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Article 1.

NYT

## **Israel and Iran**

Editorial

August 13, 2012 -- Israeli leaders are again talking about possible military action against Iran. This is, at best, mischievous and, at worst, irresponsible, especially when diplomacy has time to run.

Iran's nuclear ambitions are clearly dangerous to the region. Iranian leaders operated a nuclear program in secret for two decades and continued to invest in it even after its discovery in 2002. The government is outspoken in its hatred of Israel. It supports President Bashar al-Assad of Syria and extremist groups like Hezbollah. If Iran gets a weapon, other countries in the region may want one, too.

But while Israel's defense minister, Ehud Barak, suggested on Israel Radio Thursday that Iran had made significant progress toward acquiring weapons capability — citing what he said was a new American intelligence report — there is no proof that Iran is at the point of producing a weapon. Obama administration officials would not confirm the existence of such a report, and, in any case, continue to insist strongly that Iran is not on the verge of achieving a weapon.

It is impossible to know what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is planning or why he has ignored American entreaties to give diplomacy a reasonable chance. There is, however, persistent speculation in Israel that Mr. Netanyahu wants to attack in the coming weeks in the belief that President Obama will be forced to support the decision because of his political needs in his re-election campaign. Such a move would be outrageously cynical.

Military action is no quick fix. Even a sustained air campaign

would likely set Iran's nuclear program back only by a few years and would rally tremendous sympathy for Iran both at home and abroad. The current international consensus for sanctions, and the punishments, would evaporate. It would shift international outrage against Mr. Assad's brutality in Syria to Israel. Many former Israeli intelligence and military officials have spoken out against a military attack. And polls show that many ordinary Israelis oppose unilateral action.

Even so, Mr. Netanyahu's hard-line government has never liked the idea of negotiating with Iran on the nuclear issue, and, at times, seems in a rush to end them altogether. On Sunday, the deputy foreign minister, Danny Ayalon, told Israel Radio that the United States and the other major powers should simply "declare today that the talks have failed."

Of course, it is disappointing that the negotiations have made so little progress. No one can be sure that any mix of diplomacy and sanctions will persuade Iran to give up its ambitions. But the talks have been under way only since April, and the toughest sanctions just took effect in July.

There is still time for intensified diplomacy. It would be best served if the major powers stay united and Israeli leaders temper loose talk of war.

Article 2.

Wall Street Journal

# **Iran Doesn't Belong in the U.N. or IMF**

John Bolton, Mark Wallace and Kristen Silverberg

August 13, 2012 -- The Iranian nuclear crisis has dragged on for some 20 years, despite multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions and a phalanx of national sanctions. Many believe that only military force will stop Iran, but even now Tehran doesn't appear to take such a threat seriously.

One step short of force that the "international community" has been unwilling to take is ostracizing Iran from international organizations, such as the U.N. and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This needs to change.

Iran's participation in these organizations undermines their foundational principles. The U.N. Charter provides that membership is open to "peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and . . . are able and willing to carry out these obligations." The Islamic Republic clearly doesn't fit this bill.

Iran has repeatedly called for Israel's destruction, using anti-Semitic, anti-Israel rhetoric in violation of the Genocide Convention. It has been repeatedly sanctioned by the Security Council and condemned by the International Atomic Energy Agency for violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It has also been cited for aiding the Assad regime's slaughter of Syrian citizens. Tehran regularly hosts Holocaust-denial

conferences.

Yet the U.N. has embraced Iranian leaders. Iran was elected unanimously to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women in 2010. This is a country that flogs women for violating Islamic dress norms and stones them for adultery. Soon after Iran's election, the commission singled out just one country for condemnation: Israel. During a recent U.N. anti-narcotics conference in Tehran, Iran accused "Zionists" of spreading illegal drugs around the world.

Just this past year, Iran was elected to a leadership role in the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty negotiations—despite its history of arming state sponsors of terror and terrorist groups.

Iran undermines other international organizations, too. Currently, the IMF holds an account with Bank Markazi, Iran's central bank, totaling some \$1 billion. Both the U.S. and the European Union have sanctioned that bank for its money-laundering activities, including funneling money to Iran's military and nuclear weapons-related facilities.

Iran's participation in these organizations is unacceptable. Tehran should be held accountable for its defiance of international law. Article 6 of the U.N. Charter explicitly provides for the expulsion of any member "which has persistently violated the Principles contained" therein. That certainly sounds like Iran.

A lesser penalty, under Article 5, is suspension "from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership." The U.N. also has the power to reject the credentials of a delegation, as it did in 1974 with regard to the South African delegation, citing

its "constant violation of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Adopting any of these measures would be extraordinarily difficult. Suspension from the U.N. requires approval by the Security Council and a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. But there are real advantages in making Iran's friends stand out in the sunshine. Will Russia and China veto a suspension resolution in the council, as they have recently vetoed sanctions resolutions against the Assad dictatorship in Syria? If so, let them reveal the true character of their own regimes, and the behind-the-scenes reality of the U.N. itself.

