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Al-Monitor

West Bank Protests Raise Fears Of Third Intifada

Dalia Hatuqa

February 24 -- According to the blogosphere and media, a third intifada has been just around the corner for a few months now. However, as clashes raged through the West Bank between Palestinians and the Israeli army over the last two days that followed the death of Arafat Jaradat — a 30-year-old Palestinian man held in an Israeli jail — this rhetoric hit new heights. Protests and confrontations continued in the West Bank today, most notably in Jaradat's hometown of Sa'ir, elsewhere in Hebron, Nablus, and outside of Ofer, the Israeli military prison on the outskirts of Ramallah, where demonstrations had already been taken place almost everyday for the past week in support of four Palestinian hunger strikers, including Samer Issawi. Israeli news outlets — including Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post and Arutz Sheva — all wondered aloud whether these heightened tensions marked the beginnings of a third intifada, raising many questions: Were these reflections of fears brewing inside Israel, or did they constitute wishful thinking? In other words, would another intifada be beneficial to Israel at a time when it seems to have been losing many PR battles of late? Would an outbreak of hostilities provide Israel with a much-needed justification to the international community to warrant its ongoing military occupation?

Or is a third intifada exactly the last thing Israel wants at the moment? One can argue for this line of thinking when looking at repeated calls by Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for the Palestinian Authority (PA) <http://www.timesofisrael.com/third-intifada-is-already-raging-pa-officials-say/> to stop the demonstrations flooding the streets of the West Bank. In fact, Netanyahu's envoy Itzhak Molho spoke to Palestinian officials and demanded them to "calm down" the protests. Israel also said it would release some of the tax monies it has been withholding since Palestinians upgraded their status at the UN. Netanyahu's reasoning for the transfer—which some can interpret as bribery — is "so that [the PA] won't have an excuse not to enforce calm on the ground." <http://www.jpost.com/Defense/Article.aspx?id=304315>

Coincidentally, just two days ago, Abbas told Al Arabiya TV <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=304248>, in a message that seems to have been aimed more at Israelis than the Palestinians, that he supported protests against the occupation, but stressed that these should be non-violent in nature. "Armed resistance is banned," he said. "This is a law and it is forbidden. It is also forbidden in the Gaza Strip." The reference to Gaza suggests that Abbas has a say over what goes on in the coastal enclave run by Hamas. And though there have been repeated attempts to reconcile Hamas with Abbas' ruling party, Fatah, nothing fruitful has yet come of them - certainly not anything that would prompt Abbas to suggest that he can control what happens in the Gaza Strip. A telling indication of this is that following Jaradat's death, Palestinian factions in Gaza held an urgent meeting to discuss a response to the man's demise. <http://972mag.com/prisoner-issue-and-settler-violence-drive-escalation-of-west-bank-protests/66577/>

Meanwhile, more than 4,000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons went on hunger strike to protest the death of their fellow inmate. Four of these prisoners have been on strike for months now, and fears for their lives have been expressed by their families and human rights groups. According to the Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem, there are more than 4,500 Palestinian detainees, 178 of whom are being held without charge or trial. http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners

In a press conference held on Sunday, Issa Qaraqi, the PA's minister of detainees, said that Palestinians would continue to protest until Israel responds to the detainees' demands. Qaraqi called for an international committee to investigate the death of Jaradat, whom he said had no prior health issues. He also warned: "The situation is already explosive because of the four Palestinians on hunger strike. Palestinians on the street and inside the prisons are seething with anger."

The PA is trying to tow a fine line: using the specter of a third intifada to put pressure on Israel while doing much to placate its fears by reiterating that it will not tolerate any armed methods of resistance. That's why the PA was quick to dispel rumors – and Israeli allegations – that it was stoking the protests. Senior Fatah official Jibril Rajoub said PA-Israeli security cooperation would continue. "I say on behalf of the entire Palestinian leadership that we won't initiate any bloodshed," he told Israel Radio <http://www.timesofisrael.com/third-intifada-is-already-raging-pa-officials-say/>, while echoing Abbas' statement vis-à-vis Palestinians' right to "nonviolent resistance."

