



WASHINGTON FORUM 2011

REPORT FROM WASHINGTON FORUM

Ideology, Power, and Alliances in a Changing Middle East



December 7 – 9, 2011

The 2011 *Washington Forum*

Washington Forum, FDD's annual policy summit, brings together for discussions and debates a diverse group of foreign policy and national security professionals from Congress, the White House, the intelligence community, the Departments of State, Defense and Treasury, as well as diplomats, scholars, and journalists.

This year's Washington Forum focused on the political transformations and security concerns in a changing Middle East. Experts examined the growing threat from Iran: its ongoing efforts to develop nuclear weapons, its relations with a broad range of terrorist groups, and the role it is attempting to play in the volatile and changing Arab world. Panelists also assessed the state of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the prognosis for Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, the continuing struggle against the Assad dynasty in Syria, and strategic approaches to national and international security. Washington Forum provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to interact and for new policy ideas to emerge.

We invite you to watch the footage and read recaps from *Washington Forum 2011* which, among other sessions, includes remarks by White House official Puneet Talwar, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA), Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH), and Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY). A highlight video is also available at: www.defenddemocracy.org/events/washington-forum.

Washington Forum 2011 Honorary Committee:

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On the Cover

(Top Row) Amb. John Limbert, Rep. Howard Berman, John Hannah, Roya Hakakian, Jackson Diehl, Sen. Robert Menendez, Amb. Gary Doer

(Bottom Row) Rep. Ted Deutch, Rep. Steve Chabot, Puneet Talwar, Amb. R. James Woolsey, Khairi Abaza, Rep. Eliot Engel, Dr. Catherine Dale

A Letter from R. James Woolsey, Cliff May, and Mark Dubowitz

The year 1979 was transformative in the Middle East. The Shah fell, and the Islamic Republic of Iran arose. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Religious fanatics for a time took over the Grand Mosque in Mecca and changed the thinking of Saudi rulers thereafter. Historians may come to view 2011 as no less consequential. Uprisings and revolutions broke out and regimes changed. Osama bin Laden was killed by U.S. forces in Pakistan where he had long enjoyed safe haven. Iran moved closer to its ambition of nuclear weapons acquisition. FDD's annual policy summit *Washington Forum*, focusing on "Ideology, Power, and Alliances in a Changing Middle East," sought to take stock of these changes and to chart a way forward.

Washington Forum came at a critical time on Capitol Hill, as legislators engaged in a spirited debate over a new set of sanctions designed to weaken Tehran by targeting the Central Bank of Iran. FDD provided members of Congress with critical research on how to sanction the Iranian regime effectively. We were delighted to have Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA), Steve Chabot (R-OH), Ted Deutch (D-FL), Eliot Engel (D-NY) and Senator Robert Menendez (R-NJ) deliver remarks detailing the legislative efforts to curb Iran. Several days later, Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act, empowering the U.S. government to enact its boldest financial measures yet in the effort to halt the Iranian drive to develop nuclear weapons.

The Obama Administration also weighed in at *Washington Forum*. Puneet Talwar, senior director for the Gulf States, Iran and Iraq at the National Security Council, noted that the White House was still considering a range of options. "If Iran does not change course, the pressure will grow," he vowed. "We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons."

To discuss those options, FDD hosted a panel of Iran experts, including Roya Hakakian, author of *Assassins of the Turquoise Palace*, former National Security Agency analyst John Schindler, and FDD scholars Emanuele Ottolenghi and Thomas Joscelyn.

Ron Prozor, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, also joined us to discuss the challenges posed by the Palestinians' refusal to negotiate without concessions in advance. This was a theme that we returned to again during a panel that featured FDD's Jonathan Schanzer, David Makovsky of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and Professor Nathan Brown of The George Washington University.

Another panel gathered former top policymakers to come up with solutions to America's most vexing problems. This included FDD Chairman and former CIA Director R. James Woolsey; FDD Executive Director Mark Dubowitz; FDD's John Hannah, former



Amb. R. James Woolsey, Chairman, FDD



Cliff May, President, FDD



Mark Dubowitz, Executive Director, FDD

"FDD has been one of the most committed and creative voices in Washington regarding the Iran nuclear issue and specifically Iran sanctions. Your ideas inspired important components of the sanctions bill I authored and passed last Congress when I was Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and your ideas continue to enrich my thinking about sanctions as we move forward. My recent conversation in my office with Mark Dubowitz was one of the most enlightening I've had regarding Iran sanctions and oil markets."

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

"As Iran continues its pursuit of nuclear weapons, FDD has emerged as one of the most innovative think tanks in Washington when it comes to developing effective policies to stop the Islamic Republic before it's too late. The kind of time-sensitive research, analysis, and expertise that FDD provides the Congress is simply invaluable."

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL)

"FDD has been a valued resource to many agencies throughout the U.S. government in helping to address some of the nation's most critical foreign policy issues in a complicated world."

Puneet Talwar, Senior Director for the Gulf States, Iran, and Iraq at the National Security Council

"It is the efforts of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies that is dedicated to these issues day in and day out - your work every day makes a real difference in these battles that we wage."

Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL)

advisor to Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of State Warren Christopher; Ambassador John Limbert, who was held hostage in Iran and later became a deputy assistant secretary of state; and Stephen Rademaker, a former assistant secretary of state who today is a principal at the Podesta Group.

Some of Washington's top journalists moderated our sessions. Josh Rogin of *Foreign Policy* prompted a lively debate on Syria that included FDD's Tony Badran and Ammar Abdulhamid, along with Brian Katulis of the Center for American Progress and Andrew Tabler of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Scott Shane of *The New York Times* conducted a tour d'horizon of America's theaters of war, featuring author Paul Berman of *The New Republic*, Catherine Dale of the Congressional Research Service, Bill Roggio of FDD's *Long War Journal*, and Lt. Col. John Nagl (ret.) of the Center for a New American Security.

The Washington Post's Jackson Diehl tried to make sense of the "Arab Revolt" with the help of Turkish expert Soner Cagaptay, along with three FDD experts: Khairi Abaza, Reuel Marc Gerecht, and Lee Smith.

While the bulk of *Washington Forum* took place at the Newseum, one of Washington's newest landmarks, we were also thrilled to treat members of FDD's leadership to an event at the Canadian Embassy, just a few steps away from the Capitol. Canadian diplomats engaged in a riveting conversation with Woolsey and FDD Senior Advisor Robert "Bud" McFarlane on the urgent challenges of energy and fuel security, and the policies to address them.

We are pleased to share the *Washington Forum 2011* highlights with you in the following pages. We invite you to view videos of the panels at www.defenddemocracy.org/events/washington-forum

This year's *Washington Forum*, scheduled for December 6-7, 2012, promises to be equally memorable. We're already making plans for it. We hope you will too.

Best regards,



Amb. R. James Woolsey



Cliff May



Mark Dubowitz

SPEAKERS



Khairi Abaza

is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He is an expert on democratic reform in the Arab world, the spread of terrorism, and the influence of the media on politics. His columns have appeared in various publications, including *The New Republic*, *Newsweek*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The National Interest*, and *The Weekly Standard*. Mr. Abaza is also a commentator on several American and international television stations such as Fox, BBC, France 24, Al-Jazeera, and CBC.



Ammar Abdulhamid

is a leading Syrian human rights and pro-democracy activist and author. A Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and a member of FDD's Syria Working Group, Mr. Abdulhamid is also the Founder and Director of the Tharwa Foundation, a grassroots organization that works to break the Assad government's information blockade by enlisting a cadre of local activists and citizen journalists to report on sociopolitical issues in Syria.



Tony Badran

is a Research Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. His research focuses on Lebanon, Syria, and Hezbollah, their regional and international relations, and Islamist groups in the Levant. Mr. Badran is author of the blog *Across the Bay*. His writings have appeared in a number of notable publications, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *Forbes.com*, *National Review Online*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Jerusalem Post*, *The Daily Star*, and other academic and policy journals. Mr. Badran holds regular briefings with both U.S. and E.U. government officials.



Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

represents California's 28th district. Rep. Berman serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where he was Chairman in the 110th and 111th Congresses and is currently a ranking member. He sponsored the Hezbollah Anti-Terrorism Act of 2011 to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are not used to fund terrorist entities in Lebanon, and for other purposes. Rep. Berman is an effective legislative veteran who is considered one of the leading voices on immigration and foreign policy in the House. Rep. Berman has also been one of the strongest congressional supporters of Israel, sponsoring the Anti-Boycott Act in the House in 2011, which prohibits American individuals and organizations from actively boycotting Israeli goods.



Paul Berman

is a writer on politics and literature whose articles and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Republic* (where he is a contributing editor), *The New Yorker*, *Slate*, *The Village Voice*, *Dissent*, and various other international journals. He has reported at length from Europe and Latin America and has written or edited eight books, including, *Power and the Idealists: Or, the Passion of Joschka Fischer and Its Aftermath*, and *Terror and Liberalism*, a *New York Times* best-seller in 2003.



Dr. Nathan J. Brown

is a professor of Political Science and International Affairs at The George Washington University, specializing in comparative politics of the Middle East. He also serves as a nonresident senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Dr. Brown has conducted research for the United States Institute of Peace and has served as a member of the international advisory committees for drafting the Iraqi and Palestinian constitutions. Dr. Brown is the author of six books, including *Participation, not Domination: Islamist Political Parties and Semiauthoritarian Politics in the Arab World* and *Palestinian Politics after the Oslo Accords*.



Soner Cagaptay

is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Turkish Research Program at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He has taught courses at Yale, Princeton University, Georgetown University, and Smith College on the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Eastern Europe. Dr. Cagaptay has written extensively on U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkish domestic politics, and Turkish nationalism, publishing in scholarly journals and major international print media, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Jane's Defense Weekly*. He is a regular columnist for *Hürriyet Daily News*, Turkey's oldest and most influential English-language paper. He appears regularly on Fox News, CNN, NPR, Voice of America, al-Jazeera, BBC, CNN-Turk, and al-Hurra.



Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH)

is a 15-year veteran of the House of Representatives, serving Ohio's first district. Rep. Chabot is a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and in 2011 was named the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia. Rep. Chabot has been a leader in efforts to isolate and delegitimize Israel at the United Nations. He has sponsored legislation to leverage U.S. contributions to the United Nations to persuade international bodies to refuse the membership of an independent Palestinian state outside of a negotiated peace process.



Dr. Catherine Dale

is a Specialist in International Security at Congressional Research Service (CRS) where she provides analytical support to members and staff to help frame critical national security debates. Dr. Dale is the lead CRS expert on strategy and military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and she also spearheads CRS's analytical focus on national security reform. She previously served in Iraq as a political advisor to the U.S. Army, and has worked as the Special Assistant to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General.



Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL)

serves Florida's 19th district. He is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a lifelong activist in the pro-Israel community. Rep. Deutch is an established

leader on Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program. During the 112th Congress, the Iran Transparency and Accountability Act, his legislation to expose sanctionable business in Iran, was incorporated into a larger, bipartisan package of sanctions. As a Florida State Senator, Rep. Deutch passed the nation's first Iran divestment legislation and empowered Florida to divest over a billion dollars from Iran's energy sector.



Jackson Diehl

is the Deputy Editorial Page Editor at *The Washington Post*. He is an editorial writer specializing in foreign affairs and writes a biweekly column, which often examines the Arab

Spring. He serves as a leading voice for a strong U.S. stance on human rights and democracy in the Middle East. Mr. Diehl has been at *The Washington Post* since 1978, where he has accrued a decade of experience at the paper's bureaus in Buenos Aires, Warsaw, and Jerusalem. Mr. Diehl has received numerous awards for reporting and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing in 2011.



Amb. Gary Doer

is the Ambassador of Canada to the United States. He assumed his current responsibilities as Canada's 23rd representative to the U.S. in 2009. Prior to taking up his current position

in Washington, Amb. Doer served as Premier of Manitoba for 10 years. During that time, he worked extensively with U.S. governors to enhance Canada-U.S. cooperation on trade, agriculture, water protection, climate change, and renewable energy.



Mark Dubowitz

is Executive Director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. His policy work focuses on Iran and Syria, sanctions, and on the use of technology to encourage democratic change. Mr. Dubowitz is head of FDD's

Iran Energy Project, which provides research and analysis on energy sanctions and tracks the role of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Iran's energy sector. He directs FDD's Iran Human Rights Project, which provides research on Iranian human rights abuses and on sanctions designed to hold accountable Iranian officials and international companies supporting these abuses. Mr. Dubowitz co-leads FDD's work on Syria sanctions against the regime of Bashar al-Assad and is a founding member of the FDD Syria Working Group.



Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY)

serves New York's 17th district. He is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and is an original cosponsor of important legislation to expand energy

sanctions against the Assad regime. Rep. Engel was the author of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003, which successfully sparked international pressure on Syria to withdraw from Lebanon, and he sponsored a key resolution recognizing Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel. Rep. Engel is the founder and co-chair of the House Oil and National Security Caucus and has championed energy security throughout his political career.



Reuel Marc Gerecht

is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and a former Iran analyst at the CIA's Directorate of Operations. He focuses on Iran, Iraq, Af-

ghanistan, terrorism, and intelligence. Mr. Gerecht is the author of *The Wave: Man, God, and the Ballot Box in the Middle East*, as well as *Know Thine Enemy: A Spy's Journey into Revolutionary Iran*, and *The Islamic Paradox: Shiite Clerics, Sunni Fundamentalists, and the Coming of Arab Democracy*. He is a contributing editor for *The Weekly Standard* and a correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly*, as well as a frequent contributor to *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and other publications.



Roya Hakakian

is a former associate producer at CBS's *60 Minutes* and a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship in non-fiction. She is the author of the bestselling book *Assassins of the Turquoise Palace*, and the memoir *Journey from the*

Land of No. Her opinions and essays have appeared in numerous media outlets, including National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. Ms. Hakakian is the founder of the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center.



John Hannah

John Hannah is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Mr. Hannah worked as a senior advisor on the staff of Secretary of State Warren Christopher under President

Bill Clinton. During President George W. Bush's first term, Mr. Hannah served as Vice President Dick Cheney's Deputy National Security Advisor to the Middle East, involved in U.S. policy toward Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and the global war on terrorism. During President Bush's second term, Mr. Hannah served as the Vice President's National Security Advisor.



Thomas Joscelyn

is a Senior Fellow and Executive Director of the Center for Law and Counterterrorism at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He is also the Senior Editor of FDD's *The Long War Journal*.

Mr. Joscelyn is a nationally recognized expert on how al Qaeda and its affiliates operate around the world. He is a regular contributor to *The Weekly Standard* and its online publications, *The Daily Standard* and *Worldwide Standard*. He is the author of *Iran's Proxy War Against America*. His work has also been published by *National Review Online*, *The New York Post*, and other publications.



Brian Katulis

is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, where his work focuses on U.S. national security policy in the Middle East and South Asia. Mr. Katulis has served as a consultant to numerous

U.S. government agencies, private corporations, and nongovernmental organizations on projects in more than two dozen countries, including Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Egypt, and Colombia. He is co-author of *The Prosperity Agenda*, a book on U.S. national security.



Amb. John Limbert is a professor of international affairs at the U.S. Naval Academy. He previously served for 33 years in the Foreign Service, retiring with the rank of Minister-Counselor. While in this capacity, Ambassador Limbert was President of the American Foreign Service Association and Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Before that, he was Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism in the U.S. State Department. Ambassador Limbert holds the Department of State's highest award — the Distinguished Service Award — and other department awards, including the Award for Valor, which he received after fourteen months as a hostage in Iran.



David Makovsky is the Ziegler distinguished fellow and director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He is also an adjunct lecturer in Middle Eastern studies at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Before joining The Washington Institute, Mr. Makovsky was a journalist based in Israel for many years covering the peace process. He is the former executive editor of the *Jerusalem Post*, was diplomatic correspondent for *Haaretz*, and served for 11 years as the *U.S. News and World Report* Jerusalem correspondent. His many publications include *Making Peace with the PLO: The Rabin Government's Road to the Oslo Accord and Myths, Illusions, and Peace: Finding a New Direction for America in the Middle East*.



Clifford May is President of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He has had a long and distinguished career in international relations, journalism, communications, and politics. Mr. May spent nearly a decade with *The New York Times* as a reporter in both New York and Washington, an editor of *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and as a foreign correspondent. He is a frequent guest on national and international television and radio news programs including CNN and MSNBC, providing analysis and participating in debates on national security issues. He writes a weekly column that is nationally distributed by Scripps Howard News Service and is a regular contributor to *National Review Online*, *The American Spectator* and other publications.



Robert "Bud" McFarlane is a member of FDD's Leadership Council and served as President Ronald Reagan's National Security Advisor from 1983-1985. After leaving the Reagan White House, Mr. McFarlane founded his own energy development company, Global Energy Investors LLC, and in 2000, he served as founding Chairman of Energy and Communications Solutions. Currently, McFarlane serves as Chairman and CEO of McFarlane Associates Inc., developing energy projects in Russia, Africa, and the Middle East, as well working with non-profit organizations to develop ways to utilize alternative forms of energy and reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil.



Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Global Narcotics Affairs as well as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development. After 9/11, Sen. Menendez earned national recognition for his leadership in reforming the country's intelligence, security, and public health systems, and for fighting to establish an independent commission to investigate the terrorist attacks on our country. Most recently, he co-authored with Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) an amendment to sanction the Central Bank of Iran, which the Senate passed unanimously.



Lt. Col. John Nagl (USA, Ret.) is the President of the Center for a New American Security. He is the author of *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* and was on the writing team that produced the U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual. His writings have also been published in several newspapers and journals, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Foreign Policy*.



Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He has done research exposing Iran's energy companies and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Dr. Ottolenghi has advised foreign ministries in Europe, and testified before the Canadian and European parliaments. He recently published *The Pasdaran: Inside Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps*, and is author of *Iran: The Looming Crisis – Can the West Live with Iran's Nuclear Threat?* Dr. Ottolenghi writes widely in the international media, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsday*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Commentary*, *National Review Online*, *Middle East Quarterly*, and *The Guardian*. He has a column in the British monthly, *Standpoint Magazine*. Previously, Dr. Ottolenghi headed the Transatlantic Institute in Brussels, where he resides.



Amb. Ron Prozor is Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. With over two decades of experience in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amb. Prozor served as Israel's Ambassador to the United Kingdom from 2007-2011, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2004-2007, Chief of Staff to the Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom from 2003-2004, and Senior Deputy Director General of the Ministry in 2004. As an officer in the Artillery Division of the IDF, Mr. Prozor attained the rank of Major and is a graduate of the IDF Battalion Commanders.



Stephen Rademaker is a principal at the Podesta Group. He has a wide range of experience on security issues in the White House, the State Department, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives. Mr. Rademaker served as Assistant Secretary of State from 2002 through 2006, heading three bureaus of the State Department. He directed the Proliferation Security Initiative, crafted nonproliferation policy toward Iran and North Korea, as well as led strategic dialogues with Russia, China, India, and Pakistan. In 2007, Mr. Rademaker served as Senior Counsel and Policy Director for National Security Affairs for then-Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN). Previously, Mr. Rademaker served as General Counsel of the Peace Corps, Associate Counsel to the President in the Office of White House Counsel, and as Deputy Legal Adviser to the National Security Council.



