

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST:  
ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

by

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## ABSTRACT

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The U.S. military presence in the Middle East has assumed a great strategic role in the affairs of that geopolitical region. The permanent presence of U.S. military forces in the Middle East has created a new set of parameters for future U.S. strategy in the Middle East region and specifically in the region of the Arabian/Persian Gulf. This SRP examines some of the U.S. national security interests and policies that have established a permanent military presence in the Middle East and the interactions and consequences of its existence in that region. This SRP recommends the permanent withdrawal of U.S. military forces from the Middle East and the Gulf, and the pursuit of U.S. strategic goals in the region through socioeconomic means and the impartial application of international law.



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## THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST: ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

The U.S. military presence in the Middle East has assumed a great strategic role in the affairs of that geopolitical region following the Coalition's military intervention against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein in the spring of 2003. The permanent presence of U.S. military forces in the Middle East has created a new set of parameters for future U.S. foreign policy in the broader Middle East region and specifically in the areas of the Arabian/Persian Gulf (Gulf). However, the permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East in general and in the Gulf in particular creates its own dynamics that not only affect U.S. national security interests and strategy, but also have broader global implications. This paper is intended to examine some of the U.S. national security interests and policies that appear to have established a permanent military presence in the Middle East. The paper also provides a summary examination of the regional and global interactions and consequences that a permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East creates in and of itself.

The paper also examines certain strategic parameters that relate to the scenarios of maintaining or partially or totally withdrawing U.S. military forces from the Middle East region. The paper addresses certain aspects of the force structure and geographic disposition that the permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East may continue to have, and the potentially resulting regional implications. The paper also discusses potential time frames for the partial or total withdrawal of U.S. military forces from the Middle East in general and specifically from the Gulf region. Finally, the paper addresses whether the U.S. can achieve its desired geopolitical national security goals in the region of the Middle East through the use of means other than by maintaining a permanent military presence in that sensitive and historically volatile region.

### **BACKGROUND**

The United States political and military involvement in the Middle East in modern times started during and immediately after WW II. After the creation of the State of Israel – which was opposed by a number of Arab states including Egypt – United States involvement in the Middle East largely followed the dividing lines of the Cold War. The Superpower rivalry between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) also took hold in bilateral and multilateral relations in the Middle East. The emergence of the modern Arab states, foreign interventions in the region such as the 1956 Suez Crisis, armed conflict between certain Arab states and Israel, and the insoluble problem of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict soon led to the establishment of United States strategic interests in the region of the Near East. Currently, the *security of the State of Israel is an inherent objective in the overall national security strategy of*

*the United States.* It is the author's opinion that this objective often conflicts with other United States policy goals in the Middle East.

United States strategic interests in the Gulf following the end of WW II primarily centered on the availability and exploitation of its oil resources for the advancement of the industrialized economies in the West. The United States supported the moderate Arab monarchies in the Gulf such as Saudi Arabia, and the United States was instrumental in overthrowing the popularly elected Iranian government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq in August 1953 that had attempted to nationalize the Iranian oil resources.<sup>1</sup> The installation of the conservative regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi as the Shah of Iran established the strategic relationship between the U.S. and Iran in the 1960s and for most of the 1970s, and made Iran into a part of the Western containment barrier against both the U.S.S.R. and more nationalistic Arab regimes in the Middle East that preferred to be part of the non-aligned Third World movement during the Cold War; e.g., Iraq. The United States maintained a small permanent military presence in the Gulf region during the 1960s and until the late-1970s, with the exception of occasional deployments that were designed to bolster the position of friendly governments in the Gulf. For example, in 1963 the United States had sent United States Air Force (USAF) North American F-100 Super Saber fighters to Saudi Arabia in reaction to the involvement of Egyptian military forces in the then ongoing civil war in neighboring Yemen. During the 1960s, the U.S. also started providing extensive military assistance to both Saudi Arabia and Iran.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1950s and up to the June 1967 Middle East War the United States attempted to follow a more balanced approach in its bilateral relations with the Arab states and Israel in the Middle East. The political intervention of the United States Administration of President Dwight Eisenhower in resolving the 1956 Middle East crisis against British, French and Israeli desires is well known. However, the Israeli military victory in the Middle East War of June 1967 and well organized domestic political pressure within the United States erroneously prompted United States policy makers to increasingly define U.S. national security interests in the Middle East around the national security interests and the foreign policy goals of the State of Israel. This approach was also easily compatible with the Cold War dynamics and Superpower rivalries in the Middle East region. The United States viewed the Arab states with socialist regimes as being "Soviet clients" since most if not all of them were the recipients of Soviet military and economic assistance, e.g., Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. This switch in United States policy in the region did not lend itself to resolving of the festering Middle East crises that largely arose from the Israeli illegitimate and internationally condemned occupation of Arab territories, e.g., Sinai, Gaza, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights nor did it

address the increasing national aspirations of the Palestinian people under the banner of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and its charismatic leader Yassir Arafat.

The introduction of new and advanced United States military technology transfers to Israel in the late-1960s had the unintended consequence of escalating the Arab-Israeli conflict. The introduction of the long-range McDonnell Douglas (now Boeing) F-4E Phantom II and A-4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers in the *Heil Ha' Avir* (Israeli Air Force) inventory led Israel to seek strategic level military superiority over its Arab adversaries by conducting deep penetration air raids into Egypt.<sup>3</sup> Egypt sought and received increased levels of Soviet military assistance especially in missile air defense weapons systems. Inevitably this resulted in the escalated conflict of the 1968-1972 War of Attrition that became the prelude to the October 1973 Middle East War.

The October 1973 War resulted in a massive United States resupply effort of depleted Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and *Heil Ha' Avir* equipment and munitions inventories largely through an air transport bridge during the hostilities. The U.S.S.R. also resupplied Egypt and Syria both through the air, sea and land transportation of military materiel.<sup>4</sup> The respective United States and Soviet resupply efforts, the situation on the ground, and the Soviet political demands that were designed to implement the UN cease fire resolutions, brought the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to a collision course that culminated in a U.S. worldwide conventional and nuclear forces alert.<sup>5</sup> The October 1973 Middle East War placed the United States in the role of the sole supplier of military assistance to Israel.

The 1973 Middle East War and United States policies in the Middle East resulted in the 1973-1974 Arab oil embargo and in subsequent increases in the world market prices for Middle East oil. By 1975, members of the United States government were examining possible military intervention scenarios in the Gulf so that reasonably priced oil supplies could be secured, and the U.S. used its strategic relationship with Iran as a balancing factor against a potentially activist coalition of Arab states in the Gulf.<sup>6</sup> The 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace accords that were achieved through the personal initiative of then Egyptian President Anwar Sadat with the backing of United States President Jimmy Carter removed a potential source of armed conflict in the Middle East and established Egypt as a friendly state to U.S. interests in the region.<sup>7</sup>

The Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, the subsequent Iranian student takeover of the United States Embassy in Tehran, and the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan significantly altered the geopolitical map of the Gulf region and led to a corresponding reevaluation of U.S. national security strategy. In the late 1970s the Carter Administration established the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), while the Reagan Administration concentrated the United States

military responsibilities for the Middle East and especially the Gulf region within the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM).<sup>8</sup>

The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon exposed the weaknesses in the United States-Israeli strategic relationship and demonstrated the risks for U.S. military involvement in asymmetric warfare in the Middle East. While the United States maintained a political position of an impartial peacekeeper in Lebanon during the 1982-1983, the presence of its military peacekeeping forces was actually welcomed. However, when the United States openly sided with Israeli national security interests regarding the desired outcome of the ongoing Lebanese civil conflicts, i.e., support for the Maronite Christian factions, the U.S. military forces in Lebanon became the targets of asymmetric warfare attacks with disastrous consequences that hastened their withdrawal.<sup>9</sup>

The United States exploited the territorial ambitions of the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein against neighboring Iran, and assisted the Iraqi military campaigns during the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran war through a variety of material and diplomatic means, including financial credits and the provision of intelligence obtained through U.S. strategic satellite reconnaissance assets.<sup>10</sup> The Iraq-Iran war also provided the United States with the opportunity to establish a *permanent* military presence in the Gulf. For example, following Kuwait's request the U.S. Navy began escorting reflagged tankers flying the U.S. flag through the Gulf.<sup>11</sup> During these missions, the U.S. Navy undertook combat actions against Iranian forces that interfered with the navigation in the Gulf.<sup>12</sup> During the Iraq-Iran war, the Reagan Administration also engaged in the covert "Irangate" transfer of TOW anti-tank missiles and HAWK anti-aircraft missiles to Iran in exchange for the release of hostages that were held by certain extremist factions in Lebanon.<sup>13</sup>

During the 1980s the United States Administration under President Ronald Reagan also established a strategic relationship axis between the U.S., Israel and Turkey. This relationship not only followed the traditional boundaries of the Cold War containment of the U.S.S.R., but also extended the concept of strategic containment to such countries and regimes as the Arab Republic of Syria and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Furthermore, this strategic axis established an important military and intelligence relationship between Israel and Turkey, the only Muslim country with a secular system of governance that is also a NATO member in the Middle East.<sup>14</sup>

The 1990-1991 Gulf War and the first defeat of the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein by the military forces of a truly international and UN sanctioned Coalition, led to the permanent establishment of United States military forces in the Middle East region, and the formulation of U.S. defense cooperation agreements with a number of the Arab monarchies in the Gulf.

