect, allied with the al Saud family in eastern Arabia, ushered in a new wave of iconoclasm wherever Wahhabism appeared. It saw the destruction of many famous manuscripts, books, and artistic works, including pictures of the prophet, on the argument that any depiction of living beings was idolatry. The Wahhabi-Saudi conquest of Mecca and Medina beginning in 1924, and the consolidation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, soon enriched by oil wealth, empowered the Wahhabis to spread their extremist doctrine throughout the world of Sunni Islam.

Today, much Islamic opinion holds that representation of humans and animals is forbidden to Muslims. But no firm and universal rule on these issues has been enunciated. Shia Muslims often keep pictures in their homes of the prophet as well as Ali, the fourth caliph, or successor to Muhammad as leader of the faithful, and Hussein, the prophet's grandson. The deaths of Ali and Hussein mark the beginning of the Shia tradition.

Islam, of course, is not alone in finding the depiction of living beings a matter for debate. Orthodox Judaism and some Christian sects understand the Bible to forbid images. The second of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:4) has been variously rendered in English, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth" (King James Version) and "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below" (New International Version)--to cite just two translations--clearly leaving room for differing views.

The Danish caricatures themselves were mainly innocuous. The only one that could be considered genuinely provocative showed the prophet wearing a turban shaped like a bomb with a burning fuse. Once certain (emphasis on "certain") Muslims claimed the work of the artists was offensive to all believers in the religion, a series of absurd and tragic events ensued. Danish Islamic clerics traveled to Muslim countries to organize a protest, taking with them not only the published cartoons but also gross images, including one of a man wearing a pig's snout that they passed off as a derisive image of Muhammad. Some European newspapers republished the cartoons; but Jyllands-Posten apologized for offending any Muslim readers. The paper's editor, Carsten Juste, concluded, "In our opinion, the 12 drawings were sober. They were not intended to be offensive, nor were they at variance with Danish law, but they have indisputably offended many Muslims, for which we apologize." Riots were triggered in various Muslim countries, Danish and other diplomatic offices were attacked, and people have been killed.

But the Western habit of apology and self-abasement proved contagious, as even American politicians offered ridiculous comments on the matter. Bill Clinton, a guest at a business forum in the Gulf state of Qatar, attacked the cartoons as "appalling" and compared them to anti-Jewish propaganda. Bush administration spokesman Kurtis Cooper said, "These cartoons are indeed offensive to the belief of Muslims. We all fully recognize and respect freedom of the press and expression but it must be coupled with press responsibility. Inciting religious or ethnic hatreds in this manner is not acceptable." But objectionable cartoons on religious and ethnic issues are protected expression in the United States, and are not incitement. Incitement means directly urging people to kill each other, not making fun of a religious figure. Anti-Semitic and anti-Christian images proliferate in media around the world, without exceptional comment by the U.S.

authorities. Obnoxious anti-Jewish images are particularly common in Arab countries, whose leaders and street agitators have no moral standing to complain about anything said or printed in the West.

Christians and Jews in America have long objected to caricatures they find insulting to Jesus, the Virgin Mary, the pope and other Catholic clerics, prominent evangelical preachers, and Israeli leaders. But they have not rioted or threatened anybody with death. Muslims must learn that they do not have a special status in the West, exempt from common standards of law and conduct. If Muslims cannot stand expressions of criticism and even disrespect for Islam in the West, they should return to live in Muslim lands. This is a well-established principle in Islamic law, as enunciated by Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the Iraqi Shia cleric, as well as by Sunni jurists. Sistani, let it be noted, has reacted to the cartoon dispute with exemplary calm, condemning the cartoons but also criticizing "misguided and oppressive" Muslims whose activities, he said, create "a distorted and dark image of the faith."

Furthermore, even if there were Muslim unanimity banning depiction of living beings or even of the prophet, no normal Muslim believes that such rules apply to non-Muslims. Mainstream Muslims do not claim that the rules of their religion must be followed by those outside it. Otherwise, they would try to prevent Christians and Jews living in Muslim-majority societies from drinking wine (as do the Wahhabis). Muslims do believe their revelation is the final message offered by the creator to humanity, and extremists among them use this as a pretext to deprecate Judaism and Christianity. Radical Muslims have a right to such beliefs and expression of them in the West; but if non-Muslims cannot caricature Muhammad, how can Muslims demand protection for their right to deny that Jesus was the son of God? Radical Muslims ignore the obvious truth that banning criticism of any religion will affect them as negatively as it might others.

What is all this really about? Why did it take six months for Muslims to react to the cartoons? The stage-managed outburst of rage originates in two ideological issues, neither of which has any real foundation in Islam as a religion. The first is that the complaining Muslims are summoned to violence by representatives of the Saudi-financed Wahhabi sect, which hates all representation of living beings, just as it hates graveyards, historic mosques, and other objects it claims will induce Muslims to commit shirk, or idol-worship. The Saudis are currently engaged in extensive vandalism of ancient Islamic architecture on their own territory; recently they demolished five ancient mosques in Medina, including one built by Fatima, the prophet's daughter.

The same destructive attitude was revealed in the destruction of the colossal pre-Islamic Buddha statues at Bamiyan, in Afghanistan, by the Taliban and al Qaeda in the spring of 2001. At that time, a variety of bought-off Western "experts" tried to explain away the vandalism by citing the alleged Islamic ban on images. But the governments of other Muslim countries--including the ultra-radical Shia regime in Iran--have never embarked on the destruction of their pre-Islamic architectural and artistic heritage. Can we imagine the Egyptian government devastating the treasures of Pharaonic art and monumental statuary on the grounds that they are un-Islamic? Will they blow up the Sphinx?

Although more sinister, the aim of intimidating Westerners into silence about any aspect of Islam by this outbreak of fanaticism and brutality is actually secondary. The third and worst piece of the puzzle is an obvious effort to maintain control over the most backward and marginal elements of the Islamic community, especially those living in the West, so that the benighted outlook of Saudi-financed Wahhabism will go unchallenged among those who represent the greatest threat to Islamic extremism: moderate Muslims.

The Wahhabis have, in great part, attained their goals in this scandalous affair. Western politicians and media have cowered, and Saudi-funded pressure groups like the Council on American-Islamic Relations may now congratulate themselves on administering a lesson in bogus sensitivity to non-Muslim media and governments. But those who defend the censorship on the basis of a false knowledge of Islam should be asked: Is the faith of more than a billion people really so weak that it is threatened by a few cartoons?

*Stephen Schwartz is the author of *The Two Faces of Islam*.*

Oh, the Anguish! The Cartoon Jihad is Phony

Weekly Standard

By William Kristol

2/20

"U.N., E.U. and Muslims link in call to curb protests," read the Financial Times headline last week. A "U.N.-brokered statement," the paper reported, was issued "in an effort to curb days of protests, some violent some peaceful, at the publication and republication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. 'The anguish in the Muslim world at the publication of the offensive caricatures is shared by all individuals and communities who recognise the sensitivity of deeply held religious belief,'" the statement said.

Oh, the anguish! And why not? You remember--don't you?--the wave of bloody pogroms against Muslims living in Denmark following the Jyllands-Posten's publication, on September 30, 2005, of 12 cartoons depicting (in most cases) the prophet Muhammad. (The newspaper was testing freedom of speech in Denmark, and challenging "the self-censorship which rules large parts of the Western world.")

Then, on October 17, some of these Danish cartoons were reprinted on the front page of a major Egyptian paper, Al Fagr. And you surely must remember the anguish that provoked. Tens of millions of Egyptians were so tormented they could barely refrain from attacking Israel, slaughtering all foreign businessmen, and destroying the pagan Sphinx. So anguished was President Mubarak that he announced he would return his \$2 billion in "infidel U.S. foreign aid." For his part, the chief Islamist televangelist on Al Jazeera, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, was so anguished he repudiated the financing his branch of the Muslim Brotherhood receives from the "hatemongering European Union." Meanwhile in Iran, the nuclear program ground to a halt, as anguished engineers found they could no longer in good conscience consult technical manuals produced by Zionist and Crusader scientists.

