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Article 2. <[https://mail.google.com/mail/?0/html/compose/static\\_files/blank\\_quirks.html#b](https://mail.google.com/mail/?0/html/compose/static_files/blank_quirks.html#b)>

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The Silence of the Drones</=>

Fouad Ajami

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The Wall Street Journal

The Pharaoh Fell, but His Poisonous Legacy Lingers

Fouad Ajami <<http://online.wsj.com/search/?erm.html?KEYWORDS=FOUAD+AJAMI&bylinesearch=true>>

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The Diplomat

7 Reasons China and Japan Won't Go To War <<http://thediplomat.com/2013/02/10/7-reasons-china-and-japan-wont-go-to-war/>>

Trefor Moss

Article 1.

The Guardian <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian>>

Israel: Washington calling

10 February 2013 --It seems the first foreign visit <<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4341548,00.html>> of Barack Obama <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/barack-obama>> 's second term will be to Israel <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/israel>> . In making that choice, the president sends an important signal =nd one that is long overdue. What is optimistically still referred to as t=e peace process has been stalled for several years. There is plenty of bla=e to go around for that. But a small part of it rests with Mr Obama himself.

In his first term h= didn't visit Israel once, not even, Israelis complain, when he was in the=neighbourhood. That was a mistake, limiting the influence he could exert o=er Israel's government and, more importantly perhaps, its people. As Bill Clinton, the last US president to come close =o a Middle East breakthrough, advises today's diplomats: Israelis need to =now that if the tanks were ever to start rolling in from across the Jordan= you'd be there in the trenches with them. An unlikely scenario these days perhaps, but the emotion is rea=.

Still, an Obama vis=t can do more than offer reassurance of US solidarity. The mere announceme=t of the trip, scheduled for 21 March but liable to slip if there are dela=s in the formation of a new Israeli government, can itself have an impact. Some have argued <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/02/why-is-obama-in-such-a-rush-to-visit-israel.html>> that the White House published its travel plans now, e=rlier than necessary, in order to remind the parties to ongoing coalition =alks in Israel that peace should be a factor in their negotiations. With M= Obama coming, perhaps Binyamin Netanyahu and his potential partners will be obliged to think not only of =urrently dominant domestic issues but also of relations with their most im=mediate neighbours. If that was indeed the motive, it may be paying off. Is=ael's outgoing deputy foreign minister, the hawkish Danny Ayalon, now says Israel should accept the UN's recent up=rade of the Palestinians' status – a move he and his government fiercely=rejected last November.

For Palestinians to=, an Obama visit should be a boost – especially if he visits the West Ba=k cities of Ramallah or, as has been mooted, Jericho. The message will be =hat, for all the talk of a Washington foreign policy pivot to Asia, the Middle East is still a US priority and t=e Palestinian issue has not been forgotten. The prestige of a presidential=visit will strengthen those Palestinians who advocate the path of diplomac= over the path of violence – welcome, given that events in recent months have tended to have the reverse effect.=/span>

Bitter experience s=uggests no one should expect too much of a single visit, even if the speculation <<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4342870,00.html>> is right and Mr Obama chairs a mini-summit, perhaps in =ordan, between Mr Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas. But the fact that the presi=ent is coming, and that he has in John Kerry a new secretary of state long=engaged in the issue and bitten, says one colleague, by "the peace bug", are small grounds for ho=e in a region that does not have many.

Articl= 2.

Bloomberg

The Silence o= the Drones

Fouad Ajami =/p>

Feb 10, 2013 -- In =imes of war, the law is not silent. War is not a moral wilderness: At the =econd Lateran Council in 1139, the use of the crossbow was banned among Eu=opean knights. Throughout history, there have been codes that even the hell of war could not override.

I own up to being c=nflicted about the use of drone strikes <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-02-06/drone-war-needs-clear-r=les-instead-of-more-leaks.html>> . Those 19 young Arabs who struck the U.S. on Sept. 11, 20=1, shredded the old notions and rules of war, erased the line between comb=tants and noncombatants, brought soot and ruin onto American soil. Our cou=try had to be made ready for this new kind of war.

