



BAKER INSTITUTE REPORT

NOTES FROM THE JAMES A. BAKER III INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY OF RICE UNIVERSITY

PERES ASSESSES SHARON'S LEGACY AND CALLS FOR A UNITED POLICY AGAINST IRAN'S NUCLEAR AMBITION



Shimon Peres, former Israeli prime minister, said that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's most important legacy was to lead the Israeli people away from extremist ideologies toward a more centrist position by establishing Kadima.

Shimon Peres, the former prime minister of the State of Israel, praised Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for forging a new course in Israeli politics and the Arab-Israeli peace process, stating, "His political contribution exceeds his territorial change."

Former Prime Minister Peres spoke at the Baker Institute January 16—twelve days after Sharon suffered a life-threatening stroke and just weeks prior to Palestinian and Israeli elections. In his presentation, he declared

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BAKER INSTITUTE SUPPORTS IRAQ STUDY GROUP

The Baker Institute is one of several think tanks supporting the Iraq Study Group—a new, bipartisan effort to make an independent assessment of the current and future situation in Iraq.

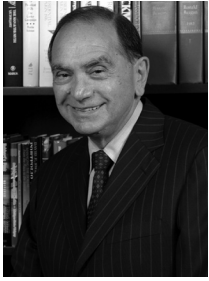
At the urging of Congress, the group was organized to have people outside the government take a fresh look at the current and prospective situation on the ground in Iraq, its impact on the surrounding region, and the consequences for U.S. interests.

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James A. Baker, III, and Lee H. Hamilton announce the formation of a bipartisan study group to assess the situation in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group, which they will co-chair, was formed at the request of Congress, and was announced March 15 in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images.)

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR: ISLAMISTS AND DEMOCRACY



The electoral success of Hamas in the Palestinian elections on January 28, 2006, raises the larger ques-

tion of democracy promotion and Islamist parties in the Arab and Muslim world as a whole. Elections are only one major element of democracy. The core concept of democracy, as we Americans know so well, is the constitutional rule of law and the consent of the governed. That means, *inter alia*, that when one political group or party gains executive power in elections, they must be ready and willing to leave power if the ballot box goes against them the next time around. We addressed this problem when I was assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs in 1992 with elections in Algeria and the prospect of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) coming to power through the ballot box. In a speech at Meridian House I stated: "Those who seek to broaden political participation in the Middle East will, therefore, find us supportive, as we have been elsewhere in the World. At the same time, we are suspect of those who would use the democratic process to come to power, only to destroy that very process in order to retain power and political dominance. While we believe in the principle of one person, one vote, we do not support one person, one vote, one time."

This latter phrase has been

wrongly interpreted by some that the United States was and is categorically opposed to Islamist parties coming to power in the region. Rather, the whole thrust of the policy statement was the compelling need for meaningful democratic political and economic reforms in the Middle East and resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict—all for their own good, but also to marginalize the extremists in the region, secular or religious. Political and economic reforms are a necessary prelude to the evolution of the Muslim and Arab countries toward democratic systems tailored to their own cultural framework, but with respect for the rule of law and the principle of the alternation of power.

In this context, we must differentiate amongst the Islamist groups. There are groups and movements that are, of course, beyond the pale of any free and democratic system, and they must be actively opposed and marginalized. The Islamic Radical Jihadists, such as the Al Qaeda network and the Salafist Jihadists target both the "near enemy" (e.g., the "impious" regimes in the Muslim countries), and "the further enemy" (e.g., the United States, European countries, and Israel). On the other hand, there are Islamist groups that offer the potential for, or have demonstrated their commitment to, democratic political participation. In this category we can include parties such as the AKP in Turkey, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, the Party of Justice and

Development (PJD) in Morocco, and the Prosperous Justice Party in Indonesia. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt emerged as the main opposition in parliament, but has yet to be tested in terms of its commitment to democratic values.

Another distinction that needs to be made concerns groups and parties such as Hamas and Hezbollah which have a radical Islamist agenda and resort to terrorism, but which have also deliberately established an effective system of social and economic programs which have gained them local popular support, as demonstrated decisively by Hamas. The challenge with these two groups is whether or not they can be co-opted to transform their *modus operandi* from violent means to political participation in both Lebanon and Palestine. This overall task regarding Islamist parties is going to take strong political will and determination, in the first place, by the leaders of the countries directly involved, and by the policies of the international community, especially the United States.

In conducting a policy of differentiation between the nonviolent Islamists and the radical Islamic Jihadists, the United States should make clear what we are for and against. Namely in our public diplomacy, we should assert that we differ with those, regardless of their religion, who practice ter-

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LÉVY ANALYZES THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

Bernard-Henri Lévy, the celebrated and controversial French philosopher and journalist, defended America's entrenched but embattled model of democracy—symbolized in its motto, *E Pluribus Unum* (Out of many, one)—declaring that America, “in spite of many things, in spite of the crisis ... it is still, *l'auteur de sa destinée*.”