Bill Roggio

is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and Editor of FDD's *The Long War Journal*. He is the President of Public Multimedia Inc, a nonprofit media organization with a mission to provide original and accurate reporting and analysis of the War on Terrorism. Mr. Roggio embedded with the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army in Iraq in 2005, 2006, and 2007, and with the Canadian Army in Afghanistan in 2006. His articles have been published in *The Weekly Standard*, *The National Review*, *The New York Post*, *The Toronto Times*, and *Die Weltwoche*. He presents regularly at the U.S. Air Force's Contemporary Counterinsurgency Warfare School at Hulbert Field on the media and embedded reporting.



Josh Rogin

is a staff writer for *Foreign Policy Magazine*, covering national security and foreign policy, and writes the daily Web column *The Cable*. Previously, Mr. Rogin covered defense and foreign policy as a staff writer for *Congressional Quarterly*, writing extensively on Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantánamo Bay, U.S.-Asia relations, and the defense industry. Mr. Rogin covered military modernization, cyber warfare, space, and missile defense for *Federal Computer Week Magazine*. He has also worked at the House International Relations Committee, the Embassy of Japan, and the Brookings Institution. Mr. Rogin's reporting has been featured on CNN, MSNBC, C-SPAN, CBS, ABC, NPR, and several other outlets.



Dr. Jonathan Schanzer

is Vice President of Research at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He worked as a terrorism finance analyst at the U.S. Department of the Treasury and for several other U.S.-based think tanks. Dr. Schanzer recently testified before the House Foreign Relations Committee on U.S. aid to the Palestinian Authority. Last year he published a monograph with FDD's executive director Mark Dubowitz titled *Palestinian Pulse: What Policymakers Can Learn From Palestinian Social Media*. In 2008, Dr. Schanzer published *Hamas vs. Fatah: The Struggle for Palestine*, the only book on the market that analyzes the internecine conflict between the two most powerful Palestinian factions.



Dr. John R. Schindler

is a Professor of National Security Affairs at the U.S. Naval War College. He also serves as Chairman of the NATO Partnership for Peace Consortium's Countering Terrorism Working Group, and a Senior Fellow at Boston University's International History Institute. Prior to joining the NWC faculty, Dr. Schindler served for nearly a decade with the National Security Agency as an expert in counterespionage and counterterrorism, with operational experience in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. A former FDD Academic Fellow, he has published widely on intelligence and terrorism, and is the author of *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, Al-Qa'ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad* and co-author of *The Terrorist Perspectives Project: Strategic and Operational Views of Al-Qa'ida*.



Scott Shane

is a reporter in the Washington bureau of *The New York Times*, where he covers national security, intelligence, and terrorism-related topics. Before working for *The New York Times*, Mr. Shane was a reporter for *The Baltimore Sun*, where he was the Moscow correspondent from 1988 to 1991. Mr. Shane is the author of *Dismantling Utopia: How Information Ended the Soviet Union*.



Lee Smith

is a Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He is the author of *The Strong Horse: Power, Politics, and the Clash of Arab Civilizations*. He contributes to *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *Slate.com*, *the Boston Globe*, *Wired*, and *The Weekly Standard*, where he is a senior editor. Mr. Smith also writes a column for *Tablet Magazine* called, "Agents of Influence." He has been a guest on radio and television, including Fox News and National Public Radio. Mr. Smith has worked at a number of journals, magazines, and publishers including *the Hudson Review*, *Ecco-Press*, *Athenum*, *Grand Street*, *GQ Magazine*, and *Talk Magazine*.



Andrew Tabler

is a Next Generation fellow in the Program on Arab Politics at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, where he focuses on how the United States can engage with Syria in a way that best advances U.S. interests. The co-founder and former editor-in-chief of *Syria Today*, Syria's first private-sector English-language magazine, Mr. Tabler achieved unparalleled access to Bashar al-Assad's Syria. Over 14 years of living in the Middle East, Mr. Tabler accrued valuable experience in the region. Mr. Tabler has published widely, including in *The New York Times*, *the New York Times Magazine*, *the International Herald Tribune*, *Newsweek*, and *Foreign Policy*.



Puneet Talwar

is the Senior Director for the Gulf States, Iran and Iraq at the White House National Security Council. He is responsible for overseeing U.S. policy in Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, the UAE,

Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. He advises President Obama, Vice President Biden, National Security Adviser Tom Donilon, Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough, and Homeland Security Adviser John Brennan. A foreign policy veteran with more than 20 years of experience, Mr. Talwar previously served as the chief Middle East advisor to Vice President Biden during his tenure on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As a chief interlocutor with top government officials throughout the Middle East, Mr. Talwar played a prominent role in the Iraq War debate and the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the Senate.



Amb. R. James Woolsey

is Chairman of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and former Director of Central Intelligence. He is also Chair of Woolsey Partners LLC and a venture partner with Lux Capital Management. In addition, he is a Senior Fellow at Yale University's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs. Ambassador Woolsey previously served in the U.S. government in five different capacities. He held Presidential appointments in two Republican and two Democratic administrations.

Opening Reception at the International Spy Museum

REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH (D-FL)



Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL) speaks to FDD friends and supporters at the International Spy Museum.



Nicolette Mayer, Carlyn Mayer



Nira Abramowitz, Mark Pruzanski, Ken Schwartz, Sebastian Gorka

FDD's friends and supporters gathered at the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C., for our annual *Washington Forum* opening reception. In addition to gaining exclusive access to the museum, the opening reception featured counterterrorism tools developed by FDD's technology partners. Participants witnessed firsthand how this cutting-edge software assists the U.S. intelligence community in its counterterrorism efforts.

sored with Representative Robert Dold (R-IL). The legislation has since been folded into the Iran Threat Reduction Act, which passed and was signed into law shortly after the conference.

"The bill not only imposes mandatory sanctions on Iran's worst human rights abusers—including those implicated in the violence following the 2009 elections that were stolen from the Iranian people," Deutch said, but it also makes

Deutch said Iran's leaders fear their own "Arab Spring," and warned that they may take harsher measures to tighten their grip on power. As it is, he said, Tehran is actively aiding Syrian President Bashar Assad in his brutal crackdown on the Syrian people.

"Reports have estimated that Iran has provided Syrian security services with more than \$6 billion in aid, including weapons, surveillance equipment,

"Reports have estimated that Iran has provided Syrian security services with more than \$6 billion in aid, including weapons, surveillance equipment, and technology to monitor email, cell phones, and social media."

Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL)

Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL) delivered remarks at the invitation-only opening reception. He called Iran "the single greatest threat to international security," and spoke about the Iran Human Rights and Democracy Promotion Act, which he co-spon-

it United States policy to support the Iranian people's efforts to bring about democratic reform, to help them access and share information freely and safely, and to deny Iran the ability to continue to oppress its own people.

technology to monitor email, cell phones, and social media," Deutch said. Iran also has sent members of its elite Quds Force to train Assad's forces. Deutch praised FDD for playing an instrumental role "in helping to identify many of the technologies



Bruce Lane, Stanley Tate, David Naftaly, Mark Dubowitz, Carlyn Mayer, Lothar Mayer, Benjamin Weinthal



Dianne Sehler, Robert Norton, Claudia Rosett



Charlie Moed, Mark Pruzanski



Rep. Deutch, Ken Schwartz

“It is only a short jump from 20 percent enriched uranium to the 90 percent enrichment level needed to produce a nuclear weapon.”

Representative Ted Deutch (D-FL)

used by the Iranian regime to repress its people.”

The Iranians, Deutch said, have a vested interest in seeing that Assad remains in power. Earlier in 2011, the lawmaker said, Iran began constructing a \$23 million base in Syria to house weapons. “Syria serves as the conduit for most weapons shipments to Hezbollah, and to Hamas and other terrorist organizations,” that attack both Israel and America, he said.

Deutch issued an unequivocal warning about Iran’s drive for nuclear weapons.

“We know that the regime is tripling its output of 20 percent enriched uranium under the guise of powering a medical research reactor,” Deutch said, and is continuing to install advanced centrifuges at an underground facility. “It is only a short jump from 20 percent enriched uranium to the 90 percent

enrichment level needed to produce a nuclear weapon.”

Deutch also noted that Iran is at a crossroads. With cracks in President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s base of support, the violent storming of the British Embassy in Tehran in late November, and the thwarted plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the U.S., Iran is “more isolated from the international community than ever before.”

It is urgent, he said, that the U.S. and its allies continue to pressure the Iranian regime through economic and human rights sanctions.

Deutch vowed to continue to do his part in Congress “to pass the toughest sanctions legislation, including language designating the Central Bank of Iran as financing terrorism and proliferation activity, and to work with our international partners to do the same.”

Keynote Address

AMBASSADOR RON PROSOR, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations



Ambassador Ron Prosor

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations says the largest impediment to peace between Israel and the Palestinians is the Palestinians' quest for the right of return, coupled with their refusal to engage in direct negotiations without preconditions.

In his keynote address, which kicked off the Foundation for Defense of Democracies' 2011 annual *Washington*

Forum at the Newseum, Ambassador Ron Prosor also discussed the Arab Spring and Iran's nuclear activities. Such a "right of return," he said, would mean the destruction of the State of Israel. "Even people on the [Israeli] left would not sign something like that," he said. While Palestinian officials who have participated in negotiations know that, the people in the Palestinian street do not, he said.

To bolster his argument, Prosor said it was no accident that in Mahmoud

Prosor contrasted Abbas' speech with statements made in 1995 by Jordanian King Hussein, who spoke of "all the children of Abraham" and referred to Israel as the "birthplace of three religions." Similarly, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat spoke of the land of Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad in his landmark speech to the Knesset in 1977.

Prosor declared that Palestinian efforts to seek recognition of statehood at the UN amounted to a distraction that has likely reached a dead end because "they don't have the nine votes" they need to advance the request in the Security Council.

Direct negotiations are the only way to move forward, he said, noting that Palestinian unilateral steps will not work. "When we did unilateral steps in Gaza, it did not work," he said, referring to Israel's 2005 disengagement from Gaza. Israelis viewed the pullout as a show of strength, he explained, but Hamas had a different narrative. They viewed the Israelis "as

"Direct negotiations are the only way to move forward. Palestinian unilateral steps will not work."

