

**How the American President is Elected:  
The 2008 US Elections**

A Lecture Presented to the:

**Bahrain Centre for Studies & Research**

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## Summary

How is the American President elected? By what mechanisms are both the Democratic and Republican Parties selecting their presidential nominees for the general election in November of 2008? After the Presidential nominees are officially chosen at their Party conventions, following a series of primaries and caucuses held in all fifty states and several US territories, and then run against each other in the general election, does this mean that the next US President will actually be finalized on November 4, 2008, the date of the general election? And does this mean that the citizens of the United States actually decide who becomes the US President and Vice President and who will be sworn into office on January 20, 2009? Is not this the essence of a republican form of government, where citizens vote on who will represent them in the operations of their government? To answer these questions, my talk will analyze both the legal requirements and party rules which provide structure to the election of the American presidency in 2008 while also taking a look at the various candidates and what the election of each may portend for Bahrain and the Middle East in general.

**Keywords:** primary election, caucuses, general election, US Presidential election, Democratic Party, Republican Party

## مقدمة

كيف يتم إنتخاب الرئيس بالولايات المتحدة الأمريكية؟ بأي طريقة يتم إختيار الرئيس المنتخب للإنتخابات العامة بشهر نوفمبر لكل من الحزبين الديمقراطي و الجمهوري؟ بعد تسمية الرؤساء المنتخبين رسميا لكل حزب خلال وبعد إنتهاء الإنتخابات الأولية و ما يسمى بالكوكسز التي يتم إجراؤها بخمسين ولاية و مجموعة من المناطق التابعة إلى الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية , بعد ذلك تتم المنافسة فيما بينهم بالإنتخابات العامة هل هذا يعني أن إختيار الرئيس يصبح نهائيا بعد 4 نوفمبر 2008 الذي هو يوم الإنتخابات العامة؟ و هل هذا يعني أن الشعب الأمريكي هو من يقرر من سيكون رئيسا ونائب الرئيس بالولايات المتحدة الأمريكية الذي سيتم تنصيبهم بتاريخ 20 يناير 2009 ؟ أليس هذا جوهر الحكومة الجمهورية, أن يختار المواطنين ممثلهم بالعمليات الحكومية؟ للرد على هذه الأسئلة سوف أحلل كل من الإحتياجات وقواعد الأحزاب التي تعطي بنية الإنتخابات الأمريكية لسنة 2008 كما أنه سيتم التطرق إلى مختلف المرشحين وماذا سيعني إنتخابهم بالنسبة للبحرين و الشرق الأوسط عموما.

مفاتيح: إنتخابات أولية, إجتماعات, إنتخابات عامة, إنتخابات الرئيس, الحزب الديمقراطي, الحزب الجمهوري.

Currently Senator Barack Hussein Obama, Jr. (D-IL) and Senator Hillary Diane Rodham Clinton (D-NY) are vying for the presidential nomination of the Democratic Party, so as to represent their party against the Republican Party presidential nominee Senator John Sidney McCain III (R-AR) in the general election on Tuesday, November 4, 2008, as well as against any third party nominees for the office of President of the United States of America. With nine primaries and one caucus yet to be held, Obama leads Clinton<sup>1</sup> in the number of popular votes counted (Obama=14,418,691; Clinton=13,917,393),<sup>2</sup> overall delegates (Obama=1726; Clinton=1592),<sup>3</sup> and in the number of states won (Obama=29; Clinton=18).<sup>4</sup> However, the only number that counts is the number of Party delegates allocated, for the Democratic Presidential nominee has to acquire a total of at least 2024 delegates<sup>5</sup> in order to garner the nomination. For the Republican Party, their rules require that a presidential candidate secure 1191 Republican delegates,<sup>6</sup> and as of March 4, 2008, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) won enough

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<sup>1</sup> Results from the states of Michigan and Florida are not included, as these two states violated Democratic Party rules by scheduling presidential primaries before February 5, 2008. Only the states of Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina were allowed to hold their primaries or caucuses prior to February 5 as per Democratic Party rules.

