

Strategic Recalibration: Framework for a 21st- Century National Security Strategy

The release of the Obama administration's 2014 National Security Strategy comes amidst increasing criticism of its strategic savvy. Some are rank partisan, some Monday-morning quarterbacking. Some, though, reflect the intensifying debate over the optimal U.S. foreign policy strategy for our contemporary era.

At one end of the debate are those advocating *retrenchment*, who see limited global threats on one hand and prioritize domestic concerns on the other—be they the budget-cutting of the Tea Party right or the nation-building-at-home of the progressive left. At the other end are neoconservatives and others pushing for *re-assertiveness*. This is based on a bullish assessment of U.S. power and the contention that it still is both in the U.S. national interest and that of world order for the United States to be the dominant nation. While retrenchment overestimates the extent to which the United States can stand apart, re-assertiveness overestimates the extent to which it can sit atop.

The United States must remain deeply and broadly engaged in the world, but it must do so through a strategy of *recalibration* to the geopolitical, economic, technological, and other dynamics driving this 21st-century world. This entails a re-appraisal of U.S. interests, re-assessment of U.S. power, and re-positioning

Bruce W. Jentleson is a Professor at Duke University, Sanford School of Public Policy, and currently Distinguished Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. From 2009–2011, he served as Senior Advisor to the State Department Policy Planning Director. He is also an Editorial Board Member for TWQ. He can be reached at bjw7@duke.edu and on Twitter@BWJ777.

Copyright © 2014 The Elliott School of International Affairs
The Washington Quarterly • 37:1 pp. 115–136
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2014.893178>

of a leadership role to better fit a strategic environment that has been changing dramatically and is likely to continue to do so.

Strategic recalibration is not intended as yet another entry in the “Kennan sweepstakes.” Nor is it about Grand Strategy: *nostra culpa* (our bad), those of us in academia who have been reifying this term. On the other hand, it is not so detailed as to be some off-the-shelf instruction manual or full bullet-pointed action plan. Rather, it is a framework that provides the coherence and cohesiveness which an overall strategy brings—and that the Obama foreign policy too often has been lacking—while being sufficiently flexible to apply to whatever particular challenges arise.¹

Such an approach can help move the domestic debate past three unproductive tropes. One is “declinism.” In posing the issues so much about

The domestic debate needs to move past the tropes of declinism, leadership, and exceptionalism.

who the United States is and what it ostensibly is doing to itself, the discourse becomes highly self-indulgent, afflicted by its own problems of denialism, unwilling to recognize how profoundly the strategic landscape has changed, and the attendant implications for U.S. power and influence. Effective strategy requires a clear-eyed assessment of the world as it is, not as it was. It is worth recalling that none other than Hans Morgenthau, the intellectual godfather of modern U.S. realism, warned against the distractions and distortions of not getting past “residues of formerly

adequate modes of thought and action now rendered obsolete by a new social reality.”²

A second trope is U.S. leadership. For its part, the Obama 2010 National Security Strategy used the term “leadership” 59 times (not even counting “lead,” “leading,” or other related permutations), and for their part, Obama critics seized on the phrase “leading from behind” to assail the President for ostensibly not providing global leadership. Yet, on any number of issues and with any number of countries—allies, adversaries, and competitors—international politics is a lot more complicated and contentious than simply the United States leading and others either following or getting out of the way.

Then comes U.S. exceptionalism, the third trope. The resonance of a “city on the Hill” and other such images invoked amidst these times of uncertainty and shaken confidence are understandable. But they tend to be more anesthetic than stimulant, used to soothe more than energize. Patriotism and pride do need tapping, but in ways that help Americans look forward.

The next section compares retrenchment, re-assertiveness, and recalibration in terms of their overarching strategic paradigms. The following two sections

flesh out the strategic recalibration framework in two crucial arenas: the Asia–Pacific and the Middle East. These are important in their own right and also illustrative examples; other areas of U.S. foreign policy could benefit from strategic recalibration.

Three Approaches

Retrenchment

Many voices in the United States today express exasperation over the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and emphasize domestic priorities amidst the toll taken by the most serious economic crisis since the Great Depression. Senator Rand Paul has a point to make in calling for “a foreign policy that works within...the realities of our fiscal crisis.”³ So too do progressives on the Democratic left who stress job creation, education, infrastructure, and other domestic priorities. Polls show some public sentiment along these lines—a November 2013 Pew poll, for example, showed 53 percent agreeing that “the U.S. should mind its own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can.” This is the highest figure since the immediate post-Vietnam period, when it was 43 percent.⁴

While many dismiss such views as isolationist, respected policy analysts make substantive arguments for retrenchment.⁵ Proposals include less defense spending, fewer overseas bases and troop deployments, less use of military force, and generally pulling back from overextension. The dramatic increase in U.S. domestic oil and natural gas production, providing less dependence on Middle East suppliers if not outright energy independence, should be exploited. The United States would love to promote democracy, but doing so can be costly and difficult. This viewpoint does not ignore U.S. values, it just pursues them in ways echoing John Quincy Adams’ 1821 warning against going abroad seeking “monsters to destroy” and instead being “the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all...the champion and vindicator only of her own.”⁶

This stay-out-of-the-affairs-of-others sentiment, though, conflates getting involved in the wrong ways with getting involved at all. Retrenchment is largely defined in “do less” terms rather than “do different.” Its conception of U.S. interests is more centered on what they are not than what they are. It falls back on the “vital interests” formulation, which in theory sounds fine but in practice often ends up contextual and contingent. Recall Afghanistan, written off as no longer strategically consequential after the Soviet withdrawal, only to become the source of the traumatic 9/11 terrorist attacks. The United States is just too interconnected in too many ways with too many parts of the world to stand as apart as retrenchment would have it do.

Re-Assertiveness

Whereas retrenchment wants the United States to do too little in the world, re-assertiveness pushes for it to do too much. Re-assertiveness proponents are right that, in terms of baseline measures, the United States still is the most powerful nation in the world: it has the most well-resourced, technologically sophisticated military; boasts the biggest economy; and is the country most turned to for lead diplomatic roles. What they miss, though, is the power-influence gap—that the possession of the resources of power is not bringing commensurate capacity to exert influence over other international actors or ensure favorable policy outcomes.

