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Article 1.

TIME

Abbas Takes Palestinian Statehood on the Road

Karl Vick

Oct. 09, 2011 -- How long will it take the United Nations Security Council to answer the Palestinian application for membership in the global organization? "Technical procedures require about a month," Mahmoud Abbas replies when the question comes up in Strasbourg, where the president of the Palestinian Authority has come to make the most of the time remaining. This French city, as tidy and quiet as a bureaucrat's cubicle, is home to the Council of Europe, one of three blandly named international organizations that in the space of a week have obliged the Palestinians with endorsements, votes or the kind of weighty pronouncements that might give their bid for statehood something like momentum, if not inevitability.

On top of the council's recommendation to its 47 members, including six nations currently on the Security Council, there was also an encouraging nod from the European Parliament, the elective arm of the European Union, which last week termed the bid for statehood "legitimate." And on Wednesday the executive board of UNESCO, the ■■■'s Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, voted overwhelmingly to put the question of Palestinian membership to its 193 members later this month, even if its parent organization has not yet acted. "The timing is good," says Riyad al-Maliki, the Palestinian foreign minister, of the flurry of multilateral encouragement. "This is really important in terms of anybody who's trying to undermine our achievement."

"Anybody" would include Israel, which correctly sees the Palestinian bid as an attempt to gain leverage in moribund peace talks aimed at ending the 44-year occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the ultimate precondition to realizing a state called Palestine. The Israeli foreign ministry issued a statement saying the UNESCO move "negates the efforts of the international community to advance the political process."

There was also a slapdown from the Obama administration, which has a longstanding commitment with Israel to protect it at the United Nations, and any other international forums that tend to pile up resolutions condemning the Jewish State. UNESCO has been historically prominent on that list, having once equated Zionism with racism. But the agency has since remade itself, and the specific complaint of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was that it was "inexplicably" putting the cart before the horse: Let the ██████. act first, she told reporters.

"If she means what she says I would agree with her," Abbas replies. "But she doesn't mean what she says." The United States, he points out, is doing all it can to thwart the Palestinian bid. Not only has President Obama vowed to use the U.S. veto in the Security Council to prevent full membership, his administration is working hard to prevent the measure from even emerging from committee.

There's intense lobbying of nations that currently hold rotating Security Council seats — the swing voters include Portugal, Gabon, Colombia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The U.S. hope is to leave Palestinians short of the nine votes required to move the application to the level where the veto would become the only way to stop it, and spare the U.S. playing at least the conspicuous heavy. The Palestinians are scrambling, too. From Strasbourg, Abbas headed across the Atlantic to the Dominican Republic — where, by chance, Clinton was a day earlier — then El Salvador, and finally Colombia,

where he hopes to persuade President Juan Manuel Santos to join nearly all of the rest of Central and South America in backing the statehood bid. As luck would have it, Colombia, which has been showered with defense aid from Washington in recent decades, has a seat on the current Security Council seat. "We will get the nine, if not even more," insists al-Maliki, who reckons he's visited 50 countries in the last three months. "The fact that the president is going to the Caribbean is evidence that we are not giving up."

The Palestinians will also hit Africa this month — hello, Gabon — but the final battleground will be Europe. If, as all expect, Washington prevails in the Security Council and full membership is denied, the Palestinians could regroup and take their case to the General Assembly. The assembly cannot bestow full membership status, but it could elevate Palestine from "observer entity" to "observer state," a crucial distinction because the promotion would very likely give Palestinians standing in global legal institutions such as the International Criminal Court, which appears to regard Israel's 120-plus settlements on occupied Palestinian territory as a violation of the laws of war.

The question of jurisdiction is not automatic, however. The court will hear complaints from Palestine only if it judges it qualifies as a state. That's a subjective judgment easier to arrive at the longer the list of existing states that say they recognize it as one — and, in the way of the world, the list includes a lot of established, economically powerful states, which are clustered in Europe. Right now, most of Europe is on the fence, extending something less than full diplomatic recognition to Ramallah, the West Bank capital. That's why, from Colombia, Abbas steers toward Paris. And why he started his journey in Strasbourg, where emerging democracies come for merit badges. Begun after World War II at the encouragement of Winston Churchill, the Council of Europe welcomed much of the former East

Bloc after the Cold War and now numbers 47 members. Its appeal? Its European Court of Human Rights surely matters. But the key is prestige: "You're a member of the club," says Mireille Paulus, secretary to the council's committee of ministers.

