

## Justice for All

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From a cultural, political, and even economic perspective, Iran is not an isolated state. Although some may question the quality and scope of Iran's engagement with the external world, Iran and Iranians continue to play a role in diverse areas such as sports, movies, science, energy resources, international organizations, and Middle East politics. In national security, Iran clearly operates unilaterally and is isolated from others. The political consequences of Iran's security isolation are enormous for the country's internal politics, national economy, and foreign policy. Iran maintains no military or security pacts with any other state and relies on its own capabilities and calculations to defend the country and its political system. The security apparatus in Iran is highly endogenous and carries strong ideological convictions to maintain the political and the cultural sovereignty of the revolution and the state. Therefore, understanding the perceptions of the United States held by Iran's top security and political officials is paramount to comprehending Iranian foreign policy toward the United States. Because Iran is not a member of any Western security, or for that matter, political, club and because officials of the two countries do not communicate bilaterally, misperceptions and misguided analyses dominate policymaking in both capitals.

Most of Iran's top leadership is passionately attached to revolutionary ideals, to Islam as their guiding principle, and especially to the notion of "cultural sovereignty." This attachment is not confined to a few individuals. Rather, it is collective, institutional, and permanent, although concluding that revolutionary beliefs and practices have been seriously challenged dur-

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ing the presidency of Mohammad Khatami would be accurate. The revolutionary and nonrevolutionary definitions of Iran among equally powerful political groups are a reflection of the country's highly intricate identity crisis that has protracted Iranian national development. Over the last 150 years, conflicting views of Iranian national identity have led to incessant political instability and unrest. Despite galactic changes at the international level, all

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layers of Iranian culture and sources of identity have been able to sustain their conceptual potency, social constituency, and political relevance. The efforts of the Pahlavi dynasty to weaken the Islamic component of Iran's cultural structure proved highly unsuccessful. Similarly, the Islamic Republic's attempt to subordinate nationalist attributes to Islamic beliefs has been resisted by the young and by the professional sector of Iranian society. History provides strong evidence of the permanence of both

Islamic and nationalist dimensions of Iranian culture.

Although Arabs do not dissociate their Arab nationalism from their Islamic heritage, Iranians have so far failed to blend Islam and Iranian nationalism meaningfully into an institutionalized macrocultural system, whereby the majority of the country's citizens can form a basis of national identity. When attributes of Western culture are superimposed on Iran's nationalist and Islamic legacies, Iranians' identity faces serious conceptual and methodological challenges. The belief structure of an average Iranian carries three diverse and at times conflicting strands: Iranian, Islamic, and Western. In their active and reactive cultural behavior, Iranians pick and choose from the three layers, depending on the issue at hand. The political developments of Iran since Western entry into the country two centuries ago are a reflection of contradictory cultural trends and the unsuccessful attempts of political leaders to forge cultural consensus-building processes. The nature of the political system in contemporary Iranian history has vacillated, as various cultural groups have been able to highlight the cultural contradictions of rulers and reach power themselves. Iranian culture, in this respect, is a much more powerful force at the disposal of Iran's leadership than Iran's long-range Shahab-3 missile.

Whether nationalist or Islamic, justice is an important element of Iranian political culture. In international affairs, Iranians, like most Middle Easterners, are obsessed with it. Realpolitik is a much weaker political ideology than egalitarianism. There is a powerful belief that all countries are equal, no matter their size, gross national product (GNP), or level of military technol-

ogy. Throughout the region, Islam provides individuals with a strong sense of self-respect and pride. Over the years, Israeli intellectuals have unsuccessfully tried to convince their leaders to remove checkpoints in Israel and start treating Palestinians politely. The same belief leads Iranian clerics to address the United States on an equal status, disregarding U.S. size, technology, power, and influence. The network of these cultural attributes provides a subtle yet robust foundation that shapes the internal and external politics of Iran.

Ironically, perceptions of the United States among Iranians in Iran are far more positive than other Arab perceptions of the United States. In contrast to a common argument in Washington, the most significant U.S. challenge in the Middle East may be to reshape its policies and to improve the U.S. image in the Arab world, not the normalization of U.S.–Iranian relations. From a geopolitical and historical perspective, the rift in Iran’s relations with the West is temporary. The resumption of ties with the West in general and the United States in particular is the only viable option to make Iran a powerful regional country and improve the standards of living for Iranians. In its foreign policy formulations, no leadership, however strong, can act against geopolitical rationale and no force in Iran’s foreign policy and national development is as potent as geopolitics. Iran’s geopolitics and the realities of the political landscape within which Iran operates dictate a Western orientation in its foreign policy. In this context, the normalization of Iran’s relations with the West is inevitable. Consequently, in viewing U.S. policy toward the Middle East, the importance of improving the U.S. image in the Arab world should not be underestimated.

