Preparing the Chessboard for the "Clash of Civilizations": Divide, Conquer and Rule the "New Middle East"

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The name "Arab Spring" is a catch phrase concocted in distant offices in Washington, London, Paris, and Brussels by individuals and groups who, other than having some superficial knowledge of the region, know very little about the Arabs. What is unfolding amongst the Arab peoples is naturally a mixed package. Insurgency is part of this package as is opportunism. Where there is revolution, there is always counter-revolution.

The upheavals in the Arab World are not an Arab "awakening" either; such a term implies that the Arabs have always been sleeping while dictatorship and injustice has been surrounding them.

In reality the Arab World, which is part of the broader Turko-Arabo-Iranic World, has been filled with frequent revolts that have been put down by the Arab dictators in coordination with countries like the United States, Britain, and France. It has been the interference of these powers that has always acted as a counter-balance to democracy and it will continue to do so.

Divide and Conquer: How the First "Arab Spring" was Manipulated

The plans for reconfiguring the Middle East started several years before the First World War. It was during the First World War, however, that the manifestation of these colonial designs could visibly be seen with the "Great Arab Revolt" against the Ottoman Empire.

Despite the fact that the British, French, and Italians were colonial powers which had prevented the Arabs from enjoying any freedom in countries like Algeria, Libya, Egypt, and Sudan, these colonial powers managed to portray themselves as the friends and allies of Arab liberation.

During the "Great Arab Revolt" the British and the French actually used the Arabs as foot

soldiers against the Ottomans to further their own geo-political schemes. The secret Sykes–Picot Agreement between London and Paris is a case in point. France and Britain merely managed to use and manipulate the Arabs by selling them the idea of Arab liberation from the so-called "repression" of the Ottomans.

In reality, the Ottoman Empire was a multi-ethnic empire. It gave local and cultural autonomy to all its peoples, but was manipulated into the direction of becoming a Turkish entity.

Even the Armenian Genocide that would ensue in Ottoman Anatolia has to be analyzed in the same context as the contemporary targeting of Christians in Iraq as part of a sectarian scheme unleashed by external actors to divide the Ottoman Empire, Anatolia, and the citizens of the Ottoman Empire.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, it was London and Paris which denied freedom to the Arabs, while sowing the seeds of discord amongst the Arab peoples. Local corrupt Arab leaders were also partners in the project and many of them were all too happy to become clients of Britain and France. In the same sense, the "Arab Spring" is being manipulated today. The U.S., Britain, France, and others are now working with the help of corrupt Arab leaders and figures to restructure the Arab World and Africa.

The Yinon Plan: Order from Chaos…

The Yinon Plan, which is a continuation of British stratagem in the Middle East, is an Israeli strategic plan to ensure Israeli regional superiority. It insists and stipulates that Israel must reconfigure its geo-political environment through the balkanization of the surrounding Arab states into smaller and weaker states.

Israeli strategists viewed Iraq as their biggest strategic challenge from an Arab state. This is why Iraq was outlined as the centerpiece to the balkanization of the Middle East and the Arab World. In Iraq, on the basis of the concepts of the Yinon Plan, Israeli strategists have called for the division of Iraq into a Kurdish state and two Arab states, one for Shiite Muslims and the other for Sunni Muslims. The first step towards establishing this was a war between Iraq and Iran, which the Yinon Plan discusses.

The Atlantic, in 2008, and the U.S. military's Armed Forces Journal, in 2006, both published widely circulated maps that closely followed the outline of the Yinon Plan. Aside from a divided Iraq, which the Biden Plan also calls for, the Yinon Plan calls for a divided Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria. The partitioning of Iran, Turkey, Somalia, and Pakistan also all fall into line with these views. The Yinon Plan also calls for dissolution in North Africa and forecasts it as starting from Egypt and then spilling over into Sudan, Libya, and the rest of the region.

Securing the Realm: Redefining the Arab World…

Although tweaked, the Yinon Plan is in motion and coming to life under the "Clean Break." This is through a policy document written in 1996 by Richard Perle and the Study Group on "A New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000" for Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel at the time.