While comparisons are being made between the first and second intifadas to draw conclusions about a possible third one, it is worth noting that the frequency of West Bank clashes is a marked reflection of frustration with the PA's inability to change the status quo. If anything, the PA is being seen as a contributor to the current situation; A few days ago PA forces were deployed (as they have been on and off in recent protests) to act as a buffer between demonstrators and Israeli soldiers in Hebron.

Settler violence has also been playing a central role in the hostilities as the number of incidents of vandalism, tree torching, car destruction and racist graffiti-drawing skyrocketed. On Saturday, many settlers, some armed with guns, attacked Palestinians in Qusra near the northern West Bank city of Nablus, uprooting residents' trees and torching their cars. Several Palestinians were wounded by live rounds, one of whom is now in critical condition <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/23/us-palestinians-israel-idUSBRE91M09Q20130223> and has been transferred to Israel for further treatment.

In summary, it seems the PA wants to use this new potential intifada to coax conciliation from Israel, such as paying money owed to it from taxes, or to nudge it into some kind of move that would placate its angry streets. It may also be using this as an incentive to U.S. President Barack Obama — visiting the region in March — to push forward his own plan or outline for a permanent peace agreement.

Israel may be fearful that an intifada would take them back in time; Netanyahu has repeatedly proven himself more concerned with maintaining the status quo wherein Palestinians don't play a major role in the national popular psyche. The last elections proved that Palestinians were merely an afterthought to many Israeli voters and he would much rather keep the focus on Iran (and Syria) any day of the week than have to deal with the Palestinians next door.

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Articl= 2.

Bloomberg

North Korea S=ows Dangers of Half-Deal With Iran

Gary Milhollin

Feb 24, 2013 -- Neg=tiators from the world's major powers sit down with Iran this week for m=re talks on its nuclear program, just weeks after Nort= Korea <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/north-korea/>> tested another nuclear weapon.

If the connection b=tween these two events isn't obvious, it should be: North Korea's nucl=ar saga is a cautionary tale for anyone attempting to bargain with the Isl=mic Republic.

Back in the 1980s, =hen suspicions were first raised about North Korea's nuclear ambitions <<http://www.wisconsinproject.org/countries/nkorea/nukemstones06.h=ml>> , the country's leadership was keen to distract atte=ntion with a show of clean hands. It joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty <<http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html>> , promised not to make the bomb and said it would report the wher=abouts of all its nuclear material to international inspectors.

Iran has been hidin= nuclear work and sites since about the same time, although it was one of =he treaty's original signatories. Like Iran <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/iran/>> , N=rth Korea was soon suspected of hiding things after that initial show of c=ean hands. It stiffed inspectors and made lame excuses for doing so. And, =ike Iran, North Korea built plants that generated fissile material that was useful for making bombs, but unne=ssary for producing civilian nuclear power.

By 1994, matters ha= come to a head. North Korea's lies were bolder, and the pace of its nuc=ear program had accelerated. Its scientists, rounding the last turn, could=see the finish line. The U.S. and other world powers had to decide how to stop them: Would it be United Nations re=olutions, or economic sanctions, or war?

Interim Deal

The response was to=negotiate a deal. The U.S. agreed to send North Korea much-needed shipment= of heavy oil and to endorse the building of a new nuclear-power reactor, =or which Sout= Korea <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/south-korea/>> would be the lead supplier. In return, North Korea agreed to st=p producing nuclear material, on the condition that it could keep its nucl=ar sites, plus the fuel it had already made. This deal was to be a first step only. North Korea would later give =p all of its nuclear material and dismantle its sites, at which point the =.S. would drop sanctions and restore normal relations.