Ambassador Ron Prosor, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations

Forum at the Newseum, Ambassador Ron Prosor also discussed the Arab Spring and Iran's nuclear activities.

Prosor believes that Palestinians are saying: "We want an independent Palestinian state, but we want our people to come to [live in] the Jewish state."

Abbas' UN address in September, the Palestinian president spoke about Muslim and Christian connections to the land, but said nothing of Jewish ones. Prosor called this a "deliberate attempt to deny the unbroken and unbreakable bond between Jews and the land."

running away with their tail between their legs."

"Peace with Egypt was not imposed, it was negotiated. Peace with Jordan was not imposed, it was negotiated," he said. Only direct meetings can achieve something, he continued. "At

the end of the day, that's the only way forward."

Prosor spoke of "triple standards" held by the international community: There is a "standard for democracies, a standard for dictatorships, and a special standard for Israel." As an example, he cited the UN's Human Rights Council, whose Article 4 deals with human rights worldwide, while Article 7 deals solely with Israel.

Israel's right to defend itself is being eroded. While the international community is very vocal when it comes to reprimanding Israel, that same community "usually stutters or mumbles" when it comes to chastising the Palestinians.

Ambassador Ron Prosor

Meanwhile, Israel's right to defend itself is being eroded, Prosor said. While the international community is very vocal when it comes to reprimanding Israel, that same community "usually stutters or mumbles" when it comes to chastising the Palestinians.

According to conventional wisdom, "the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the major conflict in the Middle East, and if you solve that conflict, you solve all the other conflicts," Prosor said. However, the Arab Spring and growing worries of an Iran nuclear weapon have proved otherwise.

Prosor wondered aloud why the Arab states were so concerned about



Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Amb. Haim Waxman, Amb. Ron Prosor



the Palestinians, but so reluctant to support the Palestinians financially. Recent Wikileaks cables, Prosor said, demonstrate that Arabs do not lose sleep over the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but over Iran.

Prosor also suggested that Washington focus on what Iran is doing beyond nuclear weapons. Its dangerous rhetoric continues to escalate, as it threatens to "erase Israel off the map."

The first time Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad mentioned this, people were shocked, Prosor said. But every successive time he echoes those words, the shock diminishes. "The repetition of things and making them more legitimate by repeating them and repeating them is as

dangerous as nuclear weapons... If we don't stand up today and now, don't be surprised if the strategic environment in the Middle East will change completely."

The effects of Iranian influence in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt are worrisome, he said, although few Israeli officials say it that publicly. "Anything we say would basically be held against us," he said.

Concluding on a positive note, Prosor said that 133 UN member nations supported an Israeli proposal to make farming technology more accessible to African nations. Israel's ambassador to the United Nations seeks support for the "good stuff that Israel is doing that the world doesn't know about."

Evolution of The Iranian Threat

ROYA HAKAKIAN, Journalist and Author of *Assassins of the Turquoise Palace*

THOMAS JOSCELYN, FDD Senior Fellow

DR. EMANUELE OTTOLENGHI, FDD Senior Fellow

DR. JOHN SCHINDLER, Former National Security Agency counterterrorism expert

Moderator: CLIFFORD D. MAY, FDD President



Roya Hakakian, Journalist and Author



Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi, Dr. John Schindler, Roya Hakakian, Thomas Joscelyn, Cliff May



Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi, Senior Fellow, FDD



Cliff May, President, FDD

The benefit of military action against Iran is a hotly contested issue. Roya Hakakian, an Iranian-born author and journalist, and Dr. John Schindler, former National Security Agency expert in counterterrorism and counterespionage, both warned that an American military attack on the facilities controlled by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) would have dire consequences.

Hakakian cautioned against playing into the Iranian leaders' hands. If the United States attacks, she said, "we will have played Santa to the wishes of the Iranian regime." Citing both the foiled plot to kill the Saudi ambassador to the U.S. in a bombing at a Washington restaurant in October and the successful attack on the British Embassy in Iran in late November, she added, "they are doing precisely what they can to provoke war. I wouldn't want to give them a gift."

Schindler agreed, "It would be a god-send for the regime."

Hakakian and Schindler were responding to a question from FDD Chairman and former CIA Director R. James Woolsey, who proposed a hypothetical scenario to the panelists: The president of the United States learns that within three months, Iran will have opera-

"If the option is doing nothing or B-2 raids, the answer is always going to be nothing," said Schindler, now a professor at the U.S. Naval War College. However, he added, "If the cost is judged worthwhile, let's roll. But, the consequences would be dire, and we may only be buying time."

Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi, a senior fel-

"If the United States attacks, we will have played Santa to the wishes of the Iranian regime."

Roya Hakakian, Journalist and Author

tional nuclear weapons and has been working with Venezuela, so it could conceivably be able to strike the U.S. How would Iran react, Woolsey asked, if the president ordered strikes on all the IRGC's facilities?

low at FDD, added that while many believe the Iranian people would rally around the regime in the event of an attack, he is not so certain. Ottolenghi said that while some believe the world will adjust to a nuclear Iran, just as it adjusted to a nuclear Soviet Union,



Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi, Dr. John Schindler, Roya Hakakian, Thomas Joscelyn, Cliff May

“implications of a nuclear Iran ... may be just as bad and possibly much worse” than the consequences of an attack.

THE JERUSALEM POST

Dismantling Iran's clerical regime

December 12, 2011

“What Iran does in and out of the country goes hand-in-hand. It is inseparable,” said [Roya Hakakian] the critically acclaimed author of several books on Iran.

While speaking on the panel “[Evolution of the Iranian Threat](#)” at the [Foundation for Defense of Democracies \(FDD\)](#) Forum last week, she called for a comprehensive policy toward Iran that is not just nuclear-based.

Ottolenghi warned of the political, economic, and military strength of the IRGC. Along with its military strength, the IRGC’s huge economic influence and allegiance to the Supreme Leader made it a political power, Ottolenghi said. “They are the veritable power behind the throne,” he said. “It is very important that the international community continue to go after them relentlessly, aggressively.”

Another FDD senior fellow, Thomas Joscelyn, said the conventional wisdom that Sunnis and Shiites don’t collaborate is a myth. “This is so flatly false,” he said, pointing to Iran’s support for al-Qaeda and for the Taliban in Afghanistan.



Dr. John Schindler, Former NSA counterterrorism official

“The American government has been operating under the assumption that there is no state sponsorship of al-Qaeda, but the 9/11 Commission found pages and pages of links and recommended further investigations. Those investigations have not taken place.”

Thomas Joscelyn, Senior Fellow, FDD

“The American government has been operating under the assumption that there is no state sponsorship of al-Qaeda,” he said, but the 9/11 Commission found pages and pages of links and recommended further investigations. Those investigations have not taken place.



Thomas Joscelyn, Senior Fellow, FDD

Schindler agreed, calling it a “huge blind spot” for the U.S. government and terrorism experts.

Joscelyn said the only reason that there is not a full alliance between Iran and al-Qaeda is the latter’s reluctance “to be owned and beholden to anyone.”

Hakakian noted that inside Iran, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has “lost any legitimacy or any popularity he had when he took office.” She implied that Iran was ripe for political change from within.

Could change come before Iran reaches the nuclear threshold? This could negate the need for intervention.

Schindler warned a nuclear Iran would mean radical change for the entire region. If Iran has a nuclear weapon on Monday, he said, the Saudis will have one by Wednesday and the Turks won’t be very far behind.

The Syrian Factor: The Middle East With And Without The Assad Dynasty

AMMAR ABDULHAMID, FDD Fellow

TONY BADRAN, FDD Research Fellow

BRIAN KATULIS, Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress

ANDREW TABLER, Next Generation Fellow, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Moderator: JOSH ROGIN, *Foreign Policy*



Brian Katulis, Tony Badran, Andrew Tabler, Ammar Abdulhamid, Josh Rogin



Tony Badran, Research Fellow, FDD



Ammar Abdulhamid, Fellow, FDD

More international action is necessary against the Assad regime—maybe even military action. That was the message from panelists on this panel that grappled with questions surrounding Syria.

For weeks, Syrian protesters had been demanding foreign intervention, a no-fly zone and safe havens, said Ammar Abdulhamid, an FDD fellow and Syrian-born activist. The protesters “want a more proactive international role,” he said, noting that the international response has been completely inadequate. The Western decision not to put a military option on the table assures President Bashar Assad “that he can continue doing whatever he wants.”

Abdulhamid argued that the United States should intervene in Syria to prevent a civil war, and suggested that

Washington send a special envoy to work with Assad’s opposition. He said the Free Syrian Army—composed of defectors from the regular army, who face the death penalty if they are caught—is emerging as the strongest opposition force. If the FSA “is not sup-

If you want to have influence with the Free Syrian Army, “you have to become the institute that is influencing them and giving them advice.”

Ammar Abdulhamid, Fellow, FDD

ported and encouraged to put all the [opposition] groups under its wings, it could be a dangerous situation,” he said, as smaller groups may become radicalized if left to themselves.

If you want to have influence with the FSA, Abdulhamid continued, “You have to become the institute that is influencing them and giving them advice.”

He also advocated identifying groups that the U.S. would want to empower if and when Assad is deposed. Such groups need to join together and present the international community with a signed covenant in which they vow to protect human rights, he said.

Andrew Tabler, a fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and a co-founder of *Syria Today*, Syria’s first private-sector English-language magazine, pointed out that the Obama Administration’s policy toward Syria has evolved. Whereas Washington previously looked at Syria through the lens of the Arab-Israeli peace process,



Brian Katulis, Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress

he said, it now looks at Syria as an Iranian proxy.