During the last decade, Arab perceptions and views of the United States have sharply deteriorated. Two issues stand out: U.S. policy toward authoritarian Arab states and the “unjust” and “unfair” U.S. stance in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. On the first topic, the level of distrust and apathy among Arabs toward the Arab political leadership is considerably high, and many Arabs hold the United States responsible for postponing democratization in the Arab world. On the second topic, since the establishment of the state of Israel, U.S. policy has been to keep Israel strong while applying diplomatic pressure on Tel Aviv to make compromises. The former policy has been pursued with greater vigor than the latter.

No U.S. administration has felt the urgency and the necessity to maintain a balance of power between Arab political and military power vis-à-vis Israel. The national security of key Arab states falls under the larger U.S. strategy in the Middle East. The Arab world, therefore, is incapable of exercising influence over Washington’s Israel policy. Many in Washington may consider this problem an Arab, rather than a U.S., issue. Yet, the democratic roots of the United States and its deep sense of egalitarianism are notable

for an attitudinal change toward the Arab polity. The resolution of the Arab–Israeli conflict ultimately rests on the concept of fairness.

Even the Palestinians have accepted the reality of the state of Israel; they and the Arabs seek only fairness. U.S. policymakers should not underestimate the conclusions of the common man in the streets of the Arab world. In the final analysis, what the average person thinks or feels may seem immaterial. But the key question remains, What is the nature of the foundation on which U.S. interactions with the peoples and states of the Middle East can be prolonged?

The United States should ideally provide some degree of psychological satisfaction to the disturbed but acquiescent millions throughout the Middle East. As a U.S. strategic thinker points out, “The American refusal to be bound by history and the insistence on the perpetual possibility for renewal confer a great dignity, even beauty, on the American way of life. ... But [America] must learn that equilibrium is a fundamental precondition for the pursuit of its historic goals. And these higher goals cannot be achieved by rhetoric or posturing.”<sup>1</sup> Inattention to these foreign policy guidelines will not produce the necessary recognition, consensus, and respect for U.S. policies. More importantly, disregard for historical processes and insensitivity to the maintenance of balance among diverse players will not justify or internalize acceptance of a U.S. mediating role in the Middle East.

## **U.S. Challenges with Iran and Beyond**

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Based on the aforementioned cultural analysis, the United States must address a number of issues to move toward the inevitable rapprochement with Tehran. First and perhaps most importantly, the United States must conclude a realistic and objective analysis of the state and structure of power in Iran. Unequivocally, a deep philosophical distance exists between U.S. preferences for Iran and the realities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Variations of religious thinking and norms will characterize Iran’s political system into the foreseeable future. Some students in the early 1990s, who comprise the second generation of politicians and legislators in post-1997 Iran, are religious in a ritual sense but have a far less ideological orientation. Westernized sectors of the Iranian population, mostly in north Tehran and some urban neighborhoods, do not represent the whole country. Iran has its own Beverly Hills, but just as Beverly Hills does not reflect the whole United States, Iran’s Westernized and secular classes are a minority.

From time to time I ask, “To what degree do the aspirations of my class, the intellectual community, represent the preferences of the Iranian population?” Most often, the answer is a resounding, “Very little.” Most Iranians

aspire to economic stability, the easing of ideological rigidities, and political freedom; smaller groups may pursue similar objectives in a different order. U.S. visitors to Iran should be cautioned not to confine themselves to luxurious receptions in north Tehran and conversations with a class that has a penchant for highbrow and pretentious living. They should seek out other social classes and people from rural areas. The overwhelming majority of Iranians pursue political, social, and economic reforms within the current political structure and through the electoral process under the current constitution. Almost no one is interested in another revolution or widespread chaotic circumstances; the young who account for half the population opt for peaceful and incremental change, in line with Iranian traditional cosmopolitan mentality.

In a Western sense, Iran will never be a secular state. Notwithstanding the fact that, after Israel, Iran has the most open political system in the Middle East, institutionalization of political pluralism and civil society will require much attitudinal change and economic restructuring.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the current political system in Iran appears to have the resiliency to endure, with many modifications and reforms yet to come. The United States should play the role of an observer and avoid the temptation to get involved in Iran's internal politics. An interventionist policy on the part of Washington would only unite groups against an external enemy.

