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Article 1.

The Daily Beast

Obama's Middle East Head Spin

Christopher Dickey & John Barry

April 22, 2011 -- From Washington's vantage, every Friday is becoming Black Friday in the Middle East. Muslim prayers turn to protests that keep building toward full-scale uprisings faster than anyone had predicted, and with potentially cataclysmic consequences nobody dares imagine. This Friday, the shock came in Syria, where President Bashar al-Assad runs one of the Middle East's most repressive regimes. Across the country, protesters have grown ever more emboldened in recent weeks, and on Friday they poured into the streets by the tens of thousands to face the deadly fusillades of Assad's security forces. More than 70 died. What did the White House have to say? From Air Force One: "We call on all sides to cease and desist from the use of violence." Surely President Obama can do better than that. Or perhaps not. The drama—the tragedy—increasingly apparent at the White House is of a brilliant intellect who is nonetheless confounded by events, a strategist whose strategies are thwarted and who is left with almost no strategy at all, a persuasive politician and diplomat who gets others to crawl out on limbs, has them take big risks to break through to a new future, and then turns around and walks away from them when the political winds in the United States threaten to shift. It's not enough to say the Cabinet is divided about what to do. Maybe the simplest and in many ways the most disturbing explanation for all the flailing is offered by veteran journalist and diplomat Leslie H. Gelb: "There is one man in this administration who debates himself." President Obama. These patterns of behavior and their consequences have been on horrifying display in the blood-drenched streets of Misrata, Libya,

where the population has begged for more support from NATO and the United States. But they did not begin with Libya, or with the surprise uprising in Tunisia in January or the stunning fall of Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak in February. They were evident from Year 1 of the Obama presidency in his excruciating deliberations over the Afghan surge, in the hand extended ineffectually to Iran, and the lines drawn in the sand, then rubbed out and moved back, and further back, in the dismal, failed efforts to build a Palestinian peace process. But in Libya the crisis of American tentativeness has grown worse almost by the day. Muammar Gaddafi holds on, despite Obama's demand for him to leave, and the civilians that the Americans, their allies, and the United Nations vowed to protect are being slaughtered.

At the Pentagon, which bears the brunt of much of this hesitation and vacillation, the mood is one of not-so-quiet desperation. Said one longtime friend of Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Michael Mullen and Defense Secretary Robert Gates: "They think it [the Libyan operation] is just nuts. We are destroying our credibility with this situation, and there is really no answer to it."

Early in the debate over establishing a no-fly zone in Libya, Gates went on the record saying what a bad idea he thought that was. "It's an open secret Bob Gates didn't like it, and Mullen didn't like it, because they know what happens when you do this no-fly zone," says Gelb, who writes a column for *The Daily Beast*. "If you think your interests justify the full monty, that's one thing, but if you don't, what the hell are you doing there in the first place?"

The essential debate in Washington, and very likely in Obama's head, has been framed as a matter of humanitarian interests on the one hand and security interests on the other. In Obama's March 28 speech explaining why he had committed American air power to the Libyan operations nine days before, he played up the moral issues. "If we waited one more day," he said, "Benghazi [a Libyan city of 700,000]

could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world.” But in that same speech the president passed leadership of the operation on to NATO, and he himself has been backing away from the problem ever since. Americans have shown little popular support or even interest in this war; many on Capitol Hill are questioning the cost, and Obama’s priority is clearly his budget battles with the Republican-controlled Congress.

So Vice President Joe Biden has been left to handle the file, and he’s seemed none too happy about it. In an interview with the Financial Times, he argued that America’s real strategic interests were elsewhere, notably in helping to stabilize Egypt, while continuing to try to deal with Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and North Korea. “We can’t do it all,” said Biden. NATO and the Europeans should do more, he insisted. But NATO is run by consensus, and when its most powerful member refuses to lead, hard decisions are hard to come by. France and Britain, for their part, have taken the initiative in Libya from the beginning and crossed a new threshold last week by announcing publicly that they would send military advisers into Libya to help the rebels organize. (One firm decision by the U.S.: It will not put its troops on the ground in Libya under any circumstances.)

With Obama still missing in action on these issues, Gates decided to clarify the administration’s position on his own terms at a Pentagon press conference scheduled with short notice. The take-away headline was about the deployment of a couple of unmanned Predator drones to blast away at Gaddafi forces by remote control. But Gates clearly wanted to lay out the reasons as he saw them for the administration deciding to intervene at all, given that the intervention has been so limited and has fallen so short of its previously expressed aims.

The United States got involved “because of the worry that Gaddafi could destabilize the fledgling revolutions in both Tunisia and Egypt, with Egypt being central to the future of the region; and, second, to prevent a humanitarian disaster.” Then the clincher: “A third reason was that, while it was not a vital interest for us, our allies considered it a vital interest. And just as they have helped us in Afghanistan, we thought it was important, the president thought it was important, to help them in Libya.”