Iraq comes into the picture, too, said Brian Katulis, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, noting that Iraq is Syria's largest trading partner. In his view, if the U.S. really wants to talk about supporting regime change, Iraq is going to be key.

"FDD has been a valued resource to many agencies throughout the U.S. government in helping to address some of the nation's most critical foreign policy issues in a complicated world."

Puneet Talwar, Senior Director for the Gulf States, Iran and Iraq at the National Security Council

Katulis said that it was puzzling that Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is repositioning himself toward Iran when only a few years ago, he was condemning the regime in Damascus.

Tony Badran, a research fellow at FDD, argued that there was a bizarre reluctance on the part of the Obama Administration to lead on Syria and that the U.S. had initially "subcontracted" its Syria policy to the Turks, but warned that ceding leadership to the Turks or other regional actors like



Andrew Tabler, Next Generation Fellow, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Qatar or Saudi Arabia wouldn't work because they were "weak reeds."

Katulis countered that the Obama Administration's policy has been effective, first in applying sanctions, and then calling on Assad to step down, all the while being mindful of the overarching threat of Syrian-supported terrorist networks.

He likened criticisms of President Obama's policy of "leading from behind" to Tom Sawyer's getting others to paint the fence. The fence got painted, he said, and "the administration understood that Turkey was going to have leverage."

Discussing sanctions, Tabler urged patience, saying that sanctions take time to work. The Europeans purchased 95 percent of Syria's crude oil, and sanctions are said to have cost Syria as much as \$10 billion. "Their reserves have been depleted," he said. "That eats away at the ability to buy bullets."

Nonetheless, he said, it's very clear that Assad isn't going to stop attacking his opponents.

Sanctions, coupled with "other powers moving into the intervention room with the United States and the Europeans," namely the Arab League and the Turks, will have a major impact, Tabler said.



Josh Rogin, *Foreign Policy*

Tabler added that Turkey or the Arab League might create a buffer zone inside Syria, along the Turkish frontier, to give Syrian dissidents a safe haven. A no-fly zone might be possible as well, but given Syria's extensive air defenses, it would be harder to establish than the no-fly zone in Libya in 2011.

Noting that the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaeda sympathizers were winning free elections in Egypt, one member of the audience asked what could be done to assure that this wouldn't be repeated in Syria.

Badran explained that though the Assad regime had severely damaged the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s, the organization would still very likely play a role today. However, Badran said that the Sunni community in Syria has historically been divided, and it is reasonable to predict that this division would likely sharpen after Assad's fall.

Abdulhamid added that while Islamists are not a power on the ground in Syria, they are able to organize quickly—as the Salafists did in Egypt. He also noted that the Sunnis have secular elements as well.

Congressional Remarks

REPRESENTATIVE HOWARD BERMAN (D-CA)



Representative Howard Berman (D-CA)

Sanctions against Iran must be “as bold as the Iranian nuclear program is brazen,” said Representative Howard Berman (D-CA), ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Calling for strong sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran’s petroleum sector, Berman argued that the United States should increase pressure on Iran to prevent the Islamic Republic from developing a nuclear weapon. He further defended President Obama’s commitment to sanctions, and declared that those who charge the administration with failing to prevent a nuclear Iran are “flat wrong.”

He added, however, that Congress must not give in to entreaties from the administration “to dilute our approach to sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran’s petroleum transactions.” This was a reference to an amendment to the Iran Threat Reduction Act that Berman authored, designed to isolate the Central Bank of Iran from the global financial system. The House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously adopted the measure, and

the full House of Representatives passed the bill in mid-December.

Berman delivered his remarks as the Senate debated the Menendez-Kirk amendment to the Defense Authorization Act, which would sanction Iranian petroleum transactions 180 days after enactment, meaning mid-June 2012 at the earliest. Berman sought to speed up the time frame. He argued that 120 days would give President Obama more than enough time to build an international coalition to support sanctions against the Central Bank of Iran, but also help to solve possible disruptions in the world oil market.

A shorter time frame, he said, “more accurately reflects the extreme urgency of the situation we now face.”

However, when asked whether the Menendez-Kirk sanctions should go into effect the day they are signed into law, Berman cautioned, “It does us no good to create massive financial havoc with banks and countries that are friendly to us. You need a little time to put this together.”

“Our strongest talking point in urging China and [other countries] to cooperate with sanctions is this: If sanctions fail, military action—which will certainly destabilize the region and send oil prices through the roof—could well follow. If we lose the military option, we lose the force of that argument.”

Representative Howard Berman (D-CA)

FDD’s Executive Director Mark Dubowitz concurred: “The last thing we want to do is pass sanctions that feel good, but that will plunge us into a major recession.”

Berman expressed his desire to maintain the threat of military action as a deterrent to Iran, and as a means to persuade other countries to join America in strengthening sanctions. “Our strongest talking point in urging China and [other countries] to cooperate with sanctions is this: If sanctions fail, military action—which will certainly destabilize the region and send oil prices through the roof—could well follow. If we lose the military option, we lose the force of that argument.”

Berman pointed to other possible measures Congress may soon take, crediting FDD with providing key research on some of them. He declared that the United States and its allies should also sanction the state-owned National Iranian Oil Company, which is headed by a former official of its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The Evolving Palestinian Strategy

DR. NATHAN BROWN, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, The George Washington University

DAVID MAKOVSKY, Ziegler Distinguished Fellow and Director, Project on the Middle East Peace Process, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

DR. JONATHAN SCHANZER, FDD Vice President for Research

Moderator: CLIFFORD D. MAY, FDD President



David Makovsky, Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Dr. Nathan Brown



Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Vice President of Research, FDD



Cliff May, President, FDD

“I would rather be where we are today than where we were seven years ago,” said David Makovsky of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Makovsky was referring to the Second Intifada, when Palestinian suicide bombings and attacks occurred on a weekly basis.

Today, Israelis and Palestinians under Abbas’ government in the West Bank are “coordinating, minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day,” he said. Security cooperation is good for both sides, he said, yielding more security for Israelis and less unrest in Palestinian cities.

Even in terms of incitement to violence, Makovsky believes there is improvement. “There are 1,300 mosques in the West Bank. Replacing those imams who call for jihad was not a small matter... In my view, the Palestinian

leadership is openly committed to nonviolence.”

Nathan Brown, a professor at The George Washington University, wondered why it has become so important to Israel that it be recognized specifically as a Jewish state. Israel’s existence

“We have held out Abbas as a counterweight to Hamas, empowering him and giving him all the tools he needs to survive...This has given him a sense he can pretty much do whatever he wants.”

Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Vice President of Research, FDD

as a Jewish state didn’t come up in peace negotiations with Egypt or Jordan, or even during the Oslo Accords, he noted.

Could Abbas survive if he signed a two-state agreement? “I don’t think he would be assassinated,” he said, but if he sat down with Israel with no pre-conditions and inked a deal, “it would be political suicide.”

Jonathan Schanzer, FDD’s vice president of research, remarked that the security situation between the Israelis and Palestinians has improved, largely because of the security barrier Israel has built, and because Washington has “bankrolled the Palestinian security forces, and we have ensured that the

economy has boomed.” But he disagreed with the notion that Abbas was the architect of this success. “Abbas happens to be in the right place at the right time,” he said.

Schanzer asserted that Washington has made a strategic mistake with the Palestinian leader. “We have held out Abbas as a counterweight to Hamas,



David Makovsky, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy



David Makovsky, Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Dr. Nathan Brown, Cliff May

empowering him and giving him all the tools he needs to survive,” he said. “This has given him a sense he can pretty much do whatever he wants,” including his rejection of United States-led negotiations with Israel. On this point, Schanzer cited Abbas’ bid for Palestinian statehood in the United Nations.

Schanzer also expressed concern that Abbas has taken power away from Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad, who sought to fight corruption and introduce greater transparency to the Palestinian government. Schanzer was clear to note, “All of these dangerous policies we see are coming from the [Abbas-led] PLO, not [Fayyad’s government in] Ramallah.”

Schanzer added that Abbas is politically vulnerable in the West Bank. “He is two years past his legitimate term, and he is a corrupt autocrat not unlike those who were deposed” in the regional protests.

The moderator, FDD President Cliff May, asked the panelists whether Abbas still seeks Israel’s destruction.

“He is unambiguously committed to a two-state solution,” said Brown. Makovsky added that he should not be lumped in “with enemies of Israel who would destroy it.”

Schanzer noted that while Abbas has not openly advocated terrorism, he has celebrated terrorists in public ways, and his Fatah party continues to fund the al Aqsa Martyr Brigades. “He has been dancing right on that edge,” Schanzer said.

Brown remarked that the Abbas-led PLO would be more likely to reach a unity government with Hamas than to incite West Bank Palestinians to violence. Makovsky and Schanzer, however, cast doubt on the prospects of such a deal.

Makovsky highlighted the financial risks of a unity government. “Doing it means risking \$1.2 billion in money that Israel [collects in customs],” he said, plus another \$400 million from the U.S. No other country is stepping up with \$1.6 billion per year, he said.

Schanzer questioned whether the two parties could find sufficient common ground. The two sides “can’t agree on the color of hummus,” Schanzer said. However, he noted that Hamas wouldn’t want to be left out of UN recognition of Palestinian statehood, while Abbas needs unity with Hamas in order to hold legitimate elections.

Brown argued that a third intifada has begun—this time, with demands for human rights and citizenship, calls for boycotts, divestment, sanctions, and low-level violence. He doubted the ability to conduct negotiations under

“As Iran continues its pursuit of nuclear weapons, FDD has emerged as one of the most innovative think tanks in Washington when it comes to developing effective policies to stop the Islamic Republic before it’s too late. The kind of time-sensitive research, analysis and expertise that FDD provides the Congress is simply invaluable.”

