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Article 1.

Politico

Why a foreign policy debate is an anachronism

Richard N. Haass

October 21, 2012 -- The third and final presidential debate of the 2012 campaign is to be devoted solely to matters of foreign policy. This is an anachronism, one that reflects neither the world we live in nor what constitutes the Achilles' heel of American security.

At first glance, the topics announced by Bob Schieffer, the debate's moderator, appear reasonable: America's role in the world — what should we be trying to accomplish and how — is a big and important matter. So, too, is what to do about Afghanistan, where there are still 68,000 U.S. troops, some of which are slated to stay until the end of 2014 and possibly longer, and Pakistan, a fragile state at best that happens to be home to the world's fastest growing nuclear arsenal. Israel and Iran could trigger a conflict early in the term of whoever wins the election. And asking about the Middle East, terrorism and the rise of China all makes a good deal of sense, although one could question the

absence of Mexico, Europe, Russia and Africa.

What makes far less sense is the entire premise of Monday evening. Categorizing some issues as "foreign" and others as "domestic" bears little relationship to a world in which what happens out there affects conditions here and vice versa. This is the inescapable reality of globalization, the defining characteristic of the 21st century world.

In fact, some issues are by their very nature both foreign and domestic. Immigration is one, as is energy policy, climate change, drugs, trade and finance. They risk falling between the agendas of debates limited to dealing with matters either internal or external. Do the candidates agree we should allow for more highly educated persons to come and live in this country? What should be done to increase production of oil, decrease consumption of fossil fuels and slow climate change? What are their suggestions for reducing the demand for drugs? What would they do to expand American exports or increase foreign investment in the United States?

Most important, the list of topics made public leaves out the most serious threat facing the United States today and for the foreseeable future: the state of the United States.

This is not meant to suggest that the topics put forward do not matter. What matters more, though, is the ability of the United States to contend with them, and this depends on whether we will have the resources to prevent crises from materializing, to defend against them if they do and to recover if efforts

at prevention come up short.

We can discuss America's role in the world all we want, but it will count little unless we have the resources needed to lead by deed and example. But this requires that we figure out a way to restore higher economic growth rates and do something substantial about our persistent deficits and mounting debt. If we do not, we will not be able to field a first-class military or maintain necessary levels of assistance to those deserving help.

We also leave ourselves hostage to the decisions of those holding large pools of dollars or to the vagaries of markets. The last thing we need is to have to raise interest rates not for the traditional purpose of cooling an over-heated economy but rather to attract the financing we need because we continue to spend far more as a government than we take in. But we might have to do just that.

Similarly, we can debate our responses to terrorism, but one important way to combat its potential impact is to reduce our vulnerability and increase our ability to bounce back from inevitable attacks, be they from bombs, viruses, computer or otherwise. But doing this will require modernizing our deteriorating infrastructure, from tunnels and bridges to ports, water plants and the electricity grid.

And we can ponder how best to meet the challenge posed by China and other emerging countries, but at the end of the day, we will succeed only if America generates the human talent needed to compete in the world marketplace. The problem is that our education

system is failing. One quarter of Americans do not graduate high school, and 40 percent of those who do need remedial help in order to have a chance at graduating college. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of jobs are going unfilled owing to a lack of qualified workers.

So by all means, Mr. Schieffer should ask the candidates how they will deal with traditional foreign policy challenges. But at the same time, he should ask them what they would do to make sure we are positioned to meet them. The previous debates raised more questions than they answered about what either candidate would do about the economy; most of the other issues that determine this country's strength and capacity to act and compete in the world barely came up. This final debate will be the last chance to confront the next president of the United States with questions that ought to be addressed. Nothing less than this country's security depends on it.

Richard Haass is president of the Council on Foreign Relations. His next book, "Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America's House in Order," will be published in the spring by Basic Books.

Article 2.

The Christian Science Monitor

Palestinian elections: Despite Hamas boycott, Fatah fares

poorly

Christa Case Bryant, Rebecca Collard

October 21, 2012 -- Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah party made a disappointing showing in yesterday's local elections, with its chosen candidates failing to secure local majorities in key cities including Ramallah despite a boycott by its chief rival, Hamas.

"This is a landmark of the end of Fatah," says Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA).

"In the absence of Hamas … Fatah could not lead completely as expected," he says, pointing to the northern city of Nablus where the official Fatah list got only five of 15 available seats, losing the rest to Fatah independents. "There was no consensus, no leadership coherence, no commitment for the movement."

The Associated Press cited preliminary results showing Fatah failed to receive majorities in 5 of 11 major towns.

The results add to mounting concerns about Fatah – and the broader Palestinian leadership – losing its legitimacy. PA President Abbas, who doubles as Fatah chairman, has been unable to secure progress on a variety of fronts, from peace talks with Israel, to reconciliation with Hamas, to last year's membership bid at the United Nations, to an economic crisis that has once again delayed payday for Palestinian

Authority employees – all of whom are still waiting to be paid for September.

Stepping stone to national elections

Municipal elections, the first in at least six years, were seen as a potential way to boost the PA's credibility and create momentum for national elections – badly needed to restore the Palestinian legislature after a split five years ago with Hamas, the Islamist movement that has governed the coastal Gaza Strip ever since.

"I think that a lot of people across the political spectrum are hoping and working to use these elections as a starting point toward national elections and to pressure Hamas … to conform with the will of the majority of the people to have the national elections as soon as possible," says Qais Abdul-Karim, a veteran politician and member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Mr. Abdul-Karim says overall the elections strengthened the Palestinian political system, but argues that time is running short for nationwide elections – and that there is growing support among decisionmakers in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for holding such elections even if Hamas threatens to boycott them as well.

