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Article I.

Wall Street Journal

The Constitution Doesn't Mention Czars

George P. Shultz

April 11, 2011 -- A pattern of governance has emerged in Washington that departs substantially from that envisaged in our Constitution. Under our basic concept of governance: (1) a president and vice president are elected; and (2) the departments of government are staffed by constitutional officers including secretaries, undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and others who are nominated by the president and confirmed for service by the consent of the Senate. They are publicly accountable and may be called to testify under oath about their activities.

Over time, this form of governance has changed. Presidents sometimes assume that the bureaucracy will try to capture a secretary and his or her immediate staff so that they will develop a departmental, rather than a White House, point of view. So presidents will name someone in the White House to oversee the department and keep a tight rein on its activities.

In national security and foreign policy, the National Security Council (NSC) was established after World War II by the National Security Act of 1947. As late as 1961, under President Dwight Eisenhower, the NSC was supported by a small staff headed by an executive secretary with a "passion for anonymity" and limited to a coordinating role. In subsequent administrations, that passion disappeared and staff members took on operational duties that formerly were the responsibility of constitutionally confirmed cabinet officials. This aggrandizement of the staff function then spread into fields far beyond national security. More recently, the situation has been worsened by the difficulty of getting presidential nominees to

cabinet and subcabinet positions approved and in place. The White House vetting process has become exhaustive, with potential appointees required to fill out extensive questionnaires on such things as foreign travel and personal acquaintances, let alone financial matters. Mistakes are potentially subject to criminal penalties. The result is a drawn-out and often disagreeable process from the time a person agrees to a job to the actual nomination.

Formal nominations do not necessarily receive quick consideration by Senate committees, which routinely request additional information. Sometimes a nomination, voted legitimately out of the committee, can be put on hold indefinitely as one member of the Senate uses the hold as a bargaining chip to get some matter, often unrelated, settled to his or her satisfaction.

These long delays make for great difficulty in assembling an administration, particularly in its crucial first year. The result has been appointment of people to the White House staff with de facto decision-making power over all the major areas of government. This practice also extends to foreign affairs, as a variety of special envoys and "special representatives" are appointed, often with ambiguity about whether they report directly to the president or to the secretary of state.

The practice of appointing White House "czars" to rule over various issues or regions is not a new invention. But centralized management by the White House staff has been greatly increased in recent years. Beyond constitutional questions, such White House advisers, counselors, staffers and czars are not accountable. They cannot be called to testify under oath, and when Congress asks them to come, they typically plead executive privilege.

The consequences, apart from the matter of legitimate governance, are all too often bad for the formation and execution of policy. The departments, not the White House, have the capacity to carry out

policies and they are full of people, whether political appointees or career governmental employees, who have vast experience and much to contribute to the making of policy. When White House staffers try to formulate or execute policy, they can easily get off track in a way that would not happen in a regular department.

As secretary of state under President Ronald Reagan, I experienced this with great pain when White House people developed and ran an off-the-books program of arms sales to Iran. It erupted in the Iran-Contra scandal involving the unconstitutional transfer of funds not appropriated by Congress to the Contras, and with close to devastating consequences for the president.

Iran-Contra is a dramatic example, but the more general problem is the inability to take full advantage of available skills and expertise in policy making, and the difficulty in carrying out the functions of government nationally and internationally.

What must be done?

To return to a more effective and constitutionally sound use of cabinet members and their departments in helping the president formulate policy, cabinet secretaries could be grouped into important functional categories—national security and foreign policy, economics, natural resources, human resources, the rule of law, education, health and others. All of these subjects involve more than one department. Sometimes the natural convener is obvious; in other instances the leading role might simply rotate.

With the help of staff coordinators in the White House, cabinet members might convene by themselves and then with the president. This would involve the departments and, at the same time, ensure that a presidential, rather than a departmental, point of view would prevail. Policy execution would be improved, as would support for legislative initiatives.

The main goal is to assure that a cabinet member—not a White House aide—is always in charge. The result would be not so much cabinet government as presidential government with the heavy involvement of accountable officials in the administration.

Then, and foremost, the appointment process must be moved back to what it was even as recently as the Reagan administration. The assumption is that honorable people want to serve honorably.

Reasonable vetting, such as a review of Internal Revenue Service and Federal Bureau of Investigation records, can be done quickly. A bad apple will surely be discovered and can be discarded.

I remember a passage in the late great American statesman Paul Nitze's autobiography. A friend in the FDR administration called and asked him to work in government—he would receive no pay, only an extra desk and an assistant. In this wholly illegitimate way, he began his career in the federal government.