None of these anguished reactions actually occurred, of course--no pogroms, no renunciation of U.S. and E.U. aid, no hiccup in the Iranian nuclear program. Because there was no real "anguish." In truth, by December nothing much had happened because of the cartoons.

So a group of Danish imams took off for the Middle East to try to cause trouble. To do this, they added three cartoons to their roadshow that they seem to have ginned up--crude propaganda pieces that would be guaranteed to stir a mob, just in case the original illustrations didn't produce the effect they were after.

The militants' trip was a success. Various extremist groups and terror-connected Islamists decided to use the cartoons as yet another weapon in the radical Islamist attempt to intimidate the West, and various Arab dictatorships saw a political opportunity in starting some anti-European riots.

And you can understand their calculation. Since 9/11, the West has gone on offense against radical Islamists and Middle Eastern dictatorships. That assault has apparently been more threatening to them than many of us realized. From Iraq to Palestine to Iran, from Islamist enemies of liberty to dictatorial opponents of democracy, those who are threatened by our effort to help liberalize and civilize the Middle East are fighting back with whatever weapons are at hand, and with whatever invented excuses and propaganda ploys they can discover.

As Olivier Guitta reports elsewhere in these pages, "The actions of Islamist agitators and financiers have deliberately drummed up rage among far-flung extremists otherwise entirely ignorant of the Danish press. The usual suspects--the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran--have profited from the spread of the disorders."

This is a moment of truth in the global struggle against Islamic extremism. Will Hamas succeed in creating a terror state on the West Bank? Will a terror-sponsoring Iranian regime succeed in its quest for nuclear weapons? Will Danish imams succeed in intimidating Europe--or the free world as a whole?

With respect to Hamas, Iran, and the cartoons, the response of Western leaders hasn't been particularly encouraging--with the notable exception of Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark. Robert Frost said of liberals that they're incapable of taking their own side in a fight. We will see how deeply a degenerate form of liberalism has penetrated our souls. Will we anguish? Or will we fight?

The Cartoon Jihad: The Muslim Brotherhood's Project for Dominating the West

Weekly Standard

By Olivier Guitta

2/20

It is now abundantly clear that the recent murderous protests over cartoons of the prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper last September were anything but spontaneous. The actions of Islamist agitators and financiers have deliberately drummed up rage among far-flung extremists otherwise ignorant of the Danish press. The usual suspects--the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran--have profited from the spread of the disorders, and even the likes of tiny Kuwait has reportedly offered funds to spur demonstrations throughout France. More important, however, and perhaps less widely understood, the cartoon jihad is tailor-made to advance the Muslim Brotherhood's long-term worldwide strategy for establishing Islamic supremacy in the West.

As first reported by the Italian terrorism expert Lorenzo Vidino on the Counterterrorism Blog, one of Denmark's leading Islamists, Imam Ahmed Abu-Laban, led a delegation late last year to visit influential figures in the Muslim world. He took with him a dossier of cartoons, both those that had been published and others, much more offensive, of dubious provenance. One place he took his road show was Qatar, where he briefed Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent leader of the Muslim Brotherhood and a star of Al Jazeera.

Even after the riots began, Abu-Laban continued his meddling. On February 4, he told Islamonline.net that Danish demonstrators were going to burn Korans in the streets of Copenhagen, a falsehood that nevertheless added fuel to the fire.

Abu-Laban's extremist connections are well established. A Palestinian who is close to the Muslim Brotherhood, he was expelled from the United Arab Emirates in 1984 for his fiery sermons and denunciations of local leaders. According to Vidino, he served as translator and assistant to Talaal Fouad Qassimy, top leader of the Egyptian terrorist group Gamaa Islamiya, in the mid-1990s. During the Iraq war, he called the Danish prime minister "an American puppet." In August, he told the Washington Post that the Danes "have made immigrants pay the price. Muslims have become the scapegoat. They think we will undermine their culture and their values."

Abu-Laban's labors were not in vain, and everywhere the loudest protests have come from the Muslim Brotherhood. On February 3 in Paris, Larbi Kechat, an imam linked to the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, said, "The most abject terrorism is the symbolic kind, which spreads unlimited violence." Meanwhile, in Qatar, al-Qaradawi was calling for an "international day of anger for God and his prophet," describing the cartoonists as "blasphemers" and Europeans as "cowards." Acknowledging the latter's role, the pan-Arab daily Asharq Al-Awsat, in London, stated on February 8, "The issue disappeared from the radar until Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the mufti of Al Jazeera TV, seized upon it and called for Muslims worldwide to protest."

Finally, according to the Moroccan daily Le Matin, the U.S. branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Muslim American Society (MAS), called on Muslims everywhere to use their economic power to punish European countries where the cartoons were published. After French and German newspapers reprinted the controversial cartoons, MAS executive director Mahdi Bray commented, "Denmark has already paid an economic price for disrespecting Islam. If France and Germany want to be next, then so be it."

That the Muslim Brotherhood would seek to inflame this controversy makes perfect sense, given the organization's Islamist philosophy and past links to al Qaeda. What may not be sufficiently appreciated, however, is the extent of the Brotherhood's deliberate planning for an Islamist takeover of the West--and how neatly the cartoon jihad conforms to its strategy.

A new book published by Le Seuil in Paris in October may further Western understanding of this reality. Written by the Swiss investigative reporter Sylvain Besson and not yet available in English, it publicizes the discovery and contents of a Muslim Brotherhood strategy document entitled "The Project," hitherto little known outside the highest counterterrorism circles.

Besson's book, *La conquête de l'Occident: Le projet secret des Islamistes* (The Conquest of the West: The Islamists' Secret Project), recounts how, in November 2001, Swiss authorities acting on a special request from the White House entered the villa of a man named Yusuf Nada in Campione, a small Italian enclave on the eastern shore of Lake Lugano in Switzerland. Nada was the treasurer of the Al Taqwa bank, which allegedly funneled money to al Qaeda. In the course of their search of Nada's house, investigators stumbled onto "The Project," an unsigned, 14-page document dated December 1, 1982.

One of the few Western officials to have studied the document before the publication of Besson's book is Juan Zarate, named White House counterterrorism czar in May 2005 and before that assistant secretary of the treasury for terrorist financing. Zarate calls "The Project" the Muslim Brotherhood's master plan for "spreading their political ideology," which in practice involves systematic support for radical Islam. Zarate told Besson, "The Muslim Brotherhood is a group that worries us not because it deals with philosophical or ideological ideas but because it defends the use of violence against civilians."

"The Project" is a roadmap for achieving the installation of Islamic regimes in the West via propaganda, preaching, and, if necessary, war. It's the same idea expressed by Sheikh Qaradawi in 1995 when he said, "We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not by the sword but by our Dawa [proselytizing]."

Thus, "The Project" calls for "putting in place a watchdog system for monitoring the [Western] media to warn all Muslims of the dangers and international plots fomented against them." Another long-term effort is to "put in place [among Muslims in the West] a parallel society where the group is above the individual, godly authority above human liberty, and the holy scripture above the laws."

A European secret service agent interviewed by Besson explains that "the project is going to be a real danger in ten years: We'll see the emergence of a parallel system, the creation of 'Muslim Parliaments.' Then the slow destruction of our institutions will begin."

One point emphasized in "The Project" is that Muslims must constantly work to support Islamic Dawa and all the groups around the globe engaged in jihad. Also vital is to "keep the Ummah [the Muslim community] in a jihad frame of mind" and--no surprise here--"to breed a feeling of resentment towards the Jews and refuse any form of coexistence with them." (On February 2, *At-Tajdid*, a Moroccan Islamist daily close to the Brotherhood, explained to its readers that the Danish cartoons were "a Zionist provocation aimed at reviving the conflict between the West and the Muslim nation.")

By inflaming a controversy such as the current one, the Muslim Brotherhood attempts to widen the rift between the West and Islam. It specifically targets Muslim communities living in the West, aiming to radicalize their moderate elements by continually pointing out the supposed "Islamophobia" all around them. Right on cue, the Saudi daily *Al Watan* reports that the Council of Islamic Countries decided in December to create a worldwide Islamophobia watchdog organization that will lobby for the adoption of "anti-Islamophobia" laws, as well as promoting a common position against states or organizations it sees as attacking Islam.