Thus, while the United States still has ample military superiority over any other state or potential coalition, in a world with much less of a shared and overarching threat, the currency of military power is less convertible to other forms of power and influence than when such threats were more central. Moreover, the capabilities-utility gap between military superiority as traditionally measured and the utility of that superiority for achieving strategic objectives was all too graphically demonstrated in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Diplomatically, the United States keeps running into the limits of its leverage. Pakistan and Afghanistan, recipients of vast amounts of U.S. aid and protection, are not exactly going along with U.S. policy preferences. More broadly, re-assertiveness' doubling down on allies and doubling up against

States today principally define their foreign policies in much less pro- or anti-American terms.

longstanding, as well as emerging, adversaries misses how much less states today are defining their foreign policies principally in pro- or anti-American terms. They are pursuing their own policy priorities and preferences in the name of their own national interest and as manifestations of their national identities. This was the point of the statement by the Indian national security advisor on the eve of President Obama's 2010 visit—that while India seeks better relations with the United States, its foreign policy remains one

of “genuine non-alignment.”⁷ As one study put it, “countries small, medium and large are all banking more on their own strategic initiative than on formal alliances or institutional relationships to defend their interests and advance their goals.”⁸

Economically, recent cyclical fluctuations notwithstanding, economic dynamism is moving eastward and southward. Chinese economic growth has fallen out of double digits, but 7–8 percent is still substantial. More broadly, as General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt put it, “the billion people joining the

middle class in Asia”—not U.S. consumers—“are the engines driving global growth.”⁹ Nor is it just Asia. The \$150 billion in aircraft orders recently placed by the Gulf Arab monarchies set industry records. Between 2000 and 2010, six of the ten fastest growing economies in the world were in Africa. Whereas in 1950, the United States, Canada, and Western Europe accounted for 68 percent of global GDP, by 2050 their collective share will likely account for less than 30 percent (smaller than it was in 1820).¹⁰

Nor is U.S. soft power as potent as often claimed.¹¹ While the U.S. political system still stands out as a guarantor of individual freedoms, its policy capacity is hardly a model. It ranks 27th of 31 in the OECD social justice index; is 17th of 24 on adult literacy, with 15-year-olds’ math scores closer to those of Kazakhstan than Germany or South Korea; gets a D+ from the U.S. Society of Civil Engineers on its infrastructure; closes museums while others build them.¹² Even its vaunted social mobility lags, not leads, most other industrial democracies.

In sum, *reassertive-istas* see the world more the way it was than the way it is. Their approach falls right into the trap that noted diplomatic historian Melvyn Leffler identifies from past transitional moments, when “too often officials clung to prevailing strategic concepts without fully reassessing their strategic utility, reappraising their costs and benefits, reexamining threats and opportunities, or rethinking goals and tactics.”¹³

Recalibration

U.S. interests need recalibrating in four main ways. First, pursuing hegemony on anything close to the preponderance of the Cold War, let alone that “unipolar moment” right after, is not in the U.S. interest. The costs of seeking to do so are much greater today: even defense spending has seen cuts, let alone foreign assistance. The capacity to bear those costs is much less. Even without fiscal pressures and other domestic constraints, the shifts in the distribution of power, the prevalence of others’ foreign policies to be grounded more on national interests and identities than major power alignment, and other strategic forces shaping this 21st-century world impose inherent limits on any state—be it the United States, China, or whomever— aspiring to hegemony. Major powers will continue to compete for geopolitical advantage; there should neither be excessive expectations nor threat inflation. Relative gains still matter, but they will be limited by the centrifugal system dynamics and come with the burdens of trying to maintain control. The United States has been taught this lesson all too painfully. As China of late has engaged in more regional muscle-flexing, it has spurred countermoves from a range of neighbors,

Pursuing hegemony is not in the U.S. interest.

ironically setting up an almost classic balancing situation for the United States. Russia too has found its gains among former Soviet states to be fleeting (with Ukraine inevitably becoming the next example of that).

Second, just as traditional allies and friends are among those re-assessing the extent to which their interests coincide with U.S. interests, so too does the United States need to make its own re-assessments of the mix of shared and divergent interests. It is important to stand by commitments. It also is important to ensure that they don't become blank-check assurances of support that draw the United States into conflicts or put it in positions inconsistent with its own interests. This particularly pertains to relations with "friendly autocrats"—those relations based on the calculus, as often put, "he may be an SOB, but he's our SOB." Just as during the Cold War such terms were struck with anticommunist regimes, so since 9/11 has counterterrorism been the basis for comparable relationships.¹⁴ While counterterrorism remains a highly important interest, it has to be managed in ways that limit the risk of being so close to repressive regimes that anti-regime sentiments also become anti-American ones. This is not about democracy purism; it is very much security pragmatism.

Third, in this regard and more generally, is recognizing the shift in the principal locus of threats from inter-state competition to intra-state instability. During the Cold War, much of global instability was "outside in," i.e., the internalization of the U.S.–Soviet global rivalry into states with their own tensions and conflicts. The 21st-century dynamic is more "inside out": it is the increased susceptibility of the international community to threats and other disruptions that emanate outward from inside states—what happens inside states doesn't stay inside states.¹⁵ Not popular uprisings against repressive regimes that scramble regional geopolitics, nor failed states that become safe havens for terrorists with global reach, nor mass atrocities that cause refugee crises and feed into neighbors' ethnic and other conflicts.

Fourth is the broadening of the security agenda with issues like climate change and global public health that no longer can be confined to "low politics" or "soft security." Nor can they be shuffled out of the inbox over to the "when we have time" file. We already feel the effects of climate change, and the projections and consequences grow ever more foreboding. "How could a society," as Jared Diamond poses the haunting question looking back through history, "fail to have seen the dangers that seem so clear in retrospect?"¹⁶ Global health pandemics are another example. For all our concern about weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the "DMD" threat (diseases of mass destruction) carries its own staggering potential toll.