We waged big milita=y campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, but the terrorists waged a twilight w=r of their own, bereft of scruples and limits. There would be no treaty of=surrender we could enforce, no capital city to be subdued. Chased from Afghanistan, they turned up in Yemen and S=malia. They were soldiers of the catacombs, and they thrived in ungoverned=spaces.

Targeted killing wa= the response <<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-01-10/bloomberg=iew-obama-must-come-clean-on-drones>> of a great military power to the frustrations of this “asymm=trical” war. We didn’t know that larger world of Islam from which this=war arose. We were sandbagged by regimes and rulers that feigned friendshi= with us as they winked at the terror that came our way.

What was one to mak= of the New Mexico-born radical imam Anwar al-Awlaki <[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Anwar%20al-Awlaki&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_n=\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&am=;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Anwar%20al-Awlaki&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_n=_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&am=;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja)> inciting his devotees to a holy war -- all in good Amer=canese? He wore no uniform, slipped into the badlands of his ancestral Yem=n and mastered the new means of communication.

#### Awlaki's Fate

In the strict legal=sm of things he was an American citizen, but he bore this country a deadly=animus. No tears need be shed for him. The strike that killed him, in Yeme= in September 2011, was a deed of just retribution. Presidential spokesman Jay Carney <[http://search.bloomberg.com=search?q=Jay%20Carney&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystyle=heet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&fil=er=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-w=nis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com=search?q=Jay%20Carney&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystyle=heet=wnews&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&fil=er=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-w=nis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja)> 's defense of the drone strikes as legal, ethical and wise =an stand in the case of Awlaki. The executive had been granted broad power= under the Authorization for Use of Military Force in the aftermath of Sep=. 11, and two presidents were given the leeway to prosecute this war on terrorism.

In truth, the publi= didn’t want to look too closely into the doings of our government. We l=ft it to our intelligence agencies and our military to keep us safe. But t=ere came a time -- after the doings of the night shift at Abu Ghraib became public -- when the writ granted our o=fficials was withdrawn. Liberals declared an all-out ideological war agains= the administration of George W. Bush <[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=George%20W.%20Bush&si=e=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_=o\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&a=p;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja= title=>](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=George%20W.%20Bush&si=e=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_=o_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&a=p;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja= title=>)

The horror, the hor=or: The renditions and the enhanced interrogation techniques and, yes, the=50 or so drone strikes used during the Bush years became, to the liberals <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-02-08/obama-s-drone-attack-on=your-due-process.html>> , a matter of national shame. A rising politician in the Democr=tic Party, a former

teacher of constitutional law at the University of Chicago at that, rode this sense of outrage to the pinnacle of political power= He posed as a moralist.

Barack Obama

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Barack%20Obama&site=wnews&client=3Dnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Barack%20Obama&site=wnews&client=3Dnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja)

was certain that rendition and waterboarding and the prison at Guantanamo Bay were recruiting tools of the jihadis. We had sullied America's reputation in lands beyond, and he would heal the damage. Our practice= had run afoul of time-tested traditions and institutions, and in his stewardship, he promised, our values would ag= in be a compass for our deeds abroad.

In hindsight, the g=eat reckoning for Obama came at the end of the first year of his presidenc=. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Umar%20Farouk%20Abdulmuta=lab&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&ou=put=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfield=-wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=3D-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Umar%20Farouk%20Abdulmuta=lab&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&ou=put=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfield=-wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=3D-lang_ja)

, a young Nigerian, a disciple of Awlaki, came=close to bringing down an airliner over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009. It =as farewell to Kumbaya foreign policy: The world was a menacing place.

Against the background of the stirring Obama oratory, and the euphoric claim that the president's personal biography was a bridge to the world of Islam, the young Nigerian could have snuffed out the promise of the Obama presidency. From that close call, the president emerged a determined leader in the war on terrorism.