Before the end of the Cold War the United States military presence in the Gulf was combined with USCENTCOM's expanding responsibilities that reflected the U.S. strategic interests in such regions as Central Asia, the Red Sea, and the Horn of Africa.<sup>15</sup> Thus, these military responsibilities encompassed former Soviet republics in Central Asia with ample oil deposits, and certain geographic chokepoints for transiting oil supplies. By 2001 the majority of the 18,500-21,000 military personnel under USCENTCOM were deployed in the Gulf region.<sup>16</sup>

Although the permanent United States military presence in various Arab countries of the Gulf was designed as an instrument of U.S. containment policies against Iraq and Iran, this military presence in itself was generating its own political and ideological cultural-religious dynamics that would later manifest themselves in the terrorist attack against the U.S. on September 11, 2001. The presence of United States military forces in the Gulf, and the U.S. military cooperation with the Gulf's Arab states has been and continues to be one of the cornerstones of the ideological foundation of the Al Qaeda movement and its founder Osama Bin Laden. Traditionally, Bin Laden and Al Qaeda have viewed the United States military presence in the Gulf as "illegitimate occupation" of "Muslim territory." Using certain interpretations of the Islamic faith, Bin Laden has called for popular resistance against the United States military presence in the Gulf. Bin Laden has echoed content of many fatwas calling for a defensive jihad against the United States because of its invasion of Iraq. Osama bin Laden has also argued followers to rise up against the United States ...a sign that some Islamic moderates are finding common cause with the extremists .<sup>17</sup>

The United States military presence in the Gulf expanded exponentially when the U.S.-led but not UN sanctioned limited international Coalition carried out the *Iraqi Freedom* operations that toppled the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein in the spring of 2003. Since 2003, the United States military occupation forces in Iraq are engaged in asymmetric warfare against local guerilla movements while trying to support the "nation building" of a "new" Iraq. The conflict in Iraq has become a pole of attraction for Muslim guerilla fighters that become loyal to Al Qaeda's ideological positions. These guerilla fighters see the armed resistance against the United States and Coalition military forces in Iraq as "legitimate self-defense" against the "unlawful foreign invasion and military occupation of Muslim territory." Many of these fighters perceive that it is their "religious duty" to clandestinely travel to Iraq in order to participate in this "armed struggle" and even give their lives for their cause.<sup>18</sup>

## ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

### U.S. STRATEGIC NATIONAL SECURITY GOALS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The United States military presence in the Middle East in general, and specifically in the Gulf, serves a number of U.S. strategic national security goals. Some of these goals are:

- The security of oil supplies and reserves that exist within the territories controlled by Arab countries in the Gulf, and the transit security of these supplies through the Gulf and other sea routes that are considered to be strategic “chokepoints,” e.g., the Suez Canal;
- The post-war shaping of a U.S.-friendly Iraq;
- The containment of the Islamic Republic of Iran and potential future “regime change” actions in the region of the Middle East.
- Support to the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign in and stabilization of Afghanistan; and
- Mutual support to the expanding U.S. strategic presence in the oil-rich region of the Caspian Sea, and in Central Asia.<sup>19</sup>

Since the 1970s, the United States has significantly lessened its dependency on imported oil from the Gulf. However, United States oil imports from the Gulf states including Iran still accounted for 2.425 million barrels a day in 2003, or 25.09% of the total U.S. oil imports in that year.<sup>20</sup> The United States has a strategic interest in safeguarding the oil supplies, reserves, and flows from and through the Gulf since threats to their security translate into higher oil prices in the world markets and associated impacts both for the U.S. and world economies. This strategic interest in and of itself supports the continuation of a *permanent* United States military presence in the broader Middle East and especially in the Gulf even if the situation in Iraq becomes normalized. However, the United States will continue to accrue the political and ideological cost of such a presence among the societies of various Middle East countries and the Gulf states in particular.

For example, although the United States military presence in the Gulf is supported and tolerated by some of the Arab Gulf states, e.g., Kuwait, it is viewed with mixed feelings or outright resentment by others.<sup>21</sup> Following the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Accords, the United States has established a viable strategic relationship with Egypt. This relationship not only facilitates the transit of United States military forces through the Suez Canal, but it also provides security for commerce and important oil supplies that transit through the same route that links

the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, the strategic relationship between Egypt and the United States has substantially removed regional rivalries and the possibility of armed conflict between Egypt and Israel, and has greatly assisted in the normalization of political and economic relations between these two countries.

The scale of the United States military presence in the Middle East is highly dependent on its mission tasks and commitments in stabilizing Iraq and on the implementation of a U.S. "exit strategy." Currently, the United States military strength in Iraq has fluctuated between approximately 138,000 and 150,000 personnel. This number increased during the Iraqi elections in January 2005.<sup>22</sup> The United States military forces in Iraq are engaged in asymmetric warfare with a tenacious armed insurgency that is carried out by multiple groups with diverse ideological bases. During the armed conflict in the city of Najaf in 2004, the Shiite guerillas of Ayatollah Moktada Al Sadr had entered into "alliances" with Sunni guerilla groups and former Hussein regime military officers provided training to Al Sadr's "Mahdi Army."<sup>23</sup> As stated previously, Muslim volunteer fighters that are opposed to United States policies in the Middle East are entering Iraq with the help of transnational networks that are or are not affiliated with Al Qaeda. These diverse groups are ideologically united in their uniform opposition to United States policies in the Middle East that include the unbalanced U.S. strategic relationship with Israel (which directly supports the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory), and the U.S. military presence in the Gulf generally and in Iraq in particular.<sup>24</sup> The same groups also oppose the United States military presence in Afghanistan, as well as U.S. military assistance operations against Al Qaeda that are carried out in the context of the U.S. global counter-terrorism campaign.

The United States "exit strategy" from Iraq and the gradual reduction of the U.S. military presence there need to be accomplished within the framework of the stated U.S. policy goals of maintaining a unified and democratic Iraq. The United States will be able to substantially undermine the ideological foundation of the Iraqi insurgency if it were to reevaluate its strategic relationship with Israel in a more balanced fashion vis-à-vis the Arab world, i.e., solutions in Baghdad are not divorced from a permanent solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.<sup>25</sup> It is interesting to note, that the stated strategic United States policy goals for a unified and democratic Iraq are not necessarily compatible with Israeli national security strategy in the broader Middle East region that can lead to fragmented Arab states that will become the hotbeds of Al Qaeda operatives.<sup>26</sup> The United States also needs to change its unilateral policies in Iraq, and actively seek the involvement of the UN and other international actors, including nations of the Arab and Muslim world in stabilizing Iraq.<sup>27</sup>

The United States military forces in the Middle East and the Gulf participate as an instrument of the containment policies against Iran. Current United States concerns center on Iran's nuclear program and its potential covert development of nuclear weapons. The United States also worries that the governing regime in Iran will use its influence among the co-religionist Shiites so that Iraq will continue to be a battleground against U.S. national security interests. Rather than pursuing a meaningful dialogue with Iran over these issues, the Bush Administration appears to be focusing on military options that can be exercised against Iran's nuclear program and facilities, in potential cooperation with Israel.<sup>28</sup> However, the exercise of preemptive military options by the United States and/or Israel against Iran's nuclear program will not be politically decisive and may prompt Iran to more aggressively and relatively cheaply intervene against U.S. interests in Iraq.<sup>29</sup> There is also the risk that Iran will use its own mobile theater ballistic missiles (TBMs) in response (the Iranian *Shahab-3B* TBMs can reach Israel) or obstruct navigation in the Gulf.<sup>30</sup> Such actions will lead to an escalation of armed hostilities in an already volatile region and will result in rapidly increasing oil prices. In view of the United States military commitments in Iraq, sufficient U.S. military resources for a unilateral sustained ground campaign against Iran are not available. A realistic approach would be for the U.S. to recognize that Iran is an actor in the Gulf region – and in the oil-rich Caspian Sea region - and that a meaningful and *direct* dialogue should start with the regime in Tehran.

Most recently, the Administration of President Bush has adopted a dual but conflicting policy approach vis-à-vis Iran and its nuclear program. Following the February 2005 visit of President Bush in Europe, the U.S. indicated that it will cooperate with the collective diplomatic effort of France, Germany and the UK that represent the European Union (EU) to diffuse a potential crisis over Iran's nuclear program. Iran has agreed to the EU proposals for a temporary suspension of Iranian uranium enrichment activities while maintaining its legal right under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to resume uranium enrichment under applicable international safeguards for its civilian nuclear program at some yet undefined future date. However, at the same time the United States has proceeded with planning for military strikes against Iran and reconnaissance missions targeting the Iranian nuclear program facilities. The United States is also insisting on the referral of Iran's alleged violations of the NPT to the UN Security Council for the imposition of possible sanctions despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has not established any concrete and credible evidence that Iran is covertly proceeding with the development of nuclear weapons in its territory.<sup>31</sup> This dual track policy has many similarities with the unfounded allegations about Iraq's programs for weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that fueled the 2003 United States military intervention in



that country.<sup>32</sup> This dual track policy also transmits confusing signals to its intended recipients among the Iranian leadership and can prove counterproductive in two respects. First, Iran can accelerate its covert program for developing its nuclear weapons capability if such a program exists, since nuclear weapons *do provide* a measure of deterrence, e.g., the nuclear weapons program of the People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Second, United States military action against the Iranian nuclear program will politically reinforce the more conservative elements within the Iranian leadership and will retard the Iranian reformist and pro-democratic movement that is currently headed by the outgoing President Mohammed Khatami.