U.S. power remains formidable. To underestimate it would be the mirror-image mistake of re-assertiveness' overestimation. But the stock-taking of "counting" power is less important than the influence-strategizing of how to

most effectively use it. Militarily, the U.S. role needs to shift from security provider to security enhancer. For all the pledges of mutuality, the Cold War arrangement was largely one of the U.S. military carrying the costs, undertaking the deployments, and making the commitments that provided security for its regional allies. This worked overall for both sides: the United States kept control over policy, the allies kept costs down and security up. A security-enhancer role still entails the United States bolstering allies' national security and strengthening overall regional security in ways for which it has unique capacities, but with regional partners taking on more responsibility. This not only is more sustainable fiscally given U.S. budgetary constraints, it also has a substantive strategic rationale of making security a more genuinely collective enterprise among the United States and its allies and friends.

U.S. economic power needs its own recalibrating. While excessive debt is to be avoided, national power requires sufficient state fiscal capacity to build the domestic bases for international economic competitiveness. As to the dollar, while it will remain the principal international currency, the advantages that have come with its dominant international position are being diminished in the wake of the 2007-08 Wall Street-driven global financial crisis.

As to the U.S. leadership role, while the United States as “The World Leader” has obvious resonance and persists as the bipartisan trope of choice, its repeated invocation is counterproductive in three respects. First, resting implicitly on the claim of U.S. exceptionalism—doing this for others and/or doing it because we’re better than others—offends more often than wins hearts and minds. Second, and more particularly, it feeds reactivity from rivals such as Russia and China. Third, it works against the leverage the United States needs in relations with many traditional allies that, as we will see in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East, are more of a mix of shared and divergent interests with the United States than before. Claims that the United States is “The Leader” play into free-rider incentives for allies trying to cajole the United States to take actions and bear risks they aren’t willing to run themselves.

This is not to say that the United States should not provide any global leadership. On issues such as Israel/Palestine, the United States remains

Repeatedly invoking the U.S. as “world leader” is counterproductive in three respects.

The United States has a much greater mix of shared and divergent interests with some allies than before.

uniquely positioned to play the lead broker role. The P5+1 process is the official mechanism for the nuclear nonproliferation talks with Iran, but the bilateral U.S.–Iran channel is key. When the international community has broadly shared interests but needs an impetus for collective action, the United States remains best able, as former U.S. policy planning director Anne-Marie Slaughter has put it, “to convene, to catalyze, and to connect.”¹⁷ Libya 2011 fit this. On Syria, though, the United States has not been able and/or willing (plenty of debate over which has been more the problem) to provide leadership.

In particular, the United States needs to do more to help build international institutions and other mechanisms that provide global governance capacity. This doesn’t mean just the United Nations or any other particular entity. Global governance is a cumulative and only loosely coordinated, multifaceted capacity involving international institutions, national governments, and non-state actors. For the United States, the key is overcoming traditional concerns about encroaching on its prerogative, and seeing how ceding some control for greater effectiveness can better serve our interests. This is not only a matter of integrating emerging powers into the post-World War II, U.S.-led institutions, but also reshaping existing institutions and creating new ones that don’t necessarily have the United States at the pinnacle.

In sum, how the United States plays its leadership role—when it pushes, when it persuades, when it recognizes that Washington is not the font of all wisdom or the exemplar of all policy effectiveness—should be based more on what solves problems rather than what feeds our own ego.

The next two sections focus on the Asia–Pacific and the Middle East both as key policy areas and illustrative of the broader strategic recalibration framework.

Asia–Pacific Recalibration

In the Asia–Pacific, the United States has interests in a secure and stable region. The area has too many tensions for the United States to retrench. Relations are too cross-cutting, power too diffused, interests too varying, and China’s motives too mixed for re-assertive regional dominance to work. Strategic recalibration, to be most effective, has three key elements: a mix of engagement and deterrence with China, reassurance and restraint with allies, and supporting stronger regional multilateralism.

U.S.–China Relations

The U.S.–China relationship is the most influential bilateral relationship in the world, and needs to be managed as such. Interests are not as contentious as many containment hawks posit, but not as shared as engagement optimists had

hoped. Where there are shared interests, they need to be pursued. One such issue is North Korea. China wants to avoid the kind of instability that could set off massive refugee flows across their border, but open-ended support for the regime is increasingly seen as counterproductive to those interests. While not quite stated in these terms, I did get a sense while in Beijing recently of indignation over that little country acting out in ways problematic for their big country, especially by this boy leader Kim Jong Un. And this was before the December 2013 purge and execution of his uncle, Jang Song Thaek, with whom China had close ties. At the same time, Beijing's concern about a reunified Korea as a U.S. beachhead is somewhat allayed by the warming of China's relations with South Korea and President Park Geun-hye, whom President Xi welcomed to Beijing as an "old friend."¹⁸

Real progress also is possible on climate change. While China remains characteristically resistant to limits set internationally, staggering levels of urban pollution and immediate public health costs are pushing it toward its own environmental protection policies. Investment in renewable energy was up 20 percent in 2012 to \$65.1 billion, the highest in the world. The current five-year plan targets a 40 percent cut in emissions relative to economic output by 2020, five years earlier than forecast.¹⁹ President Obama, too, has shown greater commitment to climate change through his executive actions on power plant emissions, fuel economy, and investment in renewable energy.²⁰ The bilateral Climate Change Working Group reached a landmark agreement on "super greenhouse gases" (hydrofluorocarbons, HFCs), as well as a number of other emissions-cutting measures.²¹ While it is not up to the United States and China to decide for the rest of the world, as the two largest carbon emitters their coordinated action could provide a solid base on which other national and multilateral policies can build.

But while pushing forward on shared interests, the two countries need to be frank about conflicts of interest and other tensions, and develop crisis prevention and management understandings and procedures so that tensions don't become crises. Differences shouldn't be demagogued, but they also shouldn't be papered over. They exist and will continue to exist. The Obama first-term "pivot," or rebalance as it has come to be called, was a response to what not only the United States and its traditional Asian allies but many others in the region saw as a shift in Chinese policy from two decades of generally cooperative Asian regional policies to much more regional muscle-flexing. As such, there was widespread regional support, both from longstanding U.S. allies (Japan, South Korea, the Philippines) and others (Indonesia, Vietnam) for the U.S. pivot when first announced in 2011. Recent incidents in the South China Sea and East China Sea island disputes, as well as China's expanded claim for its

air defense identification zone, have accentuated the sense that China does need to be deterred.