Stealth War =/p>

He had his trusted aide, John Brennan

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=John%20Brennan&ite=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xm=\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis=amp;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_=a](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=John%20Brennan&ite=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xm=_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis=amp;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_=a)

, in a windowless office in the White House, and Brennan knew the world of intelligence and terrorism. He knew the Arabian Peninsula, as he had served as an intelligence officer in Saudi Arabia -- a country where secrets and things unacknowledged are the coin of the realm.

Together the president and the spook oversaw a stealth war, and the president became his own targeting officer. (Obama going over kill lists recalls President Lyndon Johnson

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Lyndon%20Johnson&site=3Dnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis=&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Lyndon%20Johnson&site=3Dnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis=&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja)

's poring over the map of Khe Sanh in search of bombing=targets in Vietnam; the marked difference is the anguish of LBJ, and by the telling, the serene confidence of Obama that this is a war of necessity and a just campaign.)

The drone strikes were the choice of a president who had given up on winning "hearts and minds" in the North-West Frontier of Pakistan. Secure in the knowledge that he can't be outflanked from the right by the Republicans, Obama served up a policy that was economical -- and remote. Congress didn't intrude, and save for the purists at the American Civil Liberties Union, there was no powerful intellectual lobby calling for accountability.

The passion had drained out of the progressives who had hounded Bush, Dick Cheney

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Dick%20Cheney&site==news&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dt=&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&so=t=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Dick%20Cheney&site==news&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_no_dt=&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&so=t=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja)

and Scooter Libby

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Scoot=r%20Libby&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&ge=fields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&mp;lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Scoot=r%20Libby&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&ge=fields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&mp;lr=-lang_ja)

. Brennan had to step aside once when he was put up to head the Central Intelligence Agency, as a man tainted with the Bush legacy. His confirmation is certain this time around.

There remains the discrepancy between an extensive campaign of drones and a passive foreign policy that maintains -- the president's very words -- that an era of war is ending. Forgive those Syrians left at the mercy of their dictator's cruel war: It is hard to explain to them why those drones don't somehow find their way to Bashar al-Assad  
[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Bashar%20al-Assad&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_n=\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&am=;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Bashar%20al-Assad&site=wnews&client=wnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_n=_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&am=;sort=date:D:S:d1&partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja) 's bunker. We do anti-terrorism. Wars of rescue are not an American specialty nowadays.

Fouad Ajami

[http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Fouad%20Ajami&site=wnews&client=3Dwnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1=amp;partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang\\_ja](http://search.bloomberg.com/search?q=Fouad%20Ajami&site=wnews&client=3Dwnews&proxystylesheet=wnews&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&filter=p&getfields=wnnis&sort=date:D:S:d1=amp;partialfields=-wnnis:NOAVSYND&lr=-lang_ja) is a senior fellow at the Stanford University's Hoover Institution and author of "The Syrian Rebellion."

Article 3.

The Wall Street Journal

Obama's Gift to Iran

Editorial

February 10, 2013 -- President Obama has with rare exceptions shunned even modest U.S. intervention abroad, and last week we learned more details of his aversion: His chief military advisers confirmed that last year the President personally killed a plan supported by his main security advisers to arm the Syrian rebels.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Martin Dempsey didn't elaborate on the President's reasons for killing the proposal. But the two senior officials acknowledged under questioning on Thursday from Senator John McCain that they had supported the Petraeus-Clinton plan.

On Friday White House spokesman Jay Carney <http://topics.wsj.com/person/C/Jay-Carney/6498> was typically dodgy and wouldn't confirm the news. But he did volunteer a roundabout justification, claiming that "a lack of weapons is not the problem in Syria right now." He added that "we don't want any weapons to fall into the wrong hands and potentially further endanger the Syrian people, our ally, Israel, or the United States."

But if the rebels are flush with weapons, aren't those weapons already in danger of falling into the wrong hands? One point of U.S. military aid is to have some influence on rebel behavior, while increasing the clout of more moderate factions. By doing nothing, Mr. Obama has guaranteed that the rebels will be supplied by Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the Saudis who don't mind arming Sunni Salafists. That's one of the lessons of "leading from behind" in Libya, but in Syria we aren't even following from behind.