During the last two decades, an educated and nationalist class has arisen alongside the major holders of power throughout the Middle East. This class, mostly educated in the United States, has extensive exposure to the ideas of economic and political liberalization. This class ought to have a greater decisionmaking role in the transition from authoritarianism to liberalism. Whether authoritarian or liberal, Middle Eastern states need to interact with the United States. In a global context, no country can survive without a meaningful interaction with the Western world. The United States should prudently assist the gradual process of political change; the current focus on commerce and security is not adequate. Middle Easterners, whether Iranian, Arab, or Turkish, have a unique sensitivity to their sovereignty. A psychologically and culturally tailored approach will prove to be fundamental in the future role of the United States in the region.

The second area that the United States needs to reevaluate is the degree to which Washington should base its foreign policy, particularly toward Iran, on domestic politics and human rights conditions abroad. At least since

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1979, political discourse in Iran has originated largely from within the political establishment. Even Khatami, an original member of the 1979 revolution, is now a symbol of a reform-minded class and revolutionary leadership. After the Iran–Iraq War, as the country began to engage in economic reconstruction, the academic community took the lead in setting a national agenda for political, philosophical, and social discussion. After eight years, from 1989 to 1997, of intense public debate on the course of the revolution,

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Khatami emerged as the insider to provide leadership for the new agenda. As Iranians debate the foundations of their identity and cultivate a more accountable state–society matrix, new faces, cleric and noncleric, will appear to lead the country. Given the richness of the debate and the involvement of the mass public, Iranians hope to frame a political system that reflects their multilayered identity. The process to achieve political

stability may involve violence, similar to European and U.S. history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this process, religious reform is critical for Iran’s political stability and continued cultural vitality.

Westerners may be able to provide methodologies in critical thinking but Iranians will mold the substance of reform, both religious and political. Most indicators show a great potential for inevitable, positive political change in Iran. Iranians enjoy resenting authority and, in doing so, they do not need the assistance of others to put their leaders straight. The United States should prudently not involve itself in the Iranian internal process of political reform and identity crisis resolution. Moreover, U.S. leaders should be circumspect in not taking sides in Iran’s highly fractious politics. Some fall within the reform movement but oppose normalization with the West; similarly, some identify themselves with the conservative camp but favor gradual rapprochement with Europe and the United States. Individual views on Iran’s U.S. policy are fluid, ill informed, and highly politicized. Even Khatami has remained reticent on normalization with the United States. The United States should therefore focus on policies and interests rather than individuals and factions.

Despite more than two centuries of exposure to the West, Middle Eastern culture remains highly endogenous. Islam is a serious competitor to liberal thinking throughout the whole region. I remain skeptical on the plausibility and the applicability of the concept of “Islamic democracy.” The overlap between these two political philosophies is narrow, and they originate from two different sets of assumptions. Perhaps they should not be compared because they stem from two distinct worldviews. Given the West’s global hegemony,

Muslims and Middle Easterners will have no viable option other than constructing frameworks and living in a simultaneous composite of Islamic, secular, and liberal tendencies, which often contradicts itself. Therefore, as the political thought of the twentieth-century Middle East proves, attempting to secularize Islam or to “Islamicize” liberalism is impractical. One must be careful in the unconditional application of Western concepts and frameworks to Middle Eastern structures. The most important challenge is to develop a political system that will deliver political stability, legitimacy, accountability, good governance, and rotation of power, while not disturbing religious thinking and cultural norms. The most effective role that the United States can play in this complicated process of change is to use its educational system to provide creative thinking and methodological innovation.

The third area of ideal change in U.S. policy, particularly toward Iran, is the significance placed on weapons of mass destruction and Iran’s alleged attempt to “go nuclear.” After 1979, for the first time in Iran’s modern history, Iran’s foreign policy behavior and national security doctrine were based on its own political structure and national priorities. Prior to the revolution, Iranian foreign policy behavior was founded on its international alliances. After the revolution, however, revolutionary ideology promoting Islamic sovereignty and the Iranian traditional quest for national independence set the basis for a new assertive foreign policy. From a national security perspective, Iran is an isolated country. To assure its security, Tehran has largely depended on its domestic resources. During the last two-and-a-half centuries, Iran has been victim to external invasion. Iran itself has no record of expansionism or invasion.