Under the scheme outlined in "The Project," the Muslim Brotherhood would seek to become the

indispensable interlocutor of Western governments on issues relating not only to Islam but also to international issues touching the Islamic world, notably the Israeli-Arab conflict, the war in Iraq, and even the war on terror.

The same approach turns up in Qaradawi's 1990 book *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*. Qaradawi sees the presence of large Muslim populations in the West as a major opportunity. For him, "the Islamic presence" in the West is necessary "to defend the interests of the Muslim Nation and the land of Islam against the hostility and disinformation of anti-Islamic movements." He actually calls on Western Muslim communities to reform their host countries.

The cartoon jihad has been a godsend for Islamists throughout the world. For the past year, Muslim lobbies in Europe have been pushing for the adoption of blasphemy laws by the United Nations, the European Union, and the nations of Europe. Predictably, Qaradawi endorsed this cause in his sermon of February 3 (translated and posted on the web by the Middle East Media Research Institute): "The governments must be pressured to demand that the U.N. adopt a clear resolution or law that categorically prohibits affronts to prophets." Like the cartoon jihad, it is a ploy straight out of the Muslim Brotherhood playbook--and, most worryingly, a move likely to have strong appeal to Muslim moderates.

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Religious Experience

New Republic

By Peter Beinart

2/20

The riots currently engulfing the Islamic world, prompted by a Danish newspaper's decision to caricature the Prophet Mohammed, require two responses. The first is easy: horror. In the physical assault on Denmark's embassies and citizens, and in the diplomatic assault on Denmark's government--all because a free government won't muzzle a free press-- multiculturalism has become totalitarianism. Religious sensitivity, say the zealots marching from Beirut to Jakarta, matters more than liberty. Indeed, it matters more than life itself. To which the only answer, from democrats of all religions and of none, must be: In this matter, we are all Danes.

So responding to the thuggishness is easy. Responding to the cartoons themselves is harder. It is hard to condemn them when the barbaric response in parts of the Islamic world so vastly dwarfs the initial offense. And yet, the cartoons should be condemned nonetheless. Of course, the Danish newspaper had the right to publish them. But, in doing so, it revealed a particularly European prejudice, one that the United States must take care not to repeat.

The prejudice is not simply against Islam. Rather, it stems from Europe's-- or at least Western Europe's-- inability to take religion seriously at all. As my colleague Spencer Ackerman has written ("*Religious Protection*," December 12, 2005), one reason Muslims find it harder to integrate in Western Europe than in the United States is that, in Western Europe, integration is often presumed to mean secularization. In defending his decision to print the cartoons, the culture editor of the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* declared, "This is about the question of integration and how compatible is the religion of Islam with a modern secular society." In defending its decision to reprint them, the French paper *France Soir* wrote, "No religious dogma can impose its view on a democratic and secular society."

But most Americans--like most Muslims--do not think "modern" and "democratic" equal secular. In France, educational integration means public schools can expel Muslim girls for wearing headscarves. In Denmark, economic integration means employers can fire Muslim women for doing the same. Neither is conceivable in the United States, where the right to be openly religious is considered precious. And, if an American

leader criticized "these people for whom religion is their entire life," as the Danish queen recently did, she would be out of a job fast.

So it's not surprising that U.S. newspapers have been less willing to publish the cartoons than their European counterparts. And it's not surprising that the Bush administration quickly called the cartoons offensive, even as it defended the right to free speech. As Ackerman wrote, a key U.S. advantage in the war on terrorism is America's capacity to be both religious and ecumenical. And few public figures encapsulate that better than George W. Bush, a man who has helped turn the Republican Party into a multi-denominational coalition of the devout.

The intriguing question going forward is whether Bush's brand of conservative ecumenism--at least as it regards Muslims--will endure. Ever since September 11, many conservatives have derided his insistence that "Islam is peace" as naive at best. "I have taken issue with our esteemed president in regard to his stand in saying Islam is a peaceful religion. It's just not," declared Pat Robertson several months after the attacks. "To a greater extent than we have permitted ourselves to say," added William Bennett, "this war has to do with religion."

And, since the cartoon wars broke out, some conservatives have suggested that, since Islam is not a peaceful religion like Judaism or Christianity, there's nothing wrong with depicting Mohammed as a terrorist. As one article in National Review put it, the violent protests in the Islamic world proved that the "cartoons depicting Muhammed as a dangerous man of arms ... had a good point." On Fox News, Fred Barnes declared that many "Muslims all over the world are certainly enemies of Western civilization." Fox and conservative bloggers have been more willing to show the cartoons than their liberal counterparts.

Indeed, despite Bush's universalism, clash-of-civilizations thinking is deeply ingrained on the American right. In the first decades of the cold war, conservatives frequently described the fight against communism as a struggle not merely for freedom, but for Western civilization. That's why so many conservatives opposed the rapid decolonization of the Third World. They saw it not as a triumph for democracy--which they considered unlikely to take root in non-Western soil--but as evidence of civilizational retreat, an alarming sign of what longtime National Review editor James Burnham called "the suicide of the West."

This darker conservatism--with its suspicion of the capacity of abstract ideals to transcend cultural barriers--remained strong through Ronald Reagan's election. "Decades, if not centuries, are normally required for people to acquire the necessary disciplines and habits" of democracy, wrote Jeane Kirkpatrick in "dictatorships and double standards"--the essay that led Reagan to name her ambassador to the United Nations. It was only several years into the 1980s--as pro-American democracies took shape in East Asia and Latin America--that Reagan and large numbers of conservatives embraced the culturally (and religiously) universalist rhetoric that Bush has made his own.

Now, in the wake of the cartoon saga, the election of Hamas and the ongoing trauma in Iraq, that universalism is being challenged, and the older, more pessimistic conservatism is resurfacing. And that's a very bad thing. No matter what you think of the religious right's domestic agenda, the United States is much better off with a religious right than with a Christian right or a Judeo-Christian right. When conservative American Christians lose their ability to identify with conservative Muslims--to imagine their faith as in some basic way the same and deserving of the same basic respect--the United States will find itself less able to speak to the Muslim world, and less able to listen to it. It will find itself, in other words, in the place Europe is now. And that's a place no American should want to be.

Needed: Mature, Moderate Muslims

National Review
By Deroy Murdock

“Grow up.”

This should be the civilized world’s two-word response to the staggering overreaction to those cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed, first published in the Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten. Its editors’ attempt to fuel debate ignited an inferno of Islamic rage that has consumed nearly four-dozen human beings, and counting. As Western embassies, fast-food shops, and even a statue of Ronald McDonald have gone up in Shiite and Sunni-stoked flames, what also has receded into the smoke is any sense of maturity among the rampaging, Hitler-praising Muslim mobs that have dragged this global outrage into its third week.

These fanatics are violent and deadly. But they also are infantile. Their unrestrained orgy of mayhem looks like a Romper Room full of homicidal babies screaming for fresh diapers at the tops of their tiny lungs.

These brats are acting out with no sense of direction, focus, or purpose. They have attacked American, Austrian, European Union, Italian, and Norwegian diplomatic posts. They also torched Danish missions in Beirut and Damascus, even though Jyllands-Posten is published privately, not by the Danish government. The paper apologized January 30 for the illustrations--five days before violence erupted. These monsters are utterly unburdened by the fact that, as Bishop Karsten Nissen of Denmark’s Evangelical Lutheran Church explained, the Danish prime minister “did not draw these cartoons. Our prime minister is not the editor of this newspaper. He cannot apologize for something he did not do.”

Living Up to Violent Stereotypes Jyllands-Posten first published these images last September 30 beside an article on the Danish media’s self-censorship on Islamic issues. By December 18, the paper reported, it was “dealing with an avalanche of death threats against its staff.” Things obviously have gone far beyond mere threats.

So far, 45 people have lost their lives, either due to police crackdowns on destructiveness in the name of Islam or directly through mob murder. Muslim hordes burned down 15 Christian churches Saturday in Maiduguri, Nigeria. They also trashed and looted stores owned by Christians. Death toll: 16.

“Most of the dead were Christians beaten to death on the streets by the rioters,” Chima Ezeoke, a local Christian, told the Associated Press. Witnesses reported that the dead included a priest and three children.

