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Article 1.

NYT

President Assad's Bloody Hands

Editorial

June 3, 2011 -- Syrians have shown extraordinary courage, standing up to President Bashar al-Assad's reign of terror. We wish we could say that about the international community. So long as Mr. Assad escapes strong condemnation and real punishment, he will keep turning his tanks and troops on his people.

Human rights groups believe that more than 1,000 protesters have been killed in a three-month crackdown and that 10,000 more have been arrested. Hamza Ali al-Khateeb, the 13-year-old boy whose tortured body was shown in an online video, has become a heartbreakingly symbol of the regime's brutality. According to activists, he was arrested at a protest on April 29 and not seen again until his broken body was delivered to his family almost a month later.

His murder and that of at least 30 other children who joined the protests show the depths to which Mr. Assad and his thugs have sunk.

On Friday, in some of the biggest demonstrations yet, thousands of people again returned to the streets to demand political freedoms. Activists said dozens of protesters were killed in Hama after troops and regime loyalists opened fire. Independent journalists are barred from the country, so the full extent of the violence is unclear. What we do know is that the Syrian government has unleashed a wave of repression, perhaps the most vicious counterattack of the Arab spring. After the killing began, the United States and Europe imposed sanctions — mostly travel bans and asset freezes — on certain key regime officials while exempting Mr. Assad. Only later did they add

his name to the list. The rhetoric is stiffening. On Thursday Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton declared that Mr. Assad's legitimacy is "if not gone, nearly run out." But some American and European officials still buy the fantasy that Mr. Assad could yet implement reforms.

Most appalling, the United Nations Security Council is unable to muster the votes to condemn the bloodshed much less impose sanctions. Russia, cynically protecting longstanding ties with Damascus, is blocking meaningful action and China has fallen in lockstep. India is also reluctant to act — a shameful stance for a democracy that has been bidding for a permanent seat on the Council. If Russia and China, which have veto power, can't be won over, the United States and Europe must push a robust sanctions resolution and dare Moscow and the others to side with Mr. Assad over the Syrian people.

We do not know how this will turn out. But arguments that Mr. Assad is the best guarantor of stability and the best way to avoid extremism have lost all credibility.

Article 2.

The Washington Post

Egypt's revolutionary justice

Editorial

June 4 -- LET'S STIPULATE: There are very likely good grounds to prosecute deposed Egyptian ruler Hosni Mubarak. In nearly 30 years in power, the strongman appears to have amassed a considerable fortune, including the luxurious beach estate to which he retreated after his overthrow. More than 800 people were killed during the 18-day revolution, and prosecutors allege that Mr. Mubarak approved plans to use force against peaceful demonstrators.

The decision by Egypt's ruling military council and state prosecutors to begin a trial of the former strongman on Aug. 3 — before the country holds its first democratic elections — is nevertheless a mistake, one that could push Egypt off the path to establishing a stable democracy and reviving its economy. Mr. Mubarak, who is 83 and in failing health, is not entitled to impunity; nor are his family and former ministers. But the approach of the interim regime, which has jailed dozens of former officials and two of Mr. Mubarak's sons, is deeply flawed. The trouble starts with the speed and timing of the prosecutions. Anxious to prevent further mass protests, the interim military council has appeared to time steps against the former regime just ahead of threatened demonstrations. The announcement that Mr. Mubarak would be put on trial came May 24, three days ahead of a planned opposition gathering in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Three of Mr. Mubarak's former ministers have already been convicted of crimes, and other trials are moving forward quickly. There are serious questions about the evidence in at least one — a case brought against the energy minister and five associates over alleged fraud in gas sales to Israel. The legal system handling these cases, oddly, is that of Mr.

Mubarak — and was justly renowned under his tenure for its lack of independence and its politicized rulings. There's good reason for concern that former members of the regime are now victims of that politicization. The judge hearing a murder case against former interior minister Habib el-Adly, for example, was involved in one-sided rulings against political dissidents during Mr. Mubarak's reign. That's particularly worrisome because Mr. Adly has become the focus of populist calls for retribution, with some opposition sloganers demanding that he be hanged.

Egypt cannot bury a half century of authoritarianism; there must be a reckoning. But the right authority to oversee it is not a temporary military authority attempting to keep crowds out of the streets, but a democratically elected government. Investigations and trials must be conducted by prosecutors and judges who are neutral, professional and untainted by the previous regime. One leading Egyptian human rights activist, Hossam Bahgat, has suggested that Egypt follow the example of other countries emerging from dictatorship and establish a formal process of investigation and exposure of past crimes — a process that could include reparations for victims and prosecution of the most significant cases. Such an initiative could help to bolster a new democratic order in Egypt, but the rush to judgment now underway could seriously undermine it.

Article 3.