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL)

Makovsky described five clocks ticking against Israel if negotiations don’t resume: demographic trends that erode Israel’s democracy; growing Palestinian radicalization that could empower Hamas; improved rockets that will be able to hit the heart of Israel; Israel’s growing international isolation; and the emboldening of Islamists who reject normalization with Israel in the surrounding Arab states.

Theaters of War

PAUL BERMAN, Contributing Editor, *The New Republic*

DR. CATHERINE DALE, Specialist in International Security, Congressional Research Service

LT. COL. JOHN NAGL (USA, Ret.), President, Center for a New American Security

BILL ROGGIO, FDD Senior Fellow and Editor, FDD's *The Long War Journal*

Moderator: SCOTT SHANE, *The New York Times*



Bill Roggio, John Nagl, Catherine Dale, Paul Berman



Paul Berman, Contributing Editor, *The New Republic*



Scott Shane, *The New York Times*



Bill Roggio, Senior Fellow, FDD

"Predator strikes are necessary. However, there's a drawback. It is inflaming Pakistan opinion."

Bill Roggio, Senior Fellow, FDD

As the United States prepares to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, it badly needs to stand up security forces that can defend the country from the burgeoning Taliban insurgency, several panelists warned.

The Obama Administration has two core goals: Defeating al-Qaeda and preventing it from finding safe havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan, said Catherine Dale of the Congressional Research Service. She had recently returned from Kabul.

In the security arena, "we're on the right trajectory," she said, citing progress in the fight against the insurgency and increased cooperation with Afghan security forces. "The right mix going forward probably involves continued operations... by some of our combat forces together with the introduction of commanders and advisers on the ground."

The civilian side is trickier, Dale said. "We need to exercise leverage while we still have it to shape an Afghan system that can be held accountable."

John Nagl, president of the Center for a New American Security and a retired Army lieutenant colonel, believes the war in Afghanistan has crested. "The challenge is to hold what we've gained and continue to make progress," he said. Nagl had also recently returned from Afghanistan.

He called U.S. operations in Afghanistan's south and southwest successful, but said in the east, "we simply haven't had the resources to be as aggressive in our counterinsurgency."

Like Dale, he said the U.S. should move to an "advise-and-assist mission in which we put Afghans in the lead, embed American advisers in all of the



Dr. Catherine Dale, Congressional Research Service

Afghan units... and rapidly increase the capabilities of the Afghan units” to prepare them for the American withdrawal in 2014.

Nagl called 2014 a “triple witching hour” for Afghanistan: the end of American and NATO troops, a decrease in international money, and the end of President Hamid Karzai’s final term.

Dale agreed with Nagl that the way forward “is for the Afghan system to function, for our own role to increasingly step back.”

Addressing American efforts to target terrorists in Pakistan, Bill Roggio, FDD senior fellow and editor of its *Long War Journal*, said that the “Predator strikes are necessary. However, there’s a drawback. It is inflaming Pakistan opinion.”

Roggio called drone strikes “the most non-covert covert operations I’ve ever witnessed.” They have successfully targeted senior al-Qaeda leaders, external operations figures, as well as leaders of allied groups.

The operations have “done a good job of keeping the al-Qaeda network... on its back foot,” said Roggio, but they have been less successful with other al-Qaeda affiliate groups. “These groups have thousands of fighters and hundreds of leaders” in Pakistan, Roggio said.



Lt. Col. John Nagl (USA, Ret.), President, Center for a New American Security

Paul Berman, contributing editor for *The New Republic* and author of *Terror and Liberalism*, referred to the Arab uprisings as the first phase of the post-colonial revolution and the collapse of pan-Arabist nationalist movements, “leading to a moment of ideological confusion.” Islamism is now filling the void, he noted.

Berman said that focusing on military options “blinds us to the larger problem” that the Islamist movement continues to recruit from universities. “We have to engage with the Islamist movement and we have to argue against it,” he said.

“It is a political movement. It has tremendous intellectual strengths,” Berman said. It is not a coincidence, he said, that one al-Qaeda leader after another turned out to be highly educated.

Moreover, Islamists are successfully establishing the parameters for debate. For example, he noted, “moderate’ has come to mean whatever the Islamist movement declares to be moderate.”

Ominously, Berman observed, “If you don’t want to go around massacring entire villages in your own country, but you do want to massacre Jews—all of them—you are a moderate.”

“FDD has been one of the most committed and creative voices in Washington regarding the Iran nuclear issue and specifically Iran sanctions. Your ideas inspired important components of the sanctions bill I authored and passed last Congress when I was Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and your ideas continue to enrich my thinking about sanctions as we move forward. My recent conversation in my office with Mark Dubowitz was one of the most enlightening I’ve had regarding Iran sanctions and oil markets.”

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

THE JERUSALEM POST

US to turn non-military screws on Iran

December 11, 2011

A two-day forum sponsored by the [Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#) featured a bipartisan group of lawmakers seeking to force Tehran to abandon work on nuclear weapons, as well as its domestic and foreign terror operations

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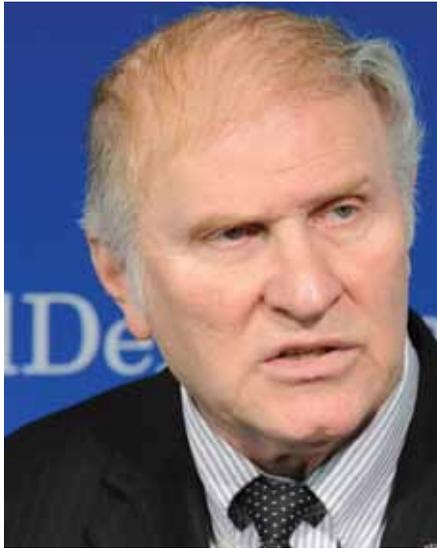
Sen. Robert Menendez (D-New Jersey) said at the [Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#) event that there is “no choice but to impose the most robust sanctions possible.”

Congressional Remarks

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT (R-OH)

“The U.S. must remain a steady ally to all those who wish to see genuine democracy rise from the ash heap of authoritarianism.”

Representative Steve Chabot (R-OH)



Representative Steve Chabot (R-OH)

Representative Steve Chabot (R-OH), chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, criticized President Obama for doing too little to prevent Iran from violating the human rights of its people. Chabot described Washington’s actions after Iran’s fraudulent presidential elections in June 2009 as both “feeble” and “late.”

“To highlight human rights abuses and then sanction fewer than a dozen individuals for abuses perpetrated against Iranians is unacceptable,” he added. “And to vacillate between condemning this regime and then later offering it a lifeline pits us against the people of that country.”

Chabot stated his opinion that the Obama Administration either believes “a grand bargain on the illicit nuclear program is possible, or it is concerned that to do so will create a situation in which it must then ensure that the regime actually falls.”

Chabot believes that Tehran views this position as weakness. The regime views

the United States as “hedging,” rather than leading. The Ohio congressman said that it looks as though the administration “is waiting to see who ends up on top before picking a side.”

The “administration may think it is putting itself in a strategically advantageous position,” but “it seriously underestimates the impact its actions—or lack thereof—have on actual outcomes,” said Chabot.

In general, Chabot said, he fears that “we are squandering” an opportunity to help the Middle East progress, which could “advance our own interests.”

“Making no decision is a decision in itself,” Chabot warned.

Referring to the reforms that Obama called for in his Cairo speech in June 2009, Chabot noted that many of the ideas resonated with the Muslim people. “Unfortunately, many of those measures were never implemented,” he said.

What would have happened, he mused,

if the United States had lobbied its allies in the region more effectively to implement political reform? “Could we have had liberalization without the violence and bloodshed that we see now?” he asked. One thing is certain, he said, “The Arab Spring has made clear that no country, region, or people are immune to the desire for freedom.”

On the question of Egypt, the Ohio congressman said that the United States must help the country ensure freedom of speech and assembly, equal rights for women, religious and ethnic minorities, and a free press. Acknowledging that the Muslim Brotherhood has voiced “very troubling things,” Chabot said that congressional decisions on continued U.S. assistance must ultimately be shaped by “choices and policies made by whatever Egyptian government the Egyptian people choose to elect.”

“We would obviously react very differently to any government that does not respect the institutions of free government, discriminates against or represses its citizens, or which pursues policies which are destabilizing in the region,” Chabot stated.

Broadly speaking, Chabot asserted that the U.S. must remain “a steady ally to all those who wish to see genuine democracy rise from the ash heap of authoritarianism.”

“Supporting the legitimate aspirations of all peoples is not just good public relations; it is good policy,” he said.

The Arab Revolts and Their Impact on the Regional Balance of Power

KHAIRI ABAZA, FDD Senior Fellow

SONER CAGAPTAY, Senior Fellow and Director, Turkish Research Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

REUEL MARC GERECHT, FDD Senior Fellow and former CIA Iran operative

LEE SMITH, FDD Fellow

Moderator: JACKSON DIEHL, *The Washington Post*



Lee Smith, Soner Cagaptay, Khairi Abaza, Reuel Marc Gerecht



Reuel Marc Gerecht, Senior Fellow, FDD



Jackson Diehl, *The Washington Post*

Turkey plays an increasingly important role in the new Middle East, said Soner Cagaptay, who directs The Washington Institute for Near East Policy's Turkish research program. "The view from Ankara is that Turkey is the region's leader."

"Turkey's role in the Arab Spring can be boiled down to Turkey's role in Syria," Cagaptay said, noting that Syria—unlike the other Arab Spring countries of Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya—shares a border with Turkey, bears an Ottoman imprint, and has economic, social, and historical connections to Turkey. As the first country in the region—outside of the Gulf States—to have a successful, middle-class Muslim society, Turkey can serve as an economic model for the Mideast.

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a senior fellow at

FDD and former CIA Iran operative, agreed. Turkey represents the "possibility you can be devoutly faithful and you can be rich," said Gerecht. "The best thing for Turkey is to have it become a democratic inspiration and to actually trumpet its own economic success."