But this must not mean seeking continued U.S. regional military predominance. While that contributed to regional stability in the past, for classic “security dilemma” reasons it will not go forward. The U.S.–China relationship increasingly reflects John Herz’s scenario “in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs tend, regardless of intention, to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening.”²² In this regard, there is a strategic basis to continued U.S. regional military predominance (and not just political rhetoric) leaving China feeling insecure. In the same way that U.S. analysts try to differentiate what within Beijing’s policy is a reaction against a perceived pro-U.S. imbalance and what is China seeking its own favorable imbalance, so too does China make its own assessment of U.S. intentions. While U.S. claims of purely defensive and stabilizing purposes may be meant sincerely, there are plenty of reasons for Beijing not to accept them at face value. Each side makes its own case for why the other is responsible for strategic distrust.²³

The United States thus needs to strategically shift from seeking to maintain U.S. military predominance in the Asia–Pacific region to a security-dilemma-managing strategy of essential equivalence. This means both not pursuing its own regional dominance and deterring Chinese efforts to pursue theirs. Of course, some in China will still threat-monger. The Xi regime needs to manage its own politics. But for its part, U.S. policy needs to recognize that regional military predominance always has been less an ends in itself than a means to the ends of allies’ security and regional stability. The ends remain the same; the means have changed.

Relatedly, some regional countries worry about the United States pushing the pivot too far. The shift, for example, between Australia’s 2009 Defense White Paper, which emphasized the threats emanating from China’s rise, to its 2013 caveat that Australia “does not approach China as an adversary” was indicative.²⁴ This was reinforced by a conversation with an Australian military planner at a May 2012 Royal Australian Air Force conference. We wanted you Americans to push back against China, he made clear to me, when Beijing had started becoming more assertive in the region—but if you overplay your hand and make this into your own bilateral competition with China that damages our own interests in relations with them, this would be of concern to us. One hears similar views from many other countries in the region that have their own bilateral trade, investment, and security interests with China.

Relations with Allies

There are three key recalibrations here. First is a shift along the lines delineated earlier from security provider to security enhancer. This entails some greater access and presence for U.S. military assets consistent with the principle of bolstering allies' security in ways in which the U.S. has unique capacities, but with regional partners also taking on more direct responsibility. This could include, as Ely Ratner proposes, U.S. assistance in building capacity "to deter and counter Chinese maritime coercion" through such limited measures as maritime intelligence and policing capabilities, as well as asymmetric capabilities geared to deter escalation to high-intensity conflict.²⁵ Such shifts need to be done transitionally, not abruptly, with consultations and some shared decision-making with partners and allies, as well as with messaging that counters "retreat" criticisms by articulating the strategic logic of making security more of a genuinely collective effort. Others have their own ways of showing China a mix of resolve and engagement through their own diplomacy, economic relations, and cultural as well as educational exchanges. As long as this stays well short of ganging up, it can help keep regional security issues from becoming zero-sum competition between the U.S. and China.

Second, the United States still needs to provide reassurance to traditional allies that it will stand by them if their security is genuinely threatened (by China, North Korea, others)—but it needs to also carry the message that this support is not a blank check, and that provocations on their part are not in the U.S. interest and will not be supported. This especially pertains to Japan, the Philippines, and others involved in the maritime/islands disputes. If U.S. support is too unconditional, they may get too assertive and feed into crisis instability. But if China sees U.S. support as too limited, it may see less risk in being assertive if not aggressive. This reassurance/restraint balance is inherently a tough one to strike, but it is one of the key recalibrations needed in relations with some longstanding allies.

The balance between reassuring and restraining Asian allies is inherently tough to strike but is key.

Third, the United States needs to help Japan become, as former deputy secretary of State James Steinberg puts it, "a more normal Japan."²⁶ The post-World War II limitations on the Japanese military were unquestionably necessary. But not only are there political pressures within Japan to increase its military, regional security and stability could benefit if this is done the right way. That means rectifying the historical legacies of Japanese colonialism and imperialism, and not just with regard to China. U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck

Hagel received a “steely lecture” in November 2013 from South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Japan’s “total absence of sincerity” on remorse and reconciliation.²⁷ And that was before Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s December 26, 2013, visit to the Yasukuni Shrine where war criminals and others complicit in the comfort women and other gross offenses are among the enshrined. The statement issued the very next day by U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy that “the United States is disappointed that Japan’s leadership has taken an action that will exacerbate tensions with Japan’s neighbors” (the first time any U.S. administration has publicly criticized a Japanese prime minister for a Yasukuni visit) was very much on point.²⁸ A speech by the Japanese leadership—something akin to German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s “in remembrance there is forgiveness” remark after WWII—would go a long way, standard Japanese domestic political problems notwithstanding (or arguably precisely because of them).

Regional Multilateralism

Relations in the region need to shift from the hub-and-spokes model based on bilateral ties with the United States to a more networked model of greater bi-, tri-, and multilateral ties between and among regional nations. While there is great variance globally in the relative strength of regional organizations, in all regions there is recognition that these organizations need to play stronger roles than in the past.

Even with the constraints of widespread traditional conceptions of state sovereignty and the problems posed by one regional country being so much bigger and more powerful than others, ASEAN and its affiliated entities have begun to play more substantial roles for conflict avoidance, management, and resolution. This is evident in quite a range of regional security issues including counterterrorism, anti-piracy, health pandemic prevention, energy governance, and trans-border air pollution control. Its strategy of pressure with some engagement had a hand in the beginning of political liberalization in Myanmar. The Chang Mai Initiative helped the region recover from the 1997 financial crisis, and since has helped mitigate the effects of the more recent Wall Street- and Euro-induced ones.

