

**U.S. Copyright Law
(title 17 of U.S. code)
governs the reproduction
and redistribution of
copyrighted material.**

**Downloading this
document for the
purpose of
redistribution is
prohibited.**

Middle East Report (ISSN 0899-2851) is published four times a year (quarterly) by the Middle East Research and Information Project, 1500 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington DC 20005.

POSTMASTER Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Send all address corrections to MERIP, PO Box 277, Hopewell, PA 16650-0277.

MAILING The magazine is mailed periodicals class in North America to the rest of the world. Send address changes to MERIP, Subscriber Services, PO Box 277, Hopewell, PA 16650-0277. Subscriptions are \$37 per year for individuals, \$76 for institutions. Overseas postage additional. Other rates on inside back cover. *Middle East Report* is available in microform from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Canadian Distribution: Doormouse Distribution, 55 Metcalfe Street, #6, Toronto, M4X-1R9.

ADVERTISING For details, contact MERIP, Tel 202-223-3677 Fax 202-223-3604 Email bneuw@merip.org Web www.merip.org

INDEXES AND ABSTRACTS Abstracta Iranica, The Alternative Press Index, Index Islamicus, International Development Abstracts, International Political Science Abstracts, The Left Index, The Middle East Journal, Mideast File, Migration and Ethnicity, PAIS Bulletin, Universal Reference Systems.

ELECTRONIC ARCHIVE Available through JSTOR, www.jstor.com for participating institutions.

REVIEW BOOKS and other items for review should be sent to MERIP Reviews, 1500 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 119, Washington, DC 20005.

COPYRIGHT All rights reserved. Reproduction, storage or transmission of this work in any form or by any means beyond that permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the US Copyright Law is unlawful without prior permission in writing of the Publisher, or in accordance with the terms of licenses issued by the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) and other organizations authorized by the publisher to administer reprographic reproduction rights. Please note, however, that all institutions with a paid subscription to the magazine may make photocopies for teaching purposes free of charge provided they are not resold. For educational photocopying requests that do not originate from an institution with a paid subscription, please contact the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, phone: 978-750-8400. For all other permissions inquiries, including requests to republish material in another work, please contact MERIP Editorial Offices, fax 202-223-3604.

FOR THE BLIND Selected articles from this publication are available for blind and visually handicapped persons on audiotape from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217.

WE ENCOURAGE the submission of manuscripts, photographs and artwork relevant to our focus on the political economy of the contemporary Middle East and popular struggles there. This includes general theoretical contributions relevant to these issues and connecting developments elsewhere in the world with the Middle East. Letters to the Editor are also welcome. Please send manuscripts as attached files to: ctoensing@merip.org. A style sheet is available on request, as well as on our website: www.merip.org.

CONTRIBUTIONS to MERIP are tax-deductible. MERIP is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization.

SHRINKING CAPITAL: THE US IN THE MIDDLE EAST

ARTICLES 2 Not All Roads Lead to Washington

Yahya Sadowski

8 Imagining the Next Occupation

Jason Brownlee

12 Civil Wrongs

Louise Cainkar

18 The Politics of Persecution

Melani McAlister

SPECIAL REPORT 28 Cosmetic Surgery and the Beauty Regime in Lebanon

Sandra Beth Doherty

REVIEWS 32 On Torture

Laleh Khalili

38 Beyond the Bush Doctrine

Waleed Hazbun

44 Khazzoom, *Shifting Ethnic Boundaries and Inequality in Israel: Or, How the Polish Peddler Became a German Intellectual*