Syria is Iran's main regional ally, and the longer the Syrian civil war rages the more disorder spreads in the region. Late last month Israel bombed a convoy carrying heavy weapons into Lebanon to help Israel's enemy and Iran's Shiite proxy, Hezbollah. A quicker victory for the rebels backed by the U.S. two years ago might have cut off Syria as a conduit for Iranian arms to Hezbollah and thus reduced the threat to Israel.

The Petraeus-Clinton proposal speaks well of Mr. Obama's first-term security team but also raises more alarm about his second-term choices. John Kerry, Chuck Hagel and John Brennan all lack the independent standing of Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Panetta and former General Petraeus. They aren't likely to challenge Mr. Obama with views he doesn't want to hear.

U.S. military action other than drone warfare isn't in favor these days, but Syria is showing how doing nothing has costs of its own. In overruling his advisers, Mr. Obama has prolonged Syria's civil war, increased regional instability, and delivered a strategic gift to Iran, the main enemy of Israel and the U.S.

Article 4.

The Wall Street Journal

The Pharaoh Fell, but His Poisonous Legacy Lingers

Fouad Ajami <<http://online.wsj.com/search/term.html?KE=WORDS=FOUAD+AJAMI&bylinesearch=true>>

February 10, 2013 -- Two years ago, on Feb. 11, 2011, the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak <http://topics.wsj.com/person/M/Hosni-Mubarak/6479> stepped aside, overwhelmed by 18 days of protests. Silent and remote, he had ruled for three decades. He had offered his countrymen—and powers beyond—the sole gift of stability. He was a gendarme on the banks of the Nile. Now his country was done with him, and the vaunted stability of his near 30-year reign was torn asunder.

Yet it is only against the backdrop of the sordid political landscape of today's Egypt—the hooliganism of the young, the lawlessness, the fault line between a feeble secular camp and a cynical Muslim Brotherhood bent on monopolizing political power—that the true work of the Mubarak tyranny can be fully appreciated. The "deep state" he presided over—a Ministry of Interior with nearly two-million functionaries, a police force that ran amok—is Mubarak's true legacy.

The disorder today in Egypt's streets is taken by some as proof that the despot knew what he was doing, and that Egyptians are innately given to tyranny. But that view misses the damage that this man and his greedy family and retainers inflicted on a nation of more than 80 million people that once had nobler ideas of its place in the world.

Grant the Egyptian people credit for their mercy and forbearance. The Pharaoh was deposed and his two sons, who sat astride the country's economy and politics, were hauled off to prison, but they were spared the gruesome end that was meted out next door to Moammar Gadhafi. A sickly Mubarak was humbled, wheeled into court on a gurney. But he was not sent to the gallows. True, some of the families of victims struck down during the upheaval howled for his blood. But the day of his reckoning was deferred as the judiciary let the matter run in the hope that the aged former ruler would succumb to a natural death—

It was odd, this tale of Hosni Mubarak. He had started out as a modest officer who had risen to power through the patronage and will of his predecessor, Anwar Sadat. Mubarak had not been imaginative or brave—and that was what recommended him to the flamboyant Sadat. Where Sadat had been unabashedly open in his identification with American power, the new man would be more discreet. Where Sadat had been a trailblazer who had made that celebrated journey to Jerusalem, Mubarak would keep the peace with the Israelis, but keep them at arm's length.

Throughout his reign, a toxic brew poisoned the life of Egypt—a mix of anti-modernism, anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism. That trinity ran rampant in the universities and the professional syndicates and the official media. As pillage had become the bane of the ruling family and its retainers, the underclass was left to the rule of darkness and to a culture of conspiracy. The middle class was tentative and timid, unsure of itself. It knew the defects of the regime but could not contest its power.

More important, with the Muslim Brotherhood quietly toiling in the shadows, broad segments of the middle class succumbed to the theocratic temptation. Wealth accumulated in the Arab states and the Gulf had remade the Brotherhood. Its members were sly: They accepted the subtle accommodation offered them by the regime.

