

TOP THREE FLASHPOINTS

Focusing on Africa

As of 2014-01-21

By John Antal

Greatest Danger to USA

1

Medium Danger to USA

2

Dangerous to USA

3

FlashPoints is a bi-monthly update on the most critical national security issues facing the United States. Author and military expert John Antal will provide you with insights and a quick synopsis of the top three flash points in the world at the time of each report. FlashPoints will list the greatest danger to the USA, and then list risks of medium and serious danger. Keep abreast of the latest impending international crisis by reviewing FlashPoints

as of January 21, 2014

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1. Egypt

2. Libya

3. South Sudan



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1. Egypt

Egyptians vote for stability, not democracy...

- a. Egypt has been in a crisis of leadership since mass protests forced President Hosni Mubarak to resign on February 11, 2011. Mubarak ruled Egypt since the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981 by a member of the **Muslim Brotherhood**.
- b. **Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Morsi was elected president on June 24, 2012.** He signs a new constitution on December 26, 2012 that moves the country towards sharia law and a fundamentalist islamic state. This constitution is widely unpopular with Egyptian secularists, minorities and the Egyptian military.
- c. **After mass protests, the Egyptian military removed Morsi from power on July 3, 2013 and installed an interim government.** Morsi is placed under arrest and is facing criminal charges. General Abdel Fattah Saeed Hussein Khalil el-Sisi (General Sisi), commander of the Egyptian Armed Forces appointed 68-year old Egyptian judge Adly Mansour as acting president on July 4, 2013. General Sisi was subsequently appointed as First Deputy Prime Minister, while remaining Minister of Defense. The Muslim Brotherhood was banned as a political party and designated a terrorist group.
- d. **A referendum on Egypt's new constitution was held on January 14-15, 2014.** Over 98 percent of voters said "yes" for the military-backed charter that replaces the one drafted and approved in late 2012 under ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood group. According to the BBC, voter turn out was about 38% of the eligible voter population. Supporters of Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood boycotted the vote.
- e. According to the BBC: "**The final constitution proposal forbids party formation based on "religion, race, gender or geography."** Islam is to be the state religion of Egypt and a basis for country's law system, while at the same time freedom of religion is guaranteed. The president will be elected for a four-year term according to the draft, and may serve two terms. The Minister of Defense is to be chosen by the military for the first eight years." <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-25739477>
- f. Also see the BBC video update at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-25713745>

1. Egypt (continued)

"It is not only about the people's approval of the articles of the new constitution but it also **reflects their support for Sisi** and the military-outlined future roadmap," Mohamed Kamal, a political science professor at Cairo University explained.

"A democratic transition should be characterized by an expansion of freedoms, but Egyptians have seen substantial restrictions on the exercise of their democratic rights. **There was no real opportunity for those opposed to the government's roadmap or the proposed constitution to dissent.**" Eric Bjornlund, President Democracy International, a U.S.-based group that sent more than 80 international election observers across Egypt for the recent vote.

"What took place last week was more of a vote of confidence in Sisi than approval of a constitution that most Egyptians would not have been able to read, let alone understand. It is nevertheless worthy of note that this is probably the **least Islamic and the most democratic constitution that Egypt has known since Anwar Sadat**. In any case, the overwhelming yes vote was a clarion call for Sisi to run for president." The Jerusalem Post, Zvi Mazel



Egyptian Minister of Defense General Abdel Fattah Saeed Hussein Khalil el-Sisi

Secretary Hagel and Egyptian Minister of Defense General Al-Sisi spoke last week regarding the Jan. 14-15 constitutional referendum in Egypt. They discussed the importance of the constitutional referendum for Egypt's overall political transition, and Secretary Hagel stressed the importance of a transparent referendum in which all Egyptians have the opportunity to cast their vote freely.

2. Libya

Libya descending into chaos...