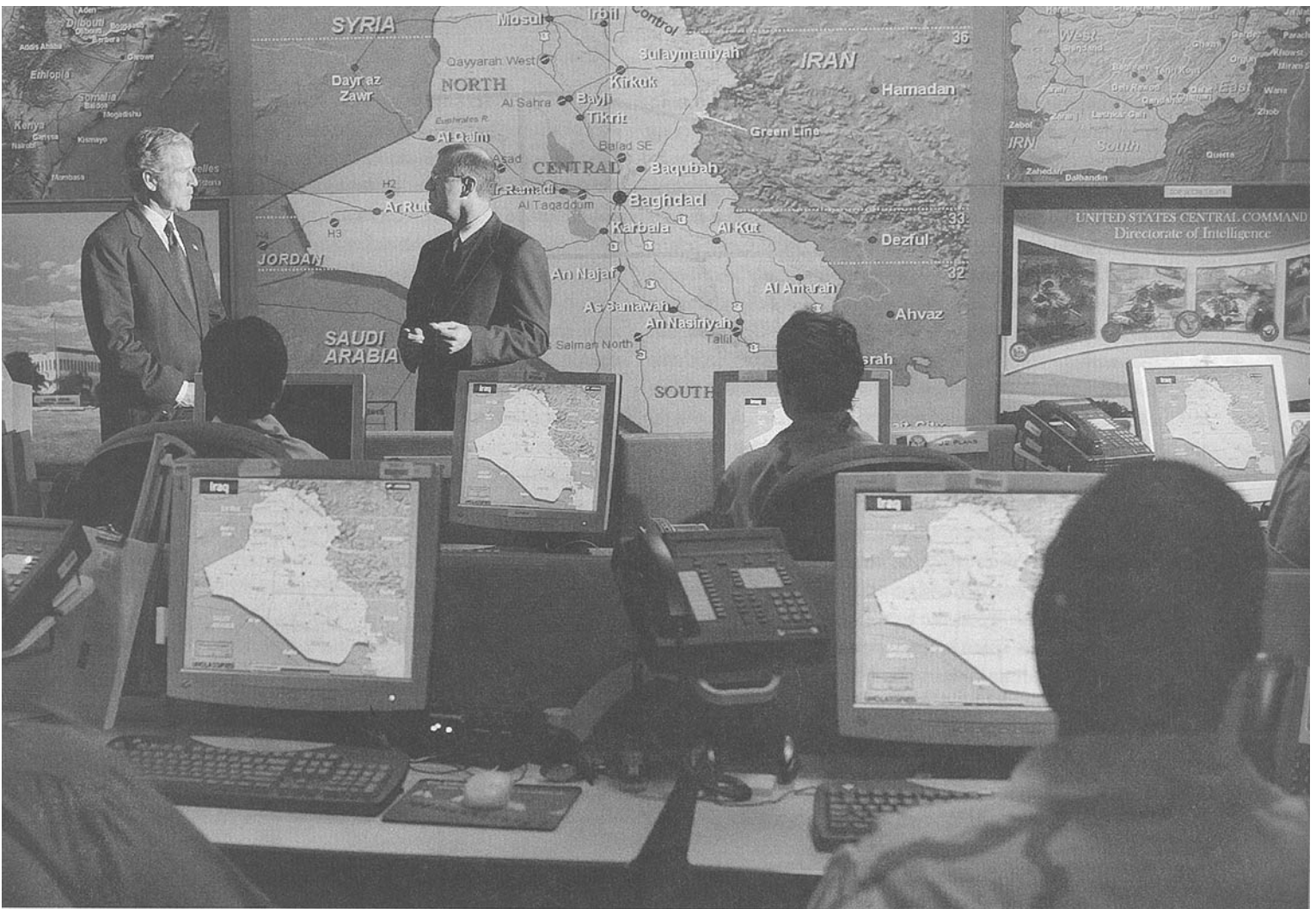
Tamir Sorek

IN MEMORIAM 46 Marsha Pripstein Posusney

EDITOR'S PICKS 48 New and Recommended Reading

PHOTOS/GRAPHICS Karim Ben Khelifa/Oeil Public, Nathan Denette/AP Photo/CP, Balazs Gardi/VII Network, Eros Hoagland, Stephanie Keith, Saul Loeb/AFP/Getty Images, Pablo Martinez Monsivais/AP Photo, Luiz Maximiano/WpN, Doug Mills/Redux/The New York Times, Damir Sagolj/Reuters/Landov, Shannon Stapleton/Reuters/Landov, Mario Tama/Getty Images, Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures, Stephen Voss/WpN

COVER The US Capitol (Stephen Voss/WpN).



President George W. Bush is briefed at CENTCOM, March 26, 2003.

DOUG MILLS/REDUX/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Beyond the Bush Doctrine

Waleed Hazbun

Will the Bush doctrine come to an end on January 20, 2009, when President Barack Obama takes office? Surely, Obama will distance himself from regime change and preventive war. He has pledged to de-escalate the Iraq war with a phased redeployment and rebuild America's alliances and image abroad through leadership and diplomacy. Most ambitiously, he has stated that American security and wellbeing depend "on the security and wellbeing of those who live beyond our borders...in the understanding that the world shares a common security and a common

humanity."¹ These differences notwithstanding, will the next administration break dramatically from the patterns that have long defined the US approach to the Middle East? There is little reason to think so. When it comes to the Middle East, the thinking of key figures in the Democratic foreign policy establishment mirrors many themes of the Bush doctrine. Even if Obama does articulate a new foreign policy doctrine, crisis management, rather than ideology, will likely shape most of his policy choices at home and abroad. And as recent books on US grand strategy in the Middle East suggest, the current posture of the US limits the tools the Obama administration will have available for resolving future crises.

