

The United States in the Middle East: An Exercise in Self-Defeat

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Idealism or Realism

In his book *Diplomacy*,¹ Henry Kissinger contends that while Europe's foreign policy has been characterized by the pursuit of calculated strategic interests, *realpolitik*, and the attempt to stabilize a balance of power, American foreign policy has generally been characterized by idealism. According to Kissinger, the American approach holds that conflicts stem from misunderstandings that can be clarified or from injustices that can be corrected, and not from a clash of basic interests. The general assumption is that respective parties share a common desire to live harmoniously, and that if we only reach out, meet, understand the other, and demonstrate good will, everything can be ironed out.

Any sound foreign policy strives to combine pragmatism with ideology. Accordingly, the worldview of a US administration is a source for interpreting national interests, and its values provide the perspective for examining questions such as: what are preconditions for the use of force; to what extent is international legitimacy important; is the blessing of international institutions required; and how can the tension between collectivism and American exceptionalism be decided. This article contends that both the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama designed a Middle East policy that is based to a large extent on idealism – even if the ideals of the two administrations are, of course, different – but did not support their respective policies with the necessary dose of cold, calculated strategy. This is not a dichotomous question

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of idealism vs. pragmatism, but a question of weight and balance, and mainly, the extent to which worldview is relying on *realpolitik*.

In its first term, the Bush administration undertook too many momentous endeavors, without the requisite American domestic political backing, sufficient allocated resources, and the national determination required to realize them. Therefore, the second term saw the administration overstretching and struggling in the test of national stamina, and as a result, with the uphill battle to change the nature of the Middle East. The Obama administration has attempted to create an atmosphere of good will and mutual respect, but in practice, it has created a situation whereby on the one hand its deterrence is eroded and it is less effective in its confrontation with America's adversaries, and on the other, it does not back America's allies as it should. Consequently, in the past two years the Obama administration has reduced the Arab leaders' incentive to adhere to American policies and interests.

The character of the Middle East stems from a host of mostly local factors, and the extent of American influence over the region should not be exaggerated. Even the sole superpower cannot shape the Middle East as it sees fit; still, it can be claimed that the two American administrations have had difficulty coping with the Middle East strategic game. Therefore, in spite of the fact that this was not their intention, the bottom line is that the two administrations have contributed to weakening the political and military front that had curbed Iran and protected the vital interests of the United States and its allies, and have shaped a theater that is better suited to Iran's realizing its relative advantages.

Optimizing the Theater for Iran

Until the late 1990s, "dual containment" was a cornerstone of American strategy in the Middle East. The United States identified both Iraq and Iran as threats to its vital interests, and therefore it aspired to contain them both. To a large extent, the term "dual containment" is misleading, since it was not only the United States that engaged in containing these two states, but it was the two states that contained each other. This is especially true of the period in which Iran and Iraq were focused on the violent conflict between them. Therefore, perhaps "balance of power policy" is a more appropriate term.

Following the September 2001 terror attacks, the Bush administration adopted a strategy of preemption and changing the nature of the Middle East. In this context, the United States occupied Afghanistan and Iraq. At the outset, it appeared that the deployment of American forces in these two states created a direct threat to Iran and limited its freedom of action. The United States itself replaced Iraq as the balancing power against Iran. The projection of American power was maintained and even strengthened for a few years after the occupation of Iraq, and in fact, the military operations during President Bush's first term were perceived as part of a more extensive strategy that would bring the United States to a collision with other states. The projection of American power and deterrence brought about Libya's withdrawal from its nuclear program in 2003, contributed to the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005, and may have also contributed to a temporary pause in the Iranian nuclear program.

But it quickly became apparent that from among the alternatives that were ostensibly open to it, the Bush administration had chosen a problematic strategy towards Iraq. The first alternative was to defeat the Iraqi military in battle and remove Saddam Hussein and his family, but to preserve the Iraqi armed forces, the ruling Sunni elite, and the Ba'athist state institutions. This option would have been far from guaranteeing a definitive result, but the regime might perhaps have become friendly, and the Iraqi state would have remained a unified and functioning entity. The second alternative was to dismantle the Sunni-Ba'athist regime, mold a new Iraqi national consciousness, establish strong civil institutions, and educate a new, post-Saddam generation with Western values. This alternative is possible – if at all – only at a heavy price of a generation-long occupation and intense involvement. The domestic American public-political system was not prepared to pay such a price, and therefore the United States dismantled the Sunni-Ba'athist regime, but did not allocate sufficient resources and did not muster the necessary will and tenacity to create a new pro-Western Iraq.