<sup>2</sup> The number of popular votes tallied come from the Real Clear Politics 2008 Democratic Delegates tabulation at: <[http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2008/president/democratic\\_delegate\\_count.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2008/president/democratic_delegate_count.html)>.

<sup>3</sup> These results do not include totals from Iowa, Nevada, Washington and Maine, for these caucus states have yet to officially release their popular vote totals. Also note this delegate count breaks down as follows: pledged delegates (Obama=1489; Clinton=1333) and superdelegates (Obama=237; Clinton=259).

<sup>4</sup> These figures of number of states won are taken from *The New York Times* "Primary Season Election Results" page at: <<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/results/votes/index.html>>.

<sup>5</sup> The Democratic Party has 4,047 delegates, allocated by the national Party based upon: 1) the proportion of votes each state gave to the Democratic candidate in the last three presidential elections; and 2) the percentage of votes each state has in the United States Electoral College. Delegates from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico each have one vote each; however, the Party counts the votes of delegates from Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Democrats Abroad as only half-votes.

<sup>6</sup> The Republican Party has 2,380 delegates allocated by the national Party and gives three delegates to states for each of their congressional districts plus ten additional at-large delegates. States are allocated additional bonus delegates for: having U.S. Senators and governors from the Republican Party, sending a majority-Republican delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, maintaining partial or total Republican control of their state legislature, or casting a majority of their 2004 electoral vote for George W. Bush. Finally, each jurisdiction (i.e. the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the US Territories)

Republican Party delegates to become the presumptive Republican nominee for President.

Pledged delegates for each party are presumed to cast a vote for the Party candidate whom they are appointed to represent at their respective Party's national conventions. However, each Party's rules do not oblige electors to stick with the candidate for whom they are representing. Moreover, the Democratic Party—in addition to the Party delegates elected in the primaries and caucuses—also have designated Party veterans, officials, and activists as so-called “superdelegates”. There are approximately 796 superdelegates<sup>7</sup> who will cast their vote at the Democratic National Convention,<sup>8</sup> and they will comprise approximately one-fifth of the total number of voting delegates. And, unlike the so-called “pledged” delegates, superdelegates act as trustees<sup>9</sup> and can cast their vote behind any candidate.

### **Who Can Run?**

It is an old adage that only in the United States of America can anyone run for the US Presidency. However, this is not exactly accurate. Under the US Constitution, Article II, Section 1:

No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who

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automatically receives three party delegates: the jurisdiction's two Republican National Committee's delegates and the chairman of the jurisdiction's (i.e. state or territory) Republican party. Jurisdictions without constitutionally elected members of Congress (i.e. U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia) are only eligible to send at-large and Party delegates to the Republican National Convention.

<sup>7</sup> Democratic Party rules were altered in 1984 to allow for superdelegates in order reduce the power of grassroots delegates and instead favoring Party regulars.

<sup>8</sup> This number may vary due to death, movement out of state, or resignation from the party before the national convention.

<sup>9</sup> In political theory, there are two models of representation: a trustee or a delegate. As Edmund Burke differentiated the two models, a trustee, unlike a delegate, exercises his own judgment without consideration to the opinions of his constituency (see Burke, 1774/1854-6).

shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years, and been fourteen Years a resident within the United States.

Given these Constitutional restrictions, current California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger cannot run for the office of US President, because he was born in Austria. And former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger also cannot run for the presidency because he was born in Germany. However, because Hillary Rodham Clinton was born in Chicago, Illinois, has resided in the US for at least fourteen years, and is currently 60 years old, then she is eligible to run for the US Presidency. Also, Barack Obama qualifies to run for the American presidency too, for he is currently 46 years old, was born in Hawaii, and has resided in the US for at least fourteen years. As well, John McCain qualifies too for the US Presidency, for he was born in the American-controlled Panama Canal Zone, is 71 years old, and has resided in the US for the last 34 years.