*Waleed Hazbun teaches international relations at Johns Hopkins University and is the author of *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts: The Politics of Tourism in the Arab World* (Minnesota, 2008).*

A good place to begin thinking about options for the future is Lawrence Freedman's **A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East** (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), which offers a penetrating critique of the policies of the past five administrations. Freedman frames his narrative around the "incompetent, careless use of power in both the military and political spheres," the ability of Islam to inspire militancy and the arrogant neo-conservative fantasy underpinning the efforts to promote democracy and "eliminate the evil of terrorism." In the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, he concludes, "the big lesson from past experience is the need to understand the limits to power and the extent to which it is hard for anyone to control events." Future grand strategy will likely turn on how policymakers understand these limits.

After briefly treating the "first radical wave" of Arab nationalism in the early Cold War, Freedman devotes the bulk of the text to the "second radical wave" following the Islamic Revolution in Iran. US policymakers did not see the Islamist wave coming, he points out, because their grand strategy was defined by Cold War containment, an imperative largely disconnected from the domestic and regional conflicts that dominated the Middle East. Yet Freedman misses the opportunity to note that most every US effort to confront the "second wave" offers lessons about the limits of US power. Thus, while he enumerates the poor choices of the Bush era, he fails to show how these choices were informed by the flawed grand strategy of the past. From the Iranian revolution, through the 1980s interventions in Afghanistan and Lebanon, up to the 1990–1991 Gulf war and the 2003 invasion, the US consistently reacted to unforeseen crisis by projecting its power more forcefully. In each case, even when the immediate crisis was quelled, the US provoked local resistance, leading the US, in turn, to redouble its projection of power. "Dual containment" of Iran and Iraq, for example, prevented the US from withdrawing its forces "over the horizon" in the 1990s, thereby generating Arab and Iranian insecurity and popular discontent. It also left the US with no endgame but regime change in both countries. The pathway was lit for the neo-conservatives, who inveighed that US failure to deploy yet more force in the face of resistance was akin to "retreat" that would spur yet more aggressive challenges from regional powers and militant movements.

A deeper limitation of Freedman's narrative is found in the comment: "When the attacks came on September 11, 2001, neither the public nor the government had a frame of reference to make sense of the events." One could say this about the Iranian revolution, the Lebanese civil war, the rise of political Islam, the 1987 *intifada* and the Iraqi invasion of

Kuwait. In most cases, frames of reference quickly appeared, and not very useful ones. *A Choice of Enemies* too rarely refers to social forces and ideological trends—let alone past US policies—that might help the reader make sense of the crises that it covers blow by blow.

Freedman recognizes how "reform" of the political and economic systems of the Middle East might serve American interests, but he condemns President George W. Bush for pushing a "civilizing mission" in the region. Following ex-State Department official Richard Haass, Freedman argues that the ill-fated invasion of Iraq has ended "the American era in the Middle East" due to mounting anti-Americanism, less

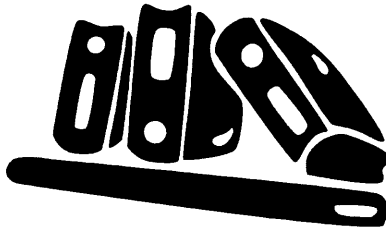
cooperation from allies and the rise of powerful rivals.² Long a status quo power dissatisfied with the Middle Eastern status quo, Freedman continues, the US must accept its decline in hegemony even as it retains critical interests. The region's many problems "must be managed or endured" because "they are too rooted in the institutional structures, power balances and cultures of the region to be solved." After rattling off a wise set of guidelines for managing the problems, Freedman allows that in practice these will "turn out to be contradictory and irrelevant," because future policy will be reactive to crisis and subject to vagaries of public opinion, domestic politics and bureaucratic infighting.

A slog through the tomes of two Clinton administration policymakers confirms the dearth in fresh grand strategic thinking. While recognizing the plentiful mistakes of the Bush administration, these texts prescribe highly assertive policies that, like the Bush doctrine, seek to reshape the geopolitical landscape in Washington's preferred image.