Al-Ahram Weekly

Egypt: In search of a foreign policy

Mohamed Anis Salem

2 - 8 June 2011 -- Sooner or later, the question of reviewing Egypt's foreign policy was going to crop up. In the early days of Tahrir, observers noted that the uprising did not occupy itself with international affairs. When Israel voiced concerns about the future of its relations with Cairo, Egypt's Higher Council of the Armed Forces (HCAF) reaffirmed the country's commitment to all international agreements, *inter alia* the Egyptian- Israeli Peace Treaty. Later, criticism of the two Egyptian governments formed after the revolution (one led by Ahmed Shafik, the next by Essam Sharaf) focussed, amongst other things, on retaining a number of the ancien regime ministers in office, including foreign minister Ahmed Abul-Gheit. Abul-Gheit had irritated his critics -- some would say the general public as well -- by his statements on the Egyptian uprising, as well as his earlier positions on Palestinians crossing over from Gaza into Egypt, Hamas and Iran. His replacement, Nabil El-Arabi, a seasoned diplomat with legal expertise, positioned himself as part of Egypt's new outlook to the world. He signalled that relations with Iran would be upgraded, Gaza's Rafah Crossings would be opened, and relations with Israel would be managed on a tit-for-tat basis. If the peace treaty with Israel required revision, there were clauses that allowed for that. Egypt would join the Rome Statute (the legal basis of the International Criminal Court) and other human rights instruments. The Iranian aspect did not rest there. While Tehran responded positively, several Arab countries in the Gulf, already in bitter confrontation with Iran over Bahrain, felt that the new minister's timing was off. In Cairo, experts supported an opening with

Iran, as it would allow Egyptian diplomacy to exercise more influence over issues like the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lebanon, Gulf security and establishing a regional nuclear free zone. But, at the same time, several voices expressed concern at the style of handling this issue. It seemed that no prior coordination or consultation was undertaken with Gulf countries. Why now? Was this a response to discreet Gulf suggestions that ex-president Hosni Mubarak should be treated more leniently? In a hastily arranged Gulf trip, Prime Minister Sharaf reassured his hosts that "Gulf security was a red line for Egypt" and that the opening with Tehran would not be at the expense of relations with Gulf Arabs. But these reassurances seemed to have limited effect as the Gulf Cooperation Council moved to expand its membership to include Jordan and Morocco. The new regional order aligned Arab royal regimes in a cluster that left out countries experiencing uprisings (Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen) or facing instability (Iraq, Somalia and Sudan) or extreme poverty (Djibouti and Mauritania) -- hardly a winning hand.

Enter the Palestinian issue. The previous year had not ended well for the Palestinians. While Israel continued with its settlement policy, the mediation efforts of the US administration were going nowhere. The bid to reconcile Fatah and Hamas had failed and tensions were high between Hamas and Cairo. Then, suddenly, Egypt closed a reconciliation agreement between the Palestinians. The Israeli prime minister reacted negatively. The US was worried, insisting that Hamas needed to recognise Israel before being admitted as a partner. But Europe, more wisely, saw the agreement as a positive development. Then Egypt announced it was opening the Rafah Crossing; it would have nothing to do anymore with the siege of Gaza. Taken together, these signals were received enthusiastically by Egypt's revolutionary youth, intellectuals, media and political movements (mostly, perhaps, by the Muslim Brothers) as a sign of a

more independent foreign policy. But life is complicated. Arab League Secretary- General Amr Moussa was leaving his post to contest the Egyptian presidency. After some hesitation, Egypt withdrew its initial candidate for the Arab League position and forwarded the name of a prominent politician, Mustafa El-Feki. When this nomination stumbled in the face of Qatari competition, it was replaced with Egypt's newly appointed foreign minister who was given the job by consensus. Which brings us full circle to the foreign policy questions presently being debated: What are the tenets of Egypt's new foreign policy? What should the objectives be? What strategies should be deployed? What is the job description for the new foreign minister?

THE NEW FRAME OF REFERENCE: For some 60 years, Egypt presented its foreign policy with reference to three circles: Arab, African and Islamic. The prolonged focus on the confrontation with Israel, and the bipolar international order helped set priorities and select strategies. In reality, Egyptian policy functioned with flexibility, embracing neutrality from the 1940s onwards while, at the same time, moving from quasi alliance with the USSR in the 1960s to a very close relationship with the US since the 1980s. The three circles were always anachronistic and limited intellectually; they did not elaborate on Egypt's priorities, nor did they explain how they would be pursued in a complex world. Moreover, the goalposts were moved with the collapse of the USSR, the Arab-Israeli peace agreements, and the withering of the Non-Aligned Movement. On top of that, over the last few months, the regional landscape has been changed dramatically -- particularly in the way it informs foreign policy. The multiple Arab uprisings emphasised democracy, human rights and participation. Egypt, now a model for change, felt the need to formulate a policy towards the tsunami wave of change hitting the region. So far, its foreign minister has considered popular uprisings

in the region to be an internal matter for concerned countries. Indeed, he told the BBC that the "official position on this question was: no comment!" In the case of Libya, Egypt's position was explained in terms of ensuring the safety and livelihood of the large number of its citizens working there. But some analysts, like Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, were critical of the licence the Arab League gave NATO to intervene in Libya. Could not the Arabs have issued a stern warning to Gaddafi to abdicate? Shouldn't Egypt have played a more assertive role in directing events in this next-door neighbour? Why has the Arab League fallen silent since the Western intervention in Libya? How shrewd was it to send an Egyptian delegation to Muammar Gaddafi as late as May, without visiting the rebels?