### **How Do Candidates Become A Party's Presidential Nominee?**

Under US law, every political party can formulate its own rules as to how it will select its nominees for the general election of the US President. Through historical development, the US has basically two viable political parties: the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. A number of other political parties do exist, for example the Green Party, the Communist Party, the Libertarian Party, the Constitution Party, the Socialist Party, etc.; however, because the membership of these third parties is minimal, selection of their candidates for office—if they choose to select anyone—is done practically by Party officials. Only the two main political parties—the Democrats and the Republicans—have the membership, finances, and experience to schedule and hold a series of primary elections and/or caucuses throughout all fifty US states, as well as the District of Columbia. Moreover, both parties even have extended their primaries and/or

caucus elections to several US Trust Territories including the US Virgin Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa. The Republican Party also holds caucuses in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. As well, the Democratic Party allows members of an organization called Democrats Abroad—with chapters in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania—to cast votes for its presidential choice.

### **What is the difference between a primary election and a caucus?**

A primary is an election operated by each state government on behalf of the political parties—either Democrat or Republican—where Party members can quickly cast their vote in a voting booth, usually via a voting machine, and increasingly with touch-screen computerized balloting, for the Party’s nomination for President. A caucus is a meeting of Party members where the nominations for the Party’s Presidential nominee is eventually voted upon in addition to deliberating on other business associated with the Party. More people vote in presidential primaries than in caucuses, for most people simply do not have the time to sit around for two or more hours discussing local Party matters before casting their vote for their choice for President. By the end of the 2008 elections, the Democratic Party will have held a total of 41 primaries and 16 caucuses (with Texas holding both a primary and a caucus). The Republican Party will have held caucuses in 19 states or territories, and primaries in 35 states, with a convention to determine the Party members’ choices in Wyoming and West Virginia, and presidential preference elections in Arizona and Illinois. Each state legislature determines the date of their state party primaries, while each state Party sets the date of its caucuses if these are held. As of today, April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Republican Party has six state primaries and two

caucuses yet to be held, while the Democratic Party has eight primaries and one caucus left.

### **The 2008 Election Schedule**

Party elections for both the Democratic and Republican Parties began in January 2008 with the Iowa caucuses on January 3<sup>rd</sup> followed by the New Hampshire primary on January 8<sup>th</sup>. They will end with the Montana and South Dakota primaries on June 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Democrats and with the South Dakota primary and the New Mexico caucuses on June 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Republicans.

Following an over two and one-half month interval, between early June and late August, both Parties will host their national conventions where they will officially decide who will represent their respective Parties in the General Election as candidates for President and as Vice President. Pledged delegates (and superdelegates for the Democratic Party) will attend their respective national conventions and cast their votes. Vice Presidential nominees are decided following the Party's vote for their Presidential nominee and is usually determined by the Presidential nominee him- or herself. The 2008 Democratic National Convention will take place from August 25-28 in Denver, Colorado, and the 2008 Republican National Convention is scheduled for Saint Paul, Minnesota between September 1-4, 2008.

An additional two months of national campaigning will separate the national Party conventions and the General Election on November 4, 2008. On Tuesday, November 4—which is NOT a national holiday but rather a working day in the US<sup>10</sup>—US citizens (and—since the passage of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution in 1961—citizens

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<sup>10</sup> Critics of the US Presidential election process argue that holding the election on a working day reduces the number of working-class voters who are willing to cast their votes after a normal eight hour workday.

of the District of Columbia), registered to vote, will go to their designated voting precincts in towns and cities across the US and cast their vote for President and Vice President of the United States. The results of the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election will indicate which Party's candidates have won the popular vote of US citizens.

### **The Contenders**

The 2008 Democratic US Presidential campaign began with nine major contenders<sup>11</sup> and, through the various primaries and caucuses, have narrowed this number down, at present, to Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Senator Barack Obama (D-IL). On the Republican side, the campaign began with eleven candidates<sup>12</sup> which have all since been knocked out of contention, as Senator John McCain is the presumptive nominee of the Republican Party and will likely be named such at the Republican Party's national convention. Because of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment<sup>13</sup> to the US Constitution, US Presidents can only hold office for a maximum of two four-year terms, thus prohibiting George W. Bush from running again. And, also, Vice President Dick Cheney chose not to run for the presidency.