This global march of the crybabies cost eleven people their lives in Libya Friday. An eight-year-old Pakistani boy died Wednesday after he was shot in the face during protests. Three demonstrators were killed February 7 when they used rifles and grenades to attack a NATO military base in Afghanistan.

Again, this and even more blood has been shed over newspaper cartoons. Militant Muslim tots set Italy’s consulate in Benghazi, Libya alight because Italian Reforms Minister Roberto Calderoli wore a t-shirt on TV decorated with one of those Danish cartoons. A t-shirt!

This all sounds like a giant anti-Islamic tall tale concocted and disseminated by some secret cabal determined to undermine the pristine reputation of the Religion of Peace. But no. As if with titanium rods in concrete, these little horrors have reinforced every stereotype of Islamic hot-headedness. They have confirmed lingering suspicions that a disturbingly large proportion of Muslims just cannot express themselves with words rather than things that burn or go “boom.”

Even worse, prominent Muslims demand even more violence.

Pakistani imam Mohammed Yousaf Qureshi issued a fatwa Friday calling for the killing of the 12 cartoonists who drew these caricatures. Whoever murders these cartoonists will receive \$25,000 from Qureshi’s mosque, \$1 million reportedly pledged by a local jeweler’s association, and, as if this were The Price Is Right, a new car!

It would be far easier to respect Muslims' gossamer sensibilities if these feelings were mutual.

Yes, it's true. The whole world is watching the lethal behavior of a minority of the Muslim population. Thankfully, the streets are not filled with Earth's 1 billion Muslims yelling for "Infidel" blood. In fact, Iraq's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, has complained that "misguided and oppressive" Muslims have "projected a distorted and dark image of the faith of justice, love, and brotherhood." Moderate Muslims have been far too quiet through this whole grim affair. They need to speak up loudly, clearly, and immediately if they want to see their faith retain even a whiff of its badly charred credibility.

Meanwhile, in the February 8 Wall Street Journal, Iranian-born author Amir Taheri exposed the lie at the center of this entire debacle: "There is no Koranic injunction against images, whether of Muhammad or anyone else." As Taheri explains, when Islam came into contact with literally iconoclastic Christians ages ago, some Muslim scholars denounced the creation of images of the Islamic prophet. But Taheri sees these declarations as debatable human pronouncements, not the Word of the Divine.

Taheri further identifies eight well-known paintings, portraits, and miniatures of Muhammad created by Islamic artists. He says there are many more such examples, including medallions carried by Ottoman soldiers with the Prophet's head stamped on them. Such works, Taheri says, are displayed in museums in Islamic nations, such as Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, Turkey, and others in Bukhara, Uzbekistan and near Isfahan, Iran. Topkapi houses some of the 841 illustrations created for a 1595 edition of a book called *Siyer-i Nebi*, similar to this miniature that depicts the Prophet Mohammed after the Battle of Badr. (Also see Paul Marshall.)

Why, one wonders, are Iranian, Turkish, and Uzbek embassies still untouched?

One cannot take seriously even a syllable from the mouths of these juveniles after weighing their cartoon-propelled rage against the West's relaxed response to Muslim debasement of Judeo-Christian religious symbols and sites.

* Consider this blatantly anti-Semitic cartoon of a hook-nosed Jew riding Uncle Sam like a jockey on a stallion. Though published in Saudi Arabia in May 2002, it has yet to inspire Jews to organize into packs to demolish Saudi businesses.

* Al Qaeda used an exploding fuel truck to demolish a synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia, on April 11, 2002. That bombing killed 19 people, namely a French citizen, four Tunisians, and 14 German tourists. Worldwide, Jews kept their cool.

* In October 2000, Palestinian mobs capitalized on the withdrawal of Israeli soldiers who had guarded Joseph's Tomb, a Jewish holy site, in Samaria. Two hours after the Israelis departed, hoodlums burned Jewish books, set furniture ablaze, and then demolished the tomb and an adjacent yeshiva, brick by brick. Security forces with the Palestinian Authority, who had agreed to protect the site, did no such thing.

Jewish riots have yet to erupt.

* On April 2, 2002, 39 gunmen with the late Yasser Arafat's Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade launched a 39-day siege at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, the spot where Christians believe Jesus Christ was born. The Muslim terrorists held hostage 30 priests, nuns, and monks, as well as 150 Palestinian civilians. After they were released, most of the terrorists returned to the Gaza Strip, where they were received as heroes. On May 15 it was reported that the shrine was scarred with bullet holes, splattered with cooked rice, and strewn with empty wine and liquor bottles, cigarette butts, and other rubbish. Catholic priests at the church said the Islamic thugs stole sacramental objects and used pages ripped from the Holy Bible as toilet paper.

Christian violence over this defilement of the reputed birthplace of Jesus never occurred.

* Saudi Arabia, home of the Grand Mosque, is the Mecca of Islam. Its respect for other faiths stops there. It is illegal to observe non-Islamic religions in that absolute monarchy.

“The Saudi government desecrates and burns Bibles that its security forces confiscate at immigration points into the kingdom or during raids on Christian expatriates worshipping privately,” Ali al-Ahmed, director of the Saudi Institute in Washington, wrote in the May 20, 2005, Wall Street Journal. “Saudi Arabia bans the importation or the display of crosses, Stars of David or any other religious symbols not approved by the Wahhabi establishment.” Saudi anti-Christian bigotry can be fatal, al-Ahmed reports: “The Bible in Saudi Arabia may get a person killed, arrested, or deported. In September 1993, Sadeq Mallallah, 23, was beheaded in Qateef on a charge of apostasy for owning a Bible.”

Nonexistent Christian mobs, thus far, have left Saudi facilities untouched.

* For their part, Buddhists did not detonate falafel stands after the Taliban used mortar shells to pulverize the world’s two tallest statues of Buddha, located in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, in March 2001, about the time Osama bin Laden and his henchmen orchestrated their surprise attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. What a pity, by the way, that al Qaeda could not simply have mocked those American icons with pen, paper, and some zany captions.

These ongoing Islamo-fascist spasms indicate that the long twilight struggle against this enemy will be arduous and incredibly challenging. It would be nice if civilization simply could put these Islamo-infants back in their cribs so they could cry themselves to sleep. Alas, it will take much more than that--as Paris’s Le Figaro explained February 8 (in my friend Vance DeWitt’s translation)--for those “who want to modernize Islam to override those whose goal is to Islamize modernity.”

Beyond what American diplomats, soldiers, and spies are doing to win this war, the rest of us can help by standing with Denmark in its time of need. In hindsight, it might not look like such a great idea to have drawn the rather tame cartoons of Mohammed, such as the one below (and not the incendiary images of the prophet practicing bestiality that Danish imams included among Jyllands-Posten’s cartoons when they visited their Egyptian, Palestinian, and Syrian counterparts).

Action Items However, in a free society, cartoonists should be free to draw what they want, even if some take offense. The duty of the offended is to behave like adults: Stop reading the offending publication, write its editor, boycott its advertisers, or peacefully picket its headquarters. Whatever second thoughts there may be about those cartoons, Denmark, its citizens, and its diplomats do not deserve the Islamo-slam they are enduring.

So, what can you do about this international outrage?

* For starters, an online petition now features more than 35,000 signatures in solidarity with Jyllands-Posten’s journalists. You can sign it [here](#).

Unfortunately, Denmark’s Washington embassy says there is no equivalent of the USO to assist Danish soldiers or veterans. So purchasing Danish products seems the most concrete way for free, civilized people to say “No!” to the Islamo-infants and stand with the citizens of Denmark, a NATO country with 522 troops serving in Iraq.

* Buy Legos. Who knew those little plastic building blocks from Kindergarten were Danish? Share the joys of Legos with a kid today. You can buy them [online here](#).

* Buy Danish food. Denmark produces excellent hams, cheeses, cookies, and other delicacies. Many are for sale [online here](#).

* Buy Carlsberg Beer. This fine, light lager has cooled, refreshed, and relaxed beer lovers since 1847. I have enjoyed it through many memorable, and a few forgotten, moments over the years. Ask for it at your local tavern or retailer. Learn more about it here.