The deal fell apart=in 2002, when a U.S. diplomat accused North Korea of secretly building a f=cility to enrich uranium. Oil shipments stopped, and the promised nuclear =eactor wasn't built. Then, as everyone now knows, North Korea used its material and its sites to make nuclear bom=s. The tremors from weapon testing arrived in 2006.

What should this ex=erience teach us about the talks with Iran? Last year, the U.S. and its ne=otiating partners in the so-called P5+1 -- China <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/china/>> ,= France <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/france/>> , Germany <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/germany/>> , Russia <<http://topics.bloomberg.com/russia/>> offered <http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012_06/P5_plus_1_and_Iran_Claim_=rogress_in_Talks> an interim deal for limited economic and technical aid. In exch=nge, Iran would lower (but not stop) its production of nuclear fuel, and w=uld send a portion of its stock out of the country.

Most important under the proposed agreement was that Iran would be able to keep its nuclear sites and all of the low-enriched uranium <http://www.iranwatch.org/ourpubs/articles/iranuclear timetable.html> it had already made. It would ship out only its much smaller stock of medium-grade fuel. CNN <http://topics.bloomberg.com/cnn/> reported last week that a similar deal will be on the table again at the talks in Kazakhstan <http://topics.bloomberg.com/kazakhstan/> .

This initial agreement with Iran would be just the first step in a process. Later, the parties would move to a comprehensive arrangement in which Iran would, perhaps (the details are still vague), get rid of its enriched uranium and limit -- to a token, face-saving level -- its ability to make more of it. The U.S. would, perhaps, drop most of its sanctions and move toward normal relations.

Same Deal </=>

Sound familiar? It should. The North Korea and Iran deals are essentially the same. After the agreement with North Korea, the country's leaders were left with enough plutonium in the form of spent reactor fuel to make about six nuclear weapons, after further processing. The deal being floated for Iran would leave it with sufficient enriched uranium to make about six nuclear weapons, after further processing.

Of course, North Korea did the processing and made the bombs. What we have to ask ourselves is this: Why won't Iran? Is there any reason to believe that this time the outcome would be different?

The mistake in the North Korea talks was not to insist from the outset that all nuclear fuel should be shipped out of the country, and all nuclear sites should be dismantled. The U.S. made a deal that lowered the diplomatic pressure on Supreme Leader Kim Jong-Il, but left the danger in place. North Korea got an agreement with the U.S. without giving up its ability to make nuclear weapons. It was in a position to restart the program at any time.

If Iran accepts the interim deal being floated this week, it will do even better. Iran will not have to stop producing nuclear fuel and will only have to cut its production back by a small percentage, while keeping enough to produce a small arsenal. Nor will it have to dismantle its production sites. Like North Korea, it will be able to restart production at any time.

The lesson from North Korea is that an interim agreement of this kind won't work. In addition to leaving too much fuel in place that can be enriched to weapons grade, the proposed agreement inevitably renders legitimate what it doesn't prohibit. If nuclear fuel, production or equipment is permitted, then it becomes Iran's right.

Once such a notion is accepted, the interim deal becomes the only one, because it dissipates the crisis atmosphere. The public starts thinking that things are safe, or at least safe enough, though they aren't. The effect is to diminish the support for sanctions that was so difficult to win, and to make it almost impossible to reinstate these measures once it becomes clear that Iran is not taking the next steps, which -- just as with North Korea -- it won't.

Before making any halfway deal, U.S. and European diplomats should insist that Iran remove itself from the path that North Korea so easily followed. If Iran wants to convince <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2011/gov2011-65.pdf> the world that it has no desire to acquire nuclear weapons, then it should be willing to give up the means to make them. When the talks resume this week, let's hope history isn't forgotten.

Gary Milhollin is executive editor of Iranwatch.org, a website on Iranian weapons programs that is published by the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control</=>.

Article 3.