The paradox is here: Iran’s intervention in the affairs of its volatile neighbors in the first decade of the revolution, an extension of its revolutionary credentials, is an aberration in its modern history. Iran’s military capabilities are insufficient to address the potential threats from its neighbors. Therefore, the issue is not what Iran possesses or what Iran intends to do with its military potential. The real issue is that Iran is not a member of any military or security alliance. The United States would ideally encourage the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf to engage Iran in security discussions with the ultimate aim of forming alliances. Washington may even potentially participate as an observer in a security pact of Persian Gulf states.

Realists in Tehran understand that, unless the security considerations of small states in the Persian Gulf are addressed, political relations between Iran and other Arab countries will not thrive. The lack of security discussions between Iran and the United States only adds to the fears, misjudgments, and misperceptions on both sides. Washington needs to have greater understanding of Iran’s security fears and then try to appease those fears by engaging Iran with regional countries and perhaps Great Britain.

Iran's military capabilities are not focused on Israel. Political rationality and restraint have been practiced in the post-Iran-Iraq War period especially. Iran's military and security leadership understand the consequences of its decisions and reactions. Defending the revolution and the state constitutes much of Iran's drive to maintain and upgrade its defensive potency. The perception in Tehran is that the ultimate U.S. aim is toppling the revolutionary state in Iran. Even the United States' willingness to talk with Iran is perceived as a strategy of disintegration through engagement. The disintegration of the Soviet Union is believed to be part of a U.S. plan, intensified after Mikhail Gorbachev's ascendancy to power, for the promotion of democracy, civil society, and economic privatization. Large numbers of individuals in Iran's military, security, and cultural establishments hold these beliefs. Washington needs to make a firm, uniform, and consistent decision on its security approach toward Iran: a policy of security cooperation with the current political system in Tehran or a policy of confrontation.

On a wider scale, U.S. security policy in the Middle East tends to place too much emphasis on threat perceptions. Given the urgency of economic, social, and educational issues throughout the region, even military solutions to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict are becoming outdated. As a global power that is not alone in possessing military hardware, the United States has the responsibility to broaden the horizons of peoples and political leaders toward technological cooperation, political cohesion, and the rational reorientation of educational materials.

The fourth area of ideal change in U.S. policy involves adjustments in U.S. attitudes toward economic sanctions. Because of Iran's sensitivities to its national sovereignty, it is imperative that the United States take incremental steps to build up trust and assurances about its good intentions. As a great power with extensive interests in the Middle East, Washington should delineate a strategy toward Iran to shape appropriate perceptions through the next decade until the new generation comes to power and should not expect reciprocity from the current history-obsessed Iranian leadership. Removal of economic sanctions is a major step toward demonstrating U.S. goodwill. Americans need to understand how the Iranian political, administrative, and commercial systems function. The U.S. business community can serve as a neutral medium to change perceptions in both governmental bodies. No political impediments exist to economic and commercial cooperation between the United States and Iran.

Once U.S. oil and manufacturing companies set up their affiliates in Iran, they will have to work through the Iranian legal, legislative, and administrative systems. U.S. superiority in technology, organizational skills, managerial techniques, and decisionmaking expertise, as well as humble social culture, will then become apparent to those Iranians who have heard otherwise in



the last two decades. In contrast, Americans will learn that Iranians are talented and cosmopolitan, with a capacity for grandeur. The United States will also learn that Iran is now different and not just another Middle Eastern country.

The United States also will have to work through a very complicated political and social system. The Shah's days when the consent of one person was adequate for the implementation of U.S. policies in Iran are over. Public opinion, diverse political groupings, and a robust legislative branch make Iran a unique country in an authoritarian Middle East. Therefore, the psychological and political ramifications of lifting sanctions will be far greater than the immediate economic benefits. Irrespective of commercial motives, the United States should unconditionally enable companies to operate in Iran and transfer technology to Iran to change elite perceptions in the medium term. Engagement, subtlety, long-term perspective, and a deep understanding of the subject to be influenced were crucial in the continuity of British global power for more than two centuries. The United States cannot ignore these universal laws of global grandeur.