A thorough analysis of whether nation building is a realistic task is beyond the scope of this essay, and the following observations will suffice: Central European states such as the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary evolved on the wellsprings of European culture, and therefore when the yoke of the Soviet dictatorship was removed, it was not difficult

for them to turn into normative Western countries. Japan and Germany are coherent nations with strong unifying foundations, and therefore when their leaderships changed in 1945 (and following massive casualties among both civilian populations), the two nations readily adjusted themselves to their new contours. Iraq is lacking these basic elements: it was born from an almost random drawing of borders by the colonial powers, and it includes fractions of three rival populations. It never cultivated internal coherence and it remained unified only under the iron fist of Saddam. Moreover, the history of local democracy is meager at best. Under these conditions, dismantlement of the Ba’ath regime and a reconstruction program of a few years were not sufficient to realize the ideological goals of the Bush administration.

Following the liquidation of the Ba’ath regime, a war broke out – indirect, covert, and nameless – between Iran and the United States over the character, hegemony, and future of Iraq. Even though the United States is the world’s sole superpower, and in spite of its resources and its aspiration to mobilize a wide spectrum of national capabilities (the “whole of government” approach²), Iran demonstrated superior effectiveness and persistence in the indirect war for hegemony in Iraq.³ Now, in accordance with the commitments by Presidents Bush and Obama, the United States is close to completing the withdrawal of its forces from Iraq, and to a large extent, a retreat from confronting Iran over hegemony in Iraq.

With its operation in Iraq, the United States contributed to shaping a theater optimal for Iran. Iran recoils from direct confrontations yet has an advantage in indirect conflicts, while the United States has removed

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the main direct threat to Iran and left an arena convenient for Iran to work in through indirect means. Saddam Hussein’s regime was formed from materials that are suited for containing Iran, for fighting fire with fire. Therefore, dual containment (in the sense of a balance of power) had an effective strategic basis. The dismantling of Saddam’s regime removed the main balance

to Iran from a bordering country and possibly turned Iraq into a failed state. As expected, the elections promoted by the United States brought about the rise of the Shiites as the dominant political element in Iraq.

Moreover, Iraq has become a convenient base for Iran's indirect means, with Iran acting through carrots (funding, bribery, *dawa*, religion, and tribal support) and sticks (terrorism, militias, the Revolutionary Guards, and the al-Quds force) within the Iraqi system to prevent the creation of a future Iraqi threat to Iran, and to prevent the use of Iraqi territory as a springboard for third party activity against Iran. In fact, it is possible to consider the Iraq that takes shape after the American withdrawal as an Iranian strategic defense zone. Once the direct threat from a bordering country was removed, all that remained for Iran was to apply its indirect means within or against states and territories that do not border it (Lebanon, Yemen, Bahrain, the Horn of Africa, Gaza, and so on). And of course, Iranian missiles and potential future nuclear weapons are free from limitations that might otherwise be imposed by the need for a shared border.

Two other bordering countries, Afghanistan and Turkey, are worthy of mention. The Afghan case is somewhat reminiscent of the Iraqi situation, and there too the collapse of the system made Iranian involvement and influence through proxies possible. Afghanistan, like Iraq, has become an arena that commands the resources of some Iranian adversaries. Once mired there, they become exhausted and lose domestic legitimacy for other confrontations, and the projection of their power toward third parties is diminishing.