The New Yorker

Who Are We Fighting?

Steve Coll <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/bios/steve_coll/search?contributorName=steve%20coll>

March 4, 2013 -- In the summer of 1988, in the University Town neighborhood of Peshawar, Pakistan, Osama bin Laden founded Al Qaeda, which means "the Base," in Arabic. As a calling card for terror or revolution, the name lacked pizzazz. Bases are safe places, not threatening ones. We can infer from the historical record that bin Laden's comrades either couldn't come up with a better idea or didn't want to annoy him by questioning his brainstorm.

A decade later, Al Qaeda announced itself as a global menace by bombing two American Embassies in Africa. The group's ambitions escalated until the apex of September 11th. That day's mass murder assured Al Qaeda's notoriety, but the Bush Administration raised its profile further by embarking on a Global War on Terror, in which Al Qaeda figured centrally. For a time, bin Laden's brand thrived.

When President Obama came to office, he scuttled the Global War on Terror—he objected to its Orwellian tone and its imprecision. He has framed, instead, a more prosaic-sounding war, against Al Qaeda and "associated forces." Obama's reasoning is that Al Qaeda and its allies distinguish themselves from other terrorist groups with their intent to attack the United States, and that they remain cohesive enough to jointly qualify as an enemy force under the laws of war. Worldwide drone strikes, indefinite detention in Guantánamo and elsewhere, and military trials are some of the policies that flow from this logic.

Since U.S. Navy SEALs killed bin Laden, in May, 2011, the President's aides have trumpeted success in their campaign. Last September, Matthew Olsen, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center, testified to Congress that "core Al Qaeda"—the original, Arab-led group, whose surviving members, hiding mainly in Pakistan, are thought to number in the dozens or low hundreds—is at "its weakest point in the last ten years." Yet, to explain the White House's policy, he and many other counterterrorism analysts warn of a resilient threat posed by Al Qaeda "franchises": regional offspring of varying provenance which have lately overtaken the parent outfit as fonts of perceived danger.

Experts refer to these groups by their acronyms, such as AQI (Al Qaeda in Iraq), AQAP (Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, mainly in Yemen), and AQIM (Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the North African group that has recently been attacked by French forces in Mali). Each group has a distinctive local history and a mostly local membership. None have strong ties to "core Al Qaeda," which is now led by bin Laden's successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, although some of the groups have maintained contact with its operatives. What's in a name? Of the several wars that Obama inherited, the war against Al Qaeda is the only one that he has not promised to end. The conflict presents a problem of definition: as long as there are bands of violent Islamic radicals anywhere in the world who find it attractive to call themselves Al Qaeda, a formal state of war may exist between Al Qaeda and America. The Hundred Years War could seem a brief skirmish in comparison.

There is no question that some of these groups pose a serious threat to the United States. Jabhat al-Nusra, an AQI spinoff that has lately blossomed in the bloody fields of Syria's civil war, is worryingly ascendant among the opposition forces seeking the overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad. If a group as radical and as hardened as that one were to acquire some of Syria's chemical-weapons stockpile or seized power after Assad's fall, the results might be disastrous. And AQAP in Yemen attempted to blow up an American airliner landing in Detroit three years ago, on Christmas Day.

But there are derivative groups whose lines of work are hard to differentiate from those of Somali pirate gangs or the Sicilian Mafia. AQIM, for example, is a shabby network that includes kidnapers and drug racketeers, whose main income in recent years has come from ransom payment and the smuggling of Colombian cocaine and Moroccan hashish through the Sahara. AQIM and its splinters enforced a brutal Islamist ideology when they captured territory in Mali last year, and a breakaway unit attacked a remote gas field in eastern Algeria in January. These groups, however, lack a demonstrated capacity to strike in Europe or across the Atlantic. Lumping them in with more potent jihadist groups, on scant evidence of their connections, is a prescription for ascribing indefinite and elastic war powers to the White House.