To the south, another set of forces demand Egypt's attention: ensuring the continued flow of the Nile waters, responding to Sudan's fragmentation, and reducing the fallout from the chaos at the southern entrance of the Red Sea. While Egypt's newly energised political and civil society leaders launched "popular diplomacy" visits to Ethiopia and Uganda, it is clear that resolving contested issues will need more than such ice-breakers. Also on the southern front, the Egyptian navy has remained aloof from the 25-nation Combined Maritime Forces focussed on Somali pirates, themselves an offshoot of a neglected 20-year conflict. Egypt's foreign minister announced that his country wanted to achieve a full-fledged Arab-Israeli peace, not perpetuate the peace process. While the inter- Palestinian reconciliation was a first step in this direction, and a movement is underway to gain UN recognition for a Palestinian state, the reality is that stagnation looms ahead, at least for the next 18 months when the US presidential elections are behind us. What are the options during this period? In the Egyptian-Israeli context, it might be possible to open negotiations on improving access to Gaza, strengthening security arrangements in Sinai, and updating the price of Egyptian gas exports. If the Syria

situation calms down (a big "if"), then Damascus may be interested in energising its own peace negotiations, as suggested recently by former US government adviser Bill Quant. Indeed, this possibility partially explains the gentler US treatment of Bashar Al-Assad in the face of a popular uprising. But there remains obscurity over how to deal with Binyamin Netanyahu's obstructionism, recently described by Thomas Friedman as the "Mubarak of the peace process".

Meanwhile, non-Arab states of the Middle East have created a brand of diplomacy where ideas are energetically pursued with a variety of hard and soft power strategies. Both Turkey and Iran, in different ways, have increased the level of their interaction and influence in the region. The former established visa free travel zones with several Arab countries, expanded its Middle East trade relations and interceded on issues ranging from Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations, to mediating on Iran's nuclear programme and the Libyan situation. The stars of Turkish soap operas are household names in the region. Iran, albeit under a cloud due to internal repression and the refusal of Arab uprisings of Tehran's patronage, still has huge influence in Iraq, an alliance with Syria, Hizbullah and Hamas, and a nuclear programme that attracts popular admiration to the extent it appears to respond to Israel's atomic monopoly. A more dynamic Egyptian diplomacy will be measured against these standards.

IT'S THE ECONOMY: Beyond this challenging landscape, Egypt's reaction to the new regional dynamics will be heavily conditioned by two critical factors: the economy and internal politics. Facing a serious downturn of revenues from tourism, a slackening of investment inflows and disrupted industrial production, IMF experts estimate that Egypt will need up to \$12 billion over the next financial year in external assistance. The critical partners that have the capacity to respond to this requirement are the US, the EU and Gulf countries. At their recent summit at Deauville, the G8 pledged a combination of debt

relief, aid and assistance to Egypt and Tunisia to help build their democracies. Earlier, speaking at Oxford, Qatari Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassem revived the idea of establishing a Middle East Development Bank to address "the lack of economic diversity, added to the high rate of unemployment among the youth sector". Cairo will need to ensure close, productive relations with this group of countries. The second factor will be the growing influence of internal politics on the foreign policy production process. For the past six decades, Egypt's foreign policy was designed and implemented through a closed system largely controlled by the president of the day and the elitist foreign affairs machinery. Gradually, after 25 January, a wider foreign policy debate has unfolded with inputs from political parties, independent experts, research centres and media, as demonstrated at the recent National Dialogue Conference in Cairo. In the near future, many predict that bodies like the proposed National Security Council, parliamentary foreign relations committees, and the Council of Ministers will institutionalise this role. Politically, the two currents of Islam and liberal democracy will come to bear on this debate. The danger here is that the growth of populist postures will impinge on a policy guided by principles and national interest. In recent policy debates in Cairo, innovative ideas were in short supply as nostalgia prevailed. There was talk about the villa on Hishmet Street in Zamalek from where Nasser's Egypt supported African liberation movements and leaders. Some participants proposed reverting to older policies and instruments: refusing foreign economic assistance, activating Egypt's Nasr Export and Import Company in Africa and moving Egyptian farmers to Sudan. And yet, what is most needed at the moment is a new reading of tectonic changes in the region and internationally. For example, in the African context, Egypt needs to consider the new players on the field and the scale of their operations. Here, there has been a rapid growth

of interaction with Asian powers. Currently, the volume of China's trade with Africa is over \$125 billion annually, while trade between India and Africa has jumped from \$1 billion in 2001 to almost \$50 billion last year. India is the largest foreign investor in Ethiopia (with \$4.78 billion invested last year) and its annual volume of trade with Addis Ababa is \$272 million. At the recent India-Africa summit, India's prime minister pledged \$5 billion over the next three years to support African countries in reaching the Millennium Development Goals, in addition to \$700 million for developing institutions and another \$300 million to building a Djibouti- Ethiopian railway. India also offered 22,000 higher education scholarships and funding for the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Meanwhile, South Africa has joined the BRIC grouping of Brazil, Russia, India and China. Such developments have changed the terrain and the possibilities for Egypt's movement in Africa, demanding closer engagement, innovation, and sustained effort.