Nitze's record of public service is legendary. I was lucky to serve with such a great and honorable man. I am not recommending that today's vetting process be like his, but I worry: Could we attract a Paul Nitze to the government today?

Today's problems are daunting and of critical importance. We need today's Paul Nitzes involved in the process of governance. It's imperative that we get back to a constitutional and accountable form of government before confidence in our capacity to govern further erodes.

Mr. Shultz, former secretary of labor (1969-70), secretary of the Treasury (1972-74) and secretary of state (1982-89), is a fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

Article 2.

NYT

Prisoner of Damascus

Yassin Al-Haj Saleh

April 10, 2011 -- Damascus, Syria -- IN all my 50 years, I have never held a passport. Other than visiting Lebanon, ■ never left Syria when, in the fall of 2004, I was barred from leaving the country. I tried many times afterward to get a passport, but to no avail.

I spent 16 years of my youth in my country's prisons, incarcerated for being a member of a communist pro-democracy group. During the recent protests, many more friends have been detained — most of them young — under the government's catch-all emergency laws. The state of emergency, under which Syria has lived for 48 years, has extended the ruling elite's authority into all spheres of Syrians' public and private lives, and there is nothing to stop the regime from using this power to abuse the Syrian population. Today, promises follow one after the other that these all-pervasive restrictions will be lifted. But one must ask, will it be possible for the Baath Party to rule Syria without the state of emergency that has for so long sustained it? The official pretext for the emergency laws is the country's state of war with Israel. However, restricting Syrians' freedoms did no good in the 1967 war, which ended with the occupation of the Golan Heights, nor did it help in any other confrontations with the Jewish state, nor in any true emergencies. Because in the government's eyes everything has been an emergency for the last half-century, nothing is an emergency.

Syria's struggle against an aggressive Israel has encouraged the militarization of political life — a development that has been particularly favorable to single-party rule. And the suspension of the

rule of law has created an environment conducive to the growth of a new ruling elite.

In 2005, the Baath Party decided, without any serious public discussion, to move toward what was dubbed a “social market economy.” It was supposed to combine competition and private initiative with a good measure of traditional socialism. In reality, as the state retreated, new monopolies arose and the quality of goods and services declined. Because local courts are corrupt and lack independence, grievances could not be fairly heard. Add to that a venal and idle bureaucracy, and the supposed economic reforms became a justification for the appropriation of economic power for the benefit of the rich and powerful.

Economic liberalization was in no way linked to political liberalization. After a half-century of “socialist” rule, a new aristocratic class has risen in Syria that does not accept the principles of equality, accountability or the rule of law. It was no accident that protesters in the cities of Dara’a and Latakia went after the property of this feared and hated aristocracy, most notably that of President Bashar al-Assad’s cousin Rami Makhlouf, a businessman who controls the country’s cellphone network and, more than anyone else, represents the intertwining of power and wealth in Syria.

Today’s ruling class has undeservedly accumulated alarming material and political power. Its members are fundamentally disengaged from the everyday realities of the majority of Syrians and no longer hear their muffled voices. In recent years, a culture of contempt for the public has developed among them.

Although some argue that the demonstrations are religiously motivated, there is no indication that Islamists have played a major role in the recent protests, though many began in mosques. Believers praying in mosques are the only “gatherings” the government cannot disperse, and religious texts are the only “opinions” the government

cannot suppress. Rather than Islamist slogans, the most prominent chant raised in the Rifai Mosque in Damascus on April 1 was “One, one, one, the Syrian people are one!” Syrians want freedom, and they are fully aware that it cannot be sown in the soil of fear, which Montesquieu deemed the fount of all tyranny. We know this better than anyone else.

A search for equality, justice, dignity and freedom — not religion — is what compels Syrians to engage in protests today. It has spurred many of them to overcome their fear of the government and is putting the regime on the defensive.

The Syrian regime enjoys broader support than did Hosni Mubarak in Egypt or Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia. This is a source of strength, and one that Mr. Assad appears not to consider when he relies on the security forces to quell protests. If the regime is to keep any of its deeply damaged legitimacy, it will have to answer the protesters’ demands and recognize the popular longing for freedom and equality.

Whatever the outcome of the protests, Syria has a difficult road ahead. Between the pains of oppression and the hardships of liberation, I of course prefer the latter. Personally, I want to live nowhere but in Syria, although I am looking forward to acquiring a passport to visit my brothers in Europe, whom I have not seen for 10 years. I also want, finally, to feel safe.

Yassin al-Haj Saleh is a writer and political activist. This essay was translated from the Arabic.

Article 3.