Both panelists noted, however, that Arabs are uncomfortable with the Turks' rising influence, because, as Gerecht put it, the powers in Ankara are producing "echoes of the Ottoman Empire, and they're not Arab."

Any future role for Turkey, Cagaptay said, "has to be... well-thought out" because of those concerns.

"Turkey can successfully position itself as a leader of democratic change in the Arab world if it were to write a truly liberal constitution," Cagaptay

"Why haven't we seen Syria as a positive gain for the United States by making sure that the regime falls and Hezbollah loses its depth in Syria? It's a big fault of this administration."

Lee Smith, FDD Fellow

said, referring to the countries forthcoming efforts to draft its first civilian-written constitution. For Turkey to become a true regional leader, he said, "it has to show itself as an exemplary liberal democracy."

FDD fellow Lee Smith shifted the focus to the Obama Administration's policies on Syria. "Why haven't we



Soner Cagaptay, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy



Lee Smith, Fellow, FDD



Khairi Abaza, Senior Fellow, FDD

Bloomberg

Berman Resists Pressure to Weaken Iran Sanctions Measure

December 8, 2011

“The Central Bank of Iran has become a vital intermediary for purchasers of Iranian crude because existing sanctions against the Persian Gulf country have constrained Iran’s ability to access the international financial sector to settle oil trades,” said Mark Dubowitz, director of the Iran Energy Project at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

seen Syria as a positive gain for the United States by making sure that the regime falls and Hezbollah loses its depth in Syria? It’s a big fault of this administration.” Cagaptay noted that he sees signs that the Assad regime may collapse. For example, Syrian elites are buying property in Turkey, a sign that they believe the regime’s end may be near.

The panelists predicted a rocky path forward for United States relations with Egypt. Relations will be marked by painfully slow progress, said FDD senior fellow and former Wafd party official Khairi Abaza. “It’s going to be more complex, but not impossible” to rebuild ties to the level they were under fallen dictator Hosni Mubarak, he said. However, relations with a

new Islamist government there could resemble the 1950s and ’60s, when Egypt got its weapons from the Soviet Union and wheat from the U.S.

Gerecht expressed doubts that the U.S. would have much traction with a Muslim Brotherhood government. “The only possible area where the Muslim Brotherhood might consider something with the U.S. is if they could get something for nothing,” he said, perhaps accepting U.S. military support or other aid.

If Turkey gains influence in Egypt, he said, “marrying Islamism to capitalism” would become a possibility. Much more likely, Gerecht said, “you’ll see fairly socialistic trends continue in Egypt. The economy will take a second seat to virtue.” Gerecht further predicted that Egypt would put its peace treaty with Israel up for review.

Moderator Jackson Diehl, a *Washington Post* columnist, wondered if the U.S. could use International Monetary Fund support for Egypt as leverage in accomplishing such objectives as maintaining Egyptian peace with Israel and keeping al-Qaeda out of the Sinai Peninsula. Gerecht expressed skepticism, while Abaza said the prospect of economic collapse could put pressure on the

Muslim Brotherhood to fulfill Egypt’s obligations.

For his part, Smith favored economic pressure on the Brotherhood “to maintain the peace treaty with Israel.”

Smith pointed out that a rise in Islamism in Egypt would mean a rise in anti-Zionism, anti-Semitism, and anti-Americanism. “You’re describing a state of 83 million that is going to look at the U.S. as an enemy.”

Giving a historical perspective on Egypt, Gerecht said its “evolution, as it should have been, stopped sometime after World War II,” and it would have been better had Egypt remained under British rule for a longer occupation. Instead, it ended up importing “foreign ideas of legal codes that had no bearing on Islamic tradition.”

What Egypt and other Arab states need today, Gerecht said, is a debate on the role of Islam in society. But the former CIA operative warned that political evolution in Europe “was pretty bloody awful.” To this, he noted, “We have to hope the Muslims do a better job than the Christians did.”

Legislators Discuss Iran and Syria Sanctions

SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ (D-NJ)

REPRESENTATIVE ELIOT ENGEL (D-NY)



Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)



Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY)

In separate addresses, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY) stated that the United States would take greater measures to promote regime change in Iran and Syria.

Menendez spoke primarily on Iran, while Engel addressed the ongoing violence in Syria, where forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad have been slaughtering the regime's opponents.

Menendez voiced support for Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) in her efforts to impose financial sanctions on Syria, giving "countries a choice of doing business with the U.S. or Syria, but not both." He also called for stronger measures against Iran, which has threatened to close the Straits of Hormuz, a key oil trade waterway.

"The timeline for acting is now, not when we are facing no other choice than military action," said the senator,

who co-authored the Menendez-Kirk amendment for sanctions on financial institutions that transact with the Central Bank of Iran. The measure, he said, could force countries to "make a choice between interacting with Iran's \$350 billion economy or the United States' \$14 trillion economy."

Menendez lamented that previous sanctions on Iran—in the form of the 2010 Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act—have not been effective enough. Iran has adapted to CISADA, he said, finding ways to work around the strictures. In doing so, he said, the Iranians have been able to advance their nuclear program.

A November 2011 report by the International Atomic Energy Agency confirming the military component of Iran's nuclear program illustrates the urgent need to restrict the flow of money to Iran, the senator said.

"Leaders of the Assad regime need to be indicted for crimes against humanity by the International Court. Just as Saddam Hussein and his son were charged, so must Assad and his henchmen be as well."

Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY)

Despite existing sanctions, he said, Iran continues to sell 2.3 million barrels per day of crude oil, generating \$80 billion annually for the regime.

Menendez dismissed concerns about his amendment's impact on U.S. allies. "The European nations and particularly the French are considering their own Iranian oil embargo," he said.

Noting that China continues to be a major trading partner with Iran, he criticized the Obama Administration's reluctance to sanction Chinese companies. "There is ample evidence that they are violating our laws," he said.

"Tightening the screws on Iran genuinely advances the causes of stability and peace in the Middle East," Menendez added, helping "us maintain an advantageous balance of power that protects Israel and the region—ultimately the world—from the intended or unintended consequences of proliferation."

Foreign Policy

Inside the conference negotiations on Iran sanctions

December 8, 2011

“Every administration wants total discretion on foreign policy, but that is an impulse that Congress must always resist,” Berman said at a conference on Thursday sponsored by the Foundation for the [Defense of Democracies \(FDD\)](#), a conservative policy and research organization. “I will not, and Congress should not, give into entreaties from the administration or elsewhere ... to dilute our approach to sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran’s petroleum transactions,” Berman said to applause. “The Kirk-Menendez amendment is a good amendment.”

THE JERUSALEM POST

No substitute for US leadership on Syria

December 12, 2011

Syria is too important a country for its crisis to be handled by any actor other than the United States, experts on Mideast geopolitics and national security said late last week at an annual policy conference in Washington

...

Tony Badran – a fellow at the [Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#), the Washington think tank that organized the event – said neither the Arab League nor Turkey wield the necessary military or diplomatic clout to end a nearly nine-month government crackdown said to have killed at least 4,000 people.

Menendez also called for an Iranian-oil-free zone in the United States to ensure that Americans do not “unwittingly support Iran’s nuclear ambitions” when they fill their gas tanks.

Engel echoed the importance of sanctions on both Iran and Syria. “It’s very important for us to lead on building coalitions,” he said. “The American people are tired. We’ve had two long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq... but I don’t think we can abrogate our responsibility and turn around and leave it to everyone else.” He called for “American leadership in cooperation with our allies.”

Engel said that with the winds of the Middle East protests turning into a hurricane in Syria, both Israel and the United States were “reluctant to join the clamor to overthrow” President Hafez al-Assad. However, the legislator from New York observed that the situation in Syria “couldn’t possibly get any worse,” noting the United Nations estimates that Assad’s regime has murdered thousands of its citizens.

Engel recalled that in 2003, Congress passed the Syria Accountability Act, but since then, Presidents Bush and Obama each enforced only two sanctions measures: blocking flights by the Syrian airline and blocking certain Syrian exports. It wasn’t until August 18, 2011, he said, that Obama “finally imposed the remaining sanctions. But, still much more should be done.”

Engel said that he initially opposed U.S. Ambassador Robert Ford’s return to Damascus, believing it would give the Assad regime a “stamp of approval,” but he has since changed his mind. Ford has “helped to call attention to the brutality of the regime,” he said.

“The European Union already has adopted tough sanctions,” he said. Turkey, a longtime friend of the Syrian regime, “has finally become one of Assad’s strongest critics.” But Engel identified China and Russia as impediments to international sanctions. “We have to keep pressuring those two countries to impose tough sanctions on Syria,” he said.

Engel called for a redoubling of efforts to monitor Syria’s nuclear program and for a strategy to help the Syrian opposition. He further called for the Assad regime to be indicted for war crimes.

“The timeline for acting is now, not when we are facing no other choice than military action. The measure could force countries to make a choice between interacting with Iran’s \$350 billion economy or the United States’ \$14 trillion economy.”

Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)

“Leaders of the Assad regime need to be indicted for crimes against humanity by the International Court. Just as Saddam Hussein and his son were charged, so must Assad and his henchmen be as well,” Engel said.

Reception & Dinner at The Embassy of Canada

GARY DOER Ambassador of Canada to the United States



Gary Doer, Ambassador of Canada to the United States

Gary Doer, Canada's Ambassador to the United States, hosted FDD's close friends and top supporters for a cocktail reception and dinner at the Canadian Embassy. The evening featured an intimate conversation on energy policy with FDD Chairman and former CIA Director R. James Woolsey and FDD Advisor Robert "Bud" McFarlane, who served as national security advisor under President Ronald Reagan. Joining them was Canadian Political Minister Kevin O'Shea. They discussed how America's dependence on foreign oil has weakened America's national security. The speakers agreed that a partnership between the United States and Canada would be mutually beneficial to both nations' economic, energy, and national security.