Both the U.S. and the EU have adopted laws prohibiting their taxpayers' revenues from lining the pockets of Iranian regime officials and institutions. Yet at the same time, both heavily fund the U.N. and the IMF, facilitating Iran's destabilizing activities.

Iran's continued participation in the U.N. and the IMF affords it international legitimacy and platforms to advance its agenda—gutting economic sanctions, among them—and undermines important Western foreign-policy interests.

This September, New York will be forced once again to host Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who will undoubtedly use his speech before the U.N. General Assembly to spew anti-U.S. and anti-Semitic rhetoric. It is time for individual countries to prohibit international institutions from ignoring their own principles.

This is no longer just about Iran flouting the rules and undermining the integrity of international institutions. These institutions are directly enabling Iran's diplomatic and financial

efforts to advance its pursuit of nuclear weapons and destabilizing activities in the Middle East. Many governments and private companies have taken seriously their responsibility to pressure Iran to change course. International organizations must now do the same.

*Mr. Bolton, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of "Surrender Is Not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations" (Simon & Schuster, 2007). Ms. Silverberg and Mr. Wallace are the president and CEO, respectively, of United Against Nuclear Iran.*

Article 3.

Foreign Policy

## **Why Did Egypt's President Actually Fire His Generals?**

Mohamed Fadel Fahmy

August 13, 2012 -- EL-ARISH, Egypt — Over the weekend, Mohamed Morsy cleaned house. Following weeks of deadlock

with the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), Egypt's first popularly elected president finally stepped out of the military's shadow, sacking a laundry list of top generals, including Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, and annulling a controversial military decree that curbed the president's powers.

The surprising political showdown came on the heels of a devastating terrorist attack in el-Arish, North Sinai, on Aug. 5 that left 16 members of the Egyptian security forces dead and the military looking complacent. Morsy pounced on the opportunity, ordering both a shakeup of the armed forces and an all-out offensive in Sinai, pounding supposed militant strongholds with missiles and helicopter gunships -- the first use of such hardware since the 1973 war with Israel.

But if it's clear that the "Ramadan massacre," as it has become known in Egypt, gave Morsy the political space to outmaneuver the generals, what exactly is happening in the Sinai remains something of a mystery. Who was behind the Aug. 5 attack -- and who has borne the brunt of the military's subsequent incursion -- are still open questions.

One soldier who survived the attack blamed "masked men" with a "Palestinian dialect" in an interview after the fact. Others have pointed to "infidels," "elements from the Gaza Strip," and Israel's Mossad. Few seem to have a firm grasp on the facts.

Yet this was not the first time unknown militants have wreaked havoc in Sinai. For years now, Egyptian security forces have been battling a ghost in the desert. Since the 2011 uprising that toppled President Hosni Mubarak, militants have blown up the

pipeline that supplies natural gas to Israel 15 times. Only weeks before the Ramadan massacre, gunmen on a motorbike attacked a military outpost in Sheikh Zuweid, leaving two members of the Egyptian military dead.

Yet analysts have struggled to pinpoint the source of the terror. Some flirted with blaming al Qaeda, while others hedged their bets by fingering groups "inspired by al Qaeda." Takfir wal-Hijra, a loosely organized extremist group with roots in Sinai, is also a usual suspect. The organization views most people as infidels -- including Muslims who fail to follow their strict interpretation of Islam -- and adheres to a radical militant ideology that requires them to purify the world of kufar, or heretics. But aside from a handful of attacks that security forces have attributed to Takfir wal-Hijra, there seems to be little consensus about who is to blame for the uptick in violence.

In part, this is because the extremist groups themselves appear to be proliferating -- or at least morphing. Over the past two years, the Internet has been flooded with statements and videos released by unknown groups vowing to create a puritanical Islamic state in Sinai. A statement released two days before last week's attack by a group calling itself Jund al-Sharia ("soldiers of sharia"), for instance, called for a Sinai "emirate" governed by Islamic law and threatened to attack the Egyptian military if it did not release prisoners the group claimed were "falsely" detained. In reality, however, no one has been able to verify the location or reach of these groups -- or even if they exist outside of cyberspace.

Similar mystery shrouds the Ramadan attack, for which no one has yet claimed responsibility. According to an Egyptian general

from the border guard intelligence team who spoke on the condition of anonymity, "There is serious intel that those who committed the Sunday massacre are members of Palestinian Islamic Jaljala Army." The Jaljala Army is an extremist offshoot of Hamas based in Gaza, meaning that its members would have had to cross into Sinai via the intricate web of tunnels controlled by Hamas.

Ibrahim Menei, who owns and operates one of the tunnels, also thinks that Hamas, which has condemned the attacks, is at least partially responsible. "Of the hundreds of tunnels used for smuggling, not more than 10 are designed for smuggling humans in and out of Gaza. They are not more than 200 meters long, and no one enters them without paying a minimal fee to Hamas. You can be in Sinai in 15 minutes," Menei explained to me in an interview.