The New Republic

Step Assad

David Schenker

April 9, 2011 -- During the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Syria's Assad regime was helping insurgents to cross the border and kill Americans. In response to the Syrian provocation, the Bush administration considered a broad range of policy options. But one family of options always remained off the table: regime change or any combination of pressures that might destabilize Damascus. The prevailing interagency concern was that Syria without Assad could prove even more militant than under his terrorist-supporting regime.

At the Department of Defense—where I worked—we held a dissenting view. While the Pentagon didn't advocate toppling the Assad regime, we likewise didn't see an interest in helping to preserve the dictator's grip on power. In discussing the administration's Syria policy, then Assistant Secretary of Defense Peter Rodman—a former aide to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who served in five U.S. administrations—recalled Averell Harriman, the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1943–1946. It was Harriman, Rodman sardonically noted, who once said, “Stalin I can deal with. It's the hard-liners in the Kremlin who scare me.”

Three weeks and hundreds of casualties into the Syrian uprising, longstanding concerns about whom and what will replace Assad are resurfacing. So too is the atavistic attachment to a regime that not only has killed thousands of its own citizens, but contributed to the deaths of dozens if not hundreds of U.S. troops and contractors in Iraq. Support for the regime goes beyond the standard “devil you know” rationale. To wit, one commentator in *The National Interest* recently opined that “Washington knows [Syrian President] Bashar

well and it knows how rational and predictable he is in foreign affairs.” No doubt, Assad hasn’t killed millions like Stalin. But he has spent his first decade in power recklessly dedicated to undermining stability—and U.S. interests—in the Middle East.

Here’s the devil we know: Since 2006 alone, Assad’s Syria has exponentially increased the capabilities of the Lebanese Shia militia Hezbollah, providing the organization with advanced anti-ship and highly accurate M-600 missiles, top of the line anti-tank weapons, and has allowed the organization to establish a SCUD base on Syrian soil. At the same time, Assad continues to meddle (and murder) in Lebanon, harbor and support Hamas, and subvert Iraq. Damascus remains a strategic ally of otherwise isolated Tehran. And in 2007, it was revealed that Assad’s Syria was progressing toward building a nuclear weapon. Given the pernicious effect of Assad’s policies on U.S. interests and the region, it’s difficult to imagine that a successor or replacement regime could be worse.

Of course, Washington can not dismiss outright the “perfect storm” scenario. It is possible, for example, that Assad might be replaced by an even more overtly hostile member of his Alawite minority sect. Alternately, the regime could be supplanted by a more militant anti-American Sunni junta, triggering a wholesale massacre of Alawites and a massive emigration of Christians. Perhaps the Assad regime would be replaced by an Islamist theocracy lead by the Muslim Brotherhood, or worse, absent an effective despot, Syria could devolve into chaos, providing an opportunity for Al Qaeda to establish a foothold in the Levant. These scenarios could transpire, and none of them would serve U.S. interests. But neither does Assad, and despite some remaining ill-placed optimism that he will reform, it should by now be clear that the regime is irredeemable.

It perhaps goes without saying that the United States should not be in the business of regime removal in Syria. Yet it’s time to revise the

assumption that Washington somehow has a vested interest in Bashar Assad's political survival. As the brave Syrian people do the hard work and pay a high price to rid themselves of a corrupt, capricious, and brutal dictator, America should not be throwing him a lifeline. Years ago when I was working in the Bush administration, I was tasked to write an options paper on Syria. Prior to putting pen to paper, I sought the sage counsel of the late Peter Rodman, who, in typical fashion quipped, "Kissinger tasked me to write the same paper in the early 1970s." Today, 40 years and seven presidents later, the United States is still seeking an effective policy to contend with the Assad regime. Paralyzed by concerns of what comes next, the Obama administration—like the Bush administration before it—continues to cling to the status quo. Regrettably, if the Assad regime weathers this storm, hamstrung by ongoing fears of worst-case succession scenarios in Damascus, decades from now Bashar—or his own son Hafez—will remain a policy challenge for the United States.

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Article 4.

STRATFOR

The Implications of an Israeli-Palestinian Flare-Up

April 9, 2011 -- The political arm of Hamas has relayed a message April 9 through [REDACTED] envoy Robert Serry to the Israeli government requesting a cease-fire, according to Israeli security sources cited by Haaretz. Israeli radio cited political sources as saying “as long as the attacks from the Gaza Strip continue, Israel will be hard put to consider it.” The cease-fire attempt follows the firing of dozens of rockets and mortar shells from Gaza into Israel earlier in the day. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched airstrikes in the Gaza Strip, killing at least four Hamas commanders the same day.