Perle was a former Pentagon under-secretary for Roland Reagan at the time and later a U.S. military advisor to George W. Bush Jr. and the White House.

Aside from Perle, the rest of the members of the Study Group on "A New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000" consisted of James Colbert (Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs), Charles Fairbanks Jr. (Johns Hopkins University), Douglas Feith (Feith and Zell Associates), Robert Loewenberg (Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies), Jonathan Torop (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy), David Wurmser (Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies), and Meyrav Wurmser (Johns Hopkins University).

A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm is the full name of this 1996 Israel policy paper.

In many regards, the U.S. is executing the objectives outlined in Tel Aviv's 1996 policy paper to secure the "realm." Moreover, the term "realm" implies the strategic mentality of the authors.

A realm refers to either the territory ruled by a monarch or the territories that fall under a monarch's reign, but are not physically under their control and have vassals running them. In this context, the word realm is being used to denote the Middle East as the kingdom of Tel Aviv. The fact that Perle, someone who has essentially been a career Pentagon official, helped author the Israeli paper also makes one ask if the conceptualized sovereign of the realm is either Israel, the United States, or both?

Securing the Realm: The Israeli Blueprints to Destabilize Damascus

The 1996 Israeli document calls for "rolling back Syria" sometime around the year 2000 or afterward by pushing the Syrians out of Lebanon and destabilizing the Syrian Arab Republic with the help of Jordan and Turkey. This has respectively taken place in 2005 and 2011.

The 1996 document states:

> "Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq — an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right — as a means of foiling Syria's regional ambitions." [1]

As a first step towards creating an Israeli-dominated "New Middle East" and encircling Syria, the 1996 document calls for removing President Saddam Hussein from power in Baghdad and even alludes to the balkanization of Iraq and forging a strategic regional alliance against Damascus that includes a Sunni Muslim "Central Iraq." The authors write:

> "But Syria enters this conflict with potential weaknesses: Damascus is too preoccupied

with dealing with the threatened new regional equation to permit distractions of the Lebanese flank. And Damascus fears that the 'natural axis' with Israel on one side, central Iraq and Turkey on the other, and Jordan, in the center would squeeze and detach Syria from the Saudi Peninsula.

For Syria, this could be the prelude to a redrawing of the map of the Middle East which would threaten Syria's territorial integrity." [2]

Perle and the Study Group on "A New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000" also call for driving the Syrians out of Lebanon and destabilizing Syria by using Lebanese opposition figures.

The document states:

"[Israel must divert] Syria's attention by using Lebanese opposition elements to destabilize Syrian control of Lebanon." [3] This is what would happen in 2005 after the Hariri Assassination that helped launch the so-called "Cedar Revolution" and create the vehemently anti-Syrian March 14 Alliance controlled by the corrupt Said Hariri.

The document also calls for Tel Aviv to "take [the] opportunity to remind the world of the nature of the Syrian regime." [4]

This clearly falls into the Israeli strategy of demonizing its opponents through using public relations (PR) campaigns. In 2009, Israeli news media openly admitted that Tel Aviv through its embassies and diplomatic missions had launched a global campaign to discredit the Iranian presidential elections before they even took place through a media campaign and organizing protests in front of Iranian embassies. [5]

The document also mentions something that resembles what is currently going on in Syria. It states:

"Most important, it is understandable that Israel has an interest supporting diplomatically, militarily and operationally Turkey's and Jordan's actions against Syria, such as securing tribal alliances with Arab tribes that cross into Syrian territory and are hostile to the Syrian ruling elite." [6]

With the 2011 upheaval in Syria, the movement of insurgents and the smuggling of weapons through the Jordanian and Turkish borders has become a major problem for Damascus.

In this context, it is no surprise that Arial Sharon and Israel told Washington to attack Syria, Libya, and Iran after the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. [7] Finally, it is worth knowing that the Israeli document also advocated for pre-emptive war to shape Israel's geo-strategic environment and to carve out the "New Middle East." [8] This is a policy that the U.S. would also adopt in 2001.

The Eradication of the Christian Communities of the Middle East

It is no coincidence that Egyptian Christians were attacked at the same time as the South Sudan Referendum and before the crisis in Libya.