"In my opinion, the time that we have got is very narrow," he says. "I think that there is an urgent need for the political system to renovate … its legitimacy through [national] elections."

Municipal services

The fact that the municipal elections happened at all

was deemed a success, but the exercise was not as robust as it could have been. Voting was slated to take place in only 93 of 354 localities, according to the Palestinian Central Elections Commission; 82 localities were unprepared and were expected to vote in a second round Nov. 24, while 179 localities fielded only one choice for voters and thus a vote was unnecessary.

Voter turnout was reported at 54.8 percent – down from the 77.7 percent turnout seen in 2006 parliamentary elections, but roughly on par with voter turnout in recent US presidential elections. While the Hamas boycott likely contributed to the decrease, some Hamas supporters may have put aside their politics to cast their vote for improving municipal services like roads, garbage collection, and sewage systems.

"I know for sure that some [Hamas members] did vote because this is the municipal election and this is for the services of the city," said graphic designer Majd Hadid, standing outside a polling station in central Ramallah yesterday.

Mr. Hadid and his architect cousin, Mohannad Hadid, who had come all the way from Abu Dhabi to cast his vote, said they voted for Fatah members – but not those chosen by Fatah chairman and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

"Getting someone from the president's office is not how we want to run our city," said Majd Hadid. "It might work for the president's office, but it doesn't work for the streets."

Abdul-Karim, the analyst, says it was “urgently necessary” to elect new councils who had popular support to improve things like roads that affect the daily lives of citizens. He expects that such areas can now see “some good improvement.”

'Landmark end of Fatah'

Despite the Hamas boycott, Fatah by no means ran unopposed in this election, with renegade Fatah members, powerful clans, new women’s groups, and other blocs challenging the official Fatah party lists. But some voters were still nonplussed about their choices in the municipal elections, which for districts such as Hebron marked the first such elections in more than three decades.

“I wish there was a third party. We have a major problem here in Palestine. It’s either/or – Fatah or Hamas,” says Bayan Shbib, an actress in the relatively upscale neighborhood of El-Bireh near Ramallah. “To me they have both proven a failure in responding to the people’s needs and aspirations…. They are not doing any good for the Palestinians.”

But many Palestinians say it’s not all their fault of their politicians; Israel, they point out, still controls many aspects of life in the territory despite granting greater autonomy to the Palestinian Authority in recent years.

“People understand they are living in a culture of prison; what is left to them is to improve life within the walls of the prison,” says Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affirs. The local elections, he says,

"expose the balance of power within the prison."

Article 3.

The National (Abu Dhabi)

Hizbollah's naked aggression strips away resistance facade

Hussain Abdul Hussain

Oct 22, 2012 -- A friend recently emailed me a story reporting that Hizbollah militants had been killed in fighting in Syria. "The road to Jerusalem goes through Homs," he wrote in the subject line. But while Hizbollah turning its guns away from Israel and against the predominantly Sunni Free Syrian Army might bewilder my Sunni friend, it sounds about right to many Shiites. After all, that conflict goes back 14 centuries; the one with Israel is only a few decades old.

The praise that Hizbollah wins from its supporters for fighting Sunni groups makes it easier for the party to commit crimes like the recent assassination of General Wissam Al Hassan, Lebanon's intelligence chief. Hizbollah denies any role in Friday's car-bomb attack, but its record makes it exceedingly likely that the "Party of God" was somehow involved in this recent murder. Many have argued that Gen Al Hassan was killed to settle a score relating to his role in the arrest of Michel Samaha, an Assad apparatchik who was caught planning a domestic bombing campaign during the summer. In fact, Gen Al Hassan was probably targeted because of his growing security role that had

started to threaten Hizbollah's unrivalled control of Lebanon's intelligence apparatus.

If Gen Al Hassan was killed by Hizbollah, as many have argued, he was not their first Sunni victim. Before him, former prime minister Rafiq Hariri, a bigger-than-life figure, was also assassinated, in 2005 by four Hizbollah operatives, according to the indictment issued by the UN-created Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Between the two murders, much has changed in Lebanon, and so has Hizbollah's style. In 2005, Hizbollah took painstaking measures to hide its involvement in the crime: a cover-up video showing a purported suicide attack was produced and delivered to satellite TV stations. The party sent its most senior figures - including Hassan Nasrallah's wife - to offer condolences to the Hariri family. The Hizbollah propaganda machine made sure that Hariri would be always described as a martyr.

Gen Al Hassan did not receive any such honours. Judging from its media coverage, Hizbollah treated the recent bombing in Beirut's historic Ashrafiyeh district with nonchalance. Hizbollah's ally, the Christian MP Michel Aoun, went on TV to counsel Lebanese (read: Sunnis) against taking on Hizbollah's Shiites. He argued that civil strife should be avoided in what sounded like an implicit threat.

When Hariri was assassinated, the Assad regime's forces were still occupying Lebanon. The Syrian dictator was not interested in civil war, but merely wanted Hariri out of the way. Hizbollah, too, was keen

to preserve its credentials as a pan-Arab, anti-Israel force that transcended the Sunni-Shia divide.
Some Hizbollah officials have said they did not foresee the consequences of the Hariri murder.
Popular outrage forced Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon after 29 years of occupation. Hizbollah was on its back foot for some time, but fought back, often by playing on the sectarian divide and pitting its Shia supporters against the Sunni backers of the Hariri family.
The party failed to stop the creation of the UN tribunal, and became convinced that it needed something big to turn the tables in its favour. In the summer of 2006, Hizbollah invited Israel to a duel that proved devastating for Lebanon, and especially catastrophic for the party's Shia supporters, many of whom lost loved ones and their homes.
When it was over, Hizbollah adopted a two-pronged strategy. On the one hand, party officials assured their supporters that there would be no further war with Israel, thus encouraging Shiites to rebuild their homes, villages and communities.
On the other hand, the party launched a full-scale offensive against Lebanon's Sunni leaders - led by Rafik Hariri's son Saad- blaming them for all the ills that had befallen Shiites, a theme in line with a Shia psyche of persecution.
Hizbollah even accused Lebanon's Sunnis and their allies of supplying Israel with target coordinates during the 2006 war.
The strategy succeeded in keeping its partisans in line,

yet came at the expense of alienating Sunnis, who once were also fans of the party because of its fight that led to the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000.