Washington’s self-involved view is often curious, but this is curiously still: As if in today’s world, where we’ve just seen revolutions spread across the vast Arab map faster than a viral video, you could somehow isolate the Libyan problem; as if you could trade participation for one war for participation in another.

The world doesn’t work that way anymore, if it ever did. There is no question, for instance, that what happens in Syria is of vital interest to Israel, which is America’s strategic partner; nor is there any question that Assad is watching Gaddafi’s brutal tactics for precedents that will serve the Syrian’s own savage regime. The same holds true for Ali Abdullah Saleh, holding out against his people and against the odds in Yemen, whose lawless territory harbors some of the most dangerous members of al Qaeda.

The fundamentally important American alliance with Saudi Arabia, which holds the keys to the global oil market, was shaken badly by what King Abdullah saw as Obama’s betrayal of Hosni Mubarak. Add to that the king’s bitter disappointment with American course corrections, and reversals, on the Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative. A European envoy who met with Abdullah in early March described him as “incandescent” with rage at Obama. Yet the Saudis backed the intervention in Libya—only to see the Americans fumble their leadership once again.

As for Iran, ever since the regime there confronted and crushed huge pro-democracy protests in 2009, nothing threatens it more than successful revolutions in the Arab world. And nothing gratifies Iran's leaders more than to see the United States dithering about whether Arab democracy is in American interests. The ripple effects are felt even in East Asia, where a former U.S. ambassador says he's heard that the North Koreans are telling the Chinese "if this is the best the Americans can do in Libya, we've got nothing to worry about." On the ground in strategically vital Egypt, meanwhile, the situation in Libya, which is right next door, is vitally linked to the stability of whatever new government takes shape in Cairo. Since the fall of Mubarak in February, it's been apparent that Egypt would face a massive crisis this summer, when the economy is likely to flatline and an extra million people may be added to the ranks of the unemployed. Now, precisely because of the civil war in Libya, hundreds of millions of dollars of desperately needed remittances from Egyptian workers there have been cut off, and the workers themselves are flooding back into their homeland by the hundreds of thousands, adding a volatile new element to an already explosive mix.

So, yes, many voices in Washington argue that Libya should be someone else's problem, that the Europeans should shoulder more of the burden, or that they should have spent more on defense in the past so they could, hypothetically, take on more of the military operations now. But a protracted stalemate in Libya, which is where NATO's noncommittal commitment appears to be headed, will be an unmitigated disaster, precisely, for American interests. Next time Obama debates these issues with himself, he may want to take that into account.

Article 2.

World Politics Review

Mubarak's Fate Could Resonate Beyond Egypt

Nikolas Gvosdev

22 Apr 2011 -- Six months ago, Hosni Mubarak was the unchallenged ruler of Egypt, and his son Gamal was generally assumed to be the heir-apparent -- a modernizer and reformer waiting in the wings. Today, Mubarak père is detained in hospital, while Mubarak fils is prisoner No. 23 at Tora Farm, the country's most notorious prison.

The wheel of fortune has turned so dramatically for the Mubaraks, in part because the provisional military government found it necessary to mollify protesters -- who continue to challenge its reform bona fides -- by vigorously taking action against the ancien regime. Indeed, with the wheels of justice also beginning to turn, Mubarak may end up facing the ultimate sanction: Some officials have openly noted that the former president, if charged and convicted, could potentially face the death penalty.

A trial for Mubarak would convincingly demonstrate that no one in Egypt is above the law. On the other hand, death or imprisonment for the former president would make it that much more difficult to convince future Egyptian presidents to peacefully relinquish power -- with the risk that some might resort to violence to try to stay in office, as Laurent Gbagbo attempted in Ivory Coast. Moreover, Mubarak's uncertain fate is also complicating efforts to encourage entrenched autocrats in other parts of the world to peacefully step down. Mubarak's trajectory, from head of state to detainee in a military hospital, with his sons and his former associates all now

"guests" in Egypt's most famous prison, provides little encouragement for leaders like Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov or Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko to follow a similar path. As Stephen Walt noted, other authoritarian leaders may be learning the wrong lesson from Mubarak's experience, given that he wound up in jail despite "ultimately [deciding] not to unleash massive force against anti-government demonstrators, and eventually [leaving] power more-or-less peacefully, if not exactly voluntarily." If Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh is currently mulling a proposed deal to hand over power, it is in part because the offer would guarantee him immunity from prosecution. Having learned from Mubarak's example, Saleh will wait until an amnesty is written into law before resigning.