- a. **“January 19, 2014 - Libya has declared a state of alert** as the air force attacked gunmen in the remote south to end unrest between rival armed groups that have been clashing for days... **Western powers fear the OPEC producer will slide into instability** as the government struggles to contain heavily-armed groups and tribesmen who helped toppled Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 but refuse to disarm.” *Aljazeera* <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/01/libya-declares-state-emergency-2014118194534208289.html>
- b. **“TRIPOLI, Libya — A Libyan deputy cabinet minister was killed by gunmen on Saturday evening in the first assassination of a senior government figure in the country since the ouster of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi more than two years ago... Assassinations of military and police officers, usually presumed to be the work of Islamist extremists, have been accelerating in the eastern cities of Benghazi and Darnah.** But the government had usually been able to negotiate its way out of threats to central institutions or top officials, as it did with the kidnapping of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan from a Tripoli hotel a few months ago. Previous attempts to assassinate senior officials had all failed.” *New York Times*, January 12, 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/13/world/africa/libyan-official-is-assassinated.html? r=0>
- c. **“WASHINGTON — A stinging report by the Senate Intelligence Committee released Wednesday concluded that the attack 16 months ago that killed four Americans in Benghazi, Libya, could have been prevented,** singling out the State Department for criticism for its failure to bolster security in response to intelligence warnings about a growing security crisis around the city.” *New York Times*, January 15, 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/16/world/middleeast/senate-report-finds-benghazi-attack-was-preventable.html> Press Release of the US Senate Intelligence Committee Releases Declassified Bipartisan Report on Benghazi Terrorist Attacks <http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/press/record.cfm?id=349314>
- d. **“North Africa and the Middle East are seeing a resurgence of terror groups** more than two years after the death of terror mastermind Osama bin Laden, and the **U.S. has no clear plans to deal with what experts call a complex problem.** "Amid this security and government vacuum, al-Qaida inspired affiliates... have found vast havens and recruiting grounds," Wayne White, former deputy director of the U.S. State Department's Middle East Intelligence Office. *Xinhua News* January 20, 2014.

3. South Sudan

- a. **South Sudan became an independent country on July 9, 2011.** The formation of the country was the result of the second Sudanese civil war (1983-2005). Roughly 2 million people died in the war, and 4 million made refugees. The conflict was the result of complex factors, including the Muslim central government of Sudan's desire to impose sharia law on non-muslims in South Sudan. South Sudan also has major fields .
- b. **In South Sudan, the two major tribes, the Nuer and Dinka have been in conflict.** In January 2012 3,000 people from the Murle tribe were massacred by the Nuer.
- c. **On December 15, 2012 fighting erupted between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, and the former vice president, Riek Machar, whom Kiir sacked in July. Machar is an ethnic Nuer.**
- d. "The country is run on patronage politics where the dominant figures, **President Kiir and Machar, represent interests of the two largest ethnic tribes, the Dinka and Nuer,** respectively. The legitimacy of the state can only be achieved if it provides essential services such as education, health and security to the citizens and, as it stands now, the country's attention is not on providing these services." Brookings Institution December 27, 2013 <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/brookings-now/posts/2013/12/a-timeline-of-brookings-expert-commentary-on-south-sudan>
- e. On December 21, 2013, four US troops were wounded when their aircraft came under fire during a mission to evacuate US Citizens from the fighting near the South Sudanese town of Bor.
- f. "South Sudanese rebels have squarely blamed the ongoing protracted violence on president Salva Kiir whom they accused of imposing the war on them as a "short cut" to try and avoid democratic political processes that would have threatened his leadership in the 2015 elections." Sudan Tribune, January 20, 2014. <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article49647>
- g. "As South Sudan's conflict escalates rapidly toward outright civil war, President Obama has shown precious little interest. He has rightly dispatched military forces to protect and extract U.S. citizens, but evacuation hardly constitutes a strategy. **Isolated troop deployments, however justifiable, merely underline the broader U.S. retreat across North Africa.**" John Bolton, December 28, 2013. <http://www.algemeiner.com/2013/12/28/obamas-disengagement-is-having-dangerous-consequences/>

3. South Sudan (continued)

"We are witnessing a gradual and continuous U.S. retreat from Africa. We don't understand that. The U.S. has been a great friend all these years, but as soon as Africa found itself starting to move up, the U.S. is really disengaging, to be frank, and as friends we must be frank with each other."

Mo Ibrahim, the billionaire entrepreneur and father of Africa's mobile phone revolution, April 24, 2013.

[http://allafrica.com/stories/
201304241208.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/201304241208.html)



Dr Mohamed "Mo" Ibrahim (born 1946) is a Sudanese-British mobile communications entrepreneur and billionaire. After selling Celtel in 2005 for \$3.4 billion, he set up the Mo Ibrahim Foundation to encourage better governance in Africa, as well as creating the Mo Ibrahim Index, to evaluate nations' performance.