On security issues such as the South China Sea, though, ASEAN et al have been much less influential. Efforts have not garnered sufficient agreement. The latest attempt to develop a code of conduct at the October 2013 East Asia Summit failed to get more than a pledge to keep working on it, with China continuing to resist multilateralization and with the United States facing reduced leverage with a government shutdown that kept Obama home. Negotiations continue, and the backdrop of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia remains.

Deepened bi- and tri-lateral relations among regional countries are no less important than greater regional institutionalization—more interests are shared, greater understanding is cultivated, key groups within societies can act as stabilizers. For instance, Australia, New Zealand, and ASEAN just signed a free trade agreement; Indonesia and Vietnam recently established a strategic partnership; Malaysia and Singapore have been improving relations. The China–Japan–South Korea trilateral summit, while suspended in 2013, has helped in the past and can do so going forward. While these and other intra-regional ties do not exclude continued development of relations with the United States, they do reflect a shift from hub-and-spokes, as another example of how U.S. interests can be well served without U.S. centrality.

Middle East Recalibration

The United States has a history of not seeing big things coming in the Middle East. Not major threats like the 1979 Iranian revolution nor the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Not major peace breakthroughs like Anwar Sadat’s 1977 seminal trip to Israel nor the 1993 Oslo talks. And certainly not the 2011 Arab Spring, neither in any particular country nor as a region-wide phenomenon.

Today, no U.S. regional strategy needs recalibration more than the Middle East.²⁹ The subtext of the Asia pivot is that the Middle East would take up less high-level bandwidth. True, the decade-plus of war-fighting is ending. Claims of U.S. energy independence go too far, but dependence on OPEC is much less. Yet, as they say, if you don’t do the Middle East, it does you. The Arab Awakening has revealed how deep the sources of instability run, with varying mixes of old tensions (ethnic, confessional, tribal), long built-up ones (socioeconomic, political repression) and new forces (technology, demographics, terrorist networks). The Arab–Israeli peace process is at another watershed. Relations with Iran carry risks both of a false dawn and a missed opportunity. The Syrian war, far from burning out on itself, rages more intensely and spreads more widely. Al-Qaeda central may have been weakened, but al-Qaeda affiliates/offshoots remain.

No U.S. regional strategy needs recalibration more than the Middle East.

In a recent trip to the region,³⁰ two main criticisms of U.S. policy came through. One was confusion, citing mixed signals on Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and other policies. This criticism is warranted, as there have been plenty of inconsistencies in U.S. policy. The other criticism was one focused on U.S. retrenchment, that the United States is leaving the region—but this carried its own confusion in

equating the United States not doing what some allies want it to do with not being engaged in the region.³¹ Some key recalibrations would help clear things up.

Relations with Arab Allies

The main U.S. interest in relations with Arab states today is less in cultivating pro-American regimes than avoiding anti-American ones. There are three reasons for this: First, pro-American regimes are less strategically necessary than during the Cold War or in the immediate 9/11 aftermath. A need for some counterterrorism cooperation will continue into the foreseeable future, which is all the more reason that it must be based on shared interests and not made a source of reverse leverage on the United States by regimes seeking to manipulate U.S. priorities. The tactical imperatives to work together day-to-day on counterterrorism are no reason not to push and use these relationships to advance other interests on the strategic level. Second, they are harder to cultivate. Alternative sources of aid and support make it easier for states to resist U.S. pressures to do what the United States wants—as Bahrain did in 2011 by inviting the protective military intervention by Saudi and Emirati fellow Sunni monarchs, and General Sisi's Egypt has been doing with \$16–20 billion in Saudi–Emirati economic aid and \$2 billion in military assistance from Russia. Third, to the extent that repressive rule is needed for such regimes to stay in power, U.S. support likely will make anti-American regimes more, not less, likely over time. Whatever the short-term ups and downs, the legacy of the Arab Awakening is the need to build relations with whole societies, not just elites.

Greater prioritization to political reform today thus has a strategic rationale, not just a values-based one. This includes working with political Islam. There are undoubtedly risks of terrorism amidst instability and the uncertain shape successor regimes might take. Assessments need to be made of the goals, strategies, visions, and leadership of different Islamist parties and movements in different countries. Policies need to be tailored to oppose those inimical to U.S. values and threatening U.S. interests, while remaining open to those with which coexistence and cooperation may be possible, even though differences exist.

This bears most particularly on relations with Egypt, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. In Egypt, the prospect that the July 2013 coup would offer a course corrective—true to the spirit of the original January–February 2011 Tahrir Square revolution and the June 2013 protests against the Muslim Brotherhood—has died. Worse, the new regime has taken extreme repressive measures, which are making greater violence and radicalization more likely. With the massive

Saudi–Gulf Sunni economic aid and at least partially substitutive Russian military aid, U.S. leverage is limited.

But limited does not mean none. Part of the problem has been the Obama administration’s ambivalence and mixed messages, such as the debate over whether suspending aid is truly a “punishment” at all.³² The message of opposition to the Sisi repression needs more clarity and consistency. Cooperation on Egypt–Israel peace, counterterrorism, and other areas can continue on shared-interests terms, not in exchange for U.S. concessions. Military aid should be confined to these shared interest purposes, the rest suspended—confident that U.S. spare parts, higher quality, and more sophisticated technology have their attractiveness beyond what anyone else can offer. On the economic side, while the Saudi et al packages amount to large sums, the United States and Europe are the ones that can pave the way for IMF and World Bank assistance as well as eventually private sector capital and technology. Even if such measures don’t change the Sisi path, they would make clear that the United States has its own strategic interests, that it is not willing to be reverse-leveraged by having its own security concerns played on, and that it understands that political Islam needs to be part of the Egyptian political equation going forward.

Bahrain, meanwhile, is setting up as the classic self-fulfilling prophecy. The Sunni monarchy’s crackdown on the reformist Shia who started the 2011 Pearl uprising is falling right into the pattern of those who make peaceful change impossible and instead feed radicalism. Bahraini Shia long had been predominantly nationalist, not Iranian fifth columns. Here too, the Obama administration has been ambivalent at best, relying on quiet diplomacy but little overt pressure or distancing, undermining the leverage it does have by not firmly and clearly prioritizing political reform. The reverse leverage the Bahraini regime seeks to get from the U.S. interest in maintaining the Navy’s 5th fleet base in Manama can be countered by active contingency planning for alternatives. As to cooperation against Iran, this is a shared interest, not a concession to Washington.