The job description, and the ongoing head hunting, for Egypt's next minister of foreign affairs will need to take these factors into consideration, with emphasis on the ability to develop a new vision for the country's foreign policy. As French novelist Marcel Proust once said, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes." Perhaps this, more than anything else, is what Egyptian diplomacy needs at the moment.

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Article 4.

Foreign Policy

Do the American people support the 'special relationship?'

Stephen M. Walt

June 3, 2011 -- A couple of weeks ago, Americans were treated to a remarkably clear demonstration of the power of the Israel lobby in the United States. First, Barack Obama gave a speech on Middle East policy at the State Department, which tried to position America as a supporter of the Arab spring and reiterated his belief that a two-state solution is the best way to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. The next day, he met with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who rejected several of Obama's assertions and lectured him about what "Israel expects" from its great power patron. Then Obama felt it was smart politics to go to AIPAC and clarify his remarks. It was a pretty good speech, but Obama didn't offer any ideas for how his vision of Middle East peace might be realized and he certainly never suggested that -- horrors! -- the United States might use its considerable leverage to push both sides to an agreement. And then Netanyahu received a hero's welcome up on Capitol Hill, getting twenty-nine standing ovations for a defiant speech that made it clear that the only "two-state" solution he's willing to contemplate is one where the Palestinians live in disconnected Bantustans under near-total Israeli control.

Not surprisingly, this display of the lobby's influence made plenty of people uncomfortable, and some of them -- such as M.J. Rosenberg at Media Matters offered up some personal tales of their own run-ins with Israel's hardline backers. In response to Rosenberg's sally (and the hoopla surrounding the Netanyahu visit), Jonathan Chait of The

New Republic has fallen back on a familiar line of defense. After conceding that there is a lobby and that it does have a lot of influence, he argued that "the most important basis of American support for Israel is not the lobby but the public's overwhelming sympathy for Israel." In other words, AIPAC et al don't really matter that much, and all those standing ovations on Capitol Hill were really just a genuine reflection of public opinion. He also said that John Mearsheimer and I believe the lobby exerts "total control" over U.S. foreign policy, and that we claim groups in the lobby were solely responsible for the invasion of Iraq.

To deal with the last claim first, this straw-man depiction of our argument merely confirms once again that Chait has not in fact read our book. I don't find that surprising, because a careful reading of the book would reveal to him that we weren't anti-Israel or anti-Semitic, had made none of the claims he accuses us of, and had in fact amassed considerable evidence to support the far more nuanced arguments that we did advance. And then he'd have to ponder the fact that virtually everything The New Republic has ever published about us was bogus. So I can easily see why he prefers to repeat the same falsehoods and leave it at that.

But what of his more basic claim that the "special relationship" between the United States and Israel is really a reflection of "the public's overwhelming sympathy?" There are at least three big problems with this assertion.

First, even if it were true that the public had "overwhelming sympathy" for Israel, it does not immediately follow that United States policy would necessarily follow suit. U.S. officials frequently do things that a majority of Americans oppose, if they believe that doing so is in the U.S. interest. A majority of Americans oppose fighting on in Afghanistan, for example, yet the Obama administration chose to escalate that war instead. Similarly, numerous

polls show that the American people favor the "public option" in health care, but that's not exactly the policy that health care reform produced. Public opinion is an important factor, of course, but what public officials decide to do almost always reflects a more complex weighting of political factors (including the intensity of public preferences, broader strategic considerations, the weight of organized interests, etc.)

Second, to the extent that the American public does have a favorable image of Israel -- and there's no question that it does -- that is at least partly due to the lobby's own efforts to shape public discourse and stifle negative commentary. The lobby doesn't "control the media," but "pro-Israel" groups like the ADL and CAMERA work actively to influence how Israel is portrayed in the United States, aided by reliably supportive publications like The New Republic. (As its former editor-in-chief Marty Peretz once admitted, "there's a sort of party line on Israel" at the journal). That's their privilege, of course, but groups and individuals in the lobby have also tried to silence or smear virtually any one who criticizes the "special relationship," and all-too-often those efforts succeed (if perhaps less frequently than they used to). If Americans were exposed to a more open discourse -- such as the discourse that prevails in Europe or in Israel itself -- Israel's favorable image would almost certainly decrease (though by no means disappear).

Third, and most important, the evidence suggests that the American people are not in favor of a one-sided "special relationship" where Israel gets unconditional American backing no matter what it does. Although there is no question that Americans have a generally favorable image of Israel and want the United States to help it survive and prosper, they are not demanding that U.S. politicians back it to the hilt or show the kind of craven adulation that Congress displayed last week.

For starters, many Americans recognize that one-sided support for Israel is a problem for the United States, and that figure is even higher among "opinion leaders." A Pew survey in November 2005 found that 39 percent of Americans saw the special relationship as a "major source of global discontent," and 78 percent of the news media, 72 percent of military leaders and 69 percent of foreign affairs specialists believed that backing Israel seriously damages America's image around the world. A 2003 survey by the University of Maryland reported that over 60 percent of Americans would be willing to withhold aid to Israel if it resisted pressure to settle the conflict with the Palestinians, and 73 percent said the United States should not favor either side. In fact, a survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League in 2005 found that 78 percent of Americans believed that Washington should favor neither Israel nor the Palestinians. A 2010 survey by the Brookings Institution found similar results: although 25 percent of Americans thought the United States should "lean toward Israel" in its efforts to resolve the conflict, a healthy 67 percent believed the United States should "lean toward neither side."