Regional events have further aggravated Lebanon's Sunni-Shia fracture: the assertive nuclear programme of Iran, the ruling Shia majority in Iraq bullying Sunni groups, and the pro-Iran Alawite minority in Syria oppressing a Sunni majority.

By the time of Gen Al Hassan's murder, his assassins did not feel they needed to produce any cover-up video. Hizbollah today has no illusions about its lack of support among Sunnis.

Whatever the cost, Hizbollah now calculates that an open conflict with Lebanon's Sunnis justifies turning its arms inward and away from Israel. And if Shiites are at war with Sunnis, that would rationalise the killing of Gen Al Hassan and the Hizbollah members fighting alongside Assad forces inside Syria.

Meanwhile, wiping Israel off the map can wait.

Conflict with Sunnis gives Hizbollah and its patrons in Damascus and Tehran a regional role; war with Israel is costly and unrewarding, a lesson that Hafez Al Assad learnt some 40 years ago.

As such, as Syria's MiG fighters fly north to bomb Aleppo, Hizbollah militants - hardened by the 2006 war - fight in Homs pretending it is part of their war for the "liberation of Jerusalem".

Hizbollah clearly fears no fallout from Gen Al Hassan's murder. For the Party of God, this is a war that is a continuation of more than a millennium of

fighting. Whether Lebanon's Sunnis and the world can prove any links between Hizbollah operatives and the Hassan assassination may be irrelevant.
Hizbollah is bracing for the worst anyway.

Hussain Abdul-Hussain is the Washington bureau chief of the Kuwaiti newspaper Alrai.

Article 4.

Associated Press

Qatar's emir to head to Hamas-ruled Gaza

Ibrahim Barzak

Oct. 21, 2012 -- Gaza City, Gaza Strip (AP) — The ruler of Qatar is expected in the Gaza Strip this week, in what would be a major stamp of legitimacy for the territory's Islamic militant Hamas rulers.
Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani would be the first head of state to arrive here since Hamas seized Gaza five years ago, setting a strong signal that the Islamic militants are emerging from international isolation.
The leader of the Gulf emirate is also set to launch $254 million worth of construction projects, including three roads, a hospital and a new town that will bring thousands of jobs to the impoverished territory.
Hamas' Palestinian opponents in the West Bank were watching the emir's plans with some concern. They fear that any gestures that strengthen Hamas' hold on Gaza will make the Islamists less inclined to end the

Palestinian political rift.
The emir called Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas late Sunday and informed him of his plans to visit Gaza and inaugurate construction projects there, said Abbas spokesman Nabil Abu Rdeneh. Abbas welcomed Qatar's aid to Gaza, but also called for pressure on Hamas to end the Palestinian political split, the spokesman said.
That rift broke open in 2007, after Hamas seized Gaza from the internationally backed Abbas. Since then, the two camps have run rival governments, Hamas in Gaza and Abbas in parts of the Israeli-controlled West Bank. Abbas hopes to negotiate the terms of Palestinian statehood in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem with Israel, while Hamas believes such efforts are a waste of time and instead is tightening its hold on Gaza.
Repeated reconciliation attempts between Abbas and Hamas have failed, with neither side willing to give up power in their respective territories. Earlier this year, the emir of Qatar brought together Abbas and Hamas' supreme leader in exile, Khaled Mashaal, for yet another deal. Under the arrangement signed in Doha, Abbas was to lead an interim unity government to pave the way for presidential and parliamentary elections in the Palestinian territories.
However, senior Hamas officials in Gaza accused Mashaal at the time of not consulting with them first and torpedoed the deal, unwilling to give Abbas a renewed foothold in Gaza. Hamas has been holding secret leadership elections since then, and Mashaal

announced last month he is no longer seeking another term in the top spot.

The upcoming visit by the Qatari ruler — a boon to Hamas — has been shrouded in secrecy. By late Sunday, Qatar had not made a formal announcement, leaving open the possibility that it could be called off at the last minute because of concerns over security or the political ramifications.

However, an Egyptian security official and officials in Gaza involved in arranging the trip said the emir is expected for a four-hour visit Tuesday. He is to be accompanied by some 50 people, including his wife, his prime minister, business leaders, intellectuals and security officials, they said on condition of anonymity because no formal date has been announced.

Qatar expanded its regional influence during the Arab Spring uprisings that toppled dictators in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt last year, lending support to protesters linked to the region wide Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas is an offshoot of the Brotherhood, but has adopted a more militant ideology as part of its conflict with Israel.

In anticipation of the emir's visit, Gaza's streets have been decorated with billboards in Arabic and English reading, "Thanks, Qatar, you fulfilled the promise."

Palestinian officials said the emir and his entourage will be met by an honor guard as they cross from Egypt into Gaza through the Rafah passenger terminal there. Gaza's prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas, is to greet the emir at Rafah and also host him at his office in Gaza City, the officials said.