Bin Laden himself may have been reconsidering the Al Qaeda brand. A document by an unidentified author recovered from bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, lambastes the name's vagueness and its lack of religious content. The author mused about alternatives, such as Muslim Unity Group. If bin Laden had renamed Al Qaeda, he would have succeeded, at least, in irritating Obama's speechwriters by forsaking the brand they have used while defining the President's war against terrorists.

Late last year, the Pentagon's departing general counsel, Jeh Johnson, delivered a speech before the Oxford Union entitled "The Conflict Against Al Qaeda and Its Affiliates: How Will It End?" No time soon, he reported. He said that he could imagine a "tipping point" when Al Qaeda and its affiliates were so decrepit that policing and intelligence activity might supplant the current state of war, a change that would reduce the scope for drone attacks and might end detention without trial. But a V-AQ Day is not yet in sight, Johnson concluded. "There is still danger," he said, because Al Qaeda has become "more decentralized," with "most terrorist activity now conducted by local franchises."

This March marks ten years since the United States led an invasion of Iraq based on bad intelligence about Saddam Hussein's weapons-of-mass-destruction programs. That dark anniversary offers a reminder, if one is required, that in any conflict where a President claims war powers the Chief Executive's analytical precision in describing the enemy is a grave responsibility. A franchise is a business that typically operates under strict rules laid down by a parent corporation; to apply that label to Al Qaeda's derivative groups today is false. If Al Qaeda is not coherent enough to justify a formal state of war, the war should end; if the Administration wishes to argue that some derivative groups justify emergency measures, it should identify that enemy accurately.

Jihadist violence presents an enduring danger. Its proponents will rise and ebb; the amorphous threats that they pose will require adaptive security policies and, occasionally, military action. Yet the empirical case for a worldwide state of war against a corporeal thing called Al Qaeda looks increasingly threadbare. A war against a name is a war in name only.

Article 4.

Al-Monitor

The Israel-Hezbollah Shadow War

Ali Hashem

February 24 -- Five years ago, when Hezbollah's military commander Imad Mughniyah was assassinated in Damascus, fingers were quickly pointed toward Israel. The group's secretary-general, as once described by Richard Armitage. According to the Israelis, the Shiite group is running an international network that involving Lebanese Shiites in North

and South America, Europe, West Africa and East Asia. But it's also obvious the group have its operation functioning in Israel. In 2009 a severe indictment was issued against 23-year-old Rawi Fuad Sultani, a Palestinian Israeli, who was allegedly recruited by Hezbollah to spy on Israel's army Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi. The Israeli investigation said Sultani officially joined Hezbollah and delivered the information he had collected on Gabi Ashkenazi and the possibilities to harm him, thanks to the fact that Sultani worked out at the same gym as Ashkenazi. <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/02/nasrallah-weekend-without-his-syrian-patron.html>>

According to the source close to Hezbollah, "Israel knows well what type of underground war is taking place, they hit one place Hezbollah hit in another, and a good example are the Israeli spy networks unveiled in Lebanon." The source added: "Hezbollah was capable of almost blinding Israel in Lebanon."

Lebanese security forces and Hezbollah uncovered several Israeli spies in Lebanon in the past three years. Some of those were within the ranks of Hezbollah. Israel was this time working on penetrating the solid structure of the group reaching to someone who was very close to the leadership. "The officer who was arrested was working for the CIA, but Hezbollah believes he was put in contact with Mossad," said our source.

Israeli spies were capable of infiltrating the Lebanese communication sector. At least two telecom engineers were indicted by Lebanese courts for providing Israel with information. Charbel Nahhas, former minister of telecoms, said in a press conference at the time that "this was the most dangerous espionage act in Lebanese history."

Both Hezbollah and Israel believe they are destined to fight each other, though both might think, given the existing deterrence, it's safer, wiser and maybe cheaper to fight away while watching the common borders getting calmer.