The United States military intervention in Iraq has considerably weakened the U.S. antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan both in terms of military and intelligence resources.<sup>33</sup> This campaign has not succeeded in uprooting Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The lack of economic development in Afghanistan is transforming the country into a "narco-state" where Al Qaeda terrorism and civil conflict between rival warlords can easily flourish. This development is likely to complicate the anti-terrorism missions and tasks of United States military forces and distract them in thankless anti-narcotics operations.<sup>34</sup> The narcotics traffic originating in Afghanistan can also further hinder United States anti-terrorism efforts in the neighboring countries of Central Asia where extremist Islamic groups have been active since the 1990s.<sup>35</sup>

The United States military presence in the Middle East and the Gulf is not independent from the increasing U.S. military presence in the oil-rich region of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. The U.S. Administration of President Clinton was instrumental in the implementation of the Baku (Azerbaijan) – Tbilisi (Georgia) – Ceyhan (Turkey) strategic oil pipeline project that will route Azeri oil to Western markets. This pipeline project bypasses existing Russian and Iranian oil pipeline networks. However, it increases USCENTCOM commitments in an unstable region which traditionally has been within the strategic sphere of influence of the Russian Federation. These military commitments are closely identified with the security of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline sectors that transit through Azeri and Georgian territory.<sup>36</sup>

#### ISLAM, THE U.S., AND THE WEST IN THE MIDDLE EAST

There is a fundamental lack of understanding and communication between foreign policy makers in United States Administrations and the political regimes, societies and cultures in the Arab states of the Middle East. This gap in understanding and communication has been exacerbated since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack against the United States, and the subsequent U.S. military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. This gap can be explained by outlining certain parameters that affect commonly held United States perceptions about the

Middle East. First, United States policy makers operate in a strictly secular democratic system of government where the separation of religion(s) and the state is defined by the U.S. Constitution, and is strictly enforced. The Islamic religion is strongly interlinked to various degrees with the functioning of most Arab governments and their respective societies.<sup>37</sup> Although many Arab governments operate on the basis of legal civil codes, the Islamic religion still exercises a parallel and strong influence on governmental institutions. Second, Arab regimes generally do not function along the lines of United States and Western conventionally accepted principles and processes of democratic governance. Currently, the United States Administration of President Bush holds the Iraqi elections of January 2005 as an example of the route to democracy for the Arab states in the Middle East.

However, the present United States Administration public pronouncements about the “march of democracy” in the Middle East must be contrasted with the U.S. strategic interests regarding *stability* in the region. For example, Algeria implemented democratic reforms and staged multi-party local and national elections in 1990 and 1991. The winners of these elections under the banner of the Islamic Salvation Front were the advocates for the imposition of Islamic (Shari’a) law in Algeria. The Algerian army staged a coup in 1991 forestalling a potentially legitimate political victory of radical Islam, and Algeria descended into a lengthy civil war during the 1992-1999 period. This conflict killed approximately 150,000 people and caused at least \$2 billion in damaged infrastructure.<sup>38</sup> In view of the Algerian example, and the religious affiliation between the Iraqi Shiite Muslims (who constitute the 60% majority of the population), and the Iranian Shiites, various experts already express worries on whether the Iraqi Shiite majority will abide by the conventional Western principles of democratic governance and political power sharing with the Iraqi Sunni Arabs and the more distinct Kurdish ethnic group in Northern Iraq.<sup>39</sup>

The United States and its “Coalition of the Willing” military intervention in Iraq has reinforced the ideological, religious, cultural, and ethnic convictions of those who adhere to the positions of radical Islam. Osama Bin Laden himself has characterized this intervention as a “gift” to the Al Qaeda movement.<sup>40</sup> The ideology and the following of radical Islam in the broader Middle East has historically been identified as part of the struggle by the Muslim Arab nations against the traditional European dominant colonial powers that have since departed the region, e.g., Great Britain, France, and Italy.

The United States as part of its anti-Soviet containment policies during the Cold War supported the promotion of traditional Islam in countries such as Saudi Arabia and, thus, the spread of its more radical interpretations (Wahabbism). The United States and Saudi Arabia

(with Pakistani cooperation), were the main supporters of the Islamic Arab *Mujahideen* guerilla fighters (including Bin Laden) who volunteered to combat the invasion forces of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan during the 1980s. Following the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, these *Mujahideen* became the nucleus of Bin Laden's Al Qaeda movement in many countries within the Middle East, while Afghanistan itself descended into the rule of the Taliban who provided a future base of operations for Al Qaeda's disciples.

During the 1990s, the former Arab Afghan War *Mujahideen* and the Al Qaeda movement declared that Arab regimes friendly to the U.S. are "illegitimate" and took concrete steps to overthrow them by force. For example, Egypt fought a successful but costly and long domestic counter guerilla campaign against Islamic radicals during the 1990s. The U.S. failed to recognize that radical Islamic movements in the Middle East could evolve into entities with their own strategic agendas that strongly opposed the U.S. influence in the region, and the U.S.-Israeli strategic relationship.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, the Israeli operational tactic of supporting Islamic movements in order to counter the more secular political influence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the occupied West Bank and Gaza during the 1970s, gave rise to the Hamas radical Islamic movement. Hamas has developed into a serious challenge for the achievement of permanent peace between the Palestinians and Israel, since Hamas' ideological principles substantially differ from the policy of the established Palestinian Authority, Israel, and the regional strategic goals of the U.S.

The current United States strategy in the Middle East is at a crossroads. The official pronouncements of the United States Administration of President Bush appear to indicate that increased democratization in the Middle East will lead to regional peace and stability. For example, in his February 2005 State of the Union address to the U.S. Congress, President Bush called for the democratization of the governing regimes in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Although increased democratization of Arab regimes can translate in the gradual ideological undermining of radical Islam within Arab societies, the process of democratization must be handled carefully so that in and of itself it does not result in the undesirable state of political and social instability within the Arab nation-states, e.g., a repeat of the Algerian experience, or a radicalization along the lines of the 1978-1979 Iranian Revolution. Furthermore, this process must *have and project* political, social, cultural, and *religious* legitimacy. In other words, this democratization process must be of and *viewed* as having a *purely domestic* origin. As the Iraqi elections of January 2005 demonstrated, the application of democratic processes in Arab Middle Eastern societies is fully compatible with the fundamental principles of the Islamic religion. Indeed, the Shiite Arabs in Iraq – who constitute the majority of the population – willingly participated in the Iraqi elec-

tions under the guidance of their *supreme religious* leader Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, who, himself, was *not* a political candidate. Similarly, a long history of elections in Lebanon demonstrates that various religious, ethnic, and political factions can participate in democratic processes in Arab states of the Middle East. These examples also demonstrate that Islamic religious leaders in Arab countries can play an important role and exert a positive influence in the formulation of democratic processes by publicly declaring that such processes are fully compatible with the teachings of Islam. However, if the initiation and implementation of democratization processes in the Arab nation-states were viewed as the result of U.S. demands or interference, then these processes will suffer from the public perception of illegitimacy. For example, the large degree of abstention of the Iraqi Sunni Arabs from the January 2005 elections was mainly caused by the perception that the process itself was illegitimate since it was imposed by the military forces of a foreign invasion and occupation and its domestic collaborators. Finally, the initiation and implementation of democratic processes in the Middle East Arab countries must still be based on the premise of *strong central governments*. Strong central governments can guarantee the successful and *impartial* implementation of democratization initiatives and the *peaceful and stable transition* to a democratic system. It must be kept in mind that not all of the Arab states in the Middle East enjoy domestic homogeneous characteristics in terms of religious affiliation, e.g., Sunnis v. Shiites, and regional and tribal loyalties. Only strong central governments can guarantee the necessary degree of security, stability and impartiality so that the process of democratization does not degenerate to domestic instability and conflict.