The latest flare-up in the Israeli-Palestinian theater began over the course of the past week with sporadic rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza interspersed with IDF strikes in Gaza. The situation intensified April 7 when Hamas claimed responsibility for firing a rocket at an Israeli school bus (a Hamas spokesman later claimed it mistook the school bus for an Israeli military vehicle). Notably, the newly deployed Iron Dome missile defense system was reportedly successful in intercepting five rockets fired at Beersheba, Ashkelon and Kiryat Gat in the past 24 hours.

Prior to this most recent spate of violence, the Israeli-Palestinian arena experienced a relative calm for about a week, in which Syria, urged by Turkey, appeared to have played a role in clamping down on Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Prior to that week of calm, the March 11 murder of an Israeli family in the West Bank followed by a series of rocket attacks and a March 23 bus bombing in

Jerusalem illustrated a likely attempt by some Palestinian militant factions to provoke Israel into a military confrontation in Gaza.

Hamas' reported request for a cease-fire could indicate that the group is under pressure and is attempting to cool down tensions. This marks the second cease-fire request made by the group in two weeks. Even if Hamas manages to negotiate a brief reprieve to rearm and regroup its forces, however, the potential for a more serious escalation with broader geopolitical implications remains.

A large-scale Israeli military intervention in the Gaza Strip, while inviting pressure on Palestinian militant factions and their support base, would speak to a larger strategic goal by groups like Hamas and PIJ to exploit the political transition under way in Egypt in the hopes of encouraging a shift in Cairo's foreign policy toward Israel. Hamas, which grew out of the same Islamist movement that gave rise to the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt, has ample reason to create a crisis in Gaza that would provide an ideal campaigning opportunity for the MB to undermine Egypt's military-led government. In such military conflicts, the Egyptian government is usually forced to crack down on Egypt's Sinai border with Gaza while cooperating quietly with Israel to keep Hamas contained.

Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) is already showing signs of stress in its efforts to steer the country toward September elections while keeping opposition threats contained, especially with regard to the protests and political ambitions of the MB. A heavy crackdown by military and police forces on a mix of mostly youth pro-democracy demonstrators, MB followers and about a dozen uniformed soldiers rebelling against the military in Cairo's Tahrir Square before dawn on April 9 reportedly killed two protesters and injured dozens more. Though the protests are still manageable from the SCAF's point of view, the tone of the demonstrations is increasingly turning against the military-led regime. The last thing

the military needs is a crisis in Gaza that would produce mass demonstrations in which protesters are condemning the SCAF for not defending the Palestinians against Israel.

Syria is another key power to watch in monitoring the current Israeli-Palestinian crisis. Given that Hamas and PIJ funds run through Damascus and the exiled leadership of both militant groups has offices in the Syrian capital, the Syrian government carries considerable leverage over their actions. The Syrian regime is having trouble putting down anti-government protests, as illustrated April 8 when post-Friday prayer protests ended up with 37 people reportedly dead from clashes with security forces. An Israeli military intervention in Gaza could provide a useful distraction for the Syrian regime to focus outside powers' attention to the south of the Levant as crackdowns intensify within Syria. Turkey is meanwhile using its good offices with Syria to make a concerted effort to prevent such an escalation, but Ankara's success is not guaranteed, especially considering Iranian intentions.

Iran can use an array of crises in the region in its attempts to place its Sunni Arab rivals on the defensive and coerce the United States into a negotiation on Tehran's terms. The Iranian government has had some trouble sustaining protests in the Persian Gulf region after the Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council intervention in Bahrain, but the Levant remains a potential alternative for Iran, as it can use its local militant proxies to create crises for both Israel and Egypt. At the same time, Iran is making clear to the United States that it retains strong assets in Iraq to ensure U.S. forces withdraw by year's end. To this end, Iraqi Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr, whose moves tend to be coordinated with Iran, organized a large demonstration in eastern Baghdad on April 9 where his followers demanded the withdrawal of U.S. troops. Al-Sadr said in a statement, "If the Americans don't leave Iraq, we

will increase the military resistance and restart the activities of the Mehdi Army.”

As the Israeli-Palestinian crisis continues to simmer, the broader regional dynamics must be monitored in tandem to examine the potential for this latest flare-up to escalate into a more serious crisis with wider geopolitical implications.

Article 5.

Foreign Policy in Focus

No Moral Consistency in Obama's Middle East Policy

Bonnie Bricker and Adil E. Shamoo

April 8, 2011 -- Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and now Libya. In the last decade the U.S. military has fought Muslims across the Middle East (Iraq and Libya) and South Asia (Afghanistan and Pakistan) for a number of reasons: national security, protection of vital interests such as oil supply, and humanitarian crises. Though our recent foray into Libya can be considered more nuanced than our earlier interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, our poorly defined words and actions have called into question our intent, with a mistrust of U.S. policy becoming a worldwide issue. In Libya, the U.S. lead role in the military intervention has proven that its advertised intentions and actions clash with reality on the ground.