Needless to say, such figures are hard to square with the robotic enthusiasm displayed by Congress, or with the Obama administration's timid approach to entire problem. But the behavior of both the executive and legislative branches are entirely consistent with the normal workings of interest group politics in the United States. In a democracy where freedom of association and speech are guaranteed, and where elections are expensive to run and where campaign contributions are weakly regulated, even relatively small groups can exercise considerable influence if they are strongly committed to a particular issue and the rest of the population does not care that much.

Whether the issue is farm subsidies or foreign policy, in short, special interest groups often wield disproportionate political power. Because countervailing forces are much weaker (as is the case when it comes to Middle East policy), groups like AIPAC and others have the field to themselves. Consider that in the 2010 election, "pro-Israel" PACs gave about \$3 million to candidates from both parties. By comparison, Arab-American PACs gave less than \$50,000. You can buy a lot of applause when the balance is stacked that way.

When you combine these facts with the sometimes thuggish tactics used against people who don't subscribe to the party line on this issue, you have a situation where politicians and appointed officials will bend over backwards to support the special relationship (or just remain silent), even when they know it's not good for the United States or Israel and when most Americans (including plenty of American Jews) would support a more normal relationship. In short, a relationship that would be healthier for the United States and Israel alike.

And the saddest part, as I've noted repeatedly, is that some people who care deeply about Israel and who see themselves as loyal defenders are the ones who are enabling its own self-defeating intransigence and threatening its future. Chait is a smart and well-informed guy, and his views on many subjects are thoughtful and nuanced. Which makes his failure to face the facts on this issue all the more surprising ... and regrettable.

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Article 5.

Yale Center for the Study of Globalization

The Battle for Pakistan

Bruce Riedel

June 3, 2011 -- The struggle for control of Pakistan - soon to be the fifth most populous country in the world with the fifth largest nuclear arsenal - intensifies every day. The outcome is far from certain. The key player, Pakistan's army, seems dangerously ambivalent about which side should prevail: the jihadist Frankenstein it created or the democratically elected civilian government it despises.

The American commando raid that killed Osama bin Laden on May 2nd accelerated the struggle underway inside Pakistan to determine the country's future. Contrary to some assessments, Pakistan is neither a failed state nor a failing state. It functions as effectively today as in decades past. Rather it is a state under siege from a radical syndicate of terror groups loosely aligned together with the goal of creating an extremist jihadist state in south Asia. They want to hijack Pakistan and its weapons. Less than a hundred hours after the Abbottabad raid, Al Qaeda's shura council, its command centre, announced the group was declaring war on Pakistan and the "traitors and thieves" in the government who had betrayed the "martyr shaykh" bin Laden to the Americans. It was ironic since many Americans suspect the Pakistani army was actually complicit in abetting bin Laden's successful evasion of the largest manhunt in human history for 10 years. That both Al Qaeda and America distrust the Pakistani army speaks volumes. Since then Al Qaeda and its allies in Pakistan have carried out their threat with a vengeance. Suicide bombings and other terror attacks have occurred across the country. The worst was an attack on a major Pakistani navy base in Karachi, a heavily guarded facility where both US and Chinese experts assist the

navy. Two US-made P3 surveillance aircraft were destroyed in the attack. The assailants had insider knowledge of the base, and Pakistani security has arrested former naval personnel accused of helping the attackers. The Karachi attack illustrates the essence of the battle for Pakistan today. The militants support Al Qaeda, but were members of its ally the Pakistani Taliban. Their goal was to humiliate the navy. The navy fought back, but is riddled with jihadist sympathizers who help the militants. A Pakistani journalist, Syed Salman Shahzad, wrote an expose after the attack of the jihadist penetration of the military, especially the navy. He received threatening calls from the military's intelligence service, the notorious Inter Services Intelligence directorate, telling him to stop reporting on the issue, and was murdered shortly afterward. The Pakistani army is genuinely at war with parts of the syndicate of jihadi terror in Pakistan like Al Qaeda and the Taliban. It has more than 140,000 troops engaged in operations against the militants along the Afghan border. Some 35,000 Pakistanis including several thousand soldiers have died in the fighting since 2001, the equivalent of a dozen 911s. Dozens of ISI men have died. But the ISI is also still in bed with other parts of the syndicate like Lashkar e Tayyiba, the group that attacked Mumbai in 2008, and the Afghan Taliban that fights NATO. Despite years of American complaints, those partnerships are still intact. But the terrorists don't stay in the lanes the ISI wants them to stay in. For example, both LeT and the Taliban eulogized bin Laden after his death and mourned the departure of a great "hero" of their movements. The army's ambivalence about the jihad flows from its deep obsession with India. Pakistan - with American help - created the jihad in the 1980s to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. But from the start the ISI, commanded by then dictator Zia ul Huq and his brilliant ISI director general Akhtar Rahman, planned to use jihadi groups against India as well and build an international cadre of

mujahedin to help fight India. Over the decades the "S" Department of ISI established close connections with scores of jihadi groups, becoming a state within ISI, which in turn is a state within the army. The army decides national-security policy with little or no input from the political establishment. General Nadeem Taj exemplifies the story. Taj was former dictator Pervez Musharraf's right-hand man. They were together in 1999 when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif fired Musharraf as chief of army staff while he was returning by plane from a visit to Sri Lanka. Taj orchestrated the coup that put Musharraf in power from the plane and was rewarded with several key jobs including in 2006 command of the Kakul Military Academy in Abbottabad, Pakistan's West Point or Sandhurst. It was on his watch as commandant of the academy that bin Laden moved into his hideout less than a mile away. Was Taj clueless or complicit?