The concept of strong central governments in Middle Eastern Arab countries is the opposite of what certain neoconservative members in the current leadership of the U.S. Department of Defense were advocating in the 1990s in their proposals for the long-term strategic national security of Israel. These proposals centered on the fragmentation of Arab states (especially of Iraq and Syria) and the remaking of the Middle East map.<sup>42</sup> However, these proposals were developed when the strategic threat of Al Qaeda was largely unnoticed in U.S. foreign policy calculations. As the situation in Iraq has demonstrated, instability and conflict in the Middle East are magnets for the attraction of radical Islamists with or without affiliation with Al Qaeda. Fragmented Arab states are certain to become such poles of attraction. However, United States public pronouncements on democratization in the Middle East parallel positions that advocate “regime change” in countries such as Syria and Iran. Thus, the United States positions are inherently and dangerously inconsistent since violent “regime changes” in the Middle East are certain to serve the strategic long-term goals of Al Qaeda for continuous armed

conflict and instability in the region, and may negatively affect the geopolitical interests of traditional U.S. allies. For example, Turkey is still very apprehensive about United States intentions in the region and the creation of a semi-autonomous Kurdish region in Northern Iraq (bordering Turkey), and has prepared to militarily intervene in order to safeguard its own geopolitical interests.<sup>43</sup>

## **THE NEED AND THE NATURE OF THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

### **A PERMANENT U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?**

The current experience in Iraq demonstrates that the presence of United States military forces in the Middle East has provided radical Islamists with the ideological and political justification for an armed struggle against the American presence and against the associated governmental structure that is developing within Iraq. It is obvious that the current Iraqi government is not capable of maintaining security and stability in the country in the face of multiple guerilla movements. The premature withdrawal of the United States military forces from Iraq, no matter how much such a withdrawal is desirable both in Washington, DC, and in Arab capitals, may lead to civil war in Iraq, and the fragmentation of the country among its Sunni Arab, Shiite Arab, and Kurdish population elements, with the grave consequence that radical Islam and Al Qaeda are likely to establish a new permanent presence and base of operations. Furthermore, such a civil war is almost certain to cause a Turkish military intervention in Northern Iraq, and the initiation of Turkish-Kurdish hostilities in that region for a long time to come.

The avoidance of civil war in Iraq and the establishment of a viable even if not absolutely perfect system of democratic governance can lead to gradual stability in the country if the Iraqis are *willing and capable* by themselves to face up to the challenges of the domestic insurgency that threatens the viability of Iraq as a unified and democratic state. The stability and viability of a unified Iraqi state is interlinked with the prospects of a staged withdrawal of the United States military forces from Iraq. In this respect, the United States role in Iraq will continue to influence both the domestic security situation, e.g., in the counter-insurgency role, and the formulation of the future national security structure within Iraq. This role must be exercised with caution and *credible neutrality* so that delicate political, ethnic, religious, and social balances are maintained. For example, the United States, prior to the departure of the majority of its military forces from Iraq, must address the role of the organized Kurdish *pesh merga* military units in Northern Iraq, and to what extent such forces can serve the national security interests of the central Iraqi government while accommodating the legitimate regional security interests of the Iraqi Kurds. The most recent demands of the Kurds for self-government in Northern Iraq include the

authority to keep the 100,000-strong *pesh merga* militia, “in defiance of the American goal of dismantling ethnic and sectarian armies.”<sup>44</sup> Similarly, the United States role in countering the domestic insurgency must not create the conditions or provide the perception that the counter-insurgency effort is an inter-ethnic or inter-religious domestic conflict with the U.S. taking sides, e.g., Shiite Arab and Kurdish Iraqis with “U.S. help” v. Sunni Arab Iraqis.

Normalization of Iraq will permit the United States to withdraw the bulk of its ground forces from Iraq, including its heavier mechanized and armored formations within a time frame of one to two years. However, the overall strategic situation in the Middle East and in the Gulf, and United States national security interests will dictate whether these formations will be totally or partially withdrawn from the region. Current United States strategy centers on the continuous strategic “containment” of Iran. Although Iran remains a strategic threat for the Arab monarchies of the Gulf region, Iran is currently more preoccupied with a combined threat from both the United States and Israel. It is certain that Iran will retaliate both with WMDs and asymmetric warfare against United States and Israeli interests in the region if the Iranian nuclear program was to suffer from U.S. or Israeli military strikes.

Since the United States strategic goals of containing Iran are not necessarily dependent on the presence of large numbers of U.S. ground troops in the region, assuming that Iraq becomes “normal,” large numbers of U.S. ground forces can still depart from the Middle East and the Gulf. Essentially, the United States military posture in the Middle East and the Gulf can return to a state similar to that following the 1990-1991 Gulf War. For example, a United States Army mechanized or armored brigade-size force can still be based in one of the Gulf Arab monarchies friendly to the U.S., e.g., Kuwait or Bahrain, that can act as a “tripwire” in the case of Iranian military adventurism in the Gulf. However, it was this level of United States military presence in the region that invited the destabilizing ideological effects that gave rise to radical Islam and Al Qaeda terrorist activities. Thus, the focus should be on the total withdrawal of United States ground forces from the region. Furthermore, the United States military presence in the Middle East and the Gulf becomes increasingly unnecessary due to the planned “forward-basing” of U.S. forces in the Balkans (Bulgaria, Romania) and Central Asia (former Soviet Republics), and the emergence of new military technologies that are readily available to the U.S. Armed Forces. These United States force deployments and military technologies assure a continuous and improved future U.S. military intervention capability in the Middle East.

## PARAMETERS OF A PERMANENT U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This paper already discussed aspects of the continuous United States “containment” strategy of Iran, and the potential continuous presence of a small brigade-size mechanized or armor force in a friendly to the U.S. Gulf monarchy where such a force can act as a “tripwire.” If the United States was to maintain additional ground forces in the region, the structure and the disposition of these forces must be designed so that the permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East *minimizes* the associated ideological impact vis-à-vis radical Islam. Thus, the United States will not be able to maintain multiple brigade-size or division-size “light” or “heavy” ground formations in the region. Rather, the emphasis is likely to be on small special forces units that will have the dual role of intelligence collection and counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, can be supported by air and naval assets, and by larger military units with high mobility as the need arises, e.g., the operations of U.S. Special Forces and U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) assets in Afghanistan immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack against the U.S.

The presence and operations of such United States military units in the Middle East will not be without ideological and political risks. It is almost certain that Arab societies will view the presence and the operations of such United States military units in the Middle East with suspicion if not outright hostility. The lack of transparency that accompanies the presence and the operations of United States special forces formations will be viewed by the “Arab street” and the popular mass media outlets in the Middle East as potentially undermining or manipulating national democratization processes. Interestingly, such suspicions may also be based on fact. The U.S. Department of Defense is assuming a larger role in the conduct of paramilitary intelligence operations in foreign countries, where such operations will not be under the oversight of the U.S. Congress, and will not be coordinated with U.S. ambassadors or CIA chiefs of stations in these countries.<sup>45</sup> A better approach would be to seek the transparent cooperation with the governments of Middle East Arab states, and formulate an environment where the presence of United States special forces units serves mutual national security interests and is publicly acknowledged by the foreign governments in question. For example, Al Qaeda terrorist activities in the Middle East are contrary to the national security interests of *both* the U.S. and the Middle East Arab countries, and Arab-U.S. cooperation in this regard could take place and be *publicly advertised* as a *separate* issue from other aspects of Arab-U.S. relations, e.g., achieving Palestinian statehood and a permanent solution to the Palestinian – Israeli crisis.

## TIME FRAME FOR WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY FORCES

It was previously stated that the normalization of the domestic security situation in Iraq can permit the withdrawal of the bulk of the United States military forces from that country within a time frame of one to two years. The Bush Administration, as well as elements of its political opposition within the United States, has been reluctant to commit to a firm time schedule for the staged withdrawal of the U.S. military forces from Iraq. The prevailing thinking is that an announced schedule of withdrawals will encourage the forces of the insurgency to “wait out” the gradual departure of the United States military forces and then continue with their armed opposition against the Iraqi governmental authorities thus prolonging the present state of instability and risks of civil war.

However, an opposite line of thinking also deserves some examination. If we accept the premise that the majority of the Iraqi population and their elected governmental authorities are committed into ignoring ethnic and religious differences and preserving a unified and democratic Iraq, then the announced staged withdrawal of the United States military forces may provide the appropriate incentives for suppressing the local insurgency through purely Iraqi means. For example, the Iraqi military and domestic security forces will have a clear deadline when their primary reliance on the United States military personnel for counter-insurgency operations will cease, and the U.S. and Coalition role will be simply limited to functions such as advice, training, intelligence, and materiel support. Such a deadline can provide the appropriate motivation that either the elected Iraqi government authorities and their military and domestic security forces reach the required level of competence in counter-insurgency warfare and stabilize the domestic security in Iraq, or the country will cease to exist as a unified entity with the attendant consequences of prolonged civil conflict and subsequent foreign military interventions.