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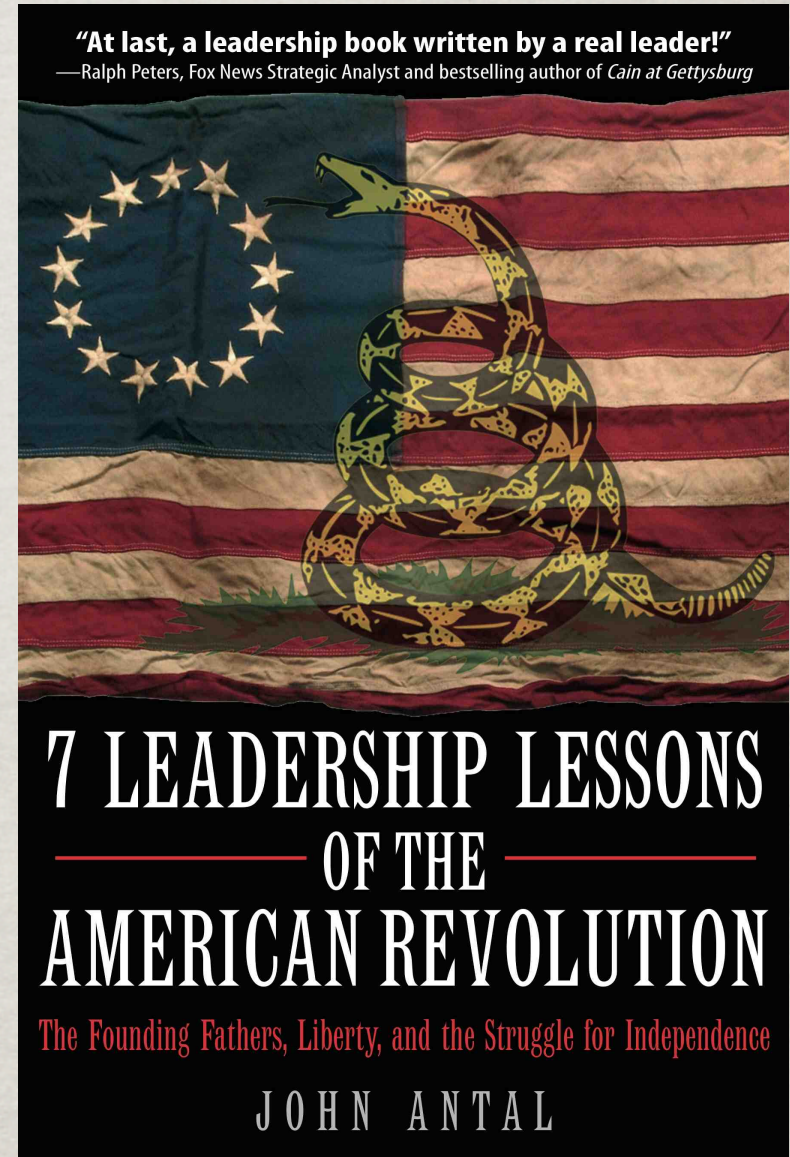
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Some more Reviews of *7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution*

“If you want to learn about leadership, read this book. If you wish to learn about the leadership that forged the birth of the American Republic, read this book. If you want to be inspired, read this book. John Antal has captured seven timeless stories that will raise your leadership awareness and make you a better leader in peace or war, at home, at work or in your community.” **Steven Pressfield, bestselling author of *Gates of Fire* and *The Warrior Ethos***

"John Antal's timely book, *7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution* is succinctly written and easily understood. On the surface, it demonstrates how those who risked all to create this republic used specific leadership principles to overcome tremendous challenges in that endeavor. These same techniques are just as valid in this century as in theirs. Along the way, Antal paints these revolutionaries as living, breathing human beings with high-risk tasks to accomplish. But Antal's study actually goes much farther – because behind his straightforward storytelling lies something much more important: an examination of what principles that leadership came from, and what principles it should serve. You'll come away with the feeling that the founders of this country weren't "historical figures" but living, breathing human beings with huge problems to solve, for which they used methods available to any one of us who cares to learn."

Bradley Thompson, television writer and producer and the co-writer for the hit TV series' *Battlestar Galactica* and the second season of *Falling Skies*.

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