Speaking to a large audience February 13 at the Baker Institute, Lévy discussed the question of whether America, which he believed was at a crossroads in its history, was still in the position of both controlling its destiny and upholding its duty of preserving American ideals to its people—and the world. In his presentation, he discussed his investigation and

findings on this subject, catalogued in his recently published book, *American Vertigo: Traveling America in the Footsteps of Tocqueville*.

Lévy modeled his search on that of Alexis de Tocqueville, the French philosopher who traveled to America in 1831 to discover what Europe and America had to learn from one another. In particular, Tocqueville wanted to study what he called in his book, *Democracy in America*, the “democratic revolution” in its pure form—and which he felt he was witnessing in France. As Lévy says in his own book, 173 years after Tocqueville, he went to America to answer “questions that are of my own time, and to learn not just about you, my American friends,

but about us all.”

In his lecture, Lévy said he undertook the project, originally suggested to him by *Atlantic Monthly*, for two primary reasons. Described in an introduction by Allen Matusow, associate director for academic programs at the Baker Institute, as a leading voice in France against what he regards as “mindless and malignant anti-Americanism,” Lévy sought to expose the political and cultural underpinnings of anti-Americanism in France and Europe—and now around the world—and “oppose the reality to the myth of the anti-Americanist.”

In order to undertake this

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ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN WORKSHOP AFTER HAMAS' SUCCESS AT THE POLLS

The Baker Institute hosted an Israeli-Palestinian workshop February 8-9 following the Islamic faction Hamas' success in the January 25 Palestinian parliamentary elections. The workshop had two purposes: first, to discuss how to avoid a potential humanitarian disaster in the Palestinian territories posed by the threat to cut international assistance in response to Hamas' success; and second, to discuss next steps on issues of financial assistance and economic rehabilitation under various scenarios to be determined by Hamas' actions.

SCIENTISTS AND POLICYMAKERS DISCUSS THE STATE OF STEM CELL RESEARCH AND POLICY IN TEXAS

Leading researchers in the field of stem cell biology convened at the Baker Institute March 6 to discuss their work and the current state and federal climate for embryonic stem cell research. The conference, “Lessons Learned,” was the second in the “Stem Cells: Saving Lives or Crossing Lines” series, which has brought experts to the institute to discuss issues of science, ethics, policy, and business potential. The focus of this conference was on the climate in Texas.

“The goal of this conference is to introduce a new and more effective dialogue regarding [the importance of maintaining] safeguards against reproductive cloning and other unethical practices while advancing research in Texas,” said Kirstin Matthews, science and technology policy postdoctoral research associate at the Baker Institute, who organized the conference.

Embryonic stem cell research is an exciting, but controversial new area of study for biomedical scientists. Using cells derived from a five-day-old human embryo (blastocyst), researchers believe that they can further the understanding of human development and cell specialization (differentiation). By studying cell differentiation, scientists hope to discover molecular controls, which cause many diseases, including cancer and Alzheimer’s. By learning to control cell differentiation, researchers are optimistic that they can use stem cells for therapies and cures

for debilitating diseases or injuries such as diabetes, Parkinson’s, and spinal cord injuries. While this research is in the very early stages, it holds great promise for the future of medicine.

“It’s got to be this medical community that’s interested in [promoting stem cell research] that gets out and educates people on just what they’re talking about.”

– Beverly Woolley

Although the research shows potential for developing cures, “it’s very, very complicated, and ... most people [believe that while] ... you are creating human life, you are [also] destroying human life to create human life,” said Texas State Representative Beverly Woolley. Woolley went further to say: “These arguments [by those in

research] are valid, but it’s got to be this medical community that’s interested in [promoting stem cell research] that gets out and educates people on just what they’re talking about. And it’s a difficult process.”

Judy Haley, president of Texans for the Advancement of Medical Research (TAMR), was optimistic about the future. During the 79th legislative session, 12 pro-stem-cell bills were introduced, compared to the three anti-stem-cell bills that were introduced. Although no bills were passed, there was an increase in support for stem cell research compared to the previous sessions, and many legislators wanted to learn more about the subject.

The discussion at the conference was wide ranging. Medical ethicist Baruch Brody, the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in Humanities at Rice University, reviewed how to incorporate ethics with sound policy. Stephen Minger, director of King’s College London Stem Cell Biology Laboratory, discussed his research in the United Kingdom using human embryonic stem cells.

“What many took from the meeting was the great potential of this research to advance biomedical research and the need for sound policy that addresses the concerns of all our citizens,” said Neal Lane, senior fellow in science and technology policy at the Baker Institute.

