

THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Published on *The National Interest* (<http://nationalinterest.org>)

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Does the Arab World Really Regard Iran as THE "biggest threat"?

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|
December 6, 2010

[Malou Innocent](#)^[2]

[Commentators](#)^[3] are [buzzing](#)^[4] [over](#)^[5] Wikileaks cables revealing that some Arab leaders regard Iran as the "biggest threat" to the region and want America to bomb it. However, [extensive polls](#)^[6] describing what the Arab public thinks about Iran paints a strikingly different picture.

According to the Brookings Institution's 2010 Arab Public Opinion Poll, 77 percent regard Israel as the biggest threat, 80 percent regard the United States as the biggest threat, and only 10 percent regard Iran as the biggest threat. Fifty-seven percent think the region will be better off if Iran had nuclear weapons. Despite those remarkably high numbers, it is the opinion of brutal Arab dictators who want America to bomb Iran that has dominated news stories. Meanwhile, the opinions of other Arab [leaders in Oman, Qatar, Syria, Kuwait, and Jordan](#),^[7] who have expressed concern about the repercussions of an attack on Iran, have all but been ignored. Of course, it's not a coincidence that the same news organizations overselling U.S.-Arab solidarity against Iran were the same ones that [overhyped](#)^[8] Iranian involvement during the Iraq War.

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[3] <http://www.aolnews.com/world/article/wikileaks-arabs-agree-with-israel-that-iran-is-a-threat/19736403>

[4] <http://www.cnn.com/2010/US/11/28/us.wikileaks.iran/?hpt=T2>

[5] <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/05/opinion/05freeman.html>

[6] http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2010/0805_arab_opinion_poll_telhami.aspx

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