In **Statecraft: And How to Restore America's Standing in the World** (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), Dennis Ross outlines the centrist approach he dubs "neo-liberalism." Noting the collapse of Cold War definitions of liberals and conservatives, Ross situates himself within an emerging constellation that includes Vice President-elect Joe Biden, Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT), Francis Fukuyama, Thomas Friedman, Christopher Hitchens and former *New Republic* editor Peter Beinart. Neo-liberals, he notes, share a great deal with neo-conservatives. They believe the US should play a leading role in global politics, define US interests very broadly and feel US policy should reflect American values as well as interests. They support the use of military force to these ends. They generally viewed regime change in Iraq as a necessity and are convinced that Iran should never be allowed to acquire nuclear capability.

According to Ross, the critical difference between neo-liberals and neo-conservatives is the former group's emphasis on "statecraft"—effective use of the tools in US possession to pursue national interests and affect others'

EDITOR'S BOOKSHELF





Left to right: Chief of Protocol Nancy Goodman Brinker, Vice President Dick Cheney, Deputy National Security Adviser Elliott Abrams, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, during a meeting between Bush and Lebanese politician Saad al-Hariri, October 4, 2007. PABLO MARTINEZ ALONSO/GETTY IMAGES

behavior. Neo-liberals are keen to spread peace and democracy, but do not think these goods can be imposed from the outside. Beyond pledging to avoid the mistakes of the Bush administration, *Statecraft's* vision for "restoring America's standing in the world" seems to amount to clever lawyering. Like advocates of liberal internationalism, Ross argues the US should build a global order through multilateral cooperation, but he states the US should first define its goals based on its interests and use statecraft to achieve them. The elder Bush's effort to build an anti-Iraq coalition in 1990 serves as a model. Ross, who worked under Secretary of State James Baker, recounts the face-to-face meetings needed to keep the Soviets and others under the US umbrella. "The 'style' of the approach was consultative," writes Ross, before adding "even if the 'substance' was not." "At the end of the day, we would act collectively as we desired or on our own if we had to." Ross notes that statecraft requires actions geared toward gaining domestic support, such as Baker's "going-the-extra-mile" initiative, which was designed not to achieve a negotiated withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait but to corral Congressional votes for Desert Storm.

Looking ahead, Ross sketches how statecraft, through negotiations and coercive diplomacy, could compel Iran

to behave as Washington wishes. He thinks the US should concert the efforts of Europe, China and a Saudi-led Arab front to "inflict real pain" upon Iran by exploiting its economic vulnerability and desire to end its international isolation.

Ross fears "radical Islam" most of all, and, in the manner of right-wing American pundits, he seems to lump all Islamists under this rubric. Might the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which he erroneously identifies as the only Islamist party to give up violence, be considered "Islamic democrats"? To address this rhetorical question, he queries Khairy Abaza, a Wafd party activist affiliated with the neo-conservative Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, and reports back that "it is all a charade." While not ruling out a role for "moderate" Islamists, Ross concludes, "Our natural allies in the struggle with the radical Islamists will be liberal, moderate, secular elements." His goal, in the meantime, is to discredit movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and Hizballah. Such "charismatic" movements "depend on grievance" and "cannot succeed only by what they reject." Ross does recognize the popularity of these movements, and this he attributes to their provision of welfare and social services. Accordingly, their ability to provide services must be cut off, while secular

movements, NGOs and friendly reformist regimes move to fill the gap.

Kenneth Pollack, in ***A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East*** (New York: Random House, 2008), contends that “reform” should replace containment as the basis for US grand strategy. The former director of Persian Gulf affairs at the National Security Council is aware that Washington, with its competing core interests in the region, has often pursued self-contradictory policies. The authoritarian regimes Washington has relied upon to maintain stability have impeded reform, resulting in the spread of radical Islam and terrorism. Pollack, however, rejects Freedman’s modesty in favor of an ambitious strategy for transcending the contradictions. Throughout his journey, he posits that neo-liberals are more committed and better equipped to implement the reform agenda to which the Bush administration paid lip service. Pollack seems to feel he has transcended his own massive blunder, *The Threatening Storm* (2002), a highly influential brief for invading Iraq. But *A Path Out of the Desert* paves the way for a repeat performance.

Pollack begins his preface by announcing, “We’re all frustrated with the Middle East. It is a very frustrating place.” The Middle East frustrates analysts like Pollack because it “seems to defy logic, as well as what Americans consider practical solutions and obvious compromises.” And America gains little from its costly intercession when the region’s problems boil over. As in *The Threatening Storm*, Pollack is forthright about what the main US interests are: the security of Israel and the flow of oil (“the principal strategic rationale for our alignment with Arab states”). The US cares about other Arab states only to the degree that they can threaten US interests or help the US contain such threats.