Palestine was named a "Partner for Democracy," a designation shared only by one other Arab state, Morocco. It's not membership, just encouragement; but encouragement is what Palestinians need, Abbas tells the delegates seated, in alphabetical order by last name, in the auditorium known as the "hemicycle." "We have always underlined our commitment to international legitimacy," he says. "Our people are waiting, patiently."

Article 2.

NEW YORK POST

Russia's Syria game

Amir Taheri

October 9, 2011 -- A few weeks ago, a senior Russian official assured me that his government wouldn't block "a strong resolution" in support of the uprising in Syria. Yet Russia this month vetoed a fairly mild UN Security Council resolution.

But then Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov invited the Syrian opposition to Moscow, implying that President Bashar al-Assad was no longer an exclusive interlocutor. And just 48 hours after the veto, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev called on Assad to either reform or step aside.

Why is Russia behaving like an erratic banana republic rather than a mature power dealing with a threat to regional peace?

Start with the back story. Just 15 years after it was put on the map as an independent country, Syria chose the Soviet Union -- Russia -- as its principal protector. Over the years, that dependence developed into the backbone of Syrian national strategy. Even in the 1970s, when then-President Hafez al-Assad served US interests by crushing the left both within Syria and in Lebanon and making sure that Israel was no longer threatened, Damascus maintained close ties with Moscow.

With the end of the Cold War, Russia lost interest in Syria and other Arab military regimes. But events may be resurrecting some of that interest.

Vladimir Putin's return as president signals Russia's return to a more aggressive anti-West posture, scraping off the veneer of diplomatic politesse provided by Medvedev. Putin thinks that America is in

decline and that Russia can make a comeback as a “superpower,” at least in the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

And in the Middle East, Russia has no friend except Syria. Iranian mullahs may be tactical allies when it comes to thumbing noses at America, but they won't play second fiddle to Putin -- they fancy their own regime as the Middle East's “superpower.”

Putin knows that Assad is doomed. But he wants to ensure that Russia has a say in choosing his successor. The emergence of a string of pro-West regimes from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean could shut Russia out of what Putin regards as part of its rightful zone of influence.

Another factor: The Russian lease on the Crimean port of Sevastopol runs out in 2017 and can't be extended without Ukraine's accord. Sevastopol is Russia's largest naval base and its lifeline to maintaining a blue-water navy via the Black Sea, the Dardanelles and the Mediterranean. Losing the base would leave Russia a virtually landlocked country. Its enclave of Kaliningrad can never be developed into a major naval asset, while the Siberian coast in the far east is hard to resupply.

By 2017, Ukraine may well be a member of both the European Union and NATO -- and it would be odd indeed for a NATO member to host Russia's biggest military bases.

So Moscow has been seeking an alternative to Sevastopol for the last decade. Russian strategists believe they've found it on Syria's Mediterranean coast.

In 2002, Moscow and Damascus held preliminary talks on the subject. Initially, the idea was to transform the Syrian port of Tartus into an all-purpose aerial/naval base for both nations' use. But European investment in the years since has turned Tartus into Syria's major commercial port, ahead of Latakia. Then, too, the area's population is largely “mainline” Muslims, who might resent the

decision by a minority Alawite regime to offer bases to foreign powers.

There is also the Iran factor. As the chief supporter of the Assad regime, the Islamic Republic demands facilities for its own navy. In February, an Iranian flotilla visited Syria for the first time ever, amid reports that “mooring facilities” would be built to host a permanent presence.

Russia knows enough about the region to know that the Assad regime won't stand much longer. This is why Putin is looking for a “median” solution: a new Syrian regime in which Moscow's friends, meaning elements of the Assad regime, would have a place strong enough to offer the Russian navy an outlet when, and if, Ukraine throws it out.

Amir Taheri is author of 11 books on the Middle East, Iran and Islam.