U.S.–Saudi relations are a prime example of the greater mix of shared and divergent interests. The Saudis led the intervention force into Bahrain. They rushed to General Sisi’s side. They have chosen their own surrogates in the Syrian civil war. They seem opposed to any nuclear deal at all with Iran, still preferring that the United States bear the costs and run the risks to “cut off the head of the serpent.”³³ The strategy of buying off their own population is running into doubts about fiscal sustainability as well as the succession crisis on the horizon.³⁴ U.S. leaders don’t need to stoop to the Saudi level of brash and nasty criticisms. But we do need to be as honest about the relationship as they are—we still do have significant shared interests, but we also have significant

divergent ones. Recalibrating within those parameters will make for a more sustainable relationship.

Israel

The United States must be resolute in its commitment to the security and survival of the state of Israel while managing differences over particular policy issues. Israel is a vital ally. U.S.–Israeli military and intelligence cooperation provides gains for both sides: for example, in joint exercises when the United States learned from Israeli experience in urban warfare and counterterrorism in ways helpful in Iraq and Afghanistan. Indeed, there has been much more counterterrorism cooperation than meets the eye. As democracies, Israel and the United States share many core political values, and societal ties are particularly close in the scientific, educational, religious, and business communities.

To be sure, policy differences have long existed on both sides—e.g., the 1967 attack on the USS *Liberty*, the 1981 sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia, the 1990–91 dispute over settlements and loan guarantees, differences over the 2006 Lebanon war. Today's tensions, though, are broader and deeper, reflecting not just the much mentioned lack of chemistry between President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu, but sharper differences in threat perceptions and strategies. Two factors are making them more difficult to manage.

First, there is growing concern among Israelis whether the United States understands the gravity of the threats they see their country facing. This is not just political; it includes an increasing segment of the Israeli foreign policy community. Many Israelis genuinely do see a nuclear Iran as an existential threat; for the United States, it is a threat but not an existential one. We differ on the risk/reward calculus on peace with the Palestinians. In Egypt, Israel clearly is happier with Sisi than the Muslim Brotherhood, and is making another effort at tacit enemy-of-my-enemy-is-my-friend strategic collaboration with the Arab Sunni states on both Egypt and Iran. Meanwhile on the U.S. end, one hears greater questioning the extent to which support for Israel serves U.S. interests.³⁵

Second are political changes within both Israel and the United States, ones that are not just typical political fluctuations. Israeli electoral politics have shifted from one-party dominance (the Labor Party) to two-party competitiveness (between Labor and Likud) to multi-party factionalism (in the last election, Likud did not win enough seats to form a government and had to bargain Italy-style with a host of small parties, particularly ultra-Orthodox and others on the right). Indeed, these shifts to the right run deep into Israeli society in ways that are having social consequences as well as foreign and security policy ones.³⁶ Meanwhile within U.S. politics, the support base for Israel has its own underlying shifts. Broad demographic changes are bringing

more ethnic, national, and other identity-based groups into the U.S. political process. This includes younger generation Jewish-Americans, who have broader global interests and may have had fewer deep bonding experiences with Israel than generations past. While this continues to be substantially offset by strong support for Israel among Christian evangelicals, as well as the continuing political acumen of longstanding Jewish-American lobbying groups, the trends are very much there. The point is not that Americans are becoming pro-Palestinian or anti-Israel, but that their pro-Israel orientation is weakening and becoming more contingent on key policy issues.³⁷

A two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living in peace and security has been, still is, and will continue to be crucial to U.S. interests. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has been swimming against the tides of conventional wisdom in investing heavily in a revitalized peace process. For Israel, while peace does not guarantee security, security cannot occur without peace. While the politics Prime Minister Netanyahu faces are formidable, they are not insurmountable. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has his own politics to manage. But as difficult as a deal is today, it will be that much harder tomorrow. If the current talks don't culminate in a final status agreement, the predictions of a third intifada may well be borne out not only—posing a threat to Israel but challenging Abbas and undermining the institution-building and economic progress that the Palestinian Authority has been able to achieve. Depending on the particulars of why an agreement isn't achieved, U.S.–Israeli relations could be severely strained.

On Iran, Israel will ultimately make its own decisions. It is a sovereign country. And it does have its own *gestalt* for what a nuclear Iran means. We non-Israelis can disagree with this but cannot deny the profundity of the concern. But as a policy matter, the United States must make clear that a unilateral Israeli military attack on the Iranian nuclear complex is not in our interest.

The bases for the U.S.–Israeli relationship still run deep, in both security terms and in shared values. But for relations to continue to be as close as they have, serious differences need working through.

Iran

There have been plenty of warnings for caution in interpreting the June 2013 election of President Hassan Rouhani. Is this all a charm offensive, a gambit to feign change and get the world to let its guard down? How are we to square Iran's flexibility in the nuclear talks with continued support for Bashar Assad and Hezbollah? Will Tehran sufficiently implement their concessions made in the November

**Improved U.S.–
Iranian relations
could be a major
strategic
opportunity.**

2013 Geneva interim nuclear non-proliferation agreement? Will they follow through on any future deals? These are formidable questions. And the balance of who has more leverage over whom in this next stage of negotiations is unclear.

Still, strategic gains could result from improved U.S.–Iranian relations. Even a *modus vivendi* with the country that 35 years ago set off the era of anti-American Islam would have the kind of demonstration effect that could significantly reduce the utility of America-bashing in the Muslim world, including for terrorist organizations. It could weaken Hezbollah and help to stabilize Lebanon, help find an end to the Syrian civil war, and cut Hamas off from one of its few remaining arms channels. Just as the failure to make a deal would further undermine the global nuclear nonproliferation regime, and possibly set off a regional proliferation wave, a solid nuclear deal could strengthen the global nonproliferation regime and contribute to broader efforts for a regional security regime in the Middle East.