Ali Hashem <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/authors/ali-hashemi.html>> is an Arab journalist serving as chief correspondent for the Al Mayadeen news network. Until March 2012, he was an Al Jazeera war correspondent and prior to that a senior journalist at the BBC.

Article 5.

The National, (Abu Dhabi) <<http://www.admedia.ae/>>

US visit agencies put Syria and Iran ahead of Palestine

Feb 24, 2013 - John Kerry leaves Washington today on his first trip abroad as US secretary of state. After stops in western Europe, Turkey and Egypt, Mr Kerry will attend a GCC ministerial meeting in Riyadh, and then visit the UAE and Qatar.

A few weeks later Barack Obama will make his first trip to Israel as US president, followed by his first visits to Palestine and Jordan.

High on the agenda for both men will be the civil war in Syria and the regional crisis it has created, as well as Iran's nuclear programme.

Previous maiden voyages to the region by presidents and their top emissaries have focused on Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. I hope that I will be proven wrong, but I do not believe that we will see any serious new US effort on that subject now.

I say this not because I believe the White House has lost interest in resolving this conflict, nor because I think American leaders no longer understand that Israeli-Palestinian peace is vital to US interests in the region.

The reason for my pessimism is simpler: current conditions make progress impossible, and pretending otherwise would be foolish.

First, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, has so far been unable to form a government. (This is the stated reason why Mr Kerry is not going to Israel.) The recent Israeli election weakened Mr Netanyahu. Ever the manoeuvrer, he is now trying to cobble together a governing coalition by tilting this way and that - mixing secular and religious parties, combining advocates of renewed talks with the Palestinians with hardline opponents. Mr Netanyahu appears to thrive on dysfunction; the paralysis it produces allows him to rule while avoiding tough decisions.

He will be forced to call new elections, or else to form a government of indecision. My bet is that desperation will win out and, fearing that he might do worse in a new round of voting, he will form a weak governing coalition - able to expand settlements but incapable of advancing peace.

The Palestinian situation is also dysfunctional. Unity talks between Fatah and Hamas have been fruitless. We once criticised the notion of an endless "peace process"; that was all process and no peace. This appears to have been replaced by a "reconciliation process" that is all process and no reconciliation.

Given their divisions, it is difficult to see how Palestinians can move forward with any peacemaking.

Not only are Israelis and Palestinians unable to make peace, but so is the US. Washington remains unable to deal with the issue.

The continued resistance of Congress to any reasoned discourse on Israel was on display this month during the debate over Chuck Hagel's confirmation as secretary of defence.

This harkened back to the humiliating "smackdown" Congress delivered to the president in 2011, by backing Mr Netanyahu's position over Mr Obama's.

So it is hard to see a bold initiative coming from Washington. Israelis wouldn't accept it. Palestinians couldn't do anything with it. And Congress wouldn't support it.

That does not mean the White House can do nothing. The president can raise critical questions and support positive behaviour while challenging bad behaviour.

He may warn that expanding Israeli colonies in the West Bank and East Jerusalem will make peace impossible. Israelis will, no doubt, be told that the US will continue to support their security, but they should also be challenged to choose between a future of peace and partnership or one in which they remain at war.

Also, Mr Obama can and should address Palestinian realities, giving support to Palestine's civil society and business community.

However, that kind of lecturing, recognising real needs and making gestures of support, may be all that can be expected at this time.

James Zogby is the President, Arab American Institute; author, 'Arab Voices'.

Article 6.

Slate

The Art of Cyberwar

Fred Kaplan http://www.slate.com/authors/fred_kaplan.html

Feb. 20, 2013 -- The New York Times' front-page report http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/19/technology/chinas-army-seen-as-tied-to-hacking-against-us.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 this week that the Chinese army is hacking into America's most sensitive computer networks from a 12-story building outside Shanghai might finally persuade skeptics that the threat of "cyber warfare" isn't the fevered fantasy of Richard Clarke http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/war_stories/2010/04/the_cyber_peril.html, the producers of Die Hard 4 http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000VNMMR0/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B000VNMMR0&linkCode=as2&tag=slatmaga-20, or the generals at the ever-growing U.S. Cyber Command. Alas, it's real.