Article 3.

THE DAILY STAR

Has anyone seen the U.S. in the Mideast?

Rami G. Khouri

October 08, 2011 -- To spend time speaking and listening to a wide range of people in Washington, ■■■. on Middle Eastern issues, as I did last week, is to wander into a world of deep perplexity, for two main reasons. First, every pillar of U.S. Middle East policy is changing rapidly. And second, much of the change sees Middle Eastern actors taking charge of their own destinies, leaving Washington in a weakened and often marginalized position.

The principal manifestations of this situation are the behavior of the Palestinians, Saudis, Egyptians, Israelis, Turks and Iranians – and the Russians and Chinese outside the region. The two most telling arenas where American perplexity rises to the surface are the Palestinian bid for United Nations recognition and the rolling Arab citizen revolts across the Middle East.

The most dramatic window into America's confusion, contradictions and degraded credibility is its inability to stop the forward motion of the Palestinian bid for United Nations recognition of statehood in the pre-1967 borders. This has dramatically exposed Washington's sharp isolation in the region, because its strong commitment to Israel apparently overrides all other issues in the region, including applying international law on issues such as Israeli settlements' expansion. The Palestinians not only dismissed strong American objections about the move at the ■■■., but have now followed this up with a request for recognition at UNESCO. This request has received preliminary approval from the body's executive board. The U.S. has threatened to cut off its share of funding for UNESCO – 22 percent

of the body's budget. In the new world we are entering, the Palestinians are acting, and Washington is reacting.

This is just one example of how the strongest power in the world also may be the weakest power in the Middle East, despite its armed forces fighting two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The isolation of the Americans and Israelis at the [REDACTED]. reflects a wider reality. Across the region, most people and governments see American policies as being contrary or even hostile to their well-being. This will continue to be highlighted by the Palestinian move at the [REDACTED]. in the months ahead. The Palestinian quest for [REDACTED]. recognition is now being widely debated across the U.S., with the common denominator being total uncertainty about its direction and implications. Even Palestinian officials close to President Mahmoud Abbas are not certain of what happens next, because the three primary dimensions of the move remain unknown: the Palestinian strategy, its impact on the ground, and American-Israeli retributive reactions.

The [REDACTED]. move is intriguing at many levels. Most importantly, it tells us about the determination of even the weak Palestinian leadership to defy the U.S. and shift the adjudication of the Arab-Israeli conflict out of Washington and into the halls of the [REDACTED]. or other bodies – where international legitimacy and law, rather than American Zionism, define the ground rules of diplomatic engagement.

The central lesson to date of the Palestinian initiative at the [REDACTED]. is that power is something you generate by your actions, and credibility as an international political actor comes from harnessing your power and using it efficiently and wisely. The Palestinian leadership seems to have learned the first lesson, and is pursuing the [REDACTED]. initiative in a manner that reveals its capacity to shake up a stagnant diplomatic arena vis-à-vis the Palestine issue.

Ironically, though, as UCLA professor Saree Makdisi pointed out in his Edward Said Memorial Lecture at the Palestine Center in

Washington last week, Abbas seemed embarrassed to see that he actually had power and autonomy of action that he could use, and seemed hesitant to use the power at his disposal. While Abbas unleashed enormous international support for the Palestinian cause, Makdisi said, he also seemed unsure of how far he should push for implementation of the key [REDACTED]. General Assembly Resolutions 181 and 194, appearing unsure if he should be assertive or apologetic. Makdisi attributed this to the fact that Abbas is only involved in “political theater” at the [REDACTED], rather than in a serious diplomatic deployment of power. The Palestinian president, he continued, is also hampered because he made no attempt to secure Palestinian popular legitimacy for his “high stakes poker game at the [REDACTED].”

The Palestinian leadership may or may not be moving ahead according to a coherent strategy, and may or may not enjoy any significant legitimacy or support among its own people. Regardless of this, however, it has triggered a significant debate in Washington that has also exposed the enormous confusion and contradictions in Washington’s unsuccessful attempt to be both the guarantor of Israel’s supremacy in the region and a mediator for the birth of a Palestinian state. Unable to live with this situation any longer, the Palestinians have taken the initiative to break the stalemate, and the United States seems unsure of how to react.

