

Note from AFA President -- ME, Egypt, China, Courage

AFA Members, Congressional Staff Members, Civic Leaders, DOCA members, my last note focused on events going in the world. The demonstrations for reform in Egypt have reached into Jordan resulting in the dismissal of the cabinet by King Abdullah. He has quickly appointed a new prime Minister who will form a new government and launch immediate reforms. Many of the countries in the Middle East have young populations that are growing amid high unemployment, poverty, political repression, and rising food prices. What this means for the U.S. is anybody's guess but it may mean the loss of key allies in the Middle East who will have to answer to more domestic than International needs. The graph below appeared in recently on the BBC. Note the median age column. The median age is the age where half the population is younger and half is older. So, most of these populations are very young ... and their economy needs to create a lot of jobs to keep them "off the streets."

Middle East social indicators

Country	pop. (m)	median age	jobless (%)	below poverty line (%)	internet users (m)
Algeria	34.5	27.1	9.9	23	4.7
Egypt	80.5	24	9.6	20	20
Jordan	6.4	21.8	13.4	14.2	1.6
Lebanon	4.09	29.4	na	28	1
Libya	6.4	24.2	30	33	0.35
Morocco	31.6	26.5	9.8	15	13.2
Saudi Arabia	25.7	24.9	10.8	na	9.6
Syria	22.1	21.5	8.3	11.9	4.4
Tunisia	10.5	29.7	14	3.8	3.5
W Bank & Gaza	2.5	20.9	16.5	46	1.3
Yemen	23.4	17.89	35	45.2	2.2

Secondly, as most of you know, the Egypt is a central concern in the Middle East. In looking for someone who can provide insight into what is happening on the ground in the country, I found a piece by Dr. Paul Sullivan, professor of Economics at the National Defense University. Dr. Sullivan's piece, while two days old, gives the reader the background of his years of experience in Egypt and with the Egyptian army. You can find the piece at: <http://security.nationaljournal.com/2011/01/what-lies-ahead-for-egypt.php#1873245>

Third, I ran across a very good article on China by Dr. Michael Auslin. Dr. Auslin states that what we have been doing for the past 20 years has not worked. He suggests we need a reframing strategy towards China – one with several components: economic, security, and political. You can find the piece at below my name.

Finally, The Air Force released it next "Portraits in Courage." In my notes, I will include one link which takes you to our website where we have them all listed. This note recognizes the heroism of Major Thomas Bozung. Major Bozung flies Casualty Evacuation and Personnel Recovery missions as a pilot of the HH-60G Pave Hawk. You can find the link here:

http://www.afa.org/Portraits/2010/Portrait_Bozung.asp

For your consideration.

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[Reframe U.S.-China Relations](#)

By MICHAEL AUSLIN

President Hu Jintao's state visit has offered the White House a chance to reframe the U.S.-China relationship, but only if President Barack Obama and his top policy makers are bold enough to decide to recognize that the U.S. is indeed in a competition with China, whether it wishes it or not. This means pursuing American interests regardless of the fuss the Chinese will make and giving Beijing the responsibility of deciding whether it wants a more constructive relationship.

If President Obama continues to pursue the same course as prior administrations, Chinese leader-in-waiting Xi Jinping will come into office in 2012 immeasurably strengthened compared to a fading United States. American allies and partners, too, are eagerly watching to see if the Obama team is confident enough to reframe policy so as to promote the interests of democratic, liberal nations.

For over two decades, American presidents have been playing defense to China's steady moves to acquire power, influence and the ability to hinder America's defense of liberal interests. From ignoring the Tiananmen Massacre in

1989 to downplaying China's clear cyber predations, American policy makers have sought instead to "engage" China and lead it seamlessly into becoming a "responsible stakeholder," in the once-popular words of World Bank President Robert Zoellick.

In response, Beijing has carefully and smartly pursued its advantage at every turn. It has rapidly modernized its once-outmoded military.

During Secretary of State Robert Gates's visit to China two weeks ago, the Chinese Air Force test flew its new fifth-generation prototype fighter-bomber, in a calculated insult to Mr. Gates's notion of improving military-to-military ties. Chinese warnings against U.S.-led naval exercises in the Yellow Sea last year are widely believed to have caused the White House to postpone the drills for months. China's ballistic missile forces grow in number every year, and the U.S. now believes that China has developed an anti-ship ballistic missile that will be able one day to target U.S. aircraft carriers.