Rather than exploring how the main interests interact, Pollack plays the shrink, pinpointing the dysfunctions of the region. The Muslims of the Middle East are angry and disaffected, he says, to the point that the despair breeds terrorists. His diagnosis reads like a thorough undergraduate thesis, plowing through economic and social data to advance the one-dimensional claim that these emotions are rooted in runaway population growth, high unemployment, economic mismanagement and low productivity. According to Pollack, these economic problems are compounded by the “cultural method of education,” which is defined by “complete obedience to authority” and the notion that knowledge is revealed, not created. Recycling the most reductionist notions to come out of modernization theory and Orientalism, he paints a picture of traditional societies undergoing the “shock of modernity.” Rather than embracing modernity, many Arabs and Muslims close themselves off from it out of fear. Cultural globalization only alienates them further.

A Path Out of the Desert can read like the Cold War’s alarmist reports about the threat of communism, as when

Pollack argues that the region may be in a pre-revolutionary condition. It is hard to disregard the thought completely. Pollack arrives there after a review of the durable authoritarianism scholarship, which identifies, as he does, the political factors blocking reform. But the same scholarship emphasizes, as Pollack does not, that most authoritarian regimes can nonetheless rest assured of US backing, due to their strategic importance. And while the most militant movements, like al-Qaeda, are clearly unable to mobilize a social revolution, Pollack misses how Hizballah is achieving political transformation (no longer meaning establishment of an Islamic state) in Lebanon without a revolution.

Like Ross, Pollack wants to dispel what he considers the prevalent myth that the US is the source of Middle Eastern peoples’ misery.³ Reform is his means of doing so, yet his specific proposals are unoriginal and often, as with economic structural adjustment along the lines of the “Washington consensus,” outdated. He does attempt, unlike Ross, to think through tricky issues the Bush administration never bothered to consider. For example, Pollack notes that Islam and democracy are not incompatible, but worries that moderate, democratically oriented Islamists often have ties to more radical elements. Pollack suggests that US officials develop guidelines for defining proper “moderate” behavior so that the US can target moderates for aid and engagement while isolating extremists. This idea, however, exposes three blind spots. First, while Pollack draws upon political economists like Alan Richards to discuss economics, he ignores or hedges on Richards’ conclusion—widely shared by scholars—that “there will be no democracy, no stability [in the Middle East] without [the Islamists’] participation in the politics of the region.”⁴ Second, the peoples of the region are unlikely to view the US as a just arbiter of what is moderate or trust the US to put them on the path toward popular sovereignty. While Pollack recognizes that reform cannot be externally imposed, the grand strategy he advances in *A Path Out of the Desert* grants little agency to Middle Easterners. Third, if Middle Eastern societies were to “reform themselves,” the fledgling democracies would hardly be acquiescent in US policy goals.

It is tempting to agree with French scholar Olivier Roy that the US is “a power tied up in knots.” His ***The Politics of Chaos in the Middle East*** (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) departs from the observation that “the ideas that drove the American neo-conservatives are still part of the current climate.” In this slim volume, Roy sets out to deconstruct these ideas, many of which have been incorporated into the neo-liberal approach that Ross and Pollack elucidate.

Roy challenges the notion of a grand strategy based on “reform.” It is not that reform is infeasible, but that dominant conceptions of how to achieve it are based on a misguided view of Middle Eastern politics and society. Taking aim not only at the Bush administration but also

at many NGOs and international aid organizations, Roy explains how Americans imagine they can unleash the power of “enterprising individual citizens” while failing to understand the nature of the collective identities that define politics across the region. “There can be no democracy without political legitimacy,” he continues. Islamist movements are powerful because they are anchored in discourses of nationalism and Islam that have established claims to political legitimacy in the face of regimes seen as brittle, oppressive and subservient to Washington.

Roy then demolishes “the idea that there is a ‘geo-strategy’ of Islam,” for political Islam is not a coherent political force. Rather than distinguishing between “radicals” and “moderates”—as is often done based on perceived congeniality to US interests—Roy identifies four interrelated groups: terrorists, Islamists seeking political power, neo-fundamentalists seeking rule of Islamic law and cultural Muslims who want space to engage in their own social and religious practices. These groups are internally divided and often mutually incompatible. “It is pointless,” therefore, “thinking of al-Qaeda as a political organization seeking to conquer and rule a territory.” That movement, which thrives on opposition to the US military presence in the region, infiltrates areas devoid of state control. Made up of networks of socially alienated individuals and quite marginal to the main territorial conflicts roiling the region, al-Qaeda has no country. It attempts to hijack the territorial conflicts, but without much success, since movements organized along nationalist lines, like Hamas and Hizballah, lead most of these fights. As for movements that support the imposition of *shari’a*, Roy explains that as Islamic law claims independence from positive or state law, it represents the negation of totalitarianism. It seeks to challenge the “all-powerful state” and define a moral ideal for society. The people Roy refers to as Islamists, in contrast, seek state power, as in Iran, where state law trumps *shari’a*, though some spaces (such as personal status law) may be carved out for it. Noting that US-allied regimes, nominally secular, coopt Islamist discourse and that most regional conflicts have little to do with religion, Roy observes “nowhere in the Middle East is there a war between the Islamists on one side and the secular democrats on the other.” In other words, the cleavages that Ross and Pollack want to pry open simply do not exist.