Article 4.

The Economist

Commemorating China's 1911 revolution **- From Sun to Mao to now**

Oct 8th 2011 -- ONE hundred years ago on October 10th, a mutiny in the central Chinese city of Wuhan triggered the collapse of China's last imperial dynasty. In Taiwan, which separated from the mainland in 1949 after a civil war and still claims to be the rightful heir of the republic founded in 1911, the anniversary will be celebrated with a parade, including a display of air power. But in China there are mixed feelings. The country is spending lavishly on festivities, too. But its ruling Communist Party is busily stifling debate about the revolutionaries' dream of democracy, which has been realised on Taiwan but not on the mainland.

China and Taiwan have long disputed each others' claims to be the heir of the 1911 revolution. Sun Yat-sen, regarded as the revolution's leader, is officially revered on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. As usual around the time of the anniversary, a giant portrait of him was erected on October 1st in Tiananmen Square, opposite that of Mao Zedong (both wearing Sun suits, as they were known before their rebranding in Mao's day). But the Communist Party's efforts to play up the occasion have revealed its nervousness.

In late September, a film about the revolution, "1911", starring Jackie Chan, a kung-fu actor from Hong Kong, was released. Officials trumpeted the movie but ticket sales have been lacklustre. The film carefully avoids dwelling on the sweeping political reforms initiated by the final imperial dynasty, the Qing, which precipitated its own overthrow. A popular television series, "Advance toward the Republic", that focused on those reforms and was aired in 2003, was

cut by censors before the series finished, and banned from rebroadcast. One scene showed Sun addressing politicians six years after the 1911 revolution with a lament that “only powerful people have liberty”. Echoes of China today were clearly too unsettling for the censors.

In the past year, officials have tried to stop discussion of the 1911 revolution straying into such realms. In November 2010 the Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, a newspaper in south China’s Hunan Province, got into trouble with the censors after publishing a supplement on the revolution. It quoted from a letter written by Vaclav Havel in 1975, when he was still a Czech dissident, to the country’s communist president, Gustav Husak: “history again demands to be heard”. The newspaper did not explain the context, which was Mr Havel’s lament about the Communist Party’s sanitisation of history. It did not need to. Its clear message was that the democratic demands of 1911 could not be repressed forever. In recent months, upheaval in the Arab world has made officials even more nervous. In April they banned a symposium on the revolution planned by students at several leading universities in Beijing. A website advertising the event said that it aimed to look not only at “inspirational revolutionary victories” but also at things “hidden deeper” concerning democracy.

Two weeks ago the authorities suddenly cancelled the world premier of an opera, “Dr Sun Yat-sen”, which was due to be performed by a Hong Kong troupe at the National Centre for the Performing Arts close to Tiananmen Square in Beijing. “Logistical reasons” were cited, but Hong Kong media speculated that some of its content—including its portrayal of Sun’s love life—was deemed to be out of line.

But the authorities are not letting their political worries spoil a spending opportunity. In Wuhan, where the revolution began, they

announced plans to splurge 20 billion yuan (\$3.1 billion) on 1911-related exhibitions and on a makeover for the city. The Manchu emperor abdicated in February 1912, ending over 2,000 years of dynastic rule. Officials in Wuhan, and elsewhere, have been keeping quiet about the orgy of violence against Manchus that accompanied the upheaval (see article).

Some Chinese scholars say the revolution did little for China except to usher in chaotic warlordism, followed by authoritarian government. Such accusations have some merit. China did indeed slide into disarray, warlordism and insurrection after 1911. Any hopes of a democratic republic were overwhelmed by efforts to bring the country under control, which the Communist Party achieved in 1949. Li Zehou, a Chinese intellectual, has stirred debate in recent years by arguing that China should have given the Qing reforms more of a chance.

The Communist Party maintains that the 1911 revolution was justified, but finds itself in a quandary. Another star-studded film released earlier this year to mark its own 90th birthday stirred audiences in an unintended way. The film, covering the period from the revolution of 1911 to the Communist Party's founding in 1921, prompted numerous comments on Chinese internet forums about the lessons it offered for rebelling against bad government. Interesting idea.