The first conference in the series was held in November 2004.

KELLY DAY ENDOWMENT ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy is pleased to announce the Kelly Day Endowment on the Status of Women and Human Rights in the Middle East. This endowment is named in honor of Los Angeles native Kelly Day and in recognition of her commitment to these issues.

Understanding both the challenges to, and achievements of, Middle Eastern women is critical to promoting and safeguarding human rights in that part of the world. Although images of Middle Eastern women in U.S. media are often based on stereotypes, positive

strides have been taken by women, governments, and international organizations to engage women more actively in public life during recent years. This new endowment will fund programs to be hosted at the Baker Institute or in an international setting which will examine human rights issues and the role of Middle Eastern women in all sectors of society. These programs will bring together Muslims, Christians, and Jews to focus on the various factors that promote the advancement of women and other human rights issues in Middle Eastern societies.

By identifying countries and policies that promote the involvement of women and human rights, these programs will help policymakers better predict and understand how the broader participation of individuals in the public and private sector may impact regional attitudes on major domestic and international issues. These programs will also consider the relationships between policies intended for the advancement of women and children and progress with respect to broader goals such as democratic reform, economic advancement, and better education.

ADVISORY BOARD MEETS IN HOUSTON AND WASHINGTON

Two meetings of the Baker Institute Advisory Board were held in Houston and Washington, D.C., in early 2006 to discuss the evolution of the Baker Institute, its current actions, and future direction.

Members of the Advisory Board first convened in Houston January 12. The second meeting was held February 6 in Washington, D.C., to brief former secretaries of state Colin Powell and Madeleine Albright, who are serving as ex officio members.

Both meetings were attended by James A. Baker, III, Rice University president David Leebron, Baker Institute director Edward P. Djerejian, and E. William Barnett,

chairman of the Advisory Board.

Ambassador Djerejian briefed the board members at both meetings on the current and future direction of the institute, as well as on its financial status and development strategies. Djerejian asked the Advisory Board members for advice on new initiatives and on the strategic direction of the institute.

“Over its first decade, the Baker Institute has progressed far more rapidly than anyone could have predicted,” Barnett said. “The question now is where does it go from here?”

The members of the advisory board are: Barnett, former chairman of the Board of Trustees of

Rice University and former managing partner of Baker Botts LLP; Hushang Ansary, chairman of Parman Group and former Iranian ambassador to the United States; Charles W. Duncan, Jr., former president of Coca-Cola Co. and former secretary of energy; Steven L. Miller, former president and CEO of Shell Oil Co.; John F.W. Rogers, managing director of Goldman Sachs and former under secretary of state and assistant secretary of the treasury; and Marc J. Shapiro, non-executive chairman of Chase Bank of Texas and former vice chairman of JP Morgan Chase & Co.

STALIN AND SADDAM, THE TOTALITARIAN MIND: LEGITIMACY, CONSPIRACY, AND FORCE

Jonathan Brent, editorial director of the Yale University Press and author of *Stalin's Last Crime*, used a brief comparison between Joseph Stalin and Saddam Hussein to launch into an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of totalitarian regimes and their use of mass terror, brutality, and force in the 20th century.

In a December 13 lecture, Brent discussed the evolution of “extremist political manifestations,” the fanaticism of their leaders, and the loyalty of their followers. He also addressed the implications of his analysis for the American attempt

to promote democracy abroad, and he stressed that the very concept of democracy “needs to be studied.”

“The deepest lesson that I have learned from my study of totalitarian regimes is that they never in fact were imposed from the outside,” Brent said, responding to a question as to whether a successful democracy would be possible in Iraq. Despite Stalin’s hateful crimes, the Russian people and party loyalists revered him and the socialist doctrine he preached during deeply troubled times. “As much as we call Stalin a tyrant... the power of that regime grew out of the will

of the people,” he said, adding: “Democracy also has to grow out of the will of the people. It too is a belief system, and so I don’t believe that that can simply be forced upon other people.... It requires a great deal of cultural, social, political cultivation.”

To set the context for how such totalitarian leaders as Vladimir Lenin and Stalin assumed power, Brent referenced party documents on brutal interrogations and the literature of the time. In researching Stalin’s last conspiracy, he was struck by the statement of an inter-

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EXPERTS SAY KOREA’S UNIFICATION PROCESS SHOULD NOT BE TOO HASTY

At a November 6 conference at the Baker Institute, “Korea’s Development: Perspectives on North and South,” presenters generally agreed that Korea will reemerge as a single nation, but the process will not and should not be hasty. Challenges include huge economic costs and resolution of the differing evolution of values between the two countries.