The historical role of the centralized state in Egypt as the principal agent of social change was abandoned. No wonder the Brotherhood sat out the early and decisive phase of the 2011 protests in Tahrir Square. Courage was not the hallmark of the Brotherhood. Its theorists were still maintaining that the ruler was due deference and obedience while a new generation of activists was battling the security forces.

Yet the Brotherhood had no scruples about "hijacking" a revolution that was not theirs. The annals of revolutions the world over bear testimony to the truth that the rule of the moderates in times of revolutions is always undone by the ascendancy of the extremists. (Think of the liberals who rode with Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979—so many of them were cut down by firing squads.)

It was no surprise that the Egyptian liberals and secularists quarreled among themselves and were feckless and divided. The dictatorship had not allowed them political space and experience. In hindsight, the tipping point in the ruin of Egypt came in 2005. The dictator rigged yet another presidential election, his fifth in a row, and he ordered a decent young rival, Ayman Nour, to prison on trumped up charges. The administration of George W. Bush grasped the importance of the moment, but Mubarak brushed their entreaties aside.

President Obama and his advisers had two years on their watch before the upheaval. But they lacked the interest and the determination—an knowledge of matters Egyptian. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described Mubarak as a friend of her family, and Vice President Joe Biden opined that the regime was stable even as millions of Egyptians had gone out to push it into its grave.

Today, a stalemate analyzes Egypt: The Brotherhood won a plurality in parliamentary elections that began in 2011, but an activist judiciary declared the elections unconstitutional and ordered parliament dissolved in June 2012. The Brotherhood drafted and secured the passage of a new constitution by referendum in December, but those unreconciled to the reign of the Brotherhood wanted nothing to do with it.

Mohammed Morsi has the presidency, but he was defied some days ago when he ordered a curfew in the cities of Ismailia, Suez and Port Said. Thousands went into the streets to sing and dance and play soccer in the night. From afar, those with a superficial knowledge of Egypt think of it as a country willing to slip under the yoke of the Brotherhood. But Egypt is a skeptical, weary country; it wears its faith lightly, and its people have an innate suspicion of those who overdo their religious zeal.

The economy is wrecked and the government has run down its foreign reserves as it attempts to maintain a system of costly subsidies. A \$4.8 billion International Monetary Fund loan was tentatively agreed on, but the government was unwilling to put through the austerity measures required by the loan. Only the remittances of Egyptians abroad, an

impressive total of \$19 billion in 2012, averted catastrophe. The ruling bargain that had the Egyptians give up their freedom for bread, and for the handouts of the state, still obtains. The old regime fell, but its ways endure. =/p>

Nowadays freedom is out of fashion in American official thinking, and the tumult in Arab lands serves as an alibi for abdication. But we should know that the bargain with the Arab dictatorships brought our way the jihadists. Two products of Mubarak's Egypt must be figured into an audit of that regime: the Cairene al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri and the psychopath Mohammad Atta, who led the dead pilots of 9/11. It was folly and naiveté to think that we really knew and could befriend the tyrants.

Mr. Ajami is a senior fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution and the author of "The Syrian Rebellion" (Hoover Institution Press, 2012).

Article 5.

The Washington Post=

Asian tension= add urgency to Obama's 'pivot'

Fred Hiatt <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/fred-hiatt/2011/02/24/AB9dIXN\\_page.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/fred-hiatt/2011/02/24/AB9dIXN_page.html)>

February 10, 2013 = As President Obama ponders his second-term foreign policy, he faces jihadists spreading across North Africa, Syria dissolving into chaos, Israelis and Palestinians further apart than ever, Iraq trending toward civil war <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/arab-spring-style-protests-take-hold-in-iraq/2013/02/08/f875ef7e-715f-11e2-b3f3-b263=708ca37\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/arab-spring-style-protests-take-hold-in-iraq/2013/02/08/f875ef7e-715f-11e2-b3f3-b263=708ca37_story.html)> , Afghanistan mired in corruption and Iran relentlessly accelerating its nuclear program.