The Qatari ruler is also expected to tour the sites of the projects funded by Qatar, including a hospital for the handicapped, a new town and the overhaul of three main roads.

Despite the plans for a high-profile visit, Qatar has tried to temper its growing role in Gaza. Last week, Qatar's ambassador to Gaza, Mohammed al-Emadi, emphasized that the massive investments "are for the people of Gaza, not Hamas." He said Qatar would be involved in the projects until completion and only then hand them to the Gaza government.

Still, the projects could produce another potential benefit by helping Hamas establish a trade route with Egypt.

After the Hamas takeover, Israel and Egypt's former ruler, Hosni Mubarak, enforced a border blockade of Gaza. Israel has since eased some restrictions, but still bars virtually all exports and restricts the imports of key raw materials.

Mubarak's successor, Mohammed Morsi — who hails from the Muslim Brotherhood — has been reluctant to open the Gaza-Egypt border to trade, in part because this could inadvertently foster the separation between the West Bank and Gaza, which lie on opposite sides of Israel. Such a move could also further weaken Abbas politically.

Qatari diplomats have asked Egypt to allow raw materials for Qatar's Gaza projects to be sent through the Rafah crossing, Gaza officials said. Haniyeh's office said the Egyptian president approved the arrangement, which could set a precedent for future

trade.

Egyptian officials were not immediately available for comment Sunday. However, Morsi has tried to avoid alienating Abbas, who would presumably oppose the idea of a Gaza-Egypt trade without oversight by his Palestinian Authority.

An Abbas aide, Nimr Hamad, appeared to criticize the emir's Gaza plans. During a trip to Egypt, Hamad said he hoped Arab nations would refrain from visits "that give Gaza a semi-independent status," adding that "this is very dangerous for the Palestinian issue."

Another West Bank official, former planning minister Samir Abdullah, said Qatar should use its leverage over Hamas to pressure it to agree to reconciliation. "Changing the miserable situation in Gaza is something good," Abdullah said. "Nobody would look at it otherwise. But it shouldn't be used to encourage the separation between the West Bank and Gaza, or make reconciliation more difficult."

Article 5.

TIME

The Sino-Indian War: 50 Years Later, Will India and China Clash Again?

Ishaan Tharoor

Oct. 21, 2012 -- The only major war in modern history fought between India and China ended almost as abruptly as it began. On Oct. 20, 1962, a multi-pronged Chinese offensive burst the glacial stillness of the Himalayas and overwhelmed India's unprepared and ill-equipped defenses, scattering its soldiers. Within days, the Chinese had wrested control of Kashmir's Aksai Chin plateau in the west and, in the east, neared India's vital tea-growing heartlands in Assam. Then, on Nov. 21, Beijing called a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew from India's northeast, while keeping hold of barren Aksai Chin. TIME's Nov. 30, 1962 cover story started off with a Pax Americana smirk: "Red China behaved in so inscrutably Oriental a manner last week that even Asians were baffled." Fifty years later, there are other reasons to be baffled: namely why a territorial spat that ought be consigned to dusty 19th century archives still rankles relations between the 21st century's two rising Asian powers. Economic ties between India and China are booming: they share over $70 billion in annual bilateral trade, a figure that's projected to reach as much as $100 billion in the next three years. But, despite rounds of talks, the two countries have yet to resolve their decades-old dispute over the 2,100-mile-long border. It remains one of the most militarized stretches of territory in the world, a remote, mountainous fault-line that still triggers tensions between New Delhi and Beijing.

At the core of the disagreement is the McMahon Line,

an imprecise, meandering boundary drawn in 1914 by British colonial officials and representatives of the then independent Tibetan state. China, of course, refuses to recognize that line, and still refers much of its territorial claims to the maps and atlases of the long-vanished Qing dynasty, whose ethnic Manchu emperors maintained loose suzerainty over the Tibetan plateau. In 1962, flimsy history, confusion over the border's very location and the imperatives of two relatively young states—Mao's People's Republic and newly independent India led by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru—led to China humiliating India in a crushing defeat where, by some accounts, both sides lost upwards of 2,000 soldiers. In 1962, TIME described the Chinese offensive as a "human-sea assault," like a "swarm of red ants" toting burp-guns. Beijing seized and has never relinquished Aksai Chin—"the desert of white stone"—a strategic corridor that links Tibet to the western Chinese region of Xinjiang. "The India-China war took place through a complex series of actions misunderstandings," says Kishan S. Rana, a former Indian diplomat and honorary fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies in New Delhi. "Bilateral relations are, however, moving forward. The border, despite unresolved issues, today is a quiet border."

Yet, just as China's economic liberalization hasn't led to an opening up of its political system, the strength of India and China's trade ties have yet to unwind the border impasse. The border may be "quiet," but tensions have spiked in recent years, with China

reiterating its claim to almost the entirety of Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern Indian state that the Chinese overran in 1962 and consider to be "Southern Tibet," while India has steadily beefed up its military deployments in the long-neglected Northeast. The issue of Tibet casts a long shadow—in 1959, the Dalai Lama fled to India, an accommodation that Beijing still resents. When he went recently to speak at a historic monastery in Arunachal Pradesh, the Chinese government lodged a formal complaint. "The territorial dispute between India and China is intertwined with the Tibet issue and national dignity, making the whole situation more complicated," says Zhang Hua, a Sino-Indian relations expert at Peking University. "When the two countries look at each other, they cannot see the counterparty in an objective and rational view."