“South Korea is very concerned that once unification occurs, it does not follow the example of West and East Germany,” where preparations were not extensive enough, said former Rice University president Malcolm Gillis, who organized the conference with

Yoosoon Chang, associate professor of economics. “Many in Korea and the U.S. and other nations are searching for more effective means of reunification,” added Gillis, who is University Professor, the Ervin K. Zingler Professor of Economics.

The program, which examined 50 years of North and South Korean economic, demographic, and military history, featured presentations by key government officials as well as academic specialists in Korean affairs.

Hugh Patrick, director of the Center of Japanese Economy and Business and the Robert D. Calkins Professor Emeritus of International Business at Columbia University,

discussed Korea’s tragedies, transformations, and successes, beginning with the division of the peninsula in 1945, which he termed the country’s “most enduring tragedy” and “not a Korean choice.”

Patrick also cited the ensuing war of more than a half century and the resulting famine and suffering of the North Korean people. He noted that while North Korea changed from a rapidly developing economy to a poor country with an inadequate food supply by the end of the 20th century, South Korea peacefully changed to a democracy. The result was economic development leading to an impressive

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BAKER INSTITUTE STUDENT FORUM

In the current academic year, the Baker Institute Student Forum (BISF) has conducted numerous events to further the educational mission of the Baker Institute and contribute to the campus policy dialogue. With the addition of open membership, BISF has received increased input from the student community, giving it a new, unique perspective, and enabling it to plan events for the maximum benefit of all of Rice University. A future aim is to foster national dialogue.

BISF began the new semester January 19 with BISF Trivia Night. Students, fellows, and faculty members competed in a test of policy trivia knowledge. Victorious students won the chance to sit in on an off-the-record, extemporaneous discussion February 9 with Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, offering them personal insights into a life of foreign service and public engagement.

A February 27 presentation, "Ending Genocide," by Wanda Akin and her husband Raymond Brown,

attorneys specializing in international law and the prosecution of war crimes, focused on their experience in the trials of suspected war criminals during the early 1990s stemming from the civil discord in Sierra Leone. They also addressed the violence in the Darfur region of the Sudan and the international community's controversial response.

BISF hosted a panel discussion March 3 on the debate over the teaching of Intelligent Design theory in schools. The panel included prominent figures in science education and ethics including William Brinkley, senior vice president for graduate sciences and dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine, and Hugo Bellen, professor in the Department of Molecular and Human Genetics at Baylor College of Medicine and an investigator at Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Students raised questions on topics including the scientific proof of Intelligent Design and its implications for education policy.



At Trivia Night, an event of a new format and purpose, the BISF invited students, fellows, and faculty members to compete against one another in a test of policy trivia knowledge.

BISF UPCOMING EVENTS

All BISF events are open to the public unless otherwise noted. For more information on these events, please visit the Baker Institute website at <http://bakerinstitute.org>.

Trafficking: Women

Wednesday, April 12, 2006

4:00 pm

Doré Commons, Baker Hall

The Uninsured in Texas

with the Baker Institute Science and Technology Policy Program

Monday, April 17, 2006

6:00 pm

Baker Hall

Secretary Baker: Off the Record

By Invitation Only

Thursday, April 20, 2006

12:00 pm

Kelly International Conference Facility, Baker Hall

Dis-chord or Harmony?: The Future of Copyright Law and File Sharing

Friday, April 21, 2006

4:00 pm

Kelly International Conference Facility, Baker Hall

Trip to Austin: Tour of Texas Capitol

late April, date TBA

ETHICS, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY LECTURE ON ANIMAL RIGHTS

Bernard Rollin, a leading figure in the field of applied ethics known as “veterinary ethics” relating to animal welfare and research, spoke March 2 on “Animal Rights as a Mainstream Phenomenon.”

Rollin, a university distinguished professor at Colorado State University, provided evidence on the significant growth in social concern about how society treats animals. He also discussed the roots of that concern and the various forms

it is taking.

During the last decade, there has been a proliferation of legislation in the U.S. Congress relating to animal welfare, with about 50 to 60 bills pending annually at the federal level, compared to no bills pending 30 years ago, he said.

Society has become increasingly disaffected with the traditional anticruelty ethic governing animal treatment. The most important reason, Rollin said, has been the sharp

increase since 1945 in the changes in the use of animals in two areas: research and testing and agriculture.

“Changes in the nature of animal use demanded new moral categories,” he said.

Rollin spoke as part of the Rice University Lecture Series on Ethics, Politics, and Society, sponsored by the Baker Institute and the dean of humanities.

ISLAMISTS

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rorism, oppress minorities, preach intolerance, or violate internationally accepted standards of conduct regarding human rights; with those who are insensitive to the need for political pluralism; with those who cloak their message in another brand of authoritarianism; with those who substitute religious and political confrontation for constructive engagement with the rest of the world; with those who do not share our commitment to peaceful conflict resolution, especially in the Arab-Israeli context and a two-state solution; and with those who would pursue their goals through repression or violence.