Kevin O'Shea, Robert "Bud" McFarlane



Cheryl Halpern, Mark Charendoff



Ron Garson, Wendy Child, Kevin O'Shea, Bob Child



Henry Feuerstein, Andy Albstein, Ben Heller



Dan Raviv, Jack Mowell, Ann Mowell



David Naftaly, Ken Schwartz, John Hannah

Keynote Address

PUNEET TALWAR Senior Director for the Gulf States, Iran, and Iraq at the National Security Council

“Iran is weakened at home, diminished in the region, and isolated in the world,” said Puneet Talwar, special assistant to the president and senior director for the Gulf States, Iran, and Iraq at the National Security Council. “In this sense, we’ve changed the dynamic since President Obama took office.”

Three years ago, Talwar continued, “the regime was highly united. Today, the regime is defined by division. Three years ago, the international community was divided. Today, we have an unprecedented degree of unity, with our allies and partners, that Iran must be held accountable. Three years ago, it was uncertain whether additional pressure could be brought to bear. Today, the regime is subject to the broadest and strongest sanctions it has ever faced.”

Before Obama took office, Talwar said, many gave Iran the benefit of the doubt, blaming Washington for tensions over Iran’s nuclear program. Obama was determined to change the dynamic.

During the Obama presidency, Talwar said, the United States has “led the way on an unprecedented array of sanctions that have imposed a significant price for Iran’s behavior and delayed Iran’s nuclear program.”

Those sanctions include not just the toughest U.S. sanctions ever, he said, but also United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929, which Talwar said succeeded in creating an international front against Iran. Talwar added that Resolution 1929 led Russia to cancel the sale of a missile system to Iran.

Sanctions have since slowed Iran’s nuclear program, making “it more dif-

ficult for Iran to acquire key material for equipment for its enrichment program,” Talwar said. In 2007, the head of Iran’s atomic energy program predicted that Iran would have 50,000 centrifuges within four years. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran today has 8,000 centrifuges, with perhaps 6,000 operating. A UN panel in 2011 also confirmed that sanctions have slowed the Iranian nuclear program.

Talwar further noted that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has “called sanctions the heaviest economic onslaught against Iran ever.” That is because Iran is facing \$100 billion in shortages for investments in oil and gas, high inflation, and high unemployment.

“We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.”



Puneet Talwar

“Globally, Iran is isolated like never before,” Talwar said. “Iran sees fewer friends, fewer protectors, and fewer business partners.”

Puneet Talwar, Senior Director for the Gulf States, Iran, and Iraq at the National Security Council

Businesses are “leaving the country in droves,” Talwar said, listing several major companies, including Royal Dutch Shell, Toyota, Kia, and Credit Suisse.

Talwar touted that the U.S. has deepened its defense partnerships in the region and enhanced its presence. “We have worked to develop a network of air and missile defenses, shared early warning, improved maritime security, closer counterterrorism cooperation,” he said, and expanded efforts to harden and protect allies’ critical infrastructure.

Shortly after taking office, Obama presented Iran with an opportunity for dialogue. It was a bona fide offer of dialogue, but when rejected, “Iran’s intransigence would be exposed to the rest of the world.”

Additionally, he said, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad seem headed for confrontation. “The supreme leader recently talked about abolishing the presidency,” Talwar said.

Iran has also failed to shape Iraq into a client state, he said, and has thus far failed to exploit the Arab Spring. “Like al-Qaeda, Iran’s model of extremism, violence, and denial of human rights is rejected,” Talwar said

Iran’s leaders can still choose an easier path by cooperating with the IAEA and abiding by UN resolutions, Talwar noted. But “if Iran does not change course, the pressure will grow,” he declared. “We are determined to prevent Iran from

Toward an Effective Middle East Policy

JOHN HANNAH, FDD Senior Fellow and former national security advisor to Vice President Cheney and Secretary of State Warren Christopher

AMBASSADOR JOHN LIMBERT, former Iranian hostage and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iran

STEPHEN RADEMAKER, Principal at the Podesta Group, and former Assistant Secretary of State

R. JAMES WOOLSEY, FDD Chairman and former Director of Central Intelligence Agency

Moderator: MARK DUBOWITZ, FDD Executive Director



John Limbert, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iran



R. James Woolsey, former Director of Central Intelligence; Chairman, FDD



Stephen Rademaker, John Limbert, R. James Woolsey, John Hannah

John Limbert, the former United States deputy assistant secretary of state for Iran who was also held hostage by the regime in 1979, defended the Obama Administration's attempts to engage in negotiations with Tehran, noting that "one 45-minute meeting in two years" isn't much in the way of diplomacy.

"Iran would remain isolated and diplomatically weak" even if it were to acquire nuclear weapons, Limbert argued. "How does a nuclear weapon improve Iran's position vis-à-vis Syria? How does it help the Ba'ath government deal with the rebellion?" he asked, claiming that while Iran "has been involved in some very nasty business... we have a distorted image of what they can do."

Other panelists disagreed. Notably, Stephen Rademaker, a principal at the Podesta Group and a former assistant secretary of state, pointed out that Iran

fought a proxy war with Israel in 2006, through Hezbollah. Iran was restrained in the weapons it gave Hezbollah, he said, recognizing that at some point, "Israel would hit back at the patron of the proxy." If Iran had nuclear weapons in 2006, then Israel's ability to retaliate would have been diminished, he said. Moreover, Iran "would have been much more unrestrained in what it was prepared to do."

The Iranian leaders see nuclear weapons as a key to changing the region through violence, Rademaker said. "It increases their options for meddling in the rest of the region," and reaching their goal of destroying Israel.

A nuclear Iran would create massive instability in the region, said John Hannah, an FDD senior fellow and former national security advisor to Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Hannah

asserted that the "slightest crisis could lead to a miscalculation, and that's enormously dangerous." Additionally, once Iran had nuclear weapons, its neighbors would seek them, he said, listing Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates as countries likely to follow suit.

Defending President Obama's decision to engage with Iran, Limbert said that when the president spoke of mutual respect and sent greetings for the Iranian new year celebrations of Nowruz, "he caught them off guard... It has thrown them off their game." That they didn't respond positively is hardly surprising, Limbert said, but "it's very clear that 30 years of trading insults and threats" haven't brought much change on either side.

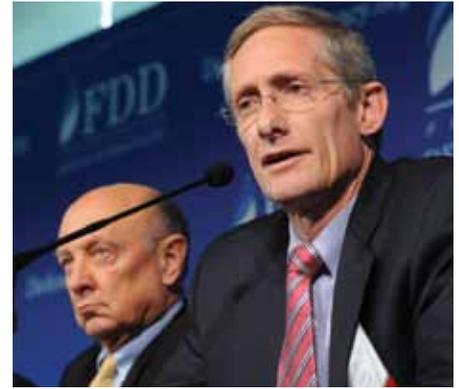
Rademaker said he didn't fault Obama for trying to see if he could negotiate with Iran, but charged that the adminis-



Stephen Rademaker, Principal, The Podesta Group



Mark Dubowitz, Executive Director, FDD



R. James Woolsey, John Hannah

“The U.S. must support the Syrian opposition in a much more robust way than we have been...This is a huge strategic opportunity for the U.S.”

John Hannah, Senior Fellow, FDD

tration failed to cease trying after it was clear talks had failed. “I fault the administration for persisting in this,” he said.

Sanctions have accomplished a lot, but not enough to persuade Iran to change direction, Rademaker said. He likened U.S. Iran policy to a three-legged stool: sanctions, diplomacy, and “this vaguely worded, ‘all options are on the table’ threat that America is prepared to use military force.”

The problem “is no one believes the Obama Administration is prepared to use force,” Rademaker said, suggesting the “threat of military action has to be made more credible.”

He also said the U.S. must take stronger action on Syria, which he identified as one of Iran’s key strategic assets. “The U.S. has a vital interest in making sure that Iran loses that asset,” Rademaker said.

R. James Woolsey, FDD chairman and former director of Central Intelligence, challenged the logic of engagement, arguing that no one knows what it

means. “Engagement can mean a promise to get married,” he quipped, or it can refer to open warfare. For example, “Little Round Top was the decisive engagement of the Battle of Gettysburg.” Woolsey argued that the Obama Administration has adopted the former approach as its means to engage.

When asked about the likelihood of Israel’s striking Iran’s nuclear facilities, Woolsey said, “I don’t think this is Israel’s duty. I think it’s ours.” He suggested a “multi-day, perhaps multi-week, bombing campaign to destroy every shred” of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. However, he said he didn’t think the Obama Administration would heed his calls.

Woolsey said the U.S. should put carrier groups in place and prepare to destroy all of Iran’s air defenses, strike “everything remotely related to the Revolutionary Guards, and try not to touch the rest of Iranian society as much as possible. Don’t take out the electricity grid. It’s not an assault on the people of Iran.”

Woolsey suggested that Washington draw up attack plans, “and then smile politely at the Iranians and say, ‘Would you be interested in giving up your nuclear weapons in a verifiable way or not? Let me know tomorrow.’”

Setting a scenario for the panelists, moderator and FDD Executive Director Mark Dubowitz asked how Washington should respond in Syria if sanctions fail to stop President Bashar Assad’s assault on his own people.

Hannah said that the situation should not deteriorate to that point. “The U.S. must support the Syrian opposition in a much more robust way than we have been,” he remarked, arguing that the Obama Administration must put a higher priority on Syria than it has so far. “This is a huge strategic opportunity for the U.S.”



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FDD's scholars represent a range of perspectives, but all agree:

- ❧ No one should be denied basic human rights — including freedom of religion, speech, and assembly; no one should be discriminated against on the basis of gender, race, creed, color, or sexual orientation.
- ❧ Free and democratic nations have a right to defend themselves and an obligation to defend one another.
- ❧ Terrorism — the deliberate use of violence against civilians to achieve political objectives — is always wrong and should not be condoned.

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