Both the general and Menei, who has built a fortune over the years smuggling weapons, animals, drugs, food, and building materials into Gaza, agree that Palestinian fighters could not have acted alone. As Menei noted, such fighters would have needed the assistance of "bad" Bedouin who provide safe houses, logistics, and on-the-ground intelligence. In other words, radicals on the Egyptian side of the border must also have been involved in the attack.

But the haphazard response by Egyptian officials suggests that they are as in the dark as ever. Following one of the highly publicized raids on the border town of Sheikh Zuweid, Gen. Ahmed Bakr, the head of North Sinai security, announced that the military apprehended six terrorists including Selmi Salama Sweilam, nicknamed "Bin Laden" by Egyptian authorities for

his alleged role in numerous terrorist operations. Three of the suspects were released two days later.

A visit to the village in Sheikh Zuweid where Selmi was supposedly apprehended, however, suggests that the raid was a sham -- designed to appease the public and deflect attention away from the military's incompetence. According to Um Suleiman, the wife of "Bin Laden," masked security forces stormed her home early in the morning, beating her viciously and terrorizing her children. The men ransacked the house, broke down the cupboards, and spilled big bags of wheat and barley on the floor.

"They picked up six men who have nothing to do with terrorism, including our 72-year-old neighbor who was feeding his goat at the time, my 20-year-old son, and my ill, 68-year-old husband, whom they called Bin Laden," she said.

Suleiman and her eight children showed off stacks of date boxes, which she insisted were Selmi's only source of income. "We voted for Morsy to escape Mubarak's injustice. Now we don't believe in him! It's the same way they treated us in 2005 after the Dahab and Sharm El Sheikh bombings," Suleiman complained.

The raids in North Sinai have produced other dubious accounts of how the military is prevailing against those responsible for the recent violence. Last Wednesday, the SCAF issued a statement saying that the operation targeting "armed terrorist elements" in Sinai "has accomplished this task with complete success."

That same day, reports leaked by Sinai security officials

to dozens of journalists claimed that battles were ongoing in the al-Halal mountain in central Sinai, where security forces were supposedly pounding Islamic insurgents. But not a single Bedouin or journalist was able to confirm these clashes. Journalists have since dubbed the operation "Sinai's Invisible War."

More misinformation came from an overzealous state TV reporter who announced on Wednesday that 20 militants had been killed in the village of el-Touma, in the Sheikh Zuewid district of Sinai. Journalists and Bedouin flocked to the scene and later to the el-Arish hospital, but no bodies were ever located. Residents showed the press parts of two spent rockets and the charred remains of a vehicle, but that was the extent of damage.

Following the report, official security spokesmen who are usually media-friendly went mute and stopped answering their phones. Wire services and other media outlets broadcast the figures globally, announcing that 20 insurgents had been killed. But the initial report was never confirmed. In fact, it was almost certainly false. The journalist who first reported the attack on Nile TV through a phone interview has been exiled from Sinai for more than a year because of his reputation for feeding lies to the media. He actually reported the attack from the city of Fayoum, located in another Egyptian directorate some 260 miles away.

Soon after, the same reporter fed a story to another media outlet about an attack on the United Nations multinational peacekeeping force (MFO) based in Sinai. MFO spokesman Kathleen Riley denied the attack outright, calling it an

"inaccurate report."

Al-Ahram, a state owned newspaper, ran a similarly dubious story on Friday, claiming that 60 "terrorists" had been killed in airstrikes. No bodies were ever recovered.

Over the weekend, el-Arish's residents greeted a long convoy of jeeps carrying rocket launchers and M-60 tanks aboard flatbed trucks. Onlookers waved dutifully to the troops as they headed toward the front lines, but they were undoubtedly wondering where this "invisible war" was taking place.

*Mohamed Fadel Fahmy is a producer and journalist at CNN, as well as author.*

Article 4.

The Daily Beast

## **Is Morsy Staging or Reversing a Coup?**

Hussein Ibish

August 13, 2012 -- Seizing on the momentum created by the attack on Egyptian forces in the Sinai Peninsula last week, new Egyptian President Mohammad Morsy took several bold moves this weekend. One of them was firing the country's most senior

military leaders. These moves not only consolidate Morsy's personal and ex officio power, they in effect reverse the traditional hierarchy of authority between military and civilian leaders in Egypt.

Even more significantly, Morsy has attempted to reverse the “supplemental constitutional articles” that the military issued on August 12 (just before the recent presidential election) an act which purports to restore presidential and legislative powers back to those elected bodies. The fight for the future of Egypt may have reached a turning point.

The Sinai attack was, perhaps, the last straw for the leadership of the already-unpopular chiefs of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. That leadership could no longer claim to be effective defenders of the Egyptian state, giving Morsy the opportunity to first clean house at a lower level (which he did last week) and then eliminate the senior leadership this weekend. He dismissed SCAF leader Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi and his second-in-command, General Sami Annan, the two men who essentially led Egypt since the fall of deposed President Hosni Mubarak.