At the same time, those who are prepared to take specific steps toward free elections, creating independent judiciaries, promoting the rule of law, reducing restrictions on the press, respecting the

rights of minorities, and guaranteeing individual rights, will find us ready to recognize and support their efforts, just as those moving in the opposite direction will find us ready to speak candidly and act accordingly.

This approach as it pertains to the Islamists is one of the major components of the challenge of democratization in the Muslim and Arab world. In the first instance, there should be engagement between governments in the region and the nonviolent Islamists to try to bring them into the political mainstream where they can be tested by involvement in governmental affairs and be held accountable in the complex business of decision making. In the second instance, there is the role of the countries outside the region and their engagement in encouraging and supporting, by word and deed, structural economic and political reforms, democratization, transpar-

ency and anticorruption programs, and the promotion of the rights of women, including the right to vote and human rights.

In this respect and while, as made clear above, there is no room for dialogue with the Islamic Radical Jihadists because there is no common ground between us, the United States and other leading countries should consider the merits of engaging in contacts with nonviolent Islamist groups with the view of testing their intent and willingness to participate positively in the process of political and economic reforms and democratization. In order to marginalize the extremists in the Muslim world and enhance the prospects of democracy promotion, a policy of differentiation is essential at every level.

Edward P. Djerejian

NORTH AMERICAN FORUM ADDRESSES DEEPWATER OIL AND GAS ISSUES

On January 23, 2006, the Baker Institute hosted the first session of the Security and Prosperity Partnership North American Forum on the Development of Opportunities in Deepwater Oil and Gas. The meeting was organized by the Baker Institute, the Center for Energy Economics of the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin, and the Applied Research Center of Florida International University.

The goal of the forum, which was attended by official government energy delegations from Canada, the United States, and

Mexico, as well as by academic and industry specialists, is to foster discussion on all issues related to deepwater exploration and production of oil and natural gas. Topics included: technical advances in exploration and drilling, hurricane and other natural risks; transboundary issues; international unitization and joint operating agreements; and project management and research and development activities.

Presenters on deepwater activities included Guillermo Perez-Cruz, Deepwater Unit, Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex); Chris Oynes,

U.S. Minerals Management Service; and Don McAlpine, Natural Resources Canada. Kristi Varangu, senior advisor for Natural Resources Canada, also presented on the subject of “Canada-France Agreement Example and other North America Transboundary Issues,” and Luis Macias Chapa discussed Pemex’s success in technology collaboration agreements. A final session addressed general discussion of the challenges ahead in energy production in North America.

STUDY GROUP

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Leading the Iraq Study Group (ISG) will be James A. Baker, III, the 61st Secretary of State and honorary chair of the Baker Institute, and former Congressman Lee H. Hamilton, director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Other members are also well-known Americans who have distinguished themselves in service to their nation: Robert Gates, Rudolph Giuliani, Vernon Jordan Jr., Leon Panetta, William Perry, Charles Robb, and Alan Simpson.

The group’s deliberations will be supported by experts from the private sector, including military experts, leading public policy and academic institutions, and humani-

tarian-assistance organizations. The group will consult with members of the U.S. Congress and the Bush administration as well as with individuals and officials in Iraq and the region.

The United States Institute of Peace, an independent, nonpartisan national institution established and funded by Congress, helped to organize the ISG with the Baker Institute and two other think tanks: the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

“The Baker Institute will be working closely with the other prominent policy institutes engaged in this very important initiative on the part of the United States Congress,” said director Edward P. Djerejian. “The Baker

Institute’s energy fellow, Amy Myers Jaffe, will be a member of the ISG’s economic reconstruction working group. There can be no more pressing national security issue for our country than the future course of Iraq, and we will be lending all our expertise and organizational support to the work of the Iraq Study Group.”

PERES

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that Sharon's legacy in Israeli politics and the peace process was to lead the Israeli people away from extremist ideologies toward a centrist position that embraces peace by both putting an end to violence and forging a two-state solution. Not only was Sharon willing and able to negotiate with the Palestinians, but to transform plans into action he founded Kadima, a new, centrist Israeli political party.

As the future of both Sharon's health and the peace process hung in the balance, Peres spoke firmly about Sharon's legacy and his own support of Sharon's policies.

"The great contribution of Sharon is that he brought to an end the wing of the Israeli politics that was for the greater Israel, namely not to give up the territories, not to have a Palestinian state," Peres said. "The fact that he brought a clinical end to the extreme ideology in Israel is more important than the fact that we have left Gaza. And today, I think the Israelis know in their hearts the time has come to leave most if not all of the territories and go back home and build our North in the Galil and our South in the Negev and build a new edition of Israel. That's our task.... It's not something traditional. This is a new policy as far as Israel is concerned."

