



Is US Power and Influence in Decline?

The Foreign Policy Association returns to the West Shore Country Club on Wednesday, September 29, to take up a most topical subject: whether American power and influence in the world is in decline.

The speaker will be Gabrielle Tarini, a research analyst with the RAND Corporation, a Washington-based public policy think tank. Ms. Tarini's research focuses on European security, the NATO alliance, and humanitarian and stabilization issues.

She is the co-author of a September 2020 RAND publication: *The Lost Generation in American Foreign Policy: How American Influence Has Declined and What Can Be Done About It*.

Her talk is particularly timely in view of the U.S. withdrawal of military forces from Afghanistan after 20 years of conflict, leaving that country in the hands of its former harsh ruler, the Taliban.

Our September meeting will mark the first in-person gathering of the FPA since February of last year. Covid forced the cancellation of the latter part of the 2019-2020 program year. Our 2020-2021 programs were presented via webinars with the generous support of Legend Financial.

Ms. Tarini is a graduate of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government where she earned a master's degree in public policy and helped to develop a course on national security leadership.

Her award-winning graduate thesis analyzed the causes and consequences of civilian harm in U.S. security assistance relationships.

In 2018, Ms. Tarini was a Harold W. Rosenthal Fellow in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in Washington.

Previously, she was a research associate at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies.

Banerjee Is FPA's New Secretary

Akash Banerjee, a Temple University student from Lititz, is the new secretary of the Foreign Policy Association, succeeding Matt Smith, now a student at England's Oxford University.

Banerjee was chosen by the FPA board of directors to serve until elections are held in 2022.

In 2018, while a student at Warwick High School, Banerjee was winner of a \$600 honorarium from the FPA to attend the University of Pittsburgh's Governor's School for Global and International Studies. He spoke at our March 2010 meeting on the global implications of mental health.

September 29 Dinner Arrangements

For the safety of our members, we ask that all attendees be fully vaccinated against Covid - 19.

Place: West Shore Country Club
100 Brentwater Road
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Time: 5:30 p.m. Social Hour (Cash Bar)
6:30 p.m. Sit-Down Dinner
7:30 p.m. Presentation with Q&A

Menu: Tossed garden salad, braised Swiss steak jardinière with vegetable pan gravy, mashed potatoes, vegetable medley, and apple crumb cheesecake.

Persons with special dietary needs may request a substitute meal when making reservations. If you do, pick up a coded tag at the sign-in table and put it by your dinner place.

**The cost for FPA members is \$33.
The cost for non-members is \$38.**

There is no charge for anyone to attend the program presentation only, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

You may make dinner reservations at our website, www.fpaharrisburg.org, or contact Ronald Pontius at ronpon@comcast.net or at 717-991-0899.

Reservations must be made by 4 p.m. Friday, September 24. If you come to dinner without a reservation, the country club may charge a late fee of up to \$10 per person. In addition, your meal selection cannot be guaranteed.

When making a dinner reservation, please give your complete name and phone number. We need that information to notify you if a meeting is canceled.

Dinner no-shows will be billed unless there are sufficient walk-ins to meet the reservation number we give to the West Shore County Club.

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Contributions to the FPA are tax deductible.

Your contribution to the Foreign Policy Association is tax deductible under the IRS code.



For Travel, Insurance, Financial and Auto Services

The Foreign Policy Association expresses its sincere appreciation to AAA Central Penn for its sponsorship of our 2021-2022 program year.

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Iran: How Did We Get Here and What Do We Do Now?

By Former FPA Secretary Matthew J. Smith

In the past, the United States and Iran have engaged in their fair share of brinksmanship. Recent events that most characterize the tenuous relationship between the two countries are:

- the Trump Administration's withdrawal from the 2015 Iran Nuclear Agreement, and
- a Trump-ordered drone assassination of a top Iranian military commander in January 2020.

On May 20, James Q. Roberts, a retired Army officer and former senior official in the Department of Defense, spoke on Iran to the Foreign Policy Association. His talk marked the end of the FPA's 2019-2020 program year during which all meetings were via webinars sponsored by Legend Financial.

Roberts said the relationship between Iran and the West can best be called a "series of shocks," beginning in 1941 with the Anglo-Soviet ousting of Iranian leader Reza Shah Pahlavi and the installation of his more cooperative son, Mohammad Reza Shah.

After World War II, Roberts said, the U.S. and its allies promised to make Iran a free state, but the nationalization of Iranian oil resources and the rise of socialist-leaning Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh made the West uneasy.

The British orchestrated the removal of Mossadegh, which solidified the Shah as the sole executive power in Iran. The rift between the West and Iran grew larger with the Iranian-backed formation of OPEC and the 1973-1974 oil embargo.

Then came the 1979 Islamic Revolution which forced the Shah into exile and his replacement by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Iranian students attacked the American embassy in Teheran and held 52 occupants hostage for 444 days.

Roberts, stationed at the embassy at the time, was among personnel evacuated prior to the takeover. In 1980, he joined an attempt to free the hostages, a failed effort in which eight Americans lost their lives in a helicopter crash.

Roberts said Iran may agree to a renegotiated nuclear deal, but probably would retain its option to build a nuclear weapon someday if felt threatened. In the long term, he said, the U.S. should work toward establishing better rapport with Iran, noting that Iran was more democratic than many other countries with which we share diplomatic relations.

2021-22 Program Topics / Schedule

All local events at the West Shore Country Club
Except the International Fellows Reception at the
U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle

- Sept. 29** Is U.S. Power and Influence in Decline?
- Oct. 21** Impact of the German Elections
- Nov. 17** Brazil and Its Influence in South America
- Dec. 16** Iran - Saudi Arabia Relationship
- Jan. 13** Afghanistan after the U.S. Withdrawal
- Feb. 17** Climate Change
- March ??** International Fellows Reception,
Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle
Date to be determined
ADVANCED RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
- April 21** Keystone Speaker Series
ADVANCED RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
- May ??** Annual Embassy Trip to Washington, DC
Date to be determined
- May 19** Social Media: A Force in International Conflict

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