To the degree that Roy points to a “path out” for the US, it is one that is guided by political legitimacy and the accommodation of rival powers. It is unlikely that the US will adopt a grand strategy embracing popular Middle Eastern notions of political legitimacy, defined by nationalism and Islam, as doing so would tightly constrain US freedom of action. So what of accommodation?

As is now generally understood, the new major player in the region is Iran, its two chief antagonists, Iraqi Baathists and the Taliban, having been toppled by US invasions.

Rather than depicting Iran as an expansionist “rogue state,” Roy shows how Iran exploits the region’s fault lines. Iran has made political inroads in the Arab world by backing opponents of the US-sponsored peace process, Syria, Hamas and, most of all, Hizballah. More recently, Iran has played on the growing tensions between Arab Sunnis and Shi’a, enhancing its influence within a divided Iraq. As with the Soviets during the Cold War, these regional conflicts elevate Iran by keeping the Arab states divided and conquered, and allowing Iran to back whoever is challenging America. Iran’s leverage increases to the degree that the region’s conflicts are viewed as interconnected, since the US is less able to solve one independently of the other, giving Iran more cards in both arenas.

At the same time, Roy notes, Iran generally seeks to avoid open warfare. Widened Sunni-Shi’i rifts or confrontation with the US would likely lead Arab states to unite against Iran rather than accommodate its rising regional influence. But if the US seeks to contain Iran by turning Arab states against it or using military force, it will likely suffer increased instability in Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine. Roy concludes, “Iran is therefore the key to the current situation in the Middle East.” The US can only limit Iran’s regional influence by resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, ameliorating Israeli tensions with Lebanon and Syria, and settling the struggles for power in Lebanon and Iraq. To do any of this, however, will require engagement with the forces Washington seeks to defeat, including Hamas, Hizballah, Syria and the Sadrist trend in Iraq. In each case, Iran has tools to assist or hinder resolution. To make matters worse, Roy laments, “the conditions on the ground now make the creation of a viable Palestinian state impossible,” rendering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nearly unresolvable.

Among Middle East scholars and former officials no longer tied to Washington power centers, a near consensus has emerged behind the need to forge a “grand bargain” with Iran that addresses both US and Iranian security concerns. It is unclear, however, if either side can live with the detente the other is currently offering.

From Washington’s side, both the neo-conservative and neo-liberal grand strategies seek to administer a US-led global order from a position of primacy, in which the US is able to project military, economic and political power across the Middle East. In his writings, speeches and choice of advisers, Obama has suggested only modulations of this approach. Rather than repudiating a militarized “war on terror,” he calls for shifting it to Afghanistan. Like Ross, he wants to use stronger diplomacy to coerce Iran and has supported stronger sanctions as well as the Israeli use of force to contain and defeat Hizballah and Hamas.⁵ And like Pollack, he hopes that US-backed economic and social reforms can “contain and roll back the tide of hopelessness that gives rise to hate.”⁶ While Obama would likely mount far more credible public diplomacy and development assistance

efforts than Bush's dismal attempts, America's popular image and ability to promote "reform" will likely be constrained by ongoing confrontation with its regional rivals and inability to achieve Palestinian sovereignty and security. Only if Obama takes Freedman's advice and chooses a limited number of enemies to confront, while accommodating the remaining rivals, will the US be able to make limited progress. Such a shift might come once he gains distance from the pressures of campaigning. Or Obama might be blessed, as Clinton was, with a surprise—analogue to the Israeli-PLO agreement that opened the door for the Oslo process and the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty—such as a Syrian-Israeli peace deal and or a rapprochement between the multiple Iraqi political forces.