This would not solve everything. Tensions would still exist, as Iran still represents a major regional power with its historical sense of Persian pride, historic regional rivalries with the Saudis and others, and new factors and forces affecting the regional balance of power. It may well be a false dawn. It also could be a major strategic opportunity. The possibilities need to be analyzed and strategized, not dismissed out of hand—particularly not for fear of attracting a label of “soft” that all too often has stunted the range of acceptable policy and political discourse.

Syria

The main recalibration in Syria is for the United States to realize that it needs a policy. For these past three years, the Obama administration has known more what it didn’t want to do than what it did want to do. Sure, there have been no good options. But meanwhile the war has intensified, with the humanitarian toll reaching Bosnia-like statistics. It has spread to neighboring countries, most evident in sectarian violence reigniting in Lebanon and in a refugee flow to Jordan so massive that it is proportionally equivalent to ALL Canadians fleeing to the United States. And it has been transformed into the latest battleground and possible beachhead for jihadist terrorists.

Proposals for additional military aid to the rebels have tactical value at most. They can have some impact on the internal balance of forces, but nothing decisive. More important is a more concerted coercive diplomacy strategy with four main components. One is pressure through the UN as with passage of Security Council Resolution 2139 and enforcing the pledged “further steps” if Assad does not comply. Another is increased pressure directly on Russia and not only by the United States. For example, with oil and gas accounting for 20–25 percent of Russian GDP, 65 percent of total exports, and 30 percent of

government budget revenue, moves by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Arab OPEC members to increase oil production enough to bring down world oil prices could affect the Russian obstructionist calculus. Such efforts also would change the diplomatic dynamic from the U.S.-Russia *tete-a-tete* that Putin relishes. Iran also needs to be engaged. Blocking its Geneva II participation was counterproductive; collaboration along the lines of Geneva I is more likely as an outcome than a precondition. Such diplomatic measures need to be backed by more credible military threats. While military options still carry risks of escalation and blowback, inaction has its own costs and risks. The longer it takes to reach sufficient agreement for starting a political transition, the higher the humanitarian toll, the more the regional spread, the more footing for jihadists. Whatever options pursued – a no-fly zone, opening up a humanitarian corridor, hitting regime military assets – U.S. forces will need to have a lead role but must be part of a coalition that minimally includes some NATO and Arab active forces.

The World as It Is

A necessary condition for any strategy to succeed is that it fit the context in which it is operating. Neither retrenchment nor re-assertiveness has that fit. We might like a world in which the United States can keep its distance, or that tracks more with the era gone by, but those are not the realities we face. Strategic recalibration with its re-appraisal of U.S. interests, re-assessment of U.S. power, and re-positioning of U.S. leadership is much more of a match with the 21st-century world.

In neither the Asia–Pacific nor the Middle East does this entail full policy overhauls. But both do have crucial recalibrations. Asia–Pacific strategy needs to shift from seeking to maintain regional military predominance to working out an essential equivalence in the military balance with China that still safeguards U.S. interests and regional allies as well as friends while also helping ameliorate China’s security dilemma concerns. Relations with allies, particularly Japan, need their own re-balancing to reflect the greater mix of shared and divergent interests. Making regional relations less hub-and-spokes and more bi-, tri- and multilateralist exemplifies how reducing U.S. centrality can better serve U.S. interests.

In the Middle East, relations with traditional Arab allies need even more recalibration based on an even greater mix of shared and divergent interests.

Strategic recalibration’s intent is to shift the debate from *how much* the U.S. should do to *what* it should do.

The “our SOB” strategy has lost whatever viability it may have had. The information revolution—creating such sweeping access with so many diverse sources—makes finessing claims to principles while supporting repressive regimes pretty much impossible. The recalibration in U.S.–Israeli relations may work itself out if there is a peace deal with the Palestinians and if common ground can be found on Iran. That is to be hoped for, but not bet on.

All told, the intent of strategic recalibration is to shift the debate from *how much* the U.S. should do to *what* it should do, and open up corresponding core questions. What is the mix of change and continuity in U.S. interests? How best to exert influence and not just wield power? How to most effectively provide leadership? These questions apply to a much broader range of issues than can be addressed herein that, are also crucial to a 21st-century national security strategy geared to the world as it is, not how it used to be or we might like it to be.

Notes

1. A related argument is made by Patrick M. Cronin, *Restraint: Recalibrating American Strategy* (Center for a New American Security, June 2010), http://www.cnas.org/sites/default/files/publications-pdf/CNAS_Restraint_Cronin.pdf. See also Steven Weber and Bruce W. Jentleson, *The End of Arrogance: America in the Global Competition of Ideas* (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 2010).
2. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 7.
3. “Rand Paul Speech Full Text: Transcript of Rand Paul’s Heritage Foundation Speech,” PolicyMic, speech by Senator Rand Paul, at the Heritage Foundation, February 6, 2013, <http://www.policymic.com/articles/25024/rand-paul-speech-full-text-transcript-of-rand-paul-s-heritage-foundation-speech>.
4. Pew Research Center, “Public Sees U.S. Power Declining as Support for Global Engagement Slips,” December 3, 2013, <http://www.people-press.org/2013/12/03/public-sees-u-s-power-declining-as-support-for-global-engagement-slips/>.
5. Christopher A. Preble, *The Power Problem: How U.S. Military Dominance Makes Us Less Safe, Less Prosperous and Less Free* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); Richard N. Haass, *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: the Case for Putting America’s House in Order* (New York: Basic Books, 2013).
6. “John Quincy Adams’ Warning against the Search for “Monsters to Destroy,” 1821,” <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/jquadams.htm>.
7. Sandeep Dikshit, “India Seeks a Relationship of Equals with U.S., Says Menon,” *The Hindu*, November 3, 2010, <http://www.hindu.com/2010/11/03/stories/2010110363411600.htm>
8. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey 2010;: The Annual Review of World Affairs* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 417.
9. Chrystia Freeland, “GE’s Immelt speaks out on China, exports, and competition,” *Reuters*, January 21, 2011, <http://blogs.reuters.com/chrystia-freeland/tag/jeff-immelt>.