Meanwhile, Chinese fishing boats backed up by maritime patrol ships regularly intrude upon other nations' exclusive economic zones, leading to showdowns at sea. When Japan arrested the captain of one such fishing vessel that rammed Japanese ships last fall, Beijing responded by cutting off crucial industrial mineral exports, arresting innocent Japanese workers in China, and giving the cold-shoulder to the Japanese ambassador. As it has gained strength, Beijing has gained confidence. That confidence is leading to increasing assertiveness and pressure on smaller and democratic countries alike.

Reframing is a tactic to seize the initiative. It is designed to shift the existing pattern of relations to one's advantage, in part by putting pressure on one's counterpart and in part by refusing to respond to their provocations. The United States has been struggling to respond to Beijing for years. Even during its so-called "unipolar moment" of the 1990s, Washington largely turned a blind eye to Beijing's theft of ballistic missile technology and nuclear warhead designs. The main goal of reframing is to set the contours of interaction, and thereby for Washington to protect its interests and prevent further instability in the Sino-American relationship.

A successful reframing strategy will have several components. First is economic. The reality of U.S.-Chinese economic interdependence does not mean that Washington must idly watch Beijing develop its national economic strength. The Obama Administration should aggressively pursue free trade agreements in Asia and throughout the world, accelerating the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and tying smaller economies closer to American trade and investment.

In addition, American development aid should be increased and targeted at liberalizing nations, thus linking economics and politics. Third, Washington can provide intellectual expertise to developing economies, perhaps in concert with other liberal nations like Great Britain, Japan and South Korea. Finally, Washington should explicitly promote the transparency and long-term stability of the American economy, as compared to the uncertainties in doing business in China.

The second element in a reframing policy is to decisively shift the security balance in Washington's favor. Defense spending as a percent of GDP remains well below Cold War highs, under 5% total, and serious observers of Washington's budget woes recognize that it is not defense, but entitlements that must be cut.

A mature approach to defense spending will be to invest in those systems that we will most need in order to counter China's regional strength. Increasing the number of U.S. submarines, forward basing another aircraft carrier, and building up our sea-based ballistic missile defense can help turn the tide in areas like the South China Sea, where Beijing's claims have grown due to its naval capabilities.

The U.S. must place more of its small F-22 force in the Pacific, forge ahead on a next generation bomber, so as to be assured of the ability to flexibly target inland military sites, and dramatically increase the number of surveillance platforms, whether unmanned, manned, or space-based, so as to have a fuller picture of Chinese military developments and movements. Now that the Chinese fifth-generation fighter-bomber program is known to be airborne, The Congress must also seriously consider restarting production of the F-22, both as a message and as insurance.

Washington must make clear that, along with its allies, it will continue to set the terms of the security balance in the broad Indo-Pacific region, and that its supremacy in maintaining stability and promoting common norms will not erode.

This brings us to the final element in the reframing strategy--the political. Ultimately, reframing is about the combination of skill and will. Washington must realistically conclude that our post-1989 approach has failed to bring about the kind of China that is more liberal, more constructive, or more of a global leader. Yet the U.S. does have enduring national interests and commitments to its allies and friends. It should resolutely defend those interests and fulfill those commitments.

Firstly, the U.S. should unapologetically sponsor a forum of liberal and democratic Indo-Pacific nations to discuss the development of civil society, democracy, and rule of law. Washington should promote bilateral ties among those same nations themselves. The U.S. should also return to the Bush administration's aggressive courting of India, and have no qualms about refusing to meet and talk with the Chinese when they act contrary to the interests of stability and against norms of international behavior. Let Mr. Hu, and after him Mr. Xi, appeal to the United States, instead of Washington always entreating Beijing to talk.

Chinese leaders seem to have concluded that they are in a competition with the United States and that they are making steady gains that are wearing it down over the long term. On the other hand, Americans now have several decades of experience showing what doesn't work. Why not try something that may protect the U.S. and possibly even change Chinese behavior for the better?

--Mr. Auslin is director of Japan studies at the American Enterprise Institute and a columnist for WSJ.com.
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