Turkey's strategic reversal is not a result of mistaken American or Israeli policy. Perhaps it is a result of European policy, but it is more reasonable to assume that the Turkish turn to the east is mainly an outcome of internal Turkish processes. The turn to the east involves a new interpretation of Turkish national interests, and its first signs can be traced back to 2003, when Turkey refused to allow the United States to use its territory to open a second front against Iraq. Nevertheless, Turkey also opposed the American invasion of Iraq out of fear that it would set in motion isolationist tendencies among the Kurds in Iraq, which were liable to spread to the Kurds in Turkey. Therefore, it is possible that even a Turkish government without an Islamist orientation would have opposed the invasion, but the United States failed to factor this vital Turkish interest in its realpolitik calculations and its expectations of Turkey. That being the case, the United States has found it difficult to influence Turkish policy. As a result of Turkey's strategic reversal, in

spite of the fact that Iran borders a country that is a NATO member, and in spite of the potential for regional competition between Iran and Turkey (whose long term importance should not be underestimated), Iran today can consider itself free of a direct threat on its northwestern border.

A Sampling from the Secondary Theaters: Lebanon and the Palestinians

Following the assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri in 2005, American and French pressure brought about the end of Syria’s thirty year occupation of Lebanon. Ostensibly this was an impressive strategic and ideological success. However, while the withdrawal of its armed forces prompted Syria to attempt indirect and clandestine means of influence in Lebanon, it quickly became clear that Syria’s effectiveness in the Land of the Cedars was on the decline, while Hizbollah’s dominance in Lebanon was growing. Although Syria and Hizbollah avoided defining the strategic situation between them as a competition for hegemony in Lebanon, the result in practice was that Hizbollah (and indirectly, Iran) gradually replaced Syria as the dominant player in the Lebanese system.

The United States and Israel had effective leverage against an actor such as Syria, and more than once this led to Syria’s restraint, and thereby,

to restrained developments in Lebanon. However, the ability of the United States and Israel to rein in Hizbollah and Iran was not as considerable as their ability to restrain Syria. The United States and its allies also found it difficult to compete in the disintegrating domestic Lebanese arena and to sufficiently strengthen the pro-Western elements there, to the extent that this was at all possible. The ineffectiveness of the United States and its allies was evident, for example, in the crisis of May 2008 and the ensuing developments. In the Second Lebanon War, Israel too lacked its longstanding leverage – pressure on Syrian armed forces in Lebanon. Thus a clinical analysis reveals that pushing the Syrian military out of Lebanon – when

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not accompanied by the buildup of pro-Western actors endowed with sufficient strength in the domestic Lebanese system – merely curtailed

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In 2006, as a result of American pressure, elections were held in the Palestinian territories. Although based on agreements between Israel and the Palestinians Hamas was banned from participating in the elections, the Bush administration – for ideological reasons and contrary to its self-interests – exerted pressure to include all the Palestinian factions in the elections. The elections resulted in a Hamas victory and led to a struggle that ended with Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip. Hamas did not become democratic, but only took advantage of the mechanics of the (thus far, non-recurring) elections to promote its non-democratic goals.

The Palestinian elections and the processes they generated led to a number of results, led by the bifurcation of the Palestinian government. Consequently, the Palestinian Authority no longer represents either the entire population or the entire territory. The Palestinian Authority will find it difficult to deliver the goods in a future peace agreement, and its freedom of action – mainly its potential to agree to concessions – is limited by its rival, the other, more extremist Palestinian administration. Hamas is not an Iranian proxy, but Iran is the foreign power that has the most influence over it. Therefore, Hamas' capture of Gaza increased Iranian influence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Iran has gained an indirect military foothold in Gaza. If that is the case, the elections did not promote democracy and peace; rather, they brought about Iranian penetration of the Sunni world and a threat to Egypt (at least, according to Mubarak's net assessment), the Palestinian Authority, and Israel.

Obama in Egypt: A Roll the Dice Strategy

Egypt is the political core of the Arab world and the strongest Arab state, and since the late 1970s it has been the most stable and loyal pro-American power in the Arab world. The political and military alliance with Egypt was a source of strength and influence for the United States, and a cornerstone of Israel's strategic jigsaw puzzle. Egypt was the key player on the front to curb and contain hostile actors such as Iran and its proxies.

The second key player in containing Iran and its proxies is Saudi Arabia, but the Saudi state suffers from deep-seated weaknesses, mostly

recoils from direct confrontations, and tends to hedge its bets. If Saudi Arabia is left alone in the battle, it might seek to limit its risks. Hence, Egypt's role is doubly important: it is not only essential in and of itself, but it is also an element that empowers Saudi Arabia and allows it to play a constructive regional role. Egypt is important on the bilateral level, but also in the fact that the Egyptian-Saudi axis has played an important proactive role in influencing third parties in Lebanon, Iraq, Bahrain, Yemen, Sudan, and so on, and in lending political backing to concessions by the Palestinians. Mubarak, who was a key player in mitigating crises between Israel and the Palestinians, feared the historic connection between the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, and therefore he labored to reinforce Fatah's standing within the Palestinian system and to curb Hamas.