### **The Role of Media, Public Debates, and the Internet**

Media coverage of the 2008 US Presidential election is massive and unrelenting. Every major American news organization, from radio and print to television and internet

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<sup>11</sup> In addition to Clinton and Obama, the other seven contenders were: Senator Joe Biden (D-DE), Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT), former Senator John Edwards (D-NC), former Senator Mike Gravel (D-AK), Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Governor Bill Richardson (D-NM), and former Governor Tom Vilsack (D-IA).

<sup>12</sup> In addition to McCain, the eleven Republican Presidential candidates were: Representative Ron Paul (R-TX), former Mayor Rudy Giuliani (R-NY), Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), former Governor Jim Gilmore (R-VA), Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA), former Governor Mike Huckabee (R-AR), former Governor Mitt Romney (R-MA), Representative Tom Tancredo (R-CO), former Governor Fred Thompson (R-TN), and former Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI).

<sup>13</sup> The 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment was proposed, after the four consecutive terms of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in 1947 and ratified in 1951.



media, in addition to a host of media outlets around the world are jockeying to relay the latest information about the presidential race to their viewers, each vying for the latest scoop, gaff, or tidbit that might effect one candidate's standing for good or ill. However, what matters to voting American citizens is the major US media, particularly the television media, including NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, CNN, and PBS. And because these are private for-profit corporations (with the exception of PBS which, in addition to a minimal amount of government funding, depends on substantial corporate contributions as well as individual viewer donations), candidates, who either do not support the profit incentives of a free market economy or whose comments, history, and/or behavior would diminish market sales of the advertisers who support these media, are unlikely to fair well in a presidential election. In addition to minute by minute updates on the candidates and the campaign, which help orient voters to the respective candidates, their platforms, and their personalities, a number of presidential debates broadcast through the various media also familiarize the American people not only with the ongoing campaign and candidates, but as well with the electoral process, responsibilities of citizens when voting, in addition to reinforcing national and patriotic sentiment amongst voters, while reinforcing values shared by the dominant media organizations, their owners, advertisers, and viewers.

The Democratic Party, so far, has held 21 Presidential debates in the 2008 campaign, with two more proposed, though unlikely to happen.<sup>14</sup> The Republican Party held 14 Presidential debates in the 2008 campaign. This is the largest number of presidential debates by either Party in US election history. As the first presidential election since 1952 without an incumbent running for either Party, the role of the debates—many, though not all, televised—help voters to become acquainted with the candidates and

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<sup>14</sup> At present, Barack Obama has refused to commit to any further debates.

compare them: their records, their demeanor and behavior, their articulation and persuasiveness, their values and beliefs, their leadership qualities and charisma, etc. Since the first televised Presidential debate in 1960 between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon, candidates are made aware that one's television demeanor and appearance are crucial to the public's perception of their candidacy. In addition, candidates will spend more money in this presidential election campaign than in any prior contest, thus making it the most expensive election campaign in history.

### **The Role of Money**

Some of you may have heard of the aphorism that: "Money is the mother's milk of politics." And while Republican Senator Mitt Romney's campaign<sup>15</sup> suggests that money is not all one needs to secure a Party's Presidential nomination, it is certainly an asset one cannot do without.

To date, four months prior to the national conventions, Barack Obama has raised \$234,745,081, Hillary Clinton has raised \$189,097,053, and John McCain has raised \$76,691,826 for a cumulative total of \$500,533,960. And the Center for Responsive Politics website estimates that following the national conventions, "the eventual nominees will need to raise \$500 million apiece to compete—a record sum" ("Election Overview: 2008 Presidential Election," 2008). The total spent by all presidential candidates in the 2000 Presidential elections was over \$343 million. In 2004, this number more than doubled to nearly \$718 million. By contrast, if predictions hold true, the 2008 US Presidential campaign will have candidates alone spending way over one billion dollars to compete for the most powerful office in the world.

### **The Electoral College**

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<sup>15</sup> Mitt Romney's personal fortune has been estimated to exceed \$247 million (Salant, August 14, 2007).