One sure way to make a grand bargain with Iran at least possible and open the door to new options for US policy across the region is to redefine grand strategy so as to diminish the US need for primacy in the Middle East. In recent years, mainstream international relations scholars have begun to promote just such a rethinking. Most of these scholars opposed the US invasion of Iraq, and have come to view the costs of the current American posture as massively outweighing the benefits, leading to a decline of US global power vis-à-vis Russia, China and others. Scholars such as Stephen Walt, John Mearsheimer and Christopher Layne have argued that Washington's projection of power across the

Middle East and close alignment with Israel have contributed to anti-American terrorism and the Iraq insurgency.⁷ These scholars call for a switch to a grand strategy of "offshore balancing." Such a strategy recognizes that a stable oil supply and the security of US allies like Israel are important strategic interests, but argues that these can best be secured with US military power located "over the horizon" as it was until 1990. In this view, the US need only ensure that no hostile power is able to dominate the region's oil resources and threaten US allies. As during the Iran-Iraq war, these scholars argue the US should back local allies to maintain balances of power between regional states (and between rival forces within states) and only intervene when those balances break down and local allies and vital US interests are threatened. These scholars differ from the mainstream media discourse in viewing terrorism as something less than a strategic threat and recognizing that if rivals like Iran gained nuclear weapons, they could be deterred from using them offensively. Moreover, by making "American involvement less threatening to states in the region"⁸ and allowing rivals more regional influence, the US would be less frequently drawn into direct intervention while gaining leverage in reshaping alignments to maintain regional balances. A critical implication of this switch in strategy is that it positions the US to define its strategic interests as no longer fully congruent with Israel's occupation of the West Bank and regional military posture.

United States Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (required by 39 U.S.C. 6985 (1) Publication Title: Middle East Report; (2) Publication No: 0899-2851 (3) Filing Date: 9/25/08; (4) Issue Frequency: Quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter; (5) No. of issues published annually: 4; (6) Annual subscription price: \$37.00 individual, \$76.00 institutional; (7) Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Middle East Research and Information Project, 1500 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20005-1484; (8) Complete mailing address of headquarters or general business office: Middle East Research and Information Project, 1500 Massachusetts Ave NW, Suite 119, Washington DC 20005-1814 (9) Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor, Middle East Research and Information Project, 1500 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 119, Washington DC 20005-1814; Editor, Chris Toensing, Middle East Research & Info Project, 1500 Mass. Ave NW, Suite 119, Washington DC 20005-1814; (10) Owner, Middle East Research & Info Project, 1500 Mass. Ave NW, Suite 119, Washington DC 20005-1814; (11) Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None; (12) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: has not changed during preceding 12 months; (13) Publication name: Middle East Report; (14) Issue date for circulation data below: 38 3 Fall 2008; (15) Extent and nature of circulation: (a) Total no. copies (net press run): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3225; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 3200; (b) Paid and/or requested circulation: (1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541: (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies) Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1530; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1529; (2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 2548 (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 0; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 0; (3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 800; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 810; (4) Other Classes Mailed Through USPS: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 0; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 0; (c) Total paid and/or requested circulation (sum of 15b (1), (2), (3) and (4)) Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2330; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 2329; (d) Free distribution by mail (samples, complimentary, and other free) (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 100; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 100; (2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 0; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 0; (3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 0; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 0; (4) Free distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means) Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 100; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 100; (e) Total free distribution (sum of 15d), Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 200; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 200; (f) Total distribution (sum of 15c and 15e): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2530; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 2529; (g) Copies not distributed: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 695; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 671; (h) Total (sum of 15g and h): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3225; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 3200; (i) Percent paid and/or requested circulation (15c/15f x 100) Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 92%; Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 92%; (16) This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Winter 2008 issue of this publication. (17) Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner: Chris Toensing, Editor, 9/25/08. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties). Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of second-class authorization. PS Form 3526 September 2007 (Facsimile)

While the US would want Israel to maintain the ability to balance regional rivals and deter hostile attacks, the US would have a stronger interest in resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute, giving it more incentive to press Israel to compromise with its Arab neighbors.

While advocates of offshore balancing promote many policies that progressives have long called for, their approach is still rooted in the capacity of the US to project power into the region (when needed), requiring a strong maritime presence, access to air bases and forces over the horizon. And as repeatedly witnessed during the Cold War, when the US followed a strategy of offshore balancing, regional forces are not likely to stay in equilibrium. US allies may provoke conflicts with the expectation of US intervention, and forces opposed to US interests may rise. The argument for restraining the American role in the region is taken further by Barry Posen, who argues that the diffusion of global power and the spread of globalization have made the forms of control neo-conservatives and neo-liberals desire so costly as to be self-defeating. As Posen writes, "The very act of seeking more control injects negative energy into global politics as quickly as it finds enemies to vanquish."⁹