That nationalist ill-will is not just confined to those in the corridors of power. In a survey published last week, the Pew Global Attitudes Project found that 62% of Chinese hold an "unfavorable" view of India—compared to 48% feeling the same way of the U.S. Brahma Chellaney, a professor of strategic studies at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi, fears such sentiment driving the political calculus in Beijing. In a more heated climate, the Chinese leadership may not be immune to the calls of its more hardline nationalists to strike out at India, writes Chellaney:

For India, the haunting lesson of 1962 is that to secure peace, it must be ever ready to defend peace. China's

recidivist policies are at the root of the current bilateral tensions and carry the risk that Beijing may be tempted to teach India "a second lesson", especially because the political gains of the first lesson have been frittered away. Chinese strategic doctrine attaches great value to the elements of surprise and good timing in order to wage "battles with swift outcomes." If China were to unleash another surprise war, victory or defeat will be determined by one key factor: India's ability to withstand the initial shock and awe and fight back determinedly.

China's decision to withdraw from much of the territory it seized in 1962 was spurred by the arrival of significant amounts of aid and weaponry in India from the U.K. and the U.S.—Washington, at the time, was locked in the Cuban Missile Crisis, an imbroglio some historians suggest China exploited to its advantage in launching its assault. TIME's 1962 cover story on the Sino-Indian war breathes fire on the 73-year-old Nehru—"his hair is snow-white and thinning, his skin greyish and his gaze abstracted"—and his "morally arrogant pose" of "endlessly [lecturing] the West on the need for peaceful coexistence with Communism." An inveterate Cold Warrior, Henry Luce's TIME reckoned the chief lesson of the war ought to be the demise of Nehru's policy of Nonalignment, his principled Socialist stand with a number of other recently independent states to chart a third path on the world stage, away from the influence of both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (I've written about nonalignment at length here, here and here.) "Nehru has never been

able to rid himself of that disastrous cliche that holds Communism to be somehow progressive and less of a threat to emergent nations than 'imperialism,'" TIME declared. His dreamy belief in Asian solidarity and unwillingness to see who really were "India's friends"—namely, the U.S.—led to India's humiliation. Tellingly, the TIME 1962 story hopes for the Indian army to "emerge as something of a political force" in its own right: for many Americans during the Cold War, the grand struggle against Communism outranked any concern for the future of fledgling democracies.

The shock of the war with China is believed to have worsened Nehru's health; he died less than two years later. But his gift to India—its democracy—has endured and its military—unlike that of neighboring Pakistan, which would be drawn much more firmly into the American camp—has avoided meddling in its politics.

The war's real legacy lies less in the folly of Nehru's ideals and more in the frozen landscape where the battles were fought: India and China's restive borderlands remain the victim of the two countries' longstanding dispute, locked down by vast military presences. In Tibet and Xinjiang, any trace of dissent or separatist ethnic nationalism is ruthlessly suppressed. In Indian Kashmir and in its northeastern states, emergency laws are still in effect—that small bonus of being able to vote somewhat dampened by decades of army occupation, woeful governance and inadequate investment in basic things like

infrastructure. TIME, in 1962, described the journey down a "Jeep path" in Assam where it took 18 hours to cover 70 miles. Fifty years on, the conditions haven't improved much in many parts of the Indian northeast; New Delhi's belated efforts to transform the region into an economic hub with Southeast Asia have yet to take hold.

Long gone are the days when caravans would regularly depart from Ladakh, in what's now Indian Kashmir, and wind their way around the mountains toward the Silk Road cities of Yarkhand and Khotan, now in Xinjiang. Tibetan monks in Lhasa can't visit some of the most sacred sites of their faith that lie in the Indian northeast. The myriad connections that bound the communities living along the Indian-Chinese border, the veritable "roof of the world," have been lost amid New Delhi and Beijing's icy standoff. As one Member of Parliament from Arunachal Pradesh told me earlier this year, "There's a lot we shared in common, but that's now all a thing of the past."

Article 6.

Al-Ahram Weekly

The River Nile: bridge or barrier?

Doaa El-Bey

The 25 January Revolution in Egypt put the issue of the water of the River Nile back at the top of the foreign-policy agenda. Diplomatic efforts at creating common interests and boosting economic cooperation seem to be the best way of managing conflicts arising from differences over the distribution of the river's water, and the various countries involved have shown a willingness to build bridges in an effort to capitalise on mutual interests and bring about a win-win situation for all.

While popular diplomacy has proven successful in the post-revolution management of Nile water issues, popular-official diplomacy can also help improve relations between Egypt and the other Nile Basin states, building further bridges between them. As if to demonstrate this idea, last week saw the conclusion of a 10-day tour to South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia, in order to involve civil society organisations in boosting cooperation with the Nile Basin states, according to Magdi Amer, assistant foreign minister for Nile Basin states affairs, who headed the delegation.

"This is the first Egyptian official-popular delegation to head to the Nile Basin states," said Amr Khaled, a popular Islamic preacher and founder of Life Makers, a charity organisation, on his official website. Khaled was part of the delegation that visited the four Nile Basin states.

The warm welcome the delegation received was an indication, Khaled said, that both officials and peoples are willing to listen and be listened to. The delegation

had visited the countries, he explained, as representatives of Egyptian civil society in order to address their counterparts and find out how they could work together. "The relationship between Egypt and these states cannot be summarised as a water issue alone. We inquired about how we could help build schools and hospitals, etc., in order to assist them. After all, we cannot resolve the water issue in the absence of other issues," he added.

The tour, organised by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, included representatives from charity organisations like Life Makers, Resala, the Food Bank, the Arab Doctors Union, the Children's Cancer Hospital and Masr Al-Kheir. Delegates met the ministers of education, health, youth, and information and representatives of civil society in each state.