He added that the majority of the Palestinians also had reached an understanding on the necessity to compromise.

Peres' comments, however, were delivered before the Islamic faction Hamas prevailed in the January 25 Palestinian parliamentary elections, throwing into question both the future of negotiations with Israel and political and economic support from the international community.

In his presentation, "The Middle East and Israel," Peres also discussed the importance of facilitating conflict resolution and

"There must be a united policy vis-à-vis Iran....

The need for a united policy is as urgent as anything else."

– Shimon Peres

fostering peace through a master strategy that directly addresses serious economic and social problems. And speaking on the same day that the United States, Europe, Russia, and China called on Iran to halt resumption of its nuclear program, he urged the international community to adopt a united policy to terminate Iran's nuclear ambitions.

In introducing Peres, James A. Baker, III, the 61st Secretary of State, said, "Indeed, there is

no individual, Arab or Israeli, who has struggled so long and so hard in the cause of a just and lasting peace." Baker quoted Peres' Nobel Prize lecture, saying, "Today the battle for survival must be based on political wisdom and moral vision no less than on military might," and then added, "This is not just a statement of fact, it is also a summons to leadership for all of us who share our speaker's dream of a Middle East where Israeli and Arab children can enjoy lives of peace and of opportunity and of freedom."

In discussing Sharon's legacy, Peres explained the political importance of Sharon's maneuver to bring the people back from extremist wings to the "empty center" in advance of the March 28 Israeli elections.

"Israel is highly divided politically," Peres said, adding that the parliament currently has 14 parties. "We don't have the political structure to express the wish of the people," and compromises aren't possible unless there is a strong political center, he said. Peres explained that he and Sharon left their traditional parties to form the Kadima party. "We decided to join forces in order to move right away after the elections in the direction of peace to start to negotiate with the Palestinians and their supporters and move ahead," he said.

In commenting on Peres' presentation, Baker Institute director Edward P. Djerejian said, "What Sharon began to put in place, Kadima, represents the center of Israeli politics." Djerejian noted that the polls to date—as of mid-

January—indicated that Kadima had the majority of seats. “This indicates, as Shimon Peres said, that there is a center in Israel... that wants to support the policy that Sharon started,” specifically, to define Israel’s borders, hopefully through a negotiated settlement, and reach a two-state solution where Israel and the Palestinian state live next to one another in peace and security.

On the topic of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Peres said the conflict between radical Muslim terrorist groups like Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) and the rest of the world cannot be resolved by compromise. “In politics, you can make compromises with political parties,” Peres said. “If you have a religious party, it’s the end of the story. Religion is made of commitments, not of compromises.” He noted that such groups tend to use terror as a tool for negotiating. In the question and answer period, Peres was asked whether Israel could support U.S. negotiations on behalf of the Palestinians should Hamas win the elections. “I don’t see [a] way we can negotiate,” he said. “I don’t see anybody in the world who is going to finance a terroristic, fundamentalistic, fanatical group of people,” unless Hamas undergoes change.

How to fight terrorists remains a global problem, especially fighting suicide bombers who cannot be identified in time to intercept them, he said. “We have to fight not only the terrorists, but we also have to fight the reasons for terror, including poverty, exclusion, humiliation, a sense of hopeless-

ness...,” Peres said.

Peres pointed out that the struggle against terror lacks a crucial, economic component to address these problems. He suggested peace could be fostered, enhanced, and solidified through an economic strategic tool that could be directed to alleviate these basic economic and social issues that plague the Palestinians, specifically, as well as global society. “Rather than to call them to democratize their life, and democracy is a short-living experience, it’s the day and the night of elections, because you could have a free election and elect an impossible government,” Peres urged economic action. “If you want to change the structure of the country, introduce the new economy that calls for changes inside the country ... and outside it.”

Peres predicted that the economy will change the Muslim world more than anything else. “I believe in the Middle East we are so old-fashioned that we didn’t recognize the strengths of the economy,” he said. Private business, science, and technology can change the way of life of many people. “You cannot raise fish in a pond that does not have water,” Peres said. “Economy to our life is like water to the pond.”

Peres said Egypt can extend a helping hand to stabilize the chaotic situation in Gaza, and Jordan can help bring hope and order to the West Bank. He praised the efforts of the United States to achieve peace in the Middle East and keep the world free of the danger of dictatorship. “They are the only power today on Earth that is

BAKER AND DJEREJIAN ATTEND MEMORIAL TO YITZHAK RABIN

In November, James A. Baker, III, the 61st Secretary of State, headed the American delegation to Israel to attend a state memorial service commemorating the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. As former ambassador to Israel, Edward P. Djerejian attended the memorial service. In his capacity as director of the Baker Institute, Djerejian was asked to lead a panel discussion at the new Yitzhak Rabin Center on the topic of Israeli-Syrian relations.

ready to face the danger of terror and terrorism.”