That may turn out to be the easy stuff.

In Asia, things could get really scary.

Since he entered the White House, Obama has wanted to shift attention and resources to the Pacific. The biggest opportunities are there: economic growth, innovation, potential for cross-border investment and trade. That the 21st century will be a Pacific century has become a cliché=

The cliché may still prove out. But rather suddenly, the region of economic miracles has become a zone of frightening confrontation. The North Koreans are turning out videos depicting New York in flames <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/02/05/that-crazy-north-korean-video-of-new-york-blowing-up-now-with-english-subtitles/>> . Chinese warships have fixed their weapon-targeting radar <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/japan-and-chinas-island-argument-is-a-us-concern/2013/02/05/fbc7ed62-6999-1=e2-af53-7b2b2a7510a8\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/japan-and-chinas-island-argument-is-a-us-concern/2013/02/05/fbc7ed62-6999-1=e2-af53-7b2b2a7510a8_story.html)> on a Japanese ship and helicopter. Quarrels have intensified between

South Korea and Japan, North Korea and South Korea, China and the Philippines, India and China. Taiwan is always a possible flashpoint. Any one of these could drag the United States in.

The scariest development may be in North Korea, the world's only hereditary prison camp, where the young leader — the third-generation Kim — seems determined to expand and improve his nuclear arsenal until he becomes a genuine threat not only to South Korea and Japan but to the United States <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jan/24/north-korea-nuclear-rocket-us> as well. Chinese officials are said to be alarmed by his intransigence but unwilling to try to rein him in fearing even more the instability that might result. Obama in his first term adopted a reasonable policy of ignoring North Korea as much as possible, while making clear that he would reciprocate if it became more accommodating. Kim Jong Un, who is thought to be in his late 20s, could find ways to make that stance untenable.

Meanwhile, China's increasing assertiveness discomfits neighbors throughout Southeast and East Asia. China has claimed pretty much the whole South China Sea, though its coastline is farther from much of it than that of Vietnam, Malaysia or the Philippines. It has sent planes and ships to challenge Japan over a few rocky outcroppings that Japan calls the Senkakus and China the Diaoyu Islands. It has been steadily increasing the size and capability of its military forces; for the first time in many years, a neighbor, Japan, is following suit.

If all this seems decidedly last century, maybe it's because new leaders in every key country are second- or third-generation, bearing the burdens of their past. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is the grandson of a leader of imperial Japan—including in occupied China — who remade himself as a pro-American prime minister after World War II. South Korea's president-elect, Park Geun-hye, is the daughter of a longtime president; her mother was killed by a devotee of North Korea [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-01-25/world/3654830\\_1\\_park-geun-hye-first-lady-language-courses](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-01-25/world/3654830_1_park-geun-hye-first-lady-language-courses). (The bullet was intended for her father, who was later assassinated by his intelligence chief.) Xi Jinping, China's new president, is the son of a revolutionary colleague of Mao Tsetung who helped battle the Japanese during World War II. North Korea's Kim Jong Un is the grandson of Kim Il-sung, who according to North Korean mythology fought the Japanese in the 1930s and 1940s and the Americans and South Koreans in the 1950s.

It's intriguing to speculate on the ghostly whisperings these leaders may hear. It may be more useful, though, to focus on the national weaknesses that may propel them to act. North Korea is a failed and hungry state for which blackmail and bluster have long been the only survival strategy. China is a rising power and a growing economy — but led by a one-party regime that may be tempted to use nationalism to distract a restive population from domestic troubles. Japan has discarded one prime minister after another, pretty much on an annual basis, for most of the past decade, an instability that leaves it punching below its economic and military weight.

All of this makes the region hungry for U.S. presence and leadership, which Obama understood with his first-term promise of a "pivot" to Asia. Regional leaders hope he can make good on that promise in a second term but wonder whether U.S. policy, too, will be shaped by political weakness. They notice when the Navy announces that it is, again, reducing its planned number of ships—a by Microsoft Office Word 97-2003 Document  
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