Article 5.

The Washington Post

Is Iraq the model for the Mideast after all?

Jackson Diehl

October 10 -- In Syria, elite army units are bloodily assaulting a now-armed resistance. Supporters of dictator Bashar al-Assad are being picked off in targeted assassinations while opposition activists are tortured to death. Western countries stand fecklessly by as Russia and China veto action by the [REDACTED] Security Council. At least 2,900 dead have been counted — and the carnage may be just getting started. I could write a column about all of this. But [REDACTED] like to propose, instead, that we think again about the war in Iraq.

With U.S. troops less than three months away from withdrawal, that mission is now generally regarded in Washington as, at best, a waste of American lives and resources, and at worst a monumental folly — and that's among the Republican presidential candidates. But the misnamed Arab Spring, which has turned from a euphoric winter in Tunisia and Egypt to a savage summer in Libya, Yemen and Syria, casts Iraq in a different light.

It turns out that the end of autocracy in the Arab Middle East, unlike in Central Europe or Asia, will not happen peacefully. People power isn't working. Dictators such as Assad, Moammar Gaddafi and Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh, backed by mountains of weapons and armies bound to them by tribe or sect, prefer to fight to the death rather than quietly yield. Despite seeing Hosni Mubarak in his courtroom cage — or maybe because of it — they don't shrink from crimes against humanity.

The carnage might be seen as regrettable but acceptable if the bad guys were losing. But with the notable exception of Gaddafi, they are not. Assad has been written off by most of the West's intelligence services, but his tanks and artillery are proving more than a match for the ragtag groups of army defectors in towns such as Homs and Rastan. Saleh was nearly killed by a bomb, but on his return after three months in a Saudi hospital, forces commanded by his son still held the presidential palace in Sanaa.

Gaddafi, of course, is losing, though still at large — thanks to the military intervention by NATO. When the air campaign began last spring, he was on the verge of massacring the opposition in the rebel stronghold of Benghazi. Western planes and drones proved just enough to tip the balance against him. But Libya was the limit for the Obama administration, Britain and France: There will be no such operation in Syria or Yemen, goes the constant refrain.

This means that the bloodshed in those countries could drag on indefinitely, and grow steadily worse. Tribal war, and the anarchy of nearby Somalia, beckons for Yemen. In Syria we could see, at worst, a repeat of the history of Lebanon: sectarian war, interspersed with interventions by neighbors and transnational operations by terrorists. This brings us back to Iraq. As former Bush administration strategist Meghan O'Sullivan recently wrote in *The Post*, Iraq has fallen well short of both American and Iraqi expectations. The pain and cost of that war are some of the reasons the United States and its allies have sworn off intervention in Syria and why the Obama administration made a half-hearted effort in Libya.

Iraq, however, looks a lot like what Syria, and much of the rest of the Arab Middle East, might hope to be. Its vicious dictator and his family are gone, as is the rule by a sectarian minority that required perpetual repression. The quasi-civil war that raged five years ago is dormant, and Iraq's multiple sects manage their differences through

democratic votes and sometimes excruciating but workable negotiations. Though spectacular attacks still win headlines, fewer people have died violently this year in Iraq than in Mexico — or Syria.

Just as significantly, Iraq remains an ally of the United States, an enemy of al-Qaeda and a force for relative good in the Middle East. It is buying \$12 billion in U.S. weapons and has requested that an American training force remain in the country next year. It recently helped get two U.S. citizens out of prison in Iran.

All of this happened because the United States invaded the country. Saddam Hussein demonstrated how he could handle a homegrown, Arab Spring-style rebellion when he used helicopter gunships to slaughter masses of Shiites in 1991. Even had his regime somehow crumbled, without the presence of U.S. troops nothing would have stopped Iraq from spiralling into the bottomless sectarian conflict that now threatens Syria.

The Arab Spring, in short, is making the invasion of Iraq look more worthy — and necessary — than it did a year ago. Before another year has passed, Syrians may well find themselves wishing that it had happened to them.

Article 6.