But what is the threat? Few of those in the know believe that some fine day, out of the blue, China will zap the programs that run our power grids, gas lines, waterworks or banking systems, sending our economy—and much else—into a tailspin. Even if the Chinese could pull off such a feat with one keystroke, it's hard to imagine what they'd accomplish, especially since their fortunes are wrapped up with our own.

The more worrisome threat is subtler: that the Chinese (or some other powers) will use their ability to wreak cyberhavoc as leverage to strengthen their position, and weaken ours, in a diplomatic crisis or a conventional war.

Advertisement

For instance, in a brewing conflict over Taiwan or the South China Sea (areas where China has asserted claims aggressively in recent years), would an American president respond with full military force if he knew that the Chinese would retaliate by turning out all the lights on the Eastern Seaboard?

A familiar concept in strategic war games is “escalation-dominance.” The idea is that victory goes to the player who can take a conflict to the next level of violence in a way that inflicts enormous damage on his opponent but very little on himself. The expected outcome of the next round is so obvious that the opponent decides not to escalate; the dominant player thus controls the subsequent course of the battle and possibly wins the war.

Real war is messier than war games. Escalation holds risks all round. The two sides might have different perceptions of which one is dominant. Or the dominant side might miscalculate the opponent’s strategic priorities. For instance, China might think the American president values uninterrupted electricity on the East Coast more than a free, independent Taiwan—but that thought might be mistaken.

Still, leaders in war and crisis do take these kinds of factors into account. Many surrenders in history have been prompted less by the damage already absorbed than by fears of the damage to come.

And China is not the only foe or rival whose calculations are complicating this new cyber world. Iran is another. Last summer, all of a sudden, a computer virus nicknamed executive order on cybersecurity<=a>. In recent years, Congress has rejected bills requiring Internet service providers to follow government standards on security for various reasons, many of them legitimate. The executive order at least allows government agencies to share information with ISPs, some of it classified, on how to meet these standards themselves. It’s a good first step.

<<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/business/global/cyberattack-on-saudi-oil-firm-disquiets-us.html?pagewanted=all>>

But there’s another way to stave off the danger of cyberwar, and that’s diplomacy.<=p>

In his extremely important 2010 book *Cyber War*

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0061962244/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=0061962244&linkCode=as2&tag=slatmaga-20>, Richard Clarke likened the current era to the decade after the first atomic bombs, when American, then Soviet, scientists built these weapons of enormous destructiveness—but before politicians or strategists devised ways of thinking about them rationally: how to control them, deter their use, or limit their damage if a war couldn’t be deterred.

It’s time to move on to the next era, when this sort of thinking did occur, not just in secretive research tanks but also in open discussions and international negotiations. Clarke, who was chief of counterterrorism and cybersecurity for Presidents Clinton and Bush, spells out ways that concepts from nuclear arms control—inspections and verification, no first use, and ideas from other accords, including the Geneva Conventions—might be applied to cyberweapons.

In any case, it’s sheer silliness, at this point, to keep cyber issues off the table for fear of upsetting the sensitivities of Chinese officials (who deny that they have offensive cyberwarfare programs) and thus possibly triggering a diplomatic crisis. A crisis already looms from all sides of the globe; the United States, after all, has an offensive cyberwarfare program, too. Best to deal with it head-on, and soon.

Fred Kaplan is Slate's "War Stories" columnist and author of the book, *The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War.* http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1451642636/ref=as_li_ss=tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1451642636&linkCode=as2&tag=slatmaga-20

Article 7.