Now, some of you a bit more skeptical about the democratic virtue of the US presidential election contest may raise the issue of the Electoral College. And, you will argue that the General Election vote is not decisive. And you will be correct. Section 1 of Article II of the US Constitution gives the authority to select the President and Vice President of the US, not to the country's citizens, but rather to a group of electors, representing each state, and popularly referred to as the Electoral College,<sup>16</sup> who cast their decisive and final vote for the selection of the US President and Vice President in December following the November General Election. The number of electors each state is allowed to send to the Electoral College is a combination of the state's number of representatives in the US House of Representatives plus two for their number of representatives in the US Senate. Currently, the number of electors who comprise the Electoral College is 538 (435 US House Representatives and 100 US Senators, plus three electors allocated to Washington, D.C. or the District of Columbia<sup>17</sup>). These electors assemble, usually in each state's capital,<sup>18</sup> on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December every four years following the Presidential General Election to cast their votes for President and Vice President of the United States, in other words, nearly one month after US voting citizens believe they have made the decisive decision as to who will become the next US President and Vice President. Each state legislature is responsible for determining who shall represent them in the Electoral College,<sup>19</sup> although

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<sup>16</sup> Although the term does not appear in the US Constitution, the term does appear in the US Code, Title 3, Chapter 1, Section 4 both in the title as "electoral college" and in the text as "college of electors."

<sup>17</sup> The allowance of three electors for the District of Columbia is sanctioned by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution passed in 1961.

<sup>18</sup> The place of assembly for each state's electors is determined by each state's legislature.

<sup>19</sup> US law governing Presidential Elections is contained in Chapter 1 of Title 3, United States Code (62 Stat. 672, as amended).

since 1824<sup>20</sup> this determination has largely been given to representatives of the political party whose nominee wins that state's popular vote in the General Election.

### **A Critique of the US Presidential Electoral Process: How Democratic Is It?**

Given this last bit of information about the Electoral College, it will be easy for most skeptics to conclude that the US Presidential election is a farce, a charade, is fraudulent, and is a cynical exercise in mass manipulation, for, in truth, only 538 people decide on who becomes President and Vice President of the United States. The votes of the country's citizens are only pro-forma, perfunctory, but not official and decisive.

Truly, it is an imperfect system, as the Electoral College is a 200-year holdover from a time before the mass education of the public and the invention of radio, television, and the internet. The founding fathers of the United States did not trust the mass public enough to directly elect the country's leader. As a consequence, four times (1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000) in US history, the winner of the popular vote did not become president because the Electoral College favored the opponent of the majority vote getter, even though he had fewer number of votes from the citizenry at-large. When this happened in the 2000 presidential election between Al Gore and George W. Bush, cries of reform were raised along with charges to get rid of the Electoral College. Still, the system remains intact.

Aside from the obvious anti-democratic aspect of the Electoral College, the question of money and the amount it takes to finance a successful presidential campaign means that the victor is oftentimes beholden to many special interests who expect legislative favors which often are opposed to the interests of the public at large. While successive

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<sup>20</sup> Only since the presidential election of 1880 have all state legislatures determined their Electoral College representatives based upon the Party winning that state's popular vote in the Presidential General Election.

campaign finance reform proposals have been enacted over the years, so far none have diminished the influence of money in winning elections. And as long as the US economy is structured along capitalist socioeconomic parameters resting on the bedrock of private property, it is unlikely that the influence of money in campaigns will diminish greatly.