It appears likely that Tantawi's replacement, General Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, was aware of and agreed to this dramatic upheaval. It's widely speculated that other military leaders also connived in the shakeup. In spite of the announcement, SCAF remains an institution with considerable authority over military matters.

Al-Sisi is well known to American military and political officials, and has had numerous dealings with Israeli authorities

as well. So Morsy's move probably does not auger a transformation in Egypt's military or foreign policies, or the complete sidelining of SCAF as an institution. Indeed, following the Sinai attack, both sides report that Egyptian-Israeli security coordination has reached levels unseen in many years.

Morsy is framing these moves in both legal and “national interest” terms, but they certainly serve to consolidate his power, that of the presidency, and, therefore, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Other opposition figures largely welcomed his actions, particularly those that restore traditional powers to the presidency and the legislature and overturn what was largely seen as a military power grab in the run-up to the presidential election. Morsy may be trying to assuage concerns about Muslim Brotherhood domination of the government by also appointing a new vice president, reform-minded judge Mahmoud Mekki. But it's impossible not to see the gestures as a power grab of his own.

Since the fall of Mubarak, however, the Muslim Brotherhood has had a history of overreaching. It tried to stack the first formation of the Constitution-drafting Constituent Assembly with Islamists, only to be met with widespread objections from all non-Islamist constituencies. And it undermined its credibility with a sudden reversal of its long-standing pledge not to put forward a presidential candidate. If it is not careful, the Brotherhood may again assert powers beyond its elected mandate, which would be unacceptable to a huge swath of Egyptian society that will not tolerate Islamist domination of the country.

Many Egyptians are no doubt hoping that the new moves clarify

the untenable confusion about lines of authority between elected and unelected institutions that have characterized the post-Mubarak era. But if they come to feel that Morsy and the Brotherhood are beginning to consolidate total control over the government, particularly by acting beyond the legal limitations of the office of the presidency, this could ultimately backfire.

As it stands, allegations of a presidential “coup” are largely restricted to supporters of the deep state and the existing institutions that are holdovers of the Mubarak era. The appointments of Al-Sisi and Mekki are no doubt intended to mollify such concerns. But Morsy will have to tread carefully in coming months. He was elected by a clear, but narrow, margin over former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq and Egyptian society remains deeply divided between Islamists and non-Islamists. If he is seen as going too far, a backlash against him could be swift and possibly overwhelming.

It is likely that there will be a legal pushback against Morsy's overturning of the “supplemental constitutional articles,” particularly since Morsy took his oath of office under the very terms of that declaration. He has, in effect, overturned the very system through which he attained office. The power struggle in Egypt has been largely playing out in the court system, but has been less about law and more about raw political power. That's likely to continue, in spite of the recent upheaval.

The courts retain widespread authority and apparently continue to view the rise of the Brotherhood with skepticism if not alarm. If they do rule against him in the inevitable legal challenges, his willingness to enforce court rulings will indicate whether or not the Brotherhood accepts the separation of powers and

recognizes the authority of the judiciary or is prepared, in effect, to go it alone in defiance of legal rulings.

As things stand, Morsy now has almost unfettered authority in Egypt, at least in theory. With the legal status of the sitting Parliament uncertain, he appears to have asserted sole power to enact, confirm and enforce legislation, declare war, and oversee the formation and function of the Constitution-drafting Assembly. New parliamentary elections are more crucial than ever. But until they happen, the power of the president, at least on paper, appears virtually absolute. In practice, there remain many other centers of power, including the new SCAF leadership and the judiciary.

Assuming that the military and, for the meanwhile, the courts, allow Morsy's decisions to go effectively unchallenged, Egypt, in effect, has a new dictator, albeit an elected one. Beyond the urgent need of restoring legislative authority through new elections, the power struggle in Egypt will increasingly focus on the crafting of the new constitution, which will either produce a system that involves real checks and balances or which consolidates yet another system in which the presidency wholly dominates the political system.

Article 5.

The Washington Post

# **Egypt's Morsi defies predictions**

Ernesto Londoño

August 14 -- Cairo — A month ago, as President Mohamed Morsi was sworn in, Egyptians who loved and loathed him could agree on one fact: The Islamist would be a relatively powerless leader.

But just weeks into his tenure, the man who was until recently widely regarded as a charmless, accidental president has cast aside rivals and consolidated power with stunning speed and shrewdness.

On Sunday, Morsi forced out the country's two top defense chiefs and other senior military officials in a sudden and dramatic move that analysts saw as an early victory in a power struggle many Egyptians thought would remain stalemated for years. Perhaps most surprising was how little pushback the dismissals drew in a country that has been led by military men for six decades. A statement posted by the manager of the Facebook page of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces on Monday called the shake-up a “natural change.” The statement said “responsibility has been moved to a new generation of Egypt’s sons to start a new journey in keeping Egypt’s soil and sky and seas safe.” Analysts raised the possibility that the new military command could yet emerge as a competing power. But for the moment at least, an unusual harmony reigned: If some of the graying generals sacked Sunday were pushed out grudgingly, none voiced their displeasure on Monday. State media coverage

of the president, a former political prisoner, turned largely deferential overnight. In headlines and broadcasts, state-run papers and channels covered Morsi on Monday much as they did his three autocratic predecessors — a sharp break from the recent past, during which those outlets tended to toe the military’s line in disputes with the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamist group that propelled Morsi to power.