* Canadian journalists at the free-market Western Standard have their hands full after republishing those Danish cartoons. While Canadian Muslims are free to be offended by the Calgary-based magazine's editorial decision, their demands for retaliation by Canada's Human Rights Commission go too far. Muslims have no more right to dictate journalistic content than journalists have the right to draft new chapters of the Koran and compel Muslims to chant them.

Free-minded people can support the free-market Western Standard in its fight for free speech by subscribing to it here.

“We have received a number of new orders from Muslim and Arab Canadians who said they were subscribing to support our freedom of the press,” says Western Standard publisher Ezra Levant. “They all say the same thing: ‘We did not come to Canada to have Sharia law follow us across the seas.’”

In a turn of events beyond fiction, 45 people are dead over some newspaper cartoons. If this is no clash of civilizations, nothing is. Whether the world's grown-ups teach these pillaging pre-schoolers some manners will determine whether coming decades resemble Father Knows Best or The Lord of the Flies.

IRAQ

Blueprint for the Iraqi Insurgency: Where are the Documents from Saddam's FM?

Weekly Standard

By Stephen F. Hayes

2/20

In late April 2003, some two weeks after the world watched jubilant Iraqis and U.S. Marines topple the tall statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad's Firdos Square, a small group of American officials began the thankless and dangerous task of recreating the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The team, led by Ambassador David Dunford, had been eager to get into the ministry sooner. They were told, however, that there were not yet enough U.S. troops in the Iraqi capital to secure that neighborhood. So they waited.

When the Americans saw a BBC reporter broadcasting live from inside the ministry, or MoFA as it became known, they pushed to get a military escort so that they might begin their job. It worked.

This small team soon got bigger--adding a military civil affairs officer, Iraqi-Americans under contract with the Pentagon, a British foreign service officer, a Romanian diplomat, and several Iraqis who had worked for the MoFA under Saddam Hussein.

In interviews, several of them described the ministry when they arrived. The building had been looted, stripped of many fixtures and even some of its electrical wiring. Iraqis described as "militias" were living in makeshift barracks on the ground floor.

The looting was haphazard and opportunistic, but the destruction of documents and torching of offices appeared to be well-planned. Still, some important items survived. Among the papers the MoFA team discovered was a map of the ministry with names of ministry officials and the suites they occupied. Offices of several senior officials had been severely damaged by fire; in others the team found piles of papers sitting untouched in the middle of the rooms, apparently awaiting destruction.

Last summer, almost by accident, I spoke to an Iraqi who had been in the ministry in those early days. I had

sought him out to discuss another subject when he rather casually mentioned two documents the Americans had recovered. One was a memo from the director of Iraqi Intelligence, the Mukhabarat, from February 2003, with instructions to senior regime and intelligence officials in anticipation of a U.S. invasion. The other was a long list of jihadists who had been brought to Iraq before the war. I called around to check on his claims and received only vague confirmations of the documents' existence. No one else I spoke with had seen the documents or could provide more specific information, so I didn't report on them.

Then I saw Paul Bremer, former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, interviewed about his new book *My Year in Iraq* on the January 15 Meet the Press. Host Tim Russert asked Bremer about a document he describes in the book.

Said Russert: "You went back to Iraq, and they found a memo which they presented to you about the insurgency and again, it's in your book and this is a very important document. It's quite interesting." Russert read Bremer's words: "The document . . . listed orders for point-by-point strategy to be implemented after the probable collapse of the regime beginning with the order of 'Burn this office.' I read the translation. It did indeed call for a strategy of organized resistance which included the classic pattern of forming cells and training combatants in insurgency. 'Operatives' were to engage in 'sabotage and looting.' Random sniper attacks, ambushes to be organized. The order continued, 'scatter agents to every town. Destroy electric power stations and water conduits. Infiltrate the mosques, the Shiite holy places.'"

The contents of the document were virtually identical to the one described to me by the Iraqi, but Bremer told me he didn't know where the Mukhabarat document was found. At the suggestion of an Iraqi source, I called Ambassador Dunford and asked him about the Mukhabarat document Bremer describes in his book.

Said Dunford: "We pulled stuff out of there very early on. We gave it to something they were calling the fusion cell in the palace [CPA headquarters], but those guys just couldn't handle it. We never got a good sense of what was in all of the documents other than what we translated on the spot."

Dunford said he thought he had heard of a document like the Mukhabarat document but didn't remember any of the details. Then, without prompting, he added this: "I do remember one document that we found that was a list of jihadists, for want of a better word, coming into Iraq from Saudi Arabia before the war. That suggested to me that Saddam was planning the insurgency before the war."

The Iraqi who had described the jihadist document to me indicated that "hundreds and hundreds" of these fighters had come from several countries in the region including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Sudan and Syria. So I asked Dunford about this. "It may have been that folks in Saudi Arabia--not the Saudi government--were organizing these jihadists from elsewhere and sending them into Iraq."

Dunford is hardly a Bush administration apologist. In an August 25, 2004, interview published by the U.S. Institute of Peace, he criticizes many aspects of the U.S. presence in Iraq and piles scorn on the "ideological" aspects of the reconstruction. And in a speech before the war, Dunford was highly critical of Bush administration policy in the Middle East.

Documents such as the one allegedly listing jihadists in Iraq raise more questions than they answer. Who are these jihadists? Where did they receive their training? What was their relationship to the Iraqi regime before the war? Which "folks in Saudi Arabia" made arrangements for their travel to Iraq? How many of them have been captured or killed in Iraq? Are we even keeping track? What have they told interrogators about the insurgency? And about the early cooperation between foreign fighters and the broader Baathist networks?

Interesting questions. But let's back up: Does the U.S. intelligence community even know it has this document? If so, do the counter-insurgency teams in Iraq have this information? We know that less than 3 percent of the overall document take from Afghanistan and Iraq has been exploited. Is this document part of that small fraction of exploited data, or part of the much larger mass of information that sits unexamined on U.S. government hard drives and in warehouses in Doha, Qatar?

Senior U.S. intelligence officials tell The Weekly Standard that they are working from lists like the one found in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. What remains unclear is what happened to the other materials collected at that ministry. Among them, according to officials who were in the MoFA in April 2003, were 16 or 17 floppy disks from the personal computer of Naji Sabri al-Hadithi's office manager. Sabri was Iraq's minister of foreign affairs from August 2001 through March 2003. As his important position might suggest, he was close to Saddam Hussein. A cursory field-examination of the disks suggests they might be quite valuable to those interested in understanding the activities of the Iraqi regime in the months and years leading up to the U.S. invasion. They included Sabri's personal correspondence with other senior Iraqi regime officials, his talking points for meetings with U.N. inspectors, and other documents described simply as "position papers."

In those early days of the new Iraq, according to an American official working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a "very reliable source" provided U.S. intelligence officials with several compact discs. The CDs contained correspondence between senior Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials and Iraqi embassies throughout the world from January 1, 2003, through the eve of war in mid-March 2003. This material is potentially even more significant than it sounds, when one considers that Iraq, like many other countries, used its embassies to run its foreign intelligence operations. Have these documents been exploited? What do they tell us?

One day after the floppy disks from Naji Sabri's office manager were passed to a representative of "another U.S. government agency"--presumably the CIA--the recipient reported back that the find was "a treasure trove." That was the last that any of these officials have heard about the recovered documents.

It may be that documents like the list of jihadists should not be released to the American public. It's harder to make that case about the documents found in Naji Sabri's office. And what about the nearly 2 million captured Iraqi documents that have not yet been exploited? Representative Pete Hoekstra, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, has continued to press the case for freeing the documents with both the Defense Intelligence Agency and the director of national intelligence, John Negroponte. In November, Hoekstra requested 40 Iraqi documents from the U.S. intelligence community. Three weeks ago, Hoekstra received 39 of those documents--some 3,000 pages of information--in two large cardboard boxes. His staff is reviewing the documents and Hoekstra is pushing both the DIA and DNI to allow him to release them to the public.

A spokesman for Negroponte says the documents provided to Hoekstra are "FOUO," for official use only, and are "still being reviewed for any sensitive intelligence-related information that might result in reclassification. They are, therefore, not for public release." For now, anyway.