It is too early to assess what Egypt will look like when the processes that recently took the country by storm have evolved, and there are still a number of possibilities. It is also possible that the actual American influence on the demonstrations in Tahrir Square and the processes to which they gave rise was limited, and that the United States has no choice but to ride the train that in any case has left the station. It is also possible to identify signs of pragmatism and a moderated White House position, as compared with the initial position expressed in late January 2011. This is evidenced by the fact that the United States' main interlocutor in the discussion on the future of Egypt is the Egyptian military (and not the civilian opposition). Nevertheless, White House policy towards the Mubarak regime – especially in the first moments of the crisis – raises serious questions.

What do the pro-Western Arab monarchs find more formidable, Iran's aspirations to hegemony or the White House's democratization policy?

The Obama administration stood by when its adversary Ahmadinejad was challenged in similar demonstrations in 2009, and when Tunisia experienced demonstrations a short time before the events in Tahrir Square. But when Mubarak, a loyal ally, was challenged, the Obama administration, out of ideological reasons, hurried to turn its back on him – publicly and behind the

scenes. What conclusion, then, should the royal houses of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Jordan, and the emirs and sultans of the Gulf reach from President Obama's policy toward Mubarak? Whether these monarchs

can count on the White House as an ally in time of distress is far from certain. And what do the pro-Western monarchs find more formidable: Iran's aspirations to hegemony or the White House's democratization policy?

A basic understanding of realpolitik reveals that with its conduct, the White House has created a situation that greatly reduces its freedom to maneuver and leaves it with two undesirable options: one, to continue to promote its values and confront every one of the Arab kings, emirs, and sultans that are its allies. In such a case, the White House is likely to distance itself from most of its Arab allies, and Iran would be happy to take advantage of the wedge that would be driven between the United States and its allies. The second choice is to concede that Mubarak was an exceptional case, and henceforth, the White House will back up its allies. In such a scenario, the White House would lose its credibility, appear fickle, and in fact admit that United States participation in the sacrifice of Mubarak was unnecessary and unhelpful, and that it stemmed in part from misunderstanding the rules of the game. At the time of this writing, it appears from the White House approach to the crises in Bahrain, Yemen, and states ruled by other autocratic allies that it is, in fact, changing direction to a pragmatic approach, and that it prefers the second choice.

It is possible to criticize the Bush administration's Middle East policy, for example, its overstretching and setting of unrealistic goals, but it could claim two strategic assets: it deterred its enemies (especially in its first term), and it was generally loyal to its allies. The Obama administration, however, does not bolster the projection of a strong American stick, and its conduct vis-à-vis Iraq, the Iranian nuclear program, and other areas of conflict reinforces this assessment. On the other hand, its conduct towards Mubarak raises questions concerning the carrot: loyalty to its allies. In addition, in his attempts to draw closer to adversaries such as Iran, Obama failed to take sufficiently seriously the vital interests of allies like Saudi Arabia. This can be seen, for example, from his hesitant and indecisive approach to the Iranian nuclear program. A clinical, unemotional analysis reveals that in the absence of the carrot and the stick, it is difficult to identify an incentive that the Obama administration could supply to an Arab ruler in order for him to be counted as part of the American camp.

And indeed, why should a monarch risk a confrontation with Iran if at the end of the day, the United States itself will demand that he give up his throne (and will even act to confiscate his money)? At the very least, when it turned its back on Mubarak, the Obama administration should have presented a new set of strategic carrots and sticks.