10. “Dubai Airshow,” *Christian Science Monitor*, November 18, 2013, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/Latest-News-Wires/2013/1118/Dubai-Airshow-Boeing-gets-twice-as-many-orders-as-Airbus>; “The Lion Kings?,” *The Economist*, January 6, 2011, <http://www.economist.com/node/17853324>; Jack A. Goldstone, “The New Population Bomb: The Four Megatrends that Will Change the World,” *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 1 (January/February 2010) : p. 33.
11. Thomas Friedman, “Calling America: Hello? Hello? Hello?,” *New York Times*, November 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/03/opinion/sunday/friedman-calling-america-hello-hello-hello-hello.html>.
12. *Social Justice in the OECD—How Do the Member States Compare?* Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011, http://www.sgi-network.org/pdf/SGI11_Social_Justice_OECD.pdf; *OECD Skills Outlook 2013* (OECD Publishing, 2013), http://skills.oecd.org/OECD_Skills_Outlook_2013.pdf; American Society of Civil Engineers, *Report Card for America’s Infrastructure*, <http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/>.
13. Melvyn P. Leffler, “Defense on a Diet: How Budget Crises Have Improved U.S. Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 6 (November/December 2013), p. 75.
14. Indeed it was not very successful in U.S. Cold War strategy in the Third World; see my “Beware the Duck Test,” *The Washington Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (Summer 2011), pp. 137–149.
15. Playing on an American phrase promoting ribaldry, that “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,” I’ve called this the “Vegas dilemma”—what happens inside states doesn’t stay inside states. Bruce W. Jentleson, “Global Governance in a Copernican World,” *Global Governance* 18 (2012), pp. 133–148.
16. Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005)
17. Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Filling Power Vacuums in the New Global Legal Order,” *Boston College Law Review* 36 (January 2013), p. 923.
18. Jane Perlez, “China to Welcome South Korean Leader, ‘an Old Friend,’” *New York Times*, June 26, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/27/world/asia/china-south-korea-meeting.html>.
19. Clare Saxon, “China Invested \$65.1 in Clean Energy in 2012,” The Climate Group, May 7, 2013, <http://www.theclimategroup.org/what-we-do/news-and-blogs/china-invested-651-billion-in-clean-energy-in-2012/>.
20. Bill McKibben, “Obama and Climate Change: The Real Story,” *Rolling Stone*, December 17, 2013, <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/obama-and-climate-change-the-real-story-20131217>.
21. “Todd Stern and Xie Zhenhua: For Showing that Climate Change Agreements Really Can Be Reached,” *Foreign Policy* 203 (December 2013), p. 94.
22. John Herz, “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (1950): p. 157. See also Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 58–113.
23. Jane Perlez, “In China and U.S., Mutual Distrust Grows, Study Finds,” *New York Times*, July 18, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/18/world/asia/in-china-and-us-mutual-distrust-grows-study-finds.html>; Kenneth Lieberthal and Wang Jisi, Brookings Institution, *Addressing U.S.-China Strategic Distrust* (March 2012), http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/3/30%20us%20china%20lieberthal/0330_china_lieberthal.pdf.

24. Australia Government, Department of Defence, *Defence White Paper* (2009, 2013), <http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>.
25. Ely Ratner, "Learning the Lessons of Scarborough Reef," *The National Interest*, November 21, 2013, <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/learning-the-lessons-scarborough-reef-9442>;
26. Susan B. Glasser, "Mythbusters," *Politico Magazine*, January 21, 2014, http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/01/myths-about-americas-role-in-the-world-102409_Page6.html#.UugbjZ0o4dU.
27. Martin Fackler and Choe Sang-hun, "A Growing Chill Between South Korea and Japan Creates Problems for the U.S.," *New York Times*, November 24, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/world/asia/a-growing-chill-between-south-korea-and-japan-creates-problems-for-the-us.html>.
28. Takashi Oshima, "U.S. Expresses Disappointment at Abe Visit to Yasukuni Shrine," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 27, 2013, http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201312270048.
29. This section draws on Bruce W. Jentleson, Andrew M. Exum, Melissa G. Dalton, and J. Dana Stuster, *Strategic Adaptation: Towards a New U.S. Strategy in the Middle East*, Center for a New American Security, June 2012, http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_StrategicAdaptation_JentlesonExum_0.pdf
30. I was part of a delegation from the Center for American Progress, with meetings in the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Israel, and the West Bank, January 3–12, 2014.
31. U.S. Department of States, Secretary of State John Kerry, "Remarks at the World Economic Forum," in Davos, Switzerland, January 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/01/220605.htm>.
32. Karen deYoung, "Kerry in Cairo: Egypt aid suspension 'not a punishment'," *The Washington Post*, November 3, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/kerry-in-cairo-egypt-aid-suspension-not-a-punishment/2013/11/03/f5b14242-4491-11e3-a196-3544a03c2351_story.html.
33. Ross Colvin, "'Cut off head of snake' Saudis told U.S. on Iran," Reuters, November 29, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/11/29/us-wikileaks-iran-saudis-idUSTRE6AS02B20101129>.
34. Study by Jadwa Investment, a private Saudi firm, cited in F. Gregory Gause III, "Saudi Arabia in the New Middle East," Special Report no. 63 (Council on Foreign Relations, December 2011), 11–12, <http://www.cfr.org/saudi-arabia/saudi-arabia-new-middle-east/p26663?co=C009603>; Lori Plotkin Boghardt, "Saudi Arabia: Outlawing Terrorism and the Arab Spring," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 27, 2013, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/25640>.
35. An oft-cited example was the congressional testimony by General David Petraeus, then head of U.S. Central Command, that "Arab anger over the Palestinian question limits the strength and depth of U.S. partnerships with governments and peoples [in the region]." "U.S. general: Israel-Palestinian conflict foments anti-U.S. sentiment," *Haaretz*, March 17, 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/u-s-general-israel-palestinian-conflict-foments-anti-u-s-sentiment-1.264910>.
36. Gershom Gorenberg, *The Unmaking of Israel* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011).
37. See Peter Beinart, "The Failure of the U.S. Jewish Establishment," *The New York Review of Books*, May 12, 2010, and *The Crisis of Zionism* (New York: Times Books, 2012).