## ACHIEVING U.S. STRATEGIC POLICY GOALS WITH OTHER THAN MILITARY MEANS

Recent United States strategic policy in the Middle East has been characterized by the use of military power or by the formulation or continuation of essentially military security relationships with various countries in the region. The United States “containment” policies in the region for countries such as Iran and Syria also have a military security focus. In this respect, the United States “containment” policies have been characterized as an “ideological straitjacket” that does not provide the required flexibility for U.S. bilateral and multilateral relations with various countries in the region.<sup>46</sup> The policies of “containment” that are copies of United States strategy during the Cold War also have the potential of creating unintended consequences. For example, the joint United States, Saudi Arabian, and Pakistani reaction to the



Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1978-1985, gave rise to or reinforced the radical Islamic movements and created Bin Laden's Al Qaeda.<sup>47</sup>

As it has been pointed out earlier, United States advocacy for violent "regime changes" in countries such as Iran and Syria would be invitations for radical movements such as Al Qaeda to step into vacuums created by domestic instability and armed conflict. Such an eventuality is almost certain to guarantee perpetual United States military involvement in the Middle East since the expansion of the Al Qaeda influence in areas that are rich in oil resources is *unacceptable* to U.S. policymakers.<sup>48</sup> However, such prolonged United States military confrontations overseas may in themselves be economically, socially, and politically unsustainable since they continuously drain the resources of the U.S., where such resources are limited despite its "Single Superpower" status. For example, the supplemental budget request of the United State Administration for operations in and various assistance programs to Iraq and Afghanistan for year 2005 totals no less than \$11.98 billion.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, such military confrontations are likely to retard rather than reinforce the United States stated goal of "democratization" for certain Arab states and their societies in the Middle East. The Iraqi experience has already demonstrated that it is very costly and risky to implement a "regime change" by force and then engage in the building of a democracy among the chaos of subsequent domestic armed conflict. Characteristically, Dr. Mohammed Khatami, brother of the outgoing elected Iranian President Khatami, and current leader of the reformist movement in Iran, recently implored the U.S. to abandon the violent "regime change" ideas since the Iranian people had already paid the huge costs of the Iranian Revolution and of the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran War.<sup>50</sup>

Since a continuous military confrontation between the United States, radical Islamic elements, and various state regimes in the Middle East is costly and probably unsustainable in the long-run, the U.S. can and must pursue non-military policies for achieving its strategic goals in the region. The United States regional strategy in the Middle East needs to be redefined since it cannot continue to simply revolve around the issues of national security for Israel and military security of the Middle Eastern oil supplies and reserves. This redefinition must include the *direct* constructive engagement of all actors in the Middle East, and must be expanded to include *non-state* actors and groups. For example, the United States unwillingness to hold direct contacts and negotiations with the Palestinians in the 1960s and the 1970s – the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Yassir Arafat were viewed as "terrorists" by Washington – severely delayed the start of the Palestinian – Israeli peace process.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, only recently we have seen a more significant turn in the policies of the Bush Administration policies

vis-à-vis the indirect albeit important constructive engagement with the Islamic Republic of Iran while previous opportunities for direct negotiations have been lost.<sup>52</sup>

The military security focus of United States policies in the Middle East subtracts both from the intentions and capabilities of U.S. policy makers to engage in socioeconomic policies that could permanently alter the sociopolitical landscape in the Middle East and fundamentally assist in the stated U.S. political goals of democratizing Middle Eastern Arab societies and governing regimes. The scope and magnitude of the constructive socioeconomic engagement that the United States had pursued with the Arab countries and societies in the Middle East during the 1950s and the 1960s, even when the foreign relations of the U.S. with these countries were very tense at times, is an example to follow for Arab-U.S. relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For example, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria still abide by the water resource allocations of the Jordan River Basin that were devised in the 1950s by Special U.S. Ambassador Eric Johnston who was sent to the region by the Administration of President Dwight Eisenhower.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the U.S. was the destination of many university students and travelers from Arab countries until the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, DC. After September 11, 2001 the domestic anti-terrorism measures under the Patriot Act in the United States have created significant security barriers to foreign students who wish to travel and study in the U.S.<sup>54</sup> These barriers have particularly restricted the arrival of young Arab and Iranian students into United States colleges, universities, graduate schools, and research institutions. The direct effect is that the cultural divide and misperceptions between the American society and the societies in the Arab countries of the Middle East grow wider. The long-term effects are that since these young people most likely will seek to successfully overcome the rigorous challenges of university undergraduate and graduate studies in other countries, e.g., the EU members, they are also likely to form future business contacts and relationships in those countries rather than with American business enterprises. This will lead to a further future reduction in the United States socioeconomic influence level within the Middle East.

The former socioeconomic influence of the United States in the Middle East has largely been replaced by the EU. The Euro-Med Association Agreements<sup>55</sup> that the EU has entered into with Arab countries and Israel contain concrete provisions that gradually but materially influence the implementation of concrete human rights protection and economic liberalization measures more than the U.S. rhetoric for democratization in the Arab Middle East societies. Thus, it is not surprising that certain Palestinian and Israeli prominent politicians and scholars have even broached the thought of a departure from a stand-alone Palestinian state in favor of a Palestinian-Israeli federation that would seek and gain membership in the EU.

A United States restated priority for implementing peaceful democratization in the Middle East must be accompanied by solid and well funded socioeconomic initiatives that encourage parallel political and economic liberalization. More often than not, United States policy makers fail to address the issue that political liberalization threatens the economic and business interests of ruling elites in various Arab countries in the Middle East, and that these interests are often embedded in the heavy institutional involvement of the government in the domestic economies. In addition, institutional corruption in these countries is considered and readily accepted as a "cost of doing business." These institutional parameters not only fail to raise the living standards and the employment levels in these societies but also provide a solid recruiting ground for the supporters of radical Islamic movements.

The United States possesses the capabilities to provide socioeconomic assistance that can be conditioned on structural economic reforms within these societies. In turn, such structural economic reforms, e.g., lessening the level of state involvement in the domestic economies through legal reforms and the transparent privatizations of state-owned enterprises, may solve chronic economic problems of low economic growth and unemployment, especially among the young educated professional members of the Arab societies. Economic reform will reinforce the pace of political democratization or, alternatively, will make the functioning more autocratic Arab regimes less relevant in their societies, e.g., along the socioeconomic development in the People's Republic of China. It is important that such economic reforms need to maintain existing safety nets in social and medical welfare in order to avoid worsening economic dislocations. It is equally important that such structural reforms gain the support of Islamic clerics within Arab societies and such support can be gained if economic modernization maintains social safety nets and promotes social welfare and social services. For example, the Hezbollah organization has expanded its political influence in Lebanon by becoming an institutional provider of social welfare services among the poor who are turned away from some hospitals since they cannot pay for medical services.

United States socioeconomic assistance and involvement in the Middle East has great potential in the field of educating the young. Much has been said in the United States about the radical Muslims that are produced by the "madrassahs" religious schools in the Middle East and Pakistan. Little has been done by the United States in reforming the educational system levels in Middle Eastern countries where the teachings of Islam play the predominant role, but fail to produce graduates with employable skills in a modern economy. It is common knowledge that science and the religion of Islam not only co-existed but thrived at the time of the Arab caliphates that expanded all the way into the continent of Europe. This historic experience can be

used in order to properly diversify the educational curricula of religious schools in the Middle East while emphasizing the use of science for the promotion of the broader public welfare that is fully consistent with Islamic teachings. Sadly, United States socioeconomic initiatives and material assistance are lacking in this regard, while U.S. homeland security barriers have become difficult and monetarily very expensive obstacles that need to be overcome by young Arab and Iranian students who wish to study in science and engineering fields within the U.S.

In summary, the United States needs to implement a “new Marshall Plan” in order to regain its socioeconomic influence among the Arab countries and societies in the Middle East. If post-World War II Europe is the prime example for the prime exercise of United States influence, this influence was not exercised by military means alone, i.e., the collective security of NATO, but it was also largely achieved because of the U.S. socioeconomic assistance that was provided to the Europeans through the Marshall Plan. A “new Marshall Plan” for the Middle East is simply economically unsustainable for the United States since the current U.S. focus is on military security commitments and assistance rather than on socioeconomic aid.

#### THE DYNAMICS OF THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING

Nothing defines better the ideological struggle that the United States has to overcome in the Middle East than the hostility and negative perceptions that exist in the region because of the U.S. unique and one-sided strategic relationship with Israel. This relationship is characterized by massive amounts of United States military assistance to Israel with large amounts of it being grant aid. According to the U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) “[s]ince 1976, Israel has been the largest annual recipient of U.S. aid and is the largest recipient of cumulative U.S. assistance since World War II.”<sup>56</sup> According to the CRS Report, since 1971 U.S. assistance to Israel “has averaged over \$2 billion per year, two-thirds of which has been military assistance.”<sup>57</sup> Large amounts of this assistance are in the form of grant aid. For example, out of the \$2,687.3 million of total U.S. military and economic assistance to Israel that is estimated for the U.S. 2004 Fiscal Year, \$2,147.3 million, or 79.91% is in military grant aid. The comparable figure for total U.S. assistance to Israel during the 1949-2004 period was \$93,534.6 million, while the military grant aid was \$46,844.2 million, or 50.08% of the total.<sup>58</sup>

Israel's ability to receive U.S. military assistance without any attached political conditions or constraints, poses unique challenges for the credibility of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Although the U.S. is the donor of such massive military assistance to Israel, the U.S. has not chosen to use this military assistance as a lever in order to influence Israeli policy making for the resolution of crises that threaten international peace and stability in the Middle East.

Thus, Israel continues to pursue its own disastrous policies in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the stated U.S. foreign policy goals for peace and stability in the occupied West Bank and Gaza cannot be achieved. It is widely believed that the lack of resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict directly and negatively affects U.S. foreign policy interests in stabilizing Iraq where U.S., Coalition, and interim Iraqi government forces are engaged in combating wide-spread and diverse local insurgency movements.