Tarek Kotb, from the Foreign Ministry's Nile Basin States Department, said that the delegation had included 20 figures representing the government as well as 15 NGOs. A single approach could not resolve all possible conflicts, he said, but "political means, together with the efforts of NGOs and popular diplomacy, go hand-in-hand in order to improve relations and create a better ambiance among the Nile Basin states," Kotb told Al-Ahram Weekly.

The official-popular approach was accompanied by top-level official efforts to boost relations with the upstream states, President Mohamed Morsi concluding a visit to Uganda last week during which he took part in celebrating the country's independence day. The issue of the Nile's water was discussed with

the other leaders of Nile Basin states who attended the celebration.
In July, Morsi visited Ethiopia to participate in the African Union summit, which was the first visit by an Egyptian president to Ethiopia since the assassination attempt on ousted former president Hosni Mubarak in 1995 by Islamist gunmen during a visit to Addis Ababa.
Prime Minister Hisham Kandil will also visit South Sudan soon, having already visited various upstream countries in June when he was minister of irrigation. These visits aim to improve bilateral relations between Egypt and these states and to discuss issues relating to the sharing of the Nile's water.
NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES: Meanwhile, Egypt and Sudan have said they will not sign the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) signed by most of the other Nile Basin states unless they are guaranteed their existing share of the river's water. Egypt's other reservations about the agreement include the need to give the country advance notice before construction is carried out in the Nile Basin and to adjust the future voting system set up under the agreement so that any vote will always be contingent on the approval of Egypt and Sudan.
Egypt has always had a natural and historical right to the Nile. Given that the country is dependent on the Nile for drinking water and agriculture, the river is considered to be a national-security issue. Egypt is also already struggling with water shortages, and a 2007 report by the Water Research Centre said that it

would face serious shortages by 2025.
Unlike the other Nile Basin countries, which have several other sources of water, the Nile provides Egypt with 95 per cent of the country's water needs, Nader Noureddin, a professor of land and water resources at the Faculty of Agriculture, Cairo University, told the Weekly.
The water resources of any country are measured according to the total amount of water resources it has, including rain and subterranean water, he explained.
Ethiopia, for instance, possesses 123.5 billion cubic metres of water per year, according to a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report.
Tanzania has 91 billion, Uganda 44 billion, Sudan 66 billion and Kenya 33 billion. Egypt, on the other hand, has 60.5 billion cubic metres a year -- 55.5 billion from the Nile and five from subterranean sources.
"These figures show that Ethiopia has more than double the water Egypt has, and Tanzania has double what Egypt has. They also show that Egypt has the least amount of water, given its size and population," Noureddin told the Weekly.
However, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya have decided to ignore such figures, and they have asked for a larger share of Nile water regardless of other sources. The countries accordingly signed the CFA, also known as the Entebbe Agreement, in May 2010, which aims to re-allocate water distribution and increase the upstream countries' share of the Nile's water.
The agreement also aims to allow upstream countries

to construct dams and related projects that may violate the 1929 and 1959 Nile Basin agreements. The Entebbe Agreement was expected to take effect in May 2011, one year after it was signed, though other upstream Nile countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, did not initially sign it. Burundi eventually signed in March 2011.

South Sudan, which seceded from North Sudan last year, has said that it will not join the agreement until all Nile Basin states agree on it.

Analysts differ on whether the death of Ethiopia's former prime minister Meles Zenawi in August will affect the water issue. Some argue that it could provide a catalyst toward resolving the issue, while others believe that it will not lead to any major change in Ethiopian policy.

Zenawi, prime minister from 1995, was known as an architect of Ethiopian development, and he repeatedly asked for a new agreement regarding the sharing of the Nile's water.

Initially, there were 10 states making up the Nile Basin states, becoming 11 after the division of Sudan. The seven upstream countries are Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan are considered to be downstream states. Eritrea is an observer state under the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI).

EGYPT'S HISTORIC RIGHTS: In response to these developments, Egypt and Sudan have insisted on abiding by the 1929 and the 1959 treaties, though

these are regarded by the upstream states as "colonial relics" that should no longer be treated as law.
The 1929 treaty was signed by the then British occupying authorities in Egypt and stated that no work could be undertaken on the Nile and its tributaries without Egypt's acceptance. It also gave Egypt the right to block any developments upstream in the River Nile, including dams, irrigation works and pumping stations. The treaty allocated Egypt 48 billion cubic metres a year and Sudan four billion cubic metres a year of Nile water as their "acquired rights".
Sudan and Egypt later renegotiated the 1929 treaty in 1959 under a new treaty that allowed for the construction of the Aswan High Dam as a major new element in the control of the Nile's water to the benefit of the two countries. The 1959 treaty also increased the two countries' share of Nile water to 55.5 and 18 billion cubic metres, respectively.
The 1929 treaty was the culmination of previous agreements made in 1889, 1891, 1902 and 1906 between the British and Italian governments and later also the Ethiopian government. All these agreements acknowledged Egypt's natural and historic right to its fair share of the Nile's water.
However, increasing energy needs among upstream states have prompted them to look for new sources of energy, among them dams to produce hydroelectric energy. The existing treaties are an obstacle to these countries' plans, and thus there have various attempts to renegotiate them and come up with a new collective agreement.

The first recent attempt towards that end was made with the establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in 1999. Although representatives of the member countries of the NBI met on a regular basis over the course of the following decade, negotiations failed to progress into an agreement that could appeal to all members.

Relationships between the NBI states deteriorated after the CFA was signed.

POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF THE RENAISSANCE DAM: Potential conflict over the water issue between the upstream and downstream countries, among them Egypt, built up in March last year when Ethiopia decided to build its "Renaissance Dam" on the Blue Nile without the endorsement of Egypt or Sudan. When built, the dam will be the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa and the tenth largest in the world. The dam's reservoir at 63 billion cubic metres will be one of Africa's largest. However, given that the dam is planned to be built on the Blue Nile, which provides Egypt with 85 per cent of its water, there are fears that it will restrict the amount of water reaching Egypt.

The Nile is fed by the White Nile, flowing from Lake Victoria, and the Blue Nile, flowing from Ethiopia. Yet, experts differ on the effect of the dam. Some argue that it could provide Egypt with water throughout the year, not only in flood time, and generate electricity that could be used by Egypt and Sudan. Others say that it could allow Ethiopia to control the amount of water reaching Egypt and that as

a result the country would no longer receive its appropriate share of water.

Mustafa Al-Guindi, an MP and coordinator of the popular diplomacy delegation that visited Ethiopia and Uganda last year, has described the situation by saying that while Egypt is concerned about the effects of the dam, Addis Ababa has repeatedly emphasised that the dam will not have any effect on the amount of water reaching Egypt. As a result, no action should be taken until the findings of the tripartite technical committee looking into the matter are released.

"My main concern now is to know from the unbiased committee that will disclose its findings to the peoples of the Nile Basin countries whether the dam will harm Egypt or not," Al-Guindi told the Weekly. "If the report states that it will, Egypt will argue that the CFA is illegal as it would deprive Egypt of one of its basic human rights, water."

Al-Guindi praised the work of the committee as the outcome of efforts made by the popular diplomacy delegation. For his part, Noureddin believes that building any dams on the Blue Nile will present a challenge to Egypt's water supply and to the country's national security.

"Egypt understood that Ethiopia needed to build the Tekeze Dam on the River Atbara three years ago and other dams before that. Now Ethiopia has a total of 12 dams, a number that is not found anywhere else in the world. Nevertheless, it now wants to build four more dams on the Blue Nile and its tributaries," Noureddin commented.

The Renaissance Dam, if built, would make the existing Aswan High Dam and Lake Nasser, which stores water behind it, redundant. "The Nile's water reaching Sudan and Egypt would be coming through a small canal that receives surplus water left over after Ethiopia has generated the power it wants if this dam is built," he added.

THE BAD OLD DAYS: Egypt's relations with the African states in general and the Nile Basin states in particular saw a deterioration in recent years that was widely blamed on the pre-revolutionary regime, which neglected the country's African neighbours and left relationships to deteriorate until the upstream states decided to sign the Entebbe Agreement.

Egypt even threatened to resort to war if its rights over the Nile's water were encroached upon. Egyptian former foreign minister Ahmed Abul-Gheit warned that Cairo's water rights were a "red line" and threatened legal action if a partial deal was reached.

While Egypt and Ethiopia signed a cooperation agreement in 1993, relations deteriorated after 1995 following the assassination attempt on ousted former president Mubarak. Mubarak never visited Addis Ababa again after that, and the incident had a negative impact on Egypt's relations with Ethiopia as well as with other African states.

Although this deterioration in relations has been blamed on the previous regime, Noureddin points to other reasons that have contributed to the worsening relations. The fact that the upstream states have considered building dams on the Nile as their right

without giving Egypt prior notice and without respecting the treaties that ban the building of such dams on the Nile without the prior consent of Egypt are among the reasons for the deteriorating relations, he said.

The upstream countries have insisted on abiding by a principle of equal rights to the Nile's water rather than the principle of equal rights to water resources that both Egypt and Sudan support. Some countries have linked their development to the buildings of dams like that planned in Ethiopia, which is even being called the "Renaissance Dam".

"This is a great mistake," Noureddin said. "Canada which has only two per cent fresh water, is a developed country. Other desert states that do not possess water at all have also achieved development."

The presence of countries like China, Korea and Israel in the Nile Basin states and their rapidly growing investment there are also dangerous signs that could lead to further differences among the states in the future.

Noureddin gave Ethiopia as an example, saying that though it had the right to open its doors to foreign investment in the field of agriculture, this could not be at the expense of Egypt's share of the Nile's water. Likewise, Ethiopia's decision to irrigate the land using river rather than rain water should be revised such that it uses non-Nile water or subterranean water sources.

Moreover an agreement had been signed earlier this year by an Israeli agency for international development to increase cooperation in the fields of

food security, water management, and industrial development in African states, Noureddin said. This project was being carried out in cooperation with the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). But Egypt, which has 7,000 years of experience in agriculture, is not undertaking any similar projects.
TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF: Post-revolutionary Egypt has shown a genuine desire to reestablish good relations and boost cooperation with the Nile Basin states, as was signaled by the visit of former prime minister Essam Sharaf to Uganda and Ethiopia in a bid to boost bilateral relations and trade with particular emphasis on the appropriation of the Nile's water.
"We were in Uganda yesterday, and today we had discussions in Ethiopia. The environment is completely different from what it was during the previous period," Sharaf told journalists during his visit. A few months later, Zenawi met Sharaf in Cairo. During the meeting, both men highlighted the positive impact their talks had had, describing the Nile as a "bridge" rather than a "barrier" to warmer ties.
During the visit, Zenawi announced the formation of the tripartite technical committee that would review the impact of the Renaissance Dam on water distribution.
Moreover, Egypt saw a surge of diplomacy on the popular level after the revolution. A popular diplomacy delegation received a warm welcome in Uganda and Ethiopia in April and May last year, and it included political figures like Al-Guindi, Al-Sayed Al-Badawi, leader of the Wafd Party, Ghad Party leader

Ayman Nour, and presidential hopeful Hisham Al-Bastawisi. Other members of the delegation included journalists like Sekina Fouad, popular figures like Mohamed Abul-Ghar and representatives from youth groups that took part in launching of the 25 January Revolution.