Though a neo-isolationist policy limits the forms of power the US would wield over the Middle East, like offshore balancing it would require accepting a government that abandons any effort to build institutions at the local, transnational and global levels that might help promote a more just, inclusive and environmentally sustainable global order. With reason, some suggest that Barack Obama is the most "cosmopolitan" American to win the White House and that he has an interest in redefining America's relationship with the world in fundamental ways. In any case, most would agree with Posen that "we do not have a debate on the deep foundations of grand strategy in the US mainstream today."¹⁰ We did not get such a debate during the presidential campaign. The time is now to have it and to seek the change we need. ■

Endnotes

1 Barack Obama, "Renewing American Leadership," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2007).

2 Richard Haass, "The New Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2006).

3 In contrast, the secular left-liberal intellectual Samir Kassir argues that the Arab experience of modernity, initiated during the *nahda* in the nineteenth century, collapsed more as "a function of [the Arabs'] geography than their history," as the embrace of anti-liberal ideologies—pan-Arabism and Islamism—came about in the process of the Arab world's struggle against colonization by outside forces. See Samir Kassir, *Being Arab* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 67.

4 Testimony to Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, June 2, 2004.

5 It is useful to recall that by 1998, two years before Bush took office, President Bill Clinton had already discarded a multilateral approach at the UN in his own effort to contain Iraq. See Marc Lynch, "The Politics of Consensus in the Gulf," *Middle East Report* 215 (Summer 2000).

6 Barack Obama, "The War We Need to Win," speech at the Wilson Center, Washington, DC, August 1, 2007.

7 See Stephen Walt, "In the National Interest: A New Grand Strategy for American Foreign Policy," *Boston Review* (February/March 2005); John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), pp. 338–341; and Christopher Layne, "Who Lost Iraq and Why It Matters: The Case for Offshore Balancing," *World Policy Journal* 24/3 (Fall 2007).

8 Mearsheimer and Walt, p. 340.

9 Barry Posen, "The Case for Restraint," *The American Interest* (November/December 2007), p. 13.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Aziza Khazzoom, *Shifting Ethnic Boundaries and Inequality in Israel: Or, How the Polish Peddler Became a German Intellectual* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

—Reviewed by Tamir Sorek

The ethnic divide among Jewish Israelis is an elusive concept and a rarely acknowledged reality. There are no discriminatory laws that explicitly sustain it, as with the divide between Jewish and Arab citizens. And it is not institutionalized in parallel state-sponsored school systems, as exist for religious and secular Jews. Zionist ideology, whereby all Jews belong to one nation, may seem to have forged a melting pot.

But a deeper analysis would find that Ashkenazim (Jews who came from Europe or America) constitute most of the upper and upper middle classes, while most Jews in the lower classes are Mizrahim (from Africa or Asia). This cleavage has concrete political implications, furthermore, since continent of origin is an important predictor of voting in parliamentary elections. Aziza Khazzoom's book traces the genesis of the gap, and also shows how and why "Ashkenazi" and "Mizrahi" became constructed as categories in the Israeli job market, in an echo of the global dichotomy between East and West.

The historical context is the mass immigration to Israel during the first 13 years of the state's existence. In May 1948, Israel had about 600,000 Jews, mostly of European origin. Over the next three and a half years, the newly established state absorbed 700,000 Jewish immigrants, of whom about half were Holocaust survivors from Europe and the other half Jews from Muslim countries. By 1960, another 300,000 Jews had arrived, about 60 percent of them from Muslim countries. Counter to conventional wisdom, what immigrants brought with them explains little about the contemporary Ashkenazi-Mizrahi divide. Khazzoom quotes studies illustrating that the educational attainment of older immigrant men varied among countries of origin, but with no obvious clustering of Europeans and Middle Easterners. Among the Israel-born second generation, however, there was a clear binary opposition. Newly arrived Iraqi men, for example, had an educational level similar to that of Romanians and Poles, and far above Moroccans and Yemenis. By the second generation, the Iraqi men's level of education was much closer to that of the Moroccans and Yemenis, and far below the Poles' and Romanians' level.

To explain the growth of this disparity, Khazzoom uses the 1961 census, which provides a snapshot of ethnic stratification. Her argument is more complex than a claim that Ashkenazi immigrants had privileged access to jobs. True, in the 1950s most gatekeepers were Ashkenazim, and employers tend to hire those with whom they feel comfortable and can more easily communicate. What, then, accounts for the "Iraqi paradox"—the ability of many first-generation Iraqis, like Ashkenazis, to translate their education into professional prestige?