The nature of this one-sided strategic relationship between the United States and Israel and its negative impact among the Muslim populations of the Middle East is adequately captured in the following quote by Mr. Michael Scheuer in his book *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*:

Surely, there can be no other historical example of a faraway, theocracy-in-all-but-name of only about six million people that ultimately controls the extent and even the occurrence of an important portion of political discourse and national security debate in a country of 270-plus million people that prides itself on religious toleration, separation of church and state, and freedom of speech. In a nation that long ago rejected an established church as inimical to democratic society, Washington yearly pumps more than three billion taxpayer dollars into a nation that defiantly proclaims itself "the Jewish state" and a democracy - claims hard to reconcile with its treatment of Muslims in Israel, its limitations on political choice for those in the [Israeli] occupied territories, and the eternal exile it has enforced on those camped in the refugee diaspora across the Levant. At the UN and other international fora, the U.S. government stands four-square, and often alone, with Israel to free it from obeying UN resolutions and nonproliferation treaties; with U.S. backing, Israel has developed and deployed weapons of mass destruction at the pace it desires. Objectively, al Qaeda does not seem too far off the mark when it describes the U.S.-Israel relationship as a detriment to America.

The close link between America and the Zionist entity is in itself a curse for America. In addition to the high cost incurred by the U.S. Treasury as a result of this alliance, the strategic cost is also exorbitant because this close link has turned the attack against America into an attack against the Zionist entity and vice versa. This contributes to bringing the Islamic nation together and pushing it strongly to rally around the jihad enterprise.

One can only react to this stunning reality by giving all praise to Israel's diplomats, politicians, intelligence services, U.S.-citizen spies, and the retired senior U.S. officials and wealthy Jewish-American organizations who lobby an always amenable Congress on Israel's behalf.<sup>59</sup>

The one-sided nature of the United States – Israel strategic relationship has not only caused actual harm to the cause of peace with numerous victims among Arab populations – Palestinians, Lebanese, etc., and the Israeli citizens, but it has inflamed Arab passions and has transformed the ideological struggle of the U.S. in the Middle East along the lines of slogans

such as “Israeli tanks in Gaza, American tanks in Baghdad.” These “sound bytes” cannot be easily overcome by even the most sophisticated advertising campaigns that are produced by “Madison Avenue” executives at great expense to the U.S. Treasury. A recent article in the magazine *The Atlantic Monthly* contains the following proposals on how the United States can regain the ideological initiative in the Middle East and overcome the challenges that exist because of the U.S.-Israel “special relationship” and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict:

This really is a war of narratives in a battlefield of interpretation,” Marc Sageman says. “We need to promote a positive vision to substitute for the vision of violence. And that vision has to be justice. It is no accident that these groups are always calling themselves ‘The Party of Justice’ and so on. In the time of the Suez Canal [1956 Suez Crisis] the United States stood for ‘justice’ against the Brits [British] and French, and we [the U.S.] were the toast of the Middle East. We need to be pushing a vision of a fair and *just* world, with us in harmony with the rest of the world, as opposed to at war with the rest of the world.

Why has America had a harder time lately pushing its vision of justice? The two major obstacles are its need for foreign oil, which forces it to coddle regimes it would otherwise blast as anti-democratic, and its failure even to feign interest in the Palestinians’ hardships in their dispute with Israel. The need for oil drenches America in hypocrisy, and America’s distance from the Palestinians is a barrier to even being heard in Arab discussions. There are sufficient economic and environmental reasons for the United States to work hard for a different energy strategy, and there are sufficient humanitarian and historical reasons for it to intensify pressure on both sides to comply with a land-for-peace deal. Such steps would also be part of the war of ideas, in helping America seem more a force for justice.<sup>60</sup>

A new United States strategy in the Middle East that will *impartially* focus on the application of principles of justice and international law in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and other Middle East issues will go a long way in dramatically changing Arab popular perceptions about the U.S. in the region of the Middle East. For example, in the current debate centering on the potential use of the Iranian civil nuclear program for the clandestine development of nuclear weapons the United States has carefully abstained from discussing Israel’s possession of a nuclear arsenal. This strategy and its concrete implementation will be a potent weapon in the war of ideas that the United States so far is waging rather unsuccessfully among the broader masses of the Muslim populations in the Middle East (the “Arab street”). The popular perception that the United States truly adheres to principles of justice and international law not only will undermine the ideological base of extremist Islamic groups such as Al Qaeda, but it will also strengthen the cooperative anti-terrorist struggle that is waged by the U.S. and Arab Middle East

governments. Under such circumstances, the presence of U.S. military forces in the Middle East will become increasingly unnecessary.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

The future challenges and prospects of the U.S. military presence in the Middle East in general and Gulf in particular are inseparable from the overall U.S. national security strategy in this region. This national security strategy cannot define the issues within the narrow geographic context of the Gulf region and its oil resources, or the narrow confines of rather outdated "containment" concepts. It is this author's opinion that the security challenges for the U.S. interests in the Middle East and the Gulf, including Iraq, are interlinked with the ideological foundations that underpin these challenges. The solutions of security challenges in the Gulf will not necessarily be solely found in Baghdad or in the Gulf itself. These solutions will find their ideological underpinning if the U.S. were to truly work for a permanent settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.<sup>61</sup> The U.S. can continue to pursue its current strategy in the Gulf that is largely based on its U.S. military presence and potential. This strategy will not lead to the solution of political problems that are deeply rooted in ideological, religious, and cultural causes. The U.S. and its willing partners will continue to be immersed in a long-term asymmetric military conflict without clear political and ideological goals. Truly international cooperation, and heeding the ideological, religious, and cultural concerns of the Arab and Muslim world, can successfully change the current course of events.

The results and the perceptions of U.S. policies in the Arab and Muslim worlds are creating members of armed movements that cannot simply be dismissed as "irrational terrorist organizations" and Al Qaeda cannot be characterized in this manner. Instead, it must be recognized that Al Qaeda is becoming an international insurgency movement that needs to be combated through the appropriate mix of ideological, political, economic, cultural, *and* military means.<sup>62</sup> The U.S. military presence in the Middle East and the Gulf is only one instrument in this campaign and cannot be used in a way that reinforces the ideological beliefs and perceptions of those who oppose this presence in the first place. If there is a U.S. goal for sociopolitical change in the Middle East through the establishment of democratic regimes, this goal cannot be accomplished through the exercise of force by the U.S. military forces in the region. Therefore, I conclude and I recommend that the permanent withdrawal of the United States military forces from the Middle East and the Gulf should be a goal of the U.S. strategy in this region, and that the United States should pursue its strategic goals in the region through socioeconomic means and the impartial application of international law.

WORD COUNT=10,630



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Helen Chapin Metz ed., *Iran: A Country Study*, Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., HQ U.S. Department of the Army, DA Pam. 550-68, (Washington, DC, 1989), pp. 30-31.

<sup>2</sup> Col. George Roungas, Hellenic Army, *Saudi Arabia Defense Procurement Programs And The Quest for Regional Stability*, unpublished paper, U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle Barracks, May 1999), p. 1, citing Helen Chapin Metz ed., *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study*, Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., HQ U.S. Department of the Army, DA Pam. 550-51, (Washington, DC, 1993), p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> Avi Shlain, Raymond Tanter, "Decision Process, Choice, and Consequences: Israel's Deep Penetration Bombing in Egypt, 1970," *World Politics*, No. 4, July 1978, p. 483. *See also* Mott, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> The U.S.S.R. resupplied Egypt and Syria through both the air and sea transportation of materiel. At least one Soviet freighter was sunk during a confrontation between Israeli and Syrian missile boats at the port of Latakia, Syria. Syria was also resupplied from the Soviet Union via overland routes that transited Turkey (a NATO member and U.S. ally). Turkey had also permitted the overflight of its territory by Soviet transport aircraft that were flying to Egypt and Syria. The Soviet Navy decision to escort Soviet transport vessels that sailed to Egypt and Syria increased the probability of an accidental armed exchange between the U.S. Navy 6<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Fleet units and their Soviet counterparts. Ioannis Gillias, Lt. Col., Hellenic Army (Inf.), *The Accession of the Cyprus Republic to the European Union And Perspectives for A Solution to the Cyprus Crisis*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle Barracks, Pa., April 5, 2002), p. 5 & n. 6, p. 39. Lyle J. Goldstein, Yuri M. Zhukov, "A Tale of Two Fleets: A Russian Perspective on the 1973 Naval Standoff in the Mediterranean," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. LVII, No. 2 (Newport, RI Spring 2004, 27:63).

<sup>5</sup> *Sunday Times* Insight Team, Times Newspapers Ltd., *The Yom Kippur War*, Simon & Schuster, Inc., (New York, NY, 2002), pp. 413-415. This alert included the nuclear forces of the then U.S. Strategic Air Command (SAC – currently Strategic Command, Offut, Air Force Base, Nebraska).

<sup>6</sup> Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, *Oil Fields As Military Objectives: A Feasibility Study*, prepared for the Special Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on International Relations, (Washington, DC, 1975), pp. 1-2. This study states:

The possible use of U.S. military force to seize foreign oil fields if the "industrialized world" were being economically "strangled" by any combination of petroleum exporting countries first surfaced as a serious issue in January 1975. The President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense all addressed this subject. Influential periodicals simultaneously began printing a spate of unofficial studies, speculation, and scenarios. Interest in the subject continues.

\* \* \*

The purpose of this paper is to provide perspective, so that Congress could participate more meaningfully in deliberations to determine:

-- Whether we should go to war to excise the effects of any given oil embargo against the United States and/or its allies.

-- What strategic and tactical objectives would best serve U.S. purposes if the answer were affirmative.

-- What forces would be essential.

-- What special expenditures could be expected.

-- What risks would be entailed.

-- What benefits could accrue.

pp. 1-2 (footnotes omitted).