Los Angeles Times

What to do about Pakistan

Peter Tomsen

October 9, 2011 -- How are insurgents able to continue launching deadly attacks in Afghanistan 10 years into the U.S.-led war there? Part of the blame — perhaps even the bulk of it — lies with Pakistan's army and its powerful intelligence arm, the Inter-Services Intelligence agency, known by the acronym ISI. For decades, Pakistan has conducted a proxy war in Afghanistan through Islamist insurgent groups that it has created, nurtured and supplied. There is considerable evidence that these groups are managed not by "rogue" ISI elements, as has sometimes been asserted, but by the agency itself. The ISI is a disciplined military institution that answers to the orders of the military command, a point former Pakistani dictator Pervez Musharraf often emphasized. The current Pakistani army chief, army Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, was director of the ISI under Musharraf, and he headed the organization during 2005, when the Taliban began to make a strategic comeback in Afghanistan, operating from protected sanctuaries in Pakistan. Today, three Pakistani-supported proxy groups are fueling the insurgency in Afghanistan: the Quetta Shura, the Haqqani network and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's smaller terrorist group, Hezb-i-Islami. Not one of them has been placed on the U.S. State Department's official list of foreign terrorist organizations.

Putting these groups on the list would make them subject to a range of U.S. sanctions, and it should be done immediately. There is extensive documentation in the public record — and extensive classified intelligence documentation — of their attacks on American forces inside Afghanistan, including the Haqqani network's deadly

attacks at the U.S. Embassy and NATO headquarters last month. As Adm. Michael G. Mullen, outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, noted in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee recently, the Haqqani network "acts as a veritable arm" of the ISI.

The U.S. campaign against global terrorism cannot succeed as long as Pakistan's army and ISI continue to support terrorist sanctuaries and training facilities inside Pakistan. The same training camps used to prepare thousands of Afghan, Pakistani and Arab fanatics to cross into Afghanistan also churn out global terrorists like the Pakistani American Faisal Shahzad, who tried to bomb Times Square last year. Americans need to realize that terrorists' attempts to strike the United States from sanctuaries in Pakistan will occur again and again unless their bases are closed down. Bombs targeting American cities will inevitably become more lethal with time. Today they are conventional. Tomorrow they are likely to be biological, chemical or nuclear.

Washington has long considered Pakistan an important ally, and so has treaded lightly for fear of alienating the nuclear-armed and strategically located country. But it is time to add an "or else" to our dealings with Islamabad.

In the weeks since Mullen's harsh language before the Senate, members of the Obama administration have sought to soften the rhetoric somewhat. White House spokesman Jay Carney described Mullen's comments as consistent with U.S. policy but said that he would not have used Mullen's language. Other officials, speaking on background, said Mullen's remarks weren't reflective of U.S. policy. But there are also indications that the U.S. could be finally ready to adopt a tougher approach. The day after Mullen spoke, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, publicly requested "that the State Department take the

additional step of listing the [Haqqani] network as a foreign terrorist organization," noting that the organization "meets the [legal] standards" for this designation. Last week, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the State Department was completing a "final formal review" preparatory to listing the organization. And at his Wednesday White House press conference President Obama warned that "there's no doubt that, you know, we're not going to feel comfortable with a long-term relationship with Pakistan if we don't think that they are mindful of our interests as well."

These are steps in the right direction, but they don't go nearly far enough. The George W. Bush and Obama administrations' "soft" policy of persuasion mixed with bountiful aid and expectations of progress has failed. The U.S. needs to take a much harder stance on Pakistan's promotion of Islamist terrorism in the region and globally. Washington has the capability to bring great pressure to bear on Pakistan to encourage it to change course. The U.S. should privately and clearly convey to Pakistan's army and ISI that it will be compelled to implement escalating measures if Pakistan does not close down the ISI-sustained terrorist sanctuaries in Pakistan. The U.S. should also enlist other nations for regional and global coalitions to contain the terrorism coming from Pakistan. No Muslim government supports the sanctuaries in Pakistan exporting violent extremism. Russia, Saudi Arabia, India, Afghanistan, the Central Asian republics and Western Europe all wish to see them dismantled. Among other pressures the U.S. can bring to bear are the severance of all military and economic aid, the designation of the three Afghan terrorist organizations as foreign terrorist organizations, the naming of Pakistan itself as a state sponsor of terrorism and the declassification of information exposing the terrorist bases in Pakistan and the ISI's involvement in them.