The lesson for the next president of Egypt, given the near-complete absence of peaceful transitions of power in the Arab world, might be this: Hold on to power like a security blanket, because once it is given up, you and your family will be exposed to fortune's capricious wheel.

The United States has an interest in seeing Egypt move toward a political system that promotes regular, stable transfers of power based on elections. And there is no reason that Egypt could not follow the path blazed by Ukraine, another state that had no practical experience with democratic transfers of power, yet which has seen three such successions since independence was achieved in 1991. If the 2004 election was not as orderly as might be hoped, all three ex-presidents of Ukraine, upon leaving office, retained their personal freedom and property. None were jailed, even though there were serious allegations made against each of them -- particularly in the case of Leonid Kuchma, in office from 1994-2004. And all three continued to be vocal critics of policies undertaken by the succeeding government.

But there is clear anger in Egypt over the corruption and repression authorized by Mubarak during his 30-year tenure as president, as well as over the hundreds killed in the recent demonstrations that ended in his removal. The challenge is to find a way to balance the short-term desire for justice with the long-term need for political stability. In the U.S. and Russia, one way to square this circle was for a successor to offer pardons to a previous chief executive, even when many were calling for those ex-leaders to be hauled off and placed in the dock. President Gerald Ford, in offering a blanket pardon for any crimes that Richard Nixon might have committed while in office, bluntly noted that "The law . . . is no respecter of persons; but the law is a respecter of reality." Ford concluded that subjecting the former president to a criminal trial would be too destabilizing for the country. When Vladimir Putin became president of Russia, he offered an even more extensive pardon to his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, as well as to Yeltsin's family, citing similar considerations. Perhaps an even more relevant example to the Egyptian case was the fate of South Africa's P.W. Botha, a former prime minister who was president during the apartheid system's "last gasp." Botha could easily have been tried and convicted for any of the actions undertaken by the country's security forces during the 1970s and 1980s. Instead, the former leader, who resigned in 1989, was permitted to retire to his country home. Significantly, Botha's only tangle with the post-apartheid legal system was the imposition of a fine and a suspended jail sentence, in 1998, for refusing to testify before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission about his activities when in power. Some might argue that this approach would allow Mubarak to get off scot-free. But requiring the former president to cooperate with some sort of truth commission as well as levying fines for ill-gotten gains accumulated during his time in office might serve to create the

balance between justice and mercy that Ford referred to in justifying his own decision to pardon Nixon. Otherwise, Mubarak's fate could become just one more chapter in the long saga of Middle Eastern leaders who rise and fall because of the whims of fortune.

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Article 3.

The Immanent Frame

Contrasting progress on democracy in Tunisia and Egypt

Alfred Stepan

April 21st, 2011 -- What are the chances of successful democratic transitions in Tunisia and Egypt? I have just returned from both countries where many democratic activists shared notes with me about their situation, comparing it with the more than twenty successful and failed democratic transition attempts that I have observed throughout the world and written about.

The first reality to appreciate is that, despite worries about the incompatibility of Islam and democracy, over 500 million Muslims live in Muslim majority countries that are commonly classified as democracies: Indonesia, Turkey, Bangladesh, Senegal, Mali and Albania. But, for almost forty years, not a single Arab majority country has been classified as a democracy. Thus, if Arab-majority Egypt and Tunisia become democracies, it would thus be of immense importance for the Arab world and, indeed, for world affairs.

I believe Tunisia's chances of becoming a democracy before the year ends are surprisingly good. This is for six, largely political, reasons. Most importantly, the military is not complicating the transition to democracy. Tunisia not only has a small military of only about 36,000 men, but since independence, in 1956, the country has been led by two party-based non-democratic leaders who strove to keep the military out of politics.

Also, the current civilian-led interim government engages in at least some interactive negotiations about the new democratic rules of the

game with virtually all the major new actors who generated the revolution and who will contest the elections.

Tunisia's interim government has announced that elections for a Constituent Assembly will be held on July 24, 2011, and, crucially, that as soon as the votes are counted, it will step down.

The newly elected Constituent Assembly will, as in the classic democratic transitions of Spain and India, immediately have the responsibility of forming the government.

The Constituent Assembly will be free to choose a presidential, semi-presidential, or a parliamentary system. A consensus is emerging among political leaders to choose the same system for which the ten post-communist countries that have been admitted to the European Union opted, parliamentarianism.

Finally, Rachid al-Ghannouchi, who leads the largest Muslim-inspired political party, Al Nahda, went out of his way to tell me that he has signed an agreement with some secular parties that he will not try to change Tunisia's women-friendly family code, the best in the Arab world. In the new democratic environment, while many party leaders do not fully trust Ghannouchi, they think the political costs to Al Nahda of trying to impose an Islamic state would be too great to risk. They also increasingly think the most democratically effective policy of secular parties toward Al Nahda is accommodation, not exclusion.