Nor is it a coincidence that Iraqi Christians, one of the world's oldest Christian communities, have been forced into exile, leaving their ancestral homelands in Iraq.

Coinciding with the exodus of Iraqi Christians, which occurred under the watchful eyes of U.S. and British military forces, the neighbourhoods in Baghdad became sectarian as Shiite Muslims and Sunni Muslims were forced by violence and death squads to form sectarian enclaves. This is all tied to the Yinon Plan and the reconfiguration of the region as part of a broader objective.

In Iran, the Israelis have been trying in vain to get the Iranian Jewish community to leave.

Iran's Jewish population is actually the second largest in the Middle East and arguably the oldest undisturbed Jewish community in the world.

Iranian Jews view themselves as Iranians who are tied to Iran as their homeland, just like Muslim and Christian Iranians, and for them the concept that they need to relocate to Israel because they are Jewish is ridiculous.

In Lebanon, Israel has been working to exacerbate sectarian tensions between the various Christian and Muslim factions as well as the Druze.

Lebanon is a springboard into Syria and the division of Lebanon into several states is also seen as a means for balkanizing Syria into several smaller sectarian Arab states.

The objectives of the Yinon Plan are to divide Lebanon and Syria into several states on the basis of religious and sectarian identities for Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Christians, and the Druze. There could also be objectives for a Christian exodus in Syria too.

The new head of the Maronite Catholic Syriac Church of Antioch, the largest of the autonomous Eastern Catholic Churches, has expressed his fears about a purging of Arab Christians in the Levant and Middle East.

Patriarch Mar Beshara Boutros Al-Rahi and many other Christian leaders in Lebanon and Syria are afraid of a Muslim Brotherhood takeover in Syria. Like Iraq, mysterious groups are now attacking the Christian communities in Syria. The leaders of the Christian Eastern Orthodox Church, including the Eastern Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, have also all publicly expressed their grave concerns. Aside from the Christian Arabs, these fears are also shared by the Assyrian and Armenian communities, which are mostly Christian.

Sheikh Al-Rahi was recently in Paris where he met President Nicolas Sarkozy. It is reported that the Maronite Patriarch and Sarkozy had disagreements about Syria, which prompted Sarkozy to say that the Syrian regime will collapse. Patriarch Al-Rahi's position was that Syria should be left alone and allowed to reform.

The Maronite Patriarch also told Sarkozy that Israel needed to be dealt with as a threat if

France legitimately wanted Hezbollah to disarm.

Because of his position in France, Al-Rahi was instantly thanked by the Christian and Muslim religious leaders of the Syrian Arab Republic who visited him in Lebanon.

Hezbollah and its political allies in Lebanon, which includes most the Christian parliamentarians in the Lebanese Parliament, also lauded the Maronite Patriarch who later went on a tour to South Lebanon.

Sheikh Al-Rahi is now being politically attacked by the Hariri-led March 14 Alliance, because of his stance on Hezbollah and his refusal to support the toppling of the Syrian regime. A conference of Christian figures is actually being planned by Hariri to oppose Patriarch Al-Rahi and the stance of the Maronite Church. Since Al-Rahi announced his position, the Tahrir Party, which is active in both Lebanon and Syria, has also started targeting him with criticism. It has also been reported that high-ranking U.S. officials have also cancelled their meetings with the Maronite Patriarch as a sign of their displeasure about his positions on Hezbollah and Syria.

The Hariri-led March 14 Alliance in Lebanon, which has always been a popular minority (even when it was a parliamentary majority), has been working hand-in-hand with the U.S., Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the groups using violence and terrorism in Syria. The Muslim Brotherhood and other so-called Salafist groups from Syria have been coordinating and holding secret talks with Hariri and the Christian political parties in the March 14 Alliance. This is why Hariri and his allies have turned on Cardinal Al-Rahi. It was also Hariri and the March 14 Alliance that brought Fatah Al-Islam into Lebanon and have now helped some of its members escape to go and fight in Syria.