Lastly, what are the likely consequences of either a John McCain, Hillary Clinton, or Barack Obama presidency for Bahrain and the Middle East in general? A list of their national security and foreign policy advisors (published by the *Washington Post* last October) will provide some indication of their leanings and orientation:

## “John McCain

- Richard Lee Armitage, President George W. Bush’s deputy secretary of state and an international business consultant and lobbyist, informal foreign policy adviser;
- Bernard Aronson, former assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs and now a managing partner of private equity investment company ACON Investments, informal foreign policy adviser;
- William L. Ball III, secretary of the Navy during President Reagan’s administration and managing director of lobbying firm the Loeffler Group, informal national security adviser;
- Stephen E. Biegun, former national security aide to then-Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., and now Ford Motors vice president of international government affairs, informal national security adviser;
- Max Boot, Council on Foreign Relations editor and former *Wall Street Journal* editorial editor, foreign policy adviser;
- Brig. Gen. Tom Bruner, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Lorne W. Craner, International Republican Institute president, informal foreign policy adviser;
- Lawrence S. Eagleburger, President George H.W. Bush’s secretary of state and a senior public policy adviser with law firm Baker Donelson, endorsed McCain April 10 [2007];
- Brig. Gen. Russ Eggers, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Maj. Gen. Merrill Evans, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Niall Ferguson, Harvard historian and Hoover Institution senior fellow, informal foreign policy adviser;
- Michael J. Green, former Asia adviser to President George W. Bush and now Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Asia policy adviser;
- Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., President Reagan’s secretary of state, endorsed McCain April 10 [2007];

- Maj. Gen. Evan “Curly” Hultman, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Robert Kagan; senior associate with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington Post columnist and former speechwriter for then-secretary of state George P. Shultz; informal foreign policy adviser;
- Brig. Gen. Robert Michael Kimmitt, current deputy Treasury secretary, informal national security adviser;
- Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon and President Ford’s secretary of state who met McCain in Vietnam and is now a consultant, informal adviser;
- Col. Andrew F. Krepinevich, president of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, briefed McCain as well as Sen. Hillary Clinton and Gov. Bill Richardson;
- William Kristol, *The Weekly Standard* editor, informal foreign policy adviser;
- Adm. Charles Larson, former superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy and now chairman of consulting firm ViaGlobal Group, informal national security adviser;
- Robert “Bud” McFarlane, President Reagan’s national security adviser and now a principal with Energy & Communications Solutions, energy and national security adviser;
- Brig. Gen. Warren “Bud” Nelson, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Brig. Gen. Eddie Newman, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Maj. Gen. John Peppers, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Maj. Ralph Peters, writer and retired Army officer, informal national security adviser;
- Brig. Gen. Maurice Phillips, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Gen. Colin L. Powell, President George W. Bush’s secretary of state, informal foreign policy adviser;
- James R. Schlesinger, President Nixon and President Ford’s secretary of defense, energy and national security adviser;
- Randy Scheunemann, national security aide to then-Senate Majority Leaders Bob Dole and Trent Lott and now a lobbyist, defense and foreign policy coordinator (for this cycle and 2000);
- Gary Schmitt, former staff director of the Senate Intelligence Committee and now an American Enterprise Institute scholar, foreign policy adviser;
- Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, national security adviser to Presidents Ford and George H.W. Bush and founder of business consultancy the Scowcroft Group, adviser;
- George P. Shultz, President Reagan’s secretary of state and a Hoover Institution Fellow, endorsed McCain April 10 [2007];
- Brig. Gen. W.L. “Bill” Wallace, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- Maj. Gen. Gary Wattnem, Iowa veterans advisory committee;
- R. James Woolsey, former CIA director and now a vice president at consulting company Booz Allen Hamilton, energy and national security adviser.