In September 2007 Taj became DG/ISI replacing General Ashfaq Kayani who was promoted chief of army staff (COAS). Taj lasted less than a year before he was removed under intense pressure from Washington. The Bush administration had concluded that Taj's ISI was directly involved in the bombing of the Indian embassy in Kabul in 2008 and was undermining the new drone program to attack Al Qaeda targets inside Pakistan by warning the terrorists before attacks. Taj was regarded as either unable to rein in the S Department or complicit in its duplicity. Nonetheless, Taj was promoted to command a key corps in the army, the highest command level short of COAS. Now he has been accused of complicity in the planning of the Mumbai attack by several family members of the American victims of the terror rampage in a New York court case. It was on Taj's watch as DG/ISI that the attack was carefully planned by the LeT and the targets, including the Chabad house where most of the Americans died, were selected. David Headley, an American of Pakistani origin, has testified that the ISI was directly involved in the

plot, and the US Department of Justice has assembled an impressive body of emails and other evidence that backs up his claims.

The jihadist penetrations of the army raise persistent questions about the security of Pakistan's nukes. According to a WikiLeaks State Department cable, from September 2009, France's national security adviser Jean-David Levitte told the American Embassy in Paris that France believes it is not secure. Levitte is one of the most astute diplomats in the world today, and he is almost certainly right.

The policies that would help wean the Pakistani army off its obsession with India and jihad are well known. A concerted effort to end the Indo-Pakistani conflict is essential. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, despite Mumbai, is trying to do just that. But it is a hard challenge. Talks to resolve the relatively simple issue of the disputed Siachen Glacier, the world's highest war zone at the roof of the Himalayas, failed again in May. The harder issue, Kashmir, will probably take years to resolve at best.

But we don't have years. Only a fortnight before the Abbottabad raid, General Kayani gave a speech at the military academy in the city, almost within earshot of bin Laden. In his remarks Kayani claimed the back of the militant syndicate in Pakistan had been broken and the army had triumphed. It is now clear he was badly mistaken.

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Article 6.

The New Republic

We shouldn't remove all U.S. troops from Iraq

Fouad Ajami

June 3, 2011 -- The U.S. war in Iraq has just been given an unexpected seal of approval. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, in what he billed as his "last major policy speech in Washington," has owned up to the gains in Iraq, to the surprise that Iraq has emerged as "the most advanced Arab democracy in the region." It was messy, this Iraqi democratic experience, but Iraqis "weren't in the streets shooting each other, the government wasn't in the streets shooting its people," Gates observed. The Americans and the Iraqis had not labored in vain; the upheaval of the Arab Spring has only underlined that a decent polity had emerged in the heart of the Arab world.

Robert Gates has not always been a friend of the Iraq war. He was a member in good standing, it should be recalled, of the Iraq Study Group, a panel of sages and foreign policy luminaries, co-chaired by James Baker and Lee Hamilton, who had taken a jaundiced view of the entire undertaking in Iraq. Their report endorsed a staged retreat from the Iraq war and an accommodation with Syria and Iran. When Gates later joined the cabinet of George W. Bush, after the "thumping" meted out to the Republicans in the congressional elections of 2006, his appointment was taken as a sharp break with the legacy of his predecessor, Donald Rumsfeld. It was an open secret that the outlook of the new taciturn man at the Department of Defense had no place in it for the spread of democracy in Arab lands. Over a long career, Secretary Gates had shared the philosophical approach of Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft, peers of his

and foreign policy “realists” who took the world as it is. They had styled themselves as unillusioned men who had thought that the Iraq war, and George W. Bush’s entire diplomacy of freedom, were projects of folly—romantic, self deluding undertakings in the Arab world.

To the extent that these men thought of the Greater Middle East, they entered it through the gateway of the Israeli-Palestinian struggle. The key to the American security dilemma in the region, they maintained, was an Arab-Israeli settlement that would drain the swamps of anti-Americanism and reconcile the Arab “moderates” to the Pax Americana. This was a central plank of the Iraq Study Group—the centrality of the Israeli-Palestinian issue to the peace of the region, and to the American position in the lands of Islam.

Nor had Robert Gates made much of a secret of his reading of Iran. He and Zbigniew Brzezinski had been advocates of “engaging” the regime in Tehran—this was part of the creed of the “realists.” It was thus remarkable that, in his last policy speech, Gates acknowledged a potentially big payoff of the American labor in Iraq: a residual U.S. military presence in that country as a way of monitoring the Iranian regime next door.