“We continue to underestimate the magical power of the presidency in Egypt,” said Hani Shukrallah, the managing editor of al-Ahram Online, a state-run English-language news site that is largely seen as impartial. For Morsi, it is a major gamble to decisively take the reins of power just as Egypt launches a military offensive in the restive Sinai peninsula and contends with an economic crisis. He is still viewed warily by many liberal and Christian Egyptians. Critics are planning a mass demonstration this month to condemn what they say is the Brotherhood’s poor record of governance. “I would love to believe that this is a step in the transition toward democracy, but I’m very apprehensive,” said Nora Soliman, one of the founders of the liberal Justice Party. “They have control over most of the levers of power.” Soliman said she was no fan of the country’s generals but saw them as a necessary evil during Egypt’s democratic transition “to get Morsi out if he did something absolutely contrary to the nature of the state.” Analysts say the absence of Islamist rhetoric during Morsi’s time in office and the relatively few high-profile Islamists he has appointed to key jobs are reasons he has been successful in restoring the far-reaching powers of the presidency. In addition to dismissing top generals Sunday, Morsi also nullified a decree that would have substantially weakened his office by giving the military council

final say over security matters. “He has moved up people from within the organizations and people who seem well qualified for the position,” said Michele Dunne, director of the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. “It was pretty well thought out.”

But there was another reason the military chiefs who served in powerful posts under deposed leader Hosni Mubarak may have been willing to step down, said Zeinab Abul-Magd, a historian at the American University in Cairo who has studied the military and has discussed the situation with several mid-level officers over the past two days.

“There was a lot of discontent against them” in the ranks, she said, referring to the ousted military chief, Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, and his deputy, Gen. Sami Anan. “Tantawi and Anan left quietly because they made huge mistakes.”

The vaunted image of the military took a hit during the 17 months the generals ruled the country after Mubarak stepped down in February 2011. Although the armed forces remain popular, Tantawi and other military leaders who became suddenly visible were vilified in street protests and on social media.

With those figures gone, Morsi and the Brotherhood are all but certain to face increased scrutiny and criticism. Public office is a heavy burden in a country with a high unemployment rate, crippled infrastructure and a suddenly empowered, politically active population.

“They have sole control, but they will be held accountable if they don’t prove worthy,” said Rashad Abdou, a professor of

finance at Cairo University who worries that the Brotherhood's sudden consolidation of power could dissuade investors from coming to Egypt. "They could be removed in the next elections."

If Morsi ultimately emerges as an unlikely strongman, he will be following in the footsteps of some of his predecessors. Anwar Sadat, who led Egypt from 1970 to 1981, and Mubarak, who followed him, both defied early expectations of the kind of leadership they would bring to the presidency.

"Morsi wanted his full authorities," said Mohamed Abdul Quddus, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood who works at a journalism organization. "He doesn't know diplomacy and is known to not accept middle-ground solutions."

Article 6.

Foreign Affairs

## **Morsi Makes His Move: What the Power Grab Means for Cairo -- And Washington**

Steven A. Cook

August 13, 2012 -- Over the weekend, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi sacked Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, the minister of defense, and Lieutenant-General Sami Hafez Enan, the chief of staff of the armed forces. He also cancelled the

military's June 17 constitutional decree, which stripped important national security and defense prerogatives from the presidency. His move came as a shock. Yet Morsi is doing what any prudent national leader does upon assuming office -- consolidating power. In the coming days, much of the commentary about Morsi's gambit will focus on what it means for Egypt's transition, especially the direction of civil-military relations, which have favored the armed forces for the past 60 years. Equally important, however, is how changes in Egypt's senior military command will alter the country's ties with the United States. If historical precedent is any guide, Morsi's shake-up at the Egyptian Ministry of Defense will be followed by a strategic realignment between Cairo and Washington. When they came to power in July 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser and his fellow Free Officers (with a few notable exceptions) were willing to join in a Western security alliance. And for its part, the Eisenhower administration regarded Egypt's new leaders as potentially important allies in confronting the Soviet Union. The U.S. embassy in Cairo cultivated both Nasser and Muhammad Naguib, who had been the Free Officers' front man. At the same time, Washington began helping Cairo develop its own clandestine intelligence service. In the summer of 1954, Nasser requested \$100 million in military and economic assistance from the United States. Washington demurred, offering \$40 million instead. The move sowed mistrust and anger among the Egyptians but did not lead to an outright breach in relations. Over the following six months, however, things soured. The Free Officers disposed of the last remaining challenges to their new regime, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, and Nasser consolidated his own personal power. As part of that push, Cairo became an increasingly influential member of the Non-Aligned

Movement and pursued a foreign policy of “positive neutralism.” The plan involved playing the major powers off each other to Egypt’s benefit. A part of it was amassing arms from countries other than the United States, which led to the 1955 “Czech arms deal” -- the largest transfer of weaponry to any Middle Eastern country at that time and signaled Nasser’s drift into the Soviet orbit.