## Hillary Clinton

- Madeleine K. Albright, President Clinton's secretary of state and now chairperson of the National Democratic Institute, foreign policy adviser;
- Samuel R. Berger, President Clinton's national security adviser and now a principal at business consultancy Stonebridge, foreign policy adviser;
- Lt. Gen. Daniel William Christman, a former West Point superintendent and now senior vice president for international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, foreign policy adviser;
- Gen. Wesley K. Clark, President Clinton's Kosovo commander and now a Democratic fundraiser, endorsed Sen. Clinton Sept. 15 [2007];
- John H. Dalton, President Clinton's Navy secretary and now president of the Financial Services Roundtable's Housing Policy Council, veterans and military retirees for Hillary;
- Lee Feinstein, a deputy in President Clinton's State Department, national security coordinator;
- Leslie H. Gelb; president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, a former *New York Times* correspondent and a former State and Defense Department official, informal adviser;
- Richard C. Holbrooke, President Clinton's UN ambassador and broker of the Dayton Peace Accords (and now a *Washington Post* columnist), foreign policy adviser;
- Martin S. Indyk, President Clinton's ambassador to Israel and now director of Brookings's Saban Center for Middle East Policy, foreign policy adviser;
- Gen. John M. ("Jack") Keane, a former Army vice chief of staff who co-crafted the Iraq "surge" and is now a military analyst (sometimes for ABC news), military issues adviser;
- Lt. Gen. Claudia J. Kennedy, former deputy chief of staff for intelligence, veterans and military retirees for Hillary;
- Lt. Gen. Donald L. Kerrick, President Clinton's deputy national security adviser, organizes meetings of retired officers;
- Col. Andrew F. Krepinevich, president of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, briefed Hillary Clinton as well as Sen. John McCain and Gov. Bill Richardson;
- Vali Nasr, Naval Postgraduate School professor, Middle East adviser;
- Michael O'Hanlon, Brookings senior fellow and former Congressional Budget Office defense and foreign policy analyst, supporter;
- Rep. (and retired Vice Adm.) Joseph Sestak, veterans and military retirees for Hillary;
- Andrew Shapiro, Sen. Clinton's Senate foreign policy staffer;
- Jeffrey H. Smith, former CIA general counsel and now a partner leading the public policy and government contracts group of law firm Arnold & Porter, national security adviser;
- Strobe Talbott, Brookings president, informal adviser;
- Togo D. West, President Clinton's secretary for veterans affairs and former secretary of the Army, veterans and military retirees for Hillary;

- Former Amb. Joseph C. Wilson IV, the half of the Plamegate couple who criticized the administration for using questionable evidence to promote the Iraq war, endorsed Sen. Clinton July 16 [2007].

## Barack Obama

- Former Amb. Jeffrey Bader, President Clinton's National Security Council Asia specialist and now head of Brookings's China center, national security adviser;
- Mark Brzezinski, President Clinton's National Security Council Southeast Europe specialist and now a partner at law firm McGuireWoods, national security adviser;
- Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security adviser and now a Center for Strategic and International Studies counselor and trustee and frequent guest on PBS's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, foreign policy adviser;
- Richard A. Clarke, President Clinton and President George W. Bush's counterterrorism czar and now head of Good Harbor Consulting and an ABC News contributor, sometimes Obama adviser;
- Gregory B. Craig, State Department director of policy planning under President Clinton and now a partner at law firm Williams & Connolly, foreign policy adviser;
- Roger W. Cressey, former National Security Council counterterrorism staffer and now Good Harbor Consulting president and NBC News consultant, has advised Obama but says not exclusive;
- Ivo H. Daalder, National Security Council director for European affairs during President Clinton's administration and now a Brookings senior fellow, foreign policy adviser;
- Richard Danzig, President Clinton's Navy secretary and now a Center for Strategic and International Analysis fellow, national security adviser;
- Philip H. Gordon, President Clinton's National Security Council staffer for Europe and now a Brookings senior fellow, national security adviser;
- Maj. Gen. J. (Jonathan) Scott Gration, a 32-year Air Force veteran and now CEO of Africa anti-poverty effort Millennium Villages, national security adviser and surrogate;
- Lawrence J. Korb, assistant secretary of defense from 1981-1985 and now a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, informal foreign policy adviser;
- W. Anthony Lake, President Clinton's national security adviser and now a professor at Georgetown's school of foreign service, foreign policy adviser;
- James M. Ludes, former defense and foreign policy adviser to Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., and now executive director of the American Security Project, national security adviser;
- Robert Malley, President Clinton's Middle East envoy and now International Crisis Group's Middle East and North Africa program director, national security adviser;
- Gen. Merrill A. ("Tony") McPeak, former Air Force chief of staff and now a business consultant, national security adviser;
- Denis McDonough, Center for American Progress senior fellow and former policy adviser to then-Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle, foreign policy coordinator;