Another angle is that the Obama administration is pushing for change without attempting to ensure in advance where the change will lead. In fact, if democratic elections are held in Bahrain and the Shiite majority takes power in the home port of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, or if there is liberalization in Saudi Arabia and the undercurrents come to the surface, will these developments serve American interests? Kissinger aptly characterized the typical American approach: "What [the United States] resists is not change as such but the method of change . . . A Bismarck or a Disraeli would have ridiculed the proposition that foreign policy is about method rather than substance, if indeed he had understood it."⁴

The White House is pushing to present democratic mechanics without studying the lessons from Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza, and the like: the mechanics of democracy without a democratic culture and without sound civil institutions does not ensure the establishment of democracy, but is liable to end with the cynical exploitation of democratic mechanics by nondemocratic elements.

The die has not yet been cast concerning the identity of the new Egypt and the way in which it will interpret its national interest. It is possible that there has not been a revolution and that all that will happen is that the military will replace the retired general Mubarak with another veteran general.⁵ It is possible that Egypt will continue to see Iran as a major strategic threat, especially if Iran seeks to take advantage of the opportunity to increase its attempts to intervene within Egypt or to pressure it,⁶ and hence, that Egyptian foreign policy will not change. But there is also another possibility: Egypt is liable not to stop playing by the rules but to adopt a policy similar to that of Turkey. It might sink into a prolonged period of turning inward and withdraw from the regional arena; and of course, the possibility of an Islamic takeover cannot be ruled out. Each of the last scenarios undermines the national interest of the United States and its allies, and is likely to be useful to Iran. But surprisingly, in spite of the weight of the interests at stake, the Obama

administration decided to gamble, roll the dice, and see what strategic number comes up.

If the more detrimental scenarios evolve and the United States loses Egypt as a strong and proactive partner, this will seriously undermine American Middle East strategy of the past four decades. This would happen without the United States having developed an alternative strategy or alternative centers of power, or having answered the question of how to maintain the regional balance of power and how, on the day after, to protect its national interests.

Libya: The Place to Spend Political Capital?

At the time of this writing, the United States is halfheartedly participating in an air campaign in Libya. The picture in Libya is far from clear, and the possibility of an optimistic scenario in which the air campaign assists a friendly and democratic entity to assume power and ensure that Libya remain a functioning state – and as a result, projection of United States power and strategic effectiveness is heightened – cannot be ruled out. However, there are currently more questions than answers. With all the areas of friction in the Middle East, the United States chose to intervene militarily in one of the less critical. Qaddafi is a colorful figure, and there has been much media coverage of his repression of his own people, but in realpolitik calculations, the Qaddafi regime (version 2011, as opposed to earlier decades) does not constitute an immediate threat to United States vital interests. In a world in which it is possible to use force only sparingly, and the public-political system is liable to quickly lose its appetite for applying force for a host of reasons, it is possible that the attack on Libya squanders the political credit that is needed for intervening in more pressing crises with greater strategic significance. It is possible that the very act of allocating management attention and political capital specifically to Libya reflects a lack of strategic understanding.

The United States is also committed to the battle to assist the rebels, about whom there is little information. It is not clear who they are, whether they are even a coherent group, what their intentions are, and why – if the campaign succeeds at all – the United States will benefit from their being in power in Libya. It is doubtful whether Libya was a habitat for covert liberal forces that burst forth in recent weeks, and it is not clear if success by the rebels would leave Libya a functioning state. In breach

of almost every rule of the Weinberger doctrine, the United States has waged an idealistic-preventive campaign: preventing human tragedy and preventing Qaddafi's continued rule. But even if this campaign succeeds, it is not clear how it will positively promote American national interests.

Conclusion: The United States Dismantles its Own Front

There is no doubt that Presidents Bush and Obama, with their substantive differences of approach, harbored good and noteworthy intentions. In addition, American influence in the Middle East should not be overestimated. For example, it is eminently possible that Mubarak would have fallen even if President Obama had backed him. And still, it appears that the unintended result of the actions by Presidents Bush and Obama was a "shaping operation" that contributed, to a not insignificant extent, to the transformation of the theater in a manner that is optimal to the competitive advantages of Iran; to weakening the Arab front that served the interests of the United States and its allies; and to undermining the regional balance of power.