The delegation managed to convince the two countries to delay the ratification of the CFA until Egypt had elected a new parliament and president, and it prompted Ethiopia to allow the formation of the independent tripartite technical committee to investigate the effects of the Renaissance Dam.

"Popular diplomacy succeeded where official diplomacy failed. Ethiopia, which had repeatedly rejected the idea of the committee, accepted its formation after the visit of the delegation," Al-Guindi said, pointing to the fact that the mixed character of the delegation's members had helped the negotiations.

"All currents, including the Muslim Brotherhood before it assumed power, were represented in the delegation. That is how a proper popular delegation should be and that is why it succeeded," he added.

The warm welcome the Ethiopians gave to the delegation was shown during the delegation's visit to the cathedral in Addis Ababa, when members chanted with Ethiopian worshippers after mass: "Egypt and Ethiopia: one hand."

Nevertheless, Noureddin for one still believes that popular diplomacy alone may not resolve the water problem. Instead, it can act to pave the way for better relations in future and enhanced cooperation. Official

diplomacy is more likely to resolve the root of the problem, he said. Without a resolution to the water problem, there cannot be good relations.

The formation of the tripartite technical committee was one outcome of the popular diplomatic efforts. The 10-member committee is composed of two experts from Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia and four international experts. It held its first meeting in Addis Ababa late last year, and a sixth meeting was held in the Ethiopian capital last week. It is expected to produce its report by the end of this year.

However, according to sources at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, Ethiopia has not given the committee all the details it needs to come up with the report, which is why some, among them experts like Maghawri Shehata, president of the Arab Association for Healthy Water, have cast doubts on the outcome of the committee.

According to Shehata, Ethiopia postponed ratification of the agreement last year, and it has not changed its position since. Moreover, it began working on the foundations of the dam even before Burundi signed the agreement. While the committee has the authority to examine the impacts of building the dam, there has been no mention of what might happen should those impacts be found to be negative on the downstream states.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: The Nile, the longest river in the world, is 4,000 miles long. Some 160 million people in 11 countries depend on the river and its tributaries for their livelihoods. Within the next 25

years, the population of the Nile Basin states is expected to double, and demand for water for agricultural and industrial purposes will grow as well. The need of the Nile Basin states to cooperate and even integrate should be growing as well, and there is an increasing need for a change in the approach of the Nile Basin states to water issues. Egypt has argued that it needs the Nile's water for its survival and for agriculture, while the upstream states argue that they need to use the Nile water for their own rapidly increasing development needs, famine prevention, and poverty reduction.

All the states concerned should work on the principle of "don't harm anybody, and don't allow anybody to harm you," according to Al-Guindi. It would not be acceptable for Egypt to live under a "water poverty line", he said. However, it would also be unacceptable for Ethiopia to suffer from a shortage of electricity. "If the Nile Basin states, especially Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda, become genuine partners in joint projects, they could provide food and electricity for all the Basin states," Al-Guindi said. Egypt has the manpower and Sudan has the fertile land to do so. Cooperation could produce food for everyone as a result.

Building bridges of understanding among the peoples of the different states is also essential. Khaled said that people in the African states he visited sometimes regarded Egyptians as "selfish", since they could come across as wanting to deprive other states of their right to develop their countries.

In the meantime, the picture that the media has drawn of the African states, especially Ethiopia, is one of their trying to deprive Egypt of its share of water and expose it to a water crisis. In this atmosphere, hostile feelings can thrive.

"We need to sit down with them and to understand them. The Renaissance Dam to the Ethiopians is like the High Dam to us. We can sit down with them and reach a compromise that would not harm Egypt and would not deprive Addis Ababa of its hope of development either," Khaled said.

In the hope of building such bridges, Life Makers decided to organise workshops for 50 people from each of the four states Khaled visited in Alexandria in order to boost understanding within these states. The organisation is also planning to build an international school in each country.

Other areas of cooperation suggested by experts include Egyptian assistance to upstream states in irrigation techniques, increasing agricultural imports from these states, the purchase of electricity from the hydroelectric power stations that the Ethiopian and Ugandan governments wish to build, and cooperation in both the public and private sectors in order to build a network of interests that will outweigh any conflicts regarding the Nile's water.

Other prospects for better relations in the future include the use of "soft power" through sending different official-popular delegations like the one that visited four African states last week. "When the people in these states see that Egyptian NGOs are willing to

visit them to find out how they can help these countries, they will be more willing to understand and compromise," Kotb said.

In the same context, the Egyptian government launched an "Egyptian initiative for the development of the Nile Basin countries" in January this year. The initiative includes the establishment of regional training centres in the Nile Basin states. It aims to establish integrated development projects and programmes in the states in strategic fields in order to reinforce Egypt's relations with these countries in a way that helps them to achieve their development goals.

Egypt is also participating in efforts to modernise the postal sector in Africa through providing technical assistance to these countries and the training of human resources. In this effort, it is able to draw on Egypt's experience in such fields, as well as on its proven ability to develop systems in the field.

Other more technical suggestions that water experts have come up with to help save water include reviving plans for the construction of the Gongli Canal in South Sudan. This canal, first proposed in 1903, has now been revived in the form of a 500-metre canal linking the White Nile and the Congo River. When built, it will channel swamp water back into the Nile, amounting to an annual increase of Nile water availability of roughly 40 billion cubic metres.

There are various ways for African countries to achieve prosperity through establishing a network of solid relationships and creating common channels and

aims. However, more efforts are needed, and these can best be done on the official as well as on the popular levels.