Democratization in Egypt in the long term is probable, but it does not share the especially favorable conditions that we find in Tunisia. One of the biggest differences between the two countries is that every president of Egypt since 1952 has been a military officer. Post-Mubarak, the interim government, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) is led by eighteen generals.

These generals unilaterally issue statements about what they see as the rules of the game for future elections. Key civil and political

society actors repeatedly told me that they had little access to, and almost no politically serious interactive negotiations with, SCAF. The recent clashes on Tahrir Square, on April 9-10, 2011, which lead to the deaths of two protesters, were the most serious to date between the young activists and the Army. The distance between the Army and young democratic activists grew further on April 11, when the first blogger since the fall of Mubarak was sentenced to prison by a military court for criticizing the military.

In SCAF's March 30, 2011, Constitutional Declaration it became absolutely clear that, unlike Tunisia, the parliament to be elected in September 2011 will not form a government. Articles 56 and 61 stipulate that SCAF will retain a broad range of executive powers until a president is elected. Instead of the Parliament itself acting as the sovereign body to write a constitution, Article 60 mandates that the parliament is to "elect a 100-member constituent assembly." The big questions now are how many non-elected outside experts will in fact be in this "constituent assembly," and how they will actually arrive there.

What is U.S. policy toward Egypt at this crucial time? The U.S. government of course supports the long-term goal of democracy. But the priorities it tends to stress are maintaining good relations with the army, which currently receives 1.3 of the 1.5 billion dollars of U.S. aid; working with the military to maintain the status quo, especially the treaty between Egypt and Israel; and, finally, avoiding a hijacking of the revolution by fundamentalists. I see such a hijacking as improbable given the growing diversification of Muslim identities in the new context of political freedoms, secular parties' efforts to keep the Muslim Brotherhood inside electoral politics, and the profiles of the three leading candidates in the eventual presidential elections, none of whom want the Egyptian Revolution to be captured.

Are the defensive goals of the U.S. up to the opportunities of this historic moment? For new approaches toward an Israeli- Palestinian peace, like the Israeli Peace Initiative proposed two weeks ago by former heads of the Israeli Defense Force, Mossad, and Shin Bet? For working with the European Union to help Egypt and Tunisia improve their economies and consolidate democracy the way the U.S. did for Europe after WWII, or as the Europeans did for post-communist countries after the fall of the wall? I am convinced that we can, and should, do better.

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Article 4.

Foreign Policy

Why Pakistan is so difficult to work with

Anatol Lieven

APRIL 22, 2011 -- Last week, the Pakistani government demanded that Washington end drone strikes against Taliban and al Qaeda targets in Pakistan's tribal areas and drastically scale back CIA operations. This followed a drone attack in North Waziristan that killed more than 40 civilians on the very day that Pakistan released contracted CIA operative Raymond Davis, who had been arrested for killing two Pakistanis in Lahore. The Davis affair caused intense anger among ordinary Pakistanis. Americans, meanwhile, are furious at Pakistan for sheltering the leadership of the Afghan Taliban, who are fighting U.S. forces and the Kabul government in Afghanistan. Given this explosive situation, is it really possible for the United States and Pakistan to go on working together against terrorism? The answer is complicated, but basically it is yes. The Davis affair has damaged the relationship between Washington and the Pakistani Army and military intelligence, but it is very unlikely to end it. Hard as it may be to swallow, the United States must go on cooperating with the Pakistani state, military, and intelligence services against terrorism directed against the West and not allow this relationship to be destroyed by Pakistan's sheltering of the Afghan Taliban. In fact, the United States should accept and even welcome continued Pakistani military links to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the terrorist group alleged to be behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks, while holding to the absolute condition that the Pakistani military uses these connections successfully to prevent further LeT attacks on India and, above all, the United States. Although Pakistan's protection of the Afghan Taliban has certainly been unacceptable, on other questions the

Pakistanis do have a point. Some U.S. officials -- especially in the State Department -- themselves recognize that what happened to Davis is strong evidence that it is not, in fact, a good idea to have hundreds of Special Forces types, wired to the max but inadequately trained for intelligence work, wandering around Pakistan. The Davis case was bad enough; future incidents could be much, much worse. Equally, there is considerable private disagreement in Washington as to whether the killing of Taliban commanders by drone strikes is really worth the Pakistani anger caused by the killing of civilians. Above all, though the Pakistani establishment and the United States differ greatly on Afghanistan, they are basically at one when it comes to preventing international terrorism against the West. This is in part because the Pakistani elites shop in the West, send their children to study in the West, and to a large extent actually live in the West. On any given day, a bomb in Harrods in London would be very likely to claim a Pakistani elite family among its victims. More importantly, the Pakistani government and military know that a successful terrorist attack on the United States by a Pakistan-based group would inevitably lead to a U.S. response that would be extremely damaging to Pakistan. If the attack were carried out by members of one of the groups linked to the Pakistani military, such a response could be on a scale that would lead to the collapse of the Pakistani state. There is therefore no reason to doubt the basic goodwill of the Pakistani state and military on this issue; indeed, British and U.S. intelligence officials have attested to the very important help that Pakistan has given against al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Where this has been limited, it has been because of Pakistani incompetence and bitter divisions among Pakistan's different intelligence and police agencies, not because of support for terrorists.