The Daily Star

Morocco offers a paradigm for good ties with Jews

Adina Friedman

February 22, 2013 - At a ceremony recently marking the end of the restoration of a 17th-century synagogue in Fez's Old City, Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane read a message from King Mohammad VI hailing Morocco's "spiritual wealth and diversity" and the "values of coexistence, tolerance and harmony between the different components of the nation."

These statements were reassuring in a regional political climate that is often turbulent, and suggests that Morocco offers a new – yet in fact very old – paradigm for inter-communal relations, particularly when it comes to Arab-Muslim-Jewish relations. In the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, "Jewishness" and "Arabness" are often positioned as mutually exclusive; Morocco seems to exemplify important ways of reconciling these identities.

I received this impression too when I traveled to Morocco this winter with a group of students consisting of Americans, Israelis, Amazigh (a non-Arab ethnic group from North Africa) and Christians, Jews and Muslims. Not only did Morocco offer a fascinating mosaic of religions and cultures, languages and landscapes. But for me, as a Jewish Israeli, it offered important insights and renewed hope.

Jews have lived in Morocco continuously for more than 2,000 years, and have played a vital role in the country's social, political, cultural and economic life. Most Jews had left by the 1960s after the founding of Israel, but a few thousand still remain, occupying various niches in society. Throughout history many were merchants or local craftsmen, while others served as government ministers and advisers to the king.

Most Moroccans met – from taxi drivers in cities to camel riders in the Sahara, and from academics to tour guides – were welcoming, and unashamedly highlighted the positive role of Jews in Moroccan society. Jewish cemeteries and places of worship were well kept and protected. Morocco's constitution, adopted in 2011 against the backdrop of the Arab Spring, recognizes the country's Jewish heritage as part of Morocco's national identity.

Importantly, we also met with members of Mimouna Club, a non-governmental organization founded by Muslim Moroccan students dedicated to learning about the history of Judaism and Jews in Morocco. Such organizations are rare in the Arab world. All these were encouraging examples that highlight the acceptance of Jews as integral to Morocco.

Einat, an Israeli Jewish participant in our group, was the first from her family to visit Morocco since her grandparents' departure in 1952. She was welcomed in "her country" by most everyone she met. As she uncovered layers of her family's past and of her own identity, she shared her personal journey with the group and with friends and family in Israel. Her story, while unique, reflects experiences of many Jewish Israelis from the Arab world.

Her family's documented history in Morocco dates back to the fifth century. When her grandparents departed Morocco for Israel, they left behind their homes and belongings, and the graves of their ancestors. In Israel, Einat's family spent their first few years living in "transitory camps" as refugees. Like most Jews who immigrated to Israel from Arab and Muslim-majority countries, they were marginalized and disenfranchised by the state's structures and hegemonic culture, which were mostly European and Ashkenazi, Jews who trace their origins to the Middle East via Europe. Moreover, they often had to suppress the "Arabness" of their identities.

As an Ashkenazi Jew growing up in Israel, the predicaments and nuances of Moroccan Jewish identity were largely invisible to me, as their experiences were largely marginalized by, or absent from the local narrative. Morocco enabled me to see and better understand some of these. Although things have changed in the last several decades, in Israel, being an Arab-Jew came to be viewed by most as a contradiction in terms. Yet Jews in Morocco saw little, if any, contradiction between the Arab, Amazigh, and Jewish dimensions of their identity.

Positive attitudes toward Jews do not necessarily imply acceptance of Israeli policies. Nevertheless, as Israel struggles to define its identity and its place in the region, and as its neighbors challenge its existence and legitimacy, Morocco offers a pertinent example that defies traditional "East-West" categories, and re-contextualizes the Jewish experience in the region. By embodying possibilities for reconciling "Jewishness" and "Arabness," Morocco offers ways for Arab-Jews to understand their own identities in a new light. And as the Arab-Israeli conflict persists, Morocco reaffirms historical example of coexistence.

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