- Samantha Power, Harvard-based human rights scholar and Pulitzer Prize winning writer, foreign policy adviser;
- Susan E. Rice, President Clinton's Africa specialist at the State Department and National Security Council and now a Brookings senior fellow, foreign policy adviser;
- Bruce O. Riedel, former CIA officer and National Security Council staffer for Near East and Asian affairs and now a Brookings senior fellow, national security adviser;
- Dennis B. Ross, President Clinton's Middle East negotiator and now a Washington Institute for Near East Policy fellow, Middle East adviser;
- Sarah Sewall, deputy assistant secretary of defense for peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance during President Clinton's administration and now director of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, national security adviser;
- Daniel B. Shapiro, National Security Council director for legislative affairs during President Clinton's administration and now a lobbyist with Timmons & Company, Middle East adviser;
- Mona Sutphen, former aide to President Clinton's National Security adviser Samuel R. Berger and to United Nations ambassador Bill Richardson and now managing director of business consultancy Stonebridge, national security adviser" ("The War Over the Wonks," *The Washington Post*, October 2, 2007).

As well, some of the more pointed statements by the three leading presidential candidates regarding the Middle East may also provide a clue as to what their presidency may portend for the region. In the interest of time, I have selected only a choice few comments from each candidate:

## John McCain

### On Iraq

"Within hours of uttering the phrase 'maybe a hundred' years at a town-hall-style meeting in New Hampshire in January, Senator John McCain came under attack by Democrats and antiwar groups for promoting a seemingly endless troop presence in Iraq. And in later clarifying his remarks, Mr. McCain took a long, if not limitless, view: 'Could be 1,000. Could be 1,000 years or a million years.' At another point, he said: 'A thousand years. A million years. Ten million years'" (Phillips, March 27, 2008).

### On Iran

"Iran has been engaged in a proxy war against our forces in Iraq for years. They are actively arming Sunni and Shia radicals with advanced weapons and on the ground training. Twenty seven years ago, the radical mullahs in Iran released American hostages held illegally for more than 400 days rather than face President Reagan. It was the first victory of his

presidency and we should heed the lesson it holds for dealing with Iran today: determination and resolve, not accommodation and appeasement, are what Tehran heeds” (McCain, September 8, 2007).

## Hillary Clinton

### On Iraq

“‘We need to be planning and preparing to start bringing our troops home, and I have committed to doing that within 60 days of my becoming president,’ she said. ‘Senator Obama, on the other hand, says he’ll end the war, but his top foreign policy adviser said he won’t necessarily follow the plan he’s been talking about during this campaign—that the plan is ‘just words.’ Well, you can count on me to end the war safely and responsibly,’” (Kornblut and Murrar, April 10, 2008, p. A06).

### On Iran

“SENATOR CLINTON: Well, in fact, George, I think that we should be looking to create an umbrella of deterrence that goes much further than just Israel. Of course I would make it clear to the Iranians that an attack on Israel would incur massive retaliation from the United States, but I would do the same with other countries in the region. You know, we are at a very dangerous point with Iran. The Bush policy has failed. Iran has not been deterred. They continue to try to not only obtain the fissile material for nuclear weapons but they are intent upon and using their efforts to intimidate the region and to have their way when it comes to the support of terrorism in Lebanon and elsewhere” (“Democratic Debate in Philadelphia,” April 16, 2008).

## Barack Obama

### On Iraq

“‘So this isn’t like we’re going to be home tomorrow. So let’s say that George Bush still has a 100,000 troops or more there when I take office in January 2009. You take on another sixteen months off of that, that’s two and a half three years away before we have all our troops out,’” (Anburajan, December 15, 2007).

### On Iran

“SENATOR OBAMA: As I’ve said before, I think it is very important that Iran understands that an attack on Israel is an attack on our strongest ally in the region, one that we—one whose security we consider paramount, and that—that would be an act of aggression that we—that I would—that I would consider an attack that is unacceptable, and the United States would take appropriate action” (“Democratic Debate in Philadelphia,” April 16, 2008).

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