Pakistani authorities, however, have also given shelter to the top leadership of the Afghan Taliban and have allowed free passage to volunteers fighting the war against Western forces in Afghanistan. The Pakistani security establishment continues to calculate (in a somewhat paranoid fashion) that the festering Afghan civil war will continue to develop as the United States withdraws, pulling in India on the side of anti-Pakistani forces -- basically the former Northern Alliance. Therefore Pakistan must keep strengthening its links to the Afghan Taliban, its only potential allies against India in the imminent proxy war.

This official policy takes place against a background of overwhelming sympathy for the Afghan Taliban among ordinary Pakistanis, at least to judge by my hundreds of interviews on the street in all four provinces over the past four years, including this March in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistanis do not necessarily support the Taliban's ideological and revolutionary program. Rather, they see the Taliban's fight against the United States and Afghan President Hamid Karzai's administration as a legitimate national resistance struggle, just like the war of the Afghan mujahideen against the Soviets and their Afghan communist allies in the 1980s.

Most don't, however, wish to be led by the Taliban. Militant rebels within Pakistan once garnered considerable sympathy from the perception that they were only acting as allies of this "defensive jihad" in Afghanistan against America's stooges in the Pakistani establishment and were not aiming at revolution in Pakistan. This perception still exists, but fortunately it has been greatly diminished, both because of the Pakistani Taliban's savagery against other Pakistanis and because it has become apparent to everyone who is paying attention that they are in fact aiming at power in Pakistan itself.

The Pakistani military and intelligence services are now waging a determined struggle against the Pakistani Taliban and its allies. In the district of Swat, formerly controlled in large part by the Pakistani Taliban, the struggle has been very successful, as attested to by the fact that there have been no terrorist attacks for more than six months. It has also been ruthless. To judge by my own interviews, a recent Human Rights Watch report on extrajudicial executions in the district was accurate, and these are still continuing, albeit at a diminished rate.

Casualties among the Pakistani security forces have also been high. According to official figures -- which seem plausible, given the intensity of the fighting and the scale of terrorist attacks -- more than 3,200 have been killed fighting the militants, including 85 officers of the Inter-Services Intelligence directorate (ISI). One of these was the famous "Colonel Imam" (Colonel Sultan Amir Tarar), a leading Pakistani ally of the Afghan Taliban. In a case that highlights the distance between the two Talibans, Colonel Imam was kidnapped by the Pakistani Taliban during a mission to Waziristan last year and then killed this January, despite appeals from the Afghan Taliban to spare his life. Another casualty was a senior police officer whom I interviewed in 2009 and greatly admired: Sifwat Ghayur, who led the police in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against the Pakistani Taliban and in consequence was killed by the militants last summer.

So there is no ambiguity in the Pakistani military's struggle against militants who are fighting against Pakistan or the West. The deep and potentially fatal ambiguity comes in the military's approach to militant groups that are not yet in revolt against their own country and have not yet conducted foreign terrorism outside of Afghanistan. The most important of these groups are the ones that were actually trained and equipped by the ISI to attack India in Indian Kashmir and elsewhere during the 1990s. Some of them, like Jaish-e-Mohammed,

have split, with many of their members joining the Pakistani Taliban in rebellion.

But the most formidable of them remains loyal to the Pakistani state and is still closely linked to the ISI. This is LeT, whose public wing, Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), runs an extensive network of schools, hospitals, and welfare organizations in Punjab and beyond. LeT is regarded by many Western counterterrorism experts as the most effective terrorist group in South Asia and even beyond. Its potential for international terrorism is greatly increased by the fact that much of the Pakistani diaspora in Britain comes from Pakistani Kashmir and -- judging from my interviews -- has deep sympathy with the anti-Indian jihadists. Because these people have British passports, they are a direct potential threat to the West.