Following Nasser’s death, Anwar Sadat’s consolidation of power and geo-strategic shift were even more pronounced than his predecessor’s had been. As a condition for being nominated president in 1970, the powerbrokers within the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) -- the party created in 1962 to administer the state and serve as a source of power for Nasser -- forced Sadat to accept limits on his own presidential authority. The most important of these was a stipulation that he rule collectively, which meant that he would have to secure the agreement of the ASU’s Supreme Executive Committee and the Central Committee on all major policy initiatives. By May 1971, however, Sadat had cultivated enough support, especially among the military and police officers, to oust the four men who had tried to curtail his power: General Sharawi Guma, the interior minister; Sami Sharaf, the minister of state for presidential affairs; Ali Sabri, the head of the ASU; and General Mohamed Fawzi, the minister of war. The officers whom Sadat promoted to fill the vacancies were all respected professionals focused on the battle to come with Israel, which occupied Sinai at the time. To be sure, Sadat met with challenges -- namely, from his handpicked minister of war, General Muhammad Sadiq, due to differences over war planning. But after sacking Sadiq and successfully crossing the Suez Canal in 1973, Sadat became his

own man. From then on, he was able to initiate fundamental changes to Cairo's foreign policy. In the aftermath of the October War, Sadat walked away from the Soviet Union -- which, in many ways, had helped make Egypt's success in the opening round of the conflict possible -- in favor of strategic alignment with the United States.

Hosni Mubarak, who succeeded Sadat after his assassination in 1981, never confronted such challenges to his power because he enjoyed well-developed ties and considerable good will among the military and political elite. Mubarak's successor, Morsi, seems to have more in common with Sadat, however. Like Sadat, Morsi was initially forced to accept limits on his authority. Also like Sadat, he has fought back. In less than a week, Egypt's new president has removed not only Enan and Tantawi but Murad Muwafi, the former chief of intelligence. The intelligence service and the military both opposed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood. And of course, it was Tantawi and Enan, as the leaders of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, who had issued the June 17 decree. The circumstances are, of course, quite different, but the dismissals of Muwafi, Enan, and Tantawi evoke the jettisoning of Sabri, Sharawi, Sharaf, and Fawzi a little more than 41 years ago. It is hard to draw any conclusion just yet about Egypt's strategic orientation, but it may look more like Egypt's foreign policy of the mid-1950s than Cairo's approach to the world over the last four decades. Observers do not know much about Tantawi's replacement, General Abdel-Fattah al-Sissi, other than the fact that he is 57 years old and a former infantryman who was the head of the military intelligence service. If Sissi, Mohamed Refaat Shehata, the new head of the intelligence service whose

appointment appears to be temporary, or Sidki Sayed Ahmed, the new chief of staff, have a worldview, it is not well known. That is unlikely to matter, though, because they owe their positions to Morsi. What is widely understood is the Brotherhood's long-standing opposition to the strategic relationship between Egypt and the United States, which Muwafi, Enan, and Tantawi were known to champion. Indeed, under Tantawi -- who became minister of defense in 1991 -- the United States routinely enjoyed expedited access through the Suez Canal, overflight rights, and training in the form of the biannual Bright Star exercise, which is the largest of its type in the world. For their parts, Muwafi and Enan were well respected in Washington for their professionalism and work with the United States.

It thus stands to reason that Morsi's sacking of Egypt's top national security and defense officials might in part represent a shift in Egyptian foreign policy away from the United States. Toward what country, however, remains unclear. There is no other power that could be Egypt's patron, yet Cairo might not need one. Egypt, representing a quarter of the Arab world and strategically located on the Suez Canal and Afro-Asian rift -- is a power in its own right. Sissi, Ahmed, and Shehata's arrival might signal a desire to pursue a foreign policy more befitting of Egypt's prestige, an approach to the world that does not privilege any particular foreign relationship over another and that is geared toward maximizing Egypt's national interests in contrast to what many perceive to be the record of the last three decades. If this is the case, then it seems that the Muslim Brother who is Egypt's president is a good Nasserist. With the consolidation of Morsi's power, the Egyptians may be

embarking upon nothing less than “positive neutralism” in redux.

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Article 7.

Washington Post - Book review

## **‘The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty’ by Dan Ariely**

Michael S. Roth

August 10 -- Behavioral economist Dan Ariely is a funny guy on a mission. As director of the [Center for Advanced Hindsight](#), he insists on a commitment to absurdity, but there is nothing cynical about his approach to human behavior.