Is Gates right about both the progress in Iraq and the U.S. future in the country? In short, yes. The Iraqis needn’t trumpet the obvious fact in broad daylight, but the balance of power in the Persian Gulf would be altered for the better by a security arrangement between the United States and the government in Baghdad. The Sadrists have already labeled a potential accord with the Americans as a deal with the devil, but the Sadrists have no veto over the big national decisions in Baghdad. If the past is any guide, Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki has fought and won a major battle with the Sadrists; he crushed them on the battlefield but made room for them in his coalition government, giving them access to spoils and patronage, but on his terms.

Democracy, it turns out, has its saving graces: Nuri Al Maliki need not shoulder alone the burden of sustaining a security accord with the Americans. He has already made it known that the decision to keep American forces in Iraq would depend on the approval of the major political blocs in the country, and that the Sadrists would have no choice but to accept the majority's decision. The Sadrists would be left with the dubious honor of "resistance" to the Americans—but they would hold onto the privileges granted them by their access to state treasury and resources. Muqtada Al Sadr and the political functionaries around him know that life bereft of government patronage and the oil income of a centralized state is a journey into the wilderness.

There remains, of course, the pledge given by presidential candidate Barack Obama that a President Obama would liquidate the American military role in Iraq by the end of 2011. That pledge was one of the defining themes of his bid for the presidency, and it endeared him to the "progressives" within his own party, who had been so agitated and mobilized against the Iraq war. But Barack Obama is now the standard-bearer of America's power. He has broken with the "progressives" over Afghanistan, the use of drones in Pakistan, Guantánamo, military tribunals, and a whole host of national security policies that have (nearly) blurred the line between his policies and those of his predecessor. The left has grumbled, but, in the main, it has bowed to political necessity. At any rate, the fury on the left that once surrounded the Iraq war has been spent; a residual American presence in Iraq would fly under the radar of the purists within the ranks of the Democratic Party. They will be under no obligation to give it their blessing. That burden would instead be left to the centrists—and to the Republicans.

It is perhaps safe to assume that Robert Gates is carrying water for the Obama administration—an outgoing official putting out some

necessary if slightly unpalatable political truths. Gates is an intensely disciplined man; he has not been a free-lancer, but instead has forged a tight personal and political relationship with President Obama. His swan song in Washington is most likely his gift to those left with maintaining and defending the American position in Iraq and in the Persian Gulf.

It is a peculiarity of the American-Iraq relationship that it could yet be nurtured and upheld without fanfare or poetry. The Iraqis could make room for that residual American presence while still maintaining the fiction of their political purity and sovereignty. For their part, American officials could be discreet and measured; they needn't heap praise on Iraq nor take back what they had once said about the war—and its costs and follies. Iraq's neighbors would of course know what would come to pass. In Tehran, and in Arab capitals that once worried about an American security relationship with a Shia-led government in Baghdad, powers would have to make room for this American-Iraqi relationship. The Iranians in particular will know that their long border with Iraq is, for all practical purposes, a military frontier with American forces. It will be no consolation for them that this new reality so close to them is the work of their Shia kinsmen, who come to unexpected power in Baghdad. The enemy will have a say on how things will play out for American forces in Iraq. Iran and its Iraqi proxies can be expected to do all they can to make the American presence as bloody and costly as possible. A long, leaky border separates Iran from Iraq; movement across it is quite easy for Iranian agents and saboteurs. They can come in as "pilgrims," and there might be shades of Lebanon in the 1980s, big deeds of terror that target the American forces. The Iraqi government will be called upon to do a decent job of tracking and hunting down saboteurs and terrorists, as this kind of intelligence is not a task for American soldiers. This will take will and political courage on the

part of Iraq's rulers. They will have to speak well of the Americans and own up to the role that American forces are playing in the protection and defense of Iraq. They can't wink at anti-Americanism or give it succor.

Even in the best of worlds, an American residual presence in Iraq will have its costs and heartbreak. But the United States will have to be prepared for and accept the losses and adversity that are an integral part of staying on, rightly, in so tangled and difficult a setting.

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Article 7.

Asharq Alawsat

Iran: The fight at the top heats up

Amir Taheri

03 June 2011 -- To jump or not to jump? For Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, that has become the question.

Not long ago, Ahmadinejad was regarded as the most powerful of the five presidents the Islamic Republic in its three decades of existence. With the opposition "green" movement almost silenced, his administration faced no serious challenge within the Khomeinist movement establishment. Ahmadinejad also marked some success selling his doctrine of "Iranian Islam" as a substitute for the hotchpotch concocted by Ayatollah Khomeini. Translated into 30 languages, his authorised biography, "Ahmadinejad: The Miracle of the Century", was supposed to have sold a million copies.

His entourage boasted that, in the 2009 presidential election he would have won 35 million, rather than 25 million accorded him. The entourage claimed that, Ahmadinejad lost 10 million votes because of his association with "Supreme Guide" Ali Khamenei.

The entourage also claimed that Ahmadinejad supporters are poised to win a two-thirds majority in next year's parliamentary election.

Today, things look different.

Tehran is full of rumors that, deeply depressed, Ahmadinejad may be thinking of stepping down.

The media controlled by Khamenei maintain a daily barrage of attacks against the president.