So far, however, LeT has not planned or carried out any attacks against the West, even as its activists have gone to help the Taliban in Afghanistan and killed Westerners as part of the group's 2008 attack on Mumbai. According to counterterrorism expert Stephen Tankel, some members of LeT/JuD did press the organization to revolt against the Pakistani government when then President Pervez Musharraf sided with America after 9/11, but their demands were rejected by the leadership and they left the organization to fight with the Pakistani Taliban against the Pakistani state.

The strategy of the Pakistani military seems largely responsible for LeT's restraint. According to well-informed sources in Pakistan, the military has told LeT leaders that if they do not revolt against Pakistan and do not carry out terrorist attacks against India (for the moment at least) and above all the United States and Europe, then they are safe from arrest or extrajudicial execution. Incidentally, a leading JuD member told me in 2009 that despite its Islamist revolutionary ideology, the group would do nothing to destroy the

Pakistani state "because then the Hindus would march in to rule over us."

On the other hand, so I have been told, the Pakistani military has told LeT/JuD leaders that they can go on sending their foot soldiers to fight in Afghanistan, both because it is in line with the military's own Afghan strategy and because, in the words of one retired officer, "these boys joined up to fight, not to sit around in Lahore doing nothing. We cannot stop them [from] going to Afghanistan. After all, that is where the group first started fighting in the 1980s."

The military's sympathy for LeT/JuD is reflected by Pakistani (or at least Punjabi) society as a whole. It was Pakistani courts, after all, that overturned both the government's ban on JuD after the Mumbai terrorist attacks and the terrorism charges against its leader, Hafiz Saeed. This and many other such judgments have taken the shine off the notion that the Pakistani "lawyers movement," which helped bring down Musharraf, is a force for liberal progress.

As a military strategy meant to prevent terrorism against the West, Pakistan's official approach to its homegrown jihadists is so far accomplishing its goals. Although it has not always been possible to prevent attempted attacks like Faisal Shahzad's in New York from taking place, the strategy has disrupted terrorist networks enough to make them infrequent and poorly carried out. Yet Pakistan's strategy carries with it not just ethical issues, but strategic ones as well. It depends on not taking harsh action against LeT/JuD for the Mumbai attacks or for its help to the Afghan Taliban. It also requires the continuation of close links between these groups and the ISI. This could prove very bad for Pakistan if LeT decides to disobey the injunction and resume terrorist attacks on India -- possibly with the help of low-level ISI operatives who have developed close personal and ideological ties to the group.

In a far more disastrous scenario, if LeT members broke away to aid a successful terrorist attack against the United States, it is extremely unlikely that the U.S. response would distinguish between the breakaway members and LeT as a whole, or even between LeT and the ISI. The results could be catastrophic for Pakistan, but also for the United States. U.S. ground raids in the border areas or airstrikes on Pakistani cities could vastly increase support for terrorism in the Pakistani military as well as society in general.

Pakistan is not an easy country to do business with. It poses some tough dilemmas for U.S. policy, and Americans are justifiably angry about many things that Pakistan has done. Nonetheless, American policymakers need to remain focused on the most important U.S. goal -- and the official reason that the United States is fighting in Afghanistan -- which is to prevent terrorism in the West. As long as Pakistan cooperates sincerely and effectively in pursuit of this goal, the United States should continue to work with Pakistan and support the relevant parts of Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy. If Pakistan fails to do so, however, then all bets are off.

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Article 5.

NYT - Books

Questioning America's Faith in Air Power

Michael Beschloss

THE AGE OF AIRPOWER

By Martin van Creveld

Illustrated. 498 pp. PublicAffairs. \$35.

April 22, 2011 -- When President George W. Bush launched his war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq with an incandescent burst of "shock and awe," political commentators marveled at the seemingly magical impact of modern air power. Some forecast that, as with the Persian Gulf war of 1991 and the Kosovo war of 1999, airstrikes by the United States and its allies would do most of the work required for an early, absolute victory.

Well, 2003 was a very long time ago. As Martin van Creveld shows in this brisk, original and authoritative history, since its zenith during World War II, when two United States B-29s ended the global struggle by dropping their payloads on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the value of air power has largely fizzled. McGeorge Bundy observed in 1988, after his own harsh experience as an architect of the Vietnam War, that the "surgical airstrike" deserved its name because surgery is bloody, messy and never final. Van Creveld would emphatically agree, and "The Age of Airpower" demonstrates the difficulty of winning a modern war from the skies.

It is not by accident that the author is so fascinated by aerial combat. He is a well-respected Israeli historian and strategist, and some of the most important milestones in his country's military history have to do

with air power — the quick pre-emptive strike against Egypt that won Israel the Six-Day War of 1967; the surprise attack of Yom Kippur 1973 by Egypt and Syria that gravely jeopardized the Jewish state; the 1976 hostage rescue at Entebbe, Uganda; the 1981 raid against Iraqi nuclear facilities at Osirak; and the similar raid against Syria in 2007.