In his previous book, [“Predictably Irrational,”](#) Ariely exposed our false assumptions about the rationality of markets and individuals with plenty of surprising and humorous examples. Our irrationality may be very predictable, but our ability to forecast this behavior doesn’t alter the conditions that give rise to it. Recognizing this, he adopts his paradoxical mission: to design better economic and social institutions to protect us from our confident pursuit of rational economic and social institutions.

In “The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty,” Ariely applies his experimental approach to how we “lie to everyone — especially ourselves.” The book discusses the powerful ways irrationality affects our lives, and it begins with a critique of those who think dishonesty is a result of a rational cost-benefit calculation. In a series of experiments, Ariely neatly shows that neither the size of the reward nor the probability of getting caught substantially affects the likelihood of dishonest behavior. The cost-benefit framework for understanding cheating just doesn’t pay off.

Ariely sees two conflicting motivations at work in dishonest behavior. On the one hand, we want to view ourselves as honorable, and on the other hand, we want to get as much stuff as possible. We want the benefits of cheating, and we want to see “ourselves as honest, wonderful people.” So we fudge. We fool ourselves and others. Our “cognitive flexibility” cuts us so much slack that we often don’t perceive ourselves as getting away with anything. This flexibility keeps the contradictions between our principles and our behavior beyond the horizon of our consciousness.

“The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty” is full of examples of how we deceive ourselves about cheating. In golf, for instance, to most people it seems less like cheating to favorably reposition a ball with one’s foot than to move it with one’s hand. Tapping the ball with the club is best of all! As a rule, “cheating becomes much simpler when there are more steps between us and the dishonest act.” We are more averse to directly taking some cash off the table but much more likely to behave dishonestly to get a reward that, in the end, has cash value. Psychological distance is key.

Dishonesty isn't always so bad. The author describes how doctors and nurses lied to him repeatedly when, as a teenager, he was recovering from severe burns that almost killed him. If they had told him the brutal truth, he might not have mustered the strength to go on. They didn't want him anticipating excruciating pain that he was in any case powerless to avoid. The pain was real, but the altruistic dishonesty of his caregivers eased his suffering.

Ariely notes that “we quickly and easily start believing whatever comes out of our own mouths,” which means that once we take credit for something, we are likely to really believe that we deserve it. When students are induced to cheat on tasks in an experimental situation, they start to believe that their skill level has increased. They certainly realize that they are, say, using an answer key to “solve” a problem. Nonetheless, they begin to inflate their perception of their competence at problem solving. This kills two birds with one stone. They don't feel guilty for having cheated, and since they've forgotten about the cheating, they feel better about their performance.

Despite the good humor with which Ariely discusses his ingenious experiments, this is depressing stuff. But there is hope. Although it is easy to induce dishonest behavior in people, it is also easy to reduce the incidence of such behavior. Mostly, small reminders of basic moral standards tend to improve behavior. Whether it's the Ten Commandments, an honor code or a declaration of professional principles, bringing moral standards to mind reduces cheating. Signing a pledge (at the top of the page) before filling out a form is more effective at reducing dishonesty than signing a pledge after completing a form. Ariely likes having students write out their own honor

codes on assignments so that they have to think about ethics rather than just signing something automatically.

He offers some recommendations on conflicts of interest, particularly in medicine. The problem is that many of our professionals systematically find themselves in conflict situations and that they fool themselves about not falling into unethical behavior. And when these professionals know their clients well, when they are most trusted, the worst conflicts tend to arise. Whether we are on the client side or the professional side, we are likely to tell ourselves that these situations don't apply to us and the people we trust. We fool ourselves, and so we don't recognize the dishonesty.

Ariely shows us how some basic factors, such as being tired or hungry, undermine our efforts to be ethical. I was struck here, as I was in Daniel Kahneman's excellent "Thinking, Fast and Slow," by the example of judges who tended to defer to parole boards as the judges got hungrier. The concept of "ego depletion" — that we can run out of the strength to do what we know we should — reminds us that willpower is a muscle. It takes energy to do the right thing.

We also learn that, once cheating starts, it tends to gain momentum and become contagious. That's why we shouldn't tolerate small indiscretions; it lowers the bar for everyone.

Ariely raises the bar for everyone. In the increasingly crowded field of popular cognitive science and behavioral economics, he writes with an unusual combination of verve and sagacity. He asks us to remember our fallibility and irrationality, so that we might protect ourselves against our tendency to fool ourselves. I

guess only advanced hindsight will one day tell us how successful we have been.

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Article 8.

Foreign Policy

## **Are politicians really less honest than the rest of us?**

Dan Ariely

Sept/Oct 2012 -- Is there any profession so disliked and distrusted as "politician"? Only 7 percent of poll respondents give U.S. elected officials "high" or "very high" ratings when it comes to honesty and ethical standards, according to the latest Gallup figures. That's on par with those paragons of dishonesty, car salesmen, and a step below telemarketers. The guys who invented credit-default swaps and bundled your home loan into mortgage-backed securities (you know, the friendly bankers at Lehman Brothers et al.)? They rank almost four times as high on the trustworthy scale.