**U.S. policy toward Iran seeks quick results; they will not be delivered.**

U.S. leadership and decisionmaking bureaucracies need to use diverse methods of engagement to enable the world to accept U.S. leadership and power. Much of the substance of accepting another's supremacy is psychological. Economic sanctions toward Iran, Iraq, or other countries are considered attempts to achieve quick fixes to complex problems. Simplicity, honesty, and straightforwardness in the United States have contributed to the flourishing of the world's most technologically advanced economy. But diplomacy and statesmanship are not business. With its great human and material resources, the United States must be the master of engagement not only in the Middle East but throughout the world. Diplomatic ambiguity should lead to results, not to stalemate. Middle Easterners are very accommodating by nature. Even militant Islam is a reaction to frustration and not an intrinsic part of Islam. As a general guideline, not only for the political leadership in the region but also for Israel and the United States, a culturally conscious approach can win the soul of the average person in the Middle East.

The fifth area where the United States can play a new and effective role deals with changes in attitude. As mentioned previously, how individuals and states are treated tends to be much more important in Iran and the Middle East. The negative consequences of fingerprinting Iranian visitors upon arrival into the United States are greater than the personal grievances

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the same visitors may express regarding the U.S. role in the 1953 coup in Iran. Kindness, fairness, and generosity can achieve what reason, statistics, and arms cannot. This axiom can also be applied to the Israeli approach toward the Palestinians. British philosopher Isaiah Berlin alluded to the nature of the problem in the Middle East, pointing out that “the partly unconscious conviction born of experience [is] that virtue always loses and only toughness pays.”<sup>3</sup> U.S. diplomacy does not incorporate cultural frame-

works into its guidelines. The Europeans, in contrast, pay much more attention to the psychological consequences of the vocabulary they use. For example, the European Union uses “Iran’s support for extremist groups” instead of the common U.S. usage of “terrorist groups.”

To those who, by training, base international affairs on realistic assessments of power relationships, it may be unexpected to learn that Iran points to “American lack of sincerity” as a serious concern in Tehran’s

policy toward potential normalization. Sensing the logic of those who oppose normalization between the two countries is important. For example, one Iranian daily responded to then–Secretary of State Madeleine Albright’s speech in March 2000 on U.S. policy toward Iran:

How could Washington speak of Iran’s “attempt” to become nuclear when Israel has possession of 200 atomic bombs? ... American officials constantly speak of the hostage taking in the beginning of the Iranian revolution, but they never explain to their people why ... this event happen[ed]? How could the [United States] complain of Iran’s weapons of mass destruction when Washington itself holds the largest arsenal of weapons in the history of mankind? ... [The U.S.] secretary of state points out that the future of American–Iranian relations depends on improvements in Iranian behavior in judicial processes, minority rights, human rights, and terrorism. If this is the case, then much of humanity will be deprived of having relations with Washington. ... [The U.S.] secretary of state calls for freedom in Iran but forgets to mention that the Iranian people were deprived of freedom by the Shah who had the full support of the [U.S] government for 37 years.<sup>4</sup>

The political psychology that embodies these statements reflects a belief structure that seeks parity, fairness, consistency, and a judicious response. The author(s) of these statements probably know very little about the U.S. system. Moreover, they may not be equipped with the necessary international exposure to realize that international politics is not founded on charity or moral preaching. The author(s) are merely reacting to the

contradictions in the behavior of a superpower from an internally generated political perspective.

Such authors and groups are increasingly influential. They cannot be denied the right to express their views since Iranian politics now, unlike many of its neighbors, has mass participation. Citizens from all over the country have an opportunity to enter politics and a chance to speak on issues about which they may know little. As societies experience more openness, active and organized minorities may possibly superimpose their views on silent majorities. Even in the United States, the largest democracy in the industrialized world, about one-third of the members of Congress do not have a passport and thus have not been exposed to the complexities and diversities of the rest of the world.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, Washington is not faced with homogenous political machinery in Iran, unlike most countries in the Middle East. At times, political variation in Iran reaches a chaotic situation that frustrates those who want some degree of coherence to Iranian politics. Regaining the trust of the Iranian heart and mind requires a serious overhaul of U.S. attitudes toward Iranian national sovereignty, orthodox sectors of Iranian society, and the role of religious beliefs in Iranian politics. Greater U.S. sensitivity to the local cultural and political landscape in Iran can be demonstrated through the kind of vocabulary and political formulations employed by U.S. congressional and executive officials.

From a cultural perspective, the Middle East remains the most insular region in the world. Greater use of political psychology by the United States is necessary to alter the U.S. image throughout the Middle East. No industrialized country in the world is as generous as the United States in sharing its accomplishments with the rest of the world, and no other democracy practices as much tolerance for diversity as the United States. It is prudent and logical then for the United States to project these and many other values to the rest of the world, provided that they are tailored to local cultural nuances. The United States is too well equipped to be misunderstood and to fail to create an equilibrium among diverse players.