The Arab world is desperately trying to shed its tyrants. Tunisia and Egypt have taken steps toward more democratic governments after the overthrow of their autocratic rulers. Bahrain and Yemen are in revolt, but help from the rest of the world has been scarce. Bahrain, home to the U.S. Fifth Fleet, has substantial agreements with the United States. In Yemen, the presence of an active al-Qaeda wing creates fears of any further instability. But in Libya, Gaddafi's history of heinous acts, and threats to slaughter suspected rebels, created a storm of opportunity and humanitarian pleas.

President Obama laid out his reasons for intervening in Libya during a March 28 speech at the National Defense University. Referencing the looming human catastrophe, Obama cited past multilateral, UN-backed interventions to claim his Libya policy was linked to U.S.

national interests. Though such humanitarian intervention seems noble, Obama's policy is intentionally amorphous to accommodate the changing environment. The reports of CIA operatives inside Libya, contrary to the stated policy of no boots on the ground, only serves to engender more mistrust of our declared policies.

Most worrisome is the doublespeak regarding Arab support of intervention. In his speech, Obama referenced the Arab League vote in support of a no-fly zone as proof of Arab support for the intervention. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and several other administration officials — as well as countless pundits — also touted the Arab League's support. Left unstated is that a number of the 22 Arab governments in the Arab League are headed by the despotic rulers whose people are currently in revolt. These are the leaders who pillaged their respective countries' treasury, tortured their citizens, subjugated their women, and repressed any hope of freedom. (Post-revolt Egypt and Tunisia are new exceptions but have not had time to formulate a policy stance toward the Arab League.) It is cynical and the height of hypocrisy to use the actions of despotic rulers as indicators of Arab support for a military intervention. The Arab League is not equivalent to the Arab people.

The president correctly argued, "America cannot use our military whenever repression occurs... we must always measure our interests against the need for action. But that cannot be an argument for never acting on behalf of what's right." The president demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice humanitarian need by assuring non-interference to Bahrain's ruling regime despite clear evidence of mass arrests, beatings, and imprisonment of opposition party leaders. Saudi Arabia, one of the most repressive governments in the Middle East, has been assured of our support and friendship over three visits by Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates. When a policy of realpolitik meets moral authority repeatedly, a suspicious world will question

true intent. This shortsightedness betrays our stated commitment to freedom and buttresses the cynical views of the Arab people about U.S. designs. The United States should provide unfettered support to the “Arab Spring” movements to topple their illegitimate regimes — but without using military intervention. We should provide moral, economic, and educational support, and later help construct the civil society infrastructure required for freedom and democracy. Doing so may mean navigating through a more complex future Arab environment, but in the long run Americans and Arabs will both be winners.

The United States should declare outright that its vital national interest includes buying oil at the market price, supporting free and democratic regimes in the region, and destroying safe havens for terrorists. We should also declare that we have no hidden policy of occupation or installing compliant governments. With these pronouncements, we will be granting Arabs the dignity they long for and deserve.

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Article 6.

Newsweek

The Mash of Civilizations

Niall Ferguson

April 10, 2011 -- It is a truth universally acknowledged that information technology—in particular social networking through the Internet—is changing the global balance of power. The “Facebook Generation” has already been credited with the overthrow of the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak. For a brief period, the darling of Tahrir Square was the young Google executive Wael Ghonim. Yet there is another side to the story. It is not only proponents of democracy who know how to exploit the power of online networking. It is also the enemies of freedom.

Ask yourself: just how did the murderous mob in Mazar-e Sharif find out about the burning of a Quran in Florida? Look no further than the Internet and the mobile phone. Since 2001 cell-phone access in Afghanistan has leapt from zero to 30 percent.

Or consider the fact that, before Facebook took down a page called “Third Palestinian Intifada”—which proclaimed that “Judgment Day will be brought upon us only once the Muslims have killed all of the Jews”—it had notched 350,000 “likes.”

It seems paradoxical. In Samuel Huntington’s version of the post–Cold War world, there was going to be a clash between an Islamic civilization that was stuck in a medieval time warp and a Western civilization that was essentially equivalent to modernity. What we’ve ended up with is something more like a mashup of civilizations, in which the most militantly antimodern strains of Islam are being channeled by the coolest technology the West has to offer.