The recent Public Broadcasting System Frontline documentary *House of Saud* confirmed that the U.S. considered and threatened the use of military options for the control of the Saudi Arabian oil fields following the 1973-1974 Arab oil embargo. Then U.S. Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Dr. Henry Kissinger conveyed the U.S. views to Saudi Arabian King Faisal. Public Broadcasting System, Frontline, *House of Saud*, TV Documentary Broadcast, February 8, 2005. Internet, <<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saud/cron/>>, accessed February 13, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> The 1978 Egyptian-Israeli peace accords also initiated a strategic defense relationship between Egypt and the U.S. Egypt started being the recipient of U.S. military and economic assistance, and the U.S. military was able to utilize Egyptian territory both for transit purposes to other areas in the Middle East (Suez Canal), and for joint military exercises in desert terrain with the Egyptian Armed Forces (*Bright Star* exercises).

<sup>8</sup> Sami G. Hajjar, *U.S. Military Presence in the Gulf: Challenges and Prospects*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle Barracks, March 2002), p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> The U.S. Marine Corps contingent encamped at the Beirut International Airport suffered a suicide truck bomb attack that killed approximately 241 U.S. military personnel. The U.S. Embassy in Beirut also fell victim to a suicide car bomb, and two (2) U.S. Navy combat aircraft were downed during the U.S. 1982-1983 military operations in Lebanon.

<sup>10</sup> Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*, The University of North Carolina Press, (Chapel Hill & London, 2002), p. 249.

<sup>11</sup> Hajjar, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> In the course of these operations, the U.S. Navy missile guided frigate *Stark* was hit and severely damaged by two Exocet anti-ship missiles launched from an Iraqi Air Force Dassault Mirage F-1EQ fighter aircraft in May 1987 with great loss of life. The U.S. Navy guided missile cruiser *Vincennes* accidentally downed an Iranian Airbus civilian airliner in July 1988. All passengers and crew on board the Iranian jetliner were killed. Nadia El-Sayed El-Shazly, *The Gulf Tanker War: Iran and Iraq's Maritime Swordplay*, St. Martin's Press, Inc. (New York, NY, 1998), pp. 282-283 & 304. At that time, the U.S. Navy in the Gulf engaged in hostile actions

naval forces of both the regular Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps *Pasdaran*.

<sup>13</sup> Shahram Chubin and Charles Tripp, *Iran And Iraq At War*, Westview Press (Boulder, CO, 1988), pp. 212-213.

<sup>14</sup> Ioannis Gillias, Lt. Col., Hellenic Army (Inf.), *The Accession of the Cyprus Republic to the European Union And Perspectives for A Solution to the Cyprus Crisis*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle Barracks, Pa., April 5, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Hajjar, p. 22.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Scheuer (Anonymous), *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War On Terror*, Brassey's, Inc., (Washington, DC 2004), pp. 12-14.

<sup>18</sup> Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, "Seeking Salvation In City of Insurgents," *The Washington Post*, November 11, 2004, p. A30. The article describes the trip of a Yemeni man who left behind a pregnant wife and five children so that he could travel to Iraq and fight against U.S. military forces. This man was interviewed as the U.S. military forces were reasserting control through urban warfare operations over the City of Fallujah.

<sup>19</sup> Public Broadcasting System (BBC), *Extreme Oil*, October 2004; Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War And Keeping the Peace With America's Military*, W. W. Norton & Company, (New York, NY 2004), "Ch. 5: The Invisible Front Line of Central Asia," pp. 99-118.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, *Top Suppliers of U.S. Crude Oil Imports, 2003*, from *Petroleum Supply Annual 2003*, Vol. 1, Table 21 (Washington, DC 2003). Internet <<http://www.eia.doe.gov/neic/rankings/crudebycountry.htm>>, accessed November 20, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Hajjar, pp. 37-47.

<sup>22</sup> BBC News World Edition, *US may boost troop levels in Iraq*, November 20, 2004. Internet, <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/4027591.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4027591.stm)>, accessed November 20, 2004.

<sup>23</sup> *The New York Times*, September 20, 2004.

<sup>24</sup> James Fallows, "Bush's Lost Year," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 294, No. 3 (Boston, MA October 2004, 68:84), p. 82. The article states the following:

The soldiers, spies, academics, and diplomats I have interviewed are unanimous in saying that "They hate us for who we are" is dangerous claptrap. Dangerous because it is so lazily self-justifying and self-deluding: the only thing we could possibly be doing wrong is being so excellent. Claptrap because it reflects so little knowledge of how Islamic extremism has evolved.

"There are very few people in the world who are going to kill themselves so we can't vote in the Iowa caucuses," Michael Scheuer said to me. "But there's a lot of them who are willing to

die because we're helping the Israelis, or because we're helping Putin against the Chechens, or because we keep oil prices low so Muslims lose money." Jeffrey Record said, "Clearly they do not *like* American society. They think it's far too libertine, democratic, Christian. But that's not the reason they attack us. If it were, they would have attacked a lot of other Western countries too. I don't notice them putting bombs in Norway. It's a combination of who we are and also our behavior."

This summer's report of the 9/11 Commission, without associating this view with Bush, was emphatic in rejecting the "hate us for who we are" view. The commission said this about the motivation of Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, whom it identified as the "mastermind of the 9/11 attacks": "KSM's animus toward the United States stemmed not from his experiences there as a student, but rather from his violent disagreement with U.S. foreign policy favoring Israel." In discussing long term strategies for dealing with extremist groups the commission said, "America's policy choices have consequences. Right or wrong, it is simply a fact that American policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and American actions in Iraq are dominant staples of popular commentary across the Arab and Muslim world."

<sup>25</sup> CBS NEWS.com, 60 Minutes, *Bin Laden Expert Steps Forward*, November 14, 2004. Internet, <<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/11/12/60minutes/main655407.shtml>>, accessed November 16, 2004. A part of the interview of Mr. Michael Scheuer, the former head of the CIA's Bin Laden tracking unit, is as follows:

Right or wrong, he says, Muslims are beginning to view the United States as a colonial power with Israel as its surrogate, and with a military presence in three of the holiest places in Islam: the Arabian peninsula, Iraq, and Jerusalem. And he says it is time to review and debate American policy in the region, even our relationship with Israel.

"No one wants to abandon the Israelis. But I think the perception is, and I think it's probably an accurate perception, that the tail is leading the dog – that we are giving the Israelis carte blanche ability to exercise whatever they want to do in their area" says Scheuer. "And if that's what the American people want, then that's what the policy should be, of course. But the idea that anything in the United States is too sensitive to discuss or too dangerous to discuss is really, I think, absurd."

<sup>26</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, "PLAN B: As June 30<sup>th</sup> approaches, Israel looks to the Kurds," *The New Yorker*, (New York, NY, June 28, 2004, 54:67). The article examines the connections between Israel and the Kurds in N. Iraq, Iran and Syria, and their potential use by Israel against the governing regimes of Iran and Syria. These activities have increased Turkey's national security concerns since Turkey does not want to see an independent Kurdistan at its borders with Iraq, and fears a renewed Kurdish insurgency within its own territory. See also James Bamford, *A Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq, And the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies*, Doubleday, (New York, NY 2004), pp. 261-265. In his book, Mr. Bamford lends credence to the position that current U.S. policies in the Middle East are being implemented by Administration officials or advisers who had previously formulated these policies as national security advice and guidance to then Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the 1990s.

<sup>27</sup> In October 2004 the U.S. rejected a Saudi Arabian proposal under which peacekeeping troops from Muslim nations not bordering Iraq, would have undertaken peacekeeping duties in Iraq under UN auspices. The U.S. had initially sought the participation of peacekeeping forces

from Muslim nations for peacekeeping operations in Iraq in July 2004. *Voice of America*, October 19, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Steven R. Weisman, "Bush Confronts New Challenge On Issue of Iran: Ominous Disclosure on a Nuclear Program," *The New York Times*, November 19, 2004, pp. A1, A12. The U.S. rejected Iranian approaches for normalizing U.S.-Iran relations that took place in May 2003. Iran had even proposed negotiations on matters relating to its nuclear program and its assistance to the Hizbollah movement in Lebanon. *Financial Times*, London, UK, March 16, 2004.

<sup>29</sup> James Fallows, "Will Iran Be Next? Soldiers, spies, and diplomats conduct a classic Pentagon war game – and with sobering results," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 294, No. 5, (Boston, MA December 2004, 99:110).

<sup>30</sup> Col. Abdulmohsen Alshatti, Kuwait Army, Armor, *Preventing Nuclear Proliferation In The Middle East: Is A "Nuclear Free Zone" Possible?*, Strategy Research Project, (U.S. Army War College March 2004), p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, "The Coming Wars, What the Pentagon can now do in secret," *The New Yorker*, January 24 & 31, 2005, (40:47); Richard Bernstein, "Nuclear Agency Says Iran Has Blocked Investigation," *The New York Times*, March 2, 2005; Carla Anne Robbins, "Iran Denies U.N. Atomic Agency A Second Visit to Suspect Site," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 2, 2005, p. A3.

