

The U.S. in the Middle East*

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<http://adel.cs.westga.edu/leagueofwomenvoters/>

*By F. Kazemi & A. Norton

Current Events

- War in Iraq
- Influence of Iran
- Lebanon & Israel, & the Syrian-Iranian factor
- So-called “moderate” states in the Middle East
 - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, etc.
- The State & Status of US policy & influence over the Middle East

Diplomacy with Iran?

- U.S. relationship with Iran:
 - Toppling an elected Prime Minister Mosaddeq by the CIA in '53
 - Shah of Iran (brutal dictator)
 - The Islamic Revolution '79
 - American Hostages
 - Iraq-Iran war
 - Axis of Evil
 - Support for the US war in Afghanistan
 - War In Iraq
 - Nuclear ambition
 - Support for Hezbollah, Hamas. & Islamic Jihad
 - The Iraq Study Group recommendations
 - Etc.

Diplomacy with Iran?

- An un-intended consequences:
 - Empowering the fundamentalists & hardliners
 - Energized the nationalist feelings
 - Shi'i influence in Iraq & other countries
 - Instability of the region
 - Oil & economic issues
- Options:
 - Military force (by US or Israel)
 - Economic sanctions
 - Diplomacy
 - Diplomatic ties
 - Cultural/educational exchanges
 - Find a middle ground for all interested parties

Whither Iraq?

- Current state of affairs:
 - Trials & executions (Saddam's execution)
 - Continuing cycle of violence (insurgency & Al-Qaeda inspired terrorism)
 - Political instability & civil war
 - Failure of creating a democracy is defeat for the US
 - Alarming # of casualties & intersectorian violence
 - “Stay the course” + 21,500 soldiers
 - Impact on the region & possible external intervention (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iran, etc.)

Whither Iraq?

- A revised Strategy:
 - Lower expectations
 - Cooperation with Iraq's neighbors (Iran, Syria, Turkey, etc.)
 - Economic stability (not possible with continuing violence)
 - Unity of country (South-Shi'i, Middle-Sunni, North-Kurds)
 - Satisfying traditional allies of US in the region (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Gulf countries, Egypt, etc.)
 - Stability of the gulf oil producing region

The Lebanon War

- 34 Day Israeli war into Lebanon
- Casualties & Economic impact
- Hezbollah was founded as a result of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the early 80s
- Hezbollah (Shi'i) surprised observers
- Instability induced in Lebanon
- Immediate outcomes favored Hezbollah
- Hezbollah has strengthened since the war

Islamists in politics

- Democratic election may actually help Islamists political parties
- Modern Islamists political parties date to 1928 (Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan Al-Bana, Egypt)
- Muslim Brotherhood was banned by Nasir in 1954 (went underground)
- Surfaced during Sadat (a benefactor is Dr. Al-Zawahiri, Bin Laden's right hand man)
- 1979 the Islamic revolution in Iran
- Hezbollah & Hamas

Islamists in politics

- Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) on the verge of winning elections in 1991 in Algeria
- 2003 AK (the Justice & Development Party won elections in Turkey)
- 2005 elections in Egypt (“Kefayah” political party was helped by efforts of the Muslim Brotherhood)
- Islamists political parties are gaining popularity & successes...

References

- My web site for this series has many useful links which you may view at your leisure:

<http://adel.cs.westga.edu/leagueofwomenvoters/>

- After today, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions
- Thoughts & Questions?
- Thank you!