To be fair, it's not as if politicians haven't earned the reputation -- from Richard Nixon ("I'm not a crook") to George H.W. Bush

("Read my lips") to Bill Clinton ("I did not have sexual relations with that woman") to Anthony Weiner ("That's not my ..."). No wonder, then, that in a U.S. election year with two relatively squeaky-clean men running for the White House, it's still fraught with rumors of hidden offshore bank accounts and fake birth certificates. And in a billion-dollar campaign with both sides spending lavishly on ads that accuse the other of dishonest dealings and spreading lies, it's hardly a surprise that we tend to think of elected officials as professional fabricators.

Yet when my colleagues and I conducted a series of experiments, we found that people on Wall Street were more than twice as likely to lie as those on Capitol Hill. Even after the financial crisis, they get a pass. Why? Are we focusing on the wrong bad guys?

Let's be honest. We all lie. We embellish our accomplishments to impress others and sugarcoat our insults to avoid offending them. We tell our wives they've lost weight, we say we're sorry when we're not, and we claim to be avid recyclers. And we lie to strangers, too, often without realizing it. University of Massachusetts psychologist Robert Feldman found that pairs of strangers meeting each other for the first time were much more inclined to lie to the other person than they realized. After reviewing video of their conversations with strangers, 60 percent of participants admitted that they told two to three lies in the first 10 minutes. Now imagine what a professional politician does on the campaign trail, where he might meet thousands of strangers every day.

In a number of experiments I've conducted over the years, I've found in general that very few people take full advantage of the

ability to cheat -- mostly we just massage things a bit. We're not awful, immoral people, yet almost all of us want to gain from cheating. We're hard-wired to be competitive, and in experiments that create conditions where there's a presumption that others will fib, people cheat more.

The main culprit is rationalization. Forces that increase our ability to rationalize lying (such as when our peers are doing it, when we think the party we're deceiving is corrupt, or when we think our actions are for a good cause) serve to increase the level of dishonesty that we are comfortable with. But the forces that decrease rationalization (reminders of our moral obligations, realizing the consequences of our actions, and so on) have the reverse effect of decreasing our dishonesty. Funny enough, the fear of getting caught plays almost no role at all.

In other words, a lot of people cheat, at least just a little bit. So why do we expect our politicians to be any different?

Politicians are, by definition, in positions of power. They are elected to represent large groups of people and make important decisions for all these constituents. The problem with power is that it comes with some nasty side effects. When you put people in a position of power, they very quickly assume that position and, whether intentionally or not, start to abuse it. In a 2010 study investigating the moral hypocrisy of the powerful, researchers at Tilburg and Northwestern universities found that when people are assigned to powerful positions, or even if they are merely put in the mindset of having power, they cheat more and think of their own transgressions as less bad. At the same time, they tend to hold their underlings to higher standards.

Another byproduct of being a politician has to do with the fact that politicians make decisions that influence the well-being of others. As such, they're actually more inclined to tell half-truths or even outright lies because they believe it will ultimately serve others. I've examined this sort of "altruistic cheating" and found that while people will cheat a bit to help themselves, they cheat more when someone else also benefits. In fact, as the number of beneficiaries increases, so does the level of cheating. Study participants also experience less guilt when cheating for others, as compared with when they are just cheating for themselves.

Washington itself is undoubtedly part of the problem -- because politicians are social animals, and lying, it turns out, is very much a social disease. When a rookie politician looks around and sees that his peers are behaving dishonestly, he determines that this behavior is acceptable and will be likely to follow suit. Party affiliation may also play a big role. In a study that my colleagues and I ran at Carnegie Mellon University, we planted a fake participant who looked like either a fellow student (wearing Carnegie Mellon attire) or a student from a rival university (wearing a University of Pittsburgh sweatshirt). We then asked the plant to make clear that he was cheating. When the student was wearing the Carnegie Mellon sweatshirt, his behavior signaled to his peers that it was OK to cheat -- and their cheating increased. But when he was wearing the Pittsburgh sweatshirt, his dishonesty made cheating appear less acceptable, and it thus decreased. This applies to politicians as well: When a senator sees her fellow party members lying or misrepresenting the truth, it becomes the moral standard.

With all these forces combined, is it any wonder that politicians are deemed the most untrustworthy characters? Still, the

question remains: Do politicians cheat more in their professional lives than the rest of us? Given their position of power, the easy justification that fibbing has an altruistic end, and the prevailing norm of dishonest behavior that is so commonplace in the halls of politics, I suspect that the answer is a resounding "yea."

But there's a wrinkle here that I feel compelled to admit. In that study in which folks on Wall Street cheated twice as much as those on Capitol Hill, we ran the experiment at bars in New York where bankers hang out and similar haunts in Washington. And anyone who has been to a happy hour on Capitol Hill knows these places are packed with bright-eyed, bushy-tailed young congressional staffers. Most probably haven't been on the job long enough to learn to lie yet. So maybe the bankers aren't so much worse after all.

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