There are unknown snippers who are targeting Syrian civilians and the Syrian Army with a view of causing chaos and internal fighting. The Christian communities in Syria are also being targeted by unknown groups. It is very likely that the attackers are a coalition of U.S., French, Jordanian, Israeli, Turkish, Saudi, and Khalij (Gulf) Arab forces working with some Syrians on the inside.

A Christian exodus is being planned for the Middle East by Washington, Tel Aviv, and Brussels. It has been reported that Sheikh Al-Rahi was told in Paris by President Nicolas Sarkozy that the Christian communities of the Levant and Middle East can resettle in the European Union. This is no gracious offer.

It is a slap in the face by the same powers that have deliberately created the conditions to eradicate the ancient Christian communities of the Middle East. The aim appears to be either the resettling of the Christian communities outside of the region or demarcate them into enclaves. Both could be objectives.

This project is meant to delineate the Arab nations along the lines of being exclusively Muslim nations and falls into accordance with both the Yinon Plan and the geo-political objectives of the U.S. to control Eurasia. A major war may be its outcome. Arab Christians now have a lot in common with black-skinned Arabs.

Re-Dividing Africa: The Yinon Plan is very Much Alive and at Work...

In regards to Africa, Tel Aviv sees securing Africa as part of its broader periphery. This broader or so-called "new periphery" became a basis of geo-strategy for Tel Aviv after 1979

when the "old periphery" against the Arabs that included Iran, which was one of Israel's closest allies during the Pahlavi period, buckled and collapsed with the 1979 Iranian Revolution. In this context, Israel's "new periphery" was conceptualized with the inclusion of countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya against the Arab states and the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is why Israel has been so deeply involved in the balkanization of Sudan.

In the same context as the sectarian divisions in the Middle East, the Israelis have outlined plans to reconfigure Africa. The Yinon Plan seeks to delineate Africa on the basis of three facets: (1) ethno-linguistics; (2) skin-colour; and, finally, (3) religion. To secure the realm, it also so happens that the the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS), the Israeli think-tank that included Perle, also pushed for the creating of the Pentagon's U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM).

An attempt to separate the merging point of an Arab and African identity is underway. It seeks to draw dividing lines in Africa between a so-called "Black Africa" and a supposedly "non-Black" North Africa. This is part of a scheme to create a schism in Africa between what are assumed to be "Arabs" and so-called "Blacks."

This objective is why the ridiculous identity of an "African South Sudan" and an "Arab North Sudan" have been nurtured and promoted. This is also why black-skinned Libyans have been targeted in a campaign to "colour cleanse" Libya. The Arab identity in North Africa is being de-linked from its African identity. Simultaneously there is an attempt to eradicate the large populations of "black-skinned Arabs" so that there is a clear delineation between "Black Africa" and a new "non-Black" North Africa, which will be turned into a fighting ground between the remaining "non-Black" Berbers and Arabs.

In the same context, tensions are being fomented between Muslims and Christians in Africa, in such places as Sudan and Nigeria, to further create lines and fracture points. The fuelling of these divisions on the basis of skin-colour, religion, ethnicity, and language is intended to fuel disassociation and disunity in Africa. This is all part of a broader African strategy of cutting North Africa off from the rest of the African continent.

Preparing the Chessboard for the "Clash of Civilizations"

It is at this point that all the pieces have to be put together and the dots have to be connected.

The chessboard is being staged for a "Clash of Civilizations" and all the chess pieces are being put into place.

The Arab World is in the process of being cordoned off and sharp delineation lines are being created.

These lines of delineation are replacing the seamless lines of transition between different ethno-linguistic, skin-colour, and religious groups.

Under this scheme, there can no longer be a melding transition between societies and countries. This is why the Christians in the Middle East and North Africa, such as the Copts, are being targeted. This is also why black-skinned Arabs and black-skinned Berbers, as well as other North African population groups which are black-skinned, are facing genocide in North Africa.

After Iraq and Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Syrian Arab Republic are both important points of regional destabilization in North Africa and Southeast Asia respectively. What happens in Libya will have rippling effects on Africa, as what happens in Syria will have rippling effects on Southeast Asia and beyond. Both Iraq and Egypt, in connection with what the Yinon Plan states, have acted as primers for the destabilization of both these Arab states.

