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Failed U.S. Strategic Concepts: War on Terror and State Sponsor of Terrorism

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The War on Terror, U.S. policy since 2001, has been a disastrously bad strategic concept, helping to propel American aggressions and wars against several countries that were hugely fruitless, costly, destructive and counter-productive. There are an order of magnitude more jihadist forces today than 14 years go. Huge numbers of innocent people have been slaughtered, wounded and displaced. Huge numbers have seen their living standards plummet. America has turned into a police state and a national security surveillance state bereft of fundamental rights and inundated with propaganda. The U.S. War on Terror, which continues to this day, has responsibility.

Another strategic concept adopted by the U.S. government that's related to the War on Terror is "Terrorist State" or "State Sponsor of Terrorism". This designation involves breaking or strained relations, isolation, sanctions, threats, confrontations and other such actions that are short of war but raise the likelihood of war. Iran is on the State Department list. Netanyahu, missing no opportunity to raise fears of Iran and goad the U.S. into viewing Iran as a deadly enemy, has today referred to Iran as "the pre-eminent terrorist state of our time". He is completely wrong to view the hostility of Muslims worldwide to Israel's treatment of Palestinians as terrorism, and he

is also wrong to view Iran as the main bearer of such sentiments. As long as Israel continues to expand its territory and deny Palestinian rights, this hostility will remain at a personal level even if some Muslim states make peace with Israel and normalize some relations. Netanyahu's rhetoric shows how strongly the concept of terrorist state is and how strongly it's embedded in strategic thinking. His rhetoric shows how such a concept blocks a peaceful resolution.

Both strategies, the "War on Terror" and "Terrorist State", designate enemies. They are belligerent in nature, eschewing diplomacy. They make war or raise the prospect of war. They place the U.S. in a military mode. They employ a militaristic model of state-to-state relations. The U.S. gets locked onto a warpath that goes on indefinitely or at least for a very long time. This warpath stymies the normalization of relations. It institutionalizes war by building up war industries and war parties at home. Americans are indoctrinated into war thinking, seeing enemies at every turn, and seeing no other options except those of confrontation, threat, sanctions and wars. What is worse, all of these negatives fail to create positive outcomes in any terms. There are no fewer terrorists. The costs are high. American living standards are harmed. There is no peace, no improvement in the general welfare, no additional security. These strategies are utter failures.

At long last, after years upon end of failures that trace back to such bad strategic concepts as War on Terror and State Sponsor of Terrorism, a president has seen fit to negotiate with Iran. Finally. And this is but one step on a path of rapprochement in which America and Iran develop friendly relations, viewing each other with respect and recognizing each other's civilizations and cultures.

But major elements in the U.S. legislative branch resist diplomacy with Iran. They are still locked into these failed concepts. They are so blind that they want to redouble American efforts based on the same faulty ideas that have brought failure after failure. The hold of Israeli hawks over certain factions within the U.S. government remains strong. Politicians like Netanyahu transfer the embattled psychology of Israel onto America, where it has no place and where it is totally dysfunctional, producing immensely evil results.

War and belligerence toward other states, as codified, legalized and institutionalized in wrong-headed concepts like War on Terror and Terrorist State, must be repudiated.