Hoekstra says that he hopes these documents--again, just a fraction of the nearly 2 million Saddam-era documents in the possession of the U.S. government--will be released within two weeks. Nearly three years after the U.S. invasion, and with the nature of the deposed Iraqi regime still the subject of a highly politicized debate, it will be none too soon.

Will Someone Please Lend This Guy a Hand?

Time

By Joe Klein

2/20

The celebration of Ashura, the Shi'ite day of mourning, was one of the first passionate displays of Iraqi freedom after U.S.-led troops toppled Saddam Hussein's regime in the spring of 2003. Saddam had banned the holiday, which commemorates the battlefield death of Muhammad's grandson Hussein in A.D. 680. But tens of thousands of pilgrims suddenly appeared in the streets of Karbala after the coalition troops swept

through, scourging themselves bloody in the traditional attempt to replicate the pain of Hussein's death. In 2004 and 2005, a different sort of pain was imposed, by terrorists--probably the followers of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia leader Abu Mousab al-Zarqawi--who launched vicious bombing attacks in Karbala, killing 170 pilgrims in 2004 and 60 in 2005. Ashura was celebrated again last week, and there was blood, as always, but no bombs.

That small triumph passed largely unnoticed, given the cartoon conflagrations throughout the Islamic world. And it's possible that a peaceful Ashura was just a fluke; there was plenty of violence elsewhere in Iraq last week. Insurgent attacks--about 70 a day--are significantly higher than they were last year. But there are curious patterns to the violence, which may have something to do with the absence of carnage in Karbala. Last summer al-Zarqawi apparently received a letter--later released by the U.S. government--from the al-Qaeda leadership ordering him to stop bombing Islamic innocents. Recently al-Zarqawi's terrorists seem to have found a new preoccupation: assassinating Sunni leaders who are planning to participate in the new Iraqi government. They killed prominent Sunnis in Kirkuk and Fallujah last week. Those may be signs of desperation, signs that al-Zarqawi fears that an all-inclusive deal is possible, bringing Sunnis more prominently into the new Iraqi government and defanging the insurgency.

The man quietly brokering that deal is Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, and it is now crunch time. A new Iraqi government will be formed in the next month or so. There will be a simple measure of Khalilzad's success: How much power, beyond their one-fifth minority status, will the Sunnis be given? At the heart of the negotiations will be a bright-line test: Who will control the Interior Ministry, now in the hands of Shi'ite religious extremists with close ties to Iran, who have murdered and tortured thousands of Sunnis? Even the Shi'ite leadership--in the person of Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)--has acknowledged the excesses. "We call upon our faithful security forces," al-Hakim said last week, "to continue strongly confronting terrorists but with more consideration to human rights."

Keep an eye on SCIRI during the coming weeks. "[It's] a problem," says a senior diplomat from one of Iraq's neighboring countries. "They want as much power as they can get, which is understandable--but potentially disastrous ... We believe Khalilzad is the best person you have sent to Iraq. He speaks to all sides and doesn't have an ideological agenda. But there may come a time when Khalilzad will need support, when worldwide pressure on the Shi'ite will be necessary."

The Bush Administration has not been known for its ability to organize global coalitions--but an opportunity exists now to do what wasn't done before the invasion of Iraq, to bring "Old Europe" back on board to press for the right kind of deal in Iraq. Indeed, the cartoon controversy seems a sign that attitudes toward Islamic extremism are hardening in Europe. Publications in Italy, Germany, France and Norway expressed solidarity with Denmark by reprinting cartoons of the Prophet. Conservative and populist anti-immigrant political parties are on the rise throughout the Continent. "Anti-American feelings have really diminished," Senator John McCain told me last week after returning from meetings with European leaders. "The Europeans have their own problems now. And I think the situation in Iran has led them to understand the importance of a stable Iraq."

The threat of a resurgent Iran, with its nuclear ambitions and its crude new President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has concentrated the minds of both Western diplomats and Middle Eastern Sunni governments. Suddenly the prospect of a permanent Iraqi government dominated by Iran-friendly religious Shi'ites seems a more pressing problem. "If the negotiations in Iraq do not yield a government acceptable to Sunnis," the Middle Eastern diplomat told me, "we could be looking at a civil war that becomes a regional conflict."

Last fall when the negotiations over the new Iraqi constitution almost collapsed because of Shi'ite intransigence, the U.N. issued a vehement objection, and remarkably, the Shi'ites compromised. The stakes are higher now, and it will take more than U.N. pressure to win Shi'ite concessions. In the end, it may take a high-profile presidential or Condoleezza Rice-led diplomatic campaign--like Henry Kissinger's in the

Middle East or Richard Holbrooke's in Bosnia--to force a deal that could salvage George W. Bush's legacy in the desert.

Standoff in Iraq

National Review

By Victor Davis Hanson

2/24

The insurgency in Iraq has no military capability either to drive the United States military from Iraq or to stop the American training of Iraqi police and security forces--or, for that matter, to derail the formation of a new government. The United States air base at Balad is one of the busiest airports in the world. Camp Victory near Baghdad is impenetrable to serious attack. And even forward smaller bases at Kirkuk, Mosul, and Ramadi are entirely secure. Instead, the terrorists count on three alternate strategies:

First, through the use of improvised explosive devices (IED), assassinations, and suicide bombings, they hope to make the Iraqi hinterlands and suburbs appear so unstable and violent that the weary American public says "enough of these people" and calls home its troops before the country is stabilized. In such a quest, the terrorists have an invaluable ally in the global media, whose "if it bleeds, it leads" brand of journalism always favors the severed head in the street over the completion of yet another Iraqi school.

Second, the al Qaedaists think they can attack enough Shiites and government forces to prompt a civil war. And indeed, in the world that we see on television, there is no such thing as a secular Iraq, an Iraqi who defines himself as an Iraqi, or a child born to a Shiite and Sunni. No, the country, we are told, is simply three factions that will be torn apart by targeted violence. Sunnis blow up holy places; Shiites retaliate; and both sides can then blame the Americans.

Third, barring options one and two, the enemy wishes to pay off criminals and thugs to create enough daily mayhem, theft, and crime to stop contractors from restoring infrastructure and thus delude the Iraqi public into believing that the peace would return if only the Americans just left.

One of the great lapses in world journalism is investigating what happened to the 100,000 criminals let out by Saddam Hussein on the eve of the war. Thus the terrorists have succeeded in making all the daily mayhem of a major city appear to be political violence--even though much of the problem is the theft, rape, and murder committed by criminals who have had a holiday since Saddam freed them.

We are at a standoff of sorts, as we cannot yet stop the fear of the IED, and they cannot halt the progress of democracy. The Americans are unsure whether their own continued massive use of force--GPS bombings or artillery strikes--will be wise in such a sensitive war of hearts and minds, and must be careful to avoid increased casualties that will erode entirely an already attenuated base of public support for remaining in Iraq at all. The terrorists are more frustrated that, so far, they cannot inflict the sort of damage on the Americans that will send them home or stop the political process entirely.

During this sort of waiting game in Iraq, the American military silently is training tens of thousands of Iraqis to do the daily patrols, protect construction projects, and assure the public that security is on the way, while an elected government reminds the people that they are at last in charge.

The IED and suicide bomber answer back that it is a death sentence to join the government, to join the American-sponsored police and army, and to join the rebuilding efforts of Iraq.

Who will win? The Americans I talked to this week in Iraq--in Baghdad, Balad, Kirkuk, and Taji--believe that a government will emerge that is seen as legitimate and will appear as authentic to the people. Soon, ten divisions of Iraqi soldiers, and over 100,000 police, should be able to crush the insurgency, with the help of

a public tired of violence and assured that the future of Iraq is their own--not the Husseins', the Americans', or the terrorists'. The military has learned enough about the tactics of the enemy that it can lessen casualties, and nevertheless, through the use of Iraqi forces, secure more of the country with far less troops. Like it or not, the American presence in Iraq will not grow, and will probably lessen considerably in 2006, before reaching Korea-like levels and responsibilities in 2007.

The terrorists, whom I did not talk to, but whose bombs I heard, answer back that while they fear the Iraqization of their enemy and the progress of democracy, they can still kill enough Shiites, bomb enough mosques, and stop enough rebuilding to sink the country into sectarian war--or at least something like Lebanon of the 1980s or an Afghanistan under the Taliban.