Van Creveld traces aerial fighting machines back to 18th-century ballooning and to the Wright brothers, who, after lofting their “flier” at Kitty Hawk in 1903, shrewdly decided that the big money would be found not in passenger aircraft but warplanes. And indeed near the start of World War I, a French pilot flying near Paris could warn his country’s generals that German troops were moving to the east. Since Britain, France and Germany owned most of the aircraft in that war, some of history’s earliest air battles took place on the Western Front. But van Creveld believes that the biggest impact of air power in World War I was in bombing submarines.

Van Creveld acerbically notes that World War II began with Hermann Goering, commander of Adolf Hitler’s Luftwaffe, directing his pilots to strike only military targets, and effectively ended with the Enola Gay releasing history’s deadliest weapon on the nonmilitary target of Hiroshima and immediately killing about 75,000 civilians. Van Creveld credits early Luftwaffe victories not to the number or quality of German planes but to a unified military command, good planning and the passion to expand the German Reich. Hitler’s “final conquest of England” failed because British morale was too strong to break under repeated bombing and because the Royal Air Force downed so many Nazi planes that the Germans had to start attacking at night. This meant they had a much smaller chance of hitting their assigned targets. In America, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared his resolve to build 50,000 warplanes

— a number that sounded reassuring until it was later revealed that Roosevelt had simply made it up.

Two moments in World War II were expected to prove the invincibility of military air power. Instead, they showed its limitations. Late in the struggle, American war planners oversaw the intense strategic bombing of German targets chosen to bring Hitler's regime to its knees. But many of the night bombers missed their targets; although 350,000 Germans were killed, Hitler and his government survived.

And in the spring of 1945, to forestall an Allied land invasion of Japan that might have doomed millions, Gen. Curtis LeMay sent B-29 firebombers over Tokyo and 63 other Japanese cities in the largest bombing campaign attempted to that time. By the summer, LeMay said that he had run out of targets. Much of Japan's war industry was destroyed, and perhaps half a million people killed, but the country's will to fight showed few signs of flagging.

Even before nuclear-equipped bombers gave way to nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles in the 1960s, the cold war hastened the warplane's decline. As van Creveld notes, during the entire 45-year conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, not once did combat aircraft of the two countries directly fight each other as part of their own air forces (though Soviet pilots did fight Americans as part of the Chinese and North Korean air forces). The nuclear balance of terror dictated that air power's real use was restricted to waging war against countries that lacked the ultimate weapon. But even many of those conflicts showed that air power was no panacea. During the Korean War, the United States military, equipped with new jet bombers, eliminated almost all the enemy's railway traffic and rendered most of its military airfields useless — with little apparent result. This reputedly led the Chinese leader, Mao Zedong, to doubt the impact of air power on ground combat, and Chinese warplanes

played little part in his country's successful Korean offensive of 1950-51.

If only the champions of America's adventure in Indochina had absorbed the historical lessons of these earlier experiences. Perhaps Robert S. McNamara, defense secretary under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, had the least excuse for this neglect. Having helped to supervise the strategic bombing of Nazi Germany and Japan, he, of all people, should have known that Operation Rolling Thunder and his blueprint for the gradual escalation of bombing against North Vietnam would not make Ho Chi Minh and the Vietcong give up. (The United States ultimately employed more tonnage on the Vietnamese than all the bombs dropped in World War II.) Van Creveld might have added the telling fact that two of the most prominent early critics of the Vietnam War, Under Secretary of State George Ball and the Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith, had been part of a group that studied the effects of the strategic bombing of Germany. Unlike McNamara, they seem to have remembered its - frustrations.

Van Creveld does not quite say so — he is more interested in military strategy than politics — but the widespread faith of the American people and the American political class in air power's potential to win quick victories has been a dangerous delusion, especially when combined with the eagerness of presidents to plan military engagements that will be finished swiftly and with few casualties. Much-ballyhooed successes — like bombing Saddam Hussein's armies out of Kuwait and helping to drive Slobodan Milosevic from power — as well as minidramas like the 1975 rescue of the American cargo ship *Mayagüez* from the Khmer Rouge and the 1983 invasion of Grenada, have encouraged Americans to go on believing that our awe-inspiring air power will enable us to win major wars without paying a heavy price. As Iraq has most recently shown, it won't. I

hope that this spring, van Creveld's timely book will remind NATO leaders supervising the bombing campaign in the Libyan civil war of how often in history we have watched air power lead unexpectedly to ground fighting on quicksand.

Michael Beschloss, the author, most recently, of "Presidential Courage," is currently writing a history of war and the American presidency.

Article 6.