<sup>32</sup> After an almost 2-year effort, the United States Government suspended its massive search effort for the alleged Iraqi WMDs in Iraq. CNN.com, *Official: U.S. calls off search for Iraqi WMDs – Bush stands by decision to go to war, spokesman says*, January 12, 2005. Internet, <<http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/01/12/wmd.search/>>, accessed March 5, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Dana Priest, "CIA Officer Criticizes Agency's Handling of Bin Laden," *The Washington Post*, November 9, 2004, p. A28.

<sup>34</sup> George Parker, Vicky Burnett, "Afghanistan described as 'narco-economy'," *Financial Times*, November 18, 2004. Internet, <<http://news.ft.com/cms/s/8c57d296-398f-11d9-b822-00000e2511c8.html>>, accessed November 18, 2004; Carlotta Gall, "Afghan Poppy Growing Reaches Record Level, U.N. Says," *The New York Times*, November 19, 2004, p. A3. According to UN sources, Afghanistan's opium economy is estimated at \$2.8 billion annually, while the Afghan opium production is 87% of the world's total supply. The detriments of narco-terrorism have been recognized in the ongoing struggle between the government of Colombia and various guerilla and paramilitary groups that are financed from the narcotics trafficking to the U.S.

<sup>35</sup> Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War And Keeping the Peace With America's Military*, W. W. Norton & Company, (New York, NY 2004), "Ch. 5: The Invisible Front Line of Central Asia," pp. 99-118.

<sup>36</sup> The U.S. has instituted a military assistance and training program for the Georgian military. This program appears to be primarily directed towards the security of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. Public Broadcasting System (BBC), *Extreme Oil*, October 2004.

<sup>37</sup> In Lebanon, politics and the society are influenced both by Islam and the Christian Maronite faiths. The Lebanese Civil War during the 1975-1990 period was fought not only along political but also on parallel religious lines, e.g., Lebanese Maronite Christians v. Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians.

<sup>38</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, *Al-Qaeda's Armies: Middle East Affiliate Groups & the Next Generation of Terror*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Specialist Press International, (New York, N.Y., 2005), pp. 97-101.

<sup>39</sup> Edward Wong, "Top Iraq Shiites Pushing Religion In Constitution – Islam As National Faith: Clerics Wield Power After Election, but Are Likely to Meet Opposition," *The New York Times*, February 6, 2005, pp. 1, 6.

<sup>40</sup> *The Washington Post*, "Transcript: Translation of Bin Laden's Videotaped Message," November 1, 2004. Internet, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A16990-2004Nov1?language=printer>>, accessed November 9, 2004.

<sup>41</sup> Timothy Mitchell, "American Power and Anti-Americanism in the Middle East," Andrew and Kristin Ross, eds., *Anti-Americanism*, New York University Press, (New York, NY, 2004), pp. 97-100.

<sup>42</sup> Bamford, pp. 261-265.

<sup>43</sup> Yochi J. Dreazen, "Restive Kurds Brace for Turk Backlash: Ankara Vexed by Ambitions Unleashed in Iraqi Election; Clash Could Inflamm Region," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 11, 2005, p. A9.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Wong, "Iraqi Kurds Detail Demands for a Degree of Autonomy," *The New York Times*, February 18, 2005. Internet, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/18/international/middleeast/18kurds.html>>, accessed February 18, 2005.

<sup>45</sup> Ann Scott Tyson and Dana Priest, "Pentagon Seeking Leeway Overseas: Operations Could Bypass Envoys," *The Washington Post*, February 24, 2005, p. A1; Josh White and Barton Gellman, "Defense Espionage Unit to Work With CIA," *The Washington Post*, January 25, 2005, p. A3; Barton Gellman, "Secret Unit Expands Rumsfeld's Domain: New Espionage Branch Delving Into CIA Territory," *The Washington Post*, January 23, 2005, p. A1.

<sup>46</sup> Little, p. 313.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>48</sup> U.S. policymakers and oil executives "privately acknowledged that if bin Laden ever toppled the House of Saud, neither OPEC [Oil Producing and Exporting Countries] nor the multinational petroleum giants could prevent the price of Middle East crude from spiking beyond \$100 per barrel." *Ibid.*, citing *The New York Times*, "Fears, Again, of Oil Supplies at Risk," October 14, 2001.

<sup>49</sup> William Matthews, "U.S. Lawmakers Dispute Items in \$82B Supplemental," *DefenseNews*, Army Times Publishing Co., (Springfield, VA February 21, 2005), pp. 4, 6. The breakdown of the requested funding authorization from the U.S. Congress is as follows:

Depart ment	\$ Millions	Recipient	Intended Use
U.S. DOD	5,700.0	Iraq	Aid to Iraqi Security Forces (Secretary of Defense)
U.S. DOS	658.0	U.S. DOS	New U.S. Embassy in Iraq.
U.S. DOD	1,300.0	n Afghanistan	Aid to Afghan Security Forces (Secretary of Def.)
	1,300.0	n Afghanistan	Economic Support Fund (International Assistance)
U.S. DOS	400.0	n Afghanistan	Aid to Afghan Police.
U.S. DOD	250.0	n/Iraq Afghanistan	Peacekeeping (Foreign Military Financing).
U.S. DOD	17.1	n Afghanistan	Anti-Terrorism Aid (Foreign Military Financing).
U.S. DOS	260.0	n Afghanistan	Drug Enforcement.
U.S. DOD	257.0	U.S. DOD	Counter-drug efforts in Afghanistan (DOD-wide).
U.S. DOD	687.0	U.S. Army	Military Construction-Afghanistan/Iraq Operations.
U.S. DOD	402.0	U.S. DOD	Fuel deliveries to Iraq from Kuwait and Turkey.
U.S. DOS	690.0	U.S. DOS	Iraq Operations.
U.S. DOS	60.0	U.S. DOS	Afghanistan Operations.
<b>TOTAL</b>	11,981. 1		

<sup>50</sup> Public Broadcasting System, "McNeil Lehrer News Hour," televised interview with Dr. Mohammed Khatami, February 2005.

<sup>51</sup> It was not until the U.S. Administration of President Ronald Reagan and his successor President George Bush that the U.S. became seriously involved with the issue of statehood for the Palestinians. This interest evolved largely because of the Palestinian 1987 *Intifada* against the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Little, pp. 295-300.

<sup>52</sup> Steven R. Weisman, "Europe and U.S. Agree on Carrot-and-Stick Approach to Iran," *The New York Times*, March 12, 2005. Internet, <[www.nytimes.com/2005/03/12/politics/12iran.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1110650415-VLi/czr...](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/12/politics/12iran.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1110650415-VLi/czr...)>, accessed March 12, 2005. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated that President Bush "would drop his objections to Iran's application to the World Trade Organization and would 'consider, on a case-by-case basis, the licensing of spare parts of Iranian civilian aircraft'." The Bush Administration had rejected Iranian overtures that took place through the Swiss Embassy in Tehran in May 2003. Former U.S. National Security Adviser Mr. Brent Scowcroft had met with then Iranian Ambassador to the UN Mr. Zariff. The Iranian proposals had included: (1) Iran's nuclear program and cessation of Iranian support to terrorist organizations; (2) coordination on the Iraq situation; (3) a two-state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; (4) end of the economic sanctions against Iran; (5) recognition of Iran's national security interests; (6) dropping U.S. rhetoric about "regime change" in Iran; and (7) reconstitution of formal U.S.-Iranian relations. U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his Pentagon team effectively scuttled any further direct contacts. *Financial Times* (London, UK, March 16, 2004). Internet, <<http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=FT.com/StoryFTFullStory&c=StoryFT&cid=1079419684413&p=1012571727088>>, <<http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=FT.com/StoryFTFullStory&c=StoryFT&cid=1079419684529&p=1057562248943>>, accessed March 16, 2004.

<sup>53</sup> Col. Ali Alqallaf, Kuwait Air Force, *Water Resources And Security Issues In the Middle East: The Next Arena of Future Conflicts*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle Barracks, PA, April 2003), pp. 6-7.

<sup>54</sup> Richard A. Clarke, "Ten Years Later," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 295, No. 1 (Boston, MA, January/February 2005), (61:77), p. 65, n. 15. According to Mr. Clarke, foreign student visa applications for admission to the U.S. decreased by 21 percent from 2001-2004. The number of applications by foreign students for admission to U.S. graduate schools decreased by 32 percent in 2004 alone. Citing *Government Executive*, "State, Homeland Security Urged to Overhaul Student Visa Process," August 2, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> European Union, *Euro-Med Association Agreements Implementation Guide*, (Brussels, Belgium, July 30, 2004).

<sup>56</sup> Clyde R. Mark, *Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance*, The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, Pub. No. IB85066 (Washington, D.C. updated July 12, 2004), p. CRS-1. Internet, <<http://www.fas.org/man/crs/IB85066.pdf>>, accessed September 23, 2004 (referenced as "CRS Report").

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., Table 2, p. CRS-12.

<sup>59</sup> Scheuer, p. 227 (endnotes omitted).

<sup>60</sup> James Fallows, "Success Without Victory: America won the Cold War because Americans embraced a set of strategic principles and pursued them steadily, decade after decade. Here's the outline of a 'containment' strategy for the age of terror," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 295, No. 1, (Boston, MA January/February 2005) (80:90), p. 86 (emphasis in original).



<sup>61</sup> Hajjar, pp. 54-56.

<sup>62</sup> Scheuer, p. 246.



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