The main military actor that contained Iran was Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and the main political actors were Egypt and Saudi Arabia. When the United States conquered Iraq and Afghanistan, it appeared as if it would take upon itself the military containment of Iran. In fact, all it did was weaken Iran's two neighbors – mainly by dismantling the armed forces and the Ba'ath regime in Iraq – and then it began to withdraw. One of Iran's main weak points is its difficulty coping with direct threats and with a regime that is made of Saddam-like materials, yet the United States removed this threat to Iran. The dismantling of the Ba'ath regime turned Iraq into a convenient space for indirect Iranian means, and Iran is becoming the most influential foreign player in Mesopotamia. In fact, once the United States withdraws, Iraq will gradually become a strategic defense zone of Iran. Therefore, it will not be surprising if the United States reconsiders the pace of withdrawal.

The processes underway in Egypt are not yet complete, but among the range of possibilities are a reversal in policy, intensifying Islamic Brotherhood influence, or a process of turning inward. If Egypt is lost as a proactive ally, an important element in the political containment of Iran will also be lost. Saudi Arabia will likely not want to remain the lone Arab ranger combating Iran (as it is being drawn into this role in Bahrain), and

hence, the loss of Egypt is also liable to cause the weakening of Saudi Arabia as an asset in the struggle for containment.

The American policy toward Mubarak has produced a hovering cloud over its relations with its remaining Arab allies, almost none of whom were elected in democratic elections. Tragically, the pressure from the White House to promote democratic reforms is effective when it is directed at its close allies (such as Mubarak), and it is less effective, if at all, when directed at its adversaries (such as Ahmedinajad). The White House is trapping itself, and it appears that any choice it makes now will harm its standing. Either Obama will find himself the enemy of Arab regimes (including his allies) or he will admit that he erred, did not understand how to play the game, and helped to sacrifice Mubarak in vain.

The removal of the Iraqi threat from Iran and America's recoiling from a direct confrontation with Iran have steered the struggle for hegemony in the Middle East to indirect channels: the use of proxies and non-state actors, terrorism, bribery, *dawa*, religious and ethnic levers, and more. Iran has a relative advantage in these indirect channels, which it wields in Iraq, Lebanon, eastern Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Gaza, and other areas of friction. The confrontation is therefore now conducted in the part of the envelope in which Iran is strong and its adversaries are weak.

Among the Palestinians, the combination of the elections that brought Hamas to power in Gaza; the possibility of an Egyptian withdrawal – followed by Saudi Arabia – from backing a Palestinian moderate line; and the undermining of America's position as a reliable strategic buttress of Fatah, reduce the chances of achieving an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.

Once the White House dismantles its own front, the moderate options are likely to evaporate, so that only the far reaching options remain: passing the baton of regional hegemony to Iran or a direct confrontation with it. And in fact, even now, a lack of American success in conducting a strategy of realpolitik and the Iranian advantage in indirect conflicts have narrowed Saudi Arabia's room to maneuver to a choice that is both undesirable and unusual for Saudi Arabia: direct and overt military intervention in Bahrain. Saudi Arabia, which is typically risk averse, was pushed into a corner, and it then executed an interesting direct move,

which poses difficult dilemmas in the face of the Iranian strategy of indirect approach. Is Bahrain a sign of things to come?

The supreme American interest in the Middle East is stability. Stability ensures freedom of access and flow (and price) of oil, and it prevents wars, terrorism, and arms races (including a nuclear arms race). One way to achieve stability is through unipolar American hegemony. The second way is through the balance of power. The promotion of ideology (conservative or liberal), especially when it is not accompanied by carrots and sticks taken from the spoken language of strategy, is a poor way to ensure stability. Idealism must be backed by practical language that Machiavelli too would understand.

Notes

- 1 Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).
- 2 US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Roles and Mission Review Report*, January 2009, pp. 31-36.
- 3 Yoel Guzansky, "'Made in Iran': The Iranian Involvement in Iraq," *Strategic Assessment* 13, no. 4 (2011): 85-100; Ron Tira, "Shifting Tectonic Plates: Basic Assumptions on the Peace Process Revisited," *Strategic Assessment* 12, no. 1 (2009): 91-107.
- 4 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, p. 22.
- 5 George Friedman, *Egypt: The Distance Between Enthusiasm and Reality*, Stratfor Global Intelligence, February 14, 2011.
- 6 As occurred during passage of Iranian warships in the Suez Canal, which is liable to be an Iranian error, since it put pressure on the new Egyptian regime and embarrassed it early on, and publicly.