Pakistan has hinted lately that it would turn to China and Iran if the

United States ramps up pressure. But neither China nor Iran would like to see a Taliban government return to Kabul, nor would they wish to spend the huge sums it would take to shore up Pakistan's listing economy.

The Obama administration needs to implement a Pakistan policy that serves America's national security interests. It must be constructed for the long term and be responsive to Pakistan's actions. There should be incentives employed to encourage the dismantling of terrorists organizations that the ISI has created and sustained. And there should be consequences if it does not.

The United States cannot afford to indulge Pakistan's support for terrorism any longer. The risks of sticking with the status quo are greater than the risks of adopting a tougher approach.

Peter Tomsen is the author of the just-published "The Wars of Afghanistan." He was U.S. special envoy and ambassador to Afghanistan from 1989 to 1992.

Article 7.

The Daily Beast

The Geniuses We'll Never Know

Niall Ferguson

October 10, 2011 -- This essay is not about Steve Jobs. It is about the countless individuals with roughly the same combination of talents of whom we've never heard and never will. Most of the 106 billion people who've ever lived are dead—around 94 percent of them. And most of those dead people were Asian—probably more than 60 percent. And most of those dead Asians were dirt poor. Born into illiterate peasant families enslaved by subsistence agriculture under some or other form of hierarchical government, the Steves of the past never stood a chance. Chances are, those other Steves didn't make it into their 30s, never mind their mid-50s. An appalling number died in childhood, killed off by afflictions far easier to treat than pancreatic cancer. The ones who made it to adulthood didn't have the option to drop out of college because they never went to college. Even the tiny number of Steves who had the good fortune to rise to the top of premodern societies wasted their entire lives doing calligraphy (which he briefly dabbled in at Reed College). Those who sought to innovate were more likely to be punished than rewarded. Today, according to estimates by Credit Suisse, there is approximately \$195 trillion of wealth in the world. Most of it was made quite recently, in the wake of those great political and economic revolutions of the late 18th century, which, for the first time in human history, put a real premium on innovation. And most of it is owned by Westerners—Europeans and inhabitants of the New World and Antipodes inhabited by their descendants. We may account for less than a fifth of humanity, but we Westerners still own two thirds of global wealth.

A nontrivial portion of that wealth (\$6.7 billion) belonged to Steve Jobs and now belongs to his heirs. In that respect, Jobs personified the rising inequality that is one of the striking characteristics of his lifetime. Back in 1955 the top 1 percent of Americans earned 9 percent of income. Today the figure is above 14 percent. Yet there is no crowd of young people rampaging through Palo Alto threatening to “Occupy Silicon Valley.” The huge amounts of money made by Jobs and his fellow pioneers of personal computing are not resented the way the vampire squids of Wall Street are. On the contrary, Jobs is revered. One eminent hedge-fund manager (who probably holds a healthy slice of Apple stock as well as the full array of iGadgets) recently likened him to Leonardo da Vinci. So the question is not, how do we produce more Steves? The normal process of human reproduction will ensure a steady supply of what Malcolm Gladwell has called “outliers.” The question should be, how do we ensure that the next Steve Jobs fulfills his potential? An adopted child, the biological son of a Syrian Muslim immigrant, a college dropout, a hippie who briefly converted to Buddhism and experimented with LSD—Jobs was the type of guy no sane human resources department would have hired. I doubt that Apple itself would hire someone with his résumé at age 20. The only chance he ever had to become a chief executive officer was by founding his own company. And that—China, please note—is why capitalism needs to be embedded in a truly free society in order to flourish. In a free society a weirdo can do his own thing. In a free society he can even fail at his own thing, as Jobs undoubtedly did in his first stint in charge of Apple. And in a free society he can bounce back and revolutionize all our lives. Somewhere in his father’s native Syria another Steve Jobs has just died. But this other Steve was gunned down by a tyrannical government. And what wonders his genius might have produced we shall never know.