Earlier in his talk, Peres paid tribute to the important role that Secretary of State Baker played in the Middle East. “He’s the only negotiator that combines honesty, toughness, and friendship,” he said, adding that this rare combination made possible one of the most important and successful events in the Middle East—the Madrid Peace Conference.

During the question and answer session, Peres addressed the issue of Iran’s nuclear capability. He cited the urgent need for a united policy among the international community to deal with Iran as a very negative player in the region, particularly when coupled with its nuclear arms production. “There must be a united policy vis-à-vis

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LÉVY

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investigation, he chose another role model, Jack Kerouac. Kerouac crafted his portrait of America in the 1950s, *On the Road*—and the rebelliousness simmering beneath the conformity of the time—by following the nation’s lifeblood of highways and byways.

Lévy said his second reason for accepting the project was to assess the state of democracy in America at a time when he sensed the country was facing a potential identity crisis in a post-9/11 world. America was experiencing a new vulnerability that challenged the Tocquevillian theorem that its very geography would protect it from attack. And the Iraqi war had ignited a deep national debate within America about the question of democracy in Iraq. At a time when Lévy wondered whether the country might become a battlefield of ideas, ideologies, and politics, he wanted to see whether, out of the many fragments that constitute America, the country could still live up to its historic democratic ideals.

Lévy concluded that democracy is thriving in America. He notes that America, which was deliberately born from a different model than its nationalistic European forbearers, and exists as collection of fragment states and communities, has so nurtured and celebrated its diversity that its citizens are united in protecting their ideals of freedom.

“The miracle of this nation after all, without having a real name,

without having this real consistent flesh which produces so often the worst ... this nation working without all that—but still working, still dealing with its destiny, still feeding the patriotism of her sons and daughters—[is that] this miracle still works, and it was one of the biggest surprises, and a good surprise of course, of this investigation and of this book.”

In the question and answer session, Lévy said one of the convincing signs that democracy is alive in America is its assimilation of immigrants. He was asked his views on how the French government had handled recent violent political protests, inviting comparison with the American response to riots in Los Angeles in the early 1990s. While he said U.S. law enforcement had something to learn, in the short run, from the French police, which managed to squelch the violence without bloodshed,

he said that over the long term, the United States had done a better job of assimilating minorities in America.

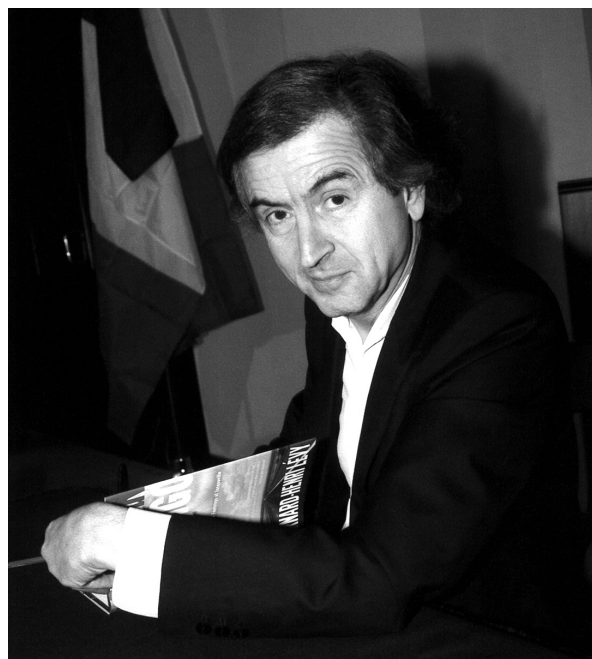
In France, he said, immigrants were essentially called upon to relinquish their heritage and “become French.” By contrast in America, minorities’ cultural heritage “enriches” what it means to be an American to the extent that the “evil” associated with past prejudices, against Blacks for example in the Deep South, is censored by common sense, he said.

“It means that democracy works and that ... it is attractive enough for all the parties to create peace and to create a democracy,” Lévy said.

When asked about the Middle East, Lévy referenced the end of his book, which is devoted to neo-conservatives in America. He said he agreed with them on certain points: that radical Islam is a prob-

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Bernard-Henri Lévy said he found that contrary to attitudes in his native France, where immigrants are expected to “become French,” in America, minorities’ cultural heritage “enriches” what it means to be an American.



BRENT

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rogator who said that “the man lost his human aspect.”