It is an odd war, because the side that I think is losing garners all the press, whether by blowing up the great golden dome of the Askariya shrine in Samarra, or blowing up an American each day. Yet we hear nothing of the other side that is ever so slowly, shrewdly undermining the enemy.

The Iraqi military goes out now on about half the American patrols, as well as on thousands of their own. It is not the Fallujah brigade of early 2004--rather, it is developing into the best trained and disciplined armed force in the Middle East. While progress in reestablishing the infrastructure necessary for increased electricity and oil production seems dismal, in fact, much has been finished that awaits only the completion of pipelines and transmission lines--the components most vulnerable to sabotage. It is the American plan, in a certain sense, to gradually expand the security inside the so-called international or green zone, block by block, to the other 6 million Iraqis outside, where sewers run in the streets and power from the grid is available less than 12 hours per day.

The nature of the debate has also changed at home. Gone is "my perfect war, your screwed-up peace" or "no-blood for oil" or even "Bush lied, thousands died." And there is little finger-pointing any more that so-and-so disbanded the Iraqi army, or didn't have enough troops, or didn't supply enough body armor. Now it is simply a yes or no proposition: yes, we can pull it off with patience, or no, it is no longer worth the cost and the lives.

Most would agree that the Americans now know exactly what they are doing. They have a brilliant and savvy ambassador and a top diplomatic team. Their bases are expertly run and secured, where food, accommodations, and troop morale are excellent. Insufficient body armor and unarmored humvees are yesterday's hysteria. Our generals--Casey, Chiarelli, Dempsey--are astute and understand the fine line between using too much force and not employing enough, and that the war cannot be won by force alone. American colonels are the best this county has produced, and they are proving it in Iraq under the most trying of conditions. Iraqi soldiers are treated with respect and given as much autonomy as their training allows.

Again, the question now is an existential one: Can the United States--or anyone--in the middle of a war against Islamic fascism, rebuild the most important country in the heart of the Middle East, after 30 years of utter oppression, three wars, and an Orwellian, totalitarian dictator warping of the minds of the populace? And can anyone navigate between a Zarqawi, a Sadr, and the Sunni rejectionists, much less the legions of Iranian agents, Saudi millionaires, and Syrian provocateurs who each day live to destroy what's going on in Iraq?

The fate of a much wider war hinges on the answers to these questions, since it would be hard to imagine that bin Laden could continue be much of a force with a secure and democratic Iraq, anchoring ongoing liberalization in the Gulf, Lebanon, and Egypt, and threatening by example Iran and Syria. By the same token, it would be hard to see how we could stop jihadism from spreading when an army that is doing everything possible still could not stop Islamic fascism from taking over the ancestral home of the ancient caliphate.

Can-do Americans courageously go about their duty in Iraq--mostly unafraid that a culture of 2,000 years,

the reality of geography, the sheer forces of language and religion, the propaganda of the state-run Arab media, and the cynicism of the liberal West are all stacked against them. Iraq may not have started out as the pivotal front in the war between democracy and fascism, but it has surely evolved into that. After visiting the country, I think we can and will win, but just as importantly, unlike in 2003-4, there does not seem to be much of anything we should be doing there that in fact we are not.

--Victor Davis Hanson is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. He is the author, most recently, of *A War Like No Other. How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*.

Iraq As Vietnam

National Review

By Dexter Lehtinen

2/27

"I feel like we're winning the war over here and we're losing the war back home." These were the words of a Marine corporal at Camp Fallujah, Iraq, just a few weeks ago. They were not constructed political rhetoric, the product of a leading question or an outright fabrication, tailored to the politically charged debate back home. Rather, they were a reflection of a common state of mind among troops in the war zones. Whether an accurate assessment or not, it does bring to mind a similar dichotomy during the Vietnam War.

About an hour before we spoke with this corporal, the Marine general in charge of logistics for the region gave a quick briefing before we left for Fallujah. We were waiting for gunship escorts at Base TQ (Al Taqqadum), leaving our C-130 cargo plane for helicopters. On the table in his office was an issue of Foreign Affairs with the prominent headline "Iraq and Vietnam." In an earlier article from the same journal, John Lewis Gaddis, a Yale professor and respected critic of the Cold War, had written, "Historians now acknowledge that American counter-insurgency operations in Vietnam were succeeding during the final years of that conflict; the problem was that support for the war had long since crumbled at home." In one sense, Iraq could become similar to Vietnam.

At Camp Fallujah, troops routinely called for "perseverance and patience." They argued that "timetables can't control the political process; the political process must control the timetable," and they voiced the belief that "back home they don't understand; you don't understand unless you see it." "What we see on TV is not what we see on the ground," a Marine complained. "The news is just a commercial industry. The news system benefits the terrorists." The dichotomy these troops lamented sounded like an Afghan saying we heard later in the trip from a village elder in Jalalabad: "What you see and what you hear are never the same."

Neither in its military aspects, nor in the structure of the international political system which surrounds it, is the Iraq War like Vietnam. Because of a bipolar system of two superpowers, the North Vietnamese ended up with the military sponsorship of a powerful outside nation-state. Moreover, the communist North Vietnamese had a unified internal party discipline and a popular ideology of domestic reform and nationalism, both of which the fragmented enemies in Iraq lack. The insurgents are split between radical Islamists and minority Sunni restorationists. Most Iraqis want neither a return to Sunni domination nor a new Islamic radicalism. Both nationalism and domestic reform favor the new Iraqi government.

Nevertheless, the corporal's comment brings to mind the way in which the Iraq war (or any war, for that matter) can be made like the Vietnam War--not in the war zone itself, and not internationally, but in our domestic politics. If people in the United States come to believe, through misunderstanding or misinformation, spread inadvertently or deliberately, for political or partisan purposes, that the Iraq war is like the Vietnam War, then in domestic political terms the misunderstanding becomes the reality. This prophecy can be self-fulfilling.

In other words, even though the Iraq war in Iraq is nothing like the Vietnam War in Vietnam, the Iraq war in Washington is taking on some of the characteristics of the Vietnam War in Washington. There are many back home who want Iraq to become like Vietnam was back home, without regard to the reality of Iraq in the field. And they are trying hard to make it so.

The dominant precedent of the politics of the Vietnam War was the American choice to withdraw U.S. troops and then abandon our ally logistically and economically. This complete abandonment led to South Vietnam's defeat by an outside conventional military attack (a mobile armored force, not insurgents) more than two years later, while the U.S. watched. Just as this choice was entirely in Washington's hands during the Vietnam War, so too it is in Washington's hands now with respect to the Iraq war--regardless of the reality in Iraq. The abandonment of an ally, rather than the way the war itself was fought, signaled a political weakness in the home front, among Washington elites, the media, and parts of the public. Among our enemies, this perceived lack of willpower is the lasting impression of the Vietnam War even to this day. This lasting impression has significantly impaired American foreign policy.

Accordingly, the American homefront is once again the target of our enemies. Radical Islamists define the American homefront as the center of gravity of the war--that is, the point of greatest weakness, where an otherwise strong military power can be defeated. The North Vietnamese did the same: Their military failure in the Tet Offensive of 1968 convinced them that America could not be defeated in the field, but must be defeated politically at home. The American home front became the center of gravity in the North Vietnamese effort.

In Iraq, if Washington can be cajoled into withdrawing forces and aid prematurely, then outside forces with outside aid are free to concentrate larger military units in more effective conventional attacks. The great theorist of war Carl von Clausewitz emphasized the trinity of war--the military, the government, and the people--and the overriding role of willpower. The enemy may not have read Clausewitz (they have their own excellent theorists of the ultimate political nature of war), but they are certainly proving him right.

So the legacy of Vietnam in Washington, Vietnam "back home," hangs over a war with little similarity to Vietnam in the field. The Marine commander at Base TQ sees no similarity to Vietnam, yet on his entrance table sits a journal from back home comparing the two. Notwithstanding the actual situation, politicians and the media can turn Iraq (or any situation) into a "Vietnam" if they work at it long enough and hard enough. Then the fears and predictions of our troops in Iraq could come true--we could lose the war over here even while were winning it over there.