The other day, the newspaper Kayhan ran this headline: "Ahmadinejad on Way to Anathema (Takfir)".

Media attacks may not be the main source of Ahmadinejad's reported depression. Hardly a day passes without Khamenei vetoing a decision

of the president.

Ahmadinejad wanted to sack Heydar Moslehi, the Minister of Intelligence and Security. Khamenei intervened to reinstate the minister whose incompetence had become proverbial.

Ahmadinejad sulked for 11 days before swallowing "the biter pill" and re-admitting the mullah Moslehi to the Cabinet.

Ahmadinejad wanted to merge four ministries to cut bureaucratic costs. Khamenei intervened to refer the matter to the Islamic Majlis, Iran's fake parliament.

The "Supreme Guide" also ordered that new ministers submit to a vote of confidence in the Majlis.

The message that Ahmadinejad is in office at Khamenei's pleasure is circulated by the latter's entourage. The other day, Muhammad-Reza Bahonar, a Khamenei mouthpiece in the Majlis, told the press that the "Supreme Guide" wanted "to retain the president until the natural end of his administration" in 2013.

The media controlled by Khamenei miss no opportunity to brand Ahmadinejad's closest associate, Esfandiar Masha'i, as "an enemy of Islam", a "Persian nationalist", and even "an agent of Imperialism." In a statement circulated in Tehran last week, Hezbollah, a group controlled by security services, threatened to kill Masha'i.

At the same time, Khamenei has ordered the Larijani brothers to prepare the "after Ahmadinejad". The eldest brother, Ali-Ardeshir, the Speaker of the Majlis, is already casting himself as the next president of the republic. The second brother, Sadeq, who wears the clothes of a mullah, is using his position as Chief Justice to threaten Ahmadinejad with "legal consequences" of the government's unspecified decisions. A third Larijani brother, Muhammad-Jawad, has informed British contacts that with "Ahmadinejad's imminent end", there would be "a new beginning in Iranian foreign policy." In a bid to repair relations with Riyadh, Ahmadinejad wanted to

dispatch Foreign Minister Ali-Akbar Salehi to Saudi Arabia for a "working visit". Khamenei signaled his opposition through newspapers controlled by his office.

For weeks, Ahmadinejad tried to appoint a Governor for the Fars province. His choice was chased away by Khamenei henchmen laying siege to the governor's office in Shiraz.

Hardly a day passes without a mullah, including some on his payroll until recently, attacking Ahmadinejad. Often, it is clear that Khamenei offered a fatter envelope to the mullah concerned.

The military are also ranged against Ahmadinejad. Once regarded as Ahmadinejad's principal supporters, Revolutionary Guard generals are appearing on TV to denounce the president's "deviant tendency." Even on minor issues, Khamenei is advertising his authority.

Last week, Ahmadinejad's office approved a decision by the Iranian Academy to replace the French word "police", in use in Iran since the 19th century, with the Persian word "passvar."

This was part of Ahmadinejad's decision to "purify" the Persian vocabulary by getting rid of Arabic and other foreign words.

Khamenei vetoed the decision as "another sign of Iranian nationalism" which he regards as a threat to Islam.

Few in Tehran missed the irony of a mullah defending a French word against a Persian equivalent.

Pro-Khamenei newspapers drop hints about "secret contacts" between Ahmadinejad and the "green" opposition to form a front against Khamenei. There is talk of former President Hashemi Rafsanjani setting aside his old hatred of Ahmadinejad in a bid to isolate the "Supreme Guide".

Finally, security forces have arrested over 50 members of Ahmadinejad's entourage, including some close friends, on charges of "spreading unauthorized beliefs".

What does all this mean?

There is no doubt that Ahmadinejad and Khamenei are at loggerheads. This is no surprise. As explained in a previous column all presidents have had trouble with the "Supreme Guide" of the time. Sharing power at the summit is always problematic. Unable to fly, a double-headed eagle often tears itself apart. Initially, Ahmadinejad angered Khamenei by scripting his group out of numerous juicy contracts and business deals. However, for the first time, the fight may also be about something more than personal power.

Ahmadinejad has realised the bankruptcy of the Khomeinist discourse and is trying to replace it with a pseudo-nationalistic, and perhaps more dangerous, narrative in which the mullahs have no place. Khamenei may be trying to push Ahmadinejad to the brink in the hope that the president would lose his nerve and throw in the towel. However, Ahmadinejad might prove a tougher cookie than Khamenei apparently hopes. My guess is that Ahmadinejad will not jump and, if pushed, would not flee into exile as did the first President of the Islamic Republic Abol-Hassan Banisadr. Nor would Ahmadinejad kowtow to the "Supreme Guide" as did Rafsanjani and Muhammad Khatami. What about assassination? That is what happened to Muhammad-Ali Raja'i, the second President of the Islamic Republic. That Khamenei is attacking Ahmadinejad every day is a sign that the "Supreme Guide" is scared. According to a Persian proverb, like a snake, a mullah is most dangerous when frightened.

Amir Taheri was born in Ahvaz, southwest Iran, and educated in Tehran, London and Paris. Taheri's latest book "The Persian Night" is published by Encounter Books in London and New York.