Here’s a good example. According to the Jihadica website, there is now a special data package produced by the “Mobile Detachment” of

the “al-Ansar al-Mujahideen Forum” especially for cell phones. Users can download encryption software, pictures, and 3GP-format video clips with titles like “A Martyr Eulogizing Another Martyr” by the Somalia-based Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen. Also available to users is the electronic magazine al-Sumud (“Resistance”) published by the Afghan branch of the Taliban, and edifying documents—available in both MS Word and Adobe formats—like “How to Prepare for Your Afterlife.” Killer apps, indeed.

Then there is Inspire, the online magazine published by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and aimed at aspiring jihadists in the West. In addition to bomb-making instructions, it also publishes target lists of individuals against whom fatwas have been proclaimed.

No one should pretend that these messages do not find receptive ears. In May 2010 Roshonara Choudhry stabbed the British ██████. Stephen Timms after having watched 100 hours of extremist sermons by Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-Awlaki. Where did she find these sermons? On YouTube, of course. Al-Awlaki’s other followers include the Fort Hood shooter Nidal Malik Hasan, the Christmas Day bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, and the Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad.

In short, Google’s pro-democracy Wael Ghonim is probably a less significant figure than Fouad X, the head of IT for Hizbullah in Lebanon, who tells Joshua Ramo (at the beginning of his superb book *The Age of the Unthinkable*) that “our email is flooded with CVs” from Islamist geeks wanting to “serve a sacred cause.”

So far, so bad. Now here’s the real problem. Many of these same Islamist geeks (among them Al-Awlaki) have hailed the so-called Arab Spring as a golden opportunity. The March 29 issue of Inspire declared: “The revolutions that are shaking the thrones of dictators are good for the Muslims, good for the mujahideen, and bad for the imperialists of the West and their henchmen in the Muslim world.”

The clash of civilizations would have been easy for the West to win if it had simply pitted the ideas and institutions of the 21st century against those of the seventh. No such luck. In the new mash of civilizations, our most dangerous foes are the Islamists who understand how to post fatwas on Facebook, email the holy Quran, and tweet the call to jihad.

Article 7.

Newsweek

Francis Fukuyama is back. What is he thinking?

Andrew Bast

April 10, 2011 -- Not long after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Francis Fukuyama was just a green 27-year-old researcher at the RAND Corporation, the military-focused think tank. His assignment? Gin up a strategy to counter Moscow's aggression. Fresh from filing his dissertation on Soviet foreign policy at Harvard, he quickly faced the unsettling fact that Washington knew next to nothing about South Asia. So he picked up the phone.

"Next thing I know, the ISI was offering me a two-week tour of the North-West Frontier province," Fukuyama recalls, referring to Pakistan's intelligence service and the treacherous border the country shares with Afghanistan. The ambitious scholar jumped on a plane and was soon interviewing Afghan refugees and dining with soldiers at the Khyber Pass. As proof, there's a grainy snapshot of Fukuyama, wearing a wide smile and a pair of hip sunglasses, eating a mango beside a Pakistani colonel. He drafted a report on his return, "just a little note," he says, "arguing the U.S. should support the mujahedin." Soon after, the Reagan administration was shipping F-16s to Pakistan. Fukuyama denies his analysis served as a catalyst. But New Delhi didn't think so: "I became one of the most hated people in India," he says.

Either way, the bold undertaking was the first clear evidence of the way Fukuyama's intellectual instincts hard-wire him into the most geopolitically strategic—not to mention dangerous—corners of the world.

Fast-forward more than two decades and Fukuyama, now 58 and the Freeman Spogli senior fellow at Stanford University, has aged enviably little. It's early on a rainy Monday morning in March, immediately following the weekend President Barack Obama and NATO allies opened a bombing campaign in Libya. He's sitting at his cherry kitchen table in his new California home. Gone are the sunglasses and the South Asian spies, but the intellectual hunger remains.

A one-page letter sits on the kitchen table and Fukuyama's leaning back in his chair, avoiding it. It is from the Foreign Policy Initiative, the latest avatar of America's neoconservative movement, comprising people like William Kristol, John Podhoretz, and Max Boot—men who advocate the use of American military might to set the world order straight. The communiqué—Fukuyama didn't even reach to read it—demanded that President Obama unleash airstrikes on Libya. Once upon a time, Fukuyama would have been part of the gang. After all, his name stood out at the bottom of the notorious letter from the Project for the New American Century (a previous neocon-policy arm) to President Bill Clinton in 1998, calling for the ouster of Saddam Hussein.