“This turning of the human into the inhuman becomes the mark of our century,” Brent said. “This is a turned-upside-down century, a turned-upside-down world.”

Lenin, Stalin, and Adolph Hitler exploited this post-war chaos, using terror and sublimation to thwart their enemies and leading their people to believe in the supremacy of their doctrines—which were not dissimilar—to buy unequivocal loyalty. Osama bin Laden and Saddam have used similar tactics, promising to lift their people up from Western oppression, Brent said.

Brent noted that while Saddam was a Stalinist, he was not a Stalin. Saddam modeled himself on

Stalin and adopted his lessons: that cruelty is the heart of an effective political organization; that party discipline is the supreme value; and that if one tells a lie frequently, it becomes the truth. Saddam did not possess Stalin’s “deeper qualities,” however, particularly his extreme caution in dealing with enemies to achieve his goals, Brent said.

“Stalin would never have taken the step of invading Kuwait,” Brent said. Rather he would have carefully studied the situation and created the conditions for the Kuwaitis to invite him in.

In discussing the roots of Soviet and other totalitarian regimes in the 20th century, Brent said the defining characteristic of their extremist political manifestations was their birth in a civilizational collapse: “They were born out of a collapsed economy, a collapsed

social order, a collapsed political order, a collapsed morality. The collapse that was at the fountainhead of extremism in the 20th century is the First World War.”

Europe was “a civilization that had lost its human aspect,” a void ripe for Lenin and Stalin to assume power, Brent said. Their power, and Hitler’s, lay in their ability to instill in their peoples an ideal whose power was best expressed in 1938 by the philosopher and Nazi, Martin Heidegger: “The world has yet to realize the essential spiritual greatness of National Socialism.”

“At this point,” Brent said, “At the point at which we understand the power of these leaders to provide that spiritual greatness to people, we get to a point of beginning to understand the psychology of the suicide bomber today,” who will give his or her life for anything.

KOREA

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standard of living. With the shift to a skilled labor force, South Korea became the only Asian nation other than Japan to build successful multinational companies.

Former Rice professor Suchan Chae, currently a member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, discussed the current state of relations between North and South Korea, citing the continued talks on nuclear issues and lessening resistance by North Korea to discuss nuclear proliferation. Chae said communication channels are expanding in areas including agriculture, mining, fishing, and light industry. There also

is progress in the area of security, with a noticeable easing of tensions on both sides. Railroads and roads are being reconnected, and goods and people are moving in both directions. Tourism increased 36 percent in 2004, he said.

For progress to continue toward unification, Chae said there must be close cooperation with relevant countries; communication lines between North and South Korea must remain open; and there must be practical progress in the areas of military and human rights.

Donald Gregg, president and chairman of the Korea Society and former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, said unification will be a gradual process of social transformation, following political

and economic transformation.

John Merrill, chief of the Northeast Asia Division of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the U.S. Department of State, described North Korea as “caught in a poverty trap.” He said the continuing emphasis on the military has dragged the economy down, forcing reliance on the Soviet Bloc. Merrill said an external infusion of capital is needed to overcome poverty, due to difficulty in getting access to international financial institutions.

The conference was sponsored by the Advisory Council on Democratic and Peaceful Unification of Korea, the Baker Institute, the Korea Society, and the Asia Society of Texas.

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PERES

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Iran,” he said, adding that as long as the international community remains divided on an approach, they will make a mockery of this policy. “They are masters to take advantage of this division,” he said. “The need for a united policy is as urgent as anything else.”

If political and psychological measures are not effective, economic sanctions should be used, he said, adding that they could prove effective given Iran’s poor economic condition. According to figures Peres provided, the population has grown rapidly to 72 million today, more than doubling from its 30 million-level in 1990-

91, and 70 percent of its citizens are under age 35. The country suffers from rampant poverty, crime, and prostitution, he said. It has an unemployment rate of 15-17 percent, an inflation rate of 18 percent, and its stock exchange has lost 30 percent of its value since the entry of the new president. He stressed that “Iran is a highly divided country,” and he cited a recent poll showing that 74 percent of the population supported the presence of the United States in the Middle East as improving their chances for democracy; that 65 percent viewed a regime change as necessary for the introduction of a constitution; and that 75 percent supported a referendum for a new regime.

LÉVY

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lem; that it is a new form of fascism; that we are at war against it; and that the best way to wage war against it is to promote democracy.

He disagreed with what he sees as these thinkers’ view that democracy is “a sort of providence” that

can be achieved quickly in some sort of “conceptual coup d’état.” Rather, he said, nothing prescribes it and it is a painstaking process of history. An advocate of nation building, Lévy said he regretted the division between America and France over Iraq given France’s considerable experience in nation building.

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vided by The Cullen Foundation
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