--Dexter Lehtinen was severely wounded as a reconnaissance platoon leader in Vietnam. He later graduated first in his class from Stanford Law School and served as a Florida state senator and United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida. He recently returned from a congressional trip to Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan (he is married to Florida congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen).

AL-QAEDA

The Tunnel Rats of Terror

Newsweek

By Michael Hirsh, Mark Hosenball and Rod Nordland

2/20

Hollywood loves to remake classic movies, and sooner or later it's sure to get around to "The Great Escape," the 1963 thriller based on a real tunnel breakout from a Nazi prison camp during World War II. But this time Al Qaeda's propaganda machine may get the jump on Tinseltown. Earlier this month, in an astonishing tale of life imitating art--albeit with good guys and bad reversing roles--a group of 23 suspected terrorists dug their way to freedom from a basement compound beneath the Political Security Office (PSO), Yemen's main

intelligence service, in the capital of Sana. Leading them out--in the starring role, as it were--was one Jamal al-Badawi, the mastermind of the October 2000 attack on the USS Cole that killed 17 sailors. Another escapee was an American Muslim, Jaber Elbaneh, who was once part of an alleged cell in Buffalo, N.Y. None has been seen since.

Not all the details of the latest great escape are yet clear. But it is highly unlikely it could have succeeded without help from members of the Yemeni government, which has been an ally in the war on terror. Last Friday a U.S. Embassy cable sent from Sana, described to NEWSWEEK by a U.S. official who did not want to be identified discussing classified material, noted "the lack of obvious security measures on the streets" and concluded, "One thing is certain: PSO insiders must have been involved."

As described by Yemeni and U.S. officials, the prisoners, left to themselves in a locked basement, spent two months digging the 143-foot tunnel. For tools, they used a broomstick with a sharpened spoon lashed to the end as a spade, along with another jerry-built device: three pots tied together as a U-shaped scoop. The plotters also had a soccer ball that they kicked around indoors, apparently to make enough noise to drown out the digging.

At about 4:30 a.m. on Feb. 3, the prisoners crawled through the tunnel, broke through the floor of a nearby mosque, somehow emerging in the women's bathroom--the least frequented part of the mosque--and disappeared into the darkness. The escape occurred on a Friday, the Muslim holy day when prison authorities do not conduct head counts as rigorously. While it is unclear what kind of outside help the escapees might have had, officials found it particularly suspicious that they knew exactly where to dig.

The Bush administration has been generally happy with assistance from Yemen, Osama bin Laden's ancestral homeland. A draft of the State Department's forthcoming country survey of global terrorism, obtained by NEWSWEEK, notes that Yemen has acted against Islamist extremists involved in attacks on U.S. and Western targets. Once virtually a welcoming committee for Islamist agitators, the Yemeni government changed its attitude after the Cole attack, especially after 13 Yemeni soldiers were killed in a December 2001 shootout with Qaeda fugitives. President Ali Abdullah Saleh began to work more closely with U.S. investigators.

But privately, U.S. officials say the plotters must have had serious--possibly high-level--help at the Political Security Office. U.S. investigators say the PSO's rival agency, the National Security Board, is now leading the probe, detaining and questioning everyone who worked at the PSO. Saleh's security chief and the head of the PSO, Ali Mutahar al-Qamish, is said to be under suspicion, according to two U.S. officials. The U.S. and Dutch navies, meanwhile, have mounted an expensive search operation off the Arabian and Red seas. "We're blocking their southern escape route," says Dutch Lt. Cmdr. Willem Cosiy.

Al-Badawi escaped once before, in 2003, when several prisoners were being transferred to another Yemeni prison. After he was recaptured, some Yemeni officials tried unsuccessfully to claim a multimillion-dollar U.S. award, suggesting a scam. And at the time, al-Badawi apparently was friendly with Col. Hussein al-Anzi, then a top PSO official. Yemeni officials say al-Anzi was fired and no longer has any ties to the PSO.

The State Department cable also cited Yemeni sources who suggested alternative escape theories, including "that elements of the government liberated the prisoners to engage them in covert operations." American authorities are now offering rewards of up to \$5 million for al-Badawi and Elbaneh, and wondering who in Yemen they can really trust.

Bombing Saudi Oil

National Review
By James S. Robbins
2/27

One frequently hears that terrorists are long-term strategists. They plan in terms of decades, if not centuries. Time is irrelevant to them. No matter what we do, they will have the upper hand, because they have an enduring cause, and the patience to stick with the game plan. It is the same thing we used to hear about the Soviets before their empire collapsed around them. Unless that was all according to plan too.

I have never given the bad guys any special credit for being long-term thinkers. They may talk about executing strategies over decades, but only because they must. Terrorists are weak by definition. If al Qaeda had land armies, air and naval fleets--not to mention nuclear weapons--they would use them. If they could get the job done quickly, they would. However, since they can't, they counsel patience to their followers, mount attacks when the opportunity arises, and allow us to make a virtue out of their necessity.

But the recent attempted suicide bombing at the massive Abqaiq oil-processing complex in Saudi Arabia shows that Osama bin Laden may be getting a little frustrated with the wait. He is deviating somewhat from his original plan, in which the Saudi oil industry was not to be touched so it would be intact when he took ownership. Now he would just as soon see the oil go up in flames if it speeds up the timetable.

Al Qaeda's initial strategy was laid out in their 1996 declaration of war, which I still consider must reading to understand the current conflict. But most of their plans were thrown out of kilter by our unexpectedly robust response to the 9/11 attacks. We acted forcefully, the hoped-for Muslim uprisings in defense of bin Laden did not take place, and al Qaeda was forced to go deep underground. Since then we have held the initiative and set the terms of the confrontation. Rather than methodically executing a long-term strategy, bin Laden has been forced to make it up as he goes.

This was very clearly demonstrated by the attempted oil-complex bombing. Granted, al Qaeda has always known that threatening the global oil supply is a very effective means of attacking the U.S. center of gravity, its economy. An enemy document captured in Afghanistan stated that oil is "the artery of life that provides the West and the Jews with the means of existence, and the oxygen for the Western industry that must be severed."

Yet, this did not mean that the way to sever the lifeline was to go after the Saudi oil industry. Osama was very explicit about this in his 1996 fatwa. "A spread of fighting in these areas would carry the danger of the oil burning which would be detrimental to the economic interests of the Gulf States and the land of the two holy mosques," he wrote, "and in fact to the world economy. Here we pause and urge our brothers the people, the Mujahedin, to preserve that wealth and not to involve it in the battle because it is a great Islamic wealth and a great and important economic power for the coming Islamic state, God willing." Bin Laden was more concerned that in the coming confrontation between the west and his devoted multitude the U.S. itself would destroy the Saudi oil industry "for fear of it falling into the hands of its legitimate owners and to harm its economic rivals in Europe and the Far East."

Now Osama has flip-flopped. According to a post on a jihadist website, terrorists from al Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula attacked the Abqaiq site at the personal direction of bin Laden. (They also claim to have carried out their bombings successfully, press reports to the contrary being "sheer lies.") Even the failed attacks caused oil prices to jump, and well illustrated our vulnerabilities--nicely timed for the recent administration push to highlight government-sponsored alternative energy, and private-sector solutions like thermal depolymerization.

The president called America's addiction to foreign oil "a national security problem," and the terrorists are seeking to accentuate the point. Whereas al Qaeda's previous approach sought to preserve the resource base that Osama expected to inherit, the new strategy seeks to destroy the center of Saudi power, presumably to quicken the downfall of the regime and damage the United States. Bin Laden would rather rule as caliph over a wrecked oil empire than continue to allow the West and the "lackey apostate leaders" of Saudi Arabia to "steal Muslim wealth." Plus, let's face it, it has been ten years since the declaration of war and he is no closer to taking power. It is one thing to talk about the long-term when you are 39, but he is turning 50 next

year, and he is in a high-risk occupation. With Young Turks like Zarqawi coming up behind him, Osama knows he has to get something going soon or become a permanent has-been--if he lives.

--James S. Robbins is author of the forthcoming *Last in Their Class: Custer, Picket and the Goats of West Point* and an NRO Contributor.