TIME

E.T., Call Us Back! Making the Case for Alien Life

Michael D. Lemonick

Apr. 22, 2011 -- There's no good evidence to date that life exists, or ever has existed, on worlds beyond the Earth — so it might seem odd that the field of science known as astrobiology is booming. Over the past decade or so, hundreds of biologists, geologists, chemists and astronomers have conducted research and attended conferences on astrobiology around the world, and NASA even has an Astrobiology Institute at its Ames Research Center in California.

That's because there's plenty to think about before we actually find alien life. What form, for example, is it likely to take? Where should we be looking, and how? How did life arise on Earth — was it pretty much inevitable, given the right conditions, or was it a one-in-a-billion kind of thing? Are there enough life-friendly planets out there to make the search worthwhile? Thanks to progress on all of these questions and more, scientists tend to be more confident than ever that life does exist out in the universe — and *First Contact*, a book by Washington Post reporter and editor Marc Kaufman, is a powerful reminder of why. Take Princeton geologist Tullis Onstott, whose story, along with those of many others, Kaufman tells. In 1996 Onstott ventured deep into a South African gold mine. Tapping into rock a mile (1.6 km) below the surface, he extracted bacteria that were living cheerfully in harsh conditions completely isolated from the rest of the biosphere.

Onstott's discovery is just one of dozens that established the existence of so-called extremophiles, bacteria and other forms of life that thrive

in such absurdly hostile places as the hot springs in Yellowstone National Park, superheated water spewing from cracks in the bottom of the sea and environments laced with acid, heavy metals and even radioactive wastes. Life, in short, can deal with a much wider range of conditions than anyone thought — which means a distant planet needn't be a tropical paradise to be habitable. Or take Jeffrey Bada, a marine chemist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, in La Jolla, Calif. Back in the 1950s, Bada's mentor, Stanley Miller, had probed the origin of life by passing electricity through a vial of organic chemicals to see what came out. Miller's published experiments were flawed. But Bada has re-examined some of Miller's unpublished ones and found intriguing hints that the origin of life may well be the rule on an Earth-like planet rather than the exception. Kaufman also tackles the question of how many such planets are likely to exist. His lead character here is Paul Butler, now at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, who has been involved in scores of planet discoveries since the first so-called extrasolar planet was found in 1995. By Butler's estimation, as few as 5% of sunlike stars may host a habitable planet — but given that there are tens of billions of sunlike stars in the Milky Way alone, that's still a pretty big number. Butler, moreover, is hardly the only, or even the most accomplished, planet hunter in the business, and his estimates don't take into account the most recent discoveries by the Kepler space probe, which is finding planets by the bucketload. Unfortunately, the most habitable planet found so far — a world known as Gliese 581g, announced by Butler and his colleague Steve Vogt last fall — is now widely believed not to exist after all. False detections are old news in the planet game, though, and Butler and Vogt appropriately noted at the time that their find would have to be confirmed by others before it could be considered rock solid.

The same applies to evidence of alien life, of course. Those claims have been made as well. It happened in 1996, for example, when scientists looked into a rock blasted from Mars to Earth and saw what they believed was evidence of fossilized bacteria, and earlier this year when an online journal announced a similar discovery in a meteorite that fell in the 1800s. In neither case were any real E.T. remains proved to exist. Back in the 1970s, the twin Viking probes landed on Mars and performed on-site tests of the soil, looking for life. Most came back negative, but one, designed by NASA scientist Gilbert Levin, showed suspicious activity. In the end, Levin's colleagues, including Carl Sagan, decided it was a fluke — but Levin himself still insists it wasn't, and Kaufman is inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt. Kaufman also bends over backward for the folks who say that bacterial remains can be found in meteorites. "Research in the past decade into the worlds of extremophiles, microbes and fossils," he writes, "has proven that what's true today often is overturned tomorrow, and what's rejected today may be accepted tomorrow."

It's hard to fault Kaufman for thinking the glass is not just half full but nearly overflowing. Even if you limit your thinking to life as we know it — life based on the element carbon and dependent on liquid water for survival — the findings Kaufman writes about (and plenty he doesn't get to) all point to the notion that the Milky Way is likely teeming with biology.

And who's to say life as we know it is the only kind? Physicist Paul Davies has argued recently that the search for life is far too parochial, that alternate biologies could exist, literally under our noses, without our being aware of them. Researchers at Harvard's Origin of Life initiative, meanwhile, are considering the possibility of planets dominated by a sulfur cycle rather than the carbon cycle that prevails on our own planet — and are trying to fathom what sort of life could

result. That would be life as we don't know it, but the Harvard group is starting to work out how we might detect it.

If they're right, Kaufman's claim that "before the end of this century, and perhaps much sooner than that, scientists will determine that life exists elsewhere in the universe" may actually be an understatement.