So why is Fukuyama's name absent today? "That presumes I want to be a member of that club," he says abruptly. In a pressed, blue button-down shirt and pleated dark slacks, he cracks open pistachios, contemplative but cagey. The brusqueness is unusual. For Fukuyama—a man with the ready confidence of, say, a principal on the National Security Council—is never lost for words. It is as if no question is a surprise, so no answer is ever offered entirely off the cuff, whether it be about the future of democracy in Cairo or the longevity of the Communist Party in Beijing. Which is not to say that he is bland. On present-day Republicans, in fact, he is downright caustic: "All of the Kissinger-era realists have gone away, like Robert

Zoellick, James Baker, and Brent Scowcroft. Today, the party is just a wasteland. They are total amateurs on foreign policy.”

Francis Fukuyama—“Frank,” to his friends—is arguably the world’s bestselling contemporary political scientist, thanks to “The End of History?”—first published as an essay in *The National Interest* in 1989, then fattened into a book (without the question mark) three years later. Its impact derived as much from its unforgettable title (which meant it stuck in the minds of many millions who did not read it) as from its content (with which many fewer people came to be truly familiar). Fukuyama’s thesis, in a nutshell, was that with the collapse of Soviet communism, the big question of how humans will organize themselves had been solved. Revolutions and war would undoubtedly continue, but liberal democracy would be the only game in town. So, History, with a capital H, was kaput.

If he started with the end, Fukuyama is now returning to the beginning: he wants to answer the existential question of politics—where does government come from?

But he’s pursuing this newest project all alone. He has publicly turned his back on the neocon movement. He has no interest in ingratiating himself in the foreign-policy establishment. Actually, after 22 years in Washington, Fukuyama has escaped to Stanford. He lives in Palo Alto, California, where dotcom money reigns. “Google is just up the street. My wife ran into Mark Zuckerberg at Trader Joe’s,” he says, “and watch out—you’ll probably see a few Ferraris around.” (In fact, by the end of the afternoon the sweet California sun had begun to shine, and ■ spotted two.) The End of History was the making of Fukuyama, not only as a public intellectual, but also financially. His beautiful new house (into which he and his wife have just moved) stands in one of the most expensive ZIP codes in America.

Self-exile from his former milieu and from his old associates, however, seems to have offered Fukuyama a kind of mental liberation, freeing him from ideological trappings and allowing him to serve up his magnum opus. His new book, *The Origins of Political Order*, which hits bookstores this week, seeks to understand how human beings transcended tribal affiliations and organized themselves into political societies. “In the developed world, we take the existence of government so much for granted that we sometimes forget how difficult it was to create,” he writes.

Political order begins, he says, in ancient China. By the time of the Chin dynasty in 221 B.C., some 10,000 individual separate chiefdoms across Asia had been corralled into a single state. How did that happen? To boil things down quickly: the state evolved to allow for a more effective making of war. Walking forward through the millennia, he investigates the political evolution of India: the strict social class structure defined its politics. Then the Islamic caliphate: “There is no clearer illustration of the importance of ideas to politics than the emergence of an Arab state under the Prophet Muhammad,” but the spread of Islam “depended also very much on political power” and military slavery. Lastly, he outlines the rise of the Catholic Church in Europe: “The Western separation of church and state has not been a constant since the advent of Christianity but rather something much more episodic—in fact, it established what we know today as the rule of law.” (The book ends at the French Revolution, leaving subsequent history to the next volume.)

What does Fukuyama make of the confounding world of today, with revolutions rocking the Middle East and the rest torn between Washington’s free-market democratic model or Beijing’s authoritarian state capitalism? “There’s something very gratifying about the Middle East demonstrating that Islam is not at odds with the democratic currents that have swept up other parts of the world,”

he says. “But what’s most important, actually, is what happens next.” That is, of course, the messy, often contentious process of engineering democracy. These are complicated places—despotic rule has stunted political parties (or, as in Libya, erased them entirely) and gutted civil society. That’s where the real trouble begins. On the “Arab Spring,” he’s bearish. “I guarantee you in a year or two it will not look as hopeful. It’s the whole point of my book. You need institutions, leaders—and corruption has to be under control. These are really the failings of many democracy movements. And it’s happening again—if you look at Egypt, the liberal parties are floundering.”

While the world can’t take its eyes off the Middle East, Fukuyama is, instead, looking ahead to China. Beijing has gone to great lengths—stymieing communications, hitting protests with an iron fist—to keep any democratic wave from rolling too far east. The Chinese government, he argues, will be successful in stifling protest, at least in the near term. “Authoritarianism in China is of a far higher quality than in the Middle East,” he wrote recently. Revolutions, he argues, don’t come from the disenchanting poor, but from an upwardly mobile middle class fed up with anachronistic government that does little but keep them from achieving their potential. So Beijing may be able to keep its people happy for now, but in the coming years its biggest risk is putting off democratic reforms and ending up with a regime that’s fallen behind its people. When the Chinese middle class is no longer willing to forgo political freedom for bigger paychecks, or when the Communist Party grows stagnant, unable to keep up with the masses, then change is going to come, one way or another. Strange as it may sound for a man who secured fame and fortune with an essay titled “The End of History?” his prescience as a political philosopher flows from his “revulsion at triumphalist views” (in the view of Paul Berman, author of *Flight of the Intellectuals*).