What is being staged is the creation of an exclusively "Muslim Middle East" area (excluding Israel) that will be in turmoil over Shiite-Sunni fighting. A similar scenario is being staged for a "non-Black North Africa" area which will be characterized by a confrontation between Arabs and Berber. At the same time, under the "Clash of Civilizations" model, the Middle East and North Africa are slated to simultaneously be in conflict with the so-called "West" and "Black Africa."

This is why both Nicolas Sarzoky, in France, and David Cameron, in Britain, made back-to-back declarations during the start of the conflict in Libya that multiculturalism is dead in their respective Western European societies. [9] Real multiculturalism threatens the legitimacy of the NATO war agenda. It also constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of the "Clash of Civilizations" which constitutes the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.

In this regard, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former U.S. National Security Advisor, explains why multiculturalism is a threat to Washington and its allies:

> "[A]s America becomes an increasingly multicultural society, it may find it more difficult to fashion a consensus on foreign policy issues [e.g., war with the Arab World, China, Iran, or Russia and the former Soviet Union], except in the circumstances of a truly massive and widely perceived direct external threat.
>
> Such a consensus generally existed throughout World War II and even during the Cold War [and exists now because of the 'Global War on Terror']." [10]

Brzezinski's next sentence is the qualifier of why populations would oppose or support wars:

> "[The consensus] was rooted, however, not only in deeply shared democratic values, which the public sensed were being threatened, but also in a cultural and ethnic affinity for the predominantly European victims of hostile totalitarianisms." [11]

Risking being redundant, it has to be mentioned again that it is precisely with the intention of breaking these cultural affinities between the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region and the so-called "Western World" and sub-Saharan Africa that Christians and black-skinned peoples are being targeted.

Ethnocentrism and Ideology: Justifying Today's "Just Wars"

In the past, the colonial powers of Western Europe would indoctrinate their people. Their objective was to acquire popular support for colonial conquest. This took the form of spreading Christianity and promoting Christian values with the support of armed merchants and colonial armies.

At the same time, racist ideologies were put forth. The people whose lands were colonized were portrayed as "sub-human," inferior, or soulless. Finally, the "White Man's burden" of taking on a mission of civilizing the so-called "uncivilized peoples of the world" was used. This cohesive ideological framework was used to portray colonialism as a "just cause." The latter in turn was used to provide legitimacy to the waging of "just wars" as a means to conquering and "civilizing" foreign lands.

Today, the imperialist designs of the United States, Britain, France, and Germany have not changed. What has changed is the pretext and justification for waging their neo-colonial wars of conquest. During the colonial period, the narratives and justifications for waging war were accepted by public opinion in the colonizing countries, such as Britain and France. Today's "just wars" and "just causes" are now being conducted under the banners of women's rights, human rights, humanitarianism, and democracy.

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He was a witness to the "Arab Spring" in action in North Africa. While on the ground in Libya during the NATO bombing campaign he was Special Correspondent for the syndicated investigative KPFA program Flashpoints, which is aired from Berkeley, California.

NOTES

[1] Richard Perle *et al.*, *A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm* (Washington, D.C. and Tel Aviv: Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies), 1996.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Barak Ravid, "Israeli diplomats told to take offensive in PR war against Iran," *Haaretz*, June 1, 2009.
[6] Perle *et al.*, Clean Break, *op. cit.*
[7] Aluf Benn, "Sharon says U.S. should also disarm Iran, Libya and Syria," *Haaretz*, September 30, 2009.
[8] Richard Perle *et al.*, Clean Break, *op. cit.*
[9] Robert Marquand, "Why Europe is turning away from multiculturalism," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 4, 2011.
[10] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books October 1997), p.211.
[11] *Ibid.*

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An award-winning author and geopolitical analyst, Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya is the author of The Globalization of NATO (Clarity Press) and a forthcoming book The War on Libya and the Re-Colonization of Africa. He has also contributed to several other books ranging from cultural critique to international relations. He is a Sociologist and Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), a contributor at the Strategic Culture Foundation (SCF), Moscow, and a member of the Scientific Committee of Geopolitica, Italy.