## Looking toward the Future

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The aforementioned attitudinal suggestions are also valid for an arduous, ultimate coexistence of Israel with the rest of the Middle East. Israeli anti-Iranian pursuits are unnecessary. Iranian political culture must be considered in Israel's foreign policy formulations. Iran will remain an important component of the Middle Eastern power configurations. The utility of military hardware to produce political outcomes in the region is increasingly limited. Based on

military criteria, isolated Iran should not have been able to defend its territorial integrity against an Iraq fully armed by Russia and Europe and generously financed by the Arab countries during the war. Yet, Iranians fought in the longest war of the twentieth century and, for the first time in their modern history, did not lose territory to an invader. In less than a decade, Iran will be a different and potentially much more dynamic and evolving state. The Israeli political machinery should not substitute short-term gains in publicity for po-

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tential mid- and long-term regional benefits. Iran has become an easy scapegoat for the endless difficulties in the Palestinian–Israeli negotiations. The United States has an important responsibility to differentiate between U.S. policy on Iran and the complexities in the Israeli–Palestinian peace talks. The current Iranian role in and contribution to the substance and outcome of the Israeli–Palestinian disputes is almost nonexistent.

Many elements make Iran an international country. Iran’s energy resources, its geopolitics, and a basic Western orientation in its social and economic structure lead Tehran’s foreign policy toward cooperating with great powers. For the current leadership in the Islamic republic, maintaining national sovereignty takes precedence over economic development. The order of these priorities will be altered only through changes in the new generation that will lead the country in the coming decade. A new worldly, cosmopolitan, and demanding generation will come to power through the electoral process to defend Iran’s nationalist and Islamic identity. This generation will look beyond the Middle East to acquire Iran’s national security and foster its economic development. U.S. policy toward Iran seeks quick results; they will not be delivered. The current attitude will only foster misperceptions and prolong unnecessary gaps. Normalization of relations between Iran and the United States is a means to an end and should not be the main U.S. objective in dealing with Iran. The United States has a far more important role to play and purpose to pursue, not only in Iran but throughout the whole region.

In less than a decade, new and young faces will lead the Middle East. The new leaders have no choice but to lead their countries to greater economic and political liberalization and gradually to abandon their authoritarian past. Religious and educational reforms top the agenda. The crucial element in this historic shift is political and methodical proximity to a West, and especially the United States, that appreciates and understands procedural and cultural nuances. The United States deserves to provide thought and leadership to the world but it need not advertise its desire to be hegemonic. U.S.

bluntness about being the only leader in the world may not be psychologically wise. German behavior is an important example: as its power increases in Europe, its conscious humbleness also rises. As a U.S. strategic thinker said, “The scope of America’s global hegemony is admittedly great but its depth is shallow, limited by both domestic and external restraints. America’s hegemony involves the exercise of decisive influence but, unlike the empires of the past, not of direct control.”<sup>6</sup> As a mid- to long-term U.S. strategy toward Iran and the Middle East, Washington needs to employ much greater subtlety in its multifaceted projection of power, especially at a time when new leaders exposed to mass politics are about to emerge.

Throughout the Middle East, the United States faces far more difficult challenges: changing the average person’s mindset from a devastating subjectivity to an objective, more global, perspective; inventing a process and assisting regional political and social opinion leaders to move from destructive idealism to scientific realism; subordinating emotions and feelings to rationality and balance; meticulously engaging the region to make seismic shifts from authoritarian political culture to individualism and rational consensus-building processes; and cultivating private sectors that will take the lead in introducing rational social and political change in their societies. U.S. technology, innovation, and a resourceful educational system on the one hand, and a fair, balanced leadership that accounts for the local nuances in the Middle East on the other, will substantially reduce opposition to U.S. presence in the region. This course of action will also enhance its long-term image and add to U.S. credibility as a global power. This is the ideal United States.

## Notes

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3. Michael Ignatieff, *Isaiah Berlin: A Life* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1998), 182.
4. “A Review of U.S. Secretary of State’s Assertions Regarding American–Iranian Relations,” *Jumhuri Eslami*, April 5, 2000, 11.
5. Moises Naim, “Clinton’s Foreign Policy: A Victim of Globalization,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 109 (Winter 1997–1998): 38.
6. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 35.