When Fukuyama first joined up with the neocons back in the 1970s under the tutelage of Allan Bloom (who wrote *The Closing of the American Mind*), it was largely a reaction against the left-wing triumphalism of the Great Society and of the cultural rebellions of the New Left spawned in 1968. More recently, Berman says, “the same kind of triumphalism overtook the neoconservatives on the right, and he turned away from them.”

That break with the neoconservative clan had a very specific genesis. At an annual dinner of the American Enterprise Institute in February 2004, Fukuyama sat listening first to a speech by Vice President Dick Cheney and then the columnist Charles Krauthammer, who declared a “unipolar era” had begun, which, of course, the U.S. would lead. “All of these people around me were cheering wildly,” Fukuyama remembers. But in his view, Iraq was fast becoming a blunder. “All of my friends had taken leave of reality.”

But rather than keep it in the family, Fukuyama went public. “I tried to keep it about ideas and policies, not to make it personal,” he says. But that’s not entirely true. He may think differently now, but Fukuyama wrote explicitly in *Crossroads* that “this is a personal subject for me.” People like Paul Wolfowitz (then undersecretary of defense and a neoconservative) were his friends—Wolfowitz not only gave Fukuyama his first job at the State Department, but later recruited him to Johns Hopkins—and Fukuyama had betrayed them. (Neither Krauthammer nor Wolfowitz responded to repeated requests for their sides of the story.) “No,” Fukuyama says, “I have not talked with Wolfowitz since.”

Fukuyama’s mother was born in Kyoto. His paternal grandfather fled the Russo-Japanese war in 1905 and settled in Los Angeles, where he opened a hardware store. Decades later, however, he had to hurriedly sell the shop in Little Tokyo when he was interned with other Japanese Americans during World War II, an episode Fukuyama calls

a “grave injustice” and doesn’t hesitate to liken to the Islamophobia thought by many to be coursing through American society today.

“This nonsense follows from the same impulse,” he says. It’s one of many opportunities he takes to sling arrows at conservatives, remarkable for a man who served two Republican administrations. Over the years, Fukuyama has scampered across the world’s chalkboard like an intellectual chameleon. “Like many life stories, mine just meandered all over the place in a random fashion and landed in a couple of lucky places that were not planned at all,” he says. His books have taken on not only politics and philosophy, but also biotechnology and that tinderbox of an idea: human nature.

“He’s incredibly intellectually honest,” says Walter Russell Mead, a historian of American foreign policy. “He goes where his head takes him. His first duty is to the truth as he sees it.”

If Fukuyama’s first duty is indeed to the truth, his personal hobbies rank a very close second. “They’re a part of why I don’t go back into government—I wouldn’t have time for them,” he says. In his home office, a floor-to-ceiling cabinet houses a tower of high-end stereo components—including a Space Age–looking turntable that cost as much as a used car. “People who are really nuts for this kind of thing don’t talk about lows and highs, they talk about the space of sound,” he says, dropping the needle on Miles Davis’s *Sketches of Spain*. He keeps a woodworking shop there, too. He’s also an amateur photographer and recently remarked, “These days I seem to spend as much time thinking about gear as I do analyzing politics for my day job.”

Strolling amid the red-tiled roofs and sandstone façades of the Stanford campus, Fukuyama explains that with *Origins* he envisions himself as a throwback to what he calls the “great historical anthropologists” of the 19th century. You may not recognize the names—people such as Henry Maine and Frederic Maitland—but

their method seems to be experiencing a kind of resurgence. They wrote books sweeping in scope and grand in ambition, reaching across academic fields and entire eras of human history. “Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel* is probably closest to what ■■■ doing now,” Fukuyama says, comparing himself to the author of a bestseller who argued in 1997 that geography and climate ultimately determined why some societies (like Europe and North America) thrived while others (like sub-Saharan Africa) remained underdeveloped and poor.

Sitting in his corner office at Stanford, the shades drawn to fend off that California sun, Fukuyama glances at the chaotic piles of books surrounding him. “But Diamond didn’t account for culture and ideas in his exploration of development,” he says. And that, for Fukuyama, is what’s most important. Ideas fuel the engine of history, and in a time when the number of vital and honest ideas are fading, he’s pushing at every turn to get more flowing again.